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## ABSTRACT

With the shifts in housing tenure patterns in post-war Britain being so decisive and apparently relentless, one of the main issues that concerns those involved with housing is that of the impact of mass home-ownership - especially on those groups new to the tenure. These concerns range from the possible effect of new home-ownership on voting patterns and political allegiances; to the financial hardship that seems to be increasingly falling on low income owner occupiers; and to the domestic and familial changes entailed by two-income mortgages. It is towards assessing the impact of these changes more fully, that this thesis is aimed.

In order to better understand the origins and effects of tenure shifts, two main points are made. Firstly, that the occupation of houses (of whatever tenure) is an issue that involves practically everyone in society, either as individual tenants/owners/homeless persons, or as groups of ratepayers/voters/neighbourhoods or as business/financial/political interests, or as any combination of these. Secondly, it is emphasised that the terms and conditions of the various tenures have been created and have been altered and adapted over time, and that the definition and meaning of the tenures is as crucial to the housing debate as the well-recognised tenure trends.

Consequently, it is argued that the changing patterns and definitions of tenures have a crucial and far-reaching effect on wider social relations in society whilst, at the same time, these changes originate from and in part reflect, already occurring events in civil society.

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*in memory of my mother, Phyllis Barim*

OCCUPYING HOUSES: THE SOCIAL RELATIONS  
OF TENURE

by

MAURA BANIM

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## INTRODUCTION

## Introduction

One of the major changes that has occurred in housing in this century has been the shift in tenure patterns. Within 70 years the mass tenure has shifted from private renting to a mixture of private renting, owner occupation and local authority housing, to the eventual dominance of owner occupation. The impact and consequences of these tenure changes have provided the material for the vast majority of textbooks and articles concerned with housing and have come to form popular understanding of the nature of the relationship between society and its housing forms. This popular understanding is well evidenced in the following extract from an interview given by the Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, to Womens Realm:

"The increase in home ownership between 1950 and 1960 was enormous. Now we're encouraging that process again. Don't forget that nearly one house in three in this country is council owned, and we have given those people the chance to own their own home. I hope that this will bring a new unity as more and more people become property owners, a new thing to have in common. I don't see us as two nations at all ..... I don't see people divided."<sup>1</sup>

Whilst commentators, politicians and economists etc. may disagree on specific impacts of tenure change (e.g. of owner occupation on voting patterns), they share an assumption that the tenure of a house and, more generally, the nature of the mass tenure, has crucial implications for the producers and consumers of housing; capital in general; the state; and labour power. Tenure is important, it has an effect on civil society. It is thus central to an understanding of housing policy. The original intention to the thesis was to attempt to come to grips with these issues by examining the impact to the development of a particular tenure in a particular place on a particular set of people. The place chosen



was Westerhope, the tenure was owner occupation (a non-marginal owner occupation), and the people were a group of married women aged 30-44 years. What is thus generated is a limited and located picture, rather than a general overview, of the impact of tenure as it relates to a series of factors i.e. class, gender and locale.

One of the major themes to emerge in the literature is the relationship between tenure and social class - a debate which encompasses a range of arguments from the claim that the two major tenures of council housing and owner occupation represent, encourage and intensify class division<sup>2</sup> (the two tenures being working class and middle class respectively); to the claim that the tenures themselves are creating new class divisions which supercede, or at least exist alongside, traditional class divisions<sup>3</sup>.

The former argument has, in my opinion, some strengths and some weaknesses. Of course, those households on low or unstable incomes, and those with a 'tradition' of council tenancies are likely to be working class and/or defined as working class, and found in council housing, especially given the current 'undesirability' of that tenure. Going on from this, those on high, stable incomes etc. are likely to be found in the more desirable owner occupied sector - as Chris Hamnett argues:

"Disraeli's Two Nations are being perpetually recreated on a tenorial basis."<sup>4</sup>

There is undeniably a link between income, class and tenure but this link is not as straightforward as it is often made to appear. Other factors affect this link such as time, geographical location, familial location, gender and race. Any attempt to understand the impact of the development of owner occupation needs therefore to go beyond simply seeing

the tenure as a middle class tenure or, more precisely, an anti-working class tenure and include considerations of the other experiences that operate on people's lives within civil society. This comment is not confined to the writer quoted (who, to be fair, does consider the role of 'fertility') but is one of the major and most prevalent weaknesses of current literature on tenure, where considerations of gender, locale, race, etc. are arbitrary and cursory<sup>5</sup>.

The latter argument, that tenure division rather than being a vehicle of social segregation actually creates new forms of social division, is one which has been in existence for some time. Its most keen advocate, Peter Saunders, has recently tempered his views but still argues the case for materially based consumption cleavages which are 'every bit as real' as class divisions:

"the division between privatized and collectivized modes of housing (is) one factor which is contributing to what one recent writer has termed 'a process of restratification' (Mingione, 1981), based on differing relations to the means of consumption."<sup>6</sup>

The consumption of a house in a particular tenure form is seen as providing the consumer with a specific set of interests different to that of the consumers of other tenures on the basis of the material relations involved. Saunders is able to analytically remove these sets of interests from considerations of class thus providing society with a 'new' set of social relations, and giving housing tenure an almost determinant role in events and struggles in civil society.

"Consumption sectors.....crosscut class boundaries, are grounded in non-class-based material interests and represent an increasingly significant form of social cleavage which may in certain circumstances come to outweigh class membership in their economic and political effects."<sup>7</sup>

The argument for consumption based divisions is firmly rejected by others<sup>8</sup>, largely on the grounds that the relations of production involved in housing also play a crucial role in the understanding of the relevance of tenure:

"This approach to owner occupation must include the study of the contemporary agencies involved in provision of owner occupied housing, for example, the study of the construction industry, of the institutions which control the housing promotion process, of landownership relations, and of the mortgage-finance industry."<sup>9</sup>

For these writers the relations of production explicitly revolve around the dominant interests of capital (and, I would argue, patriarchy<sup>5</sup>) and a consumption dominated account of housing tenure, such as Saunders', neglects this aspect and is thus seriously flawed:

"The present economic, social and political imbalance between renting and owner occupation is one consequence of the domination of the economics and politics of housing provision by the interests of capital. Yet measures such as those proposed by Saunders would leave this relationship undisturbed."<sup>10</sup>

Inequalities, divisions and imbalances between tenures, are understood here as the direct result of the domination of capitalist interests in housing provision. This approach has recently culminated in the argument, being put forward by M. Ball as part of a 'socialist housing strategy', that:

"The debate over housing has tended to be confined to tenure choices and hence to consumption issues. The left has failed to confront the problems of owner occupation partly because it has accepted this limited terrain of debate and partly because it has adopted an economic view of the link between tenure and voting behaviour. The author argues that an adequate strategy can only begin to be developed if we challenge structures of housing provision and the institutions involved."<sup>11</sup>

According to Ball, the emphasis on the relations of provision, as opposed to consumption, enables the housing debate to 'break out' of its essentially limiting and narrow framework which is dominated by the

'politics of tenure'. A political debate over housing provision would allow a broader, more constructive and 'optimistic' analysis. Whilst I am critical of Ball's treatment and perception of consumption issues, the developing approach his work represents has begun to broaden current understanding of the social relations of tenure to include the relations of consumption and provision, and the relations involved within and between the two arenas.

Out of these sorts of considerations has emerged another set of themes, namely that tenures represent attempts by different groups to achieve some sort of dominance/ascendancy over another - an attempt articulated in production and consumption. Put simply, it is not that tenures have strengthened class divisions (by the allocation of different tenures) in any straightforward way, or that tenures have obscured and weakened class divisions (by creating 'new' cleavages). Rather the different tenure forms are, and have been, useful devices for labour and capital to achieve certain 'own' aims e.g. for capital - the continued profitability of housing, the control over labour power; and for labour - affordable housing of a decent standard, more say in the provision of housing. More importantly, tenure has become this useful device because tenures have forms that are produced, maintained, experienced and changed. This is a critical point to understand because a house, as a built form can stand unchanged for several generations, whereas the tenure, and the relations of tenure, can swiftly respond to changes in the spheres of economics, politics, the capital-labour relationship etc.

It has been noted in recent literature<sup>12</sup> that owner occupation has, over time, become increasingly associated with 'higher housing standards' (a relative phenomena), 'good investment in an inflationary world', 'a means of self expression' and 'control of one's environment'. These associations (though by no means as universal as some of the literature would have us believe) are a product of the way a tenure is formed by the agencies of provision and by the consumers and occupiers of housing. Because tenure form involves all aspects/groups/members of civil society, it can constitute a way of responding to, and initiating, changes in social relations in civil society that cut across economic, political and ideological boundaries. Put starkly, tenure form is an immediate and relatively readily accessible arena for the articulation of struggle, conflict and restructuring that constantly occurs within civil society. It is therefore necessary to consider the production of housing, though this should not mean the exclusion of consumption from the debate. However, where I would depart from the majority of the current literature would be to step beyond its limitation to this dichotomy. To understand the impact of tenure form on civil society, it is now necessary to broaden the analysis to include specific considerations of the relations to provision (as well as production) and the relations of occupation (as well as consumption). It is to this analysis the content of the thesis is directed.

The remainder of the introduction will focus its attention on presenting a map, or readers guide, to the thesis.

The first chapter has the dual purpose of locating my work within the wider housing debate and spelling out the themes and arguments which are considered within the thesis. In many senses it is an introductory chapter, presenting the rationale for the thesis' logic and prioritisation in a somewhat general manner. The chapter takes the opportunity to present some of the more technical debates covering the production and realisation of housing in order to form a 'back-drop' to the more theoretical, ideological issues raised in later chapters. This thesis does not try to consider all aspects of economic and public policy around housing, but does recognise that these aspects are ever-present and cannot be 'left out' in the sense that their absence makes them 'non-issues'. In my analysis of events in housing, these aspects are 'nodded at' in the first chapter, not in a way that trivialises or minimises their influence, but in a way that acknowledges their specific manifestations as they relate to the main 'strand of thought' of the thesis i.e. how the social relations of tenure are formed and articulated.

The economics of housing provision, fiscal policy, public policy implications of tenure shifts etc., are all matters well documented elsewhere and, where appropriate, the reader is referred to this material. It is hoped that the arguments and lines of thought introduced in the first chapter and developed throughout the thesis, will be seen as a sophistication - a 'building on' - of those issues, rather than a set of themes that exist alongside, or apart from, them. My own understanding of housing issues and hence my contribution to the wider housing debate, whilst specific in content, is necessarily and unavoidably informed by the vast range of literature and theory that can be encompassed under the umbrella title of 'housing issues'. It is the aim of the first chapter to acknowledge the underlying themes that inform the following



chapters and provide a coherent, logical rationale for my choice of theoretical framework and area of study.

As chapter one explores the issues surrounding the commodity form of housing so chapter two explores the issues raised by the notions community, culture and capital. The chapter is not an attempt to provide a definitive version of the 'meaning' of those terms. The basic aim of the thesis is to establish a more thorough and dynamic understanding of tenure so that social relations in civil society and the realm of reproduction might be more thoroughly analysed. That being so, the aim of the second chapter is to provide a critical evaluation of the use of the terms community, culture and capital, which so often appear - sometimes uncritically - in the housing tenure debate. In short, the second chapter sets out the theoretical framework of the thesis.

The chapter starts by examining the nature of the relationship between theory and action. This is one of the longest standing 'problems' addressed by sociologists and social theorists. In that context my treatment of it is brief and cursory and I do not claim to provide any outstanding original contribution to the 'solution' to the 'problem'. However, its purpose (and value) lies in the opportunity it affords me to develop a framework within which I can make a re-appraisal (theory) of the notions of conflict and change (action). The theoretical framework thus developed allows me to incorporate 'the subjective side of praxis' with the objective conditions and material forces that define consciousness (class, gender, race) and experience within civil society. The dynamic potential of the realm of reproduction is stressed as is the dynamic nature of theoretical activity itself.

One strand of thought that emerges from that level of consideration is the existence of the contestation of meaning, as it specifically applies to housing and class. By examining the notion of ideological hegemony, alongside the relationship between theory and action, I put forward the argument that the experience, meaning and relations of tenure are not simplistically imposed on one group by another, but instead can be seen as vehicles which carry the conflicting values, understandings and aims of the different groups involved toward some sort of 'resolved' state. This 'resolved' state is perforce temporary and, generally, never resolved for all groups at the same time.

This resolved/unresolved state is evidenced, chapter two goes on to argue, in events (and writing about events) in the community. However, the community is a location that has generally been overlooked (in terms of its dynamic potential) or misunderstood. My line of argument dicatates that the community - as long as the concept is clearly spelt out and critically addressed - be given a central role in debates around the capital labour relationship thus making housing and tenure more crucial and fruitful areas of analysis when looking at social relations and class and gender consciousness.

In chapter three these themes are taken up within an historical perspective. The chapter aims to show that tenure (specifically, though not only, owner occupation) is a created structure, whose form and meaning is, at any one time or in any one place, the object of contest and change and is always the product of earlier struggles.

A critical overview of contemporary perspectives on owner occupation is made before I begin the main task of the chapter which is to illustrate on a national and local level, the way the occupation of houses (and the built form of those houses) has changed over time - developing into tenures and the relations of tenures - and how this change/development is best understood within the context of the locale. The chapter covers the period 1900-1939 (reference to the post war period is mainly taken up in chapters five-seven). In choosing these dates I do not wish to imply that 1900 represents some sort of 'base time' and that development since then has been smooth, progressive and unproblematic. Rather I have sought to show - through the use of primary and secondary sources - that tenure form has always constituted a way of responding to, and initiating, changes in the social relations of civil society that cut across (though are still linked to) the 'traditional' spheres - i.e. economic, political and ideological. In some ways the events and times picked out for analysis are a little arbitrary, but the object of this chapter is to illustrate that whilst the built form of a house has crucial implications for the occupation of that house (i.e. physical representation of status, spatial organisation within the house), it is the relations of occupation, the relations of tenure, that have carried forward the wider changes in social relations that have occurred this century.

Chapter three has quite a broad agenda - from looking at the activities of small local builders to outlining the impact of war on the housing market. However, it is not the intention to provide a definitive history of housing in all its aspects this century. Instead it must be emphasised that the core theme of this chapter is the

development of the construction of tenure and tenure relations, and to bring out some of the influences on this development and of this development.

The final three chapters of the thesis are taken up by my own field work in Westerhope, a suburb of Newcastle, and I attempt to relate some of the general themes, problems and issues raised in chapters one to three to a specific, closely examined locale. Before the thesis shifts to the field work section, chapter four considers the whole notion of studying communities. Firstly, the chapter expounds my own understanding of that term, bringing in considerations of how class and gender relations are specifically manifested in the community, and of how the realms of production and reproduction are linked. From these considerations comes my rationale for concentrating on married women in paid employment in the final part of the field research. Utilising the concept of 'politics of lifestyle', it is argued that this group is uniquely placed to represent the conflicts and contradictions that lie within the spheres of work, home and community.

Secondly, chapter four considers the process of gaining an adequate view of the world i.e. how does a researcher approach, observe and represent their chosen subject. The chapter then critically explores the range of options, research techniques etc. that are available. The problem of field research is essentially conceptualised not so much as one of accurate, unbiased observation, but as one of reconstruction. For me, this type of research/community study is a process of reconstruction - of past events, changes and the present situation - and this process is fraught with methodological and theoretical problems. These problems start to be addressed in chapter four, though the nature of the research

dictates that they cannot be 'put aside' after that. Rather they should be incorporated into the writing up of the research itself.

Chapter five is a detailed examination of the growth and development of the village/suburb of Westerhope over the last hundred years. Within that time span Westerhope has changed from a small agricultural community to a mining village to a 'dormitory' suburb of Newcastle . In the chapter I try to avoid simply comparing one epoch with another, but instead try to chart the changes that have occurred over Westerhope's history and the impact of those changes on the population there. It is a study of growth and transition, and how a population creates their own community, reacts to the presence of 'newcomers' and to wider changes in the relations of production. It is also a study of the organisation of family life, especially the role of women. The shifting tenure base and the relations of tenure are here seen as a vehicle that carries forward these changes.

Tying in with chapter four, comments are made on the difficulty of reconstructing the past. The evolution of a locale is a very complex affair, involving local and national 'inputs' and objective 'fact' and subjective opinion, and even the most thorough research can only present a partial account. Therefore, whilst I have tried to provide a detailed history of Westerhope's development, the main aim of the chapter is to try to assess the impact of change and the nature of social relations within the context of economic and social change.

The final section of chapter five focuses on recent changes (i.e. in the past 15 years) in Westerhope using Census and other statistical material. Although there are problems inherent in using such data, this approach is developed in chapter six as I believe it provides a valuable

base, or backdrop, to examining the less tangible changes (i.e. in attitudes, lifestyles etc.) that are explored in chapter seven. Such statistical analysis can also alert the researcher to processes and movement that require further investigation.

It was always the intention of the research to see how 'new' owner occupiers understood their current living situation in the light of their previous living situation and working experiences. Westerhope was the area selected to study as it was a village that witnessed, from the 1950's onwards, the influx of owner occupiers (mostly first time buyers) onto the new privately built estates. It therefore gave me the opportunity to examine the 'new' experience of owner occupation; the new residents' relationship with, and understanding of, the established Westerhope residents; and the impact of the new population on the old. However before these themes could be examined in depth, I felt it necessary to discover some of the characteristics of the new population e.g. their housing backgrounds, family structures, childhood location, employment histories etc. To this end chapter six initially presents selected statistics from the 1981 Census and ward data in order to give an impression of the 'social make up' of the private estates in Westerhope, and to build on to the statistical data presented in chapter five.

From this data an image began to emerge of an area with a high percentage of married couples, many with dependent children, who enjoyed a relatively high degree of affluence. What also emerged was a high percentage of married women in paid employment. It seemed that associated with living on the private estates of Westerhope was a

lifestyle that is more or less dependent on the wages of wives and mothers. This aspect of Westerhope life was incorporated into the rest of the field research. My own empirical research (i.e. a survey carried out on fifty households) was designed to flesh out the details of the lives of the Westerhope population, and the sample was chosen with the above considerations in mind.

The final chapter concentrates on indepth interviews with ten married women living on the private estates, with the questions falling into three broad categories; background and parental family; marital family; work patterns. Again the difficulties inherent in this type of research are acknowledged and addressed in this chapter. Building on the research material presented in chapters five and six, chapter seven seeks to further explore the themes of the present location of the working class; womens' dual role as wives/mothers and workers; the relationship between class and gender within the context of a changing and developing community. The inter-relationship between tenure relations, class and gender is, as this thesis argues, a very complex one and the main aim of the final chapter is to try and explore that complex relationship as it is articulated in the lives of ten women who form part of the image of mass owner occupation. Of course, no firm conclusions can be drawn from such a minute sample, but the chapter does draw attention to issues and considerations along the lines of class, gender, and tenure that I feel have been too long neglected in the wider housing debate.

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CHAPTER ONE

Housing Under Capitalism:

Production, Reproduction and Occupation

The issues that could be discussed under the title 'Housing Under Capitalism' are numerous, ranging from the concerns of feminist architects to the critiques of urban sociologists, and the number of perspectives available for adoption, limitless. This thesis aims to examine one particular theme - the relationship between increased owner occupation and the changing nature of class and gender relations - and, whilst borrowing ideas and material from a diverse range of sources and schools of thought, does not claim to adopt an accordingly broad approach to the issues of housing under capitalism.

That having been established however, it must be admitted that even within my own concentrated approach, there exists a complexity of themes that need to be spelled out in order to locate this work and the direction of this work within the wider housing debate. This is the primary purpose of the following chapter, which presents a thematic approach to the production and occupation of houses. It must be stressed that this thematic approach implies that the issues under scrutiny are neither perceived (and thus not analysed) as "a set of fragmented, almost technocratically-conceived issues", nor as "generalised references"<sup>1</sup> (Harloe), but are rather addressed as concerns whose selective emphasis opens up opportunities for direction and analysis that go beyond Harloe's options. The following chapter, covering the production of housing, its realisation and consumption, and the issue of reproduction, represents not so much a clear unequivocal

statement of issues as a recognition of themes and processes that underpin any analytical perspective. As Harloe writes:

"...it is necessary to recognize that housing and its evolution over time is characterised by a set of processes which occur more generally in the course of the consumption of certain goods and services and, moreover, that there are strong links between the processes which occur in the sphere of consumption and those which occur in the sphere of production. A central concern must therefore be the nature of socialised and individualised production and consumption and the contradictory consequences that have for both capitalism and the working class."<sup>2</sup>

### The Commodity Form and Housing

Few writers would disagree that housing under capitalism is first and foremost, a commodity i.e. that which has a use value and an exchange value. According to Marx this commodity is the fundamental form of capital:

"it must be understood that the class struggle is over the way the capital class imposes the commodity form on the bulk of the population by forcing people to sell part of their lives as the commodity, labour power, in order<sup>3</sup> to survive and gain some access to social wealth."<sup>3</sup>

Capital is thus defined as a social system based on the imposition of work through the commodity form i.e. capital is not a collection of things - means of production, profit etc. ; but a system of circular, self-reproducing set of relationships. H. Cleaver in "Reading Capital Politically"<sup>4</sup> argues that all products of labour power must perforce take on the commodity form as the survival of capitalism (i.e. the constant accumulation of labour and the products it produces) depends on the selling of commodities to the working class e.g. food, clothes, etc. It is thus a set of power relations, whose existence and manner of imposition depends on capital's power vis a vis the working class:

"Capital's power to impose the commodity form is the power to maintain the system itself - a system in which life for most people, is converted into labour power."<sup>5</sup>

Labour power is thus also a commodity, which, like all commodities needs to be produced and reproduced using other commodities and indeed the value of labour power is crucially determined by the value of necessary commodities required to ensure subsistence, whilst at the same time, the value of a commodity is determined by "the socially necessary labour time required for its production"<sup>6</sup>. Within this framework it is important to note that labour power as a commodity has a unique feature, it can produce a value greater than its own, which is the source of accumulation, thus the centrality of the cost of labour power for capital and the cost of commodities for the working class.

Private capital and the state have entered increasingly into the process of the production of labour power (as a source of accumulation and to ensure its continuance) through the provision of commodities/necessities such as food, housing and goods and services which may be described as welfare goods e.g. education, council housing. How far these welfare goods have escaped the commodity form is hotly debated (see for example N. Ginsburg, C. Cockburn, Community Development Projects Reports<sup>7</sup>) and is largely a product of working class agitation, given that class's basic antagonism to the commodity form<sup>8</sup>. What is clear however, is that private capital makes, often extortionate, profit from the production of welfare goods and that increasingly 'realistic' charges are being made for these services e.g. prescriptions, council rents, home helps, etc.

Within this context, housing can clearly be seen as a commodity, with the exchange value for capital being a source of accumulation, and the use value for the working class (and consumers generally) being a fundamental means of subsistence. Unlike other areas of the welfare state, e.g. education, the bulk of housing is provided by the free, private market, with even socialised housing being prey to the operations of market forces<sup>9</sup>. Housing is then largely produced and consumed as a commodity, a phenomena that throws up a number of issues that need to be examined not only in their own terms but also in their relation to each other.

Firstly, housing has an essential use value which must be consumed by workers to ensure their subsistence and reproduction. It is therefore crucial to captial and labour and, like other commodities, it contributes to the value of labour power as it is purchased out of wages and is itself produced by labour power. Housing therefore has to be produced and it has to be consumed and, given capital's inherent need to accumulate (i.e. to reduce the cost of production and reproduction), housing becomes an arena of class conflict and state intervention<sup>10</sup>. Secondly, housing has an exchange value which is very high and is generally too expensive to be purchased outright by consumers, thus creating the necessity for mechanisms of realisation such as tenure forms, state intervention, a secondary circuit of capital and various agencies of provision.

The rest of this chapter will take each of these issues in turn (i.e. production, realisation, consumption and reproduction) analysing the conflicts between class and capital in each. However whilst such a separation of issues might provide a useful starting point for analysis,

it will become clear that the relations discussed under each heading articulate in all the spheres. Furthermore, the following analyses rest on the basic premise that the state and the private agencies, involved in provision, act within a capitalist/patriarchal framework and that class and gender relations articulate in all spheres of housing. Moreover, that the class and gender relations involved in the consumption and production of housing are, at the same time, constituted out of, and themselves reconstitute, the social relations of civil society. Thus, the provision and consumption of housing is perceived as a dynamic area of social life.

### The Production of Housing

"housing is a commodity produced by a particular sector of production, the building industry."<sup>11</sup>

The issue of the production of housing is one which generally has tended to be ignored or at least peripheralised (see M. Ball<sup>12</sup>) in most considerations of the nature of housing under capitalism. However, a serious study of production reveals a series of processes and sets of relations that are intrinsic to the way that people experience and consume housing. Unlike other areas of 'welfare goods' e.g. education, health care, the process of production is especially important in housing as housing is a built form that embodies a legacy of assumptions about people's lives - a legacy of assumptions that can physically remain for over a hundred years. Housing therefore is not merely 'there', but is produced by certain groups at certain times to conform to certain ideas about lifestyles. This section will look at this process of production, assessing its impact and importance, and will take as its starting point the building industry.

M. Ball in 'British Housing Policy and the House Building Industry'<sup>13</sup> argues that:

"the process of production is important for an understanding of the development of state housing policy as is the analysis of tenures. Also, class struggle within housing, and its resultant effect on state housing policy, can only be examined in the context of the relationship between the contradictions for capitalism, produced by the housebuilding industry and the effects of specific housing tenures."<sup>14</sup>

In short, the amount and form of housing provided and the struggle around that provision is directly related to the nature and the politics of the construction industry under capitalism.

Capitalism involves the continual reduction of the value of labour power as a share of the total output. For housing to remain profitable for the building industry, it requires a reduction in the value of labour power i.e. the amount of society's labour necessary for its production. However it has been argued that the fall in labour time necessary to produce housing has not reduced to the same extent as other commodities and thus there has been less opportunity to lower the value of labour power. Overall this has acted as a restriction on increases in the rate of profit . Housing's high costs (i.e. to build), exacerbated by the low growth of productivity and technical development, contribute to this inability to reduce the value of housing. Or, as one group has put it, simply but effectively:

"Buildings are exceptionally expensive, take a long<sup>15</sup> time to build and a lot of workers to build them."

Exactly why the construction industry has not progressed in the same way as other industries has been explained by reference to the archaic structure of the industry e.g. the proliferation of family firms, the use of casual labour and craftworkers etc., and to the 'easy entry'

into the industry, encouraging quick profits<sup>16</sup>. It is claimed that the industry is technically backward, largely because of the necessity to produce housing 'on site', and too labour intensive. However such explanations are largely inadequate and superficial. Housing has the potential for on or off-site production and in fact a certain amount of technical development has already taken place - e.g. the increased use of systemised building - although such advancements have brought with them their own problems for companies that have used them<sup>17</sup>. Yet the nature of the product may limit the production methods but does not determine the nature of the industry and its output - as Ball argues:

"The physical nature of building places limits on the types of product produced and techniques used - it is however the organisational structure of the industry which fixes the nature of the product and how it is produced, within those limits. Under capitalism the products and techniques yielding the greatest profits will be used."<sup>18</sup>

In this analysis then, building is for profit and is governed by the forces of the capitalist market and, as such, the necessary set of physical processes required to produce a physical structure with a use value will always be subordinated to the process of transformation and generation of value. As the Direct Labour Collective argue, in the context of the establishment of Direct Labour Organisations, the need for private contractors to make a profit produces many problems in terms of the supply of housing:

"Local authority direct labour was originally set up ... as a result of two main factors ... (firstly), the inability of contractors to provide an adequate service for local authority requirements. For there was no means of ensuring that they did not intentionally produce poor quality work, or that they did not charge exorbitant prices... Secondly, workers were fighting for improved wages and conditions. This was something that contractors would not provide."<sup>19</sup>



The capitalist nature of the vast majority of housing producers therefore has far-reaching consequences in terms of what is actually provided. The rest of this section will attempt to take a detailed look at the processes of house production.

The profitability and therefore supply and quality of housing essentially depends on demand - or more specifically on the ability of people to afford the housing offered, on the availability of credit (for both the producer and the consumer), and on the assumption of inflation. Merrett<sup>20</sup> has noted that less than 3% of housing is 'bespoke' production i.e. built to individual consumer order, illustrating the vast proportion of housebuilding that is speculative. Again, like the issue of production itself, the nature and development of speculative housebuilding is not a well-researched area so much of the following information serves only to highlight particularly important features of this industry and its impact on housing provision, and is not a considered study of speculation itself.

A substantial proportion (90%) of construction firms that concentrate on housebuilding are small firms (i.e. less than 20 employees) who generally have little capital, and therefore depend on a supply of credit, usually from clearing or fringe banks - in order to buy the materials necessary to build. Such a method of operation is extremely precarious - a drop in demand (i.e. a lack of consumer credit and/or a squeeze on credit) may mean that the built houses will not sell and, as assets locked in housing cannot easily be released whilst the interests on loans still need to be paid, bankruptcy is far from uncommon in this area of industry<sup>21</sup>. However these small firms account for only 23% of total output. The post war period has witnessed the development of large scale construction companies many of whom started out as small scale

family firms - see Chapters 3 and 5. - the largest 20 of whom employ at least 2500 workers each. Such firms operate on a less precarious financial basis, namely by diversifying in the construction market. However even such methods do not leave these companies impervious to the risks in the speculative housebuilding market and they too are vulnerable to the vagaries of the financial world. Hence efforts are made to safeguard themselves as much as possible by 'playing' the land market. An additional source of profit for construction companies is inflation i.e. when money loses its value while the price of materials, like bricks, and land rises, profits may be made by borrowing huge amounts of (cheap) credit to buy materials or buying and stocking 'land-banks' to be released and used at a more profitable time:

"Despite appearances, housebuilding is only partially the business of putting up houses. Houses are the socially acceptable side of making profits out of land appreciation."<sup>22</sup>

Again, at times when credit becomes more expensive and demand falls away, many firms find it difficult (i.e. unprofitable) to carry on building operations, they have to unwind, sell off assets, diversify and reduce borrowing and building. Although this is rather a generalised picture, this unevenness and uncertainty of the construction industry, it is argued, leads to a slow, change/static process, and accumulation in the industry tends to take the form of a quantitative expansion of a given labour process rather than the revolutionising of that process through changes in the technical composition of capital. Consequently, one of the major sources of profit is not technical innovation and efficiency but land speculation, which partially accounts for the low growth of productivity and the inability to reduce the value of housing<sup>23</sup>.

Land speculation is far too detailed and complex an area to consider here and is well documented elsewhere (see Merrett<sup>20</sup>). However, the point needs to be made that it has been claimed that land speculation accounts for the entire profit of housebuilders, and although land speculation, in Merrett's words "can and does contribute significantly" to builders' profits, it does not account for the entire profit. The modern construction industry is huge, complex and sophisticated and the process of production is too vast a concern to be reducible to single factors and attention has to be turned to other areas involved in production.

Building to contract (often state initiated when speculative building fails to meet demand or when there is an attempt to regulate building as in the periods following the 1924 Wheatley Act and the Second World War) is often postulated as making the production of housing more stable as the elements of risk are removed - i.e. uncertain profit and level of demand. However as Ball argues in "The Contracting System in the Construction Industry"<sup>24</sup> building work under the contracting system is a series of discrete projects that have to be competed for by a system of tenders. The inability to forecast accurately the cost of a project (because of site specificity, weather, the unco-ordinated organisational structure of the industry) and the element of competition involved, means that building to contract involves a firm in a speculative process, tendering and building up a balanced portfolio of contracts, with all the concomitant risks that that implies. The Direct Labour Collective on the other hand, argue that the contracting system can eliminate risks (allowing many firms to make vast profits) but that this does not provide an adequate housing production system:

"The contracting system is completely loaded in favour of the contractor. Price ringing (fixed pricing) is very easy, poor quality, time over-runs and excess costs are endemic .... Competition is a myth .... The contracting system ensures profitability to the majority of contractors (but) at the expense of the workforce and of the cost and quality of the building process."<sup>25</sup>

Again it may be argued that the development of safeguards and devices (expansion and diversification of firms, speculation, contracts etc.) employed by the building industry do not totally render the industry inviolate to the vagaries of the market.

To minimize risks and maintain profitability, capital, in the building industry, needs to be kept as liquid as possible for both contractors and speculators. This, it is argued, has led to an industry in which fixed costs and overheads are kept low. There is little investment in plant machinery as it is costly and usually relatively immobile. Rather firms prefer to hire machinery for specific tasks and subcontract aspects of production at fixed costs, thus creating no incentive for techniques and technology that cut across specialisations. Building then is a labour intensive industry but the need to keep overheads low (and thus wages flexible) creates the need to minimize permanent employment and creates a certain type of employment structure - hence the phenomena of casual labour, the 'lump', subcontracting, piecework and bonus payments. Such a structure has the effect of disbanding skilled workforces and of discontinuity of work and of creating a lack of control over speed and quality of work and working conditions. Ball and the Direct Labour Collective claim that this leads to enormous physical and organisational fragmentation in the building industry and there appears little incentive

for this to change whilst the cost can be passed onto the consumer. Some of the above problems have been partially overcome within the very large building firms but these firms very much tend to concentrate on 'newbuild' property, on purpose built owner occupied estates, which whilst having the potential to overcome 'traditional' problems, still seem too vulnerable to whole new sets of problems. An increasing proportion of 'new' owner occupied property is older, rehabilitated housing which seems especially prey to the problems outlined above. The impact and consequence of this is discussed in the last section of this chapter.

As implied above, labour power is the only reducible element in the process of production and this, along with the generally poor working conditions, has the effect of intensifying the conflict between capital and labour. T. Austrin in "The Breakdown of Craft Unionism in the Construction Industry 1945-70"<sup>26</sup> comments on the strategies of capital and labour around this struggle - often at the workers' expense. Direct Labour Organisations, established for reasons outlined earlier, constitute a direct challenge to the private building system and are largely the result of worker agitation, hence the prolonged anti-DLO campaigns described in the Direct Labour Collective's literature<sup>27</sup> and in Chapter 5 of this thesis.

The organisational structure of the industry and the operation of the capitalist market have therefore contributed to the inability to reduce the value of housing, making the cost of housing to the working class progressively more onerous. However at the same time other consumption goods have decreased in value, leading to a rise in living standards for the working class and in aspiration vis. housing, as C. Pickvance, paraphrasing 'Capital', argues:

"there enters into the determination of the value of labour power a historical and moral element. In other words, the socially necessary level of subsistence was not a historical given but was continually advancing .... under worker pressure."<sup>28</sup>

Such a consideration raises an important but often neglected point concerning production - that of housing standards and design and their relationship to ideology in a capitalist/patriarchal society. Many commentators<sup>29</sup> have written of the very poor standard of working class housing in the 19th century vis its sanitation etc., and have illustrated the links between these standards and the economics of building, renting and the cost of labour as they existed at that time. (Thus, incidentally, highlighting the fundamental contradiction between those who want to maximise housing cost - investors, builders, landlords - and those who want to minimise costs - employers - i.e. different factions of capital.) The state response to this situation was a proliferation of sanitation, and other, bye-laws and other public health legislation thus introducing an element of quality and design into the provision of working class housing and this has been an important area of struggle ever since. This theme i.e. the importance of quality and design, in class and gender relations is taken up again in chapters 3 and 5, but is important to note here as a facet of production. Simply put, those involved in the production of housing - especially speculative housing for sale - need to be aware of the consumers' expectations, expectations which are moulded by class and gender experiences, which in turn are socially and historically constructed. Thus in modern newbuild housing for sale, a good, aesthetically pleasing design is generally assumed, conforming strongly to people's aspirations<sup>30</sup>, as illustrated in the literature of a typical builder/developer.

"The development combines the best modern house building technology with an old-fashioned feeling of community. Each house has real character and is constructed to a very high specification inside and out. Impeccably built, easy and cheap to maintain. Choose from the Glade, the Brook, the Dell...."<sup>31</sup>

The issue of standards and design becomes more complex and contradictory when discussing state provided housing. M. Swenarton in 'Homes Fit For Heroes'<sup>32</sup> draws crucial links between design and ideology by reference to the post First World War campaign to provide decent housing for the working class. The experiences of the 19th century philanthropists (e.g. Cadbury) and the Garden City Movement, had shown the benefits, in ideological terms, of providing working class housing of good quality. Working class unrest after, and during, the First World War, was to be quelled not by a simple expansion of housing, but by the state provision (it being unprofitable for the private market to produce such housing) of housing on different lines from the past - with gardens, bathrooms and other improvements. The rationale was simple

"By building the new houses to a standard previously reserved for the middle classes, the government would demonstrate ... (to) ... the people that their aspirations would be met under existing order ... a visible proof of the irrelevance of revolution."<sup>33</sup>

However, apart from brief periods following the two world wars, housing in the state sector has been built more to provide a profit to the builder than to quell a potential revolution, (though of course locale is a very important consideration here). Given the general ascendancy of the profit motive, the fiscal constraint on local authorities and the run down of council housing since the 1950's, public sector housing has been built often as cheaply as possible - its standards and design becoming a product of the requirements of the private construction industry rather than the

tenants. As way of example, note the comments of the Community Development Project:

"In the 1950s many big civil engineering firms wanted to move into council housing: they wanted to develop new technology and use mass production methods - to make a profit. High rise flats fitted the bill. The state was persuaded to pay massive subsidies to big firms to build flats which few people wanted to live in."<sup>34</sup>

Yet conflicts over design and standards still remain. The physical and ideological run down of council housing (and council tenants) does not stop people aspiring to, and demanding, the standard of housing offered and available to owner occupiers<sup>35</sup>, but how far working class demands can be met under present production methods is problematic for the state, which has had to rely increasingly on ideological appeals. A Ravetz has argued, that the moral and social engineering arguments were merely transferred from the model tenements to other forms of housing; first to garden suburbs, and later, to the 'continental' modernist tower blocks. It was argued for each of these forms of housing in turn that it was:

"the gateway to health, education and higher domestic standards - the essentials that were crucial in transforming the culture of poverty into the affluent society."<sup>36</sup>

This area of debate raises many issues that cannot be fully discussed here but which are tackled in following chapters. This section has hopefully highlighted the themes that I consider important for a correct understanding of the nature of housing provision in Britain i.e. that housing - both in the public and private spheres - is produced within a capitalist framework and that this affects what is produced. Housing does not merely appear, it is produced in a certain way at a certain time that involves class and gender social relations



and conflicts. Understanding and acknowledging the processes of production is crucial for any analysis that attempts to locate and explain the nature of housing and the development of tenure.

### Realisation and Consumption

As indicated earlier, housing as a commodity is distinguished by its very high cost and by the fact that whilst it is a necessity, the vast majority of people cannot purchase it outright - a fact which acts as an obstacle to production/supply and accumulation. Put simply, housing as a commodity creates problems in terms of realisation and consumption. This section aims to examine the devices and agencies that have emerged to overcome these problems, arguing that these agencies etc. play, and have played, a crucial role not only in responding to the problems of realisation but also in helping to create the terms of occupancy and tenure. Again many of the issues raised in the section will be addressed in more detail in later chapters, the point here being to highlight themes and processes.

As the production of housing is a relatively lengthy process, the period of time between the rotation of industrial capital and the realisation of profit is similarly lengthy - the implications of which have already been discussed. However, the period of circulation is made more problematic by the fact of housing's expense for the consumer. This issue highlights not only the conflict between capital and labour vis working class demands for sufficient wages to house itself adequately (a cultural and historical element); but also the conflict between different factions of capital as regards the need (of employers/industrial capital) to reduce the cost of labour power (low housing costs) counter-posed to the need (of finance capital and landed capital) to appropriate profit from housing - as M. Stone argues:

"Capitalism cannot solve this problem, because the required redistribution of income would lead to a collapse in the labour market and the required reduction of housing costs would lead to a collapse of the housing market."<sup>37</sup>

M. Boddy in "Building Societies and Owner Occupation"<sup>38</sup> argues that this situation has led to the emergence of specific mechanisms to speed up the rotation of industrial capital, allowing it to pass rapidly back to the money form thereby ensuring housing's continued supply. Secondary circuits of capital, usually institutionalised by building societies, and various tenure categories represent alternative mechanisms which speed up the realisation process.

By and large, before the First World War, the rentier class (from the landed gentry to petit bourgeoisie) bought houses and rented them to the working class; after the war, a combination has existed with mortgage financed owner occupation and provision of council housing developing alongside private rented accommodation. All these mechanisms though are vulnerable but private rented housing especially so, given the fact that, like all forms of investment, it will only attract funds if it offers a higher rate of return than other forms. The development of joint stock companies and imperial expansion in the late 19th century attracted many small investors away from this particular form of investment and tenure.<sup>39</sup>

In an attempt to solve this problem i.e. to enable capital (both in terms of production and investment) to ensure a profit and people to consume housing, there has emerged then a specific pattern of housing tenures; a role for the state in terms of building and subsidizing; the institution of building societies; and the creation of a class of housing/exchange professionals. The 'first solution' to the problem of realisation (private renting) failed and collapsed because of its inability to provide housing in sufficient quantities whose standards were adequate to ensure the reproduction of labour - a failure largely attributable to

the fall in real wages and the supercession of other forms of investment. The 'second solution' is a combination of state provided housing and mortgage financed owner occupation. The failure of private landlordism (for both capital needs and labour demands - see Swenarton's account<sup>32</sup> and the work of North Tyneside Community Development Project<sup>40</sup>) led to a situation where the state was forced to play a vital role in housing provision:

"By 1918 it was accepted that Government intervention was essential to launch a housebuilding programme. These houses were to be built at a subsidised rent by local authorities and to standards laid down by the 1918 Tudor Walters Report. The introduction of subsidies was a recognition of one of the unique characteristics of housing as a commodity - its high cost - the nature and extent of subsidies has been a feature of housing policy ever since."<sup>41</sup>

However, subsidised housing has not only aided consumption but, as the Community Development Project<sup>42</sup> and others have argued, it has acted as a source of profit for capital in the sense that local authorities have usually little option but to employ private builders, contractors (given the problematic history of Direct Labour) and have to borrow money to finance projects at a rate of interest which is competitive with yields and risks elsewhere in the market<sup>42</sup>. This is not to argue that such an arrangement is inevitable, even in a market economy (see for example the post war Labour Government's insistence on keeping interest rates to 2%, or the role of the Public Works Loan Board), but that State provided subsidised housing has only rarely been allowed (for political, ideological and economic reasons) to supercede the other elements of the 'second solution' - that of mortgage financed owner occupation.

The provision of relatively cheap loans through building societies, who through government subsidies and tax concessions can offer competitive

rates of interest to borrowers and investors, has made housing affordable for increasing numbers of people, whilst allowing industrial capital to accelerate its rotation in the housing sphere, and investors to realise a reasonable return on capital - as Boddy argues:

"The circuit of loan capital ... permits the rapid transfer from commodity form to final money form ... circulating capital comes to form an autonomous circuit with a long period of rotation, while industrial capital enjoys a conventional period of rotation. (This) secondary circuit of loan capital is predominantly institutionalised in the form of the building societies - the essential basis for the accumulation of capital in the sphere of housing production and for the reproduction of labour power."<sup>43</sup>

However, it must be emphasised that although these secondary circuits of capital ease the access of consumers to the purchase of housing, they do not make that housing any cheaper.<sup>44</sup>

Building societies had originally existed as mutual aid organisations for working class people, gradually adjusting to the conditions of the late 19th century by providing much of the funds required by private landlords. The decline of this sector and the massive increase in the private housebuilding for sale (mainly for the middle classes and partially subsidised by the state e.g. the 1923 Chamberlain Act) led to building societies to change their methods of lending and operating. From the 1930's onwards the societies have become increasingly centralised and drawn into the general finance market, becoming in the process the dominant supplier of housing credit and thus, as Boddy claims above, they are 'the essential basis' in the housing market.

In terms of operation, building societies lend money to potential consumers in the form of a mortgage (that reflects not only the cost of production, but also rent and current property values) transferring the high price into monthly repayments, and borrows money from investors (who

range from large financial institutions to individuals) at comparatively attractive rates of (quickly realisable) interest. The ability to operate in this way whilst being in competition with other institutions e.g. banks, investment companies, involves a series of mechanisms. Firstly, through the mechanism of tax relief on mortgages<sup>45</sup> an owner occupier is protected against the real rates of interest making owner occupation more accessible (and thus reducing potential conflict over wages).

Secondly, through the mechanisms of charging composite tax rates on interest accrued by investors which in effect increases interest rates although this mechanism benefits the larger investor (who would normally pay above the composite rate) at the expense of the low income small savers (who could be exempt from tax altogether). Thirdly, such investment is protected by a conservative lending policy and by the state guarantees to underwrite building society risks - as happened in 1975 when the Department of the Environment guaranteed a £500 million loan to societies in order to keep interest rates down. This has the effect of making building societies a very stable and secure form of investment. Building societies therefore represent a 'solution' to the problems of realisation and consumption but only because the state is willing to intervene with tax deals and subsidies. Further, although the complex financial operations of the housing market have only been sketched here, it is clear that these agencies of realisation work in such a way as to reinforce the relations of capital and patriarchy - a point which is made clearer when looking at the consumption of owner occupied property.

The incentives to the individual consumer to enter the owner occupied market are presented as manifold. It is argued, to a large extent validly,

that mortgage financed owner occupation provides access to real accumulation for the owner (given that the rate of inflation is not truly reflected in the interest rate);

"assuming general inflation increases at the same rate as house prices ... owner occupation becomes a very attractive form of investment - a mortgage is almost a licence to print money."<sup>46</sup>

In effect this reduces housing costs considerably, increasing disposable income and thus gives credence to the view that the expansion of owner occupation increases aggregate demand for other consumption goods and is therefore beneficial to the economy as a whole. It is thus argued by the Chairman of the National Housebuilding Council that:

"building low cost homes could lead the nation from recession."<sup>47</sup>

Owner occupation also has very important ideological and political aspects in terms of control over property and life-style; choice of housing location and design; and social status. As argued earlier, the private housebuilding industry (and the state when it was deemed necessary) have tended to produce housing that conforms with people's aspirations - however those aspirations are formed. Again M. Stone argues:

"the type of residential structure has made the personal motivation for home ownership more often a social rather than an economic choice."<sup>48</sup>

These aspects of owner occupation, although presented very simply here, cannot be overemphasised as they play a vital role in encouraging the expansion of that tenure as the solution to the conflicts and contradictions, outlined earlier, that exist in housing provision and consumption. However, such an option is made more attractive simply by the lack of alternatives. Private rented accommodation is difficult to find, costly and/or generally in a bad state of repair<sup>49</sup>, whilst the 'rundown' of council housing, both

in terms of quality and quantity, has meant that ownership represents the only viable choice for many households<sup>50</sup>. It is interesting to note that the promotion of the 'solution' of home ownership has meant a deterioration in the status and standards of council housing and is therefore no 'solution' for millions of tenants - unless they exercise the right to buy<sup>51</sup>.

The co-existence of the promotion of owner occupation with the run-down (ideologically and practically) of council housing is discussed by M. Harloe in "Class, City and Capital"<sup>52</sup>. In his discussion, Harloe makes the point that we are witnessing not the commodification of housing (i.e. from public 'non-profit' housing to private 'profit' housing) but the recommodification of housing as housing was privatised (through the tenure of private renting) before its production was ever socialised. Socialised (and part-socialised) housing was only the dominant form of provision for brief period of time, amply illustrating the argument that different tenures and different forms of provision represent attempts by capital and labour to provide solutions to the problems of realisation and consumption. Yet even owner occupation, as the tenure most promoted at present, does not provide a total solution, but has itself contradictory and potentially damaging aspects precisely because it is imbued with the relations of capital.

However attractive owner occupation is made, it still excludes many people on low incomes who cannot raise a deposit for a mortgage or meet monthly payments or who do not comply with building societies' generally conservative lending policies or who want to purchase older and less conventional property. It now seems that the main thrust of government policy is that of expanding the owner occupied sector -



mainly for the political and ideological reasons outlined earlier - and this thrust is being accompanied by the easing of restrictions on lenders by building societies and a wide variety of schemes now exist to help low income households become owner occupiers. The crucial point here is that it is misleading to conceptualise owner occupiers as an homogenous group, all benefitting from the 'second solution'. The research work of the CDP teams in Birmingham and Newcastle and of D. Thorns in Australia<sup>53</sup> have clearly shown that the benefits of home ownership are differential with some groups - largely low income and/or inner city dwellers - not only never realising the gains made by other owners but also often finding ownership a liability.<sup>54</sup>

"Despite the popular ideology of home ownership and the property owning democracy, that 'everybody gains', it is not only those who cannot obtain their own home that lose. It can also be the poor home owners at the bottom of the scale who lose out in the face of rising maintenance costs, declining asset values and vulnerability to mortgage failure."<sup>55</sup>

Such groups, because of the lending policies of building societies (or more accurately, fringe banks) often find their only foothold in the housing market is in older, poorly maintained and, therefore, cheap property. The research of V. Karn in Birmingham<sup>56</sup> indicates the vulnerability of such owners to mortgage repossession - directly challenging the notion that ownership brings control and security - whilst the research of G. Green in Saltley<sup>57</sup> shows that the repairs necessary to maintain (let alone improve) these houses are often beyond the means of individual owners, leaving whole areas to fall into obsolescence. Even with improvement grants from the local authority many owners find themselves paying an ever increasing proportion of their income maintaining a property that faces a relative (if not absolute) decline in market value as it approaches the final stages of deterioration. Individual, voluntary

(and increasingly discretionary) improvement grants offer no long term solution to low income owners - as the writers of "From Failure to Facelift" argue:

"What are the prospects for residents who do improve, surrounded by houses that are falling into disrepair at a faster rate, and where unemployment prospects are grim and the likelihood of permanent unemployment very real? Is improvement worth it?"<sup>58</sup>

Attempts to socialise the cost of repairs etc. have not only proved to be very difficult to organise<sup>59</sup> (mainly because the structure of local authority bureaucracy is geared to dealing with the individual) but are in direct contradiction to the individualised ideology of the owner occupation and thus rarely encouraged by the local state. Where however such schemes have been state initiated and/or approved, the actual improvement work almost exclusively goes to private contractors and is therefore done for profit<sup>60</sup>.

Most of the literature cited in this section assumes that, whilst the tenure of owner occupation causes many problems for the low income households, the system always operates in favour of the higher income households. Whilst it may be argued that the possession of more real wealth eases some of the problems of owner occupation (e.g. the ability to maintain the house, choose the location of the house etc.) such owners are still susceptible to fluctuations in the market and vulnerable to crises in the sphere of housing production and consumption - for example when the increase in house prices falls behind the rate of inflation. For such people, who have been encouraged to 'play the market' and to think in terms of continually 'trading up', a faltering in the owner occupied market can have serious consequences because, unlike the poorer groups mentioned earlier, their ideology has never failed them before. This however is an area in which a lot of research has yet to be done.

Another important issue around the question of owner occupation is raised by Stone<sup>37</sup>, namely that the necessity to meet monthly payments (often quite high) that are essentially regressive vis. low income households, involves many people in working at unsatisfactory jobs, tolerating poor conditions because of the fear of redundancy and eventual eviction<sup>61</sup> - though of course it could be argued that the obligation to meet these payments is taken into consideration during wage negotiations and industrial conflicts and, moreover that the 'behaviour' would apply to tenants obliged to pay the rent. Stone also writes of the notion of 'shelter poverty' as paying more for housing than can reasonably be afforded in relation to needs. This challenges the argument of the multiplier effect and can be said to apply to all owners. A similar theme is taken up by J. Kemeny who argues that:

"home ownership encourages households to attempt to manipulate their lifetime budgets to accommodate their housing costs."<sup>62</sup>

This factor, in a situation where individual and differing mortgage burdens fragments and isolates people, could, he claims, lead to a demand from home owners to have increased control over their income. Citing the experience of other countries, Kemeny argues that the increased commodification of housing may be linked to attempts to privatise welfare services - attempts which may not be as strongly resisted because of the attraction of tax cuts and more disposable income against the background of a fragmented (by tenure and mortgage burden) population. How far this situation is applicable to Britain is not really discussed in Kemeny's work but it provides an interesting viewpoint to the current government's policies.

A similar point is made by Harloe in relation specifically to housing. Explanations of the growth of owner occupation have generally been limited to the naive belief that it represents a 'natural preference' for ownership and/or an attractive option given the available subsidies and tax relief. Yet, as Harloe argues, these are a consequence, not a cause of the development of the tenure,

"They fail to see that the change is a part of a wider process of recommodification, other symptoms of which include, for example, the progress away from the general construction subsidies in social housing towards market rents, with some personalised assistance for the least well-off, and the switch from publicly-led housing development to rehabilitation by the private sector."<sup>63</sup>

Going beyond this owner occupation has inherent problems for capital in general. A whole series of official and 'unofficial' studies<sup>64</sup> have argued for the abolition or reduction of subsidies to home owners in the form of tax relief mortgages:

"on the basis of the harm being done to the rest of the capitalist economy by the investment flowing into the housing sector, as well as the considerable and growing burden of the subsidies allocated to it via the tax system, with the restriction that they place on further reductions in general taxation."<sup>65</sup>

Currently, the political importance of owner occupation (i.e. fear of losing the votes of mortgage holders) seems to be superceding finance capital interests, preventing a 'direct assault' on the established position, but the development of the tenure and the ever growing dominance of owner occupation is becoming more problematic for the state and for capital. I have already cited the example of the low income home owners where it seems the need for the housing factions of capital to continually extend their market is causing problems for capital in general which has to contend with 'paying out' more and more subsidies as well as coping with the consequences of 'shelter poverty'

and political and ideological disillusionment. Owner occupation then, as a solution to the problems of realisation, though often linked to higher standards, and good investment potential and presented as the 'legitimate' way to occupy a house (see V. Karn and C. Ungerson<sup>66</sup>), not only affects the individual consumer but also has dysfunctions for the state and finance capital.

Essentially, the stability of a mortgage system (and thus the owner occupied market) depends on the ability and the willingness of home owners to meet their mortgage repayments. Such ability varies according to income and ideology which therefore makes owner occupation a class issue, though this is not to deny, as Saunders argues<sup>67</sup>, that owner occupiers as a group do have some distinct interests vis a vis tenants, but that these 'distinct interests' do not generally supercede other considerations such as the effect of income, workplace experiences, race, gender, locale etc. Analyses of housing should attempt rather to move beyond the rigid accounts of the functions of housing tenure - as put forward by Saunders - to develop some understanding (both theoretical and historical) of the complex relationship between the needs of capital/patriarchy and the aspirations of people, and the struggles around ways of occupying housing.

The stability of the mortgage system is also increasingly emeshed with the stability of the finance system. As building societies have grown in size (through both expansion and merger) they have become subject to the laws of the finance market in the form of the response of investors to interests rates, which are now the main tool of policy controlling the flows of funds to financial institutions. As mentioned earlier, building societies have been able to attract large investors

through the mechanism of charging composite tax rates. At the same time building society funds have become more volatile (i.e. small and large investors switching funds to wherever returns are highest) and this volatility is transmitted through the housing market in the form of fluctuations in mortgage lending. The availability of mortgages is the major factor governing demand in the housing market and thus influences house prices and the response of profit-g geared builder developers in the form of housing starts. State subsidies to guarantee building society funds etc., are therefore crucial in maintaining the present system of housing allocation.:

"The first solution - private renting - failed because it proved impossible to provide housing of good quality and sufficient quantity at a profit for the owner. The second, owner occupation - would fail were it not for wide ranging public subsidy."<sup>68</sup>

However, as argued earlier, this is not to imply that such intervention is without contradictions for the state and capital in general. For example, it makes 'private' housing and 'private housing enterprise' a much more overt political issue (as argued by Castells<sup>69</sup>) and can eventually contribute to the fiscal crisis as conceptualised by J. O'Connor<sup>70</sup>.

It must not be forgotten that housing transactions are dominated by the second hand market and the largest mass of interest bearing capital is provided to finance the resale of already completed houses whose price reflect current replacement cost and market conditions, and increasingly deviate from the original price of production. Not only has this implications for the cost of housing for first time buyers, but it creates and sustains a whole area of enterprise - that of housing exchange. Solicitors, estate agents, surveyors, insurance companies etc.

are the exchange professionals who operate in the market of buying and selling houses, appropriating profit in the process which is incorporated in the cost of housing. Green<sup>57</sup> amongst others, has argued that although building societies are nominally non-profit making, links exist in practice between many societies and the "set of petit bourgeois professionals"<sup>57</sup>, societies and companies building housing for sale - with estate agents, insurance companies acting as 'agents' for particular building societies who reciprocate by apportioning quotas of mortgages<sup>71</sup>. As well as increasing the price of housing, such a system makes the housing market one of "collusion and competition, monopoly and mystery."<sup>72</sup>

Further, such groups have a vested interest in seeing the continued expansion of owner occupation and therefore play a crucial role in the development of the nature of the market - with all that implies for the individual consumer and the builder developer. Through their powerful associations, e.g. Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors; the Corporation of Mortgage and Finance Brokers, they have virtually created a monopoly, lobbying parliament and influencing state policy, and thus they control access to housing for many people. Yet at the same time, in order to expand and thus maintain their market, they need to be responsive to changes in society for example, the increase in affluence of many workers in the 50's and 60's and the increased independence of (some groups) of women in the last decade. In this way these agencies of provision and exchange part-create and part respond to, changes in society as a whole, and the pursuit of their own interests sometimes conflicts, sometimes co-incides with the interests of capital in general and/or with changing class and gender relations in civil society. Overall though, their operation and role is crucial in the process of

creating an effective arrangement between the production and consumption processes and as such they can be said to represent a distinct faction of capital.



## Reproduction

Housing is unique among commodities by virtue of the fact that it is lived in i.e. it is not only consumed but occupied, which involves relations of class and gender. In the same way that housing is not provided for individuals but for men and women in family and class locations, then housing is consumed and occupied by households. This section, whilst raising themes that will be discussed in more detail later, will concentrate on drawing out the important issues that underpin an understanding of reproduction and housing tenure. Capital production depends on the continual renewal of the productive forces i.e. the working class need to be maintained in such a way as to ensure that they continue to produce and consume commodities. Marx assumed that the reproduction of labour power was provided through the payment of wages:

"If the owner of labour power worked today tomorrow he must again be able to repeat the same process .... His means of subsistence must therefore be sufficient to maintain him in a normal state of health."<sup>73</sup>

The continued reproduction of labour power as workers and consumers is pre-requisite for capital accumulation and thus involves the physical reproduction of the labour force (which largely takes place outside the workplace) and the reproduction of sets of beliefs and relationships that are necessary for accumulation to continue (i.e. the willingness to sell labour power). Taking the former point first, it is often claimed that capital needs a healthy workforce and, on one level, this is true, but it is important to note that many industries have notorious safety records (not least of which is the construction industry<sup>74</sup>) and/or produce products that are unhealthy e.g. cigarettes, high rise flats etc. Also capital as a whole has done little to prevent the run down of the

National Health Service and 'tolerates' a situation where the health experience of social classes IV and V are "deteriorating"<sup>75</sup>. Whilst these contradictions are partly attributable to the divisions within capital, they also illustrate the point made by L. Doyal in "The Political Economy of Health"<sup>76</sup> that the workforce will only be maintained at a 'satisfactory' level (for capital and labour) i.e. a flexible level relative to the needs of capital and to the expectations that workers themselves have developed and demanded:

"At any point in time, functional 'health' is that organismic condition of the population most consistent with, or at least disruptive of, the process of capital accumulation."<sup>77</sup>

It is important not just that the labour force should be physically reproduced (at whatever level), but that it should continue to work within a certain set of economic and social relationships, as Cockburn argues:

"if capitalism is to survive, each succeeding generation of workers must stay in an appropriate relationship to capital: the relations of production must be reproduced. Workers must not step outside the relation of wage, the relation of property, the relation of authority. So 'reproducing' capitalist relations means reproducing the class system, ownership, above all reproducing a frame of mind."<sup>78</sup>

Again though, this 'reproduction of appropriate relations' is not a static, ahistorical process, but represents the stage reached in the struggle between the needs of capital and the demands of labour:

"There is no reproduction of social relationships without a certain production of those relations; there is no purely repetitive process."<sup>79</sup>

The continued production of social relationships implies a form of social control by capital. That Britain, even with its regular democratic elections, has never produced a government committed to the full realisation of socialism (and thus the over-turn of capitalist relations) is seen as a measure of the pervasiveness of the 'bourgeois

hegemony', the "prior ideological conditioning of the proletariat before the electoral moment"<sup>80</sup>. The acceptance of capitalist relations may be perpetuated through either co-ercion or consent, through repression or through ideology. The 'conditioning' of the labour force in the West, it is argued, takes place within civil society, through capitalist control of the means of communication (cultural level) and through "the indivisible diffusion of commodity fetishism through the market or the instinctual habits of submission induced by workplace routines"<sup>81</sup> (the economic level). Within this framework, the system is maintained by consent and not co<sup>u</sup>ercion. However, that these relations need to be produced and reproduced in and by each generation indicates that not only are they not 'natural' but there is some form of resistance ever present from the working class who, far from accepting the culture of the bourgeoisie, produce and transmit their own ideas and values based on their experiences in the workplace and the community, as consumers and workers (see Chapter 2).

Reproduction, both physical and ideological, is carried out in this country, in the workplace (e.g. the division of labour stratifying workers) and in the community (e.g. health care, schools). In this context the provision of housing plays a crucial role in the reproduction of labour power, as the home is where the worker is generally 'serviced' - usually by the wife/mother, and where children are ascribed a social status and a way of life, long before they acquire an objective relation to capital through employment. The style of housing is vital - it needs to be sanitary and conducive to good health- it needs to encourage a family lifestyle (room number etc.); and it needs to have adequate facilities e.g. somewhere to sleep, cook, wash etc. The home is meant to be a refuge, thus making work conditions more tolerable and divorcing

production and reproduction. The form of housing provided i.e. as individual commodity units, plays a role in encouraging stability and, in the case of owner occupation especially, decreases the tendency to identify with one's own class (as Kemeny argues) and supposedly increases the tendency to identify with the 'propertied classes' and the country as a whole<sup>82</sup>. Also deemed important is the location of the housing, which is seen as a tool of stratification and control of classes and class interest. Castells<sup>83</sup> for example, writes of the 'symbolic structuring of space' that leads to a notion of the 'status ladder', giving the illusion of upward progress. Going along with this is the argument that the realm of reproduction (and therefore the nature of housing and operations of tenure) is a crucial area for the reproduction of gender divisions and family relations (see H. Austerberry and S. Watson<sup>84</sup>).

There are a range of views that exist around the relations of class and gender in the realm of reproduction, and each has their own perspective on the development of housing and housing tenure. The experience of the late 19th century in Britain clearly showed that capital as a whole was unable to provide housing of sufficient quantity and quality to ensure the adequate reproduction of labour power and, unlike Marx's assumption, the worker's means of subsistence were insufficient to maintain him/herself (n.b. this is a generalisation - ). One viewpoint, that of Castells in "City, Class and Power"<sup>83</sup>, claims that such a situation paved the way for state intervention in housing i.e. through public housing, subsidies to private builders etc.:

"the intervention of the state becomes necessary in order to take charge of the sectors and services which are less profitable (from the point of view of capital) but necessary for the functioning of economic activity and/or the appeasement of social conflicts. Such is the history ... of public housing." 85

State intervention is seen here as necessary and functional and in articulation with private capital, making capital accumulation possible. It functions to maintain the unity of capitalist power i.e. unifying an inherently fragmented capital class whilst fragmenting the dominated class by sustaining an ideology of the individual rather than the class agent. For Castells, the state is relatively autonomous of any one class and thus it is quite possible for it to cede concessions to the dominated classes at the economic level provided this does not threaten the domination of capital at the political level. It is within this context that the welfare state has emerged i.e. as state intervention ensuring the reproduction of labour power; regulating the class struggle through concession; stimulating demand; countering the falling rate of profit. Ultimately, such concessions lead to a fiscal crisis as capital retains the profits created by the state maintained labour power and the ensuing crises in state expenditure leads to cuts - yet the area of welfare is now politicised, creating the potential for conflict within the urban system (which Castells conceptualises as the concentrated unit of collective consumption). This crisis, along with the globalisation of specific problems through the concentration of consumption, leads to a situation where there is:

"a partial inter-class nature of the contradiction at the level of collective consumption - a welding of the ensemble of classes."<sup>86</sup>

The accentuation of contradictions, their globalisation and their direct connection to political power forms the basis, Castells claims, for a;

"practical articulation of more general demands for transformation of the societal model."<sup>87</sup>

In practice, the growing emergence of the urban social movement permits the progressive formation of an 'anti-capitalist alliance' based upon a broader objective basis than that of the specific interests of the proletariat.

Castell's account of state intervention and the housing problem has been much criticised (especially by S. Duncan<sup>88</sup>). His account is seen as representing too functional a view of the state, reducing to mechanical roles and functional links, what are essential important social relations, with the dominating interests of capital determining every social event<sup>89</sup>. Castells' view of the housing problem is regarded as static and over-generalised, with specific historical moments frozen as generalisations<sup>90</sup>. In doing this, Castells misses the point of the development of the political and economic expression of the capital relation, of class mobilisation and class consciousness. It is these omissions that allow him to predict an anti-capitalist alliance that goes beyond the specific interest of the working class - as J. Foster argues:

"In the same way that the formation of the sectional identity is sundered from its material base, so also is its breakdown."<sup>91</sup>

Like many writers, Castells sees the role of the working class as essentially passive - with class struggle being seen only as a response to the developments predicated by the internal laws of capital. The state then acts to mediate and contain what is in essence, defensive action by the working class, to ensure the smooth running of capital. However, as argued earlier, capital's needs and labour's demands are not static absolutes but are constantly changing and developing and exist equally, influencing the state and initiating policy responses. State

intervention in housing (and indeed other areas of reproduction) in the early 20th century represents not merely an attempt to maintain the workforce for capital's needs, or to quell potential revolution, but rather is:

"the outcome of the crucial interplay between capitalism's economic laws of motion... and the particular cultural, political and ideological identities which specific historical levels of consumption sustain."<sup>92</sup>

To take the example of early council housing, the 'crisis' occurred only at the periphery, as capital realised that it could not reproduce the poor, and state attention was largely concentrated there (see G. Steadman Jones<sup>93</sup>). Most workers were politically organised and powerful enough to ensure their own subsistence - in contrast to Castells view. Early council housing was for this central group and it was at this time that the competition for the mass tenure began in earnest. What is provided and how it is provided can be said to enclose the gains of past struggles, both between and within classes - as Cockburn writes of welfare provision in general.

"These services through which the state plays its part in reproducing the labour force, are also services won by the working class. Years of militancy and negotiation lie behind council housing ...Though the capitalist mode of production may perpetuate the exploitation of the working class, workers nevertheless have to live within it. They can only build up the strength they need to challenge capitalism by fighting for and winning material concessions and democratic freedoms here and now. In this respect the welfare state was a real gain for the working class....(but) not total gains, because to the state they are not total losses....The struggle takes place over levels of provision and over the amount of control over provision given to the consumer."<sup>94</sup>

What I am attempting to argue is that state provision, such as council housing etc., is not merely 'given' to the working class to ensure their reproduction when capital could not, nor is it merely a concession granted when the working classes threatened to militate against the living and working conditions that are imposed upon them. Rather it represents the outcome of autonomous political activity of the working classes in the sphere of reproduction, based on a rejection of capitalist relations and the commodity form. Moreover, struggles around housing provision and consumption do not represent the appeasement of the working classes, deepening the acceptance of capitalism and thus ensuring its survival<sup>95</sup>, but instead can be said to constitute the crucial contradiction within capitalism - that the struggles form a pre-figurative form of revolution<sup>96</sup>. Viewed in this way the issue of occupation of housing becomes an overtly political concern.

To follow 'capital logic' too closely has led to the tendency amongst many writers to develop what is essentially an inadequate and narrow perspective on the role of owner occupation. Its popularity and appeal is explained in terms of its ability to give workers, as 'owners' a chance of control over at least part of their lives, an opportunity to accumulate real wealth and generally lead a better lifestyle. Its separation from the workplace has led to a tendency for tenure to be seen as an 'issue of consumption'. Established theory argues that owner occupation creates conflicts and separations e.g. between owners and tenants, creating differing interests among the working class which are interpreted in terms of their contribution to the reproduction of a fragmented, stratified and relatively compliant workforce and are seen to militate against building alliances which might lead to progressive



changes in work and social relations. Such an understanding basically has the effect of marginalising the struggles that do take place in the housing sphere, making campaigns around the social relations of living (and thus the political activity and consciousness of women as wives and mothers and domestic workers) almost secondary, as Damaris Rose argues:

"If housing tenure divisions are theorized only in terms of their 'functionality' for the logic of capitalism and/or are seen to be structurally and irretrievably divisive, this implies a major limitation on the spaces available within everyday life for resistance to that logic. In a society where more than half the population are already homeowners, the prospects offered so far by this perspective are dismal."<sup>97</sup>

What is crucial to remember is that housing tenure forms are historically created products - the scene of tangible struggle - not merely about their physical form but also about their social meaning. Owner occupation as a form of tenure is not a fixed institutional form that generates predictable modes of behaviour (such as incorporation etc.). However, this is what is generally argued denying in doing so (or at least reducing in significance) the struggles that many people are engaged in outside the workplace, thus overlooking the progressive possibilities inherent in the realm of reproduction which by its very definition is away from the dominant relations of production. Perhaps more importantly, this perspective fails to understand what people are trying to achieve through this form of occupancy i.e. it does not pay sufficient attention to people's aspirations and intentions which are largely a product of past struggle against the dominant processes of capitalist societies.

What Roses' article<sup>97</sup> begins to bring out is that the social definition of housing tenure form as solely an issue of consumption separated from other processes in capitalist societies, has not been historically universal:

"It is a definition which has been constructed historically in the course of concrete struggles and which continues to be a site of struggle over economic, political and ideological aspects and effects of capitalist processes."<sup>97</sup>

Homeownership has meant different things at different times to different groups and has not always represented a separate (both spatial and functional) sphere from the workplace (see Rose's later work with S. MacKenzie<sup>98</sup>). Rose argues that the present polarisation between home and workplace, between production and reproduction, is essentially artificial and that there is a definite relationship between people's aspirations and struggles around occupying housing and the processes of capitalist society.

The over emphasis on the 'functionality for capital' of homeownership also tends to lead to the view that bourgeois ideology and culture is all pervasive and powerful, encouraging people to make sacrifices to gain the 'reward' of ownership, thus concealing the real relationship between the domestic sphere and the processes of capitalist accumulation. This issue of control over individual living environments is alleged to be the main attraction of homeownership - the attainment of which the working class will align itself to the interests of the ruling class. This view does have some tenets of truth but the attainment of control over the living environment can mean precisely that - i.e. the home can be a sphere of life that is not totally permeated by capitalist processes and where there is the potential for creating new sets of social, class and gender relations:

"In a sense, the home and residential environment are 'separate spheres'. While they are structured and delimited in various changing ways by the dominant processes of capitalist society, they are not themselves, fully capitalist environments."<sup>97</sup>

The present ascendancy of owner occupation can thus be interpreted as a gain for the working class, especially if the opportunities provided by the 'cultural space' of homeownership (i.e. explorations of alternative ways of living and working) are taken up, which involves a new validity being accorded to the present struggles taking place in the realm of reproduction. I am not arguing that owner occupation is a radical, revolutionary tenure per se - clearly, given the earlier discussion, it is still imbued with capitalist/patriarchal relations - but that the occupation of houses within this tenure does create conflicts and contradictions for the capitalist/patriarchal society.

## Conclusion

Briefly then, in conclusion, this chapter has attempted to draw out certain themes and issues that I believe to be central to the question of the development of housing tenure and the social relations of tenure. These themes, given the space available, have had to be presented in a somewhat simplistic and generalised manner, although following chapters re-address these themes in a more critical, detailed and exploratory way. Nevertheless, it is important that these themes are stressed at the outset of the work. In summary the main themes are:

- that the issue of production is as (though not more) important as the issue of consumption i.e. that the relations of provision are bound by the class and gender considerations that exist within capitalist/patriarchal society and are thus formed by, and help form, changing social relations within civil society. A serious study of housing tenure and the social relations of housing therefore needs to acknowledge the importance of the production of housing.
- that the problems of realisation - a result of the production process - and thus consumption, present real difficulties for housing capital, capital in general and labour power. Attempts to solve this problem have led to the formation of housing and exchange professionals, social agencies of provision, mechanisms for circulating capital and tenure forms. However, at each stage, the form adopted by these various solutions and mechanisms is the historically and socially mediated result of conflict within class and gender relations.
- that the way people occupy housing (as opposed to its consumption) is not totally determined by its tenure form in as much as the tenure form can be said to represent the imposition of capitalist/patriarchal

dominated lifestyles. The occupation of housing, and thus life in the realm of reproduction, has its own dynamic and potential for challenging and changing social relations. The relations of tenure are therefore both the instigator and product of developing class and gender relations in wider society.

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98. D. Rose & S. McKenzie, "Industrial Change, the Domestic Economy and Home Life", in J. Anderson, "Redundant Spaces in Cities and Regions", Academic Press, 1983.

CHAPTER TWO

Community, Culture and Capital

"Real life communication exemplifies neither the domination of capital over labour, nor emancipation or freedom, but rather both simultaneously, i.e. that real communication and social action in class society is characterised first and foremost by the ambiguity of language and action."<sup>1</sup>

In the previous chapter I explored the issues surrounding the commodity form of housing, namely production, realisation, consumption and reproduction. I concluded by saying that an adequate analysis of housing tenure patterns needs to consider the role of the realm of reproduction as the meaning occupants place on their housing and the way they choose to live their lives in the home and the community may or may not at any one time accord with the meanings and intentions of private capital and the state. In this chapter this analysis is extended with a critical evaluation of the role of 'community' in the establishment of living and housing patterns and thus adopts a dynamic notion of community. Initially an examination is made of the relationship between theory and action in order to develop a theoretical framework that conceptualises change, conflict and movement within the realm of reproduction. Accompanying this is a relocation and redefinition of base and superstructure and a reassessment of the notion of ideology. These concepts must be re-appraised so that a perspective can be adopted that gives sufficient significance to the actions of people in terms of their class, gender and locale. What people actually do in their homes and communities and the sense they make of their living situations is understood in this chapter as culture, and this culture is seen not only

as the result of past experience but also represents an attempt to form ways of living not totally capitalistic. Human action in the arena of reproduction is therefore seen as being shaped and determined by existing social structures but it is also the creator of new forms that challenge and overturn those same structures.

### The Relationship Between Theory and Action

To start with I wish to consider how theory and action relate before going on to develop a theoretical framework that tackles the notions of community, class, capital and culture. The approach adopted is a marxist one, chosen, not because it is seen as having all the answers, but because it offers the scope to develop a framework that allows for a re-appraisal along the lines I wish to make.

As S. Duncan, amongst others has argued, the recent renaissance of marxist analysis in urban and regional studies has served to replace...

"the myopic concentration on superficial appearances, with analysis of historically formed social relations, and so furthered the scope of the research."<sup>2</sup>

By relating the development of the urban form and urban struggles to the dynamics of the capitalist forms of production, the writings of such writers as Castells and Harvey, have not only created the possibility of escape from a technical, apolitical, fragmented approach to urban issues, but they have also, by emphasising conflict and the relationships between and within classes, changed the location of the debate. Individuals, or groups of individuals, are no longer viewed as passive recipients within an ordered structure which constantly lends towards an optimum, and the analysis no longer begins and ends in the

urban form. Instead, the structuring of the urban form is set within and approached from a concern with the dynamic of the totality. Although the work of Duncan and Castells differ in their basic conception of the urban problem and many of their arguments are, in my opinion, vacuous and distorted, they at least open up an approach that allows for a reassessment of the urban question that includes tension and change. According to these writers, the urban question is located within debates which focus on such issues as changes in the labour process the logic of capital accumulation and the potential of class struggle.

Inherent in those debates is some notion of conflict, change and movement, so for an analysis to be meaningful (i.e. have critical and explanatory powers) it needs to integrate theory and action. A theoretical understanding of the historical processes that have constituted and continue to reconstitute an epoch is needed to develop a social practice relevant to that epoch. A theory is needed to explain interpret and give coherence to the multiplicity of events and social processes that happen at any given time, and also to help develop these processes and to prevent history from becoming merely a chronology of events with a supposed self-evident meaning - "an disconnected series of episodic observations" as Mingione put it<sup>3</sup>. A theory must therefore be grounded in, and pay attention to, the 'real world', for if it is developed purely in the abstract, or concentrates on only one aspect of social reality and predicts and interprets other aspects from that basis, it can become "an academic project, remote from and even hostile to political practice"<sup>4</sup>. Of course attempts to create a theory which does take account of events in the 'real world' is fraught with difficulties, namely about the interpretation and definition of those events and their significance, but at least it provides a way of looking



at what is happening (and has happened) instead of definitive statements which may lose their relevance after a time.

A marxist approach to urban studies must also acknowledge and give regard to the fact that the subject of study is constantly changing, modifying and creating new ideas and structures. A theory which fossilizes a certain historical happening or structure and presents it as an ever present phenomenon, is of little relevance and may lead to distortions in that other facts and concepts are 'stylized' to fit the theory. As Minigione argues, a theory needs to:

"emphasise the complexity and specificity whilst not abandoning a general theory of society and an interpretive methodology suitable to different situations."<sup>5</sup>

It was for these reasons that Gramsci condemned scientific marxism which sought to explain historical change by reference to a formal system of causal laws as such theorists assumed a set of principles governed historical development that were external to subjective perception and action. For Gramsci:

"Reality does not exist on its own, in and for itself, but only in a historical relationship with men who modify it."<sup>6</sup>

Carl Boggs develops this argument in "Gramsci's Marxism" claiming that the epistemology of scientific marxism is not merely irrelevant but also harmful as it becomes:

"a substitute for concrete analysis of class and political forces and specific activities - as a reified theory it could never lead to an explanation of actual historical events because it could not take account of the subjective side of praxis. Beyond that it tends to destroy the revolutionary impulse itself by making the theoretical enterprise a detached form of activity."<sup>7</sup>

A theoretical framework has therefore to 'take account of the subjective side of praxis' i.e. it needs to incorporate the political, conscious and active dimensions, yet this does not necessarily imply that the identification of 'broad tendencies' or subjective conditions is impossible rather that these objective conditions etc. only become operative at the moment they are taken into the minds of people, given shape and applied to the immediate political situation. Theory also needs to take account of the fact that this consciousness is part of a complex and unique history that is shaped by particular cultural and political traditions, as Gramsci wrote:

"It is not enough to know the ensemble of relations as they exist at any given time as a given system. They must be known genetically, in the movement of their formation. For each individual is the synthesis not only of existing relations, but of the history of these relations."<sup>8</sup>

People then give meaning to objective conditions and material forces by defining and applying them in ways that depend on a variety of possible mediations and individual perceptions. Also 'structures', instead of being reified and fetishized, are viewed as being created and held together by living beings. As far as the urban form is concerned, opposing forces (i.e. capital and labour) seek to impose these meanings - culturally and historically mediated - on the built environment. In the preceding chapter and the following one these meanings are looked at in terms of specific tenures of housing, but here they are looked at more generally in terms of the continual antagonistic relationship between capital and labour which at any single instance is manifested through different ideas about the purpose of contemporary lifestyles. Along these general lines, Harvey has argued:

"As Labour seeks to re-organise its mode of living to compensate for the degradation and disciplines of factory work, so capital seeks to pervert these efforts for its own purpose. Labour strives to raise its living standards .... But capital constantly seeks to subvert this drive, often through the agency of the state....."<sup>9</sup>

Although I do not necessarily agree with all of Harvey's statement (i.e. that the impetus for labour's activity is to 'compensate for the degradation etc. of factory work') it at least brings out the complexity of the contestation of meaning about lifestyles between capital and labour, and the possibility of labour being dynamic. Consciousness is thus not only an expression and understanding of the material world but it is also a creative, transforming agent. A theory which acknowledges that meaning is ascribed to facts and actions, must also acknowledge that this political consciousness has the potential to initiate and bring about different ways of living i.e. that labour may be responsible for change. In "The Meaning of Crisis" James O'Connor puts this nicely:

"theory must be formulated in terms of what has been made to happen and what can be made to happen in the future, rather than in terms of what has happened and what will probably happen."<sup>10</sup>

Implicitly this raises a question that is not often considered - the role of the theorists themselves. In a radical sense, the role of the theorist is not merely to observe and predict, for that in itself is to imply that theory is a sterile, empty practice-something outside the conflictual capital labour relationship. Rather, theory is integral to revolutionary activity and, if it is not seen as such, then theory and action lose their basic conceptual unity, leading to a tendency to reduce each other to empty abstractions. Theory represents in this sense the cognitive side of praxis and can only become viable as an

organic part of the struggle to transform every-day life. The role of the theorist here, is to use their own political consciousness to understand actions being carried out and thus contribute in a very concrete way to the actual creation of the event foreseen. In this context, the theorist is also an actor. However, in the analysis proffered so far, everyone is a bearer of consciousness, so everyone is a theorist. Admittedly this brings up the question of differing levels and natures of consciousness and of means of transmitting values and ideas, but the point is that the act of theorizing, of thinking seriously and systematically about aims, methods and strategies, is vital in the creation of a new alternative order. Otherwise, if actors are not also seen as being theorists, then any political activity in the realm of reproduction (and production) can never be understood as challenging and transcending capitalistic forms. Theoretical statements and predictions need to 'make the effort' to express collective ideas and notions and translate them into social and political action:

"For a mass of people to be led to think coherently and in the same coherent fashion about the present world, is a 'philosophical event', far more important and 'original' than the discovery by some philosophical genius of a truth which remains the property of a small group of intellectuals ... Prediction reveals itself thus not as a scientific act of knowledge, but as the abstract expression of the effort made, the practical way of creating a collective will."<sup>11</sup>

In this theoretical framework then human activity is both the object and subject of study - it is seen as being shaped and determined by social structures and as the creator of new forms that challenge these same structures, with theory representing the 'cognitive side of praxis'.

Implicit in a marxist analysis is the notion of conflict and struggle, yet this conflict must not simply be perceived as being located in the economic level only. As argued earlier, politics, ideology and culture are not understood here as merely a reflection of the material base without an independent or continuous existence of their own, but rather they have a dynamic, complex and reciprocal relationship to the base, adding a qualitative element to conflict and change. Conflict and struggle thus exist at the level of super-structure. This point will be developed in a later section of this chapter but I wish to mention it here in order to introduce the concept of ideological hegemony (i.e. the ability of one class to assume a moral and intellectual domination over other classes without resorting to coercion) into the theoretical framework.

Through hegemony, capital seeks to permeate civil society with an entire system of values, attitudes, beliefs and morality that are supportive of the established order and the class interests that dominate it. It also seeks to mystify power relationships and public issues and events and so encourage a passivity towards political action. As Carl Boggs argues, ideological hegemony attempts to:

"induce the oppressed to accept or consent to their own exploitation and daily misery."<sup>12</sup>

The point I wish to emphasize here is that human activity which tries to resist dominant values, ideas etc. within civil society is essentially a revolutionary activity (in that it seeks to undermine the structures evolved to maintain the existing system). Theoretical activity must not only allow for the dynamic potential of the realm of reproduction (the home, the community) but must also recognise its

own dynamic role in the contestation and formation of ideas within a hegemonic society. I now want to look at some of these issues in relation to housing and class before broadening the discussion to address the issue of community.

### Housing and Class and the Contestation of Meaning

As the statement by Harvey, quoted earlier, implied, and according to the notion of ideological hegemony, capital seeks to impose meanings conducive to the continued productivity of labour power and capital accumulation, on conditions and objects in civil society, namely on the form and quantity of housing provided for labour. Often this is done through the agency of the state. For example, in "Homes Fit for Heroes" Mark Swenarton points out the important ideological element contained in the supply of early state housing (see chapters 1 and 3) and, in a more contemporary context, the 'right to buy' argument, as evidenced in the debate on the 1980 Housing Act in the House of Commons, is based on a particular perception of what people really 'want' and 'need' - attempting to impose a certain value laden meaning onto the tenure of owner occupation:

"The Bill has two main objectives, first to give people what they want .... There is in this country a deeply ingrained desire for home ownership. The Government believes that this spirit should be fostered. It reflects the wishes of the people, ensures widespread distribution of wealth through society, encourages a personal desire to improve and modernize one's own home, enables parents to accrue wealth for their children and stimulate the attitudes of independence and self-reliance that are the bedrock of a free society."<sup>13</sup>

The historical development of housing patterns and tenures will be examined in greater detail in the following chapter, but the point I wish to make here is that the practice of hegemony is not static or total and it is not external to conflict. Its scope and form and its specific impact varies from time to time and place to place, and at any one time has no single meaning. In fact, O'Connor argues that it is the contestation of meaning, the attempt by labour to resist bourgeois hegemony and create new social forces and relationships, that can lead to crisis - in that there is no single, agreed meaning about how society operates:

"real life communication exemplifies neither the domination of capital over labour, nor emancipation or freedom, but rather both simultaneously, i.e. that real communication and social interaction in class society is characterized first and foremost by the ambiguity of language and action".<sup>1</sup>

Therefore to understand and give theoretical coherence to events, changes and processes, it is necessary to pay attention to this idea of political consciousness which permeates, defines and shapes the outcome of struggles and conflicts.

However, when I say that 'there is no single meaning .....' I am not necessarily implying that there are rather two distinct meanings, i.e. the meaning of capital and the meaning of labour, that are oppositional and openly contested within society. In the previous chapter I highlighted some of the conflicts that exist between different factions of capital around the form of housing; here I wish to highlight the conflicts and ambiguities within labour itself (conceived here as the working classes). Just as meanings and political consciousness change

over time, so they can be differentiated at any single time through such divergent experiences as locale, gender and race etc. I would not like to say whether things were ever any less complex than they are now (though they are often cited as being so), but it is clear that any notion of a 'traditional working class' with a distinct set of attitudes, meanings and strategies (i.e. consciousness), is rapidly becoming an outmoded concept. With major changes in the realms of production and reproduction and economic restructuring, notions of class have had to undergo an overhaul. It is vital to have some clear idea about the current nature of class structure if an analysis of the 'meaning' of tenure and housing patterns is to be attempted, but it is also important to recognise that an exploration of meanings (i.e. as a part of culture) helps us build up a picture of contemporary class relations.

This approach, to a large extent, rejects two prevalent analyses about what is happening to the working class. One of these analyses is one which stresses the changes in the production process (see Mallet and Goldthorpe<sup>14</sup>), claiming that these changes have led to the creation of a new working class based on a perceived particular relationship to capital their type of work puts them in. For example, Mallet emphasises the rise in importance of skilled technical and professional workers who then constitute the 'new petty bourgeoisie', whilst Goldthorpe claims that developments in the production process have led to a more privatised, consumerist lifestyle in the community. However, as Bhatti<sup>15</sup> argues, although these changes in the production process may be 'real', they alone cannot account for differing consumption patterns and cannot therefore form the base of a new class structure.



Going on from this, the second analysis is one which emphasises consumption patterns. Mass consumerism is seen as eclipsing class experience and consciousness and social relations are mediated through consumer goods. As far as housing is concerned this approach predicts that increased owner occupation (perceiving such housing as a commodity) amongst the working class, changes the basis of that class in that workers become ideologically incorporated into bourgeois society. P. Saunders<sup>16</sup> takes this analysis a step further by claiming that the occupants of private housing now form a distinct class on their own - distinct that is from people in council or private rented property. This cleavage between individual and private against public and collective relations (as exemplified in housing tenures) are seen as outweighing class alignments.

These two approaches are rejected not only because they tend towards a capital logic analysis and leave little room for any contestation of meaning, but also because they ignore the differential experiences, especially in the realm of reproduction that are the basis (and the outcome) of political consciousness. What I am basically saying is that owner occupiers cannot be understood and analysed as an homogenous group. To put it crudely, owning a house in inner city Newcastle for example is a completely different experience in very important respects from owning a house on an 'executive estate'. Before I started this research at Durham, I worked in a Housing Action Area in Rochdale. The area was very depressed, high rates of unemployment, poor housing, lack of facilities, a high percentage of pensioners, single parents etc. Yet 80% of the houses were owner occupied and the whole improvement programme teetered

on the brink of failure for 5 years as many people could not afford to take up the grants or realised it would not be worth their while to do so<sup>17</sup>. Clearly the residents' understanding of what owner occupation means would be substantially different from residents in better off areas, but perhaps more important is how the residents in Rochdale reacted to their housing experiences. That is the residents organised collectively to attempt to gain some control about what was going to happen to their area, were often in opposition to the local state, and ultimately formed their own Housing Association to build and rehabilitate local property and rent them to local 'displaced' residents. This kind of occurrence hardly fits in with Saunder's ideas about owner occupation creating a system of individual and private relations that outweigh class alignments.

Along similar lines the meaning of tenure (and of life in the community) is mediated through gender in that the relationship to housing is defined for women by their marital status i.e. women's access to housing in terms of tenure and quality is often governed by their relationship to a man. A woman usually occupies a house in a various role e.g. as a married woman, as a mother, as a single woman, as a single mother etc., and generally has little power in the housing market. This, I would argue, affects their understanding of housing and the meaning they impose on it - and consequently how they act about housing issues. However, I do not think that gender is ever the sole determinant of this understanding but that locale, relationship to production, race, background etc. also play a part. A working class wife/mother in owner occupied housing is not totally the same as a middle class wife/mother in the same tenure, but neither does she totally share the same experiences as a working class wife/mother in

council property or a working class single mother etc. There are elements that are linked and elements that are contradictory, for divergent experiences, based on locale, class background, gender, race etc. create differential consciousness.

I would accept that class relations and gender relations are changing and therefore there is a need to re-assess the restructuring that is going on if we are to understand the impact of tenure patterns on political consciousness and 'community life'. However as Bhatti argues:

"Because class forces are never pre-given, there is a struggle over class formation first before classes struggle against each other, there is constantly a decomposition and recomposition of class structure and class forces." <sup>18</sup> (author's emphasis)

The point about the continual decomposition and recomposition of class structure will be picked up again in the next section but I have introduced it here to emphasise that the changing of classes is a continual process and not just a recent 'one-off' phenomenon. The approach I have adopted to analyse this process is one which emphasises neither solely the production process nor the privatising effects of mass consumerism, but one that looks at how wider changes in the economic and political structures are mediated by the locality in which people live as men, women, workers, the unemployed, the disadvantaged, mothers etc. How these changes are mediated in turn affects how people act and express their understandings and imposed meanings in their locale. This is how I understand community and culture.

A final point before going on to develop these arguments in the next section. I do not see my approach as implying that it is impossible to identify any broad tendencies along class lines in society today - I do not intend, like Gorz<sup>19</sup>, to bid 'farewell' to the working class on the grounds that collective consciousness has been evaporated and has been replaced by little more than an aggregation of individual consciousness with no power to change things. Rather, the culture that emanates from the ever-conflicting capital-labour relationship is transformational and, although mediated and expressed in a complex manner, is essentially collective in that it represents attempts (sometimes successful, sometimes not) to challenge dominant ideological forms. As D. Parsons argues:

"The working class is by no means of a homogenous group composition - it is hierarchically fragmented in a variety of ways, both socially and spatially. Capital maintains its hegemony over the class as a whole by exploiting this socio-spatial composition and regulating power through the various sectors of class. Such hierarchies are based on sex, race, access to the wage, spatial location etc..... It is important to clarify here that these divisions are not just a clever ploy on the part of capital to divide the workers. They have a very real material foundation which implies intra-class as well as interclass struggle. By the same token, successful struggle against capital does not imply a simple, colontaristic 'unite and fight' strategy.... in its struggle with capital, the working class can erode its hierarchical composition through cycles of complementary struggle, where gains made by one sector of the working class become generalised and provide the foundation for further struggle by other sectors."<sup>20</sup>

Where these challenges come from, how and where they are manifested and what the implications are for our understanding of class structure and activity in the realm of reproduction is discussed in the following section.

Capital and Culture: the role of community

"To work in this area (of urban and community politics) is to reject crudely economistic analyses which argue all such political practice is 'secondary' and should be subordinated to organisation by the working class at the 'point of production'. That old and tired argument not only flies in the face of the realities of daily life under advanced capitalism, but also subordinates to secondary status the political activities of housewives and mothers, children, old people, the unemployed and the 'marginalised'."<sup>20</sup>

Like other areas involved with reproduction, the housing of workers has many contradictions and thus a potential not only for disrupting current capitalist relations but also for creating new anti-capitalist relations (e.g. demands for housing of higher and radically different standards than capital can profitably provide). However, the fact that 'community struggles' etc. are often dismissed as secondary and parochial, and even divisive and distracting, indicates that this aspect of reproduction is undervalued. It is sometimes given cursory empathetic empirical recognition in the form of community studies or the narration of incidences of community struggles, but it is seldom given sufficient theoretical attention or validity. Rather the main theoretical perspectives dictate that the present provision of housing serves only to benefit capital - financially through its commodification; and ideologically by dividing working from everyday living, and creating conflicts between residents of different tenures.

These divisions and conflicts are interpreted as contributing to the stratification and relative compliance of the workforce and as militating against the building of progressive alliances. The potential impact of housing and community on radical class consciousness disappears

under a welter of such claims, and appeals are made to concentrate only on the realm of production. This is a tendency which several writers are critical of, including Damaris Rose:

"The emphasis on the ways in which 'capitalist social relations' penetrate daily life and seemingly incorporate people and struggles, has tended to distract attention from, and lead us to underestimate, the multiplicity of ways in which people are constantly trying to resist, or at least escape from the dominant processes of capitalist society in their daily lives - on the production line, in the office, at school and at home ..... insufficient serious and theoretically informed attention has been paid to the progressive possibilities inherent in the maintenance of spheres of life not permeated through and through by the capitalist process."<sup>22</sup>

At a time when there is a very high rate of unemployment and increasing numbers of marginalised people and when many people in work are in a very vulnerable and often conflictual position, it becomes even more distorting to assume that relationships developed at the point of production govern all activity. However it is more than a distorting perception for it actually misses a crucial point - that as capital develops it creates and becomes dependent on an increasing number of 'non capitalist' institutions (families, hospitals, the home and the community) whose meanings, definition and terms of existence are a contested area between the provider and the consumer.

In the current economic crises, fewer and fewer people will find themselves in secure well paid employment, and more and more people will find themselves living the vast majority of their lives in institutions other than the labour market. In terms of power, this latter group is 'marginalised' in the sense that they cannot join in the consumer activities of wider society because of their low individual income. However this is no reason to see their activity as marginal for as

they struggle in their daily lives to improve the conditions of their lives they are fighting in an arena (by its very nature) not totally penetrated by capital and therefore ultimately challenging the basis of capital. Of course capital plays a role in these institutions and structures, for example, the activities of developers and the private interests involved in universal health care, but their role is not total and it is from the ambiguity of the role that new progressive, non-capitalist ideas of living emerge. I now want to look at this argument, how it operates within the home and the community and how class and gender roles are expressed, developed and changed within the realm of reproduction.

The home and the locale are the setting and basis not only for the physical reproduction of the labour force but for the relations of production and reproduction - that are primarily social. Each succeeding generation must stay in an appropriate relation to capital, adopting and believing in a set of values and attitudes appropriate to the current needs of capital, a process Cockburn refers to as "reproducing a frame of mind"<sup>23</sup>. This form of reproduction is mainly carried out in what Gramsci termed 'civil society' i.e. the family, the church, schools etc., using cultural persuasion rather than force/coercion, though the two areas may merge at times, e.g. as in the repressive nature of aspects of the welfare state. Thus appropriate sets of values, ideas and attitudes not only become accepted as 'right' and 'natural' but also cease to appear as values at all, as Henri Lefebvre writes in "The Survival of Capitalism", they become practice, the lived reality of peoples' daily lives:

"The ideologies which are most effective are hardly distinguishable from practice: they are not expressed at a distinctly ideological level and they do not appear as ideologies".<sup>24</sup>

I do not wish to suggest that behind all practice lies the ever dominant spectre of capitalist ideology but that if we want to understand the practices of people's lives (i.e. culture) then we must give thought to the sets of ideologies that form the basis of these practices. To understand and appreciate the importance of the actual forms of popular practices and beliefs, it is vital to broaden the notion of culture to include the concept of intention as well as action, Raymond Williams argues:

"The primary distinction between bourgeois and working class culture is to be sought in the whole way of life, and here we must not confine ourselves to such evidence as housing, dress and modes of leisure ... the crucial distinction lies at a different level ... (it is)... between the alternative ideas of the nature of the social relationship."<sup>25</sup>

Working class culture is not therefore merely the sum of incidentals but:

"the basic collective idea and the institutions, manners, habits of thought and intentions that proceed from this."<sup>25</sup>

The practices and culture of people in their daily lives is thus the representation of the sense people make of their world and their experiences in the workplace, in the home, in the community, as workers, as consumers etc. Practice and culture form the expression of relationships and the ideology of those relationships, but culture itself serves to create new forms of relationships. As such, culture is not a static, self perpetuating entity, but is rather an indicator and vehicle of change and altering relationships, as Lefebvre writes:



"There can be no reproduction of social relations without a production of these relations: there is no simple repetitive process."

and again

"The urban today is the location of both the reproduction of former social relations and their decomposition, and the formation of new relations and their contradictions."<sup>26</sup>

The important point here is that culture cannot be read as indicating that capital has finally overcome the resistance of labour, or labour the power of capital. Within the places where people live there is a constant production, reproduction and decomposition of social relations (and the consequent expression through culture) that signifies the constant shifts of power between capital and labour. If this understanding of culture is not adopted or accepted then changes and movements are essentially misrecognised. John Clarke, echoing William's notion of culture, is critical of the way post war changes in working class lifestyles have been viewed, there is a tendency, he writes:

"To exaggerate them or understand them one-sidedly, and present them as permanent shifts rather than conjunctural moments. It would be more accurate to say that the working class was transformed in those years - restructured and recomposed. This was not just a question of some sectoral changes - a 'standard of living', education, housing etc. but of a deep and thorough reorganisation of working class life. The class did not disappear, but its form and conditions of existence were transformed."<sup>27</sup>

Whilst Clarke's account casts the working class in rather a passive role and implies that the process, rather than the expression, of class relationships was different before the war, he at least introduces some notion of transformation and progression in his work on culture and class consciousness.

The main way in which culture is vacated of its significance and changes become misrecognised, is directly linked to the emphasis given to the relations and mode of production - rather than the relations of reproduction - in marxist and non-marxist theory. As stated in the beginning of this section the relations of reproduction tend to be relegated to being inherent in the mode of production with culture consequently becoming relatively impotent. Williams addresses this problem in his essay "Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory". His main criticism is not so much that culture and ideology have (wrongly) been placed at the level of superstructure, thus making them merely the determined reflection, imitation or reproduction of the reality of the determining base; but that the very terms base, superstructure and determination, are essentially misconceived and need revaluing. Superstructure, cannot merely be a reflection etc. because the base is not a uniform, static object, rather it is:

"the specific activities and relationships of real men  
....active...complicated and contradictory."<sup>28</sup>

Instead the base, in Williams' analysis, becomes a process, not a state, thus losing its fixed properties that can be translated to the realm of superstructure. The whole arena thus changes direction:

"We have to revalue 'determination' towards the setting of limits and the exertion of pressure, and away from a predicted, prefigured and controlled content. We have to revalue 'superstructure' towards a related range of cultural activities and away from a reflected, reproduced or specifically dependent content. And crucially, we have to revalue 'base' away from a notion of a fixed economic or technological abstraction and towards the specific activities of men in real social and economic relationships, containing fundamental contradictions and variations and therefore always in a state of dynamic process."<sup>28</sup>

This redefinition essentially politicises the notion of determination and thus manages to break free from the idea that there naturally exists a set of causal laws that translates activities in one realm into activities in another, secondary, realm. This is an important break because it is the concept of naturally existing causal laws that, in essence, vacates culture (and consequently what happens in the home and the community) of its dynamic significance. In William's analysis primary production becomes the production of society itself, the people and the material production and reproduction of real life, thus breaking away from the commonly understood notion of primary production within capitalist economic relations. This broadening of the notions base and the production leads to a reappraisal of the role of the reproduction of culture and ideology, making that role crucial and innovative:

"we are then less tempted to dismiss as superstructural and in that sense, as merely secondary, certain vital productive social forces, which are in the broad sense, from the beginning, basic."<sup>29</sup>

Claus Offe also addresses this issue in "Contradictions of the Welfare State". He questions the centrality of labour within classical Marxism and the common understanding of base/superstructure. He argues that the work role is only a partial determination of social existence and that:

"social conflicts arising from the role of citizenship - citizen as both politically active beings and recipients and consumers of state services - can be of great significance and therefore should not be dismissed as superficial and superstructural."<sup>30</sup>

In fact Offe takes this analysis further and points out the danger of concentrating on relations of production as the all powerful, determining

base. He argues that, on the contrary, it is one of the contradictions of the development of capitalism that, as the structure of employment changes, increasing numbers of people will live the majority of their lives in arenas not totally permeated by capital. Like Williams, Offe's analysis presents us with a reworking of the idea of 'base' and the process of 'determination':

"I think its potential (i.e. of the labour movement) has been exhausted to the extent that it ignores the fact that the wage-labour-capital relationship is not the key determinant of social existence, and that the survival of capitalism has become increasingly contingent upon non-capitalist forms of power and conflict ..... In my view, the crucial problem for the labour movement is how to become more than a labour movement." <sup>31</sup> (Author's emphasis)

Lefebvre also addresses the issue of the role (and relative under-emphasis) of the reproduction of ideology, and questions the ascendancy given to the mode of production in most analyses. He is especially critical of the structuralist view as propounded by Althusser, arguing, that its emphasis on the rigid, dogmatic concept of the mode of production, renders powerless the reproduction of the relations of production:

"structuralism evades the question of the reproduction of the relations of production, by reducing it to a commonplace and self-perpetuating component, the reproduction of labour power .... The structuralist hypothesis identifies "mode of production" with "system" and presents capitalism as a system well constituted, with all its organs present from birth. There is not, and never has been, an accomplished system, only an attempt at systemisation (coherence and cohesion) on the basis of the relations of production and their contradiction".<sup>32</sup>

According to the structural functionalist view of marxism, the reproduction of the relations of production is reduced to a simple strengthening or the reduplication of those relations through the intervention of the state and its ideologies and repressive apparatus. The state intervenes to reduce the conflicts and economic contradictions that reveal themselves, in the interests of the ruling class/capital. Within such a closed system, the notion of the reproduction of ideology and the relations of production becomes as rigid, sterile and static as that of 'mode of production'. Such an overly deterministic analysis of capitalist society does little to explain events and transformations but rather, evacuates history, and the acquisition of 'absolute knowledge' obscures spontaneity and power. For this is what a dynamic understanding of culture gives to people, it becomes a creative, collective force that constitutes a challenge to the existing relations of capital. As Lefebvre writes:

"the rigidification of a 'marxist concept' such as mode of production and the systemisation that derives from this as a separately held concept, destroy Marx's perspective, which is to seize what is happening in order to transform it, to seize the 'lived' in order to beat a path towards life."<sup>33</sup>

I have so far conceived as culture as the sets of practices that derive from the constitution and reconstitution of class relations and, in turn, come to form and represent alternative ideas of the nature of social relations. I have located culture within the realm of reproduction, as this is the arena not directly controlled by capital where alternative ideas may exist, and argued that this arena cannot be dismissed by marxists as secondary as there are very real struggles and redefinitions going on there that could not happen elsewhere.

However it is important to emphasise here what I am not arguing, as well as what I am arguing. The perspective adopted does not attempt to remove the relations of production from 'centrality' to the sidelines of class consciousness, rather I am asserting the point that "housing and class are happening together".<sup>34</sup> In the interests of balance and to place this chapter in a wider context briefly, I want to spend a little time explaining my understanding of the centrality of the relations of production.

The early section of Chapter 1 considered the relations of the production of housing; in the next chapter the development of the housing market is examined alongside the development of capitalism in Britain and, in the final chapter, the impact of womens' increasing involvement in the sphere of production on their housing experiences is analysed. Put quite simply "the emergence of industrial capitalism created the urban system"<sup>35</sup> and the operation of industrial capitalism determines the production and consumption of housing i.e. that the relations at the point of production (wage labour, the division of labour) set the limits and bind the nature of the processes of reproduction.

This chapter attempts to redefine the notion of base and super-structure and relocate the place of reproduction and community - it does not however, attempt to subordinate the relations of production in the process. The content involved in the concept of centrality is being broadened (and hopefully being made more 'political' and dynamic) and not being replaced. The crucial influence of the Miners Wives Support Groups on the miners strike of 1984-85, is but one example of the process I am referring to (see H. Beynon 'Digging Deeper'<sup>36</sup>). In that instance, struggle to maintain 'a way of life' was (is) an initial

and determining factor in the action around the point of production and involved all parties affected, but the action taken was crucially bound by the relations of production i.e. the strike as 'weapon': attempted settlement through negotiation between union leaders and management; the weakening of the struggle by 'strike-breakers'. The following chapter examines this process and sets of relations as they are manifested within housing and housing tenures. In summary, to emphasise the importance of reproduction is of necessity to emphasise the importance of production:

"If we use reproduction then we are constantly reminded that what is going on is to do with production because it is a process of preparing labour power."<sup>37</sup>

The writings of Lefebvre and Williams then leaves us with a much more dynamic, progressive and yet more problem-ridden view of the reproduction of relations and production and ideology. For if culture and the reproduction of ideology is such a crucial and potentially progressive area, and is not crudely linked to the mode of production, then how are the perpetuity of the relations of production and the continued maintenance of order within civil society to be accounted for. At one stage Lefebvre answers this question quite dismissively:

"we must face the painful truth - if the relations of production have maintained themselves for over a century, if they have scarcely changed at all in capitalist countries, then it is because the working class have actually wanted it that way."<sup>38</sup>

However, this view is modified and qualified later as Lefebvre argues that the apparent global strategy of the state (i.e. to maintain existing relations of production) appears only as an 'apres coup' - as a chain of ventures and contests won or lost and it only materialises after the 'spoils' have been shared out. In this sense the appearance

of the continued 'success' of the state on behalf of capital, is much better understood as a relationship rather than a constant state of being. As a relationship, its basis is more open to change and it also reduces the culpability of the working class:

"the working class resists capitalism and shows itself to be impenetrable, irreducible. (It) cannot claim to be exempt from all responsibility for perpetuating the social relations of exploitation and domination. However it is not to blame either."<sup>39</sup>

This relationship, of domination and control over the meaning of events i.e. hegemony, once removed from the realm of superstructure, from mere opinion, becomes something much more total and complex. It saturates society and constitutes the substance and limits of common sense or consciousness for most people. Within this framework ideology is inseparable from practice, but as stated earlier, the meaning of practice is contestable and ambiguous, and can itself have an influence on ideology. The dominant, hegemonic ideology is maintained not only because it is deemed to be 'natural', but also because it is a part of people's 'lived reality' and, more importantly, people's desired lived reality, as Williams writes on the centrality of hegemony:

"It is a whole body of practices and expectations; our assignment of energy, our ordinary understanding of the nature of man and his world (sic). It is a set of meanings and values which as they are experienced as practices, appear as reciprocally confirming. It thus constitutes a sense of experienced reality beyond which it is difficult for most people to move. But this is not .... a static system. On the contrary we can only understand dominant, effective culture if we understand the real social process on which it depends: the process of incorporation."<sup>40</sup>



If the dominant culture was merely an imposed ideology, super-structural and secondary, it would in essence be inadequate and easily overthrown as it would not be strong enough to resist the challenge posed by the culture, or set of practices or beliefs, evolved from the relations of reproduction. Its effectiveness and perpetuity is linked to its depth and saturation in society and consciousness which in turn is linked to its ability to (to an extent) incorporate, re-organize and manage alternative ideas and attitudes, and alternative senses of the world etc. However that is not to imply that these alternatives are thus defused or overcome, rather that their challenge is contained within certain limits - limits that change and shift - and, rather than being 'defeated' by capital, become part of the 'lived reality' of people's lives. Williams comments on the existence of alternatives:

"This has been much under-emphasised, and the under-emphasis opens the way for retreat to an indifferent complacency. In the practice of politics for example, there are certain truly incorporated modes of what are nevertheless . . . real oppositions, that are felt and fought out."<sup>41</sup>

Going on from this I would argue that such alternative meanings and 'incorporated modes of opposition' exist within the arena of the reproduction of social relations i.e. the home and the community, both in terms of relationships and objects. For example, the possession of any commodity, such as a house or a car, does not necessarily indicate a convergence of lifestyle with those who similarly possess them, but rather there is the possibility of the same object or practice being located within different sets of relations and being endowed with different sets of cultural values:

"an object or commodity is not uni-dimensional, but involves some, (however limited) possibilities of being appropriated as a different sort of use value in a different class-cultural context."<sup>42</sup>

So when I write about culture I am not implying that it is always obviously 'revolutionary' or free of contradictions and conflicts. It is possible, for example, for an owner occupied house to serve to incorporate its residents in the sense that they may decline to take part in industrial action in case it leads to them losing their home, but it also can serve to give the residents an element of control and power that gives them the opportunity to subvert capital, and the experience of buying and ownership itself can become one which alienates and/or politicises the residents. (I am thinking here particularly of those people in decaying inner city houses). I would suggest that most of the conflicts and contradictions that exist within the expression of culture lie along class and gender lines. However, as I argued earlier, I do not think that all women or all working class men place the same meaning, and/or adopt similar sets of practices within the realm of reproduction. Although women's experience as women and working class men's experience as workers is an important factor in creating consciousness, if the debate is shifted to the realm of reproduction then location becomes an important factor. A balance is needed between the premise of "class as the base category of existence, and that of community of place."<sup>43</sup> Also needed is a theory of consciousness that rather than simply assuming universality, takes some account of locale.

As mentioned earlier, 'community studies' have often been dismissed, partly on the grounds of methodology - basically a misconception of the very notion of community - and partly on the grounds that focusing on the micro-structural diverts attention away from the macro-structural. Whilst I would join in some of the criticisms of existing community studies (see Chapter 4), my line of attack is not they should not have used community to access information, but that they have generally misconceived the role of community. Rather than abandoning the notion of community altogether in favour of, say the notion of reproduction, it is perhaps more useful to analyse the class and gender content of community based struggles, using the relations of reproduction as a starting point, as Lloyd writes:

"the term (community) has become ideological in much of its use, papering over the cracks of different class interests, but also it .... remains a term worth struggling over."<sup>44</sup>

Given the importance of people's daily lives/experiences within the sphere of reproduction and the transforming potential of the culture involved in that; the fact that this sphere is not fully but rather, unevenly, permeated by capitalist relations; and that 'politics' are still mainly locationally fixed, then place attains an important role in the formation of class consciousness and becomes the sphere most open to competing forms of social relations. Community studies are more valid as a vehicle for understanding the processes of social reproduction and of transition - that involve continuities and breaks, with some elements of ideology and culture continuing unmodified, whilst others are sustained in new forms and others disappear and are replaced by new cultural forms/relationships, thus;

"....working class culture does not exist as a simple unity (but) is produced as a complex, uneven and contradictory ensemble, involving a variety of repertoire of strategies, resistances, subordinations and solutions, - cultural forms (which) are permanently being remade and transformed. These forms are materialized and embedded in sets of practices, relationships and institutions which go to make up the terrain of 'civil society' in capitalism ..... the 'problem' of working class culture is not that posed by the mythologies of affluence or kinship networks, but must be located in the problems of understanding the complex and contradictory forms within which the working class lives in its subordination in capitalist societies."<sup>45</sup>

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CHAPTER THREE

The Origins and Development  
of Owner-Occupation



SECTION ONE

"A place where the ideological defence of dominant economic interest clearly gets dressed up as economic inevitability is in housing provision, and in the actual way housing currently gets provided in any tenure form. Associated with any tenure there is a particular product of earlier struggles (which)... are the historical product of earlier struggles over housing provision. They are not the inevitable consequences of any particular tenure form, but their existence as established structures of provision will determine the development of those tenures, how much in them housing costs, how much is provided and of what type. Each category of social agent within those structures of provision will have their own economic interests, and some of them are in conflict. These structures also have their own dynamic, the product of which may end up benefitting no one but the interests that dominate that form of provision. Yet rarely are the social relations associated with housing tenures analysed or criticised. Ideologically they are treated as virtually inevitable."

M. Ball<sup>1</sup>

Throughout most writing around housing and urban issues there is as an assumption that somehow housing tenures are natural, an 'economic inevitability' that evoke specific types of behaviour and attitudes. In chapter one I looked at the production and consumption of housing, emphasising the power and conflict relationships that operate in the provision of housing, and in chapter two I attempted to establish a theoretical framework for understanding the mediations and manifestations of consciousness in the realm of reproduction and in the community. In this chapter I want to look at these issues more closely as they relate to the development of the tenure of owner occupation in industrial



Britain. Using an historical perspective, I aim to show that this tenure (and consequently other tenures) is a created structure, whose form and meaning is at any one time or in any one place, the object of contest and change and is the product of earlier struggles. Before embarking on the historical perspective, I briefly want to consider some of the current notions of owner occupation as a tenure, in order to introduce what I believe to be a more relevant and dynamic view of the social relations of occupying housing. In "Owner Occupation in Britain" Fred Gray argues that:

"there has been a ..... tendency to fetishize the impact of owner occupation - as a tenure form - on social relations .... It (fetishism) is used to describe a variety of work that has treated the tenure itself as a powerful and essentially independent influence on social relations".<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps the most prevalent view of the tenure of owner occupation (i.e. the most widely expressed rather than the most widely believed), is termed by Gray as the 'status quo' view. I have already mentioned and explained this notion elsewhere, but for clarity, will recap it here. This view, held increasingly by politicians of all complexions amongst others, states that owner occupation is per se a 'good thing', assuming that it gives the individual a stake in the system (and therefore less likely to 'revolt') and that it fulfills a basic desire and thus allows for greater financial and personal independence. The main reaction to this view, instead of challenging the assumptions within it, accepts its basic premise arguing de facto that owner occupation is a 'bad thing', because it makes the individual owner a more pliable, vulnerable, incorporated person within the capitalist system. Although these two views, status quo and normative marxist, differ in their analysis of the desirability of owner occupation, they both see it as essentially functional for capital.

A third perspective is a Weberian view as propounded particularly by writers such as Rex and Saunders. Here, owner occupiers form a distinct 'housing class' with specific political allegiances related to their ownership of an accumulative financial asset. This position is well documented and has recently been under debate by P. Saunders and M. Harloe (see International Journal of Urban and Regional Research 1983/4). Another Weberian perspective (Payne and Payne)<sup>3</sup> develops the notion of 'housing status group' where housing acts as a mediator for stratification of inequalities experienced in the occupational structure. This is perhaps a more informative position than Saunders', which still tends to mystify and misconceive the theoretical difference between consumption and reproduction.

Again these analyses differ in their ideological and political consequences from the previous two but they also assume that owner occupation means a particular thing and that it has an independent and powerful impact on social relations. A criticism that I share with Gray and that I have explored earlier, is that these views are based on the false premise that owner occupiers are an homogenous group and that everyone that lives in owner occupied property, regardless of class, gender, race, age, locale, occupational status, experiences their housing in the same way. The work of the Community Development Project in Newcastle and other cities, and the work of V. Karn in Birmingham, (see chapter one) clearly show that this is not so - the impoverished owner occupier in the inner city, suffering from problems of obsolescence and decline, cannot realistically be put in the same category as his/her counterpart in an 'executive' suburb. The distinctions between owner occupiers run deeper than just 'rich and poor', but the point that I

wish to make here is that the impact of owner occupation is differential and that an examination of how it affects different groups of people in different ways tells us more about the social relations of tenure, than a generalised view of the tenure itself.

A contemporary example of these 'differential experiences' are discussed in the recent work of D. Byrne<sup>4</sup> on inner city areas of Gateshead, where it is not so much the incidence of long term poor owner occupiers that is making the tenure unmanageable, but the relatively recent collapse of tenure relations (e.g. the inability to fulfill mortgage obligations, and to 'trade up'), which is tied in with the peripheralisation of the skilled working class by de-industrialisation in the region. In Gateshead, for one set of people resident in one area, owner occupation is changing its meaning and those changes are linked to their experiences (or lack of it) in the production process.

"A process is going on in which the material and ideological (crude) conditions under which they are being reproduced is changing consequent upon their changed position vis a vis production."<sup>4</sup>

The growing figures for repossession (increased four fold over the past five years) and the increased 'spread' of redundancies, would indicate that, for growing numbers of people "owner occupation is turning round."<sup>4</sup>

At (almost) the opposite end of the spectrum, owner occupation has worked well for people not originally dis-similar to those now experiencing difficulties. The subjects of the research in chapters 6 and 7 are precisely those who are benefitting from the move into owner occupation. The implications of this are discussed in chapter 7, yet it

is worth mentioning here to draw out the different aspects involved in the 'differential experience of tenure'.

So, like Gray I question the accuracy of the assumptions that lead to the concept of a tenure being an independent entity that has a specific effect on social relations. However, I think that Gray too readily dismisses the impact of tenure in his analysis. Having argued that the way people experience housing is more dependent on their income or locale than on any particular notion of tenure, his conclusion tends to imply that ultimately the impact of tenure is not as important as other factors (e.g. income, class, locale, etc.), and that the conditions and implications of tenure are just a part of, and dependent on, 'external variables' that occur in wider society. What I feel Gray gives insufficient consideration to is the creation and structure of the tenure of owner occupation and why differing ideas of the implications of the tenure carry on existing.<sup>5</sup>

I would argue that the actual conditions of occupancy (the social relations of tenure) cannot be limited to being merely a consequence of the changes in 'wider society'. Rather, the current form of any tenure, while linked to wider changes, is a crucial manifestation of conflicting relations within society and, in itself, can and does create new forms of relations, due its central location in the realm of reproduction. Given my perspective of the importance of activity in this realm (see chapter two) then the creation and construction of tenure forms becomes a key to understanding wider processes in society and not just vice versa. There are predictions that by the end of this decade over 80% of housing could be owner occupied, whereas 70 years

earlier this figure had been less than 10%.<sup>6</sup> This is a powerful and important shift which must have had crucial implications for social relations, for what was happening in the community, in the realm of reproduction in civil society. The tenure of owner occupation was, and is, not independent of other changes that were occurring in society, and therefore cannot be said to have had an independent effect on social relations, but neither can it be said that the fact and effect of this shift was secondary, or could be 'read off from' other changes. I now want to trace through the links between tenure patterns and the relations of reproduction.

I started from the premise that in a capitalist society, housing is produced as a commodity, i.e. that it has an essential use value in that it must be consumed by labour to ensure its reproduction and subsistence. As such it is crucial to both labour and capital (which needs a healthy, convenient workforce), and, like other commodities it contributes to the value of labour i.e. it is purchased out of wages (though rarely purchased outright). As a commodity, housing is produced as an investment and a source of profit for certain factions of capital. Housing can thus be said to stand at the interface between those factions of capital that seek to make a profit from housing; capital in general that, in order to accumulate, seeks to reduce the subsistence and reproduction costs of labour; and labour which seeks to protect and enhance its standard of living. These groups simultaneously co-exist, trying to define and impose various forms of housing.

On a basic level, it can be said that different tenures have emerged in an attempt to continue to make housing profitable and its consumption realizable. However, such an economic explanation is inadequate if we want to understand the differences between and within tenures that

have occurred in the past century. As implied earlier, housing is also crucial in the reproduction of labour power and the reproduction of the relations of production. This role goes beyond merely providing healthy housing for labour (for as will be seen later, capital sometimes provided unhealthy housing), but rather the quantity and quality of housing varies and is produced in an attempt to enforce and reinforce the division of labour. However, labour also seeks to obtain for itself decent housing of a relative standard and an improvement in the quality of life, something that is historically and culturally mediated. I am not arguing that people merely continually aspire to 'better' housing to that which they currently have, as that would be to imply the capitalist provision is natural. Rather that capital seeks definition, seeks to impose meanings conducive to the productivity of labour and to the consumption of commodities which capital can profitably produce, but labour seeks to impose its own meanings, potentially resisting the commodity form.

In "The Consumer Experience of Housing" (1980) C. Ungerson and V. Karn trace the process of the desirability of owner occupation, and provide a very adequate account of the connections between this desirability and developments in the economy - in production relations. In short, that owner occupation is presented (tax relief, investment potential), perceived (legitimate, natural), and experienced (generally higher standards, return on investment), in ways that are linked to wider economic and political developments. Not only are such presentations and experiences contested and experienced differentially, but they are likely to alter over time due to their determination by production relations.

How housing is provided in terms of tenure and what that tenure means vis<sup>à</sup>vis costs, standards, the relations it involves occupiers in, will, at any one time, depend on the relative strength and power of the groups involved. However, given the opposing aims of capital and labour (and different groupings within them), the conditions and meaning of occupancy will be experienced differentially. In this sense then, tenure comes to represent an attempt to define what the terms of occupancy of a particular set of housing, should be. According to this analysis, tenures emerge because of the contestation of meaning that exists around occupancy of housing, but, in doing so, the tenures themselves often become the focus of conflict and liable to contradictions. The meanings and definitions of tenure change over time and space because they are caused to change by the conflicts that occur in a capitalist society, but the attempts to impose such meanings themselves create conflict so the conditions of any tenure is never static or one-dimensional and is the indicator and instigator of change.

#### Examining the Development of Owner Occupation

In the following sections of this chapter I shall be looking at the relevance and implications of changing tenure patterns in the pre-war, inter-war, and post-war periods. In this short section I want to give a brief outline of the methodology used in the research. I have already indicated that I believe it is important to develop a historical perspective (i.e. in order to assess when, how and why different tenures were created and changed) in this work. I also feel it is important to look at the development of tenure (in this case particularly owner occupation) at both a national and a local level, as both are crucial to an understanding of the other. National policy (e.g. the introduction



of state subsidies) and/or general capitalist forces/market conditions (e.g. a fall in real wages) are translated and experienced in highly specific situations and localities where, at any one time, different groups will have differing amounts of power, often as a result of past struggles and experiences. It is usually how these struggles are translated back to the national/general level that informs and directs future policy. This is not to imply that there is a causal, functional chain, but rather that it is important to establish and explore what Melling calls:

"The dialectical relation between general development and specific situations, between objective conditions and subjective experiences."<sup>7</sup>

Using a variety of sources, such as detailed local studies; various Royal Commissions and Parliamentary Reports and Debates; and text books covering the subject generally or dealing with specific issues e.g. building cycles, state intervention etc., I attempted to build up a picture of general tendencies in the origins and development of owner occupation, and outline several of the important forces and their inter-relationship.

One of the main problems that could be identified when trying to build up this general picture, was that before the post war period the issue of tenure, especially owner occupation, was not, overall, perceived as an important issue and therefore little was recorded. The vast majority of information available centred around issues such as the quantity of housing at any time or the desired standard. What did become clear was that houses that were built for owner occupation were built for a whole variety of reasons, often depending on local conditions.

National policy as regards this tenure was, until relatively recently, piecemeal and contradictory and consequently hard to isolate and examine without making assumptions about what was 'really going on'.

Another problem that emerged was that most of the general texts used, failed to make the link between 'general development and specific situations' but instead generalised specific events and applied them universally thus undermining the relationship between local and national events; or would neglect local issues and make their analysis very functionalist. Because of problems like these it became important to develop a theoretical framework so that the aim become not to try and prove some hypothesis by means of empirical data collected, but rather to try and explain the data in the light of theory and ideas.

As mentioned, I also looked at a specific locale, trying to trace through the development of owner occupation there. I chose Newcastle primarily because it's where I live and the necessary information is more accessible (and also the housing I was studying is visible). Also, because Newcastle is a relatively large city, its development was often monitored and probed by the government for various Royal Commissions etc. The aim of the local research was to try and discover why houses began to be built for sale to the occupier, the style of such houses and where they were located within the city. Going on from this the research attempted to trace the development of the structure of the private housing market in Newcastle. By using local material I hoped to gain an overall picture of housing development in the city, to see how owner occupation became to be equated with 'respectability' and how it acquired its financial attraction.

Quite a range of local material was available, such as local building society records, planning and rating documents, Ministry of Health reports as well as historical accounts of the growth of the city. However there were a number of problems with the material. As with the national data, I found little systematic recording of the development of owner occupation and most of the material used was recorded for different reasons for my research. As mentioned, not only might this lead to distortions but also there may be important omissions. For this section there was the additional problem in that some of the material (such as inter war building society records) were inaccessible because of confidentiality and time bars, and whilst some of the local societies waived these restrictions when approached, others did not. Against this background it becomes important to stress again that the research does not aim to give a definitive, 'proven' statement about why and how different tenures developed, but rather it aims to put forward some tentative ideas about how and why housing tenures should be viewed and analysed differently from current 'established' ideas.

I said earlier that it is important to establish the relationship between objective conditions and subjective experience. Now while it is possible, to some extent, to gain a picture of objective conditions and make such statements as people did not always buy for security/ investment and owner occupation became more desirable for many people only as private renting and council renting became undesirable, it is more difficult to gain access to subjective experience i.e. what people actually felt about their housing and tenure. Those studies which

did attempt to record subjective experience before 1945 often centred around 'social problems' such as poverty, overcrowding in slum areas, and not around the living conditions of the new suburbia. With the exception of novels and oral history, this subjective experience is now largely lost and again much of the work in this area has to be tentative. A final word about the current section. Although this section covers nearly 40 years (1945 to 1983) it has to be admitted that this division is somewhat arbitrary and false, unlike the other sections which are neatly bracketed by phases in capitalist development and the upheaval of major wars. Indeed the past few years have seen a flurry of activity around owner occupation that is unprecedented in its whole history. Within the time scale of the research itself there have been what I would describe as significant developments in this area - (I am thinking here in particular of the emergence of the big developers' 'starter homes' - very small houses that are offered as a package to first time buyers - and of the recent government decision to allow building societies to operate as banks). Given the time restrictions on the research it is impossible to coherently and completely assess the impact of such moves and also, I believe that, given the present governments' strong belief in owner occupation, more major changes are on the way. So, rather than analyse such change and base predictions on them, it is more realistic (and hopefully more fruitful) to concentrate in this section on why activity is so virulent and what such moves reveal about the current capital labour relationship.

#### Owner Occupation before the First World War

Owner occupation in industrialised Britain is not a phenomena of the 20th century, but existed to varying extents throughout the

industrialisation of Britain. However, whilst the tenure itself is not new, its form and conditions have been continually changing so when I talk of owner occupation in this chapter I am referring to the state of occupying a house at the same time as the occupier is paying over for its purchase (or has done in the past), rather than paying over money in the form of rent. It is important to stress the development of this tenure has not been a simple process which started in a particular year and has increased steadily ever since, and the fact that I have had to define a 'basic' model of owner occupation is indicative of the wide range of conditions of occupancy and the relations involved therein, that have been experienced by different groups of occupiers in industrialised Britain. This being the case it becomes somewhat unnecessary and misleading merely to state and compare percentages of owner occupation over time, but the study of motives behind, and conditions of, the tenure as experienced (and created) by varying groups of people may instead reveal more about the dynamics of the development of owner occupation.

Ownership in this period was not confined to the landed gentry but extended through the classes. Damaris Rose records<sup>8</sup> that shoe-workers in Northampton in the 1880's bought houses:

"to avoid being sucked into the factory system by buying houses large enough to maintain workshops in their own homes where the family worked."<sup>8</sup>

In the Minutes of Evidence given to the 1884 Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes, Mr. T. Fatkin, the secretary of the Leeds Permanent Benefit Building Society told the Commissioners:

"as soon as ever the working class of Leeds get £30 or £40, £50 saved their favourite mode of investment is at once to go in for building or buying 2 or 3 little cottage houses."<sup>9</sup>

Although Fatkin's idea of what constituted 'the working class of Leeds' is a little dubious<sup>10</sup>, the fact that the Royal Commission concludes that "it is safe to say that the English middle class now enters into the building society movement"<sup>11</sup> (my emphasis) indicates that the idea of co-operative saving and building was a working class initiative. This issue will be taken up a little later, but the point I am making here is that at this early stage, workers were entering and developing the tenure of owner occupation for differing reasons and that it was the emergence of capitalism that was causing these contradictory and complementary activities.

M. Pawley<sup>12</sup> in "Home Ownership" estimates that as many as 20% of households could have been owner occupied in the early 19th century<sup>13</sup> and that the percentage of such homes varied between 13% and 20% throughout the century. Yet however low or high these percentages may be, the issue of home ownership and the ideology ownership at this time were not as crucial as might be suggested, as Pawley writes in the context of the growth of the building society movement:

"Although housing demand was unquestionably the main-spring of the building society movement from its earliest years, the question of whether houses built by (or with the aid of) societies should be owned or rented was hardly an issue at all until after the Great War."<sup>14</sup>

To underline this point, he later comments that:

"Not until 1961 was the national census .... modified to show the tenure of households, and all estimates before that date are based upon deductions from information gathered from other sources."<sup>15</sup>

If the issue of tenure was 'hardly an issue at all' and if the incidence of owner occupation did not uniformly increase throughout this period, it remains to be asked why owner occupation existed at all and exactly what did the tenure represent given that its popularity differed over time and space.

The connection between freehold tenure and enfranchisement that existed until the 1884 Reform Act, was undeniably an important factor in the growth of home ownership. Demand for electoral reform (aroused after the 1832 Reform Act) led to the development of Freehold Land Societies which had the objective of financing the purchase of 40 shilling plots so as to create voters. Loosely linked to Chartism, the movement initially gained working class support, building clubs were formed and houses built. However again, the actual issue of ownership per se, and any notion of a concomitant higher standard of living, was not a consideration:

"If the only way a working man could earn the vote was by becoming the owner of a £10 house, then the means to make him an owner had to be found. The fact that, in the process he should attain to comfortable living wholesome surroundings was good but incidental .... The chief thing was the vote."<sup>16</sup>

In fact, Freehold Land Societies and other similar institutions, such as the Co-operative Building Societies, did not always ensure that houses built would provide for 'comfortable living'. Such societies built back to back tenements<sup>17</sup> and the Royal Commission of 1884 heard graphic evidence of the quality of such housing:

"I heard one Lancashire miner say that when he went to to knock a nail to hang a clock up, he knocked down all the clocks in the row."<sup>18</sup>

Similarly, the growth of terminating societies enabled many workers to save and purchase property. Formed at a time when rapid urbanisation left urban immigrants without sufficient housing and social facilities, these societies were self-help co-operative agencies that served to house its members and then 'terminate'. Most of these

societies were initially dominated by artisans and craftsmen who had the security of regular income (unlike casual labour) but not the individual capital wealth to purchase housing outright. Again the types of housing financed and built by these societies varied enormously from small cottages and tenements to "quite elegant terraces, stucco fronted with Classical or Gothic doorways"<sup>19</sup> depending on the financial status of the dominant members.

Chapman has recorded the history and development of such societies and rather than just repeat that detail I would prefer here to try and draw out some of the themes his historical research has highlighted. For a start, the motives behind the beginnings of owner occupation in industrialised Britain, are many and are often contradictory. For the founders of the Freehold Land Societies their foray into owner occupation was little more than a direct challenge to the prevailing order in as much as their aim was change<sup>in</sup> the electoral system. The quality of housing built by these groups was not always satisfactory and, although comparatively they may have been adequate, it is likely that the members of Freehold Land Societies believed they would improve the quality of their lives through general changes rather than individualised changes. The tenure here seems to have been a means to an end with little intrinsic value being placed on the tenure itself. For the members of the Terminating Societies the eventual purchase and ownership of property, achieved through saving, provided not only decent housing where decent housing was scarce, but also a measure of independence and freedom not experienced before in their housing by this class of people (though some of them would probably have a degree of independence in their work place). Such activities



in the housing market would have had contradictions, they encouraged thrift, enterprise and incorporation - qualities 'in line' with the continued development of capitalism; they encouraged the physical/spatial division of the working class but their collectivised provision and level of control and independence from the state was, at this juncture, relatively unchartered ground. Chapman outlines two important features of home ownership in this period;

"the aristocracy of labour, many of whom were able to climb the ladder to economic independence during periods of trade depression, were also expressing their independence by helping one another to become property owners..... Members of the societies could alleviate the burden of the monthly subscription by building 'back houses' to rent to their employees or to other tenants."<sup>20</sup>

What Chapman's comment indicates is that by the mid-19th century terminating societies (along with the surviving Freehold Land Societies) gradually became dominated by the middle classes and their nature changed dramatically. As franchise reform accelerated and the division of labour developed, creating hierarchies of workers in terms of security of labour and income, then these early societies lost a lot of their political impetus and became more commercial, financial institutions. The societies became permanent, enmeshed in legislation and financial complexities, and eventually, as they expanded into large institutions, were administered by experts and professionals. The 1872 Royal Commission on Friendly and Benefit Building Societies (II) pointed out that permanent societies often appeared to be:

"mainly agencies for the investment of capital rather than enabling the industrious to provide dwellings for themselves."<sup>21</sup>

As the nature of the societies changed, then the meaning and conditions of the tenure of owner occupation began to alter also. What evidence there is seems to indicate that as the permanent building societies expanded, home ownership provided certain groups of people with the opportunity to attain housing of a higher standard than was generally available in the rented market:

"The main achievement of the society in Aston Park.... seems to have been to have set a superior standard of housing and .... to obtain this better quality at a lower price."<sup>22</sup>

The purchase of houses also provided owners with an extra income, as they rented out a handful of houses often using the proceeds to finance a mortgage on their own, superior, homes. Such landlords were usually artisans or shopkeepers who were looking for an attractive but secure investment. In Newcastle for example, in 1900, 90% of the landlords were small scale landlords, owning less than 20 houses and included a school master- a plumber, a clerk and an innkeeper<sup>23</sup>. This was a practice looked upon with favour by the 1872 Royal Commission:

"building societies do not build, they simply make advances on building. They are in fact investment associations..... We are bound to say .... the development of building societies appears to have been beneficial to the public.... they have promoted investment on real or leasehold estate security and enormously encouraged the building of houses for the working or lower middle classes. There is thus no a priori reason why the law should look upon them with disfavour."<sup>24</sup>

This quote is very indicative of the consequences of the changes that were taking place in the housing market in general and building societies specifically. Many of the building societies that began to proliferate in the latter half of the 19th century had their roots in

the radical Freehold Land and Co-operative Societies as well as the more respectable terminating societies. These pioneers saw their *raison d'etre* as building and not solely investment, and the houses they built gave them, as members of the Society and as occupiers, a degree of independence and control previously unknown, to a large extent, to them. By 1872, many of the societies had become 'investment associations' which made advances to other than the 'investor', for the building of houses which in turn were not generally occupied by the borrower/builder, but rented to others. The intimate link between investor and borrower/builder/occupier was being replaced by a far more abstract and complex set of relations.

It must be emphasised that owner occupation only ever amounted to a small minority in this period and that even then it was frequently sought out of necessity and expediency and was 'hardly an issue', there were some features of the housing market that emerged that had an important effect on the post 1914 housing market, namely the growth of building societies and housing professionals, and the style, quality and aesthetics of housing. The activity and nature of the housing market in the 19th century established a financial and administrative structure that was to be extremely influential in the following century, as Pawley has succinctly written:

"The century of the rent payer was also the century in which the institutions of home ownership learned their business."<sup>25</sup>

Before going on to look at the post 1914 situation, I want to trace through some of the pre-war developments that had such a crucial effect on the emergence of mass home ownership.

As mentioned, although building societies originated as working class self help building clubs, by 1872 the Royal Commission had to recognize that they were investment institutions dominated by the middle classes and administered by experts. As the industrialisation and urbanisation of Britain unfolded, the lucrative potential of housing provision started to be exploited by those with the capital and 'connections' to do so. The 'taking over' of the Freehold Land Societies served not only to give the embryonic building societies a structure upon which they could base their expanding activities, but it also in the process went a long way to removing the threat of working class people having control and power over their own housing. How far this threat was perceived or articulated is hard to judge, but the quotation from the 1872 Royal Commission does indicate that it was in favour of a newly emerging building society system which was based on the profit motive (i.e. return on investment) and on a hierarchy of experts and administrators.

Case studies cited in "Private Housing and the Working Class"<sup>26</sup> amply illustrate that the 19th century saw the proliferation not only of building societies but also of property developers, land agents, chartered surveyors, solicitors who dealt mainly in housing, estate agents etc., whole groups of articulate and often well connected people whose living depended on housing transactions i.e. at this time, on the buying and building of houses to rent. By the turn of the century, not only were the interests of these professionals to be safeguarded, but also those of their investors, who were increasingly large powerful financial institutions. When after 1914, the private rented sector began to decline with fresh activity being severely curtailed, and the state starting to provide rented housing, there was a whole

legion of professionals and experts with a mass of funds literally touting for business.

Home ownership, after the middle classes began to dominate the building societies, became correlated for these classes with an improvement in standards and style of housing. (This is not to imply that the private rented sector did not begin to provide an equally 'high standard' of housing for the same classes, but its supply did not always correlate with demand and, due to the machination of the bourgeois Freehold Land Societies and the building societies, it was often cheaper to buy than to rent (see Chapman)). The improvement though was not merely in terms of space and size, but as Leonore Davidoff et al have coherently argued, it was firmly linked to a certain ideology - the rural idyll. The rural/village community and its perceived associated hierarchical social order had a great appeal in an increasingly troublesome, impersonal and alienating urban world:

"It was to the village community that the Victorian Middle Class looked as a haven from the industrial world. This was not simply a matter of aesthetic qualities of green fields as opposed to city streets, but of the kind of society into which the individual fitted."<sup>27</sup>

A certain style of housing (and more tentatively, its tenure) was starting to be associated with a certain set of ideas and a lifestyle and it was the promise of a 'better' lifestyle that was used as a selling point, as well as the financial attraction of home ownership, which at that time was a potentially risky venture for new buyers. Such ideas of the rural idyll were prevalent in English literature and art and soon became transplanted into physical planning and social science. Only the upper classes and the upper strata of the middle classes could

afford a town and a country house (and transport to work in the city was still not fully developed) so the rest of the middle class, who having achieved a measure of financial independence, sought some physical expression of their status within the urban structure. The first of these houses were called 'suburban villas', with their extensive buildings and park-like grounds, they catered for a select group of people and represented:

"a rural illusion which was...within the reach of the successful business or professional man whose affairs did not demand an excessively punctillious attendance at the office."<sup>28</sup>

Such villas were imitated by the less opulent middle classes, though their scale decreased as land near the city centres became scarce and whereas development was dependent on commercial factors e.g. the market value of land, the shape and layout of the houses in the suburbs retained the illusion of the rural community. The housing aspirations of the professional and entrepreneurial classes became defined in terms of this suburban/rural ideal - with all its perceived status - and as the spending power of the middle and upper classes increased in the second half of the 19th century, such ideas percolated down to them, often in a diluted form. A. Jackson neatly sums this up when writing of the London suburbs built at the turn of the century:

"Most new property was still built for letting, but there was a growing tendency to erect speculatively for sale .... it reflected the increased prosperity and size of the middle classes. And it was in the houses built for sale that the new designs were most apparent ....a more open layout....a little closer to nature....brighter looking houses of a less substantial construction."<sup>29</sup>

In fact the rural idyll was so pervasive that the transfer of the urban population to the country and the reviving of the village community,

was seen as the answer to the 'bitter cry of outcast London'. A contemporary Liberal writer argued in 1907:

"we may learn what may be done by way of suburban cottage-building to encourage the exodus of skilled and even unskilled workers from the town to the adjacent country, or what is better still, by the transference of industrial enterprise to the country with suitable provision of dwellings for the workers close by, and thus re-establishing as far as possible that patriarchal relationship between employer and employed."<sup>30</sup>

The rehousing of the working class in the suburbs (in 'cottages cheap not nasty'<sup>30</sup>) was not only intended to restore the health of the workers but also establish (or re-establish a social and moral order that was perceived to have existed in pre-industrial times. The style, location and tenure of housing provided was deemed to have the potential to create and maintain certain patterns of social relations. (These themes are explored in more detail in the last section of the chapter and in chapter 5). Living in close proximity with the middle classes but within an hierarchical structure physically expressed by the size and style (and to a lesser extent, tenure) of housing, was perceived as a 'solution' to the conflict and separation of the classes. For example, the common usage of trains from the suburbs to the city centres was seen as a "very civilising and humanising thing" by the 1884 Royal Commission, and in his evidence to the Commission Sir E. Watkin M.P. states:

"I think that the mutual restraint that comes by the mixture of classes in a train, meeting together on a platform and going up the same staircases and all that, has a very improving effect. I think that there is nothing so improving to the lower classes as to see a good deal of the classes above them."<sup>31</sup>

Such thinking was still prevalent thirty years later when state building of housing for the working class became a major political

issue. As will be argued later, housing built by the state in the 1920's was of a very high standard and conformed to the 'Garden City' ideal and the ideology of the rural community. However this is not to imply that these homes merely represented an attempt by the state to impose a certain social and moral order on the working classes. For the most part the state and private capital were happy to let workers live in very poor, unhealthy housing. Rather such Garden City homes represented a vast improvement in living standards for their tenants and were as Swenarton argues in "Homes Fit for Heroes", the outcome of pressure exerted on local and central government by organised labour:

"So complete was the appeal of the low density, quasi-rural format of the garden city movement, that its desirability was not questioned."<sup>32</sup>

It is a desirability that the speculative builder/developer of the inter-war and post-war periods have never failed to recognise.

A very important aspect of the 'rural idyll' was that at the core of its ideology was the notion of the patriarchal family structure. The man was the head of the household, he earned the means of subsistence and was thus the ultimate authority. Within this ideology, what Davidoff terms the 'domestic idyll', the woman stayed at home 'working' within its confines. As the physical structure and location of this housing served to create a certain kind of social order outside the home, so it also created 'a natural order' within the home:

"like a village community it was seen as a living entity...harmoniously related parts of a mutually beneficial division of labour. The male head of this natural hierarchy, like the county squire, took care of and protected his dependents".<sup>33</sup>



Within this natural order it was the woman's role as wife and mother, to maintain domestic peace, 'run' the home and preserve its sanctity. The suburban villa, as a status symbol, needed to be maintained and kept presentable. As the suburbs expanded, admitting less wealthy people, the maintenance of the home became a full time job for many women, as the employment of servants was not generally affordable. A. Jackson argues<sup>34</sup> that as the suburbs expanded to house the less opulent not only were the houses of "less substantial construction" but also its facilities reflected its ideological structure, - schools and shops became part of the suburbs, thus defining (and confining) the boundaries of the wife/mother's useful existence. The physical distance from the traditional places of women's work, practically ruled that out as an option. It has to be said that it was not, of course only the women living in the suburbs that were under pressure to keep their home presentable and put their husband's and children's needs first. Married women from areas where there is a tradition of women working full time (e.g. the cotton manufacturing areas) were under equal, if not more, pressure to maintain an orderly home<sup>35</sup>, even though many of these homes were far from the rural idyll of the suburbs. Also it is not the case that ideas about the women's role in the family and in the home, originated from the expansion of the suburban villa. Notions of the patriarchal/capitalist social order were prevalent throughout society, in the workplace and in the realm of reproduction long before the builder/developer appeared. However, what was new was the way this ideology became equated with a certain style and standard of housing and was 'sold' as a package, as a desirable lifestyle....for the women as well. The development of the suburbs, the building of good quality housing, often for sale, was done in such a way as to re-inforce patriarchal/capitalist notions, with this being seen as an attraction.

As with the early council housing standards, there exists here an inherent contradiction. Women had long agitated for improved living condition, as prime child carers and as the ones most involved in domestic affairs such as dealing with the landlord etc. As the Women's Labour League wrote in 1906:

"Let us use our women's brains and women's hearts to help us guide the Labour policy on matters where we have knowledge and experience which men cannot have.... Let us claim for ourselves and our children decent homes to live in."<sup>36</sup>

As mentioned before, the vast majority of women had to struggle on fulfilling the wife/mother role in often appalling conditions, so on one level the improved conditions in the suburbs were an advance and a victory for women. However it was an advance that was limited:

"For the more ideal and self contained the housing conditions the more self sufficient the housewife becomes and the more pressure there is on her to maintain a perfect home."<sup>37</sup>

In this somewhat brief summary of the development of the housing market before 1914, I am aware that I have presented a rather simplistic picture, especially of the economics that were in force throughout this time. To make such a detailed analysis would require far more time than I have available at this point. Instead I have tried to draw out some general themes concerning what was happening as Britain experienced a rapid expansion in its housing requirements. The urbanisation that was consequent on industrialisation created a series of structures that were to influence the operation of the housing market throughout the next century. The 19th century brought the development of a substantial body of housing professionals; the involvement of large financial institutions in housing provision; the stratification of housing styles and locations;

speculative building; and the notion that certain types, locations and tenures of housing could be imbued with specific ideologies and types of behaviour. As mentioned, I am not implying that the suburban home itself created these ideologies of capitalist/patriarchal social and domestic systems that were so desirable to the development of capital. If that were the case the question would remain why such homes were not built for everyone. Apart from the fact that the vast majority of the working population could not afford to rent or buy such property (which therefore would be unprofitable to produce), capitalist ideology was already pervasive throughout the society, reinforced through the factory system etc. without the aid and cost of decent, healthy housing. Also, the stratification of society such housing helped to reinforce (which was integral to the continued development of capital), meant that large numbers of people would be excluded from it. What was unique about the suburban home, often speculatively built and presented as an investment, was that its style, location and occupancy was correlated with a certain desirable lifestyle. The suburban home reinforced rather than created capitalist social relations, but here lies the inherent contradiction, for the gain for capital was also a gain for the occupier and labour in general. This was the type of housing everybody wanted and everybody should have; to create stratification was also to create conflict. Throughout the century the working classes had shown that they wanted to achieve some level of control over the conditions in which they lived and the relations their occupancy of a house involved them in. The housing activity of the 19th century would indicate that not only would the quantity and quality of housing provision be contested, but also that there would be conflict around the social relations of tenure.

Owner Occupation in the Inter-war Years

The middle class 'flight to the suburbs' that started in the late 19th century, presented builders with a speculator's paradise, raising their expectations of profits that might be gleaned from the middle and artisan classes. Meanwhile, low cost housing for the working class, which had to be situated in the city centres due to the need to be close to work, was less profitable than ever by the turn of the century given the increased scarcity and demand for city land and the fall in real wages. A slump in the building trade after 1907<sup>38</sup>, coupled with an extreme reluctance to build low cost housing by both private enterprise and local government<sup>39</sup>, meant that by the outbreak of the First World War, city centres and urban districts were extremely overcrowded and squalid. The concentration of building for certain groups was having serious consequences for other groups and the imbalance was to create crisis in the years immediately following the war:

"The result was that now an absolute and inescapable shortage of houses was shown to exist in certain areas. In spite of the much emphasised existence of empty houses in other areas....there were not enough of the right kind of houses in the places they were needed."<sup>40</sup>

The years immediately after the 1914-18 war were ones in which there was a housing crisis in Britain. The crisis had two aspects; on the one hand there arose the perennial problem of how to accommodate the urban poor in conditions which would be regarded as being of an acceptable minimum standard; and on the other there was a general shortfall in the supply of housing in general. Of particular significance was the housing shortage experienced by the middle classes and the more prosperous groups amongst the working class, who in peace time had always been able to afford better quality housing. This situation was, for the latter

groups, a relatively new phenomenon caused by the virtual cessation of house building during the war; the continued population growth, and an increasing rate of household formation. The problem was compounded as the middle and artisan classes began to experience what had previously been a working class problem, namely that, due to the rent control imposed in 1915, private enterprise was unable to provide sufficient housing of adequate quality given the rise in building costs and the disincentives to invest in housing.

It is estimated that there was an absolute shortage of 300-400 thousand houses by 1921 and that a similar number needed to be built rapidly, but the equation was not that simple, as Glynn and Oxborrow argue:

"The reality is that the balance between supply and demand for housing will be struck at a point which reflects the economic and social factors acting on both sides .... and that this balance is dynamic, constantly shifting point with no final resting place ..... factors acting on the side of supply are the availability of land suitably placed in relation to employment opportunities, the price of raw materials, the rate of interest and the productivity of the building industry. On the demand side there are changes in the rate of potential families, the level of incomes, the social conventions which determine the balance between the different things these incomes are spent, and the institutions which enable for financing problems to be overcome, either through renting or borrowing capital for purchase."<sup>41</sup>

The demand for housing was not solely linked to quantity, but rather 'social conventions' were changing. The upheaval of war and the subsequent raising of expectations of peace time, served to reinforce and strengthen peoples' desire for better housing, with the emergence and presence of the pre-war suburb being the tangible example of what was possible. As Pawley writes of the immediate post war period:

"For the mass of people there were no 'good old days' to be regained..... The war had raised their status and their power, enabling many to earn and save for the first time in their lives."<sup>42</sup>

The average level of incomes had risen and the extension of unemployment benefit to some groups in this decade, meant that more and better housing had figured prominently in peoples' expectations. Also, the rise in incomes meant that the capacity to save had been increased and building societies were increasingly offering a safe and reasonably profitable haven for small savings. There was also an improvement in land availability at this time; urban transport (e.g. motorbuses, railways, etc.) started to be extended making possible the building of houses in areas surrounding the towns and cities. Life in the suburbs co-incided with peoples' desire to leave the cramped, unpleasant urban housing.

As mentioned earlier however, the imposition of rent control, the decline of house building during the war and the ensuing high cost of house building after, meant that building activity was not immediately sufficient to supply this demand. The actual number of people employed in building and the production of building materials actually fell between 1920 and 1924 (see Richardson and Aldcroft<sup>43</sup>). A contemporary government document stated:

"prices must be expected to remain at a higher level than that to which they will eventually fall when normal conditions are restored..... Anyone building in the first years after the war will consequently be faced with a reasonable certainty of a loss in the capital value of their property within a few years."<sup>44</sup>

The state, albeit reluctantly, had conceded the principle of providing housing when the market failed in the previous century, although they had in fact provided very little (only 1% of total stock by 1914). Those affected by the shortage had acted upon this principle and demanded its extension through formal channels and otherwise, for example the Clyde rent strike of 1915. The extension of government involvement in housing provision was recorded as early as 1915 in a memo<sup>45</sup> prepared by the Local Government Board which proposed a system of grants to cover increased building costs to local authorities, who were building not, as before, to merely house displaced slum dwellers, but to provide housing for general needs. The government also recognised the increased potential of unrest amongst the working class and saw the solution to the unrest thus:

"so long as we could persuade the people we are prepared to help them and to meet them in their aspirations ..... (we) would have an easy victory over the Bolsheviks amongst them."<sup>46</sup>

A wide ranging programme of social reform was promised and "at its heart was the promise of a great housing campaign"<sup>47</sup>. The inter-war years did indeed see a great housing campaign, over 1.3 million houses were built, housing almost 15% of the population, under the Housing Acts by Addison, Chamberlain and Wheatley which provided subsidies for general needs and later, by Greenwood, for special purposes i.e. clearance. As implied earlier, the standard of these houses was crucial - not only had they to be placed in pleasant surroundings (i.e. in the suburbs) but they also had to be of a higher standard internally, if they were to satisfy working class pressure. The 1919 Tudor Walters report recognised the importance of space and size, and

the number of rooms was increased e.g. eating and cooking areas and sleeping areas were separated and internal bathrooms provided etc.

The rationale for this move was evident:

"The new houses built by the state - each with its own garden, surrounded by trees and hedges and equipped internally with the amenities of the middle class home, would provide visible proof of the irrelevance of revolution."<sup>48</sup>

Although these houses had their drawbacks<sup>49</sup>, they were in great demand but, even with the subsidies, the rents of these high quality council houses were often beyond the pockets of the urban poor most in need of housing. As Bowley, amongst others, has noted:

"The market for local authority houses was largely confined to .....the better off families, the small clerks, the artisans; the better off semi-skilled workers with small families and fairly safe jobs."<sup>50</sup>

In the 1930's, standards became less generous, partly in an effort to provide housing for the very poor (who could not afford high rents), and, partly as a result of Treasury pressure to reduce housing costs, subsidies were abolished for all building except slum clearance housing. This policy change, with its serious consequences for tenants is illustrated in "Whatever Happened to Council Housing"<sup>51</sup>. I am aware that I have presented here a very cursory glimpse of the development of council housing and that there are many issues that I have omitted to discuss. However for the purposes of this research, this glimpse serves only as a backdrop for what was happening in private building for sale market. The imposition of rent control, the granting and withdrawal of state subsidies, the numbers and types of houses built and the rents charged, all have implications for the development of owner occupation at this time, so it is important that these events are noted, even if



they are not fully explored in their own right. There are however several important matters that need drawing out before moving on to looking at the owner occupied market.

I have already pointed out that the first council houses to be provided (i.e. in the early and mid 20's) were built at a relatively politically emotive time (e.g. the return of the soldiers/heroes) and at a time when the labour movement was stronger than it had been for years. The houses built, conforming as they did to the contradictory 'rural idyll' ideology nevertheless represented a very real gain for sections of the working class. This was not necessarily the case in the 30's when economic crisis, high unemployment and a consequent weakening of the labour movement, meant that standards of housing declined, as did the 'status' of their tenants. It is clear that stratification and differentiation existed within the one tenure, just as it had in the private rented tenure before the war, as well as between the tenures themselves. It would seem that it was more important for individual families and communities to struggle for decent housing of any particular tenure. However this is not to deny or undermine the role of the local state in the emergence of owner occupation in this period. As will be seen in the next section, local authorities in many senses acted as a 'midwife' for the relatively new tenure, which was still in a fragile state. In essence, this nursing of owner occupation in this period became as much a part of the relationship between the local state and the provision of council housing, as the pressure of the working class through labour movement involvement. (See D. Byrne 'The Standard of Council Housing in Inter War North Shields' in J. Melling<sup>52</sup>).

The shifts in state housing policy in the inter war years also had significant implications for the owner occupied market.

Glynn and Oxborrow note that:

"in the discussion of housing policy at the end of the war (1914-1918) there was ..... no discussion of the encouragement of owner occupation as a major policy aim."<sup>53</sup>

yet by the outbreak of the Second World War, private enterprise had built the vast majority of its housing speculatively for sale. In fact three million houses were built this way, housing over twice as many as the state. The same Acts that provided subsidies and charged local authorities to build, also provided private enterprise with subsidies out of taxation to enable their houses to be sold at less than market cost. However, 60% of the houses built privately in the 1920's did not utilize these subsidies, as Glynn and Oxborrow point out:

"Though they were significant, the subsidies were not a decisive feature of the housing scene. The reduction in costs they afforded was not spectacular."<sup>53</sup>

By the end of this period then owner occupation was a strong growing tenure, even though it was not an overt policy aim immediately after the war. This section will concentrate now on the various elements that went to make up this tenure and how its form was defined and established.

As indicated at the beginning of this section, the middle classes and the more prosperous working class were experiencing a shortage of suitable housing as activity in the private rented sector was disrupted. Building for sale, with the aid of subsidies, seemed a potential solution (although the government had rather hoped that houses would be built

for rent<sup>54</sup>). However the owner occupied market was still a relatively new venture for many builders, building societies and housing professionals, and the quantity and types of houses initially built reflected this uncertainty. The private housing produced in the 1920's, like state housing, was perforce of a generally high standard, almost exclusively semi-detached or detached with a strong emphasis on external design, conforming generally to the 'rural idyll'. An art historian writes of the period:

"the effect to be aimed at was that of an idealised country cottage, with as much olde worlde charm as possible but combined with such modern conveniences as hot and cold water and electric lighting."<sup>55</sup>

However as building costs were high, even with subsidies, the cost of new housing was likewise only affordable by those with relatively good and secure incomes, and were willing to make a long term commitment. Writing of Palmers Green in the inter war years, M. Turner comments

"Although the 1919 Housing Act introduced a subsidy for private house builders, a new house cost more than twice that of its pre war counterpart. A three bed-roomed house in a suburb each as Palmers Green would have cost £350 in 1914. In 1920 the price was at least £750. Builders found it difficult to provide housing for renting on economic terms....Even when house prices fell in the late 1920's, the custom of building houses for sale, rather than rent, continued."<sup>56</sup>

The standards of the new, speculatively built, private houses, then were very similar to those of the first council housing. It is interesting to note that the rents and mortgage repayments of the occupants of these houses were also generally similar. For example, on the high quality council estate of Pendower in Newcastle (built in the 1920's) rents averaged between 9 and 12 shillings a week whilst the average mortgage repayment was 10 shillings, excluding rates. A point to remember here

is that, as mentioned earlier, the social composition of these early council estates was often quite 'respectable'. In these pre-rebate days, a tenant would have to be in a relatively secure and well paid job in order to pay the weekly rent. The social class and occupational structure of the owner occupiers would not be too far removed from the council tenants at this stage, given the similarities in payments and house styles (though there would have been regional differences). In fact in this period, due to the uncertainty of owner occupation as a tenure and as an investment and to the relaxing of rent controls, a number of private builders built houses for letting. The builder of Grainger Park estate in Newcastle for example, built half the houses on the estate for sale and half for letting. The houses were of a similar high standard and there was little price difference in terms of weekly payments. Indeed many of the builders/developers and building societies concerned actually organised the weekly collection of mortgage repayments from occupiers (following the format of landlord/rent collector) and 'moon-light flits' from owner occupied houses were not unheard of<sup>57</sup>.

It would be misleading however to imply that the terms of occupancy and costs of these two groups were exactly similar. Overall it did cost more to live in an owner occupied house, not only in terms of weekly repayments (mortgage and rates) but also by the fact that the potential occupiers had to save for a deposit and money for furnishings, and also they were responsible for repairs and the maintenance of their property. Also even if the weekly payments of tenants and occupiers were roughly similar, at least the owner occupiers would eventually own their house. This last aspect would be a very new experience for the vast majority of the new owner occupiers and one which would be an attractive notion

especially after the upheaval of the early years of the decade. It must be pointed out though that the notion of the home being an investment was a different notion than it is today. Most of the new buyers saw their homes in terms of somewhere secure to live and something they could pass on to their children and not as an asset they might sell and 'trade up' during their lifetimes.<sup>58</sup>

Another important divergence between the two groups was the sets of relations involved in the occupancy of the house. That is, for the tenant it was the local state who was the landlord whilst for the owner occupier it was more than likely a private building society. Although this divergence may not have been perceived as crucial initially (see above) it was a difference that was to have an increasing impact as the nature and status of the two tenures involved. Despite these differences, it remains generally true that especially in the '20's, the divergence between the paths of owning and renting was relatively small and, as will be seen later, were often chosen for arbitrary and/or incidental reasons.

The situation gradually changed in the late '20's. and early '30's. By the early '30's, for reasons outlined earlier, state building turned its attention to 'special needs' housing and the building of superior council housing tailed off. Although a period of recession was beginning, those people in secure employment found their real incomes rising and the demand for housing increased. Quite a substantial number of people, unable to join the 'flight to the suburbs' made the transition from renting to buying without moving home. "Private Housing and the Working Class"<sup>23</sup> records how landlords in the inner cities, after rent regulation was enforced, were often tempted to sell to sitting tenants and make a

'once for all' profit and by 1939, 1.9 million houses had changed tenure in this way. It was initially a finely balanced proposition for the tenants in terms of housing costs and as long as their jobs remained secure the move did provide an element of security given the disruption in the private rented sector. However, as Saltley Community Development Project in the above report, and as Housing Action Areas bear witness 50 years later, the sale of inner city pre war housing to tenants who usually could not afford new housing was a different proposition to owner occupation in the suburbs. The increased cost of repair and maintenance (i.e. the generally poorer physical state of the house) and the 'less desirable' location meant that, even in its formative days as a mass tenure, owner occupation contained very different types of housing.

For many people this 'solution' was not desirable or possible. The inter war period saw a change in the structure of the working population and the population in general. There was a steady increase in the number of clerical and administrative workers; a relative decline in the number of manual industrial workers, and a growth in the number of new households. Those people in secure jobs aspired, not necessarily to owner occupation, but rather to better quality housing, as Glynn and Oxborrow argue.

"For many people, the cramped and dreary streets of the 19th century legacy were seen for what they were - a desperately unsatisfactory way for humans to live - the demand for something better was a natural enough outcome of this legacy as soon as circumstances and income levels enabled it to be expressed."<sup>59</sup>

As suitable council housing and privately rented housing was becoming less generally available, the demand for small, decent houses was growing. It was a situation that was not entirely accidental:

"He (Sir Hilton Young, Minister of Health) told the House that he had been in close consultation in the preparation of the Bill (that abolished all subsidies except for slum clearance) with the National Federation of Builders;

"They say...that on withdrawal of subsidies, houses will, in their opinion, be built in very large numbers to supply the whole demand shown by the waiting lists of the local authorities."<sup>60</sup>

It was envisaged then that potential buyers could be recruited from the waiting list for council housing. These were people who generally had not been able to afford the high price of private housing in the '20's, or were young couples without the necessary capital to obtain a mortgage. The housing professionals, builder/developers and building societies began to concentrate on 'gearing' their product at these local groups, subtly changing as they did, so the terms, conditions and social relations of the tenure:

"In the 1930's particularly, estate developers were able to arrange high mortgages with building societies, thus enabling houses to be bought with a very small deposit. To keep costs to a minimum, room sizes were reduced and the standard of construction was often lower than before the war."<sup>61</sup>

and

"The quality of housing at this time fell markedly as speculative builders sought to maximise profits and extend housing for sale as far down the income scale as possible, and societies were forced to lend on shaky security in which borrowers might have a minimal cash stake. In many cases the determining factor in selling a new house became not the quality of the house; but the terms on which it can be bought."<sup>62</sup>

The reasons why owner occupation was increasingly being encouraged, becomes clearer when the activities of the building societies and housing professionals are examined. The 1930's saw a huge increase in

the number of houses built speculatively for sale as interest rates lowered and the price of raw materials fell. Also the building societies whilst losing an important source of revenue as private renting shrank, still had a sophisticated structure to deal with housing transactions and were experiencing a huge intake of new investment. In a period of recession the societies were attractive as a form of investment, to large and small investors, owing to their liquidity, relatively high rate of returns on shares and their security. These factors converged with the demand factors to create a housing boom. As M. Boddy argues the building societies had the funds to lend to the builder/developer and the funds to lend on mortgages - the 1933 Housing Act was, a contemporary M.P. claimed:

"placed on the Statute Book simply because the building societies were absolutely bursting with funds for which they had no outlet and it compelled local authorities to cease to build houses for the ordinary applicants, for one purpose only, namely to order that people might be driven into the hands of the building societies, and called upon to purchase houses for themselves."<sup>63</sup>

The question of buying or renting was simply not available to many people, as Boddy goes on to argue:

"The new owner occupiers were so by necessity rather than by choice .... the main source of the increased demand for mortgages came from people forced to become owners because there was no houses to let."<sup>63</sup>

As already indicated, the council housing built in the 30's was largely built as slum clearance property. This factor, coupled with the dynamics of the economic and local political situations (see for example the account of North Shields in this period<sup>64</sup>), led to a decline in the physical standards and in availability in the council sector and created the notion of council housing as 'residual'. Against this



context of residual status for local authority housing, and the decline in numbers and standards of houses available for rent in the private sector, it can be suggested with some confidence that owner occupation was an option for many people out of no choice.

So whilst mortgage terms were relaxed and owner occupation made more accessible to a wider range of people (in the '30's the number of wage earners taking our mortgages rose faster than salaried workers<sup>65</sup>), standards declined and problems appeared. To people on moderate incomes, mortgage repayments represented quite a high cost to which often had to be added the cost of repairs to these "chaotically thrown up houses"<sup>66</sup>. Branson and Heinmann record that three thousand owner occupiers on new estates actually went on strike until repairs had been done<sup>67</sup>, and that the building activity of the 30's had dire consequences:

"It was the beginning of a new stage - a stage ushered in at great social cost. The urban sprawl which accompanied it was to jeopardise the rational planning of towns for generations to come. And the individual cost was also high in many cases, as people strove to meet mortgage payments they could barely afford and found they had been cheated by the jerry builders."<sup>68</sup>

It becomes clear then that owner occupation was a tenure that, in this period, was starting to accommodate a very wide range of people whose costs and benefits varied and whose degree of choice and control varied. Some of the occupiers were very close in terms of class, income and occupation to the tenants of the 'good' council housing, and some were not. The conditions of occupancy also varied and were linked to economics, locale, gender and class-based aspirations and political power. The point is there was no single set of ideas about what owner occupation was but that the tenure evolved gradually and its conditions were defined in order to fit the current requirements of

capital and the imposition and contestation of definitions was again a contradictory issue, for people had struggled and fought for housing of a decent standard and over which they had more control than they had had in the hayday of the private landlord. The general improvement in housing conditions was as much a result of working class agitation as was the need of capital.

Attempts to define the meaning and conditions of owner occupation by both factions of capital and the state can be witnessed throughout the inter war years. Not only was there the start of the process of 'playing off' one tenure against another, but also there was the active promotion of the building societies. The benevolent image of the societies was enormously encouraged by the government and by the 'establishment' in general. The Times for example, in 1938, ran a special series devoted to the building society movement, to which government ministers regularly contributed and which were full of praise for the movement, heralding:

"The use of building society facilities has become a national custom."<sup>69</sup>

If good housing had been seen as the antidote to revolution in 1919, then by the end of the 1930's owner occupation was seen as a double safeguard - the worker/owner would not only not become a revolutionary but he would become a responsible citizen, participating in local affairs to protect his property. He, and his family would also become mass consumers and thus play a part in economic recovery. Also his privatised world would encourage a peaceful domestic atmosphere where children could be brought up as good citizens. It is important to emphasise that these properties are not necessarily inherent in any

particular tenure but they became invested in owner occupation at this time as a political strategy and in order to stimulate demand. Owner occupation started to become popular partly because there was limited choice available and partly because its presented, created form touched a central core in peoples' aspirations. Witness the Earl of Harewood, Chairman of the Building Society Association in 1938:

"They (the building societies) help to stimulate and to satisfy that independence of spirit which makes a man covet the security and content that comes of ownership. There is in human nature a natural love of possession.....With this love of possession there goes the ambition to create an environment which will be a projection and expression of the character and personality of the owner."<sup>70</sup>

By the outbreak of the Second World War, half of the population still lived in privately rented housing - very few were to remain there much longer. What happened to them after 1945 was a consequence of the patterns and ideologies of the housing market established in the inter war years.

Tenure Patterns and the Social Composition of West Newcastle Pre-First World War

This section will briefly attempt to trace through the development of tenure patterns in a specific locale, drawing out those themes and issues which seem to have been most important for the present day construction of the social relations of tenure.

Like most of the industrialised cities of the 19th century, the development of housing in Newcastle was a largely arbitrary and unconsidered affair. Poor quality, low cost-low rent accommodation sprung up around the main centres of work, which in the city of Newcastle was the river Tyne, where shipyards, heavy engineering works and brick-works were located. In the west, where this research concentrated, the main industries were the latter groups and the nature of the industries very much dictated the nature of the housing for the mass of the workers. With low wages and uncertain employment, the working class of the west city lived in overcrowded tenements<sup>1</sup> because of the need to be immediately accessible to the workplace and because it was all that could be afforded on their low, irregular wages. This situation largely persisted until the 1860's when increases in the population and the concern of the city council over health risks from such insanitary property, provoked a call for more housing. Already in the city several building societies were established, the main one being the Rock Permanent Building Society which had started life in 1850 as basically a freehold society<sup>2</sup>, who were all too keen to encourage housing development.

The 1860's saw the building of small terraced flats in Arthur's Hill, which although immediately adjacent to the tenements of the riverside, were nonetheless located at a distance from the workplace. Because of this relative distance and superior quality and 'newness', the rents of these properties were higher than average, and tended to attract artisans, professionals and merchants. For example, Edward Street, built in the 1860's listed, in the relevant Street Directories, as its inhabitants, tailors, butchers, bakers, millers, joiners, pawn-brokers etc. As the area developed in the latter half of the century, the houses (or rather flats), as they were built further up the hill and away from the river, were built to higher standards with higher rents, consequently attracting a superior class of worker. Half a mile up the hill from Edward Street was Beaconsfield Street. Built in the 1880's, the flats, though still terraced without gardens, were generally larger than those in Edward Street and were occupied, according to the Street Directories, by a gentleman, a teacher, a surgeon, a builder, an architect, a minister, a mason and other similar occupations.

At the turn of the century, the social composition of the area had changed quite substantially. Over half of the tenants in Edward St. and Beaconsfield St. had moved (a large proportion to larger flats or houses in the east of the city or further up the hill). The same period had witnessed an influx of semi-skilled workers into flats. Such moves were made possible by the increase in real wages and decrease in unemployment at that time. This increase in real wages for certain sections of workers meant that some filtering up did take place in Arthurs Hill. The merchants, professionals and white collar workers, began to vacate the flats for houses that were being newly built further up the hill and in the east city, leaving their old homes vacant for those semi-skilled workers

who were seeing a rise in their fortunes. Landlordism, and in particular the building of new housing for rent for the 'superior classes', was increasingly an attractive investment, and whole sections of people, from land owners to builder/developers to financiers were beginning to establish an organised structure to control this lucrative area of activity.

It is interesting to note that very little of the housing in Arthur's Hill was built for the mass of workers located on the riverside (i.e. the non or semi-skilled workers), who were 'causing' the over-crowding, but instead they were remaining in squalid conditions. This was mostly because it was unprofitable to provide housing for these groups. Even quasi-philanthropic institutions failed to find the housing of "the really poor classes" profitable enough to induce investment<sup>3</sup>. Some companies, especially those in isolated locations, did build settlements and cottages for their workers on the outskirts of the city, but the firms in West Newcastle were not generally in this position.

To cover the costs of building new housing, the rents of the houses and flats in Arthur's Hill were relatively high, an occurrence that was compounded by the land speculation that was increasingly evident. For the landlord, the rent of this housing had to cover mortgage repayments, increased land and leasehold prices etc. and still provide a reasonable return on investment. It follows that if higher rents were to be charged on this speculatively built housing, then that housing must attract those on higher incomes who could afford the rents, and that therefore the housing must accord with that groups's social aspirations.

As the area of Arthur's Hill and the adjacent Fenham developed in the pre war period, the flats and houses became more spacious and, architecturally, more ornate. By the turn of the century, the building of flats was becoming less common, being replaced by small houses, built in blocks of four rather than in terraces. Tenants lived in Roads, Places and Gardens rather than Streets and Terraces. There was a variety of styles and sizes attracting different strata of tenants, but all the houses had gardens and generally pleasant surroundings. For example whilst the older flats in Arthur's Hill in 1910 continued to house semi and non skilled workers, the new 3/4 bedroomed, garden fronted houses in Matfen Place, Fenham, listed among its residents, an electrical engineer, an accountant, a manager and a journalist.

At this time however, private house building and landlordism began to become less profitable due to cyclical factors and the increased inducement to invest elsewhere, especially in industry. The last houses to be built in Fenham, until post war government subsidies reactivated the market, were built in 1912-13. Again rents had to be relatively high to cover costs, but the squeeze on the house building market at this time meant that the houses were smaller in size than those built a few years earlier. To compensate for this and to continue to attract the 'superior classes' the layout of these houses became even more 'rural'. The houses were smaller and terraced but were given the appearance of cottages - with beams, extensive external woodwork, large gardens with garden paths, gates and wooden fences, and with only a pavement between the two rows of houses. One of these roads, Cherryburn Gardens had listed residents before the war thus; an accountant, a merchant, clerks and commercial travellers.

This rural idyll, as stated earlier, became very pervasive in the late Victorian/early Edwardian period, and was to become crucial after the First World War, for both private and state building. In an increasingly industrial, impersonal and alienating world, the rural idyll, however diluted, became an aspiration and a reward and the perceived retrospection to a meaningful, structured, arcadian existence, in which subordinates would 'know their place'. The attraction and popularity of the 'rural idyll' can clearly be seen when walking around areas like Fenham.

It is important to remember that virtually all the housing in this area was privately rented. However, even though the tenure was universal it was easy to identify groups and classes of occupants by the style and location of housing. The movement of people (by occupation) indicates that people aspired to move away from the city centre, nearer the country and 'countrified' housing, rather than to own their own homes. Style, size, quality and location of housing was beginning to be linked to status and income - physical representations of social and occupational status. Another point to be remembered is that most of the housing in the area was built speculatively and so the location and aesthetics of newly built housing also had to be a 'selling point' as well as being a profit-making exercise. Again it was a combination of 'tapping' what people wanted as well as defining the market in the process. Those who could not afford such housing began to agitate for municipal housing in this period. Their physical proximity to the garden fronted, spacious housing of the white collar workers would certainly have given them ideas about the kinds of housing they wanted to see for their families.



Going along from this, another interesting feature that can be drawn from the records of Fenham and Arthur's Hill at this time, is the changes in the occupational structure. Craftspeople, who occupied the superior flats in the 1890s had practically faded away from the listings by 1920. With the increasing industrialisation the city was experiencing, it is likely that the demand for these people was declining and their numbers decreasing, rather than they were moving on to better areas. Their replacements in the flats were now the semi-skilled industrial workers, and it was this mass group, who were still excluded from the superior housing of Fenham but were beginning to realise their power through organising in the workplace, who formed the basis for agitation for municipal housing after the war.

#### The Inter War Years

Building for private renting and landlordism, which began to decline before the 1914-18 war, almost totally collapsed after the war, mainly due to the enforcement of rent control. Building in Fenham had come to a virtual standstill in 1913 and between 1914 and 1921, the cost of building a terraced house had increased three fold whilst real wages (and thus the ability to pay rent) fell. Decent housing, for the mass of working class people, was neither available or affordable but instead they had to remain in the older, smaller flats which were rapidly deteriorating as the rate of return for the landlords caused widespread disinterest and neglect.<sup>3</sup> The scarcity of housing and the return of the soldiers after the war exacerbated a severe overcrowding problem. H.A. Mess records, for example, that in 1921 39% of households in Newcastle lived in two rooms or less, compared with 14% for England and Wales as a whole<sup>4</sup>.

Against this background of housing shortage, and with Lloyd George's "Homes Fit for Heroes's" campaign gathering momentum, pressure for subsidised public rented housing was being felt at local level. Although councils had been empowered to build houses for the working classes as part of slum clearance since 1866, there had been great reluctance to do so. Newcastle, for example, with one of the worst records for overcrowding and mortality rates, waited until 1907 before it built any such houses, located in the east of the city, and even then only after years of heated debate. However the principle that a council had an obligation to provide housing was established, and the legislation of the immediate post war period provided the subsidies to fulfil this obligation.

The period 1928-1933 saw the appearance of council housing in the Fenham area. The first houses to be built were on the Pendower estate, (built under the 1924 Wheatley Act), and were of a very high standard. Again people lived in Avenues, Crescents and Gardens; the houses were semi-detached, bordered by large gardens and a spacious interior layout. The high standard of the housing was however reflected in the rents, even with the subsidies, as the costs of materials was still high and land-owners in the area, such as J. Pease and Blakett-Ord - two well known city dignitaries, held out until they believed the councils' offer was high enough - hence the relatively late starting date<sup>5</sup>. With the high rents<sup>6</sup>, the estate tended to be populated in its early days by the better off working class e.g. in 1930 its tenants on one avenue included an engineer, a grocer, a mechanic, a fireman, a policeman, a miner, etc. The fact was, that it was groups such as these who had demanded municipal housing, who had the social aspirations and sufficient income to pay for the housing that was of equivalent standard to the pre-war Fenham housing.

It is interesting to note that very few of the households listed on the estate can be traced back to previous residences in the area. As it is doubtful that the council would allocate to people from outside the city, this would seem to indicate that many of the households were newly formed, or from other parts of the city. Fifteen years earlier, the former group would presumably have expected to move into reasonably good privately rented housing, but with such an option now largely closed to them, their alternatives had to be at least as good.

In fact the social composition of these early estates was a cause for some concern from some quarters. Whilst thousands in the city still lived in poor conditions, a great deal of money was being spent on Pendower and other similar estates and people, unable to obtain such housing for themselves, became suspicious of the councils allocation policy. Witness the Council Minutes in 1932:

"Alderman Lunn said that had been many attacks on the Council, and the Housing Committee in particular, on the grounds that Council houses were preferentially let, either to council employees or to members of the Council....It was an impossible to substantiate such a charge...and he congratulated the Housing Committee who had the difficult job of selecting tenants....

Alderman Lee asked if some of the Council tenants built garages to their homes.

Alderman Telford said tenants were sometimes allowed to put up sheds for motor cycles.

Alderman Lee said the subsidy was never intended for people who could afford to run cars.

Mr. Oliver asked if it was an outrage for any tenant to be fortunate enough to possess a car.

Alderman Lee: if a man can afford a car he can do without the £9 subsidy".<sup>7</sup>

The intention of the council had been that there would be a 'filtering up' process, as the houses vacated by prospective council tenants (i.e. the better off working class) would be occupied by the less well off, who would thus be improving their housing situation. However, in Arthur's Hill and Fenham, this only happened to a limited extent. It seems that many of the semi-skilled workers were 'trapped' in the poor quality flats as house building and the economy in general began to experience crisis and depression in the early 1930s. The slowing up of council house building was causing even more problems for the tenants of the rapidly deteriorating flats in Arthurs Hill and was creating a crisis of confidence in private enterprise, a crisis which the council wanted checked:

"We believe in the principle of private property..., but we felt strongly that private ownership, if it is to be retained in the class of property which we are considering, must be efficient and conscientious, and cease to be.... an illegitimate gamble on the inactivity of the local authority."<sup>8</sup>

The government, alarmed by the cost of council housing and alarmed too by the continuing slum problem legislated to subsidise building for slum dwellers only. It was a 'solution' that was taken up by Newcastle City Council, and the council housing built in Fenham in the early '30's, recognised the 'need' for more basic (i.e. cheaper to rent and cheaper to build) housing. These houses were smaller than the Pendower ones, and were built in terraces. What however, these estates did not lose, was the 'village' atmosphere, but it was a 'village' with no individual gardens and fewer trees than the older estates. The tenants of these estates were precisely those semi-skilled workers and aspirant white collar workers that had been unable to obtain access to the older council housing or to better private rented property.

The introduction of council housing in the area under study provided a standard of accommodation for many people that they would have been unable to obtain otherwise. There was a growing recognition that:

"In future it is not enough that a man has a roof over his head. He must have a certain statutory minimum of accommodation in which he and his family can live in reasonable health and safety.....at rents within their means."<sup>9</sup>

For most of the residents in Arthur's Hill and Fenham, the emergence of council housing materially improved their standard of living. However what council housing did little to change was the stratification - spatial and social - in the area. Housing, whether council or private rented, was still a physical representation of social and occupational status - a status that was felt and recognised. Even within the short time span of this period, the construction of the tenure of council housing was debated and changed, from being a 'victory' for the working classes, to being a residual category, whose tenants were vulnerable to moral judgements on the part of others.

Of course the changing definition and meaning of council rented tenure, was connected to the emergence of owner occupation in this period. As stated earlier, with the advent of subsidies to private builders, the decline of landlordism and the establishment and wealth of funds of building societies, the time was ripe for the development of building housing for sale. Such building started on a relatively small scale in Fenham in 1927/28 with the building of architect designed large detached houses, usually 'ordered' by monied people from small scale builders. The demand for private houses began to grow and by the end of the decade the same small scale builders were erecting speculative high quality,

but smaller, semi-detached, houses in the area. It is interesting to note that the first occupants of these houses were only marginally further up the occupational scale from those first tenants on Pendower. It seems that as the supply of good quality private rented housing and council housing was drying up, and as council housing itself was becoming 'less desirable' in terms of its status, conditions and standards, the owner occupation of these houses was the only option for many relatively well paid white collar and highly skilled workers.

The inter war period saw a great deal of building activity for this tenure, with small scale builders, property owners and building societies often joining forces and creating embryonic alliances that were to form the basis of the large companies that have dominated the owner occupied market in the post war era. One example of this is the alliance between the Gold family of Newcastle and the Bell family of Northumberland.<sup>10</sup> Property owners and builders respectively, they combined forces in the 1930's and developed land on Westgate Hill, erecting about 300 houses and flats. Originally these were meant for rent, but generous building society loans and enormous demand for those people who were weathering through the depression on good wages, led to Bell and Gold deciding to sell half of the properties. The Gold family has remained in the private rented business, but the Bell family are now the biggest house building company in the North East (see chapter 5).

Building societies not only lent generously to builder/developers but also to prospective home owners (who were often wanting to buy the new housing that the building society had financed). Although the depression was biting deep for many people, those in good jobs were experiencing a rise in real wages and accordingly they sought better

housing for themselves. However, owner occupation was still very much an unknown quantity for most people, who were more used to the relations involved in renting. To allay these doubts, and to encourage more 'takers' for the speculatively built housing they were financing, building societies began to present home ownership as a safe, desirable affordable option.

The local paper was full of advertisements such as these:

YOU CANNOT GET HOUSES FOR NOTHING, but at Earsdon you can get one on Hire Purchase on the following terms:

4 ROOMS AND BATHROOM      16/- PER WEEK  
 6 ROOMS AND BATHROOM      19/- PER WEEK  
 70 already sold. Mortgages Arranged and Carried  
 Out for You<sup>11</sup>

and:

WHY PAY RENT? Houses for Sale. Freehold £425, £475, £500, £525. Houses at £425 with £15 deposit will cost you 16/6 per week.<sup>12</sup>

The ownership, as well as the cost, quality and relative ease of purchase, was beginning to be a selling point for these new houses. Some adverts stated 'Become the landlord of your own home' and, indeed, the thought of the absence of a landlord, must have had an appeal for many people, in terms of the control and independence they might exercise in their homes. The concomitant 'decline' of council housing and council house status, must surely have enhanced this and the relationship between mortgagee and building society would probably have felt markedly different than that between tenant and landlord/state.

There are two things that must be remembered though. Firstly that the conditions of the three tenures were constructions that changed and altered over the years as different forces came into play. The stratification that could be witnessed between the three tenures at

this time, had been just as evident when private renting had been the sole tenure. The inter relationship between the three tenures (with one succeeding at the expense of others) is more important than what is happening in any one tenure. Secondly that the people in any one tenure are not, per se, an homogenous group. The council tenants of Pendower would have had more in common in terms of income and occupation, with the owner occupiers of the 30s built housing in Fenham, than they would have had with other council tenants in Fenham. Also, by the end of the 30s, the slowing down of building and the virtual 'run down' of council housing, meant that for many households, the purchase of their rented property was the only alternative as landlords became increasingly willing to try the open market. Some people changed tenure without changing houses, whilst others, unable to afford new housing, bought older property as first time buyers. As will be seen in the next section, the age and condition of such housing was to create problems in later years, but even at the initial transaction this kind of home ownership would have been a different proposition than buying a new house.



The Post War Period - The National and Local Picture

In many ways the activity witnessed in the housing field since 1945 are far too complex and detailed to be recounted here. Also this period has been more than adequately covered and documented by others (for example, S. Merrett<sup>13</sup>, M. Ball<sup>14</sup>). Chapter Five of the thesis deals with the description of housing activity post war in a local setting and therefore merely to repeat that exercise would be unnecessary. However in order to round off the chapter and make some general conclusions about the meaning of tenure, I want to draw out some of the themes and trends that affected local and national housing provision in the post war period. I also want to 'link up' the housing developments between West City (studied earlier in this chapter) and the suburb of Westerhope (studied in chapter five).

There are of course obvious points to be made, the main one being that there has been a marked increase in owner occupation, in terms of number and spread through income groups, coupled with the increased residualisation of council housing, the sale of council housing, the decline of the private rented sector etc. In fact many of the trends started in the inter war period have been continued in the past forty years. One theme in particular that has had a great impact on the development of housing and tenure patterns since the war and has had a special impact on the west end of Newcastle, is the issue of the production and construction process and the activities of the builder-developers. As M. Ball writes:

"Building controls were used after 1945 to bring owner occupied house-building to a virtual halt .... The planning of priorities, necessary in war damaged and overcrowded cities, could only be done via state direction and council housing was the highly successful instrument used for house-building. But the speculative housebuilder was not abolished.<sup>15</sup>

As happened in most major cities, the stock of housing in inner Newcastle has remained fairly static since 1945. The area that had witnessed a great deal of building activity in the period 1870-1940 quietened significantly. The major change experienced here was the gradual shift towards owner occupation in the houses and flats originally built for private renting. There was also a measure of slum clearance and the building of 'replacement' council housing, which will be outlined in a moment. In 1986 the area is still a mixture of private rented housing, owner occupied housing, council rented housing with the emergence of housing associations and housing co-operatives. There is a tendency for flats to come onto the owner occupied market, encouraged by the relaxation of mortgage restrictions witnessed generally in this period. Concomitant with this, the area has also witnessed the problems of low income owner occupation and private renting (e.g. houses in bad repair etc.).

The older, cramped housing in the lower Westgate Road area was demolished in the early 1960s and replaced by three high rise blocks and a row of maisonnettes (the latter were demolished in 1985). The surviving local authority housing, whilst it has its fair share of problems (e.g. expensive heating systems), is by no means the worst of its kind in the city. My experience as a social worker in the area, indicated that whilst these flats have a significant proportion of mobile

tenants who are on the edge of the common definition of 'social problems' groups e.g. elderly pensioners living alone, unemployed workers, etc.

A decade after the tower blocks were built, the city council demolished more housing further up Westgate Road and, perhaps learning from experience, built an estate of relatively good housing for rent. These houses, completed in 1982/83, are small but are separate dwelling units with small gardens and grassed over communal areas. The estate also contains a small unit of housing for the disabled. A new community school with impressive facilities serves the estate. Built alongside this estate is an estate of flats built and administered by the Northern Housing Association, who are expanding rapidly in the West End of Newcastle. These estates, although designed to be mixed (i.e. provision for the elderly and the disabled) have largely been populated by young families. Compared to other council housing in Newcastle, this housing is 'desirable', although with rents around £40 a week for a three bed-roomed house, they are expensive and many of the rents are paid by the local authority through Housing Benefits and rent rebates.

That, in summary, has been the housing activity in the West End of Newcastle - some shifting of tenure has occurred. Perhaps the most important point to note is that the type of population has remained fairly static, and largely consists of a population (with a proportion of mobile residents) who hover on the brink of entry into the residuum. The changes of tenure in the area have done little to affect the nature of the population, except perhaps to admit the emergence of a very mobile young semi-professional element, buying the flats or small houses as a temporary, first step on the housing ladder. Further along

Westgate Road, new council estates were built in the twenty years following the war, the main one being at West Denton, which housed the miners and ex-miners from the Northumberland coal fields and the skilled workers from the West End. In the early 1960s small-scale speculative builders also took the opportunity of the post war housing shortage and the encouragement to build given by the then Labour Government (as embodied in the Labour Government White Paper of 1965, see Merrett<sup>16</sup>) to build new houses for sale. According to records kept at Newcastle City Engineers department<sup>17</sup> these builders would build a few houses alongside the inter war built for sale housing thus extending the ribbon development bordering Westgate Road. These houses were often built in the same style and size as their inter war counterparts and it is difficult to tell by sight the date of building of the private housing in this development. By the early 1960s then, housing development, by both the local authority and the private builders, had 'connected' the West End of Newcastle with the village of Westerhope.

The major private, speculative development for owner occupation in the post war period took place on the outskirts of the city, mainly because of the supply of land (see chapter one and Merrett<sup>18</sup>) As discussed in Chapter 5, much of the land located on the periphery of the city was owned by the Bell family who had acquired it over a considerable length of time due to their connection with the Duke of Northumberland. This landbank was to prove extremely useful to the Bell family, who through their building company, Bellway Homes, and their connections with Northern Rock Building Society, were able, in the years following the war, to build and offer for sale new owner occupied homes at a time when such accommodation was in short supply (see chapters 5 and 7). Given the mass of land owned by Bellway, the company was able to plan the development of the area

(Westerhope) over a period of over 30 years (again see chapter 5), and at each stage in that development were able to respond to the needs and desires of the market. But beyond this simple advantage over quantity, the ownership of a landbank allowed for a qualitative response - in terms of cost, style and size of house built.

According to Ball's<sup>19</sup> calculations Bellway have over 10 years landbank remaining at 1980 output. In fact in 1979 the Bellway company was split into a commercial property company and a housebuilding company - the figure just quoted represents aggregate data. Like other major independent housebuilders who have expanded significantly since the early 50s, Bellway have managed to develop a financial stratagem that combines their residential housebuilding with projects concerning commercial property that utilize the cash flow from house sales and thus turns the relative short term profits from housebuilding into a steadier source of income. The holding of such a large landbank in the west of Newcastle has allowed Bellway to 'time' its building programme, minimise its risks, diversify its interests and as stated, such opportunity has had a significant impact on the quantity and type of home built in the area.

As discussed, the inter war years were largely synonymous with the emergence of small scale specualtive builders and the expansion (often tentative) of the building societies. After the war, the relaxation of building and planning regulations meant that speculative builders, like Bellway, were able to forge ahead, but their progression was at least partially dependent on the progression of the building societies and the housing consumer, many of whom had still to be persuaded that owner occupation was desirable.

As far as the building societies were concerned, their expansion and prosperity in the post war period has been well documented elsewhere<sup>20</sup>. They have generally enjoyed favourable treatment from governments vis a vis taxation and monetary and housing policy. Ball has noted that, due to this treatment and the wider workings of the financial market, the building societies have generally managed to 'isolate' and exclusively run the mortgage market, attracting personal savings not previously invested and recycling funds within the owner occupied market. With such funds at their disposal and their commitment to, and hold on, the housing market, the building societies have had an influential role to play in the development of tenure patterns post '45. For e.g. a local building society, Northern Rock, gave assistance to Bellway in the manner of pre-arranged mortgages in the crucial initial stages of Bellways speculative building programme. (See chapter 5). The search for new markets for their funds, has led to building societies being increasingly willing to lend in inner city areas and on older, less conventional, property. Such trends have in their trail brought problems, (e.g. increased mortgage default, deterioration of housing see V. Karn<sup>21</sup>) but are largely inevitable given the profit motive that drives the private housing market (see chapter 1). In general though, the operations of building societies and builder/developers in the post war period, as illustrated by local example, has meant that more property has become available as owner occupied housing to a wider range of people. Strongly linked to this has been the decline in private rented accommodation and the increasing residualisation of council housing, especially after the immediate post war period. At the moment the banks are challenging the building societies for the mortgage market and the builder/developers are facing growing criticism (re: standards and price) and difficulties (re: finding new markets). However, the shift is still towards owner occupation. Chapter

7 attempts to deal with the question of how much this shift was/is created by consumer demand and how the current owner occupied market is perceived by the owner occupiers who came into the sector precisely as builder/developers and building societies began their huge expansion and dominance of the housing market.

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"what is most odd about the book is that there is virtually no explanation as to why anything happened or suggestions as to how anyone should go about finding out. As a result most of the interesting questions about the dynamics of owner occupation are fudged or completely ignored."

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"There were now two sorts of council houses, the respectable estates built in the 1920's and the unrespectable estates of the 1930's, which further divided the working classes .... the council house was no longer a symbol of working class emancipation". p.16.
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53. Glynn & Oxborrow, *op.cit.*, pp.221-223.
54. See Branson and Heineman, *op.cit.*, p.221.
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57. See M. Boddy, *op.cit.*, Chapter 2.
58. As Bowley *op.cit.*, writes:

"The owner occupier does not invest in order to obtain a cash return but to secure a house approximately of the type he would like to live in . . . . . The question of the ultimate selling value is apt to be just as a remote a contingency as death", p.240.
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Tenure Patterns and the Social Composition of West Newcastle

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CHAPTER FOUR

Studying Communities

The Politics of Lifestyle - the place and potential of community

"The emphasis on the ways in which 'capitalist social relations' penetrate daily life and seemingly 'incorporate' people and struggles, has tended to distract attention from, and lead us to underestimate, the multiplicity of ways in which people are constantly trying to resist, or at least escape from the dominant processes of capitalist society in their daily lives .... insufficient theoretically informed attention has been paid to the progressive possibilities inherent in the maintenance of spheres of life not permeated through and through by the capitalist process." (D. Rose<sup>1</sup>)

The research for this thesis has emphasised the importance of the arena of reproduction in trying to understand changing social relations. The 'politics of lifestyle' i.e. the way in which people choose to live their lives, is conceptualised as dynamic and potentially autonomous and innovative. However, in doing this there remains the theoretical problem of trying to establish the relationship between the arena of reproduction and that of production - the 'place' and function of culture and ideology within the framework of social relations. These relations have to be explored and outlined if the research is to get beyond the somewhat simplistic and stagnant conclusion that current lifestyles in this sphere are either merely the reflection of changing modes of production, or are independent changes grown autonomously of production.

As outlined in preceeding chapters, there is an implicit assumption that the two arenas are linked in some way and that both spheres contribute to the creation and maintenance of specific lifestyles and consciousness, which in turn creates a set of notions for understanding peoples' lives in the workplace and in the community, without implying the subordination of one to the other. It thus cannot be said that the culture of the working



class is merely the reflection or reaction against, whether clearly or obscurely, the relations of production. Nor can it be said that culture in the arena of reproduction is independent of other arenas and just confined to language, dress, ways of occupying houses etc. Instead, the notion of ideology employed in this research revolves around ideas of the nature of social relationships "the basic collective idea and the institutions, manners, habits of thought and intentions that proceed from this"<sup>2</sup>.

As John Urry argues in "The Anatomy of Capitalist Societies", ideology and culture, a set of practices and beliefs, do not exist solely in one sphere. In fact the same sets of practices exist in all levels, and in any one level there is no unique, homogenous set of practices. Earlier in the research (see chapter 2) it was argued, using R. Williams' framework outlined in 'Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory'<sup>2</sup> that the conventional usage of base and superstructure was inadequate as it under-emphasised the role of culture and ideology. Instead the terms base and superstructure were re-evaluated so that each part was seen as containing an internal and interactive dynamism, with elements of ideology existing in each. Thus the notion that social being determines consciousness need not to be understood as implying that 'social being' is a static, fixed abstraction. Rather, that both social being and consciousness are continually exposed to a multiplicity of forces.

In the same way, the notion of distinct levels, economic, political and ideological, whilst being at times a useful conceptual tool, is largely inadequate in that certain issues such as ideology, culture, social relations etc. may become fixed and interpreted within either one level or the interaction of one level with another, thus making it more difficult to see the impact of class struggle. As Urry argues:

"It will be central to my argument that the conventional Marxist topographical metaphors, base and superstructure, or the three layered economy, politics and ideology, are both inadequate. In neither case can we adequately grasp the forms and effects of struggle; by which I mean the multitude of different efforts by which both individuals and groups of individuals struggle to maintain and expand their material conditions of life."<sup>3</sup>

In order to 'grasp the forms and effects of struggles' Urry utilizes and re-assesses the concept of 'civil society' - i.e. the set of social relations that lie between the economy and the state, claiming that:

"a division into the economy, civil society and the state provides a better basis for understanding advanced capitalist societies."<sup>4</sup>

Within the theoretical framework adopted in this research civil society is understood not narrowly as a collection of private, individual needs, but as sets of structured, institutionalised social practices, and is linked both with the economic structure and with the state; that is, civil society is an intermediary between the economy and the state. Both the state and civil society are part of the hegemony of bourgeois society i.e. both are essentially ideological and cultural but it is only within civil society that class struggle is generated and contested. In this context, the term struggle is used in its widest sense and incorporates not only fights for increased pay, improved living conditions etc. but also for the right for self definition, to gain access to power and resources, to gain control over one's own life.

An important point to make here is that not all struggle in civil society is of essential class nature, e.g. divisions exist based on gender, race, sexuality and religious beliefs etc. Although these divisions/struggles are not divorced from class (for those involved are not classless), the forms and outcomes of these struggles are not totally defined by class.

The 'politics of lifestyle' therefore, whilst family based within class and within the material, transcend both these elements and allows a more dynamic interpretation of events in the home and community.

Within this framework, social classes are not seen as the consequences of particular types of economic production, but as the effect of changing social relations - that involves the economic, the political and the ideological, and is experienced within civil society, which therefore in turn becomes the arena in which struggle - in its broadest sense - takes place. Urry, summarizing Gramsci, argues:

"Classes do not manifest themselves within the structure but exist rather as the effects of the three structures at the level of intersubjective social relations. The structures of the economic, the political and the ideological effect a structural determination of social classes. Social classes are then the effect within the field of social relations of these structures ..... the changing relations between the state and society, both in part stem from class struggle and in turn affect the forms that such struggles may take. Thus the reproduction of capitalist societies is crucially dependent upon political and ideological struggle and not simply economic determination."<sup>5</sup>

Thus what is happening in civil society, what forms class struggle is taking at any one time - the 'multitude of different efforts by which individuals and groups of individuals struggle to maintain and expand their material conditions of life' - is a product of past and already existing class struggle/cultural definitions, and is also dynamically re-establishing the definitions of class.

Therefore my concept of community is one which gives full credence to a community being a place where class struggle is generated and contested and the forms of this struggle, manifested in many ways are affected, though not strictly determined, by economic structures. As Bill Williamson writes of the 'arrival' of a mining community to a previously farming village:

"The same moment of change spawned a response among the miners themselves. Through their unions and co-operative societies they built their own institutions distinct from those of the coal company. Through family and kinship they built defensive walls against chance and circumstance, constructing a way of life which was theirs and not simply a reflection of the coal company's plans."<sup>6</sup>

So, in my own community study I shall be emphasising what is commonly called 'the private realm' i.e. marital, familial, home-based relations, as a way of understanding changing social relations. Many sociological studies which attempt to explore capitalist social relations tend to emphasise the 'public realm' and many more discuss and examine the 'private realm' whilst assuming the dominance of the public. Eva Gamarnikov and June Purvis refer to this tendency as the 'over-socialisation' of the public sphere and write:

"Since the focus of male (main) stream sociology is on the public sphere of male concerns, the private realm of the family occupies a contradictory theoretical niche. On the one hand, if the public realm alone is seen as the main concern for sociological construction of what is social, then the private realm, by definition, lies outside the boundaries of the social ..... On the other hand, because the private sphere also encompasses the social organisation of family life, it enters the social through the family-society relationship."<sup>7</sup>

Traditionally, sociological theories of the relationship between the family and society - the private and the public - have established a conceptual hierarchy which places the family in a subordinate or determined position in relation to society. This hierarchical structuring also produces a picture of the family as a unit made up more or less of social parts.

Thus several studies that aim to examine relations in the private sphere start with the premise that the public (male) sphere determines the experience and the politics of the more private and, by implication

less important, lifestyle away from work e.g. "Managers and their Wives" by J. and R. Pahl; "Married to the Job" by J. Finch. Other studies, for example, "Gender and Class Consciousness" by P. Hunt and "Married Women Working" by P. Jephcott et al., which concentrate on women (as opposed to their husbands) and address the question of women working, in a more obscure way still fall into the trap of assuming the omnipotence of the realm of production - the public sphere. For Hunt, a woman who is married is necessarily a housewife/mother, her role is automatically that of reproducer, within her family - the private sphere - her social part is defined by the public sphere of the workplace. Therefore when the woman becomes a worker, an agent in the public sphere, this is analysed in Hunt's study in terms of the effect this has on the woman's 'main' role as wife and mother. Again the implication of this is that the public sphere is the true location of the 'construction of what is social' and the ideology, culture and practices found in the home and the community become mere reflections of the practices in the realm of production.

There is a division between the private and the public, the home and the workplace, both physically and politically, but as I have already argued, this does not mean that there is a conceptual hierarchy between the two - to say that would be to diminish the activities and practices of people (especially those marginalised from production, women with young children, the unemployed, the elderly) in the community. Traditionally much sociology has conceptualised man's role as producer, a seller of his labour power in the workplace, with his home environment becoming somewhere where he is almost 'roleless' but is just serviced and maintained by his wife and eventually replaced by his children. His role in the home is still primarily defined by his role in production just as a married woman in paid work outside the home is still defined by her role in the 'other'

sphere of the home. In this type of analysis, a constructed gender order becomes confused with biological sex and is "located in a naturalistic and timeless reproductive dualism".<sup>7</sup>

A study which attempts to look at the nature, construction and meanings of lifestyles in the community, must overcome these simplistic, hierarchical divisions between 'public and private' and male and female, for such a perception plays down the conflicts and contradictions experienced and manifested as people move between and within spheres. It is for these reasons that I believe it is important - and would be a fruitful approach - to concentrate, in a community study, on married women who work or have worked outside the home. An exploration of the experience of this group of women would provide a picture of the motivation and location of changes in social relations, as they are active participants in both spheres and their politics of lifestyle would represent the conflicts and contradictions that lie within and between the spheres. This is not to imply that other groups in the community, e.g. women who do not work, or men in employment, do not experience contradictions or are excluded from participating in change, in fact part of my community study focuses on the whole population of the community, but that an examination of this specific group within the community, provides us with information about class and gender order and consciousness, both of which have crucial roles to play in the maintenance of dominant capitalist processes and the creation of anti-capitalist lifestyles.

For example, one of the questions I shall be considering is the meaning of tenure within the community. Most conventional theorists (from the present Conservative government to the left wing radicalism of groups such as the Socialist Housing Activist Workshop) argue that the owner occupation

of housing is so expensive a commodity (especially for working class families) that the financial and psychological investment therein necessarily breeds a desire to work hard, without 'needless' disruption, and isolate the home owner from potentially radicalising groups (e.g. tenants groups) and the operations of the state and blatant private profit (in the guise of the landlord), whilst creating the belief that, as a home-owner, they are part of the consensus nation. However a different interpretation is possible. The ability to begin to purchase a house, for many working class families, depends, at least initially, on there being two incomes - that is the employment of married women. Not only would this have an effect on the nature of the workforce, but the women would be contributing a vital part to the family's lifestyle beyond that of the traditional mothers' role. A possible consequent alteration in the gender order and domestic relations in the home might affect the man's role as producer. Further, for many working class families, their current owner occupation, made possible by women working, may be their first experience of this tenure, and the level of control over their home environment and their rise in status, not always available to their parents in rented accommodation, potentially provides opportunities for alternative ways of living and organising their lives in the private sphere.

J.E. and R.M. Pahl have also commented on the overly-deterministic analyses that often result in the hierarchical separation of spheres within sociology and the fact that consequently, actions and meanings become associated with just one sphere, or an element within one sphere. Such as analysis, they argue, leads to sets of assumptions that overlook or even deny the actual essence of the politics of lifestyle:

"The interconnections between (the) spheres are not very clearly articulated. Indeed there is some danger that inexplicable variations in attitudes to work are ascribed to unexplored variables related to the non-work situation; similarly variations in family and community behaviour which are not understood are assumed to have their roots in the world of work. Thus the very fact of being in an academic discipline appears to create blinkers, which direct the gaze to specific problems in specific institutional spheres ..... Indeed there is a current argument which gives added force to this point, which maintains that true individual autonomy is only possible in the interstices between these institutional spheres ..... True autonomy is found, as it were, between the chapters of the text book."<sup>8</sup>

A study which concentrates on people living their lives in a community therefore needs to consider the role of work and other elements of the public sphere and their affect on people's lives in their home environment (i.e. class and gender consciousness), whilst at the same time understanding that the experience of work and the public sphere is very much related to people's lives in the private sphere. This is what I mean by the 'politics of lifestyle' and why I think the 'place and potential' of community must be reassessed and precisely defined.



The Problems of Gaining an Adequate View of the World

"Our problem, in common with all reasearch workers, is to make the best sense of what we have got. We believe that at this stage in our understanding of a complex field, imagination is as useful a tool in aiding understanding as mathematics."<sup>9</sup>

The ultimate aim of community studies, of whatever kind, is to gain an adequate view of the world, meaning a specific world as defined by the researcher. Different tools and approaches are used from statistical analyses to the relation of the subjective interpretation of the respondent. Much has been written about these different techniques and there is probably much more to come and I would agree with Raymond Williams that some of the most accurate and sensitive portrayals of day to day life are to be found not in sociological surveys, but in popular novels and auto-graphical accounts such as Jack Common's 'Kiddar's Luck' and Robert Roberts' 'The Classic Slum'. My own research covers many aspects of the 'world' I have chosen to study and a range of different techniques are to be used. However, before I consider how one looks at a community I believe it is important to consider exactly what is being studied.

I have already emphasised my view of community as dynamic and therefore by implication I am not studying a static entity, but something which is constantly acting and changing. Many community studies, or studies that attempt to examine a particular section of life, are more concerned with capturing a moment in time with a view to understanding the influence and dynamic of a milieu of existing social forces and relations in order to gain an accurate perception and sometimes, to counter other perceptions; for example, the introduction to Jephcott et al's "Married Women Working":

"The married woman who leaves her home each day and goes off to work has become a familiar, if controversial, figure in western society. Some see her as a symbol of freedom, but to others, she is the epitome of irresponsibility and neglect. .... This study is mainly concerned with providing a factual basis for discussion, by reporting what this trend has meant for factory and family in a London community."<sup>10</sup>

There is nothing inherently wrong with this approach as far as it goes, as long as this is what is stated. In fact it can be an important exercise if a discipline is to gain some 'truth' about a current situation. However such studies quickly date as economic and political forces are constantly in flux and many studies provide little ground for assessing what is happening several years after the original study, except perhaps to say that things are different or the same. In important ways we are left to 'start all over again', using the original studies as limited reference documents of historical interest, a snapshot, with varying degrees of accuracy, of a certain situation at a certain time.

Other studies do consciously turn themselves to a historical perspective, seeking to describe and analyse a situation that existed outside their own personal experience, and maybe record it in such a way that was not done at the time. In some ways this cannot be done as 'accurately' as the contemporary studies as the writers are doing their research with hindsight and with political/ideological experiences that separate them from the time they are writing about. Of course in both cases problems of method abound. However again, with the historical studies, this is an important exercise - to make presentable and accessible information (whether objective or subjective) that was previously dissipated, and analyse its significance in its own context, provides the researcher with an idea of changes, motives and a logic for gaining an adequate view of today's world. Again, the danger is that these studies

may make it too easy to directly compare today's world with the world of yesteryear. It is perhaps more pertinent to portray the processes of change, whether of earlier or modern times.

I feel it is important to realise that what is happening now is linked to what was happening before and what will happen next. Such a statement seems obvious enough but the crucial fact is that these links are not accidental or arbitrary, but can in themselves tell us more about the functioning of communities than a 'snapshot' study can. An adequate view of the world lies not in the analysis of frozen moments but in the study of the processes of change.

My own study of a community (I have chosen Westerhope, an old mining village on the outskirts of Newcastle that is now ringed by private estates) covers about 100 years in the village's life, from 1890 to the present day. Within the research I shall be using a range of techniques, from the analysis of historical data and oral history, to a questionnaire survey and observation, to interviewing local women. There will be two 'strands' to the study, one to examine how a locale has changed and the other to examine how the people living there have changed. The population of Westerhope has not been static over the period in question, so as well as tracing the development of the village per se, I will be looking at the histories of the population newly arrived in Westerhope, thus broadening out the usual concept of community study. As stated, the emphasis of the study will be on the processes of change in that community so that I might present an adequate view of the way people live their lives in that specific world today. Part of that presentation will involve 'making the best sense' of what I see, hear and read - the final outcome of the study therefore will involve a degree of imagination as well as more scientific analyses. I do not think this necessarily

devalues the research, it may leave parts open to question and re-interpretation, but I believe it would be a poorer study without it.

In the rest of the chapter, I shall be looking at some research techniques available and examining the approaches used in other community studies. However, I shall not be attempting an exhaustive critique of the whole range of previously written studies, but instead will be considering a few that I see as relevant to my research either because of their subject matter (e.g. Williamson's study of another North Eastern mining village and Jephcott's study on married women in employment),<sup>11</sup> or because of the research techniques used (e.g. Hunt's study which concentrates on informal oral interviews with women). I realise there are other studies that I could have used, but I do not believe that the substitution of one set of books for another would have substantially altered my approach.

### Reconstructing the Past

Like many social scientists, I feel it is important in the studying of communities to try and get beyond ethnographic and/or empirical descriptions of a set of people at a set time<sup>11</sup>. Such descriptions leave us with a rather dull and, to an extent, less than full picture of a community and its functioning. As the Pahls write of their study:

"We suspect that sociology is sometimes disliked, or perhaps feared, because it appears so insulting to people: it implies that one or two variables such as 'years of education received' or 'fathers occupation' determine a large part of people's lives. Such a sociology makes people appear two dimensional and flat.....

We want to go beyond this two dimensional approach, but we were not inclined to simply to extend the list of 'factors' and quantitatively to assess the relative importance of each. In striving for a multi-dimensional sociology we believe that correlations do not constitute explanations; .... that attitudes and behaviour change over time as situations change."<sup>12</sup>

For a start then a community study needs an element of history, some idea of how that community came to acquire its character and identity. Again this enquiry cannot simply be confined to searching out the historical empirical data but requires a qualitative analysis of how people understood the changes they experienced in their lifetimes and how this understanding affected their politics of lifestyle. For this in essence is what a community is - it is more than a geographically defined and socially isolated group of houses, or the interrelation of a set of social institutions - rather it is a place where the changes and movements in society as a whole, are digested and contested in a way that is peculiar to the history of that place and the histories of the people in that place. This generally holds true even if the people do not recognise themselves as living in a community or do not feel the mystical 'vague sense of belonging'. Williamson sums it up thus:

"the notion of community embraces not just the idea of locality or social networks of particular kinds; it refers to the rich mosaic of subjective meanings which people attach - or ..... attached - to the place itself and to the social relationships of which they are a part ..... It is in terms of such meanings that the community can be recognised and the people who live there can recognise themselves. The pattern of these meanings is what constitutes the culture of the community."<sup>13</sup>

Such 'subjective meanings' are acquired over time, through the experiences of the people who live there, experiences often based on struggles in the workplace and attempts to utilize the community as an arena for resistance. In this sense a community is created and constructed - "constructing a way of life which was theirs and not simply a reflection of the coal company's plans"<sup>6</sup>, and because this construction is based on capitalist social relations then it will be permeated with class and gender relationships that are constantly in flux.

In my historical research I have looked at the 'creation' of the community of Westerhope on the arrival of the miners late last century and traced through the changes and movements, within the community of Westerhope and within wider society, in order to understand the current 'pattern of meanings'. However to say that a community was 'created' is not to imply that Westerhope was (is) a static entity that was, once upon a time, made and finished - an entity that collapsed and disappeared when, say, the nearby pits closed and the new private estates were built. I do not wish to look at the history of Westerhope in isolation from its present, even though the area has seen some radical changes, and I do not intend to reconstruct the past merely to make interesting, but undynamic comparisons with the present. Williamson argues that the disappearance of the mines from Throckly led to the 'disappearance' of the mining community except as "images in fading memories".<sup>13</sup> However I propose that

a community can survive radical changes, as these radical changes become part of the continual creation of patterns of meanings themselves. Rather than concentrate on tangible historical events as starting and ending a community, I want to locate and reconstruct the practice of people and the meanings they attached to what happened around them, the construction of 'a way of life which was theirs'. To my mind this represents peoples' attempts to create a meaningful sense of the world around them and as that world changed (and to some extent was changed by them), so did their range of meanings. Adopting such a model of community means that unless people stop thinking and feeling, then a community cannot 'die' just because a pit closes. Rather it is restructured and reformed, and the important elements involved in this remain the same i.e. the experience of work, the role of place and the experience of reproduction.

Although the emphasis in the historical research is on the creation of subjective patterns of meanings through the processes of change, there is also a need to examine the social institutions and their relationship to, and operation within, the locale, and the influence of society as a whole. So as well as trying to establish what the local population was feeling and thinking at moments of change (for example, through interviewing older residents, reading old local newspapers, looking at the practices of local institutions like the Co-op), it is important to examine the operations and policies of other, more institutionalised, groups (e.g. the coal company, the local district council, local landowners), as well as considering wider movements (e.g. the impact of the First World War, general changes in economic and occupational structures). Some of these may seem a long way from the notion of a community study, but a community, whilst in many ways is unique and peculiar to itself, does not exist in isolation, but gains its identity from its struggles with the 'world outside'. As Melling

observes, an understanding of change is dependent upon .....

"the dialectical relationship between general development and specific situations, between objective conditions and subjective experiences."<sup>14</sup>

Of course the use of historical data is fraught with problems and difficulties concerning reliability. People interviewed may remember imperfectly, records may be biased for reasons no longer appreciated or recognised and data may be distorted as it was often collated for different reasons than that for which it is being used now. It is hoped that the meticulous use of such materials, with an awareness, not only of its limitations, but also its richness, and a measure of common sense and imagination will lead to an account of the growth and development of Westerhope that can be challenged but not totally dismissed.

As mentioned earlier, and to recap briefly here, the historical input of a community study involves not only the examination of the development of Westerhope itself but also its residents. A large proportion of the population I shall be studying, i.e. the residents of the new private estates, have only been living in the area for about 20 years, and considerably less in many cases. On coming to Westerhope then, they would be bringing their own 'patterns of meanings' acquired in other locales and other sets of circumstances and these need to be examined. Part of the study will be analysing how this influx of differing patterns of meanings affect the community of Westerhope and how the experience of settling and living in Westerhope affects the politics of lifestyle of the newer residents. I am not denying that the 'old' community of Westerhope would be changed by this new population and would, in important ways, be different from what it was. However this does not necessarily imply that the community has 'died' - the process of being a community still goes on even



if the manifestations of that community alter, and that process is still governed by the class and gender relationships that shaped the 'old' Westerhope. Those relationships may change but their determining influence does not.

Reconstructing the Present

"...unhappily for the social scientists, if perhaps fortunately for the rest of the world, most people do not go around thinking of themselves, their lives and the way they lead them in the same terms that social scientists use to describe them."<sup>15</sup>

The vast majority of community studies, whether done in recent years or a couple of decades ago, attempt to illustrate what is (was) happening at the time of writing. Of course many studies tend to concentrate on one or more particular aspects of the lives of the population they are studying, as a definitive analysis of all aspects would be an extremely awesome and time consuming task. For example, M. Stacey's details study of Banbury "is the outcome of three year's field work and some six years spend analysing and sifting the data".<sup>16</sup> The aspect/s or approach selected usually reflect what that research perceives as one of the crucial determinants of life in that community, from which they can draw up a picture of the community as a whole. Thus, community studies are not really a reflection, or mirror image, of a certain community, but a reconstruction based on the exploration of a number of variables.

This reconstruction of the present is likely to be more 'lifelike' if the basic assumptions and preconceptions held by the researcher as to what is important to study, are not too inflexible. Although some idea of a framework of basic questions is needed in order for the study to have a structure, there should also be room for the research to be guided by those being researched, especially as it is their present that is being reconstructed. As the Pahls write:

"We have tried to record the questions and problems which interested us in the early stages of the research in order to show how the material that we gathered dissolved some questions but raised others. We make no apology for our study being shaped by our material."<sup>17</sup>

Most studies admit that this is what happens whether it is foreseen or not. However rather than this 'shaping by the material' being an almost accidental by-product of the research, I believe it is a crucial part of the research process in community studies and should be accounted for at the outset. This is not to deny or underemphasise the manipulation and influence of the researcher on the final outcome of the study. Information gathering by social scientists often involves 'false' and/or unique situations that are generally outside the usual experience of the population being studied, so a degree of what is being gathered could be something unique to the reserach situation. Again rather than this being an admitted but inevitable fault in this sort of work, it can become a positive element in the reconstruction process if the researcher is willing to use, instead of trying to play down the effect of their presence:

"I have no doubt that in the course of talking with people I have altered their perception of their own situation..... In my view this does not mean that (their) views as reported are less authentic because they have been mediated by the research experience. To me the research experience was a learning situation which to an extent helped to unveil aspects of reality which previously were hidden. And this was as much a consciousness-raising experience for me as it was for some of the people interviewed. Although I started out with a general theoretical conception it took shape in the course of the fieldwork."<sup>18</sup>

As well as addressing the problem of the actual mechanics of doing the study itself, there is also the issue of the relevance of the study to the wider world to be considered. The question remains, are the findings of the study only relevant to the community being studied, or can they be

generalised to cover other communities and answer questions about them. A study which is confined to and by its own material is of limited value, even though it may contain a great deal of information about the group studied. However a generalisation of the results is an extremely precarious business especially if the research emphasises issues such as subjectivity and uniqueness. As I discussed in the earlier part of the chapter, I believe the answer to this not unimportant question lies in the purpose of the research. My own purpose is how a collection of different and continually changing forces affect the understanding and meanings people evolve within particular communities, and how these specific meanings and cultures in turn affect their relationship with the forces of capital. That is, it is the processes of change, rather than the tangible manifestations, that I am interested in, and these processes mostly operate throughout society, even though particular manifestations may differ.

The framework of basic questions adopted for this research centred, as implied before, on the class and gender relationships in the arena of reproduction and most of the material used will be accessed through oral interviews, supported and confirmed by the analysis of census and survey data, and by limited observation. It is hoped that the emphasis on the fairly informal oral interviews will allow the respondents to 'shape' the way the research goes, to a certain extent, by choosing to talk more freely about some subjects than others or even introducing other topics they think relevant. Such an approach may not leave the research with neat, comparable sets of interviews, but it may go some way to reducing the artificiality and one-sidedness of the interview situation and elicit a more realistic, if more complex, picture of peoples' understanding of

their lives and the influences of it. (For a full discussion of this issue see A. Oakley "Interviewing Women: a contradiction in terms" in H. Roberts "Doing Feminist Research"<sup>19</sup>).

One study which makes extensive use of oral interviews is Pauline Hunt's "Gender and Class Consciousness". In her work Hunt interviewed 36 people (mainly couples) in an attempt to explore the integration of domestic and industrial production, and how the two sexes are differently related to this double production process. Her approach is one which relies heavily on the interview material and although her work lacks any notion of the respondents having a 'past' that might have influenced their behaviour and attitudes now and she is almost too ready to ascribe certain behaviour patterns to the women because of their role as wife/mother (qv), she does attempt to 'reconstruct' the present world of her respondents in terms of their gender and class consciousness. Contrasting her approach with that of Mary Chamberlain ("Fen Women"), whose work she sees as without theoretical structure and limited to descriptive records, she writes:

"....I make fairly extensive use of interview material.... (it) ..... is used as illustration, and is subject to interpretation, and the quotations are selected on the basis of what seems to me to be of significance in terms of a theoretical conception of the role and consequence of the place domestic production occupies in society as a whole.

Although no work is without some theoretical perspective which influences the selection and presentation of the material, Mary Chamberlain's book gives the impression of providing a record of what the Fen women had to say about themselves. By contrast, in the work presented here the words of Silverdale people are used as a means whereby I can say something about them."<sup>20</sup>

Hunt's work is important in that she does attempt to reconstruct class and gender relationships and analyse them, without being too structured (and therefore, inhibiting to the respondents) in her research techniques.

However she makes little use of the notion of community in the analysis of these relationships.

Dennis et al's study of a mining village in the 1950s ("Coal Is Our Life") does utilize the notion of community when looking at class, gender and familiar relationships amongst miners in Ashton. Many of the areas of questioning (e.g. the division of labour in the home) and the style of research (close observation and interviewing of the miners and their families) provide several starting points for other informed community studies. However the emphasis of the research was the occupational structure in the village and its affect on 'home life'. Women are conceptualised in the study as 'miner's wives' first and foremost and there is little discussion of the creation of those roles nor is there any sense that the roles may change.

"Married Women Working" by Jephcott et al, addresses the question of the impact of changing trends in women's employment and the effect on their traditional role of wife and mother. The study also examines the influence and impact of the community on their decision and ability to work outside the home. Again the study provides many important ideas and suggestions that would be interesting to follow up in my own research, and the range of research techniques used (empirical work, interviewing, observation, historical research) give the study a broad scope though again the employment aspect of the study is given precedence over the community and there is little notion of the womens' experience in the home and community being dynamic or creative.

In fact this hierarchical division between production and reproduction, public and private, discussed early in the chapter, is evident in most of the studies I've seen that attempt to reconstruct the worlds of various places and groups of people. The studies undertaken by Williamson and Hunt are notable exceptions to this as they both examine the impact of work in community life and the impact of community life on peoples' relation to work (Williamson on men's work and Hunt on women's ). This will be a central theme in my community study and will provide the general theoretical framework for the research with the emphasis being on the way changes in occupational structures and community structures have influenced this relationship. The methodology of the research and the selection and critical analysis of the techniques used will mainly be contained in the relevant text.

## Conclusion

Before the start of the next chapter - the study of a community - I would like to summarise the main points of this chapter. I started by arguing that what happens in the home and community, the sorts of choices people make about the way they live their lives and the opinions they hold, constitute a way of dealing with what happens in the world outside the community. This 'way of dealing' is not strictly a straightforward defence (or escape) from the realm of production, nor an autonomous movement that has grown separately from the world of work. Instead, the culture of a community is a part of the relationship between capital and labour - a product of past and existing class struggle, which is at times defensive, at times offensive, but always an intrinsic part of the continual re-establishment of the definitions of class.

It is thus crucial to examine community in relation to changes outside the community (i.e. in the economic structure and relations of production), without implying the subordination of the former to the latter. Often the public sphere is seen as the creator and instigator of all relations, the force which dictates the form of life in the community - whether this is explicitly stated or not. Such an approach necessarily plays down the role of women (who are summarily written off as housewives or housewives who happen to work) and, to a large extent, the important relationship - which is interactive and dynamic - between the public and private sphere is often missed.

What is lacking from many community studies, and what I hope to rectify in my study, is an accurate understanding of how the community relates to the wider world. To gain this understanding it is vital to



explore exactly what is relevant to study in this type of research. A 'snapshot' study tells us little of value about the social functioning of a community apart from that which is currently overt. To gain a fuller picture it is necessary to give full credence to the role of community in changing social relations and examine the processes by which those changes came about. By looking at these underlying processes, as well as their manifestations, a wider idea and understanding of the rationale behind changing social relations may be gained and the research should be thus adapted.

Of course it is relatively easy to say what a community study should or should not be, or what the point of the study is in the first place. It is a lot harder to go out and achieve the aims, however theoretically worthy they may be. As social researchers we seek an adequate view of the world - a detailed portrayal of a certain section of the population - so we can identify and examine the important, determining aspects involved in social functioning. A desire to be objective, pertinent and relevant to the wider world has led to a tendency to make 'scientific', not only the methods of research, but also the community itself. Elements of community become isolated so as to become measurable and quantifiable, but it is often doubtful, however objective and accurate the measurements, exactly what it is being measured and if indeed it is worth measuring. It is therefore important not to be too obsessed by numbers and percentages, for these elements are often concentrated on at the expense of other, equally crucial, research methods, namely imagination, common sense and a feeling or understanding for the people being studied. This of course makes the role of researcher an intrinsic element of the research process - the end product is undeniably the researcher's 'adequate view of the world'. Again I would state that, as long as it is acknowledged, this is

not a flaw in the research process, for I am researching the processes by which people in a certain community came to understand and shape their world and in doing so I become a part of the process that I am studying.

A final point. I have just acknowledged that the researcher has an influencing role in a community study but there is more to it than that. A researcher is not just a researcher - as a subject is not just a subject, there is no single identifiable, identical class of people who are researchers. If we say that people are different from each other (and therefore worthy of study because of varying experiences), then we have to say that researchers are different from each other for the same reasons. If this was not the case there would be no need for social research because we would all automatically know all about each other.

For most of its history, sociological research has been dominated by men - mainly white and middle class, and their subjects have generally been (at least in this country) white working class men. Many feminist researchers (e.g. Ann Oakley<sup>19</sup> E. Gamarnikov<sup>7</sup> Angela McRobbie<sup>21</sup>) have commented on the effect this has had on current structures, styles and outcome of research undertaken. These writers emphasise the patriarchal ideologies that underpin the approaches adopted, ideologies that became even more apparent when it became more 'fashionable' to choose women as research subjects.

I am undertaking my community study as a white working class woman, and my main subjects (i.e. sources of information) will be mostly white, working class women. This has an affect on the way I see them, the way they see me, and the way we all see (and experience) the world around us - an effect that would be different if I was a man, or black. I think there

is a recognition of shared interest that facilitates and directs the course of the research, and that is an illuminating and positive element. It is a shared interest that relates to our experiences in society in terms of our gender, class and our race/culture. Yet these experiences themselves are differential, with other factors (such as education, health, familial relationships, age etc.) playing an important part. In the case of my own family for example, my two sisters lead lives very similar to those of the women in Westerhope (i.e. living in owner occupied property on an estate, married, in steady employment), whereas my lifestyle, shaped by the educational opportunities I have had, has diverged in many ways from this path. These divergent experiences affect the way we understand the world as groups of working class women - they alter but do not totally eradicate our shared interest.

However, to merely state that women talk more openly to other women is to over-simplify a complex issue and denies the contradictions and power inequalities that still exist. The researcher/researched relationship is unequal; women subjects tend to talk more out of deference, a sense of being flattered and a willingness to serve, that is part of their imposed gender role; and women researchers often stake their self respect and reputation in discovering 'new evidence' because of their persistent vulnerability in the male world of academia. In terms of my community study, it matters that this researcher is a woman and her subject is a woman, but it also matters that this woman is a researcher and that that woman is her subject.

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CHAPTER FIVE

Westerhope: the Construction  
of a Community

## Introduction

"In about the middle of the 18th century there was 9 farms on the East Denton Estate and 28 coal pits. Black Swine and Red Cow Farms were two of them in Westerhope, but they did not call it Westerhope then, it was called West Kenton. No less than 7 farms have been demolished in a 4 mile stretch, from Todds Nook, Newcastle, to Westerhope in less than 50 years, and nearly all their fields are built upon"

W. Allison Journal, 1948<sup>1</sup>

Westerhope is situated to the west of Newcastle on high ground that overlooks the denes and small valleys which cut into the steep southward slope to the river Tyne. The area has always been prime agricultural land and from the middle ages onwards numerous collieries were developed to exploit the many coal seams available at shallow depth beneath the thin coating of boulder clay, shale and sandstone.<sup>2</sup> In its long history, the locale now known as Westerhope, has existed as a rural, farming village, a mining community and, later, as a large 'dormitory' suburb for the city of Newcastle. Where once it was a physically isolated group of farms and houses, it is now practically indiscernable from West Newcastle, Denton and Walbottle. It would therefore be misleading to define the community of Westerhope purely on terms of geographical space, - i.e. that all the meanings and values of that community originate and are perpetuated within certain measurable boundaries.<sup>3</sup> Rather the notion of community utilized here embraces the idea of locality and the subjective, special meanings people attach to the locality, which are formed by experiences within and outside that locality, and the idea of the influence of broader, less localised events and elements. What follows in this chapter is an attempt to present a potted history of the locale, emphasising the changing social relations and the effect and experience of change on the 'patterns of meaning' that define the community.

It is hard to be exact about population changes in Westerhope due to its initial incorporation with Newburn and other later boundary changes. However, it is possible to state that there has been a very strong trend towards growth in the area, for example, in the period 1931-1951 whilst the population of Newcastle upon Tyne grew by just 2%, that of Westerhope increased by a staggering 80%, a figure too high to be accounted for by minor boundary changes. Similarly, in 1971-1981 whilst the population of Newcastle fell by nearly 10% Westerhope's rose by 41%.<sup>4</sup> The vast majority of the latter increase came to Westerhope to live on the large new private estates, whilst the former generally settled on the inter-war council estates built in the area. The area has grown rapidly over its life and has always been an interesting, complex, changing interaction between widely divergent interests, from strong landed interests to the labour dominated Newburn Urban District Council; from powerful locally based business interests to the 'progressive' Newcastle City Council.

The area has also seen a great deal of change, not merely in a physical sense, but in the type of people who live there in terms of their background and occupations. In a more general sense, increased mobility and the decreasing influence of local factors (for example, the majority of housing is controlled by regional or national institutions rather than local landlords; welfare services operate from Newcastle; few people are employed locally) means that people are no longer bound by geographical limits but rather live a substantial part of their lives outside Westerhope. Clearly then the current population of Westerhope is very different to population of 100 years ago and not only that but the population has changed itself within that time span. There is little point therefore in merely comparing today's community with that of 100 years ago without charting the series of changes that have occurred over Westerhope's life.



Today's population may not be as geographically isolated as generations before but this does not imply that the importance of locality has decreased or that the community has died. Rather the community has undergone a series of changes and the meaning of locality has altered.

The information for this study has mainly come from a combination of documentary evidence (e.g. newspapers, council minutes, local historical accounts) and informal interviews with those active - in different senses - in the area, e.g. councillors, the MP, ministers, estate agents, builders, older and new residents. The two sets of sources are used together, not merely for verification and confirmation - for at times there was not much to choose between the inaccuracies of the written data and that of the 'remembered' material. Rather the documentary data provides a context against which the themes and feelings that came from interviews could be understood. As stated in the last chapter it is at this point in the reconstruction of the past (and the present) that imagination and empathy on the part of the researcher becomes a crucial part of the research process. As Williamson puts it:

"My contention is that to portray faithfully the experiences of people requires imagination and empathy. The techniques available to us as members of society which enable us to take the role of another person, to see the world how others see it, thereby helping us to understand them, are techniques essential to historical and sociological work."<sup>5</sup>

#### Westerhope's Early Development 1890-1939

Before 1890 Westerhope as such did not exist as a separate township but only as a group of farms, the main one being Red Cow, to the west of Kenton, on land owned by the Duke of Northumberland, giving the area a rural aristocratic pedigree that it has never really lost. During the last

quarter of the 19th century the expansion of the railways, the prosperity of the city entrepreneurs and the changing structure of work and home (see earlier work on Arthurs Hill and references articles by writers such as Leonore Davidoff), had led to an increasing flow of the more wealthy Newcastle elements to the country suburbs, to join the farmers and farm-workers who sparsely populated the area to the west of the city. This flow was facilitated and encouraged by the Bell family who were employed as estate managers by the Duke of Northumberland. One member of the family, Seymour Bell, used his aristocratic and business connections and actively canvassed Newcastle business people to ascertain "probability of and demand for" speculative building. On receiving a favourable response he wrote in 1876 to a financier friend a "Memorandum as to the adaptability of ground west of Newburn, as sites for villa residences and dwellings, in consequence of application for leave to build and inquiries likely to lead to other negotiations" in which Bell states:

"From the early provision of the railway (Scotswood-Newburn-Wylam) I anticipated the probability of Building Speculation being turned this way. By the facility of the Railway Station it is brought nearer than any other picturesque suburb of Newcastle and as near the common place district of Benton which has recently attracted a number of Newcastle people."<sup>6</sup>

It was through these 'applications' and 'negotiations' that the Bell family gained the leasehold to land around Westerhope that, over a hundred years later, it is still developing,

Several villas were built in the area of Westerhope, attracting such people as James Bainbridge, a very successful local merchant, and the owners and higher management of local quarries and coal mines that were starting to be developed in the area. Later, as the village expanded, these villas on

Highfield Road, became known as 'gaffer's row'. The establishment of a local 'gentry' before the more humble residents arrived had an important impact on the nature of the village as it developed. As will be seen in a moment, it was the people in these villages who speculatively built 'cottages' for local workers, so the village for them not only represented a status symbol (i.e. living in a picturesque suburb) but also a financial investment and enterprise. It was very much these motives that dictated the nature and character of the village that thereupon evolved. One of the 'gaffers' living on Highfield Road had a different kind of enterprise in mind. Joseph Wakinshaw was a northern business man with a distinctive philanthropic bent - a local newspaper described him thus:

"A gentlemen to whom the north country owes much for practical measures of social reform. He was profoundly interested in politics with a decided radical leaning .... he became a pioneer in the movement for small holdings, and many an owner who would otherwise have been landless was enabled, by his agency, to satisfy his land hunger. His method was to form societies which acquired local estates, afterwards disposing of them in lots among members."

Wakinshaw has already been active in West Newcastle, especially in the Fenham Nurseries area and in 1890 he headed a syndicate - the Northern Allotment Society - which bought 61 acres of the Red Cow farm, aiming to develop it into small holdings of one quarter acre each with a house on each plot. The moral overtones of the plan are to be seen in the prohibition of "pawnbrokers and public houses", and for the Northern Allotment Society the area became a utopian symbol, literally 'the hope of the west' - as a local newspaper reported in 1891:

"Altogether the capabilities of the Red Cow freeholds to enable the owners and their families to live homestead lives in good air, with gardens well stocked, with poultry in plenty and other products of culture, are very evident.... The movement from congested towns to the country in its purity .... a migration for some years past almost monopolised by millionaires .... Perhaps the Red Cow freeholds may become banners or ensigns ... a partial solution of the dreadful crux question of the day .... the slums and overcrowding in dwellings."<sup>8</sup>

However this ideal was never realised, there was no mass migration of workers from the city. Only a few local farmworkers were enabled to gain their freeholds (some starting market gardens that exist today) before the Northern Allotment Society, in financial difficulties, put the Red Cow estate up for auction. A substantial proportion of the land was bought by the villa residents (including Bainbridge and a Joseph Bell, a descendant of Seymour). The new owners proceeded to indulge in speculation, building a couple of rows of small cottages to rent to local farm and market garden workers. They also probably perceived a growing lucrative market in providing houses for the miners of neighbouring villages. It is important to emphasise here the early involvement of the Bell family in the development of Westerhope; as in many ways the nature of the growth of the village tells us as much about the development of 'housing professionals' as it does about the village itself. The speculative building of the private estates by the Bell family (i.e. Bellway) in the <sup>19</sup>60's onwards is generally perceived by the older residents as almost an 'intrusion' in the life of the village. However what is not often acknowledged is that the houses in the older part of the village were also speculatively built by the Bell family for precisely the same reasons - i.e. it is a pleasant area which would attract workers with relatively good incomes. The tenures and types of housing the Bells now deal with may have differed but their rationale for exploiting this area, has not. Of course another crucial

difference is in the way the Bell family are presented to the local residents. In the early years the village residents would see the family responsible for the building of their homes (who were of course also their landlords too) almost daily, whereas now this relationship is far more obscure and the family interest in the area is hidden behind a range of business guises (i.e. Bellway builders, Northern Rock Building Society, Bell, Noble, Elliott Insurance Brokers). The depersonalisation of the relationship between house builder/financier and occupant and the consequent impact on the community, is one example of the effect of national trends on local situations, the relationship between "objective conditions and subjective experiences".<sup>9</sup>

Another important participant at the auction of the Red Cow estate was the North Walbottle Coal Company. At the turn of the century this company, who had many other pits in the area, sunk two new shafts in the vicinity of Westerhope and, as production increased, it became evident that the coal company could no longer rely on private enterprise to house the excess of immigrant of coal workers (who had come from Durham and further afield) who were not housed at Walbottle or Throckley. Although the Coal Company put in the highest bid for the land, the sale was halted when Wakinshaw's group found out who the bidder was, probably because the local 'gentry' feared the influx of miners and miners housing would 'downgrade' the village. Local historical sources reveal that when the Coal Company did manage to acquire some land for building, opposition was voiced on the grounds that the numbers of cottages and their external appearance was not in keeping with the image of the village. Eventually the company managed to overcome opposition by hiring Joseph Bell to build three rows of 'superior' miners' cottages which had extensive gardens. Like the majority of building in those times, the streets built were named after directors of the mining company.

Although the population of Westerhope before the influx of miners was very small, their importance must not be underestimated as they set a structure on the village that still remains now and had an effect on the integration of the miners. The area was very rural, and still the now very much larger village is surrounded by farms and market gardens. In fact it was the emphasis on agriculture that helped the miners and local farm-workers to integrate so well, as they both took part in vegetable and flower shows that still proliferate. The village from its earliest days was seen as being 'superior' (n.b. Wakinshaw's preference for it on the grounds of its 'purity') and patronage was very strong - as can be evidenced in the naming of the early streets;

"Until Westerhope expanded the houses in the village were not referred to as such and such a street or avenue but were referred to as 'Brooks Building' (i.e. built by Brook)."<sup>10</sup>

.....and links with its autocratic past still exist:

"The present owner of Hillheads Farm is a Mr. R.A. Arthur and there has been a farm on this site for at least five hundred years. Mr. Arthur's family has had the longest connection of any family in that time. The previous owners was the Duke of Northumberland and the Duke's crest is still on the farm wall."<sup>11</sup>

This air of superiority - of being better off than the surrounding mining villages and the city - has continued throughout the village's development. There has always been a certain amount of pride in the superiority of the village and a tendency to jealously guard this from attack by outsiders. The severe shortage of accommodation in Northumberland in the second decade of this century (qv) was, according to local residents "bad, but nowhere near as bad as Newburn, we had bigger and better houses you see"<sup>12</sup>. The private houses built since the 1950's have always, according to the local estate agents, been in great demand and had a certain status

attached to them. Indeed by far the largest developers in the area (Bellway Ltd.) have chosen Westerhope as the location for their most expensive and exclusive estate, St. John's, and are loath to build anything less than two bedroomed houses in the area (i.e. the one bedroomed starter home or uniflats as being developed by other contractors in the region).

This feeling of being 'better off' than their neighbours may be one of the factors accounting for the relative moderation of the local miners' lodge. The local shafts were quite prosperous and unofficial strikes were unheard of until the 1930's. The influx of miners in the early years of this century did not cause much disruption in this rural community and there does not seem to have been any strong distinction made between the mining community and local farm workers. Although the colliery cottages were built on the west extremity of the village, a substantial proportion of miners took up the cottages built in the centre of the village by the villa residents and market gardeners (especially as the miners usually had to wait 15 years for a colliery cottage). Rather the distinction in the village was between workers and the large farmers, business families, professionals and colliery managers. Usually the relationship between the two groups was that of deference and patronage, but spatially and attitudinally separate, their relationship quickly erupted into antagonism during the official strikes of 1921 and 1926.<sup>13</sup> A local account of the history of Westerhope Methodist Chapel (founded 1901) states, concerning the period 1900-1920:

"The miner now of course was making his presence felt in the chapel, with the bosses tending to go to the Whorlton (C of E) Church. Miners were coming onto the Board of Trustees and combining well with the small scale farmer."<sup>14</sup>

However this easy integration of the miners into the life of the village does not imply that their arrival had no impact or created any changes. Their sheer numbers meant that trade increased in the area and several new shops and businesses opened up in the village. The miners themselves took part in this development, by opening a local branch of the Throckley Co-operative Society which acted as a focus for the social life of the village and which played a major role during the strikes. The arrival of the miners also led to the first corporation bus and tram links being made between Westerhope and Newcastle. As well as bringing the facilities that provided the basic framework for the post 1945 expansion, the miners brought a higher standard of living to the area and other, less obvious but crucial changes, as a local ex-miner stated:

"the miners brought more of an intimacy to the place - you had neighbours .... people to run to if you needed help."<sup>12</sup>

The sense of community amongst the miners was very similar to that in the neighbouring village of Throckley as described by Bill Williamson in his book "Class, Culture and Community". There was a great deal of sharing of resources amongst families, a strong streak of self reliance and a dependency on the unpaid work of women. A limited income and a paucity of services meant that mining families had to be versatile and different families 'specialized' in different skills, for example the mother of one resident I talked to made shoes for all the children in the terrace whilst her neighbour (a widow) was a resourceful decorator. Food, from a home bred pig to a pan of broth, was shared amongst neighbours and there was very little rivalry in terms of the possession of commodities, mainly because everyone was on more or less the same income. The brutality of pit life also brought people together - the high incidence of injury at the local pits and the poor record of official compensation payments increased



this solidarity and whilst the men were happy to see their pay docked by the union to provide financial support to widows, the women were careful to ensure that any work available, such as washing, mending and decorating, went to their widowed friends. This struggle to cope on limited and often precarious incomes was another factor that helped the miners and the local farmworkers to identify with each other, for the farmworkers too suffered from the restrictions of tied accommodation and were likely to incur disabling injury. To a large extent this streak of self reliance among the miners was encouraged by the Coal Company, who provided the miners with allotments and/or large gardens. Of course this kept wages lower but it also represented a stable and relatively untouchable part of the miners' income and thus worked against the Coal Company in times of industrial conflict. At this time (i.e. the first three decades of this century) the employment structure of the village was almost exclusively male. The local co-operative store did employ some younger women as counter assistants or in the offices and such employment was deemed very respectable and a great achievement. However, in the case of the women it tended to be temporary, ceasing upon their marriage. Other young women were sent into service in the 'grand houses' in Newcastle until they too were married. Once married few women worked, not because there was no financial need to do so (in fact many women spent their days making rugs etc. to help make ends meet) but chiefly because their labour in the home was indispensable. Servicing a mining family was a time consuming and, given the different shifts worked, intricate task. A woman who had a husband and sons working in the pits and other children at home, simply had no time to leave the home, given the constant supply of hot meals etc. it was her job to provide. Even shopping was an infrequent occurrence, with most stores operating an order and delivery service door to door. The chapel, the Co-op Guild and rug making

evenings, provided the only social gathering for women, all of which reinforced and emphasised their role as wives and home-makers.

Perhaps because of their immediate involvement in the management of the family income and home, the women of Westerhope were "apt to be more militant"<sup>13</sup> when the local miners struck in 1921 and 1926. There was a great deal of hardship during these strikes, especially the latter one, and many people, including the Allisons who I interviewed, were reduced to digging coal, sawing branches off the 'gaffers' trees and stealing food from the market gardens, as well as resorting to the more legitimate channels of parish relief, extended Co-op credit and the union-provided soup kitchens. To the more dubious activities the local police usually turned a blind eye - in return for an occasional bag of coal etc. but, despite this level of support, there was a great deal of bitterness between the miners and the Coal Company and people's memories of the strikes and the hardships suffered are still vivid.

However, despite the hardship and the determination displayed, the mining lodge at Westerhope, was very moderate compared with other lodges. The lodge had a trouble free record, the miners had been relatively prosperous and the standard of living (especially the housing) in the village was relatively good, creating a breed of miners who were determined but not militant, moderate but not conservative. During the strike for example the unions operated a policy of 'silent intimidation' when dealing with non striking miners (usually imported from other areas) changed shifts and singing hymns all night outside their houses.

A certain amount of communism was to reach the village in the '30s but for the first three decades of this century it was a respectable, artisan-based labourism that dominated. It was almost as if the miners although recognising their class basis and need for solidarity, could not quite evade the aristocracy and notions of superiority and privilege that their locale was steeped in. The social functioning of mining communities has been documented elsewhere and it is not the intention of this study to produce a detailed account of life in such a community. The intention rather is to assess the impact of change on people living in a specific locale and how patterns of living in that community help the residents to resist, adapt to and/or contest these changes.

Neighbourhood support, between the mining families themselves and the local agricultural workers and the mining families, and the wider institutions such as the unions, co-operative society and the chapel, provided a great deal of support against the difficulties inherent in those types of employment and a more 'solid ground' for coping with the contemporary capital labour relation. Implicit in this, at one and the same time offensive and defensive, structuring of social relations, was the central role of women, a role that was almost entirely focussed on the home. In many ways the women, as wives and mothers, enabled the mining community to be, and continue to be, what it was - the way of life created and maintained in Westerhope was very much a product of the work of women. However, the miners did not confine this impetus "to maintain and expand their material conditions of life"<sup>15</sup> to their own tight knit community. They sought change and improvement for themselves and their class, though being a somewhat moderate group of people, they found most expression through the official and 'legitimate' channels of the local council. The changes that occurred in the social and economic structure of this country after

the Great War, had a great effect on the community of Westerhope, and the way these changes were assimilated and contested is indicative of the nature this area was evolving.

Miners, Landowners and the City - the shifting ground of the inter war years

As stated, the miners of Westerhope and other surrounding villages, became involved in local politics soon after their mass arrival in the area. Although there had been struggles in the council chamber before the war (namely around public health issues) it was in the period immediately following the war that most activity was centred. The plethora of social legislation engendered by the war (mostly concerning housing) and the growing domination of the miners on the local district council (Newburn Urban District Council), and the consequent entrenchment of the landowners and businessmen on the County Council, meant that conflict was more likely and more common. Most of the debate of this period centred on the financing and building of housing in the villages in this part of Northumberland. Prior to 1919 the County Council had resisted the building of houses financed from public funds (made available by the limited housing legislation of the late 19th century), though it had been keen to see the expansion of the local coal fields.

With the appearance of the 1919 Housing Act, the miners were finally armed with adequate legislation and the fight to gain decent housing and consequent control over the future development of the villages, began in earnest. At this time the County Council finally conceded that publicly-financed houses for rent should be built, but its inherent snobbery was not easily overcome and it was still reluctant to relinquish control over the area - as witnessed in the council minutes:

"The power to build housing is not a general power but is limited to the provision of houses for the working classes, it is not easy to say who are the working class, but for the present it may be considered that a police officer is within the expression."<sup>16</sup>

The regional housing survey undertaken in 1919 showed that within Newburn Urban District Council, one third of the houses were overcrowded and that the area needed one thousand new houses. Whilst the County Council insisted that these houses be built by a combination of "respective local authorities and by private enterprise"<sup>16</sup>, Newburn UDC was one of only two authorities in Northumberland which built the total required number of houses solely under local authority schemes. Although the two councils clashed over the allocation of the building programmes, there were other issues that created no conflict whatsoever and highlight the allegiances that were to become increasingly evident. Despite the progressive gains made by the District Council (i.e. building their full allocation of housing with no interference from private enterprise) there was nothing in the style and allocation of the new houses in Westerhope that could have displeased the County Council. Several 'crescents' of very superior housing were built, each with their own very large garden - reflecting and maintaining the rural image and the emphasis on self-help. Also the large semi-detached houses were, despite the good bus links with Newcastle, almost totally allocated to people who worked locally in 'respectable' jobs such as miners, police officers, shop workers. So whilst ideas of method differed, the desired end product of the building programme was similar for both the Labour-dominated District Council and the Tory dominated County Council. Once the propertied and monied interests on the County Council had conceded the point of funding building from the public purse there was little conflict.

Both groups felt the area deserved high standard housing (unlike Tory councils in the city who were satisfied with the building of basic, but sanitary, tenements) and at this point in time the interests of the groups superficially co-incided. However the underlying differences (based on class differences) were becoming more apparent when the building programme began to expand in the '30's and beyond.

As the inter war years developed, the issue of housing remained increasingly contentious. The experience of the two major strikes had highlighted the disadvantages of colliery housing for the miners, the hardship of those strikes and the following years of depression meant that over-crowding and worsening conditions once again appeared in the colliery houses of Westerhope and the lifting of rent control led to increased rents for those living in the privately-rented cottages (see Newburn Urban District Council Housing Committee Minutes). This being the case, the spacious, secure and local authority controlled council housing seemed more and more attractive to more and more miners and their families. It seems that it was the issue of control - which represented a break from the patronage of the past - that was the focus of conflict around housing in these years and in the years following the war (see B. Williamson, p.207).

The building of new council housing had decreased rapidly since 1925 - in line with national trends - and had come to a complete halt during the upheaval of the early '30s (see Table 1). However, the demands of Newburn UDC for decent affordable housing, grew increasingly vociferous and the building of new housing recommenced. Due to economic constraints the new houses were smaller and 'less grant' than those of the '20s but the rents were consequently moderate and the allocation policy remained generous,

Table 1House Building, Newburn Urban District 1914 - 1937

	<u>Council Houses</u>	<u>Private Houses</u>	<u>Cumulative Total</u>
1914-1925	446	85	531
1926	39	9	579
1927	73	24	676
1928	12	7	695
1929	76	27	798
1930	20	19	837
1931	20	19	876
1932	-	34	910
1933	-	85	995
1934	225	148	1368
1935	240	112	1720
1936	56	111	1887
1937	86	101	2074

Source: Calculated from M.O.H. Reports, Newburn UDC, Tyne-Wear Archives taken from B. Williamson, p.206.

for example Newburn UDC gave priority to unmarried mothers and miners' widowed families as well as to young married mining families. In fact Newburn UDC built more houses than was strictly required by its own population which not only increased the housing opportunities of the local families but also paved the way for the new influx of Westerhope residents.

It was the second group of council houses built in the 1930's that first brought non-mining 'outsiders' to this new stable and cohesive community. Built to the west of the village, these houses were mostly in terraces with smaller gardens and fewer and smaller rooms. Several rows of

bungalows were also built indicating that this new 'estate' was purpose-built to house young families, retired workers, widows etc, unlike the spacious housing of the 20's which had attracted the more affluent adult family groups. As well as the surplus mining community, the new houses began to accommodate people who worked further afield and/or in less skilled work. Some of this population were the children of miners who could or would not go down the pit and instead got different kinds of work in the city (a sign of the increasing aspirations some of the miners had for their families). However, the remainder of this population were people who had come from, and worked, in the city. There was initial apprehension of the 'townies', but their relatively small number and their similarity to their neighbours (e.g. occupations, class backgrounds) meant that their integration did not pose too large a problem and they were soon participating in the shared activities of the village, e.g. whippet racing, local politics etc.

Speaking to the older local residents now it is difficult to assess the impact of these 'outsiders' on the village, as the disruption and upheaval brought by the new influx after the war was enough to have practically 'blotted out' any previous upheaval or hostility. The local newspapers of the time are amazingly polite about their new residents and perhaps a little tentative about the developments they could see around them. For Westerhope was changing in many ways and a batch of new residents was just one of the things it had to deal with. The village was growing bigger, there were more shops opening, more bus services which brought the city nearer and a more diverse occupational structure. I would suggest that by 1939 Westerhope was a changing, but stable community in that its progression was slow and the changes were being assimilated into the fabric of the village. Also the changes the village was seeing



in many ways represented a 'victory' for the local working people, more houses, more services and more control, - without it necessarily being a 'defeat' for the propertied and monied classes, who continued to build private housing for rent and in this and other ways profited from the increased population and growth in the area. The local residents in the 30s could afford to laugh gently at the new arrivals who 'kept coals in their baths' - there was a threat posed, but it was minimal and manageable. It was less so after the war.

Westerhope after the War - the expansion of the city

"The general object of the society is to preserve the pleasantness of the countryside .... combining the aims of civic improvement and rural preservation ..... we must constantly remember the fact that continued ease of movement allied with the general desire of so many urban dwellers to seek pastures new, brings in its trail its own special problems ... It follows that those charged with the responsibility (of planning) must be well advised ... It can hardly be believed that those planning technicians, having regard to the responsibilities of their task, would fail to welcome information and advice from those who, through intimacy of personal contact and knowledge, are in a position to give such aid."<sup>17</sup>

- from "Looking Back and Looking Forward" by the Northumberland and Newcastle Society, 1946.

The development of small rural and mining villages in Northumberland in the '20s and '30s has "changed the area from a 19th century rural one to a 20th century one"<sup>12</sup>. However the activity and concern of those years was minimal when compared to the furore that followed the Second World War. Although their actual effect on policy was not very great, the Northumberland and Newcastle Society, quoted above, provides an interesting example and indication of the currents of feeling during these important years. Founded in the previous century and formerly called the "Newcastle upon Tyne Society

to Improve the Beauty, Health and Amenities of the City", it changed its name and direction in the '30s when it became clear that the beauty, health and amenities of the country were now under threat too. Its patron was the Duchess of Northumberland, its president the Lord Mayor of Newcastle, and the vast majority of its members landowners, businessmen and esteemed academics - a make up not dissimilar to the County Council. The 'grand grumbling body' as it was described by the regional miners' leader<sup>18</sup> had formerly concentrated on 'blending architectural styles' in the city, but the development of the '20s and '30s had forced it to turn its attention to rural areas.

However, it could not condemn the new housing too severely as the reason these new houses and facilities were needed and provided (e.g. over crowding, poor living conditions) was, partially, an indictment on the neglect of the landowners, whom they represented. This neglect had meant that the landowners had momentarily 'lost control' (witness Newburn UDC's persistent demands) and they were determined that it should not re-occur. Their reasoning was complex and clever as they abdicated blame but not responsibility - on the future needs of the county they wrote:

"The needs are many and varying: here an efficient piped water system and all that should accompany it.... there a full service of electricity: here allotments, there a playing field: here new housing and village hall, there a new school ... all round equipment for community living.....

We do not start from scratch. All but the smallest hamlets have some of these things; thanks to the past effort of landowners, village committees and local authorities; but there are few places with a full and satisfactory provision of all of them ... We must aim to improve, both in quality of planning and in speed of execution, on the - generally speaking - slow and scrappy progress of the years between the wars."<sup>19</sup>

The members of the society were not, however, intending to provide these facilities themselves, but once large scale development was accepted as inevitable, they were determined to exercise some measure of control, seeking to 'preserve the pleasantness of the countryside'. They appointed 'district watchers' who were instructed to be "on the lookout for" a number of "disfigurements" ranging from "ribbon development" to "the introduction of coloured buildings in the villages of old stone" and "injury to ancient monuments" to "careless siting of adverts in places of beauty and ugly design of petrol filling stations". Last on their list came, quite simply, "quarrying".<sup>18</sup> In a twenty year span the Society made forty-seven deputations to local and national government. In their bid to preserve and improve the rural community, the Society was not being alarmist, but were rather showing a remarkable degree of foresight and advance planning as they pre-empted the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act that brought upheaval and conflict to Northumbrian villages such as Westerhope.

After the destruction of the Second World War, the expected rise in the population following the war and given the unsatisfactory pre-war living conditions, there was a realization that a comprehensive, national redevelopment plan was needed on a major scale, covering housing, industry and welfare facilities. The Town and Country Planning Act of 1947 aimed to:

"make fresh provision for planning the development and use of land, for the granting of permission to develop land and for other powers of control over the use of land, to confer on public authorities additional powers in respect of the acquisition of land for planning and other purposes ..... for the benefit of the community."<sup>20</sup>

A mass building programme was needed<sup>21</sup> and the Act represented an attempt to encourage (and coerce if need be) and control change and development. It lifted many restrictions that had surrounded local authorities

around building as they were to be given:

"wider powers ..... to carry out development themselves .....  
no longer confined ..... to development which private  
enterprise will not undertake (as under the 1944 Act)."

but private enterprise was not to be discouraged as local authorities  
were also given:

"wider powers to buy land compulsorily for leasing to private  
developers."<sup>20</sup>

The Act also represented an attempt to overcome 'piecemeal' planning  
by legislating for regional plans that covered housing, industry and  
education. A broad 'outline' - i.e. the structure plans - covering a wide  
area and indicating the use to be made of that area, was to be made by  
County Councils or Boroughs with joint committees of smaller local author-  
ities in order "to secure coordination". Under this structure Newburn UDC  
and Northumberland County Council found themselves trying to agree on  
policy for their area with Newcastle City Council. This was to prove to  
be an interesting mixture.

Newburn UDC was only too keen to build and within a year, before the  
Structure Plan was even at discussion stage, it was recommending the  
building of one hundred houses at Westerhope<sup>22</sup>. However, it was evident  
that these houses were meant for local residents only:

"these houses will be let to agricultural workers, miners  
and key workers."<sup>23</sup>

As before the war, Newburn UDC's actions had a complexity of motives.  
As <sup>a</sup> radical and progressive council, it was quick to exploit the post-war  
situation to prepare to build high quality housing, using as much direct  
labour as possible and prohibiting private development and/or building for

sale<sup>24</sup>. However the council was so willing to use its prompt action and proven ability as a housing authority to stave off Newcastle City Council's attempts to intervene that it is difficult not to believe that its action was not at least partially prompted by this perceived threat<sup>25</sup>.

It was not until mid-1949, when the Northumberland Joint Planning Committee delegated the administration of the Town and Country Planning Act to the County Council and District Councils, that the Northumberland County Council acted at all. The preparation of the Outline Plan was allocated to two eminent planning consultants, Sir George Pepler and Mr. P.W. McFarlane. Their report first appeared in draft form in November 1949, and its rather prosaic foreword was an indication of the general message of the plan:

"In the process (of industrialisation of the North East), a once beautiful countryside was marred and scarred and its people were herded in squalor around their work-place and in some cases in great urban conglomerations."<sup>26</sup>

The report was very concerned about the industrial future of the area - it acknowledged the decline of the stable industries (i.e. mining, heavy engineering) and recognised the problems caused by this:

"The plan concludes that the Area must remain vulnerable to depression in its main occupations, and, while a plea is made for a greater diversification of industry and a widening of employment opportunities, there is no likelihood of any substantial overall change in the Area's economic structure in the foreseeable future. (The spoilation of mining) has left a legacy of pit heaps, derelict workings and unsatisfactory mining villages."<sup>27</sup>

In terms of the economic and industrial structure of the Area and the consequential pattern of housing development, Pepler and MacFarlane had a complex problem to solve. Newcastle was very overcrowded, with a substantial proportion of its population densely packed into inadequate

housing. The industries - mainly river based - were starting to decline but were, nevertheless, still employing thousands of people and more importantly, occupying scarce land. A 'surplus of male labour' was being predicted in the mining areas - male labour which needed jobs and homes. For Pepler and MacFarlane there was only one solution:

"The redevelopment of high density housing areas in the conurbation of Tyneside must inevitably result in an overspill and to house this surplus, mainly dormitory development is regarded as unavoidable. Subject to the over-riding consideration of coal, the proposed new housing areas are to be located as near as possible to the present periphery of the built up area of Newcastle in order to keep extra travel to a minimum. There is no great quantity of derelict industrial land which can be reclaimed to provide any substantial part of the large amount of land required for this purpose, and some undeveloped land now in agricultural use must therefore be taken."<sup>27</sup>

The last part of this section had great significance for Westerhope for, since the building of council housing in the '30s by the City Council on the western periphery of Newcastle, only a few miles of road separated the village from the city. As regards industrial development, the report had this to say:

"To meet the needs of a proportion of the redundant mining community it is proposed that factory development should be encouraged in Newburn... Industry here would serve the declining Newburn Throckley coal area and offer employment to part of the overspill from Newcastle."<sup>27</sup>

It was therefore the areas on the boundaries of Tyneside that were seen as the solution to the post war problem, areas like Westerhope and Newburn. Where Newburn UDC had been laying plans to build a few hundred houses in its area of administration, the Pepler report had something more ambitious in mind, namely:

"a new settlement in and west of Newcastle (partly in Newburn and partly in the Castle Ward (i.e. Westerhope) to accommodate 65,675 - including 58,750 of Newcastle's overspill."<sup>27</sup>

- my emphasis

The reaction of Northumberland County Council to this was severe. Although it had remained relatively quiet while the report was being prepared, in some ways it had foreseen this eventuality and had been preparing its line of defence for some months before - as the Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee was to point out, some time later, during detailed discussions of the siting of new housing:

"he reiterated the serious objections to the development of Westerhope and Newbiggin Hall land which had emerged as long ago as April 1949, when both councils (i.e. Northumberland and Newcastle) had been informed, in particular, of the Ministry of Agriculture's anxiety that no more land (in that area) should be taken out of agricultural use. It was therefore a matter of some surprise to the County Council that notwithstanding this clearly expressed opposition, Newcastle should have applied for planning permission."<sup>28</sup>

There was however a much more serious threat posed to Northumberland in the Report - one which had very serious repercussions. The overall message of the Outline Plan seemed very much to support the recommendations of the Annual Report of the Boundary Commission of 1948 -

"That Newcastle should become one of the new one-tier counties and they stated that they would be in due course make proposals to Gosforth, Newburn and part of Longbenton within the new county. (However) it had been made clear by the government that it was not regarded as practicable to introduce comprehensive legislation on local government reconstruction in the near future."<sup>29</sup>

The immediate threat of 'take over' seemed to be delayed but the District Councils and Northumberland CC realised it had not gone away altogether. With Pepler-MacFarlane recommending such vast numbers of housing in their areas the District and County Council could not believe that Newcastle City Council had let the idea of boundary extension drop for good. In fact the findings of the Pepler-MacFarlane Report led to speculation that Newcastle might decide to promote a private bill in Parliament, asking for the extension of its boundaries as recommended by the now defunct Boundary Commission. The Parliamentary Committee of Northumberland CC organised numerous meetings with council representatives of Wallsend, Gosforth, Longbenton, Newburn and Castle Ward - "to discuss what their attitude should be should such a situation arise" (i.e. the appearance of a private bill). Whatever their differences of the past, this group of councils that reflected political extremes:

"reached a substantial measure of agreement ..... as to the adoption of a common and coordinated policy."<sup>29</sup>

The County Council's strategy was basically to disarm and undermine the City Council's campaign before it began. With the recommendation of the Ministry of Agriculture (see p.22<sup>5</sup>) up its sleeve, it sent a communication to the City Council in July '49, stating that:

"the Council would be glad to any time to consider any specific proposals which the Corporation might wish to make for the reservation of land outside the city in connection with the housing programme.... No (appropriate) reply has been received and the County Council have therefore been left with no alternative but to form, in consultation with the District Councils, their own estimate of the urgency or otherwise of Newcastle's alleged housing shortage."<sup>29</sup>



To the government, Northumberland CC and its 'allies' made themselves appear co-operative, eager to develop and almost blameless. After all, they had consulted 'at great length' with the District Councils, given 'much thought' to the Pepler-MacFarlane Plan, had decided to make 'an important and valuable contribution to the future of planning in the North East', but Newcastle's reluctance to act immediately could, to the County Council, mean only one thing:

"that the immediate urgency and eventual extent of the overspill problem cannot be anything like as great as they have been represented to be or that such a large housing programme as (was) contemplated within the period of the Plan is necessary, desirable or practicable."<sup>29</sup>

In late 1949, the inevitable happened - Newcastle City Council promoted a private bill in parliament - the Newcastle upon Tyne Extension Bill - which sought to extend the boundaries of Newcastle to those envisaged by the Boundary Commissions Annual Report of 1948 and supported by the Outline Plan. The City Council's rationale was simple, they needed more land to develop alternative industries and house their overspill population and these activities would be greatly facilitated if the Council controlled the administration of the areas. They forcibly argued that such a move would be in the spirit of the Town and Country Planning Act.

The response of the councils in Northumberland was swift and hostile. Attacking from ground they had prepared earlier, they claimed that Newcastle's plan was ill-conceived and inappropriate:

"The Council .... regard the existence of an actual or potential problem of housing space as essentially a planning rather than a boundary question."<sup>29</sup>

As stated earlier, Northumberland CC had presented themselves as willing to build its own housing "should the need be proved" to accommodate

some of the "alleged" overspill. This being the case, they could only come to one conclusion about the rationale for the proposed Extension Bill, namely that:

"this grandiose Bill; which expresses only too clearly Newcastle's well known expansionist policy, aiming at the creation of a 'Greater Newcastle'".<sup>29</sup>

It is important at this stage to try and explore some of the reasons why the overspill housing issue and the ensuing claims for boundary extension, was such a contentious matter that labour dominated councils 'threw in their lot' with the landowners and properties classes that they had been fighting for years. For the members of the County Council, and the people whom they represented, the reasons are maybe more clear. As a group of people who were landowners, landlords and/or who had some form of financial investment, they were keen to protect and preserve that which they had built up and that which profitted them. Also, there was a substantial group who had made all their money in the city, either through having businesses there or as city landlords, and had consequently moved to superior property in the villages outside the city as a mark of their enhanced status etc. All these things were under threat if Newcastle City Council was allowed its way; the rural status of villages would take a blow and they would lose control (and therefore opportunity to exploit) over the provision of local services which would affect both their profit margin and their 'grip' over the mining communities. Although, under the terms of the Bill, Northumberland CC would only be reduced, in terms of acreage, by 1.6%, it would lose 26% of its population and almost 30% of its rateable value - a situation the County Council found intolerable and high enough stakes to form unlikely alliances in order to prevent its taking place.

The rationale of Newburn UDC's antagonism to the Pepler recommendations is perhaps a little harder to trace. In some ways it might be felt that joining the City Council and thus coming under the administration of the city, would be politically advantageous as it would free the local communities from the tyranny of the Northumberland landowners. However its vehemence to Newcastle's plans was as strong as the County Councils' for if the Extension Bill was passed, Newburn UDC (and others) would be dissolved with property and liabilities going to the City Council. The present day MP for Newcastle West, Bob Brown, was in this period secretary of the Labour Party in Newcastle West and he remembers "clashing very badly" with the leader of Newburn UDC over this issue. The Newcastle Labour Party wanted Newburn to compulsorily purchase a swathe of land from Newburn to Westerhope so that it could control what was built in the area (and implicitly provide council housing for some of the overspill). This suggestion was made just after the Extension Bill had failed to be adopted in Parliament, but the hostility was as rife as ever. The overriding fear was still that Newcastle, once it had 'settled' some of its population in the contested areas, would try to move in and take over. Bob Brown recalls:

"George Harrison (leader of Newburn UDC) nearly took off his jacket to me - "Over my dead body," he said, "Will Newcastle people come to Newburn."<sup>30</sup>

It seems that any notion of solidarity with Newcastle City Council, or even the city's Labour Party, was tentative and not at all straightforward for the District Councils. They felt themselves distinct from the city dwellers, by their lifestyle and by their employment and it was by no means accepted as fact that their needs would coincide. In fact, as was written earlier, the mining dominated village communities had worked hard and struggled to create a way of life that was their own and benefitted

them. Their way of life had been hard won and it seems they were loathe to let it go, even if it meant allying with the County Council. For they knew how to deal with County Council opposition, they had fought over that ground for years and that fight had become part of the way they lived. The City Council's plans seemed to disregard their past efforts, they did not seem to be considering the specific needs of the mining and agricultural communities - in short, whatever the political complexion of the City Council, Newburn UDC probably felt it could not trust them.

Like the County Council, the UDC was careful to work out a strategy to counter the city's plans. However violently antagonistic the individual councillors were, the approach of the council as a whole was polite, reasonable and well argued. They aimed quite simply to disarm the claims of the City Council, putting forward their own worth and ability as a local authority at the same time. At a special meeting of the General Purposes Committee, Newburn UDC outlined its tactics:

"Newburn Urban District Council decided unanimously to resist amalgamation... it was decided in opposing the (Extension) Bill to remove the grounds of Newcastle's demands for land for housing outside its boundaries, by the District Councils themselves offering to provide (with the help of the County Council) houses and the necessary services to accommodate such overspill population as Newcastle may be able to prove that they cannot accommodate within the present city."<sup>31</sup>

At this stage, with the Extension Bill still being considered in Parliament, Newburn UDC presented itself as willing to act as a housing authority in respect of the needs of the City Council - subject to satisfactory arrangements being made with the County Council. Newburn had a proven track record in housing, in the inter war years it had built almost one and a half thousand homes and planned to build a similar amount in the immediate post war period. Waiting lists in their area had always been kept to a minimum, standards had been high and rents had been moderate. However when the Extension Bill

failed in late '52, Newburn, supported by the County Council, did not strictly keep to these assurances. In the period 1949-1955 the District Council had built over one thousand houses (a hundred in Westerhope and one hundred and forty in the neighbouring district of West Denton) to house local people. These new houses were incorporated into the community by the extension of already existing council estates, mainly those built in the 1930s. (In fact it is very difficult in some areas to distinguish the '30s housing from the '50s housing). Yet when it came to their offer to provide houses for the overspill, the progressive, generous nature of the District Council practically disappeared. With the threat of take over removed the Northumberland councils dragged their feet over new housing and resisted the moves of the City Council. With its plans thwarted, the City Council had to adopt a new strategy. The need for new mass housing was now, almost ten years after the war, even more pressing than ever so it forwarded a plan in which the city would finance the building of estates outside its boundaries which would then be administered by the relevant District Council. Given the statements of the District and County Councils of the preceding years this seemed not an unreasonable plan, but it was met with great resistance and the District Councils put forward objection after objection, mainly on the grounds that the City Council was grossly over-estimating its overspill.

The City Council had first shown interest in Westerhope and the adjoining Newbiggin Hall land as areas for their development, as early as 1949, but the resistance of the local District and County Council, forced them finally to appeal to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government in 1954. After five years of acrimonious conflict and debate, the Ministry's decision was simple and clear - Westerhope and Newbiggin Hall provided the only space where Newcastle could possible house its overspill:

"The Minister of Housing and Local Government has now issued the decision on Newcastle upon Tyne Corporation's application . . . . He has decided to permit the use of land at Westerhope . . . . and 256 acres of the 311 acres of Newbiggin Hall (and) reached the conclusion that even if all the land in the Walbottle and Throckley areas of Newburn should become available it would not be sufficient to meet the whole of the Corporations short term need for housing land outside the City boundary without using a substantial part of the Newbiggin Hall land."<sup>32</sup>

It seemed then that the building of estates by the City Council for Newcastle overspill could no longer be avoided and from then on, the County and District Councils reserved all their criticism for the style of housing built at Newbiggin Hall (which was the first area developed in the Westerhope area). They insisted, quite pompously, on "good manners in architecture" and emphasised the importance, the rural areas, of "character". As noted earlier, in the intervening years Newburn UDC and the County Council had not been idle as regards housing production. When the overspill development became inevitable though, their housing policy took a distinct turn - witness the Council minutes for August '54:

"The County Council will do their best to co-operate with the Newcastle Council . . . in helping to satisfy Newcastle's housing needs, subject, in the case of parts of the Westerhope land, to claims by the District Councils and the prospective developers already having an interest in the land."<sup>32</sup>

#### Constructing New Communities

The traumas of the preceding years had shifted a lot of ground - the County Council, once resistant to publically financed housing, were now emphasising and supporting the District Council's right to build such housing, and the District Council, once opposed to private development, were now practically 'touting' for developers to acquire as much land as possible in order to deprive the City of much-needed land. It was clear,

by this stage, that the Northumberland County Council and even the labour dominated Newburn UDC, were more eager to encourage private development in the locale than they were to welcome the building of council estates for Newcastle people. Newbiggin Hall was finally begun in late 1954 and the area is still being developed. Initially the houses, being small or built in long terraces or maisonettes with little or no gardens, were far inferior than anything that had been seen in Westerhope (though the more recent building on the estate makes these first houses seem palatial). Local residents in Westerhope were to take far more kindly to the stone built private houses that mushroomed in this period than the bleak and austere council estate.

However bleak the estate appeared to the local residents, to the majority of people coming to Newbiggin Hall the new houses were little short of luxury. The new residents mainly came from Scotswood (West Newcastle) and Byker (East Newcastle), and had lived in private rented accommodation that had been due for clearance since before the war. Whole communities and streets had been moved at the same time and people still had, more or less their original neighbours. Most of the men continued to work at the river-based industries of Vickers, Parsons or Swann Hunters, whilst the women started work in the local industrial estates that were now being developed, or the local shops, or took local cleaning jobs. Until the mid 1970s, the population of the estate remained fairly static and there were many young families who "grew up together" on the estate<sup>33</sup>.

With its distinct neighbourhood and occupational structure, the community on Newbiggin Hall was quite 'tight-knit' and related and identified far more with its origins than with their new locale. One local resident who grew up on the estate relates how her mother, who had lived in Byker all

her life before being 'cleared' to Newbiggin, shopped in Byker every weekend rather than use the local facilities. The children and young people too, rarely got involved in the activities of the village:

"People from the village kept separate ..... they wanted to keep it a village. You were more likely to go to Kenton (to play or go out) than Westerhope, even though Westerhope was a lot closer by."<sup>33</sup>

Westerhope residents recall with horror (and Newbiggin with delight) the antics of their children when they first arrived in the area - e.g. stealing from market gardens and allotments.

Although literally only separated by a road, the communities of Westerhope and Newbiggin Hall were completely distinct, because of differing backgrounds and interests, and because of the acrimony that had preceded the building of the estate and consequential entrenching of attitudes. The main focal points of Westerhope were the Methodist Church and the Miners' Welfare Institution. However very few of the Newbiggin Hall residents were miners and the dominant religion on the estate was Roman Catholic. From its earliest days the estate had its own thriving social clubs, a large and active Catholic church with its own community centre attached and its own facilities e.g. shops, health clinic, schools. It was the Catholic church - St. Wilfrids - that initiated and organised the only truly local newspaper, the Gauntlet. Whilst this was distributed over quite a wide area, including the village of Westerhope, its news coverage was largely limited to the activities (which were extensive) of the parish of St. Wilfrid's, even though it made frequent appeals to village residents to contribute. Even Labour party activity failed to unite the two communities for as Newbiggin Hall estate developed, growing numerically and becoming a Labour stronghold, in the same period and for the same reasons (i.e. growth of population) Westerhope was becoming less of a stronghold.



As with other activities Newbiggin Hall groups were far more likely to look to City groups for support than to Westerhope.

One of the ways that Newburn UDC sought to counteract the effect of the influx of Newcastle overspill, was to permit the building of huge private estates in Westerhope, namely Hillheads, Chapel Park, Chapel House and St. Johns. Whilst it had been fighting and stalling the intervention of Newcastle City Council, Newburn had in the years '48-54 been involved in lengthy negotiations with the Bell family over the purchase of land (from Bell) and the granting of permission for Bell to build on its own land. The Housing Committee minutes of Newburn UDC<sup>34</sup> reveal that whilst the council was keen to purchase land from Bell it was very reluctant to consider Bell's proposition of building private flats to rent in Westerhope. Part of this restriction on private building can be accounted for by the fact that the war time licencing system for new construction was still being retained and was not finally lifted to 1953. However it was not just the building regulations that held Bell back. After the furore and rhetoric of the Extension Bill, Newburn UDC was eager to prove its ability as a housing authority, discussing ambitious plans at committee meetings - of new, well built council estates constructed solely by the Direct Labour Organisation.<sup>34</sup>

However, by <sup>9</sup>1/55 when subsidies to housing authorities began to diminish and the conditions for owner occupation were being encouraged, and Newcastle had embarked on its building programme in Newbiggin Hall, it became clear that Newburn were not going to be able to even match house for house, the City Council's plans<sup>35</sup>. This being the case, once the building restrictions were lifted and the Bell company applied again for planning permission, Newburn quickly granted it, even though the scale of the scheme was quite daunting and would undoubtedly have a major impact on Westerhope.

Table 2<sup>37</sup>

	No. Dwellings	Start	Finish	Price Range Starting at
Whorlton Grange	272	1963	1966	£2500
Hillheads	452	1957	1960	£1500
Chapel House	1521	1960	1972	£2100
Chapel Park	1253	1971	1980	£6000
St. Johns	251	1977	1980	£30000
Pilton Park	81	1965	1966	£4000
TOTAL	3820			

Source: Bellway (Builders) ltd.

"Permission has been granted for a 50 acre site fronting Hillhead Road.... for private housing and erection of 452 dwelling houses (houses and bungalows). Grant conditionally 4.6.54".<sup>36</sup>

Within five years of this planning permission being granted, Bell had plans underway for five estates to be built in the area over a twenty year span, totalling four thousand houses in all<sup>37</sup>. In fact, thirty years later they are still developing the area. However this is not to imply that the relationship between Bell and Newburn UDC was a simple straightforward coalition - attempting to thwart Newcastle's ambitions etc. - rather it was a complex, and often unhappy, relationship, borne, in this instance,

of expediency, but it was later to cause many problems to the local council for local people. (qv)

Northumberland County Council, although by this stage it contained a diversity of political opinion, was less ambivalent about Bell's involvement in the area, as it realised that, under government policy the private sector might provide a solution to the perceived 'problems' of the North East, without being too radicalising an experience. In 1956 they wrote:

"With the easing of restrictions on private building, private builders have become increasingly active in.... Newburn .... In 1954, 394 dwellings were completed in the area, 10 times as many as in 1949, and in 1955 it increased to 604. The continuation of private building here on the scale of recent years depends primarily on the demand for new private houses on Tyneside as a whole. (Private development) should house those who wish to leave the cramped terraces of the riverside, and the retired people ..... The standard of housing accommodation in Tyneside is low .... and the improvement and prosperity of the area since 1939 has created a large demand for private houses".<sup>38</sup>

It is relevant to note at this stage that although Bell was by far the largest developer in Westerhope, it was not a simple case of Bell building all the private housing whilst Newburn UDC's Direct Labour Department built the council houses. Instead elements of the pre-war ensemble of building organisation were still retained, with Bell being contracted to build 76 local authority houses in the locale and local 'entrepreneurs' were being granted permission to develop, for housing, small plots of land.

From the mid-50's Bell commenced to build a succession of estates, starting with Hillheads and continuing to the present day. Hillheads was built on the western periphery of the old village and over looked the less spacious council houses built in the 30s and 50s. These houses, on Hillheads, though often more spacious and offering more variety in terms of size and style than those of the estates that were to follow, have always remained the least expensive. Part of this has to do with their age but part of it also has to do with their spatial location. George Stephenson, Senior Architect with Bell Ltd. (now Bellway) was employed by Bell throughout this period. He describes the process of speculative building thus:

"First we see what land is available, then we gain planning permission. The next move is to decide what sort of people will be attracted to the area as regards external features for example, the presence of other, older housing. The external features dictate the price range (i.e. cheap to medium, medium to dear) and thus the style and kind of houses built."<sup>39</sup>

In Westerhope, the Hillheads estate, boarding as it does the old village, fell into the 'quite cheap' category, acting as a 'screen' for the Chapel House and Chapel Park estates which were thus deemed 'cheap to medium'. St. Johns estate, being the farthest from the village is the 'dear' estate, having the benefit of overlooking, on one side, other Bell estates, and on the other side, a 'green belt'. This hierarchy of housing is marked by style (though not necessarily quality). For example, the houses on St. Johns are all detached whilst Chapel House contains several rows of 'link villas', though any differences in the size of the rooms was imperceptible to me. There is also a gradation of style (and price) within the estates too, working on the assumption that people do not want to overlook other, older housing. For example, Whorlton Grange, an exclusive, small, compact estate to the north of Westerhope, is bounded by

local authority housing, not surprisingly the cheapest housing is to be found 'screening' the edge of the estate. Again, a row of modernised, spacious colliery cottages in North Walbottle are overlooked, not merely by the cheapest housing on the Chapel Houses estate, but by the backs of those houses. The rationale for this was simple:

"Nobody wants to live near a council estate, no matter what people say. Social mixing doesn't work - its a bad idea. Speculative housing is a true reflection of what people really think about class relations."<sup>39</sup>

There have been elements of Bell's building policy that have caused friction in the area. The 'expansionist' policy of the company has continued to amaze local residents who always seemed to believe that the row of houses just completed would be the last. The 'external features' that so strongly dictate the style of housing (and its initial price) are however, not static. The 'green belt' for example, which has always been a selling point of the new estates, has continually been encroached upon<sup>40</sup> and distrust of Bellway in the area is very high.

So, from being a stable and established community before the war, Westerhope became a locale that was altering dramatically and these changes were happening so quick and on such a large scale that it must have been difficult to see how the 'old' Westerhope could avoid losing its identity, but instead be subsumed by the new estates.

In order to look at what sort of 'new' community was constructed in this period, it is necessary to examine who was actually moving to Westerhope (i.e. the new estates), and to try and uncover some of their feelings about this move. The first buyers of the houses on Hillheads were generally artisans and clerical workers from the big engineering firms or local government etc.

According to a local estate agent the estate has always been "very static", housing people who did not have ambitious housing plans<sup>41</sup>. The estate tended to attract older, more established families and one of the major patterns was that of a middle-aged family moving from private or local authority rented accommodation in the city to Hillheads before their advancing age disqualified them from a mortgage. The houses on Hillheads have always been very popular and very 'resaleable'. A worker at District Estates - the main local estate agents - recalls that in the 1950's and early '60s very little property was ever advertised. When people heard that a house was coming up for sale (or see the distinctive Cadillac car of District Estate's manager pull up) they would ring the office, saying they knew someone, a relative or ex-neighbour, interested in the property. There were often queues outside the District Estate shop on Saturday mornings.<sup>41</sup>

It must be remembered that the new estate in Westerhope held some very attractive features at this time, that tie in with national and local factors. In an atmosphere where owner-occupation was being encouraged by the government and the post war prosperity was beginning to take hold, the skilled artisans and white collar workers in the city of Newcastle were eager to improve their housing and living situations (NB Pepler's condemnation of housing in Tyneside). Bell was one of the first builders in the North East to be building new private housing at a relatively moderate price. The houses in Hillheads were new, they were available, they were away (though not too far) from the city, and, due to cooperative links between Bell and the Northern Rock Building Society, they were attainable.<sup>42</sup> For the new residents then, living in Westerhope marked an achievement. Having come through the depression of the 30s, and a World War, they were now receiving the benefits of their sacrifices and, I would

suggest, they would be very keen to keep their proud achievement in tact, just as the mining community had been.

It seems then, as now, Hillheads estate identified itself closely with the village of Westerhope. The estate itself attracted its fair share of retired miners and the grown up children of miners who, due to the pit closures in the area, had had to seek employment in some other field thereby losing the right to colliery housing. The age and occupational structure of the residents on the estate was roughly similar to that of Westerhope, especially as the pit closures was creating a wider diversity of employment in the old village. No new facilities had been built on the estate, apart from one or two shops, so the new residents had to use the same recreational facilities, the same church, etc., as the people of Westerhope. When the next estates were built a few years later (Chapel House and Chapel Park), more facilities were provided, e.g. a shopping centre, schools, churches, a community centre, but the precedent set in the early years of development, and the fact that a major road separates the newer estates from the older one, has meant that the residents of Hillheads have always identified themselves more closely with Westerhope than elsewhere. The two groups of estates are even served by different bus routes and so effective is the 'screening' policy of the Bell company that Chapel House and Chapel Park, vast as they are, cannot be seen from Westerhope even though they are less than a mile apart.

The people first attracted to Chapel House (the next estate built) were, broadly speaking, different to the Hillheads residents. The occupational structure tended more towards the professional/white collar or highly skilled artisan. The residents also tended to be younger (perhaps because of the size of mortgage needed) and have two incomes. Mrs. Morton,

the worker in District Estates, confirms this trend, stating that the majority of households have their mortgages based on two incomes (i.e. husband and wife) and, in some cases, the mortgage is based on the wife's earnings.<sup>41</sup>

In 1971 the next estate, Chapel Park, was started, with a consequence rise in price and 'quality'. Again Bellway attempted to provide a type of housing that was not being generally built in the area by other builders. The same philosophy was used for the design and building of the latest estate, the 'exclusive' St. Johns, in 1977, where prices then started at £30,000. Altogether Bellways have, to date, built around 4,000 houses in and around Westerhope, each time gearing their houses to a slightly higher market, but ensuring a 'back up' of mortgage and insurances facilities that meant these homes were attainable by those who, not necessarily having large amounts of capital, did have good prospects. However this is not to imply that the purchasers of these houses have had no problems. Bellways recently had to replace the window frames on the houses on Hillheads and residents on St. Johns had been worried by recent reports that their homes may suffer 'movement' due to their being built on concrete shafts as there are mine workings directly beneath. Mr. Stephenson, the architect, admitted that whilst the vast majority of their housing was of "a very high standard" the people in the cheaper housing "may experience difficulty in paying to repair their homes, which of course may affect their prices and the price of those around them".<sup>39</sup>

In the late 1950's, Northumberland County Council was beginning to be very concerned about the future of their mining villages. The coal industry was starting to decline in the area and Newcastle seemed poised for the opportunity to 'take over' part of their territory at the least sign of



trouble and the miners themselves were starting to express anxiety about their future. Northumberland recognised "the need to provide new employment at once". They also realised that whilst the "young miner is particularly adaptable (to) learn new skills", new industries would lead to new housing and new residents - "men and women willing and quick to learn the skills necessary for the new types of employment."<sup>42</sup> Having opted in the late 50s, along with the District Councils, that this new population would be the skilled artisan and white collar worker attracted to new private housing, the County Council wrote in 1963:

"Today there is a contentment on the faces of the retired miners and a new generation will look back without anger."<sup>42</sup>

However, this 'push' to attract a new type of resident did not leave the community of the 'retired miners' unscathed, but instead brought changes that have led to the current construction of the community of Westerhope. To the older residents of Westerhope, it was the mobility, relative affluence and political allegiances that initially marked the differences.

"Dan Dawson (the secretary of the local Labour party) used to say that there had never been any need to canvas the area, he would say 'I could stand on any streetcorner and mark my cards'. Of course that all changed when they built the estates. They (the new residents) were not all Tories, but there was much more of a mixture."<sup>30</sup>

"A lot of the people from the new estates used to come to my church and get quite involved. You'd get all sorts, the new affluent - office workers, telephone engineers, and teachers, well, they were two a penny. You should've seen the difference they made to the offerings, it would run into the 100's whereas, before they came it were £2. I quite like them but its sad, they're here today and gone tomorrow."<sup>12</sup>

Westerhope Today

There is no denying that Westerhope today is a very different place than it was just after the Second World War. There is more affluence, more people, more mobility, more facilities and a wider variety of occupations. The area is different from what it would have been if the estates had not been built but it must not be forgotten that the village would not have remained static either. The nation and region as a whole have undergone wide ranging changes in terms of the mode of production, economic development, political ideologies and ideas of personal lifestyles (some of these being the result of working class struggle) that have affected modes of living in the realm of reproduction over and above the structural/spatial changes in individual communities. Thus in many ways, it is fallacious to crudely compare today's community with that of yesteryear. It is important however to consider why things changed the way they did and what that says about how people create and deal with these developments in terms of their class and gender.

The community that is Westerhope today did not 'start' when the first private houses were built, with no reference to the area's history. In fact, I have shown that the appearance of the estates themselves was the product of local people's (as manifested in the local District Council) attempt to control and define some of the inevitable changes that were going to affect the future of their area. In this sense the current community is shaped by the mining community that existed before it. The people who moved to the new housing also brought with them the ideas, practices and 'culture' of their previous communities and their ideas and aspirations for the future as engendered by the culture and by societal and economic changes experienced after the war. To come to grips then with the 'new'

community of Westerhope it is important to consider what sort of people moved to the new estates in the late '60s and the 70s, and what happened to those they left behind.

The 1971 Census was the first Census that recorded what was happening in Westerhope and, with over 2000 private houses built, a distinct pattern was beginning to emerge. I have put some selected statistics at the end of the chapter but I would like to make some comment on them here. From the housing viewpoint, owner occupation was already overtaking the other tenures and living standards are accordingly quite high, in terms of amenities e.g. there is very little overcrowding and very few household with shared amenities. The adult population structure veers towards the 25-40 age group, with a significant percentage of young (i.e. dependent) children in the population. The vast majority of households are 2 adult households and there are extremely few one parent families. As far as indicators of wealth are concerned, this population seems to be doing well. Not only are most of them buying their own houses but over 50% of them have access to a car and around 5% have access to two or more. The 10% sample shows that the majority of males are employed in skilled manual and non-manual work and a large proportion of women are concentrated in skilled non-manual work. Given the standard of living the new residents of Westerhope were experiencing at this point, it is perhaps surprising that there are not more professional/managerial workers. It is true that the men are generally in secure, moderately well paid work and that the percentage seeking work is low (though the national unemployment rate at this time was not that high either), but it seems that these incomes were being bolstered by the high rate of married women working. With over 50% of married women, between the ages of 20 and 60 years, working it seems that it is their wages that help the family to acquire the mortgage for

the new house, the car etc., i.e. their employment is an intrinsic part of the standard of living the family has achieved.

This high rate of married women's employment (which, it appears, would often be a requisite to moving to Westerhope) would have a marked affect on community living in Westerhope as it is in direct opposition to the situation before the war when women were tied to the home. In addition to this the Census data shows that around 50% of women aged between 20 and 45, that is the main child rearing ages, are in employment, and, given the high percentage of households with children, then this means that women with children were working outside the home. The role of women seems to be undergoing a transformation in this small community, though perhaps in terms of her family, little has changed. The women of the pre-war Westerhope cared for their families by always being there, servicing them from their arduous jobs (or prospective jobs) and using their energies to keep the family going. The women of the new estates worked outside the home (and inside I've no doubt) as their expression of serving the interests of their husband and children. So the physical absence of women from the area during the day would have an effect on community lifestyle, but over and above this, there is the notion of working hard to achieve something tangible and worthwhile for themselves and their children (i.e. the present and the future), that would have a deeper affect on how people saw their community. However before I probe how people understood the area at that time, it is more than pertinent to look at the situation these people left behind as any understanding of the present and the future hinges on the experiences of the past, or what might have been.

The occupations of the new residents would seem to indicate that they generally came from 'respectable' artisan working class backgrounds where, given the wave of affluence after the war, daughters would be encouraged to seek steady, 'nice' office or shop work, and sons would be encouraged to seek skilled employment in the newer industries that were beginning to replace the older, now declining industries of mining, ship building and heavy engineering. The 10% sample for 1971 shows that the majority of work was concentrated in manufacturing, and distributing services. For these people, with parents probably living in rented housing close to their place of employment (i.e. the small Tyneside flats or terraces or council housing densely located near the riverside), the move to Westerhope, with its spatial separation from work and its surrounding countryside would be understood as a move forward. However, I do not think that these people moved out of a sense of wanting to 'get away' from deprived circumstances or out of fear for the future of the city and life in the city. It was not a 'flight of fear' but a search for better things, a striving towards an improved lifestyle and not an escape from the 'big, bad city'. In fact I would suggest that in the decade I am looking at now (i.e. 65 - 70) it would have been seen as just a good a move if the young couple had managed to obtain a council house on a good estate. Many of their contemporaries would probably have done this, or opted for good quality private rented housing as their parents had done. However neither of these were available in sufficient quantity at this time and, as stated earlier, the new houses at Westerhope were ready and attainable if the young couple satisfied the mortgage requirements, which might often entail a dual income household. It cannot be stressed too much that the divergence of paths at this point were relatively minor and almost arbitrary with those obtaining a council tenancy probably feeling they had just as good a deal as their friends and neighbours who were moving to the new estates.

Yet however minor this divergence at this stage, the implications of the different paths were to become increasingly disparate in the following years. Statistics collected in 1975 in the area show a growing rift in terms of affluence and housing and living conditions between the population of Westerhope and that of the city. (See end of chapter<sup>6</sup>). This population profile shows a younger than average population in Westerhope with a low percentage of pensioners - the population of the new estates was essentially a working population with a lower than average unemployment rate. The people in Westerhope were living in newer houses, predominantly owner occupied, with virtually no overcrowding and a higher percentage of consumer durables and facilities, than their city counterparts. Of course this is not to imply that their childhood contemporaries living in the city were all living in unsatisfactory housing conditions, but the point is the residents of the Bell estates were living in an area which was fairly prosperous whereas those in the city, whether they were in good housing or not, were living in a conurbation that was continuing to experience the problems that had been highlighted in the Structure Plan after the 1945 war. The problems of poor housing, poverty and industrial decline and unemployment were still in existence in the city, but these problems hardly touched the new generation of residents in Westerhope. I would suggest that, in comparison with those who had stayed in the city, they would feel they had made the right move. This feeling would be emphasised by the fact that in essence they were not all that different from those in the city. The socio-economic statistics show that the majority of Westerhope residents were still concentrated in the skilled manual and junior non-manual categories. They had not, en masse, achieved any substantial advancement at work that would account for their comparatively affluent position - they had rather made a certain choice at a certain time. The household income figures reveal a median annual household income that is

over 50% higher than the city median. Given the small percentage of professionals and managers, this high figure surely indicates the importance of the paid work of married women in the area. Again there is a sense of people working hard to achieve something tangible for their families, something perhaps they would not have achieved if they had stayed in their childhood locations.

Again I must emphasise that I am not trying to imply that those who stayed in the city did not work hard, or the married <sup>women</sup> did not do paid work outside the home, or that they lived in poor housing with few consumer durables, or that they were living in dire poverty. On the contrary I would suggest that most of this population would be the workmates of some of the Westerhope population and would be candidates for the 'best' council housing in the city, or would occupy superior rented accommodation. However, when we consider the development of local authority housing policy in the 60s and 70s it becomes clear that the housing conditions of those in the city did not rise as those in Westerhope did. The main trend of council housing policy in these two decades was to clear the older areas (e.g. places like Byker and Arthurs Hill where many of the new Westerhope residents had been brought up) and build 'mass housing' (see Dunleavy for further discussion<sup>43</sup>). The faults and effects of mass housing have been well catalogued and there is insufficient room here to deal with the issue. Rather the point I wish to make is that although the Westerhope residents were in many ways, similar to their childhood contemporaries who stayed in the city, the developments since the 50s, in terms of urban policy and economic development, have meant now that living in Westerhope is a radically different experience than living in the mass housing in the city and that many of today's Westerhope residents were at one point within a hairsbreadth of living in such housing themselves.<sup>44</sup>

An interesting twist in this pattern of spatial location has occurred in the past few years. On the western extremity of Westerhope, there are a few rows of colliery cottages, which constitute the small village of North Walbottle, though the houses are now overlooked by the Chapel House estate. When part of the old village was demolished in the mid 70s, the residents were 'temporarily' rehoused in Scotswood with the reassurance that Newburn UDC would rebuild in Walbottle and rehouse them there. However, Bellway Ltd. owned the surrounding land and refused to let any go to Newburn UDC, insisting it had its plans to build on the land (which they are now doing despite a public enquiry). So the residents of Walbottle are now permanent residents in Scotswood, whilst the grown up children of Scotswood residents are living in houses that overlook the Bell building operations in Walbottle.

The point I am making here is that any understanding of the contemporary community in Westerhope is crucially linked to what was and is happening in the city and the area around Westerhope. The divergence of class and gender experience is an integral part of the assumed lifestyle of the community I am studying and helps explain the changes created and assimilated in this old mining village.

As I stated in Chapter 1, it is impossible, if not wrong and foolhardy, to 'read off' the politics of an area in terms of its tenure. The Labour Party membership, for example, in Westerhope is growing and quite active, and although the area continues to return Tory city councillors, the Labour vote is growing (or rather the anti-Tory vote is growing<sup>45</sup>). The community centre that was built for the old village of Westerhope is neither totally ignored, nor totally patronised by the residents from the new estates. Some of these people do get involved in the 'village' community centre, some



prefer to use their own purpose-built community centre/sports centre (Chapel House and District Community Association), some prefer to use the facilities of the city and some use none of these . The new residents have neither completely blended with the old community, nor have they created something totally new and oppositional. Instead there are elements of class and gender experience that have remained the same and elements that have diverged. A study of Westerhope today should examine the impact and relationship of these similarities and divergences and how they affect the residents understanding of the type of life they lead.

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2. See Northumberland County Development Plan - a written analysis July 1956. Newcastle Central Library Local History Collection.
3. See Margaret Stacey, "Methods of Social Research", 1969, Pergamon.
4. From Census Data for 1951 and 1981.
5. B. Williamson "Class, Culture and Community", Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982, p.13.

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7. Newcastle Chronicle, July 1923, Newcastle Central Library.
8. North Mail and Newcastle Chronicle, 1891, Newcastle Central Library.
9. J. Melling (ed), "Housing, Social Policy and the State", Croom Helm, 1980, p.13.
10. From 'Westerhope Walkabout - a village trail', by A.D. Walton and J. Allison, published by Denton Library, 1978, p.3.
11. Walton, *ibid.*, p.2.
12. From interviews with Joe and Elsie Allison, 5.5.82 and 22.10.82 and Ernie Bell, 4.6.82.
13. See J. Allison "Reminiscences concerning the mining strike of 1926", Tyne and Wear Archives Department 1429/1.
14. "The Changing Face of Westerhope", published by Westerhope Methodist Chapel, 1976.
15. J. Urry, "The Anatomy of Capitalist Societies", Macmillan, 1980, esp., Introduction.

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16. Northumberland County Council Minutes, vol.xxxi, p.71, and vol.xxxii, pp.15-20.

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17. "Looking Forward and Looking Back" Northumberland and Newcastle Society, 1946 in Newcastle Central Library.
18. *ibid.*, p.11.
19. *ibid.*, p.12-13.
20. Town and Country Planning Act, 1947. Explanatory Memorandum.
21. See "Homes, Towns and Countryside", G. and D.G. McAllister (eds), Batsford, 1945.
22. Newburn Housing Committee Minutes, July 1948, Tyne & Wear Archive Dept., T65/74 & 75.
23. *ibid.*, December, 1948.
24. *ibid.*, January, 1949 and April, 1951.
25. For example at a special meeting of the General Purposes Committee November 1950 (TWAD 221/1254) Newburn UDC opposed incorporation with Newcastle by stating that "the housing activities of the council have been virile and progressive".
26. Foreword to Pepler-MacFarlane Outline Plan for the North East, Newcastle Central Library.
27. North East Development Area Outline Plan for the North East as reported to County Planning Committee, November 1949, vol.LXI.

28. Report of the Parliamentary Committee, February, 1952, Northumberland County Council Minutes, vol.LXIII, p.543+
29. *ibid.*, January, 1950, vol.LXI, p.65=+
30. From interview with Bob Brown M.P. for Newcastle West, 29.5.82.
31. Special Meeting of the General Purposes Committee, *op.cit.*
32. Report of the County Planning Committee, August 1954, vol. LXVI.

#### Constructing New Communities

33. From interview with Anne Purvis - a Newbiggin Hall resident 6.5.82.
34. See Newburn UDC Housing Committee Minutes, January 1948, December 1948, January 1949, February 1951, August 1951, March 1953, July 1954, and March 1955, TWAD T65/74 & 75.
35. Newbiggin Hall estate was to have 2700 dwellings, housing 14000 of the overspill population (estimated at 28000). The Written Analysis of the Northumberland County Development Plan July 1956 (Newcastle Central Library) calculated that local demand for council housing was over one thousand households, whilst Newburn only had 732 sites available and its annual building rate (1954-56) was 79 a year.
36. From records of planning permission granted kept by Newcastle City Council Planning Department in the Civic Centre.
37. From statistics supplied by G. Stephenson, Chief Architect from J.T. Bell (Bellways) Ltd.
38. "Written Analysis of the Northumberland County Development Plan", *op.cit.*
39. From an interview with G. Stephenson, 19.5.82.
40. This is an aspect that has caused much criticism amongst local residents as reported by Bob Brown and Tessa Gray, Tyne and Wear Councillor for the area.
41. From interview with Mrs. Morton employee of District Estates and resident on Hillheads since the mid 50s 19.5.82.

42. "News from Northumberland" Journal of Northumberland County Council, Spring 1961 and Spring 1963. Held in Newcastle Central Library.
43. see P. Dunleavey, Mass Housing in Britain, Oxford University Press, 1981.
44. It must be made clear that not all these differences are attributable to the decision to buy but that that decision was one of a complex of reasons and events that influenced the lifestyle experienced by the majority of residents in Westerhope.
45. Information from Tessa Gray, Tyne and Wear Councillor for the area.

CHAPTER SIX

The Socio-Spatial Location  
of Westerhope

In the last chapter I attempted to give an historical account of the contemporary Westerhope - to examine the changing social relations of the area. In this and the following chapter, this examination will be complimented by giving a historical account of the current residents of Westerhope - to examine wider changes in social relations and how this affects a 'community'. In chapter seven I will be giving a detailed account of the lifestyles of ten women living in Westerhope and analysing the significance of changing lifestyles. In this chapter I hope to provide a bridge between chapters five and seven by giving a broad indication of the socio-spatial location of Westerhope using statistical sources i.e. 1981 census data, Tyne and Wear small area statistics, and my own questionnaire survey (qv).

#### Strategy of Field Research

Briefly, as stated in chapter four, what the research needs to accomplish is to provide an indication of how the 'new' population of Westerhope understand their living situation in the light of their previous living situations and working experiences. The first private houses were built in Westerhope in the mid-50's, with the vast majority only being built in the last twenty years. The obvious inference to be drawn from this is that almost all of the current residents (i.e. adults) previously lived elsewhere. A sample survey would provide the opportunity to examine some of the characteristics of the new population in relation to this. For example it would initially be important to indicate the differences between the old and new populations (origins, occupations etc.). To do this would be to quantify differences, to provide a base

for looking at the two groups and assessing the impact of these changes on the way people live their lives in the community. However to do this adequately a different approach is needed to compliment and make sense of the quantifiable data. It is not enough to say that the majority of the old population were miners and locally-born and that the majority of the new population are white collar workers moving from certain parts of Newcastle, rather it is crucial to qualify that 'difference' - does it mean that the new population would live 'differently' from the old, and if so, what is the substance and significance of that difference. In this sense the research is:

"a technique (which) may be used for gaining the desired information and for processes for thinking about that information."<sup>1</sup>

The research in chapter five was structured round a two-tier approach, i.e. the use of statistical, empirical, documented data such as census material, reports of council meetings, etc., coupled with the use of interviews with key informants to give 'meaning' to the measured data. Observation which, because I was largely dealing with 'historical' events, had to be done through the medium newspapers reports etc., provided a link or bridge between the two tiers. It was envisaged that the next state of the research would not deviate from this approach, although, because this stage is contemporary research, it was recognised that the content of this stage would be different, i.e. different methods of observation, different ways of selecting key informants (qv chapter 7). As indicated, the first tier, the base, of the research, is to quantify the differences in the population, the measurable changes in the area. A very general outline of this can be gained using the relevant census material, espeically the small area census returns and the 10% sample returns from the 1981 census. However this material is not totally



adequate for the purpose of the research for three reasons; firstly, it does not cover all the ground required (i.e. it does not pose the relevant questions; secondly that the areas selected for the more extensive analysis (e.g. the 10% sample of enumeration districts) do not totally coincide with the areas I am interested in and may include small pockets of rented, or older housing; and thirdly that, on commencement of my empirical research the census contained therein was already two years old, making it less acceptable given that the research emphasises the contemporary. Having said that it is important to stress that the census material still has a use as an indicator of patterns of change and a means by which Westerhope can be compared with other areas in Newcastle and with the country in general, i.e. it can help establish the socio-spatial location of Westerhope and highlight those issues that might warrant further investigation in my own empirical survey. Initially therefore I wish to make a few comments about contemporary Westerhope based on relevant census and local council material.

#### The Socio-Spatial Location of Westerhope

Most of the statistics I used for this section are to be found at the end of this section. What the text of this chapter represents is my interpretation of those statistics. It is important to state here that I am not using the figures as an end in themselves, but as a means to an end, i.e. I am using the available statistics to gain an impression of who lives in Westerhope and how those people might function and see themselves in their locale.

The aim of this section of research is to give an impression of the 'social make-up' of the private estates in Westerhope, to see how this area compares with the national picture and other areas in Newcastle and Tyne and Wear, and, as just stated, to bring out any interesting differences and trends.

To briefly recap then, the research carried out for chapter five, gave the impression that, because of their relatively low prices and ready availability, the houses built on the estates in Westerhope attracted many first time home buyers who were given plenty of incentive by the builder/developers (e.g. 100% mortgages, easy repayment terms etc.). However, the purchasing of their own homes was still a major undertaking for the young couples so two incomes (i.e. husband and wife) was generally a precondition for moving to the area. Again, given the age of the new residents, it followed that there would be a high proportion of children in the area sooner or later. In a five cluster analysis of Newcastle City, based on 1981 Census data, some of these issues were explored in relation to other areas in the city. A five-cluster analysis was chosen as a dendrogram showed a very large jump in the number of the error sum of squares at the fusion cycle (ref. Ward's discussion in B. Everitt 'Cluster Analysis - an SSRC review of current research' pages 15-16).

Westerhope, as a suburb, is a large area made up of a variety of estates, both council and private, and the old mining village. The privately owned estates of Hillheads, Chapel House, Chapel Park and St. John's make up the vast majority of housing in the area. These estates are divided up into 22 Enumeration Districts, and where possible I have used statistics covering only these districts. However some of

the City Council and Tyne and Wear Metropolitan data is collected and published in wards, which in the case of Westerhope, include an extra 10 EDs to the more relevant 22 EDs. When it is the ward data that is being used instead of the more selective Census data, this will be clearly stated in the text.

Also in the five cluster analysis just referred to, the cluster selected as representing Westerhope (i.e. Cluster 3) contained 15 of the more relevant EDs, with the remaining 7 falling in Clusters 2 and 4. This is not seen as a serious problem whereas it is merely a general comparative sketch that is being attempted and not a definitive statement about the area. In the analysis, Cluster 3 - the one most relevant to Westerhope - is the most prosperous cluster, using the standard indicators of prosperity. For example, it has the lowest unemployment rate (5%) compared with the rate (27%) for the least prosperous cluster (i.e. Cluster 1) and the highest full time adult employment rate - 50% compared with 31% for Cluster 1 (See table 1.1). Other indicators of prosperity are house tenure (83% of houses in Cluster 3 are owner-occupied compared with 5.5% for Cluster 1), and car ownership with 16% of households in Cluster 3 owning 2 or more cars, whereas only 1% of households in Cluster 1 did likewise. (See table 1.2) These two clusters represent the top and bottom of the prosperity scale - the remaining clusters were spread evenly between them. However, when it came to the number of households with children, Cluster 3 fell exactly in the middle with a figure very similar to the national average (i.e. 34%) (See table 1.3) Looking at the statistics it seems that one of the crucial factors that makes Cluster 3 the most prosperous is the high incidence of female employment. Of course, women's employment is not the only factor that separates this cluster from the others, as the rate of male full time

economic activity is also substantially higher than that of the other clusters. However the significance of this rate, and its relation to the prosperity of Westerhope, has to be re-examined when the socio-economic groupings are considered. Westerhope, as a ward, does not have a significantly high percentage of professionals resident, but on the contrary it is surprising that Westerhope is in this prosperous cluster despite its percentage of professionals. Of the five clusters it has the highest percentage of economically active females i.e. 47% (30% full time and 17% part time) (as table 1.4 illustrates).

For Cluster 1 the comparative figures are 31% (18% and 13%). The figures here for Cluster 3 are also higher than the national average. However, what is particularly striking about this cluster that sets it apart from the other clusters is the very high percentage of married women in paid employment. Again with 53% of married women in paid work, it exceeds the percentages of other areas of Newcastle and Great Britain. It is also the only cluster where the percentage of married women in full time work exceeds the number of women in part time work (it also goes against national figures). Yet, as mentioned on the previous page, Cluster 3 is not a group with a proportionally low number of children, but rather is average in this respect. What becomes clear then is that what separates this cluster from the others, and makes them prosperous (in relative terms) is the employment of women, and more particularly, married women with children. It can be assumed from the statistics that the majority of married women in Westerhope (who by far dominate the estates) have roles in both production and reproduction.

The issue of women and production and reproduction for Westerhope itself, was then explored more fully using statistics based on the 10% +

100% sample 1981 Census Information<sup>2</sup>. For this part of the research I was able to concentrate on the 22 Districts that make up the owner-occupied estates in Westerhope. Also it was these particular statistics that provided the information for the final selection for my own empirical survey.

As stated, the vast majority of women on the estates are married - according to the 100% data. In fact 84% of the adult female population (i.e. those over 24 years and under 60 years of age) are currently married, and in one of the EDs the percentage was 100%. Given the size, style and the cost of the houses this is partly understandable. With most of the population being between the ages of 24 and 44 years of age, there was also a high percentage of households with dependent children - 38% compared with the national average of 34%. Consequently the percentage of one-parent families in the area is negligible (less than 1%). (See table 2.1) However this is not to imply that there are no divorces in the area, but it seems that (and this is supported by the local estate agents) on divorce, most of the couples sell up and leave the area. Table 2.2 shows that 94% of the houses in the 22 EDs are owner-occupied with the remaining 6% being accounted for by the odd pocket of council housing (mainly old age pensioners bungalows) and the occasional new house that is being privately rented from the owner. National statistics, based on the '81 Census, put the rate of owner occupation at 56%. 15% of the households in the 22 EDs have two or more cars, which accords with the national average. However only 21% of the households do not possess a car which is almost half the national average.

An image then is beginning to emerge of an area with a high percentage of married couples (mainly under pensionable age - 16% of households contained one or more people of pensionable age), many with dependent children, who enjoy a degree of relative affluence. As indicated in the cluster analysis, this affluence is linked to the high rate of economic activity. The rate of unemployed adults (16+) as a percentage of economically adults is just under 5% which compares favourably with regional and national rates. (See table 2.3) Again in line with the cluster analysis, the 22 selected EDs show a very high percentage of economically active married women - 58% whereas the corresponding national figure is 47% (as is the regional figure), with almost equal numbers working full and part time. It is assumed that many of the full time married women workers are younger women who have not yet started their families and are working full time to help share the burden of the initial heavy mortgage repayments. In fact in a breakdown of employment by age (see table 2.4) it becomes clear that as the women get older the chances are they will switch to part time work, probably because of child-rearing responsibilities.

However, given the high percentage of married women working coupled with the percentage of households with children, it is clear that this newly-established childless young group of residents cannot account for all the working women. In a breakdown of employment by age it is revealed that 68% of married women aged between 30 and 44 years of age are economically active (25% full time and 43% part time). A substantial number of women must therefore be in paid employment whilst their children are still dependent. Employment having been a factor on arrival in Westerhop, it continues to be so, either out of choice or necessity.

It must also be remembered that, given the current employment situation, there may be a significant proportion of women, at the moment classified as housewives and therefore 'economically inactive', who would take paid employment if it were available. The size of this group is difficult to calculate because the unemployment statistics tend to exclude married women.

There is obviously a 'lifestyle' that is associated with living in Westerhope that is more or less dependent on the wages of wives and mothers. This lifestyle is not merely the acquisition of material possessions (though that may be an important factor) through higher than average income, but also relates to the factor of employment itself - the assurance of two independent incomes, the experience of work, the potential for the women to relate to a wider world than just the family and neighbours. It is this aspect that makes the lifestyle of the present generation of women in Westerhope radically different from that of their Westerhope predecessors, their own mothers and their contemporaries living in other parts of the city. It was mainly for this reason that I chose to take as my sample for the empirical survey married women between the ages of 30 and 44, with dependent children as I felt that their dual roles of workers and wife/mother would have a direct bearing on their understanding of their lives on an owner occupied estate, and it is also for this reason that a substantial section of the empirical was devoted to questions about the household structure and employment patterns. Also it became necessary to consider the employment patterns of the women's parents in order to trace through generational changes. From the preliminary research (see chapter five) it seems that most of the population of the new estates in Westerhope come from areas in Newcastle or Tyne and Wear - generally from neither the 'best' or the 'worst' areas in terms of housing standards etc:

Rather they seem to have come from 'respectable' areas, having been brought up in good quality council housing or private rented accommodation. The women now living in Westerhope have managed to improve their material circumstances and it is assumed that their employment has something to do with this. Therefore their current impressions of their living situation would be linked to their past experiences, in terms of where and how they were brought up. Unfortunately, no data currently exists covering areas like this, so this would have to be directly accessed by the empirical survey.

However, before I go on to discuss the empirical survey in detail I would like to give a more detailed impression of the life style in Westerhope based on the ward profile provided by Newcastle upon Tyne City Council. Again, this profile uses statistics from the 1981 Census and also statistics collected under the Special Priority Area scheme. As mentioned earlier, the ward of Westerhope includes EDs that are not directly relevant to this research (i.e. they consist mainly of council housing or older housing). However as most of these figures relate the type of area Westerhope is, then the inclusion of the extra EDs is not seen as too much of a distortion. Also the ward profile provides the research with an insight into how the local council themselves perceive the area. In a summary of the ward of Westerhope the profile states:

"Westerhope's population has continued to rise over the last few years..... it has a young population.... and a large number of family households. Housing is predominantly post-war and owner-occupied and appears to be of a good standard with few or no households lacking amenities, little over crowding and high levels of central heating and use of a garden. Westerhope is also relatively well off in economic terms .... The working population .... is slightly more biased towards non-manual occupations that that of the City as a whole .... Not surprisingly a very high proportion of Westerhope households have the use of a car and ownership of consumer durables is high."<sup>3</sup>



These comments are interesting as it is the City Council, using such statistics and perceptions, that decide the allocation of many of the services to the area and have to set priorities between different parts of the city. I have reproduced six of these tables from the profile, not only to illustrate the lifestyle in Westerhope, but also to highlight the relative affluence of Westerhope that would be perceived by the City Council and would affect the extent of local state intervention in the area, which in turn, it is assumed, would influence how the residents perceived their own community. (See tables 3.1 to 3.6). Most of the statistics in these tables speak for themselves and need no further comment in the main text. However one point that does deserve comment and provides an interesting issue to follow up in the empirical survey, is the incidence of 17 year olds still in education (table 1.6) which is 10% higher than that of the city as a whole. As well as being a reflection of the aspirations of the parents it is also a comment on the standard of the education in the local schools. A follow up on this point would allow another analysis between the generations, as table 3.9 - residents with qualifications - this time between the present generation of householders and their children. The residents perception of the area and their own lives, lives not just in the present as it relates to the past, but also as it relates to the future.

Another group of statistics that I have included from the profile are the Socio-Economic groups of residents in employment; industry of employment of those aged 16 or over; and residents with qualifications (tables 3.7 to 3.9). The employment of the men in the ward is perhaps as expected for such an area with a tendency towards professional/white collar and skilled manual jobs, in fact it is surprising there are not

more professionals. The most striking feature of table 3.7 is the huge concentration of women in intermediate and Junior Non-Manual work. The choice of employment will be discussed in more detail later, some of the implications will be drawn out here as an introduction to the empirical survey. The jobs represented by this classification are generally stable 'respectable' and well paid (for women) and would enable the women (in conjunction with their husbands) to save enough, and have a high enough income, to take out a mortgage on a house in Westerhope. However these kinds of jobs (e.g. typists, secretaries, clerks) not only provide a degree of affluence (for a woman), but also makes the couple 'credit-worthy' conferring status and a certain amount of privilege when dealing with the state and institutions. They are also jobs they generally allow a woman to 'break off' for the birth of her children and then return to work part time. These issues will be taken up and explored in the rest of the research as it is thought extremely relevant to the lifestyle lived by the residents of Westerhope.

## Housing and Employment Questionnaire

### Choice of Sample - Questionnaire Design

As indicated in the previous section, it was decided that married women aged between 30 and 45 years with children and who were, or had been, in, employment would be the most fruitful sample in that in questioning them the issues raised in the analysis of the census material, would be best investigated. The type of household this group of women represent (i.e. wife, husband and child/ren with a dual income, either now or in the past) is a very popular one in Westerhope, and in many ways are the type of household structure that the builder/developer of the estates geared their housing towards. Married women younger than 30 were excluded on the grounds that it was felt that a significant proportion of them would not have had children yet. Married women older than 45 were excluded on the grounds that part of this group would represent those households who had moved to Westerhope on, or approaching, retirement, and therefore would not have lived in Westerhope as the mothers of dependent children etc.

By looking at this group it is thought that the areas of interest outlined earlier (broadly speaking the diffusion of the relation to capital) can largely be covered by this group in a way that no other group could. For it is envisaged that the majority of this group of the new population lived elsewhere before moving to Westerhope and that the vast majority worked in paid employment for a number of years before 'breaking off' from work to have a family and therefore spend a substantial amount of time in the locale, using local facilities, in a way that men or working women without children, rarely do (e.g. shops, health clinics,

playgroups). The implication of this is that these women have experienced 'living' in Westerhope in a way that other sections of the new population have not, and that this experience is substantially different from the women in the old population of Westerhope. Also this sample's initial experience of Westerhope would probably have been as a worker and a vital contributor to the household budget.

It is thought that some elements of this experience are measurable i.e. those elements that focus around the social 'make up' of the new residents; where they were brought up; where they lived before moving to Westerhope; their occupations etc. Most of the questions in the questionnaire would then be centred on those areas, where structured responses to structured questions, is appropriate, e.g. where did you live when you were young? What was your fathers job? A copy of the questionnaire is to be found in at the end of the *thesis*. Most of the questions were quite straightforward and were pre-coded. Only a handful involved the testing of attitudes (i.e. questions 18-20) and these questions were post-coded. However these questions were not intended to provide a definitive statement as to why, for example, the respondents moved to the area. Rather they were intended to provide a general indication as to some of the reasons and feelings that were expressed when such questions were asked. In fact this is true in general of all the <sup>post-coded</sup> answers given in the questionnaire. It is not intended to try and draw inferences from the statistical material gathered in any serious way. Instead the purpose of this stage of research is to highlight some of the areas of change, for the individual and the community, and to go to explore and analyse those changes using different research techniques.

Representiveness and Randomness

Given the time and resources available it would be impossible to interview all the women falling into the sample population (i.e. over 2000 households in an area of over 4000 households) and therefore the question of selecting a smaller sample arises. I decided, on the basis of time and resources, to interview just 50 women in this stage of the research. I am not going to claim that such a small sample is going to be representative. However I do not think that this is necessarily too great a problem as the question of representativeness is directly linked to the purpose of the research, and as I have just stated, the purpose here is to highlight potential areas of further investigation and outline some of the general trends, bearing in mind the data provided by the analysis made of the 1981 Census. The intention of the questionnaire is to see how 50 individual women who have lived in Westerhope as wives, mothers and workers, have lived their lives and 'fitted in' their various roles.

The smaller sample was however chosen randomly from the electoral register for 1983. I selected the relevant streets and then eliminated any household that were headed by unmarried women or men or women or men living alone with children. Those that were left were divided into four groups i.e. the four estates in Westerhope. Fifty households were then randomly selected, in proportion, from these groups. The women in the households were then sent a letter explaining the nature and purpose of the research and outlining the necessary qualifications for taking part. The letter was shortly followed up by a home visit to carry out the questionnaire.

Of the original 50 selected, 27 were eligible and willing to take part in the questionnaire. Of the remaining 23 contacted 19 were over the age limit, 6 were under it, 5 were in the correct age group but were childless, and 3 were eligible but were unwilling to take part. Using the same procedure I selected another 50 households and these were approached in the same way. All the second sample were contacted and 23 questionnaires were completed (9 were over the age limit, 8 under it, 4 were eligible but childless, 4 were eligible but unwilling to take part and 1 had left the area). The information on the questionnaires was then prepared for the computer and was analysed.

### Survey Findings

The starting point of the questionnaire was an examination of the respondents current household structure (tables 4.1 to 4.5). The spread of ages of the women seem to be fairly even, though there is a slightly larger proportion of women in the 40-45 years bracket. Given this, and the age range of the sample, it is not surprising that the majority of the women's children were of school age. However what is surprising perhaps is the high number of children aged under 15 years (i.e. 50-74%) given the age limits imposed on the sample. The figures in tables 4.1 and 4.5 indicate that many of the women in the sample waited a while before having their families and the figures in table 4.2 indicate that most of them also restricted their families to 2 children. It is also interesting to note that of the three families who have more than 2 children, two include women who have married twice and have brought children from the first marriage to the second and then had another child/children. It was also noted that none of the respondent households had any other adult relative resident.

Another area that was examined in this section was the daily occupation of the people in the households. Again the high percentage of married women workers, found in the census data, is reflected in this sample. In fact, the percentages in table 4.4 are very high indeed, and this is probably due to the fact that my sample excludes women under 30 (and who are more likely to have young children) though as I have just pointed out, there is still a large number of dependent children in the sample. The percentage of husbands in full time employment is also extremely high with the only exception being one man who took early retirement from a large chemical firm.

Acting on their current situation then it seems that the sample population are a relatively 'privileged' group, with no male unemployment and a high proportion having two incomes, with a third of the households having two full time incomes. This affluence is not just confined to the material, but also relates to acquiring a certain status (e.g. with institutions such as banks and building societies, and also with schools). To a large extent the women have managed to gain some control over their lives - to be able to have their children when they want and to continue, or return to work when they have dependent children. This degree of privilege and affluence is one of the themes that is taken in the second tier survey. However to understand what this 'affluence' means to the women and how they feel about their lives now, I think it is important to examine their backgrounds in greater detail.

### Background

The questions relating to the backgrounds of the respondents serve a dual purpose in that they help to indicate generational changes between the respondents and their parents, and also provide a 'base' from which the current lifestyles of the respondents can be analysed. It becomes evident from looking at the figures (see table 5.1) that the household structure of the respondent when a child is different from the current experience of her own children. For a start several of the respondents lived in a single parent household and a large proportion (nearly a third) had other adult relatives living in the house. The size of families also shows a marked difference with over half the respondents growing up in a household which contained 3 or more children. Not only does this set of figures tell us something in general about demographic changes, but it also indicates that most of the women living with their husbands and



1 or 2 children in Westerhope had a particular kind of childhood that, in many ways, is not being repeated now. How they feel about their current household structure would involve some reflection on their own childhood. Again this is a theme that warrants further investigation in the second tier of the survey.

The questions asked about the respondents backgrounds also revealed that the vast majority of them were born in the region, with 66% being born in the city of Newcastle itself. Also nearly all of those women who had not been born in the region had husbands who originated from the area. Unfortunately there are no other statistics available covering this issue so I cannot compare my small sample with a larger study. However, my findings do confirm the impressions given by local people interviewed for the earlier parts of the research (see Chapter 5). It seems therefore that, relatively speaking, most of the women had not moved far from their place of origin. (See table 5.2). Table 5.4 also reveals that the same is the case for the respondents parental families, with a large proportion of their parents and brothers and sisters still living in the region. Their parents also tended to be locally born (table 5.5). Not only is this a comment on familial relations, but it also allows a tentative analysis of the changing social relations of a location.

#### Parents employment

The employment of the respondents' parents would, to a very large extent, influence how and where the respondents lived when they were children. Table 7.1 shows that the majority of the fathers were in skilled manual work, which tended to be either mining, shipbuilding or

heavy engineering. Such jobs would be centred around a certain locale (e.g. the mining village, the streets near the docks etc.). Consequently it is most likely that most of the respondents grew up in an area where there was a 'shared identity' through the fathers work.

Table 5.3 represents an attempt to analyse the changes of lifestyle experienced by the respondents and their parental families, by charting the moves made by the families in terms of tenure and type and age of dwelling. Initially it appears that the vast majority of the respondents lived in older, smaller rented property, mainly privately rented. The main shift in their childhoods was the move from private rented accommodation to council rented property and, to a lesser extent, owner occupied property, and the higher standard of accommodation that this implies (i.e. larger, newer property). Almost three quarters of the sample moved once (the figures in brackets represent the absolute percentage of those in each category), tending to moved as just indicated. Those who moved a third or fourthtime, who represent a far smaller percentage of the sample, showed a slight tendency to be moving into owner-occupied property. These figures make logical sense in the context of what was happening during their childhoods. The women in the sample would have been born between 1938 and 1953 and the vast majority would have had their childhoods disrupted to a lesser or greater extent by the war (for example, several of the women lived in relatives houses whilst their fathers were away at war). After the war and the immediate post war period, many of their parents would have started to benefit from the increased prosperity of this period, both in terms of their fathers obtaining stable employment again, and in terms of state provision. 24% of the sample for example, made their first move into post 1945 council property, which in all probability would just have been built and been of quite a high standard.

By the time that the respondents left the parental home (the vast majority to get married, fewer to go to college or live independently) 31% were leaving owner occupied property, 28% were leaving privately rented property and 41% were leaving council rented property. The type of housing they were leaving was also linked to the type of area i.e. those in owner-occupied property tended to be located in the 'good' areas of the city e.g. Fenham, Heaton; those in council property were mostly in the 'respectable' estates such as West Denton, Walkerville; and those in privately rented property were located either in the small mining villages on the outskirts of the city (i.e. National Coal Board property) or in the 'better parts' of the inner city areas e.g. Byker and Arthurs Hill. Their ability, on marriage, to obtain similar housing in the same location would have been quite restricted - good quality council housing and private rented property would have been getting scarce at this time (i.e. throughout the '60s and early '70s) and few of the respondents would have been able to obtain or afford a mortgage on the older properties available in Fenham and Heaton etc. Also having been accustomed to a certain standard of housing and location, I would argue that the alternatives available (lower standard council and privately rented property in less prestigious parts of the city) would have only been seen in terms of a temporary solution. I would also argue that these issues would have an important influence on the respondents marital housing histories and on their decision to live in Westerhope.

#### Housing after Marriage

Table 6.1 illustrates the kinds of housing choice available to the respondents on their marriage. It is noted that relatively few went into council property (given the high percentage of parents living in

such accommodation), probably due to a mixture of scarcity and/or a reluctance to occupy a poorer standard of property available. Most of the sample initially opted for owner occupied property or privately rented property. It is interesting to note that this choice appears to be linked to the different ages of the respondents i.e. it is mostly the younger respondents who moved straight to owner occupied homes, the older ones spending some time in privately rented property first, having married at a time when mortgages were less readily available. The figures for housing after the first move appear to support this line of thought. 86% of the sample have moved at least once and in this first move, of the 86%, 70% moved to the owner occupied tenures. Of course some of these would be respondents moving within the tenure, but some must have come from the private rented tenure. Another interesting feature that emerged from this section was that the move into owner occupation was almost always concomitant with the move to Westerhope, i.e. that most of the sample bought their first homes in Westerhope, and this was true of all the different groups. Therefore by the respondents third move, 70% had settled in post war detached or semi-detached owner occupied property on one of the estates that make up Westerhope.

It becomes clear then that Westerhope, as a group of owner occupied estates, offers something specific to certain people at a certain time in their life. This is of course not just confined to young married couples, the estates also contain single person uni-flats and several roads of small but high-standard bungalows. As discussed in chapter 5, the estates of Westerhope were built to attract certain groups of people, and their location, style and cost were all geared in catering for the needs of these client groups. Right from the start of their coming available (i.e. in the early '60s) they were offered as attractive

package deals, the builder/developer, the local estate agent and the main local building society worked together to sell the speculatively-built property, so that in relation to other areas of Newcastle, the houses in Westerhope were relatively cheap, readily available, were new, away from the inner city, and it was easier to get a mortgage. Given all these factors and the difficulty of finding good quality, affordable accommodation in the city (whether to buy or rent) it would be difficult to distinguish, even perhaps for the respondents themselves) whether the decision to move to Westerhope and to the tenure of owner-occupier was a positive choice or was made out of necessity.

Table 6.2 illustrates the responses given when I asked the women why they moved to Westerhope. The answers were categorised by prime consideration, but what is perhaps most interesting are the recurrent themes that were mentioned. It becomes apparent that the respondents moved to Westerhope (and therefore into owner occupation) because good, affordable housing was available in a good and convenient location. When asked what they thought about the area now (Table 6.3 and 6.4) most of the women gave quite positive responses, though a substantial proportion gave ambivalent responses. However what these tables do indicate is that most of the women feel the area has some important positive points (e.g. convenient for work, good schools for their children) whilst they felt there is room for improvement (e.g. facilities for the children, a reduction in the rates). It would therefore be wrong to give the impression that the respondents moved to Westerhope just because there was nothing else available. Also several of the respondents (nearly 20%) have actually moved to other houses on the estates - a trend confirmed by estate agents.

Although the houses in Westerhope were more available and accessible than those in other parts of the city, they are, or were, by no means inexpensive and it would need quite a high income to obtain and maintain such homes. Certainly a young couple moving, or hoping to move to Westerhope, would need two stable incomes in order to qualify for a mortgage for a house in Westerhope. Also it is likely that both husband and wife would have to work full time in the early years of their occupancy to pay off the heavier mortgage repayments. Clearly such a process involves some form of sacrifice e.g. commitment to stay in stable, relatively well paid employment, waiting to have a family, etc. The meaning of living in owner occupied property in Westerhope then is linked not only to the respondents' backgrounds but to their willingness to continue in employment for a substantial part of their married lives. These are areas that warrant further probing in the second-tier questionnaire but before that is done I would like to outline some of the employment trends among the sample.

### Employment

Although it has been argued earlier that it is womens' employment that is a crucial factor in the social relation in Westerhope, that is not necessarily to say that the employment of their husbands does not have a role to play. The improved standard of living (in terms of housing) over their life times is linked for the respondents to both their employment and that of their husbands. Table 7.1 illustrates the 'improved' employment, in terms of occupation, of the respondents husbands as compared to their fathers. Far more of the husbands are in professional/managerial employment and far less are in semi-or unskilled manual work. Apart from reflecting increased aspirations on the part of

the individual men involved, this trend also reflects changes in general employment patterns, namely that most of the skilled manual work the fathers were engaged in is simply not available any more, in those quantities in the North East (e.g. mining, ship building). It is also interesting to note in this context (see table 7.7) that whereas most of the respondents' husbands were initially in skilled manual work (60% with many being apprentices) there was a distinct shift after marriage to professional/managerial work. Again this is probably linked to individual effort and to increased opportunities in this field. However it must not be forgotten that although the shift to managerial work is very strong, the majority of the respondents husbands are not in this type of employment and that 38% are still in skilled manual work. Given the cost of housing in Westerhope it is perhaps more surprising that there are not more husbands in professional/managerial work.

Another 'break' from the parents employment patterns is the changes experienced by the women. Tables 7.2 and 7.3 show that the mothers of the respondents had a far lower economic activity rate than that of their daughters, and that when they did work they were far more likely to be semi- or unskilled work. The respondents on the other hand are concentrated on intermediate/junior non-manual or managerial/supervisory work. They also have a higher incidence of working full time, (see table 7.5) and appear to have far more commitment to pursuing a certain type of employment.

Few of the women stayed on at school after the compulsory age (see table 7.4) and the majority went into office work as junior office staff. Although less than 20% took up full time further education at this point in their lives, it is probable that their choice of employment was

interpreted as 'doing well' for example steady, respectable jobs with good prospects (for young women). Also many of the respondents who did go into further education undertook some form of training in relation to their jobs (16% did a full time secretarial course, 18% did a part time course, and 10% have done in-service training - usually related to office skills, though these categories are not mutually exclusive.

The flow diagram in table 7.6 shows that the strongest shift in terms of occupational changes has been towards managerial/supervisory occupations, indicating a level of aspiration and commitment among the respondents. Perhaps more significant is the amount of women who have stayed in intermediate/junior non-manual occupations, given that all the sample have stopped work at some time to have children, i.e. they have been able to return to work, resuming their employment at more or less the level they left it. This is of course not true of all respondents as some returned to semi-skilled and unskilled manual work after the birth of their children, having been in intermediate/junior non-manual work previously. However I would argue that the change in occupation was a choice (i.e. several of the women in this category chose to be dinner ladies at the local schools rather than get a secretarial job in the city) and that these women, who changed occupation, could have returned to their previous occupational group if they have chosen and it is likely that several of them will do so when their children are less dependent.



These trends in the respondents employment represent a very significant break from the employment patterns of their mothers, and as such is a generational change. They also represent a break from the previous pattern of womens employment in Westerhope (see chapter five) and are thus part of the changing social relations of the locale. Both these areas of change would affect the womens perceptions of their lives and living situations and the affect of their employment patterns is thus an issue that will be considered in the second tier interviews. However, perhaps the most crucial area (and the most fruitful area as far as the research is concerned) is the effect of their employment on their perception of themselves. As mentioned earlier, their full time employment in the early years of their marriage would have, in all likelihood, played a vital part in their being able to obtain a mortgage for a house in Westerhope. Their continued employment after the birth of their children would have enabled them to create and maintain a certain lifestyle for themselves and their children. These factors, this 'positive' contribution to the family's lifestyle, I would argue, would play an important part of the respondents perceptions of their own domestic relations and in social relations of their locale.

The next 'logical' stage of the research then is the in-depth interviewing of a section of the respondents during the questionnaire survey. As already mentioned these women will be asked questions about their backgrounds, their housing histories and their employment patterns. Another pertinent area of investigation would also be the present 'politics' of the respondents as this area potentially reflects the meaning of the changes perceived in the research up to date as they are manifested, in a tangible sense, in civil society. The question remains does the new lifestyle, seen in the research, represent a political 'shift' as some

commentators claim - have these women (many from traditional working class backgrounds) become 'middle class', and have the daughters of traditional labour voters changed irrevocably into Conservative or SDP voters? The whole contradiction in this theory is that it is womens' work i.e. being put in a direct relation to capital, that is a vital factor in this lifestyle. Should we conclude that the dual exploitation of women as producers and reproducers has increased their conservatism? What happens and is manifested in 'lifestyles' and voting patterns may not be traditional labour patterns (whatever that may be), nor does it imply that something has 'gone wrong'<sup>4</sup>, rather it is, as it always has been, the result of workers continually developing relation to capital. The political/cultural movements of say the 1930's, has been well documented and analysed. Considerations of current political <sup>ve</sup> moments are too often only undertaken to provide a counterfoil to what used to be - an often very unfavourable comparison. What is happening now in Westerhope has to be allowed sufficient analysis in its present context and be recognised for what it actually is - the contemporary representation of the relation between labour and capital. As A.H. Halsey writes of the current 'collapse' of the Labour vote:-

'Class has not been abolished. Relative inequality of wealth and income as well as class inequality of opportunity in education, has not changed .... But there has been economic growth with its increased absolute rates of upward mobility and its general largesse of more money and more leisure. It was the affluence, and not the inequality, which has made the stronger impact on popular political perceptions .....In capitalist democracies, whether of the Bismarckian right or the Atlee left, political parties have been an adaption to the class interests of both capital and labour .... Political parties are the potential (not automatic) mobilisers of class action.'<sup>5</sup>  
(Authors emphasis)

It is envisaged that individual in depth interviews with relatively unstructured questions and responses will be the medium for gaining information for such issues mentioned above. It is hoped this process will allow the respondents to express their impressions and also explore and analyse these impressions, thus allowing for some self-analysis to complement that which will be made based on the information collected in other stages of the research. For this is one of the crucial components of this research, it is not merely intended to be a catalogue of observed and measured changes but rather it is an attempt to look at the actual meaning of changes in the area of social relations and the quality of those changes. As stated previously, the study does not set out to say that things have, or have not, changed, but instead it will look at how patterns of living have changed, and why they have changed in that particular manner. It is an examination of the processes of change, rather than the superficial observation of change itself, based on the concept that social relations in the community are dynamic, creative, and part of the determining base and not really reflective entities.

The next stage of the research, the 'second tier' of in-depth, taped interviews, is more intricate, not only in respect of choosing the questions to be asked, but also in the choice of respondents. As indicated earlier in relation to the questionnaire it would be impossible, and not necessarily relevant, to try and locate a truly 'representative' sample. The rationale for selecting the respondents for this stage of the research is outlined in the next chapter, but it is relevant to state here that one of the intentions of the questionnaire survey was to identify potential respondents for the second tier of the research, which is seen as the crucial component. Another intention of the survey was to

indicate those areas worthy of a more probing investigation. Before the discussion of these interviews, I would like to reiterate that the research carried out for this thesis is not an attempt to quantitatively analyse changing housing and employment patterns with a view to making a definitive statement about changing social relations as experienced in an owner-occupied suburb. Rather it is an attempt to evaluate and understand the effect of changes that a particular group of individual women have undergone and how they themselves understand these changes and translate them into their daily lives.

Table 1.1

Employment	Total adults 16+ economically active	Total adults 16+ full-time	Unemployed males as % of economically active males	Unemployed Females as % of economically active females	Total persons 16+ seeking work	Total persons 16+ economically inactive	Total persons 16+ permanently retired
CLUSTER 1	58	31	37	19	17	42	9
CLUSTER 2	60	45	10	5	5	40	13
CLUSTER 3	63	50	6	4	4	37	10
CLUSTER 4	64	42	21	9	10	36	9
CLUSTER 5	53	37	21	9	9	47	16

Table 1.2

Household Characteristics	TENURES OF HOUSES %			CAR OWNERSHIP %		
	Owner-occupied	Local authority tenant	Housing Association tenants	Private Tenant	No car	2 or more cars
CLUSTER 1 (52 cases)	6	77	6	11	83	1
CLUSTER 2 (137 cases)	50	25	3	20	53	7
CLUSTER 3 (155 cases)	83	10	-	5	28	16
CLUSTER 4 (124 cases)	19	72	2	7	67	4
CLUSTER 5 (158 cases)	14	61	7	17	78	2

Source: Aggregated Data 100% Census Data 1981

Table 1.3

Household Structure	% of population in private households by age			% of households			% adults migrant last year
	0 - 4	5 - 15	Pensionable age	with Children	with Pensioners only	Single Parent	
CLUSTER 1	11	17	13	43	18	4	17
CLUSTER 2	4	12	22	24	29	.5	12
CLUSTER 3	6	15	17	34	21	-	8
CLUSTER 4	6	18	15	37	19	1	10
CLUSTER 5	4	10	29	19	36	1	13

Aggregated data 100% & 10% Census Data 1981

Table 1.4

Women's Employment	Total Females 16+ Fulltime	Total Females 16+ Parttime	Unemployed Females as % of economically active females	Total married women working fulltime	Total married women working parttime	Married females economically active
CLUSTER 1	18	13	19	12	19	36
CLUSTER 2	29	16	5	24	25	51
CLUSTER 3	30	17	4	27	24	53
CLUSTER 4	26	20	9	19	30	51
CLUSTER 5	21	15	9	18	24	45



Table 2.1

Household Structure

Population by Age %	0 - 4 Years	5 - 15 Years	Pensionable Age	With Children	With Pensioners Only	% Households headed by Single Parent	% Adults Migrant last year
Selected ED's Average <sup>+</sup>	6	17	38	12	16	-*	7

\* less than 1%

+ based on aggregated 1981 Census Data (100% & 10% sample) from the 22 selected Enumeration Districts.

Table 2.2

	Tenure %				Car Ownership %	
	Owner Occupied	Local Authority Rented	Privately Rented	Housing Association Rented	No Car	2 or more cars
Selected ED's Average <sup>+</sup>	94	3	3	1	21	15

Table 2.3

Employment

Economic Activity Rates %	Total adults economically active	Total adults 16+ fulltime	Unemployed males 16+ as % of economically active males	Unemployed Females 16+ as % of economically active females	Total Persons 16+ seeking work	Total Persons 16+ economically inactive	Total Persons 16+ Retired
Selected E.D.'s Average	68	53	4	3	3	32	8

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Table 2.4

Female Economic Activity Rates %	Total Female 16+ Full-time	Total Female 16+ Part-time	Married Females 16+ economically active	Married Females 16+ Full-time	Married Females 16+ Part-time	Married Females 30-44 economically active	Married Females 30-44 Fulltime	Married Females 30-44 Parttime
Selected E.D.'s Average	33	24	58	28	30	68	26	42

Table 3.1House Age (percentages)

	Pre-1919	1919-45	Post-1945
Westerhope	7	12	80
Newcastle	21	35	44

Table 3.2Housing Facilities (% households having use of:-)

	Central Heating	Garden
Westerhope	88	93
Newcastle	62	72

Table 3.3Housing Problems (% households with:-)

	Condensation on windows	Damp on Walls	% with both
Westerhope	35	20	14
Newcastle	43	32	22

Table 3.4

Possession of Consumer Durables

	% households having the use of:						
	Washing Machine	Fridge	Deep Freeze	Colour T.V.	Phone	Automatic Clothes Dryer	Car or Van
Westerhope	93	96	43	76	80	14	65
Newcastle	78	87	21	58	57	11	42

Table 3.5

OpinionsPercentage of Household Expressing Dissatisfaction with Local Services

	Bus Service	Local Shops	Parks/ Recreation Land	Other Outdoor Play Space	Library Facilities	Refuse Collection	Street Cleaning
Westerhope	21	34	57	54	17	5	.21
Newcastle	20	33	44	50	14	4	30

Table 3.6

Selected Population Characteristics

	Number	Ward %	City %
Persons in overcrowded households (more than one person per room)	512	4.1	9.8
Households containing three or more children aged 0-15	195	4.3	4.9
Children in households with only one adult	85	2.9	8.0
Seventeen-year-olds still in education ("staying on" measure)	90	41.9	31.3

Table 3.7

Socio-Economic Group of Residents in Employment

	Professional & Managerial	Intermediate & Junior Non-Manual	Skilled Manual	Semi-Skilled	Unskilled Manual	Total
Males	1020	810	1270	340	110	3570
Ward %	29	23	36	10	3	100
Females	180	2060	120	320	130	1830
Ward %	6	73	4	11	5	100
Total %	19	45	22	10	4	100
City %	14	35	23	18	9	100

Table 3.8

Industry of Employment of those Aged 16 or Over

	Energy & Water	Manufacturing	Construction	Distribution & Catering	Transport	Other Services	Total
Males	130	1130	370	450	390	1040	3560
Ward %	4	32	10	13	11	29	100
Females	80	320	50	750	60	1550	2830
Ward %	3	11	2	27	2	55	100
Total %	3	23	7	19	7	41	100
City %	3	23	7	18	7	41	100

Table 3.9

Residents with Qualifications

	Males 18-64	Females 18-59	Total
Number	530	340	870
Ward %	14	9	12
City %	12	11	12

Table 4.1Present Household Structures

Age (Years) %	30-34	34-39	40-45	45+	0-5	6-15	16-24	25+	
Respondent	30	32	38	-					n=50
Husband	28	28	18	26					n=50
Children					18	56	21	1	n=81

\* none of the respondents households had any other adult relatives resident

Table 4.2

%	1 Child only	2 Children only	3 or more Children	
Size of Family	10	64	6	n=50

Table 4.3

%	Once Only	Twice	
Number of times married	92	8	n=50

Table 4.4

Occupation	Full time Work	Part time Work	Fulltime Education	Under School Age	Economically inactive	Retired	
Respondents	32	40	-	-	28	-	n=50
Husband	98	-	-	-	-	2	n=50
Children	9	-	73	18	-	-	n=81

Table 5.1

Household Structure When Respondent was a Child

				Size of family (children inc. respondent)				
%	Two Parents	One Parent Only*	Other adult* relatives living in house	1	2	3	4	5 or more
Respondent	84	16	28	14	32	32	10	12

n=50

\* i.e. for a continuous period of more than six months

Table 5.2

Location at Birth

%	In the North East	In the North East but not in Newcastle*	In Newcastle upon Tyne <sup>+</sup>				Not in the North East
			West City <sup>1</sup>	East <sup>1</sup>	West <sup>1</sup>	Total	
Respondent	90	24	24	24	18	66	10

n=50

\* i.e. Tyne &amp; Wear, Durham, or Northumberland.

+ using current boundaries

1 i.e. West City - wards in the west of the city but centrally located  
 East - wards in the east of the city  
 West - wards in the far west of the city, includes several pit villages.



Table 5.3

Housing Situations of $\phi$ - pre-marriage %	Tenure				Type of Dwelling						Age of Dwelling			Length of Residence			
	Owner-Occupied	Council Rented	Private Rented	Tied/Forces	Detached	Semi-Detached	Terraced House	Tyne Flat	Flat Other	Tied/Forces	Pre-1919	Between Wars	Post 1945	Under 5 years	5-10 years	Over 10 years	
At birth (100%)	16	12	62	10	4	16	46	30	2	2	78	22	-	16	22	62	n=50
After 1st move (74%)	20 (27)	28 (38)	24 (32)	2 (3)	-	36 (49)	14 (19)	12 (16)	10 (14)	2 (3)	32 (43)	18 (24)	24 (32)	23 (31)	23 (31)	28 (38)	n=37 =100
After 2nd move (24%)	10 (42)	4 (17)	6 (25)	4 (17)	4 (17)	4 (17)	4 (17)	6 (25)	4 (17)	2 (8)	12 (50)	6 (25)	6 (25)	18 (75)	4 (17)	2 (8)	=100
After 3rd move (14%)*	-	10 (71)	2 (14)	2 (14)	-	8 (57)	2 (14)	-	-	4 (29)	2 (14)	4 (29)	8 (47)	6 (43)	2 (15)	6 (43)	=100

\* less than 5% moved more than 3 times

Table 5.4

Location of Family

Current %	Mother	Father	Sister1 (52%)	Sister2 (20%)	Sister3 (6%)	Brother1 (58%)	Brother2 (26%)	Brother3 (6%)
Newcastle	50	36	28	6	-	26	10	9
Tyne & Wear	8	8	8	4	2	8	2	-
Northumberland	10	4	4	-	2	8	2	-
Durham	4	2	4	2	-	-	-	-
England/ Scotland*	4	4	4	8	2	16	8	2
Outside G.B.	-	-	4	-	-	-	2	-
N/A <sup>+</sup>	24	46	4	-	-	-	2	-

\* i.e. other than above

+ i.e. dead, whereabouts unknown

Table 5.5Location of Parents when Children

%	Mother	Father
Newcastle	58	56
Tyne & Wear	16	16
Northumberland	10	9
Durham	6	2
England/ Scotland	10	10
Outside G.B.	-	-
N/A	-	7

Table 6.1

Housing situation post-marriage %	Tenure				Type of Dwelling						Age of Dwelling			Length of Residence				
	Owner-Occupied	Council Rented	Private Rented	Tied/Forces	Detached	Semi-Detached	Terraced	Tyne Flat	Other Flat	Tied/Forces	Pre-1919	Between Wars	Post-War	Under 1 year	Under 5 years	5-10 years	10+ years	
First Residence (100%)	44	10	42	4	6	34	22	26	4	8	46	12	42	18	56	20	6	n=50
After first move 86% (100%)	70 (81)	8 (9)	6 (7)	2 (2)	10 (12)	56 (65)	10 (12)	4 (5)	4 (5)	2 (2)	6 (7)	4 (5)	76 (88)	9 (10)	24 (29)	25 (30)	28 (33)	n=43
After second move (100%)	26 (76)	4 (12)	2 (6)	2 (6)	12 (35)	14 (41)	2 (6)	2 (6)	2 (6)	2 (6)	2 (6)	6 (17)	26 (76)	3 (9)	10 (35)	12 (30)	8 (24)	n=17
After third move* (100%)	10 (63)	-	4 (25)	2 (13)	6 (38)	6 (38)	-	-	2 (13)	2 (13)	2 (13)	-	14 (87)	4 (25)	4 (25)	6 (38)	2 (13)	n=8

\* after the third move over 70% of the respondents had settled in post-war owner-occupied property in Westerhope - the main trend after that being to bigger different houses in the area.

Table 6.2

Stated Primary Reasons for Moving to Westerhope

	*Housing as a Prime Consideration					Location as Prime Consideration					Finance as prime consideration
%	Houses available	Good housing in good location	Wanted own house	Wanted own house - affordable	Total	Links with area	Good location	Near work	Good location good housing	Total	Affordable
Respondents	18	14	12	8	52	22	8	8	4	42	6

n=50

Table 6.3

Westerhope as a plce to live for respondent and husband

	*Positive Response						Negative Response				Qualified Response					
%	Like area	Convenient	Good family/social life	Quiet	Better than city	Total	Very expensive	Hate area	Too quite	Total	Ok but noisy	Ok but expensive	Ok but poor family/social life	Ok but too quiet	Ok but hate house	Total
Respondent	20	20	4	10	8	62	2	4	4	10	2	14	8	2	2	28

n=50

\* exclusive categories

Table 6.4

Westerhope as a place to live for respondent's children

	*Positive Response					Negative Response	Qualified Response
%	Good schools	Better than city	Children like it	Good social life	Total	No facilities	Good but no facilities
Respondent	22	18	10	4	54	20	26

n=50

\* exclusive categories

EmploymentTable 7.1Father's employment\* compared with respondent's husband's<sup>+</sup>

%	Father	Husband
Professional/ Managerial	15	45
Skilled Manual	52	38
Intermediate and Junior non- manual	5	15
Semi-skilled and unskilled manual	8	2

n=40\*      n=50

\*i.e. when respondent was 5 years old

+i.e. husband's current employment

x10% of the respondents sample had a father who was unable to work through ill health, or whereabouts unknown or dead.

Table 7.2Mother's Employment

%	Mother Working* full-time	Mother Working* part-time	Mother Economically inactive	
Respondents under 5	2	10	88	n=50
"    between 5-11	8	28	64	n=50
"    "    12-16	20	42	38	n=50
"    left home	24	24	44	n=46

\* for more than 6 continuous months

Table 7.3

Mothers employment\* compared with respondent's<sup>+</sup>

			Socio-economic group					
%	Working full-time	Working part-time	Professional/ Managerial/ supervisory	Intermediate junior non-manual	Semi-skilled non-manual	Semi/un skilled manual	Not economically active	
Respondent	32	40	14	50	4	4	28	n=50
Mother*	20	42	-	30	8	24	38	n=50

\* i.e. mother's employment when respondent was aged between 12-16 years

+ i.e. current employment



Table 7.4

Further education\* of respondent

	Full-time				Part-time			
%	O/A Levels	Degree	Professional qualification	Secretarial Course	O/A Levels	Secretarial Course	In-service training	No further education
Respondent	+ 10	8	6	16	4	18	10	46

\* i.e. after the age of 16

+ not exclusive categories

Table 7.5

Respondents' Job Chances

%		Working full-time	Working part-time
Respondents' first job	100%	98	2
Respondents' second job	94%	70	22
Respondents' third job	74%	46	28
Respondents' fourth job	40%*	18	22

\* less than 20% of respondents have had more than 4 jobs.

		Professional/ Managerial/ Supervisory	Intermediate junior non- manual	Skilled Manual	Semi- and unskilled manual	Other*
First job n=50		7	38	3	-	2
Second job n=46	Professional/ Managerial/ Supervisory	6	3	-	-	-
	Intermediate Junior non- manual	1	32	-	-	-
	Skilled Manual	-	-	2	-	-
	Semi and unskilled manual	-	1	1	-	-
	Other	-	-	-	-	1
Third job n=37	Professional Managerial/ Supervisory	5	2	-	-	-
	Intermediate Junior non- manual	-	24	1	-	-
	Skilled manual	-	-	1	-	-
	Semi and unskilled manual	-	2	1	-	1
	Other	-	-	-	-	-

\* forces

Table 7.7

Occupational Changes (Husband)

		Professional/ Managerial	Intermediate Junior non- manual	Skilled Manual	Semi and unskilled manual
Husband's occupation on marriage n=50	Husband's occupation before marriage	5	14	30	1
	Professional/ Managerial	5	3	2	-
	Intermediate/ Junior non- manual	-	11	-	-
	Semi and unskilled manual	-	-	-	-
Husband's occupation now n=49	Professional/ Managerial	4	8	10	-
	Intermediate/ Junior non- manual	-	6	1	-
	Skilled manual	-	-	19	-
	Semi and unskilled manual	-	-	-	1

References

1. Schatzman and Strauss, 'Field Research: Strategies for a Natural Sociology', Prentice Hall, 1973, p.14, quoted in R. Burgess (ed), "Field Research; A Sourcebook and Field Manual", p.2, Allen & Unwin, 1982.
2. My thanks to the Research Section of the Policy Services Department, Newcastle-upon-Tyne City Council, for their help with the Census data.
3. Economic Profile 1981, published by Newcastle City Council.
4. See for example, J. Seabrook, "What Went Wrong", Gollancz, 1978.
5. From "Class, Politics and Jobs: the Parties' Shifting Foundations", A.H. Halsey, in New Society, 17.3.83, p.412

CHAPTER SEVEN

Living in Westerhope

"It should not be forgotten that every biographical account takes place in the present time and in relation to the present. For the person who tells his or her life story, the first purpose is not to describe the past 'as it was', or even as it was experienced .... but to confer to past experience a certain meaning, a meaning which will contribute to the meaning of the present (and even to the 'future' whose image lies in the present under the form of projections and children). To tell one's life story is .... an encounter with reality. If this encounter is limited to the past, it is orientated past from the present point of view; second, and more deeply, it gives meaning to the past in order to give meaning to the present, to the present life of the person. And this last meaning cannot be the same for all social groups." (author's emphasis)

Isabelle Bertaux-Wiame

"The Life History Approach to the Study of Internal Migration"<sup>1</sup>

- Q. "When you left school and started working, how did you see your life developing?"
- A. "I always wanted to work, changing jobs, going to better ones every time. I wanted to marry too and have children, or at least I think I did, but the jobs thing was more important .... Well I say that now, whether or not I thought it when I was sixteen I'm not sure. For most of my life I've given priority to work so that must have been in my mind when I left school". (Mrs. F)

Oral sources (i.e. in the form of detailed taped interviews) are generally confined within social science research to the relation of the past and past events (oral histories, life histories) or to the testing of attitudes about specific entities or events. The detailed interviews carried out in Westerhope do not strictly belong to either of these two camps but instead fall somewhere between them. Rather than being a simple test of attitudes (e.g. to living in Westerhope) or a straightforward relation of past events, the interviews sought to create, establish and explore the Historical world of the present i.e. on an individual level, how a person an experience/event in the light of what is happening around

them now, what has happened previously and, perhaps to a lesser extent, what might happen in the future.

On a broader level this analysis may lead to an understanding of the changing culture of the working class. In this sense it is hoped that the research will go beyond descriptive ethnography, but instead will include an analysis of structural relations which ethnography often lacks. However this divergence of the usual use of taped interviews does not mean that in general the writings of, say oral historians, are thus rendered invalid. Much of their writing is concerned not with the strict content but with understanding the processes and interpretation of interviews.

Initially in this chapter I wish to discuss these issues and the relevance, limits and purpose of the taped interviews. Then, an analysis of the material collected in the interview will be undertaken within the framework established in the first part.

### Process

Whatever the purpose of the interviews the process of interviewing, the structuring and ordering of the questions, the interaction between researcher and respondent and the manipulation of the interview situation remains a salient and prevalent issue and represents the most important limitation in the use of material so collected. As Portelli writes in 'The Peculiarities of Oral History'<sup>2</sup>.

"The content of the oral source depends largely on what the interviewer puts into it in terms of questions, stimuli, dialogue, personal relationship of trust or detachment. It is the researcher who decides that there will be an interview. Researchers often produce specific distortions: informants tell them what they believe they want to be told ... On the other hand rigidly structured interviews exclude elements whose existence and relevance

were previously unknown to the researcher and are not contemplated in the question schedule; therefore such interviews tend to confirm the researcher's frame of reference".

The role of the researcher in this type of interview cannot then be understated. Apart from the initial choice and ordering of the interview framework (i.e. areas to be covered) the actual choice of specific questions and their timing is, to an extent, variable and dependent on the people involved in the interview. As Portelli goes on to say:

"The first requirement is that the researcher 'accepts' the informant and gives priority to what he or she wishes to tell. Communication works both ways, the interviewee is always - though perhaps quietly - studying the interviewer as well as being studied. The researcher might as well recognise this fact and work with it, rather than eliminate it for the sake of an impossible (and perhaps undesirable) neutrality. Thus the result is the product of both the informant and the researcher".<sup>2</sup>

The limits on this kind of research seems quite extensive. The researcher has to play an active role in the interview (though whether this can ever be avoided is debateable<sup>3</sup>) in order to elicit information from the informant, but such an approach may lead to the risk of distortion - the researcher 'putting words into the mouth' of the informant. Such risks have to be recognised and the distortions acknowledged as part of the final product on tape and this approach is far less limiting than attempting neutrality and objectivity, which as Portelli says are 'impossible (and perhaps undesirable)'. Each individual interview then is unique in its own right and cannot be quantitatively compared with interviews with other people in the same situation or even interviews with the same person at a later date.<sup>3</sup> However, this is not to say that one interview cannot inform us about others. That one person's memory of an experience may be different (or the same) than another person's informs us more about the two individuals



involved and about the interpretation of the experience/event than it provides a demonstrable, countable reaction to something concrete that happened.

Leading on from this the limits within oral sources lie not only in highly personalised format of most interviews but also in the account given by the informant. Specific events may be imperfectly remembered or answers given may be contradictory and inconsistent. This is further reason why material from such interviews cannot be generalised. However, as stated earlier, the acknowledgement and 'working with' such limits can in fact tell us more about the material recorded than if neutrality and objectivity was attempted.

"People seem to remember best what they did most often, and are apt to remember it in a routinised form, as usages rather than events .... incidents and episodes - which have taken on symbolic meaning in the context of their life-stories, but are unreliable when it comes to the sequences and fickle when it comes to disconnected facts"<sup>4</sup>.

An emphasis on the factual relation of an event or 'time', whilst it may be useful in 'sorting out' riddles, and revealing the context in which written records were compiled<sup>5</sup> would be insufficient in trying to reconstruct the historical world of the present as the central core of personal experience would be minimalised, whereas it is the interaction between events and personal interpretation that is important, that yields far more information than a mere factual account could. As Portelli writes in the context of oral history:

"The credibility of oral sources is a different credibility. .... the importance of oral testimony may often lie not in its adherence to facts but rather in its divergence from them, where imagination, symbolism, desire break in. Therefore there are no 'false' oral sources. Once we have checked their factual credibility ... the diversity of oral history consists in the fact that 'untrue'

statements are still psychologically 'true', and that these previous 'errors' sometimes reveal more than factually accurate accounts."<sup>6</sup>

As well as factual inaccuracies other features of detailed, taped interviews such as those undertaken for this research, are the silences contradictions and inconsistencies found in them. Again such limits do not undermine the content of the interview. After all oral interviews are not an exclusive form of document. A person's memory does not constitute a vehicle for perfect recall and neither do their impressions and thoughts represent a logical process that reached a definite conclusion. knowing all the facts. Rather the inaccuracies and the contradictions tell us about how people actually live their lives:

"The memory of any particular event is refracted through layer upon layer of subsequent experience and through the influence of the dominant and/or local and specific ideology ..... The contradictions and inconsistencies are not hiccups and diversions which should (be) smoothed out of an otherwise coherent tale; rather they are the very material of which history is made".

This area of research is a complex one, where the search for 'facts' and demonstrable aspects becomes a hinderance or a mask for other, and in this context, more fruitful areas. Yet these more fruitful areas are 'impure and inconsistent' and yet have to be given credibility for what they are i.e. human consciousness and subjectivity. The taped interviews carried out sought to examine individual experience and interpretation of a lifestyle. Such an examination relies on the current consciousness of the interviewees and their interpretation of how they have reached that consciousness. In this context it is the meaning of events rather than the events themselves that provide the clue to the development of consciousness:

"(Oral sources) tell us not just what people did, but what they wanted to do, what they believed they were doing, what they now think they did. Oral sources may not add much to what we know, but they tell us a good deal about its costs."<sup>8</sup>

It is therefore the realm of consciousness and subjectivity that is studied and revealed by the use of oral sources, and it is within this realm that the contradictions of political/economic systems are experienced by individuals. Understanding consciousness and subjectivity involves not the collection of data but rather an exploration of relationships between different phenomena. By thus examining and conceptualising consciousness it is possible to develop alternatives to rigid, rationalistic theoretical categories of class consciousness generally offered;

"Implicitly questioning the world historical view which treats class consciousness as pre-given and unproblematic they (oral sources) allow for a more complex and, in the end hopefully, more realistic understanding of what the components of class consciousness are."<sup>9</sup>

An important point to note here is that consciousness, whilst partially revealed in the meanings people attach to event/s or times and in their, often contradictory, reactions and understanding of events and issues, is not confined to the world of ideas and thoughts but affects choices and actions. As stated earlier and in the quote at the beginning of the chapter, the examination of consciousness - the biographical account - can be seen to represent a merging of thought and action, of past and present, and it is extremely difficult and perhaps unnecessary to distinguish between them. The validity of 'historical accounts of the present' lie in this very merger. As Bertaux-Wiame concludes:

"..... a biographical approach using life stories (makes) it possible to look at actual decisions and actions, and to perceive behind these practices the network of social relations which allowed them to take place. But to do this the researcher must first listen to those who have lived and therefore know. Certainly their knowledge is not presented in a theoretical .... form and quite often it does not even emerge in an explicit oral form either. This is because their knowledge is entirely focussed on real life choices, on day to day activity. Social investigation is not a matter reserved to sociologists. Everyone is investigating, all the time. But the results of these investigations are not construed into ideas, concepts or discussion; they materialize as acts."<sup>10</sup>

The Westerhope Interviews

The ten women interviewed for this part of the research were selected from the fifty women interviewed for the survey, who were, as previously explained, chosen randomly from the electoral register. This initial sample was too small to 'randomly' select the ten respondents for the second tier interviews - neither was this sample strictly representative. Twenty-one of the women interviewed in the survey expressed a willingness and an interest in taking part in further work. From this 'pool' of 21, 10 women were approached (initially by letter) on the basis to their response to the questionnaire. An attempt was made at this stage to interview a range of women i.e. women of different ages, with fathers in different occupations, coming from different areas within, and outside, Newcastle, with different work experiences, and, to this limited extent, the sample was representative (see Appendix 1). Women were also chosen who seemed to have 'a lot to say' and were willing to converse quite freely about their backgrounds and their current lives. Any claims towards bias would be largely inapplicable in a sample so small, and moreover, this type of research - relying on oral sources - necessitates finding informants who are willing to talk openly.

Like the questionnaire survey, the questions in the taped interviews fell into three broad categories; background and parental family; marital family; work patterns. A list of questions was prepared (see Appendix 2) which were used as framework during the actual interview, but were amended for each individual interview depending on a) the information given in the questionnaire (for example if a woman had changed tenure during her marital life the emphasis of the questions on tenure would be different than those asked a woman who had always been in an owner-occupied house);

and b) on the way the actual interview went (for example a woman might be more willing to talk about her background than her work - for whatever reasons). As pointed out earlier in the chapter, it is the way that people talk about their lives, rather than what they say, that requires attention, for as Wiame argues:

"The forms of life stories are as important as the facts which they contain. Because of this, freedom of self expression is all important. If it is true that we can learn not only from the facts of a life story but also from the way in which these are expressed, it must be essential to ensure that informants can organise their own stories in their own way. The facts of the stories will allow us to see social relations in action. The forms on the other hand reveal the shape of mind, the cultural and ideological structures, for it is through ideology and culture that interpretations are given to the real conditions of existence."<sup>11</sup>

Because the research is looking at women's life stories - the sequence of events and impressions of events - it is my intention to primarily treat each interview as a whole, and statements within each interview will be analysed in the context of the whole interview, for if the process by which people come to make sense of their lives - as manifested through their attitudes and lifestyle - i.e. the historical world of the present, that is being examined.

However, comparisons are made between separate interview<sup>s</sup>, where such comparisons, or contrasts, inform us about the processes in the individual interviews. That is, the taped interviews are not, in any way, intended to be quantitative, e.g. x many women thought this, but rather their aim is to illustrate how ten particular women living on a private estate in West Newcastle as wives and mothers, feel about their lives and the way they live now.

From the material collected in the interviews, three main themes arise -

- the present 'location' of the working class
- womens' dual role as wives/mothers and workers
- the relation between gender and class

For the most part these themes will be discussed in the context of the analysis of the taped interviews but a few words of introduction will be stated here.

As discussed earlier in some detail, the present location of the working class is a theme that has attracted much attention in theoretical debate of late (e.g. A. Gorz's "Farewell to the Working Class" and Seabrook's "What Went Wrong"). It has been my contention throughout the research that class has not been abolished through the increase in relative wealth as expressed in the ownership of homes, only that the expressions of class (for some) may have shifted but - cultural expressions they still are. Unless this is recognised there is a danger of writing off as crude embourgeoisement, a potentially dynamic and radical area of class conflict.

There is also a great deal of literature concerning the dual role of women (e.g. "Standing on the Edge: Working Class Housewives and the World of Work" Marilyn Porter, "Womans Worth" Leghorn and Parker) but what is particularly interesting to this research is that this is the first generation of women in Tyneside in modern times to go out en masse to work. The prefigurative circumstances of this change are also extremely revealing and have links with the concept of a changing working class in that it is womens employment that has played a large part in the shifting cultural expressions of class - i.e. increased incomes, changes in traditional family structures, changes in aspirations which in turn affect values. This issue leads onto the third theme under consideration - the relation between

class and gender. One point that comes out strongly from the taped interviews is the contradictions that women feel about their current lifestyle. They all expressed an awareness of the changes that had taken place in their lives - changes in terms of class and gender - and their feelings about this were ambivalent for they experienced class changes as women, and gender changes as workers whose backgrounds were almost exclusively working class. From the interviews it would seem that many of the women are still in the process of 'working out' these changes and conflicts, and trying to understand them logically. It is at this point that it becomes important to look at what the women have done, in terms of choices about their lifestyle, as well as what they say.



## SECTION ONE

### Background

The questions asked in this section were directed towards a comparative discussion about the lifestyle of the women's parents and of the women now, in an attempt to analyse (both quantitatively) the effects of higher standards of living (as experienced by most the population in the past 30 years) on different generations. The women in this survey are generally those who have benefitted from this wave of relative affluence. This section seeks to examine what this means to people's lives in various ways; in material terms and how this has affected the different generations involved - how they feel about these changes - what they feel brought these changes about. The role of party politics and the 'transition from Labour' is also examined in this framework. Questions asked in other sections are also drawn upon to provide material for comparative analyses.

#### A The Experience of War

An important factor that emerged from the majority of the interviews was that the women in question spent all or a significant part of their childhood during the 1939-45 war and/or in the post war period. This affected their perception of how 'well off' they had been when they were living with their parents. This was a much more important factor with the women in the tail-end of the age range (i.e. 40-45), but was still mentioned by the younger women. It seems that for the older women the war materially affected their lives, whereas for the younger women the experience was largely handed down through their parents. Mrs. H for example, was born two years after the war but her father had been invalided out of the army, was never well enough to work and died when his daughter was 10 years old.

Her father's war experience had a direct influence ;

Q. "Can you tell me a bit about your childhood, what life with your parents was like?"

A. "We lived in rented terraced property in South East London, I suppose you could call it a working class area ....//.... father was an invalid, he contracted TB in the war, so he was at home all the time. Mother didn't work because she had to look after him. They didn't have much money .... dad's disability pension was their only income, so we didn't have many material things, didn't have flash things like bikes. But my parents were great ones for taking me places, the zoos, the museums and when my dad wasn't well enough to go out we'd stay in and play board games together. Nobody had much in those days, but we were lucky, we had a big park at the bottom of the street. Dad used to love going and sitting in the park, and I'd go with him. It was lovely .....free as well."

Mrs. I, on the other hand was born in 1941 and spent the first seven years of her life living with just her mother and her aunt in rented property in Durham and East Newcastle, as her father was not demobilised until 1948. She described this period of her life as being "very happy, my mother, my aunt and I, struggling along together, because we had no money whatsoever". Throughout these seven years there was a "tremendous build up" towards the father's coming out of the army -

"There was nothing we weren't going to have, we used to spend hours dreaming about all the toys we would get....// .... My mother really wanted a place of her own, but my father came out of the army in '48 and thought 'gosh look at the price of the houses, I'm not paying that' - thinking that the prices would come down. Of course we managed to get a good council house on a nice estate on account of my father being a captain, and he got a good job with the civil service, so we were fairly comfortably off. But my father only got round to buying his bungalow after my mother had died. I always feel very sorry about that .... its so sad .... it meant so much to her, it seemed to me as a child that was what the war was for."

Not only did the war affect the financial and family life of the women but it also had a perceived effect on community. In this, and in the last section of questions about the family and community, most of the women stressed the neighbourliness and the 'closeness' that the war generated,

as their model of the community, and time and time again this 'neighbourhood orientated' childhood was contrasted with the more materially orientated childhood of their own children. When asked whether they thought their children were worse or better off than they had been, the answer was invariably that their children had more in a material sense but there was always some uneasiness about this. Mrs. G for example, spent the years between 1940-47 living with her mother and brothers in a rented terraced house in North Tyneside whilst her father was in the army and in reply to the question 'Do you think your children are worse or better off?' she replied:

"Yes much better off .... but I don't they they enjoy life as much as we did... friends were friends then, we all stuck together, we all used to play out together, they don't seem to do that now.... mind you, they have less opportunity around here, they daren't go out and kick a ball in case it goes into someones garden. People have changed and children seem to enjoy life less. There's something missing. Whether it was the war, the war did a lot of strange things to people. The war made people more aware of other people, in need, anything, there was more neighbourliness, they'd do things for each other."

For practically all the women interviewed, the war provides a focal point, something they compare and contrast their marital lives - their current understanding of their lives, the way they live in, the way they bring their children up, has definite links with their war or immediate post-war experiences.

The war also was a factor in how women perceived the status of their parental family. The austere conditions during and immediately after the war seem to have acted as a leveller - the idea that 'nobody has anything' is prevalent in the interviews and to some extent this confuses the issue about the social class of the women in their childhood. Although I deliberately avoided using the terms 'working/middle class' several of the

women introduced the terms when talking about their childhoods, basing their definitions of what that meant on a variety of factors. Two of the women had been raised in owner occupied housing (both in quite a good area of the city, built during the war, and purchased when their fathers left the army), but they did not perceive themselves as being 'well off', nor did this type of housing exclude 'neighbourliness' -

"Our house was owner occupied, on an estate, a professional estate. I used to call all my neighbours 'aunty', I was in their houses more than my own. We had our lean times too, especially when my father was unemployed" (Mrs. F)

"It was a residential estate, private house, quite neighbourly, you knew the people who lived around you. (Q. Was your father on a good wage?) Not really, we didn't really have much money. Sometimes he used to take bets at the racetrack and get a bit of money that way. I remember having to do a paper round every morning and evening for a year so I could buy myself a bike. Of course that was just after the war, people didn't have money for bikes." (Mrs. G)

Whereas Mrs. I who had moved from private-rented property to a council estate evaluated her lifestyle thus:

"It was a council house but we were fairly comfortably off. We were one of the first to have a television and a fridge. It was a fairly new council estate and it wasn't too bad, but as it progressed it changed. Where we were they were selective but the other end was filled with people from run-down estates - there was a sort of difference in the area that you lived in the estate - it was strange. Our part was really quite middle class. We were comfortable in relation to others but I wouldn't say our income was high. Of course we didn't have a mortgage and we didn't have a car, though not many people had cars then anyway."

## B Neighbourhood and Location

The social relations of the parental family then seem to have been mediated through the occupation of the father, the neighbourhood and the family. Results from the questionnaire survey indicated that to a large extent the occupation of the women's fathers dictated the area in which

they lived, both in terms of their 'nearness' to the place of work, and the type of housing that could be afforded. For example, the daughters of shipyard workers tended to live in the East End of the city in private rented property; the daughters of the engineering workers lived in the West End of the city, again in rented property - a mixture of council and private; the daughters of miners tended to live in property rented from the National Coal Board, later moving to council accommodation; and the daughters of white collar workers tended to live in the 'better' areas of the city e.g. Fenham, Heaton. In those cases where the mother undertook paid work outside the home, it was generally low or unskilled work that was available in the vicinity. The mothers in the East End were more likely to work in the local factories (tobacco and confectionary were the main products) whereas the mothers in the West End, where such work was not generally available, tended to work as shop assistants or waitresses in the local works canteen. It was still, therefore, the fathers employment (or in some cases, past employment) that dictated where and how the family lived. Mrs. C lived in a rented flat in Byker when she was a child, when asked about her father occupation she replied:

"My father was a caulker on the shipyards. We lived very near the shipyards as a matter of fact - right on their doorstep .

- Q. Did your mother ever work?
- A. Yes she worked at one of the local factories. In fact my father had to stop work when I was about five, because he was ill. Sometimes my mother worked full time, sometimes part time, depending on how ill my father was, but she could always get work at the factory.
- Q. Is your mother still working?
- A. No she stopped when I left home to get married. Dad died soon after so she left Byker and went to live in Gosforth with my sister."

Mrs. B was born in Heaton and lived in a rented Tyneside flat.

When she was five her parents separated and her father moved out but still remained in the area. Her lifestyle as a child was still dictated by her father's job:

"We lived in an upstairs flat, all five of us (mother, two daughters two sons) .... it was very crowded let me tell you. We didn't go out much, just the church and the youth club. We didn't have money, no TV or holidays or anything like that. My father was just glad to have work.

Q. What did he do?

A. He was a labourer, used to work on the buildings in the area. Sometimes if there wasn't any building work he would help in a garage, but it wasn't a good income, no, I'd say we were really poor - we weren't starving if you understand me, my mother's family helped a lot, but it was hard."

The family (i.e. of the mother and of the father) also seems to have been an important factor contributing to the social relations of the women's childhoods. From the questionnaire results it seems that the geographical mobility of the women's parental family was limited. Their parents tended to settle in the area where they were brought up and their own parents were, to a large extent, local. By implication it would seem that the men of different generations were involved in similar types of work. Where the women's grandparents were not from the area, but had moved to Tyneside, it was usually as a result of the relocation of industries. For example, several of the women had grandparents who had moved from Durham and Scotland to work in the pits in Northumberland. The women interviewed (apart from Mrs. H who spent an "isolated" childhood with her parents in London) often spoke of aunts and uncles living near their parental home. This sense of stability and continuity was very strong for several of the women interviewed and was manifested when they talked about their own children's lives:

Q. "Do you think your children are better off than you were at their age or not?"

A. Well yes, they have more material things, I didn't have a tenth of things they've got .... but I don't know, they don't seem as happy as we were. When I was little I used to be in a big gang and we all used to play out all together all the time and everyone used to mind out for the kids, so if your mam couldn't see you she wasn't worried because she knew that somebody else's man was watching. During school holidays our kitchen was full of kids whose mams worked. They would come in for their dinners... There wasn't a formal arrangement, they would just turn up, and then, when people got paid on Fridays, they would see my mam right. Could you imagine that happening here? I hardly know any of my childrens' friends' parents". (Mrs. J)

Q. "Do you think your children are worse or better off?"

A. That depends on whether you compare material things .... my kids have bikes and a swing in the garden .... but the quality of life hasn't changed ... if you're a family that's where the richness comes in. It doesn't matter how much money you've got, your richness comes from having your family around you." (Mrs. B)

Although most women felt that their children did not have the 'shared identity' that they had experienced through their fathers' having similar occupations to those of their friends and family, and consequently living in the same area in the same conditions, that sense of identity is not lost altogether, though the relativity of the matter tended to obscure it. For example, in a wider sense none of the women interviewed can be said to be 'geographically mobile' (with the exception of Mrs. H who came from London, but only because her husband returned to Newcastle on the death of his father) none of them live more than half an hours car ride away from where they spent their childhood (the same is true for most of their brothers and sisters). Yet when compared to their parents, several of the women, especially those from south of the Tyne or from the east side of the city, felt their move had been a major change - for example Mrs. D lived in Gateshead till her marriage, ten years ago, when she moved to Chapel Park,

when asked why she chose to live there she replied:

"I wanted to get right away. Mike (her husband) is from Gateshead too and there would have been no peace from our parents. Its nice to be somewhere new....different. I wouldn't like to be like my parents .... all their lives in one place".

Mrs. B expressed it thus:

"We wanted to live in Heaton (where she and her husband were brought up) but we just couldn't afford the houses. So after a few years there we had to admit defeat and move away ..../..../.... I still think it would be nice to go back someday, perhaps when the children have left school, yes when they're more independent ... off our hands".

The same sort of logic also applies to contact with the rest of the family. Although five of the women had 'moved' their parents near them (especially after the loss of a spouse) and four had at least one other close relative on the same estate, several expressed regret that they did not see more of their family:

Q. "Do you see much of your family?"

A. No, not really. I get the bus over there about once a week (Monkseaton) and on the occasional day my parents will come over here. But its not sufficient really is it? My sister drives over with her children every other weekend, and of course we all get together on special occasions, birthdays anniversaries .... but well its finding time to get over there really." (Mrs. F)

These changes are perceived as major changes by the women interviewed and, in comparison to the parents' lifestyle (or at least the lifestyle of the parents when the women were at home) they do represent a major break from the past and can be linked to changes in the relations of production and to relative affluence experienced in the years after the war.



As mentioned earlier in the section the women in this survey are generally those who have benefited from the wave of relative affluence and higher standards of living that have been experienced by the majority of the population in this country over the past thirty years. This 'material wealth' has not only affected the women and their marital families, but has also reached their parents. Eight of the ten women interviewed in the second tier now have parent/s living in owner-occupied housing, with six of these properties being bought after the daughter left home which implies that the parents would at least be well into middle age and must have had a steady, secure income and/or substantial savings in order to obtain property for the first time. Just as the daughters have become more mobile than the parents, the parents too have become relatively more mobile and have a different lifestyle:

Q. "Has your parents' lifestyle changed over their married lives?

A. Yes, definitely, they're a lot better off now, they live a lot more comfortably .... even money. They live in Gosforth (previously Benwell) my dad's had central heating and double glazing put in. Their standard of living is a lot better. Of course, they live on their own now, their moneys their own.  
(Mrs. J)

Q. Has your parents' lifestyle changed over their married life?

A. They're better off now especially since we all left home and they retired. As a child I remember holidaying in Whitley Bay.... now since they've retired they've been to Yugoslavia, Russia, Italy, Rumania. "  
(Mrs. F)

This affluence then has affected both generations and has been mostly gradual - from the austerity of the war and post war years to the high standards of living both generations are experiencing now. To a large extent this rise in standards of living can be linked to the occupations of the fathers, the majority of whom were in skilled manual labour or white collar jobs - both areas which experienced expansion after the war.

With secure and rising incomes, and the gradual increase in living standards, the parents' aspirations for their daughters was for a lifestyle even better than theirs, a lifestyle that they saw as being attainable through a 'respectable' occupation and a 'good' marriage:

"My mother thought nobody less than a duke was good enough for me. She was appalled when I married a butcher, but she's a bit better about it now, now that we've got our own shop." (Mrs. F)

"The teacher at school got me fixed up in a shop, but my mother wasn't having that, she marched me round to the CWS and got me a job in wages". (Mrs. B)

"I wanted to do something artistic like hair dressing, but my father made me do the Civil Service exams, said it was a steady job". (Mrs. I)

It is interesting to note that where once their parents 'aspired' for them to work in an office, now these women aspire for their children to go to university and obtain professional qualifications - daughters as much as sons - which emphasizes the relative nature of these changes. It was probably as much a major achievement (and anxiety) to have a daughter in a clerical job in the 50s and early 60s, as it is for the women now who are preparing to send their teenage children to university. A similar relative analysis can be made to apply to lifestyle of the different generations, for although the parents lifestyles are better than they were, for the most part the daughters are more affluent. This was something that was recognised by most of the interviewees and evoked from their parents feelings ranging from pride to antagonism and/or a mixture of these feelings.

Mrs. B. for example, who's father has just bought a bungalow in Chapel House, explains her father's attitude to her current lifestyle in rather ambivalent terms:

"He thinks I'm a millionaire living here - he thinks I've done tremendously well, he's please and proud. Of course he's done well himself though he won't admit it .... sometimes that's a sore point".

Mrs. H's answer also reflected this ambivalence:

"Oh yes, she (mother) thinks I've done very well for myself but she can't understand why I'm not content with this house. I want to move to a house with a bigger garden and she can't understand it at all".

Mrs. I, whose father had been quite a high ranking civil servant after being a captain in the army, also expressed this ambivalence in her father's attitude to her current lifestyle and understood it thus:

"He thinks I've done well for myself. He has a slightly exaggerated view of how well we've done because I think most people do tend to get better provided when they've got jobs. The standard of living has improved anyway. He's done fairly well and he thinks we have too".

Mrs. G, whose parents are still working in their own betting shop, took this reasoning a little further:

"They think I've done well. In fact I'm always getting it thrown at me. It's not that we're any better off really, but they've worked harder for it. They had to wait for years before they got anything - my father used to have two jobs. My mother thinks I've had it too easy. I know what she means too, I think the same about my daughters".

## C Politics

This gradual change from one generation to the next is also reflected in the political allegiances of the people concerned. With the exception of one case, the parents, as members of the 'aristocracy of labour', were, in their working years, supporters of the Labour Party and the Trade Union Movement. The degree of involvement varied, from being very active to merely voting for the Labour Party at elections, but the women inter-

viewed grew up with an awareness of their father's politics. (The women were less sure of their mothers political allegiances and none of the mothers were involved in any kind of trade union activity). Politics were often discussed in the home, not so much with the family but with the fathers' visitors and it seems that the fathers displayed an active interest in labour politics:

"My father was in the Labour Party and he was a shop steward .... very active.... I thought everyone was in the Labour Party .... it was always Labour .... I didn't realise that the Conservatives were an actual party .... Everyone round where we lived voted Labour .../.../... He was involved in industrial action at Vickers. I can't remember much about it but he was always talking about getting things for the men ..../.../... My mother, even she voted labour, but she wasn't action in fact it used to get on her nerves." (Mrs. J)

"My father was staunch Labour, my mother was a bit of an enigma but I think it was Labour. He was a strong union man, NALGO, he was always going to union meetings and he was always discussing politics with visitors, very heated arguments, my mother was always trying to ban them from the house." (Mrs. F)

Even where the father was not working, as in the case of Mrs. H, whose father was an invalid the politics were Labour and were seen as a crucial issue:

"They (parents) were socialists. Dad was a very keen socialist, a Gaitskellite. I remember the insurance man used to come and sit and talk politics with Dad and I remember going with dad....he made every effort to go to the polling station, if he could, if he could walk."

There seems then to have been a strong labour/working class base for most of the women interviewed in their pre-marital lives, in terms of their fathers occupations, incomes and politics (which of course is directly linked to where and how their families lived). To some extent,

this firm labour base has now gone for these women; for example, only one of the women interviewed (Mrs. E) is now a member of the Labour Party, none of them is currently involved in any kind of trade union activity and their voting behaviour is largely variable. (qv). It does represent a shift between generations, but it is not as crude or simplistic as this, for, just as the increased affluence has affected the parents as well as the daughters, the changing relation of production have affected the politics of the parents also. This political transition is not universal for the parents (just as it is not for the daughters) and it is further confused by the fact that three of the women have since lost their fathers, but it does seem that the voting behaviour of most of the women's fathers has become more variable. For Mrs. I, whose father was a shop steward and a member of the Labour Party, the change in her father's voting behaviour is linked to his removal from the relations of production. When asked about her father's politics now, she replied:

"My father votes SDP now, he says they do a lot more and I don't blame him, because I think that ... I give them credit, they went and did their homework where my dad lives, and they knocked on every door and said "What can we do for you?" and that affects blokes like my dad, who never goes out and sits and watches television, it gets to him. He doesn't want to know whats happening in London, he wants to know whats happening in his own backyard and they say they're going to help him so he votes for them".

Mrs. D's father still works in skilled manual work and her parents have recently bought their council house. Her father always voted Labour until the last two elections and 'occasionally' attended union meetings, when asked how he votes now she replied:

"Gosh thats a hard question. At one time it was very clear cut, he and all his work mates would be voting Labour, now it seems to be more an individual thing. I know he still votes Labour in the local elections because he feels he's voting for friends, but when its a general election, its less easy for him. He told me he was going to vote SDP in this election (June '83) but whether he did or not I wouldn't like to say. But I will say this, I feel that now he could go to work or to the club and say to his mates 'I didn't vote Labour this time' and that would be all right whereas before, well he wouldn't have dared say it ...../.../... Another thing too I've noticed, before when he talked about the Labour Party he would criticise but you still felt that there wasn't any alternative, now if he doesn't like something that they're doing, like the Tony Benn thing, he says he'll vote for someone else. Strange isn't it?"

The impression that came across from the interviews was not that parents and daughters had 'turned their backs' on Labour politics and become 'middle class' Conservatives, but that their changing personal situations (retirement, increased affluence, changed occupational structures) had caused them to 'look around' for a party which would reflect their needs and ideals. In this sense, the women have been affected by the same changes as their parents and this is reflected in their voting patterns. Another point that emerged was that all the women put a great deal of thought into which party they were going to vote for and it is not a task that is taken lightly. Even those women who had a definite political commitment in terms of political parties (i.e. three women 'always' voted Labour and one 'always' Conservative) were very articulate about the reasons for their voting:

"We were always Labour in our family, and I look now and think, if none of them had been in the Labour Party, I'd be looking at things now and still be Labour. I think about my children and whats going to heppen to them, I don't think the Tories care about that". (Mrs. J)

For other women it was less clear cut about who to vote for and voted differently on different occasions. However this seemed to reflect not a change of politics or beliefs, but a change in the perception as to which party would best represent these politics.

"I say anybody who votes for Michael Foot is absolutely, you know .... not that I'm for Margaret Thatcher .... For image I like David Steel very much .... I'm more liberal now. My politics are very different from my fathers ('staunch Labour') I listen, not so much to the party but to the man who's representing your area whether council or M.P. Its the politics I listen to, then I go and listen to the man. I feel this time I simply had to give it to the Liberal person." (Mrs. B)

Mrs. H, whose parents had been Socialists, now votes Conservative, though she dislikes Mrs. Thatcher and would vote SDP if she felt they were a more viable party, understands her own 'transition from labour' thus:

"My politics are a lot different (from parents). By force of circumstance I suppose, but I think all of us would vote Socialist if we thought it was practical. I still feel for the people that should be helped, but I don't believe the socialists will help them.... I like people to help themselves and be encouraged to help themselves ..... everyone should be helped to be more independent. I suppose at the heart of me, once a socialist always a socialist. I've only changed in the last few years .... things have polarized now. I suppose its the same politics but a different party. People don't like extremes, they just was to get on with their lives, you need a middle of the road .... you just vote for the party that offers you most hope."

However, I feel that there is more at issue here than just how a particular class (or a section of a particular class) is changing its political expression, but that the role of gender plays a significant part. As mentioned earlier, when the women were asked about the parents' political allegiances, they often answered by telling me about their fathers' allegiances. When this point was probed, most of the women stated

that they either did not know (everyone knew their fathers' politics) or assumed it was the same as their fathers. With few of the mothers working there was little contact with trade union activity and since the home was her domain, it seemed to have been her role to keep things running smoothly and maintain 'peace and quiet'. Several of the women talked about their fathers discussing politics with (male) visitors with the family being excluded (or at least wives and daughters) and their mothers trying to stop the rows.

Although the women in the survey have far more experience of the work place than their mothers, and this has affected their political perceptions especially in terms of feelings of independence about their choice, their roles as wives and mothers still plays its part in their political behaviour (i.e. not getting 'too involved' in politics, refusing to discuss politics in the home) and in some cases causes them to devalue political knowledge:

"I can honestly say I have no politics at all. I've voted Labour, Conservative, SDP. I vote differently for Parliament and local elections. Its just the person who will most benefit the area at any one time. My husband, now he votes Liberal, always Liberal". (Mrs. F)

"Now I vote Conservative, living here in your own house, it has to be Conservative, but I don't always vote. My husband is staunch Labour, though he votes Conservative in the local elections sometimes. He always seems to know what he's doing, but we never talk about it. I've banned politics and religion from the house." (Mrs. G)

A similar sort of logic runs through the womens' attitudes to trade unions as well. Although all the women work, or have worked, outside the home, with the exception of three cases, involvement in trade unions has been minimal and again this is directly affected by the fact of their



gender and their role concomitant with this. As wives and mothers several women said that they simply did not have the time to go to union meetings etc. as part time workers they saw themselves, and were seen by unions, as 'less important'; and many felt that their jobs (i.e. traditional womens' jobs - secretaries, service jobs) precluded any kind of union involvement:

"I'm not in a union now, no, and I wouldn't join one. There wouldn't be any point. I've just got the one boss (a dentist) and it wouldn't have any effect on him. Its only a small job anyway (i.e. part-time) people wouldn't take it seriously."

"I've no involvement with the trade union. I'm secretary to the Managing Director, so I can't be anti-management."

Some of these themes will be taken up again when the role of work is more fully discussed but has been mentioned here in order to bring out the factors which have played a major role in the womens' understanding about the changes they, and their parents, have experienced - i.e. that class and gender are inextricably linked.

One final point before finishing this section - it was mentioned that trade union involvement was minimal with the interviewed women with the exception of three cases. This point is being raised here because again it links in with the class and gender issue. Not surprisingly perhaps, these three women are also the ones who are committed to the Labour Party, but it is still their experiences as women workers and daughters/wives/mothers that has affected politics, though these experiences differed from those of the other women. For a start, the women in their parental family did not fully fall into the 'passive' role; Mrs. I's mother was in the Labour Party and helped in elections (though she still 'banned'

politics from the house); Mrs. C's mother worked full time in a local factory from when Mrs. C was very small as her father was ill, and her mothers life "revolved around the factory"; and Mrs. E has vivid memories of life with her grandmother:

"I spent a lot of time as a kid with my grandmother who was very active politically so when I was about seven she started me addressing letters and leafletting and helping with the elections."

It is also interesting that these three women were the ones who worked in a factory before their move to Westerhope. It was in the factories that the women first became involved in trade unions and it was the conditions in the factories that evoked that trade unionism (a large number of women working together for a 'distant' boss, and able to compare their working conditions and wages with the men workers). Again this point will be returned to later, but illustrates the complexity and diversity needed in any analysis of the present 'location' of the working class, and the relation between gender and class.

## Work

The questions asked in this section were directed towards a discussion of the women's work patterns in an attempt to establish whether the woman's adult status was conferred through work or motherhood, and the effect this has on the woman's self-image (i.e. work dependent or family centred) and on her understanding of her role. This section also examines the dual role of the woman i.e. in direct relation to capital (as a worker) and in the indirect relation to capital (as a mother). The woman's reaction to being in that direct relation is examined and her feelings about her 'dual role' - its benefits and contradictions - are discussed.

### D Aspirations and Choices

As mentioned before, the parents of the women interviewed were generally those who had benefitted from the prosperity that followed the post war years. This seems to have had the effect of raising their aspirations for their own children. These aspirations were expressed in terms of making a 'good' marriage and/or getting a 'steady' job and whilst these may not seem very high aspirations for a woman now (indeed when the women were asked about their own daughters' futures, their hopes were more geared towards careers and independence), but set in the context of their time they represent a break from the past and from other families around them.

None of the women interviewed were encouraged by their parents to undergo further education, not because the women are not intelligent enough, in fact several have gone on to hold responsible positions in their employment, but rather because going to college was just not considered

an option for this particular group of people at that time. Higher education is far more of a reality now for the children of these women than it ever was for their parents. The options available to the woman's parents (and of course to the women themselves) may seem limited but they were the ones which, at that time, were achievable.

"My parents weren't really ambitious for us, like college or anything ..../.../... I was never a bright spark at school and the teacher had me set to go into a friends shop, but my mother wasn't having that. She marched me round to the CWS and got me a job in wages. My sister was already working there." (Mrs. B)

"My mother, now she wanted to find a nice boy.... with a steady job. My father, he was keener for me to get into the Civil Service and get on." (Mrs. I)

There are two factors in operation here which have been touched upon earlier but need re-emphasising in this particular context, i.e. the changing affluence/status/aspirations of the parental family and the wider changes in occupational structures and the economy. I do not necessarily think that the latter 'causes' the former in any crude sense or that the form of one dictates the form of the other, rather that the two act on each other - "the dialectical relation between general development and specific situations, between objective conditions and subjective experiences" as Melling puts it.<sup>12</sup> For on the one hand it could be argued that as the economy improved, the position of this group of people, who happened to be in the 'right' occupations, also improved in tandem. However the case could be put that these people had (successfully) fought a war, had returned to civilian life, worked hard in industry and had spent a lot of energy fighting for gains within the Trade Union Movement and the Labour Party, and that their improved circumstances were largely their own doing, or, more importantly, perceived as their own doing. These two factors probably acted in combination, not necessarily in a set pattern but always varying

(in fact the women interviewed expressed a similar combination, of having control but also limits when talking about their children), and this varying understanding of their lives would surely engender a sense of better things being possible if you worked hard enough for them.

At the relevant time, i.e. when these women were leaving school ('53-'65), white collar and other respectable occupations were more generally available to these women, especially so following the increased standards of education after the war which these women benefited from.

Q. What do your parents put that (i.e. current lifestyle) down to?

A. Really I suppose getting a good job - working hard. We had a better start and a bit of education. (Mrs. G)

Out of the sample of ten women, six women went into office work when they left school, taking day release/evening classes in secretarial skills whilst they were working. The opportunity was there to gain these sorts of steady/respectable jobs, and with the benefit of education, the expectations of parents, and a little application and effort, these women could grasp these opportunities:

"I wanted to be a hairdresser, but unknown to me my mother had already signed me up at Skerries (a secretarial school). So the day after I left school I found myself going there." (Mrs. F)

"My father worked at the Co-op and my mother was very co-operative minded, because of the divvy. Anyway when I left school I was too young to sit their exam, so I worked somewhere else till I was old enough to sit it. I was determined to pass that exam, .... I was more determined because working anywhere else or a shop, would have been a real come down.." (Mrs. G)

Mrs. A lived with her mother who worked as a shop assistant and her grandfather who was a miner. Her mother's reasoning about her job choice reflects the combination of knowing what was practical and what might be possible.

"She (mother) said there was no way I was going to go into a shop. You see she hated wearing overalls at work, and of course my granda always had to wear overalls too, down the mine. She was determined..... it was her that wrote to the firms and got me a place at Turners, in the office. I didn't like it at first ...../.../... 'well', my mum said 'it might not be much but at least you can wear your own clothes and don't have to cover them like you had something to hide'."

Of the other four women one, Mrs. H (from London) went into the services after leaving school, which is often another traditional for working class women (and men) to 'get on'. The other three, two from the East End of the city, had a variety of jobs, ranging from shop assistants to factory worker. As mentioned before, factory work was far more of an option for people living in the East End than it was for other parts of the city, and from the mothers' and daughter's work histories, it seems that factory work was chosen when some paid work was quickly needed, as it was the sort of work that was readily available. It is also interesting to note that the three women did not initially go into factory work after leaving school but did so in the early stages of marriage, when perhaps making and saving money was more important. It is also interesting that the women were quite young when they were working in the factories and that consequently, their husbands were still serving their apprenticeships or had just qualified, and so would be on a limited income. The women had initially chosen to become shop assistants which had its own status attached to it:

"I remember going home from school on the day that we all left for good .... Me and my friends were talking about what we were going to do... I was really pleased because I was going into Woolies and that was a real catch because they treated the staff nicely there. My friend was going into Tesco's which wasn't so good. Another girl was going to Woolies as well, but she was going into the Northumberland Street branch (i.e. city centre) and we were all dead jealous." (Mrs. C)

The backgrounds of the ten women not only meant that they were more likely to be in a position to obtain 'respectable' employment, but also that the men they married were more likely to be in 'good' jobs. The questionnaire survey results showed that whereas the majority of the women's fathers were in skilled manual jobs (i.e. 9/3 by classification of occupation) the husbands tended to be in either skilled manual, skilled non-manual (6/3), or professional employees (4). In one sense it could be argued that the husbands are in 'better' employment than their wives fathers, but if the change is put into the context of the changing relations of production, then the analysis alters a little. It must not be forgotten that the industries that many of the fathers were involved in have declined in Tyneside, for example mining, heavy engineering and ship building. The jobs held by the fathers are to a large extent simply not available any more. It is not necessarily that the employment base of the women's husbands is different from that of their fathers, but rather that their husbands have been subject to wider changes in the field of employment with different and more diverse kinds of employment becoming available.

As with the women, these men too (i.e. the husbands) had had the benefit of post war education and in this sense were 'able' to take up the new opportunities as they arose. However it goes beyond just 'being in the right place at the right time'. The types of employment taken up by the husbands all involved some kind of training or apprenticeship - some

kind of sacrifice and deferred gratification, which would have engendered a feeling of having worked hard for what they have achieved. The husbands of the women interviewed in the second tier, had all spent considerable effort to reach the position they are in today, to be able to live in Westerhope.

In a more limited sense, the jobs the women chose allowed them to have a good income (for a woman) and opportunities to be promoted. Their jobs also allowed them to 'break off' and return after the birth of their children, without necessarily damaging their job prospects. Here again the factors of gender and class were operating, affecting the choice of employment (and of course the type of employment deemed available). This idea of job choice being linked to the probability of breaking-off for motherhood is one that appears to be evident from the choice of jobs, but it is also one that is not always expressed by the women themselves:

Q. Would you have chosen the job you did (i.e. after leaving school), if you thought you would never break off to have children?

A. Yes, I don't think we were really career-minded as people are now and I definitely don't think I would have changed what I did as a job.... definitely not, mind you, I'm not sure I could have done if I'd wanted. But I am glad that circumstances (i.e. motherhood) made me go out and look for other jobs."

Most women were more unsure whether the possibility of motherhood affected their job choice or not:

"I never really thought 'Oh I don't like this job but don't worry you'll be getting married one day', no I didn't think like that, but if I'd seriously considered that I'd be in that job for good, I would have died, honestly I would".  
(Mrs. A)



"Possibly not no, I wouldn't have chosen that job, but that's thinking now.... at the time I possibly would, there wasn't that much option. I'm different now, no way would I sit in an office all day. But then I didn't know any different....I never really thought about having children and I never thought about having a career". (Mrs. G)

#### E Work and Marriage

After their marriages, the women stayed initially in full time employment usually in the same job, and if marriage itself affected their work patterns it was only in the sense of changing the location of a job to be nearer the marital home. As mentioned earlier, it was during these childless married years when the three women worked in the factory and it seems that this was the time when the women and their husbands accumulated enough wealth to buy a house in Westerhope. This is probably one of the points of divergence that separates this group of women from those of the previous generation and also of their own generation. Seven of the ten women did not have their first child until they were well into their 20s, and four had reached their 30th birthday before they were mothers. It is also interesting to note that of the three women who had their children relatively young, two, (Mrs. E and Mrs. J) have 'had' their families (their definition, not mine) and have moved to Westerhope since their children were born and are working quite hard, as are their husbands, to maintain their position, Mrs. E who had three children at 17, 20 and 25 and moved to Westerhope two years ago when her youngest child was three, laughingly admitted 'I didn't plan that very well did I?'.

The third woman, Mrs. F, had her only child when she was 22 and admits the birth wasn't planned. Her response to this unexpected turn of events was hand over her child to her mother when he was one year old so she could return to full time work. She also persuaded her husband to

change his job from being a butcher's assistant, to work in management at a local factory. Five years later they were able to move from a private rented flat into a semi-detached house in Chapel Park. Some of these issues will be returned to later when marriage and the family is discussed, but in the context of work patterns, the point I wish to emphasise is the amount of work experience these women have and the meaning that experience would have for them. Their work in the early years of their marriages meant that they played a part in realizing owner-occupation. Also nearly all of the women were working for ten years or more before they had children and employment therefore would have played a large role in their self-image.

For the women interviewed motherhood caused a reassessment of their lives. It seems that, for the most part, until then their lives had followed a plan and much of the dialogue covering that period is dotted with phrases like, 'we didn't know any different'; 'you did that in those days', etc. So all of the women stopped full time work to care for their newborn children and although all of them deny they felt any regret or resentment about this, the 'pull' of employment came to all of them sooner or later:

"I got very much in a rut, very much so, but I surprised myself by getting up and doing something about it. When Christopher was two I went and demanded a place in a nursery and went and got a small job (i.e. part-time). Sometimes when I lie in bed at night and think about it I don't know how I had the gall to do it. I didn't even tell my husband till afterwards." (Mrs. B)

Going back to work was often done for a combination of reasons i.e. for financial reasons and because they actually missed going to work. Mrs. F. illustrates this well:

"I returned to work for financial reasons (when her son was one) I wanted my own house. I'd stopped work for the baby but I got so bored, so we came back to Newcastle and I went back to work. I couldn't stand the quiet of being at home."

"I never thought I'd go back to work but I got roped in through a friend. But you know really .... it was murder. I'm just really glad I was pushed into going back, I don't know where I'd be now if I hadn't ..... my kitchen floor used to be super shiny.... my husband used to complain that the house was too clean. Now the children are older its a good job I work because they need so many things. The financial side of it means that they can go abroad with the school and things like that." (Mrs. G)

Of the three women who are not currently employed outside the home two have plans to alter this situation soon:

"I can't wait to get back to work. I mean I did want to have Kevin (her six month old son), but I'd always planned to go back after the maternity leave .... in fact I waited to have him till we could afford a baby, but the money from my job is still bound to come in useful isn't it?"

"I don't think I'll go back to work full-time, I'm too lazy and there's no way I'd be a police-woman again, its too rough .... but I've been doing some survey work for a private company and I've just written to the Poly to see about some degree courses and I've decided its time to move house, so that keeps me busy for now." (Mrs. H)

Mrs. A is the only woman not working and has no plans to do so, even though her children are now at school. Her reasons for not working are very similar to reasons given for working by the other women:

"Yes I have thought about going back to work, but my husband is on such a good income that I don't need to work... we have all we want and the children like me being here. I feel a little lonely at times and

I find myself watching the clock, but there's enough work in the house to keep me busy. I'd like to do something one day but for now, well there's so much unemployment that I couldn't justify taking a job..... I'd like to but I think that would be selfish."

From the accounts given by the women interviewed, I do not think it can be over-emphasised how much the return to work after the break for childrearing meant to them, and the experience was often one that was liberating. After years of working full time most of the women found it hard to forget their experience as a worker and step into the more 'passive' and isolating role of full-time motherhood. It is also clear from the interviews that the work undertaken post-motherhood differs from that of their pre-motherhood days, not necessarily in terms of the type of job undertaken but in terms of the meaning that work has for them in their lives. Although there does exist a financial aspect, their return to work this does not seem to be the main reason, as many women admitted when questioned, their husbands earned sufficient for the family - see Mrs. A (above) and Mrs. B who said:

"My husbands<sup>1</sup> always telling me that my 12 hours don't keep the house".

Before this point in their lives the women seem to have almost been following a plan, doing what they were supposed to do and several of the women actually spoke in these terms:

"I was very immature until I went back to work. I had no control over my life... I was set on a course. When I went back to work I found myself...this is me I thought and I can do it on my own. I didn't exist until I was 25." (Mrs. F)

In a sense these women had 'fulfilled' their roles as dictated by their gender and class and having had their children and acquired their home, began to re-assess their lives and self-image. In most cases it was work that gave them the structure and base for this reassessment and it was the experience of motherhood that presented them with the need for this reassessment. Mrs. B's account illustrates this well:

"I feel very, very lonely at home. I am just Christopher's mummy and Wendy's mummy and I am the scout leader's wife, but I am not myself but at work I am a person on my own. I don't earn much, but I would always want to work, I think its very interesting to go out to work. In fact, if I wasn't so guilty about people not being able to get jobs .... I've twice been offered full time work but I didn't take it 'cos of the situation. I feel that I would love to go and get someone to do my work for me, because I think housework is the biggest stretch of work I do."

Mrs. F saw returning to work as a chance to 'start again' after an early marriage (she admits marrying the first eligible man who asked just to get away from home) and an unexpected pregnancy:

"I thought to myself if you're going to go back then you might as well make a career of it so I actively decided to change jobs and better the job each time, and I did."

The return to work not only provided a relief to the strain of full time motherhood and some financial security, but also 'changed' their views of themselves and many of the women talk in very different terms of their post-motherhood jobs. However these changes are quite complex and rooted in the class/gender conflict. It seems that the return to work affected the way they perceived their roles as wives and mothers, and that their experience of motherhood affected their attitudes towards themselves

as workers. For example the experience of motherhood seems to have given the women a new air of confidence at work\_

"I used to be in a Trade Union when I first started working. We had a very good manageress who was shop steward and I used to go to meetings just because she asked me....and being young and ignorant, at the meetings I would turn round and see what she was voting and vote the same. I'm not in a union now, I don't like the way they go on and I don't like their policies....I can take care of myself." (Mrs. B)

For Mrs. G, returning to work gave her more confidence in her domestic life. After nine years as a full-time wife and mother (and the 'cleanest house in Chapel House') a friend 'pushed' her into getting a job:

"I'm really glad she roped me in because now I'm totally different, I got a responsible job and I became far more outgoing ... it brought me out .... I now go out and talk to people in my own right, people who have nothing to do with the rest of my family.... and I'll tell you this, I feel as though I'm just one of the four people living in this house...its not my sole responsibility and I've stopped taking the blame for everything that goes wrong in the house."

Some of these points will be returned to in the section on marriage and the family, but it is important to understand here that for these women their dual roles as workers and mothers affected the way they operated in both their work and domestic spheres. Their understanding of their lives would probably be radically different than that of their mothers and that of the women of the previous generation who lived in old Westerhope, so social relations were changing both in terms of generation and location.

## F Work and Motherhood

As pointed out in the first section of this chapter, the women's own personal experiences as people caught up in the class/gender conflict at times leads to some confusion/contradiction between what they do and what they think. For example, when asked what they thought about working mothers, their answers sometimes varied from their own experiences and action:

"Mothers shouldn't work until their child is in school, and then only part time....the mother should be there. I know I returned to work full time when my son was a baby but I was lucky....my mother could look after him, and anyway that was different." (Mrs. F)

"There's far too many of us...given the situation. If its full time it can be harmful...my son doesn't like mum not being at home but he has accepted the need for me to go out to work. I know that it can be murder for women who have been working to suddenly be swamped with nappies, but she should be prepared for it. I still resent it that its always me that has to sort out who is going to look after (my son) when I'm at work. I feel happier now that (my daughter) is older now ..... she can take care of him....get his tea and keep an eye on him." (Mrs. I)

Mrs. E is currently working part-time and would like to work full-time if she didn't feel 'so guilty' about taking up a job an unemployed person could do. She currently works 20 hours a week as a shop assistant and has three children aged 13, 10 and 5. Her attitude towards working mothers reflects her ambivalence towards her own situation:

"When the children are young, no, unless you can get them into a nursery (as Mrs. E did). I feel its important to be in when they get in from school, you get to know more, they tell you whats been happening at school. You'd miss that if you worked full time.... But then I like to work, I feel important.... its your money.... you're keeping your hand in for when the children leave you, aren't you? When one of the children is sick, the lady across the road looks in on them, but, oh, I feel so guilty, I feel so mean."

At this point I would like to repeat a quote by Bertaux-Wiame, cited earlier:

"The forms of life stories are as important as the facts which they contain.../../. The facts of the stories will allow us to see social relations in action. The forms on the other hand reveal the shape of mind, the cultural and ideological structures, for it is through ideology and culture that interpretations are given to the real conditions of existence."<sup>11</sup>

The 'facts' of these women's life stories is that almost all of them have returned, or plan to, to work after the birth of their children. Initially, employment of these women was important in terms of financial needs and the desire to buy their own home. For this particular section of people, this element of hard work and degree of sacrifice is part of their 'social relations in action'. After having their families, the women's wish to return to work seems to be for more personal reasons (although the financial aspect is still present) a wish to be a person in her own right, to be earning an independent income, to be playing a part in the 'real' world. Again this is part of the 'social relations in action' in a locale such as Westerhope. However, just as their dual roles as mothers/workers brought these women a new confidence and a strong sense of self in both their domestic and work spheres, it also brought less comfortable feelings, especially in relation to their roles as mothers and wives.

The 'cultural and ideological structures' still dictate that, as women, they are primarily responsible for their home and children and that any 'neglect' is their fault. As working mothers they are caught in a particular trap - they appreciate the value of employment and the value



of family life (often embarking on the former to improve the latter), but they are also subject to the conflicts this can cause. For example, the women tend to stay in part-time employment when they would like to work full time; they feel guilty about not being at home all the time but actively want to work outside the home etc. This combination of compromise and assertiveness is one of the ways the women try to ease this conflict. However this 'juggling' of their roles (which will be discussed at greater length later) often caused problems for the women - especially the older women who have been working mothers for a number of years. For a brief example here, Mrs. F has worked full time for over 16 years. For some of that she worked unsocial hours so she could spend school holidays with her son and admits letting her husband make most of the major decisions regarding the family to 'make up for' not always being at home. Now, at 41 she has just had a nervous breakdown and understands the reasons for that are thus:

"It was a jolt when I realised that I wasn't needed by my family. My son's grown up ... my baby doesn't need me any more... and I've always brought him up to be independent anyway. My husband does what he wants to do... just as I do. He can do the housework and feed himself, he's learned to do that while I've been working.... what good am I?"

Of course not all the women felt so desperate about their plight and individual personalities and individual marital relations play a large part in how the women cope with these conflicts. However, the point is that these 'cultural and ideological structures' form the way they see the 'social relations in action' and how they interpret the real conditions of existence, so as mothers they could not generally condone the notion of working mothers but as women caught up in a certain set of social relations they rationalised their own actions and conditions of existence,

often by personalizing and individualising their experience e.g. Mrs. E and Mrs. B thought women should not go out to work unless they could get their children into a nursery - as they had done; Mrs H thought the return should be dependent on the 'assertiveness' of the children and their ability to cope, describing her own children as 'very self-assertive'; Mrs. F thought mothers should not return to work until the children were in school, though she herself returned much earlier, but 'I was lucky, my mother could look after him, and anyway that was different'.

When we are trying to understand these women's lives therefore there are a lot of conflicting and confusing elements. For although there has been a change in the structural relations of their lives, which for the most part have been quite positive and liberating, there still exists many contradictions in their roles as wives and mothers. Bertaux-Wiame describes the process of telling one's life story as an 'encounter with reality' and as I talked to the women I interviewed I got the impression that, for most of them, it was the first time they had actively tried to reconstruct their life history in a way that gave meaning to the events (as opposed to merely describing a pattern of events). I witnessed the women trying to make 'sense' of what they had done (and not done), trying to 'fit' the facts - the social relations into action - into the cultural and ideological structures. This process involved, not a rewriting of their histories to fit what they thought now, but a reconstruction of the meaning of past events in order to give meaning to the present.

This process of constructing and reconstructing meanings in order to understand and make sense of current lifestyles, is one which is also strongly evident in the next section on marriage, the family and the

community. However I feel it is important to introduce it in this section on work as it is the contradictions that are thrown up when a mother returns to work, that provides the relevant women with an impetus or need to re-evaluate their roles and search for 'meanings' that will allow them to understand their 'real conditions of existence'.

Marriage, Family and the Community

This section represents a discussion of contemporary social relations in the arena of reproduction. An examination is made of the family, marriage, friends and the community, and how these different elements interact, and also what creates and influences these relations. The effect of material relations (i.e. the increased disposable incomes; increased 'power' of women through earning; increased 'power' of the family through home ownership) on non-material relations is also accessed through the questions asked in this section. These changes are then linked to the women's aspirations for her own children.

In the last section I examined how the changes in working patterns affected the women's lives and the way they thought about themselves and their roles. In this section this analysis is extended to the women's marital family, her friends and the community in which she lives.

The suburb of Westerhope was selected for this research because it is first and foremost an almost totally privately owned group of estates. The purpose of the survey is primarily to ascertain not just what effect this type of tenure has on social relations (although this is relevant here as for most of the residents this is their first experience of home ownership), but also what set of meanings this group of people themselves are imposing on the tenure i.e. how the residents live their lives and what part the ownership of their own homes play in this.

In the early part of the thesis extensive use of Damaris Rose's article 'Towards a Revaluation of the Political Significance of Home Ownership'<sup>12</sup> was made and I wish to repeat some of that now. In the article Rose argues

that it is crucial to remember that housing tenure forms are historically created products - the scene of tangible struggles - and not merely fixed institutional forms that generate predictable forms of behaviour. Any perspective that places emphasis on the 'functionality for capital' of home ownership fundamentally misunderstand what people are trying to achieve through this form of occupancy - it pays insufficient attention to people's aspirations and intentions which are largely a result of past class struggle against the dominant processes of capitalist societies.

How owner occupation affects people is not to be assumed from a crude economic argument that dictates their incorporation. Rather the definition of this tenure form is a continual site of struggle in which the occupiers play a large part; an owner occupied house is an environment that offers more control to the occupier than any other tenure form, and, as Rose argues, "is not permeated through and through with capital relations"<sup>12</sup>. It is through the attitudes, aspirations and lifestyle of the people in Westerhope that their definition and meaning of owner occupation can be detected.

What owner occupation 'means' is not merely confined to what happens in the home/street/estate, but has wider implications i.e. choice of job, work and childrearing patterns, and it affects, and is affected by, the whole lifestyle. The first two sections of the detailed interviews were an attempt to examine this wider lifestyle - the life before and outside the current home - whereas this section concentrates on the home and the community. However, it is hoped that this section will not be read in isolation from the others, but that the spheres of production and reproduction will be seen as operating together to create and maintain people's lifestyles.

## G Domestic Relations

This influence of one sphere on another was witnessed in the previous section on work when I discussed the reasons for women's return to work and the change in their approach to work after their experiences of motherhood. A similar set of influences appeared when the women interviewed for the second-tier survey were asked about their domestic relations. Again the answers to such questions reflected the conflicts about gender as well as class. The most straightforward way to assess information about domestic relations i.e. the sexual division in the home, was simply to ask 'who does what in the home?' and their answers very much reflected their dual role as women (wives/mothers) and workers:

"My husband's quite good about the housework, I mean after a lot of discussion he'll do the washing up now. He still needs prompting and he moans a lot but he does far more now than he did at first. Of course I'm not here all the time now so he's got to or starve, but he was no help when the kids were small." (Mrs. G)

"I've got a super husband, he's willing to do anything in the house, except hang the washing out ..... When he was young he had no mother around so he was used to helping in the home, but I must admit I still feel ultimately responsible, I do all the shopping and my husband needs asking. Its changed since I went back to work my husband doesn't really mind helping and I insist the children help occasionally, but sometimes its too much hassle asking. (Mrs. I)

"Oh I'm very lucky. My husband would never sit and watch me work. In fact all the family helps in their way .... the housework is shared .... I never have to ask. Of course I do most of the work when everyone is out of the house and I make most of the decisions about finances and holidays and things. My husband is better with the kids than me and I suppose I'm a bit jealous of that.

Q. 'Has the responsibility for the housework changed at all over your married life'.

A. 'Yes, being a working wife has changed things, oh yes that's changed things a lot'. (Mrs. B)

These changes in the division of labour in the home are firmly linked to women's employment and as such they represent a generational change. As mentioned earlier very few of the mothers of the women worked outside the home - the very fact of being at home during the day meant they did the vast majority of the housework and childcare (as indeed their daughters did when they stopped work to have their children). Another aspect that emerged was that the changing types of work done by the husbands and the fathers has also influenced the division of labour in the home. Most of the husbands of the women interviewed have the energy and the time (as well as the inclination) to help with the housework and childcare, that their wives' fathers did not have. Mrs. J.'s father for example worked in the shipyards and often worked long shifts and with four children to bring up, her mother's time was largely spent making sure the 'breadwinner' was looked after:

"My father didn't do a thing in the house. We always had to save the butter for him, he always got the largest dinner... we weren't allowed to read the newspaper till he'd read it and nobody was allowed to sit in his armchair. He used to come from work, have his dinner and fall asleep in his chair... he worked hard."

Mrs. E.'s mother did work part time but it was still father who came first and it was his needs that were considered paramount:

"In the morning before she went to work, my mother would peel the veg. When we got home from school we put the pans on the cooker and start the tea and do some of the housework. Then mum would get home and finish off the tea so as to be ready for when my dad got in. It was only when he'd eaten that we could get anything to eat. If he was going to be working late I'd go round to me mates and her mum would give me some chips."

None of the ten women interviewed, even those that were at home all day, operated their domestic lives as strictly as this. Although all the women admitted when asked to feeling ultimately responsible for the housework and childcare, they also felt that the housework was far more a shared task than it had been for their parents. Several thought that this was partly due to the fact of their working and simply not being at home all the time (for example, Mrs. G.'s reply about her husband's efforts in the home 'he's got to or starve'). However, as with the issue of working mothers, most of the women individualised their experience of changing domestic relations by giving replies such as 'I'm lucky', 'I've got a super husband', etc. It seemed that they did not have any expectations that their husbands would share the household duties, but that practical circumstances and marriage to a co-operative husband meant that this is what happened. Again the 'social relations in action' are operating in such a way as to make necessary a change in domestic relations but the interpretation of these facts are still influenced by the 'cultural and ideological structures' of contemporary society. The point I wish to make here is that the 'meaning' and understanding these women place on their lives in owner-occupied homes in Westerhope will be influenced by these dual factors.

Another area of domestic relations that was probed was the women's attitudes to marriage. As mentioned earlier, most of the women had undertaken marriage as almost a matter of course. Their upbringing and choice of work after school indicated that marriage was expected sooner or later, whether this was consciously recognised or not. In this section, after the women had been married a number of years and has had children, they were asked about their attitudes of marriage in an attempt to discover



what effect being married has on their lifestyle (and of course vice versa). The answers to the questions relating to the marriage were quite extensive as many of the women had a great deal to say about the subject. Much of this material has had to be condensed due to pressure of space though a couple of the replies will be quoted at length.

One factor which must not be forgotten is that the women interviewed had put a great deal of effort into achieving their present position, balancing work and their attempts to create a certain lifestyle for their families. The questions asked provided them (especially so for the older women) with the opportunity to evaluate this effort and perhaps these answers more than any others reflect the conflict they perceive in their position and the need to 'give meaning to the past in order to give meaning to the present' (Bertaux-Wiame):

Q. 'Do you feel that marriage has changed you?'

A. 'Well I feel the same age as I was when I got married, but when the kids have problems I feel really old .... I sometimes feel like running away and not face up to the responsibility, but you just get on with it ... you have to. You know sometimes I just stand and stare out of the window and think 'what have I done with my life?' If I was 20 again I would change my life .... no marriage, I would have had a career and enjoyed myself. I don't regret marriage, but I should have enjoyed myself before settling down. I would love to do something madly exciting and horrifying, like running away, but then I go and put the tea on and boring things like that.' (Mrs. B.)

'I'm surprised that people marry at all these days. The marriage ceremony is a farce, I used to cry at weddings, but not now, people should live together. I know marriage is popular, its the thing to do but I'm not so sure its a good thing .... Oh dear, I can't say that .... it is a good thing, its got to be, I've got my two kids and I'd hate to be on my own.'

Q. 'Did you ever think of not marrying?'

A. 'No, I might now, but not then. I couldn't have stayed at home, I couldn't imagine not being married ... I'm trying to remember what I though 20 years ago... it was expected... I would have had to stay at home and I couldn't have coped

with that. Marriage has given me companionship, someone to confide in, which is the most you can hope for, isn't it?' (Mrs. I.)

Most of the answers about marriage were ambivalent, with the recognition that marriage had provided them with several important things (companionship, a family, a certain quality of life), which, in their terms would be unobtainable outside marriage (for example their level of income as secretaries etc. would exclude them from buying a house in Westerhope if they were single). However, coupled with this is the recognition of the constraints of marriage, not belonging to oneself but to a group of people, and a reduced control over one's life. Although work restores some of this control it is clear from the answers given that the women still feel that their primary role is as wife and mother.

An interesting point to note here is that the answers given by the younger women, or the women who had not been married long, did differ in some respects from those given by the older women. Many of the older women, (see Mrs. I on the previous page for example,) felt that they had 'drifted' into marriage because it was expected of them and their current attitude towards marriage reflects this (i.e. the notion of wishing they had had a choice or opportunity to do something different). The younger women felt that marriage had been a positive choice and were less ambivalent about the state of marriage, with the notable exception of Mrs. E. 30 who married at 17 because she was pregnant. Mrs. H., now 36, married 8 years ago after 13 years of 'independence' working firstly as an officer in the WRNS, then as an air stewardess and lastly as a police officer. When asked about her attitude towards marriage she replied:

"In my case marriage was a positive choice, I'd had a good run for my money, that helps, and I wanted to settle down and have a family. I think marriage is more important

to the man, they're always looking for another mother aren't they. It wouldn't matter personally if I'd stayed single. I was independent before ..... now I'm always thinking of others, it makes you much more serious and responsible. Sometimes I long to get out a bit more and do light-hearted things."

Whether the slight difference in attitude is due to changing views of marriage or whether it has more to do with the length of time married is an issue outside this particular research.

These women's marriages/domestic relations represent a shift - although within a relative framework - from those of their parents. As noted their feelings about this are ambivalent, but their aspirations for their children, in terms of domestic relations and work, are a lot more clear. There is a definite sense of the children building on what the parents have already achieved and the expectation that they would do 'better' than their parents, just as their parents did better than their parents.

These increased expectations were not necessarily expressed in material terms, but more in the sense of increased opportunities and choices (with the assumption being that these would lead to more material wealth). It seems that most of the women perceived that the most important thing they wanted - and had achieved - for their children was the freedom to do and be what they wanted.

Q. "How do you see your children's future. Do you think they'll be better or worse off than you?"

A. "Oh better off definitely. I don't just mean in material terms, but they've done much more than I ever did ... They've been abroad with the school, studied subjects at school, met a wider variety of people, they're a lot more .... sussed. They have a lot more to offer employers. They may go to

university, that would be great or they might go and work in Woolies if they preferred. They will be able to choose what will make them happiest and take their time thinking about how they want their lives. That's an improvement on what I had ... and it's the ideal situation really."  
(Mrs. J.)

Mrs. H. Stated that her decision to marry was a 'positive choice' and she too sees choice as being the crucial element in her daughters' futures:

'I wouldn't wish marriage upon them, I would want them doing something they're happy in, maybe university and degrees or maybe not. I think they'll be able to achieve the living standards we have but material things aren't really important as long as they have a good and happy lifestyle and I think they will, there's no reason why they shouldn't.'

The women with daughters also recognised that their daughters could achieve a good lifestyle without getting married, through better work opportunities, and were generally pleased about this although there was some ambivalence expressed, especially by the older women:

"I would like to see them both happily married, yes, I would, but I can't see it, they're both very head strong and know what they want. They will possibly have a better lifestyle than us, if I have anything to do with it. Their education comes first then they can find a 'respectable' boy. Diane's going to university which is a better start for her, it must be. If she gets to be a doctor she won't really need to marry, she'll have her own money and her own sense of importance and interests .... there wouldn't be any point in marriage, would there?' (Mrs. G.)

The conflicts expressed about women's role in the future were also reflected in the women's aspirations for their sons: Mrs. B. has a son and daughter and she is aware of the discrepancies in her aspirations for them:

"I would like my son to play the field and then marry a nice 18 year old domesticated girl because he's hopeless at looking after himself. As for my daughter, I wouldn't like her to play the field at all, I think girls are much more vulnerable. It seems wrong to say that, they should

be able to do the same things. If she gets on I'd be happier, women need a career to get a decent income."

It seems that, if the mothers' aspirations are anything to go by, the daughters are going to experience more freedom than any previous generation of women, but that the conflict of class and gender is still going to have some influence on their lives.

However, an important point to note here is that when the women are talking about their lives in Westerhope and the 'meaning' of that lifestyle, part of that understanding is influenced by and influences, the future as they perceive it - not necessarily their own future but the future of their children. Several of the women were concerned about the current economic situation in as much as it affected their children's job prospects, and expressed doubts that their children would ever achieve as good a lifestyle as their's.

"The main this is, will they get a job .... even after university they might not get a job". (Mrs. I.)

"Sometimes I get worried about their future ... if Mrs. Thatcher stays in for five years, my eldest will be a school leaver when the Tories are in and I just don't imagine what the situation will be then. My children have a lot of school to go through yet and you never know from one day to the next if they're going to have enough teachers and facilities. There are no guarantees any more and thats the hard part. My husband and I worked very hard to get our own place, but will the work be there for my children so they can make something of their lives. I know my children have more chance than a lot of others ... living in this area.... but thats still no guarantee. I'm trying to bring them up to be pushy and street-wise .... they're going to have to live off their wits". (Mrs. E.)

I would argue that part of the process of creating a lifestyle and/or imposing a meaning on the lifestyle lived, involves future expectations and aspirations. If these expectations are diminished or perceived as

being in doubt, then this would lead to a re-evaluation of the 'meaning of the present'. Some of the women interviewed were optimistic about the future in terms of their children, some were pessimistic, and others expressed both hopes and doubts, but due to the age-limits imposed at the start of the survey, none of the women had children old enough to be fully independent so the issue was more abstract than tangible. However I do feel that this issue will become more crucial in the near future and emphasises the point that the 'meaning' of any particular way of life is not constant but changes to cope with changed circumstances and to change circumstances.

#### H Family and Friends and Community

After asking about the marital family, the issue of non-material, social relations was extended to cover the wider family and friends. In the first section it was already established that although most of the women still had a lot of contact with their families - with several of their parents moving to be nearer them - there was not the immediate contact that had characterised their childhoods, and this was often perceived as a substantial change. In this section the women were asked if they wished their parental families lived nearer, in an attempt to ascertain what part their parental families play in their present life-styles and if they felt the need to substitute something else in place of their families.

"My father lives nearby but I'm afraid to say that that's a liability rather than a pleasure ... I feel very responsible. My husband has replaced my family, I turn to him rather than anyone else, I know so many people round here but they're always moving ... my husband, he's the constant one rather than friends and family, or at least I hope he is." (Mrs. I.)

"I see my mother and my sisters but I don't see aunts and uncles people like that though they're good to see on a rare basis. You know what they say, you can choose your friends but you can't choose your relatives... you're stuck with them. Mind I say that but we don't have that many friends ... we live quietly." (Mrs. C.)

"My family (i.e. parental) were very close know but there's less visiting now. I would say that friends definitely replace family, you have much more in common. My mother was much more family-minded than I am now, but there's not the opportunity for that anymore." (Mrs. B.)

In their childhoods, the 'family-centredness' was very much based on shared residential location and employment, and it is this same basis that governs current social relations. However this has meant that the women have more contact with their friends/neighbours, than their families, as Mrs. B. put it - "you have much more in common."

This point was clarified when the women were asked about their social lives outside the home. Their friends were largely neighbours who they knew through work and/or through their children (i.e. attendance at post-natal clinic, local schools) and/or through some shared activity such as the local church, political party etc.:-

Q. "Who do you socialise with now?"

A. "We socialise with people from round here, people we've met through the church, or the scouts, or the school. We have a lot of contact with the neighbours through the PTA, even the teachers too .... they live on the estate."

Q. "Do you go out much with the people from work?"

A. "No, not as much as I used to ... I go to less office do's, its the same for my husband. Some of the girls (from the same workplace) live on the estate, we might go out on someone's birthday but we don't really go to the official things." (Mrs. C.)

It did seem that neighbours were not often classified as friends just because they lived on the same street, but that something extra was needed. This 'something extra' - i.e. things in common - was not difficult to find because, as established in the census material and survey, an estate such as Westerhope tends to attract similar types of people. At times these 'things in common' became quite intricate:

"My best friends, those I see most often are from the area. I originally met them at the ante-natal clinic and our children have gone through school together. In fact it was her, one of the mothers, who got me the job I had when I first went back to work .... lots of part-time jobs go round word of mouth, so the people you work with are often your neighbours. Sometimes our husbands go out together as well ... I think they tend to meet less through work and children, but through the wives being friends, though my best friends husband has just started work at my husbands department so if they hadn't met sooner they would have met later". (Mrs. I.)

It must be pointed out that this level of socialising is again not a constant state, but is dependent on the stage the family has reached at any particular time. Before the children are born, the social life is much more linked to work and when the children are young, the focal point of social life shifts to the immediate locality. As the children become more independent, it seems the mothers lose an important point of contact. Mrs. G. who has two daughters aged 16 and 13 illustrates this well:

"Before we (neighbours) used to mix a lot, but that was when the children were younger. I got involved in the community centre.... anything that was going that the children have grown up. I get more neighbourliness now when I walk the dog on a Sunday morning and you say 'Good morning, nice day' to all the other people who are walking their dogs .... like having a small child and going to the shops. Once my family came out looking for me, I was talking to an old man with a dog and we'd been stood in a field for an hour .... we had something in common you see, that was it".



This change in social relations is also reflected in friendships with people living outside the area (i.e. Westerhope). Again these friendships were mainly initiated through shared employment or residential location and these particular relationships greatly diminished when the women had their children. This seemed largely due to lack of time and also lack of opportunity for visiting and the older women, who's children are now less 'time consuming', stated that these friendships were never really revived.

However, this is not to imply that the women interviewed socialised a lot, with either neighbours or people from outside the area. On the contrary, in many ways the women were very 'home-centred' especially after the birth of their children, and their selection of friends during motherhood reflect this i.e. they did not have to travel far from home to see their friends, and it is supposed, their friends were also relatively 'home-centred'. The women with younger children tended to limit their 'night life' to the very occasional evening at another young couple's house, whereas the older women tended to stay in, just going out on special occasions:-

"Me? I don't go out much. All the friends I had when he (her son) was small have all moved on now.... I'm too tired after work to go into town or anything like that, last time we went out it was for my birthday."  
(Mrs. F.)

The main reasons why the women seldom went out at night were because of having young children and/or being 'too tired' after spending most of the day at work (the majority of part time work involved working a few hours each day). It will be remembered that most of the women still perceived themselves as being ultimately responsible for the housework, so they would probably spend some time on these duties (e.g. late-night

shopping, cooking the tea, etc.) after work. One of the consequences of this 'home-centredness' was that what remained of the often relatively considerable disposable income after bills and mortgages, was mostly spent on the home and the children, with the emphasis being on making the home comfortable and on home entertainments (e.g. videos stereos, home computers) rather than say family holidays or having two cars. This sort of lifestyle - based on the dual role of women as workers and wives/mothers - also affects the sense of community in Westerhope. For most of the women, when the children had stopped being totally dependent, their own involvement with traditional community activities, such as scouts, youth clubs, even coffee mornings in neighbours' houses, diminished or stopped completely - because the 'something in common' had altered and/or the return to work precluded such involvement.

In an earlier chapter the lives of the previous generation of women in Westerhope was discussed at some length. The most salient point to come across from the historical research was the extent of the women's involvement with each other and each others families e.g. doing daily chores for each other, shared child care, helping each other at times of crises such as illness or during the miners' strikes. Such involvement is not in great evidence in contemporary times. However it would be too simplistic just to say that the community in Westerhope had 'died' merely because the way people live their lives has changed. When the women who were interviewed were asked if they thought that Westerhope was a community, a wide variety of answers were given:

Mrs. A., who had been brought up in a nearby mining village answered:

"No, not at all. Its just a collection of houses .... there isn't the warmth there was in Throckley. My children have lots of friends but I find it very quiet ... there's never anything happening .... everyone's at work all day."

Mrs. C.. from Byker gave a similar answer:

"The children belong to many things, so in that sense there's a community on the estate. They have it better than when I was a child .... more opportunity for all sorts of things ... the community centre has things on all the time. There isn't so much for adults though, we all live in our little houses .... its all done for the kids."

Mrs. F. also linked community with children, emphasising the importance of having 'something in common':

"A community depends on the people in it. I feel no sense of community. When we first arrived the street was full of women with small children and there was lots of coffeeing and going to the shops together. But in this street over half of the houses have changed hands several times .... now I might see the neighbours at New Year or just to pass the time of day. You see, people have more money, they're more mobile, they're out at work all day. It can be very lonely ... I would say that half the women on this street are on pills or they drink."

"In a community people mix, they don't here .... thats now.. when the children were younger, yes. People on this estate were peculiar, they've forgotten what they had when they came and they've forgotten where they came from. Everyone's progressed and there's a lot of judging that goes on ..... but having said that I like it round here .... I suppose I've just got used to it." (Mrs. G.)

"There are few communities left .... I always tend to think of village communities, with a few cottages and a shop.... thats being idealistic isn't it? There's no helping going on round here and I would like to see that, but people round here don't need help, so what have we got to offer each other?" (Mrs. H.)

"Westerhope is very much a community, its like a big village. I know so many people and thats nice. Do you think thats being institutionalised? I can't imagine not living here. I suppose its similar to my childhood community but a bit more upmarket." (Mrs. I.)

Mrs. E. moved to Westerhope two years ago when her children were aged 11, 8 and 3 years. She had returned to work after the birth of her last child before the move so, in many ways 'missed out' on the time (at home

with young children) when the women seemed to get most involved. Her perception of the 'sense of community' in Westerhope is influenced by this difference.

"No, I don't think there's a community in this place at all.... I barely know anyone... I could tell you more about my neighbours gardens than I could about them. When I first came here I was always popping back to Longbenton (she previously live on a council estate there). I just never manage to meet people around here. I really miss my friends from Longbenton.

Q. "Would you say that the estate at Longbenton was a community?"

A. "Yes I think so, there was a lot of sharing went on and you saw a lot of each other. Practically all the women on my road had young bairns and when its like that you need friends around you .... but it was me that wanted to leave and come up here. I can remember at the time all the popping in and out, and all the gossiping used to get on my nerves."

It became clear that the women's individual perception of the sense of community in Westerhope differed and were often based on a variety of notion as to what actually constituted a community. Sometimes this understanding of community was based on popular notions (e.g. Mrs. H.'s reference to the village community), sometimes it was based on past experience e.g. Mrs. E.'s answer. It is not for me to say whether Westerhope is a community or not, based on this level of research and anyway such a judgement would involve my own assumption of what constitutes a community. Here I am trying to establish how the ten women I interviewed perceived the area in which they lived, how it compared to past experience, and whether they felt they had attained the lifestyle they wanted and worked for. After asking whether they thought Westerhope was a community, I asked if they would like to see any changes in the area in an attempt to ascertain if they actively wanted anything different (and also if they were prepared to bring about any changes). Most of

the answers were defensive, as an admission that their current lifestyle is not what they wanted would involve a denial of their, and their husband's effort. Mrs. G.'s answer to this question reflects this defensiveness and also neatly sums up the answers given by practically all the women:

Q. "Would you like to see any changes in the area, for it to be more community minded?"

A. "No, I don't want any change. As I said before there's a lot of judging that goes on round here, but it doesn't bother me. There's a lot of gossiping in the community centre but its alright here really .... its somewhere to live. I wouldn't go into raptures about it ... I wouldn't bother if my husband wanted to move and I wouldn't bother if he wanted to stay. One time, socially and community wise I would have wanted things different, but now I don't care. I've come to realise that people are the same everywhere, its what you make it. I can't blame anyone for what I'm doing .... you can't force change."

#### I. Home Ownership

In the questionnaire the respondents were asked why they had initially moved to Westerhope and most of the answers revolved around the availability of affordable new housing and the area's convenience for work, etc. Part of assessing what the ten women interviewed in depth feel about the area, requires an understanding of what their rationale was for moving in the area and in this respect their answers did not substantially differ from the larger sample, for example:

"We came here because it was a nice house and we liked the area, its very pleasant. We would have had to wait a long time for a council place so we saved up and came here. Its not too far from my family either."  
(Mrs. A.)

As with the issues of marriage and pre-motherhood work, few of the women had definite plans or expectations about their lives in the area (with the exceptions of Mrs. F. . . . and Mrs. E. and Mrs. J. who came to the area later) when they originally arrived. At that stage the tenure basically meant that they could obtain somewhere 'nice' to live - in comparison with other options - and something material to show for their efforts that would benefit themselves and their children. To a large extent they have achieved this, or at least they perceive themselves as having done so, see for example their attitudes towards their children's standard of living. After spending some time in owner-occupied property, I asked the women what the tenure meant to them now, and what effect they thought the tenure had had on their lives:

"Put it like this, I wouldn't want to go back to council property, why pay rent - its a waste ..... but in a way of thinking thats just what I've been doing .... I've been paying a mortgage for 20 years. On reflection, I could sell, get the capital and go mad, why not?"  
(Mrs. I.)

"The tenure of a house shouldn't make any difference, but I like being responsible for my own home. I don't like modern houses but this was easy to get .... I'd like to move but you get stuck, it gets hard to move out, but we've had some happy times. I wouldn't discount changing tenure. If anything happened to the kids and it was just the two of us, I'd sell and blow the money. I don't seriously think that the tenure has that much more importance. Me and my family could be living the same life anywhere, if the opporutnity was there." (Mrs. H.)

Q. "Is owning your own home important to you?"

A. "Not now it isn't but it was when I first came up here. Now I realise things change and you change with them. At the end of the day its just a pile of bricks, this house, its just a pile of bricks that we're leaving to the girls. They're the ones that are going to benefit from all our hard work.... I think I'll sell it and go and live somewhere hot." (Mrs. G.)

It seems that owning their own homes is important to the women in the sense that it provides them with the 'room' to bring up their families in the way they wanted i.e. it has given them a degree of freedom and choice to live a lifestyle that they perceive as being desirable, although they were only too ready to point out the drawbacks of owner occupation - e.g. mortgage and rates burden, maintenance, etc.:

Q. "Is owning your own home important to you?"

A. "Yes it is... its so nice to have your own private space, as a family and as an individual. Owning your house must make a difference. You've got to take care of it and thats a chore.... and those awful rates.... and somehow you find that the children from this estate do better at school than the children from Newbiggin Hall (a nearby council estate). Yes it makes a difference, living here, in this house." (Mrs. B.)

From the answers given I feel it is impossible, as well as undesirable, to extract what ownership means from other areas of their lives. Owning their own homes does not mean any one particular thing, but must be seen in the context of their whole lives - their lives at home with their families as they grow up; their lives in the wider community; and their employment. Their position as owner occupiers is linked with their background and the influence of their parental families, to their own efforts and to wider demographic changes in housing and employment patterns. Some of the things that owner occupation has provided are perceived as being beneficial e.g. attaining a comfortable lifestyle and more opportunities for their children; while other things have caused some of the women to re-evaluate their lives and choices of action e.g. the conflict between needing/wishing to work and their roles as mothers and wives.

## Conclusion

What I have been arguing all through the research is that owner occupation as a tenure is neither totally independent of social relations and neither is it secondary. Its form and conditions are affected by wider changes, but the experience of living in the tenure under its conditons also creates new forms of social relations that in turn influence activities in wider society. In a capitalist/patriarchal society, this means that the present status of owner occupation is an attempt on the part of capital to maintain capital and at the same time, it is bound up with labour's aspirations for good quality housing over which they have a measure of control and independence from capital.

The chapters in the second section of the thesis illustrate this process in one specific area, but owner occupied housing is not just the end product of contestation and attempts to dominate. Rather those attempts and contests continue as the house is occupied, because those occupying the houses, and those with an interest in owner occupation (which includes the state as well as capital) operate in a society that is developing and changing and is constantly in a state of conflict. For this chapter I talked at length to ten people who owner occupy housing in a specific area - ten people who have specific histories that are class, gender and locale based. They all brought these histories to their housing, understand their housing in the light of these histories in terms of ideas, practices and aspirations, and manifest these ideas, practices and aspirations in their current lifestyles on a private estate. The fact of their owner occupation itself does not independently create a certain way of thinking or living, but neither is it incidental. I



believe the interviews would have been different in important aspects if I had talked to women in council housing for example.

The fact of their owner occupation has given the women a sense and meaning of what has gone before (in terms of their and their parents' efforts) and of what will happen in the future (in terms of their hopes for their future lives and of the lives of their children). However, owner occupation has not 'freed' them from their gender (i.e. their roles as wives and mothers), their class (i.e. as workers, with their husbands, who are still dependent on waged labour), and on the specific conditions of their locale. They have not been freed from these roles through owner occupation, but the attainment and experience of that tenure has created a redefinition of those roles. Class and gender and locale and tenure have interacted to produce a life style for these women that is different from that of their mothers', the preceding generation of women in Westerhope, and their daughters'.

These are important changes and will become increasingly so as owner occupation becomes more and more dominant in Britain. There is no simple answer as to whether these changes are good news or bad news for capital, or whether they will liberate the working class and/or women. As always change and progression is contradictory and contested. What I have tried to show is that owner occupation, located as it is in the realm of reproduction has the dynamic potential for mediating and changing the experience and consciousness of occupiers and thus can create new forms of social relations that call into question, in a very real 'lived' way, dominant capitalist, patriarchal ideologies.

APPENDIX ONE

Mrs. A. 37 years old. Born in a mining village in West Newcastle then Northumberland). Lived with mother and grandparents in NCB terraced house - grandfather was a miner. Moved to council house in West Newcastle mid 50's. Mother worked as full time shop assistant since daughters birth. Mrs. A. married at 20 to an electrician (now self-employed) and moved straight to Chapel Park. Has 2 children, born when she was 27 and 29. Worked as office clerk full time until the birth of her first child and has not worked outside the home since.

Mrs. B. 45 years old. Born in Heaton (East Newcastle). Lived with mother as parents were separated - father was a labourer. Mother never worked. Mrs. B. lived in a Tyneside flat in Heaton after her marriage (when she was 22) for 3 years when she moved to Chapel House. Has 2 children, born when she was aged 30 and 36 - her husband is now a production manager. She worked full time as an office clerk with the CWS until the birth of her first child. She returned to work (same job) part time when her youngest child was 2.

Mrs. C. 45 years old. Born in Byker (East Newcastle). Lived with both parents in a rented Tyneside flat. Father was a caulker in the shipyards. Mother went to work in a local factory when the father became ill - Mrs. C. was 5 at the time. She stopped work when Mrs. C. left home to get married at 24. Married apprentice printer (now a sales rep.). Lived for a year in a rented flat in West City, then for a year in a council flat in the same area before moving to Chapel House. Has 2 children, born when she was aged 31 and 33. Worked as a shop assistant full time, then in a factory for 9 years until her first child was born. Returned to work part time when youngest child was 4 - works as a shop assistant, now a supervisor.

Mrs. D. 30 years old. Born in Gateshead. Lived with both parents in a private rented flat. Moved to a council house mid-60's. Father was a planer miller in a local factory - mother never worked. Married at 20 to an electrical engineer, moved straight to a 'link' house in Chapel Park,

then to a semi-detached house on the same estate. Her child was born when she was 30. She worked as a clerical officer (civil service) until the child was born and intends to return to full time when her maternity leave is over.

Mrs. E. 30 years old. Born in Scotswood (West City). Lived with both parents in a council house. Father worked as a fitter and mother as a home help when Mrs. E. was at secondary school. Married at 17 years and had three children when aged 17, 20 and 25. Lived initially after marriage with her parents, before getting own council house in Scotswood. Moved to Chapel House 2 years ago. Husband is an electrician. Has always worked since she left school in a variety of jobs (shop assistant, waitress, factory), breaking off only briefly for the birth of her children.

Mrs. F. 41 years old. Born in East Denton (West City). Lived with both parents in a privately owned semi-detached. Father was a miner until invalided out, then became a warehouse manager on the Quayside, mother never worked. Married at 22 to a butcher who became a production controller and is now a self-employed butcher with his own shop. Her only child was born the same year of marriage. First 6 years of marriage, lived in rented flats in and around Newcastle, before moving to Chapel Park. Worked as a secretary until the birth of her child. Returned to work when son was 1 (part time) and became full time when son was 6. Now works as personal secretary to a Managing Director.

Mrs. G. 43 years old. Born in North Tyneside. Lived with both parents in a rented terraced house. Moved to a privately owned house in West City after the war. Father was a warehouseman and also worked for a 'bookie' - mother never worked. Parents now run a betting shop in North Tyneside. Married at 21 to an apprentice electrician (now a sales rep.). Has 2 children born when she was aged 28 and 32. Lived initially with husband's parents - a council house in West City - for 3 years, before moving to Chapel House. Worked in an office full time until the birth of her first child. Returned to work when youngest child was 5, firstly as

a dinner lady (part time) then as a merchandise clerk at the CWS (part time). Is now a supervisor.

Mrs. H. 36 years old. Born in London. Lived with both parents in a rented terraced house. Father was an invalid and never worked in Mrs. H. life. Mother went out to work as a clerk when father died - Mrs. H. was 11 - now lives on same estate and, at 71, is 'unemployed'. Mrs. H. joined the armed services after school and travelled quite a bit. Left the forces at 24 and became a policewoman. Married at 28 to a fellow police officer. Lived initially in a police house in London. In 76 husband's parents (from Newcastle) died. With the money they left, the couple moved up to Newcastle and bought a detached house on St. John's. Now have two children, born when she was 31 and 33. Mrs. H. stopped work when they moved to the North East - is now thinking about going to college to do a degree.

Mrs. I. 42 years old. Born in Durham. Lived initially with mother and aunt in rented terraced house as father was in the army. When father returned the family moved to a council house in Kenton (West City) and father became a civil servant. Mother went to work part-time in a shop when Mrs. I. was 14. Father, a widower, now lives across the road from Mrs. I in own property. Married at 24 to a civil servant and moved to a link house in Chapel House (owner occupied). While there Mrs. I. had two children, when she was 25 and 29. Moved to semi-detached on same estate 10 years ago. Before motherhood she was a civil servant, but since has worked as a dentist-receptionist part time, taking 2 years off for the birth of each of her children. Has recently taken dental technicians exam.

Mrs. J. 40 years old. Born in Arthers Hill (West City). Lived with both parents in a rented Tyneside flat for 10 years, then moved to a rented house in Benwell. Father was a fitter and turned at the ship-yards. Mother didn't work outside the home. Married at 20 to a turner from father's workshop. Lived initially with father (mother had died) before moving to rented house in Heaton (East Newcastle). Moved to

Chapel Park in 1973. Has 2 children, born when she was 22 and 24. Worked at a variety of jobs before motherhood (shop assistant, factory). Stopped work for 10 years for children, before returning to work part time as care attendant in Mother and Baby Home. Is currently looking for full time work.

APPENDIX TWO

1. Comparative discussion about woman's parental lifestyle and her marital lifestyle.
  - a) - questions about living conditions (parents' work patterns, income, housing conditions, community relations) of parental family when they were at a similar stage to present marital family (i.e. age of children/parents) - in quantitative and qualitative terms. Woman's reaction to this, in what ways are things better and in what ways worse.
  - b) - discussion of the changes her parents have experienced in their lifestyles i.e. work, housing community etc. and attempt to discover the logic of this i.e. were improvements/deteriorations linked to general economic conditions and/or changes in work patterns (promotion, redundancy, mother working, changes in location etc.) and/or changes within the family (more children born, children start earning, children leaving home).
  - c) - questions about parents' attitude (if applicable) to daughter's marital lifestyle - what do parent/s particularly like about the way she lives (house? area? opportunities for children? job?) is there anything parent/s dislike or think is missing. How do parent/s perceive these changes - society more affluent? daughter has/had good job? made a good marriage? etc. - what they imagined for you.
  - d) - questions about parents' and woman's political allegiances. How do/did parents vote? What was the extent of their political activism (party members, workers, voters). Were politics discussed in the home? Also parents' involvement in Trade Unions - were they ever involved in any industrial action - woman's impressions of this as a child. Woman's own political allegiances and activism - reasons for a particular allegiance (or non allegiance). Does she think her background influences the way she votes or is her current situation and her concern for her children's future more important - do these elements conflict or not?

2. Work Patterns

- a) - attitudes to work before motherhood - why did woman do the job/s she did pre-motherhood, would she have done that job if she thought she would never break off to have children, or was job just 'filling in time' (attempt to establish whether adult status was conferred through becoming a worker or a wife/mother). Did woman ever perceive herself as 'getting on' at work - was this important in choice of job? Is there some kind of logic behind woman's employment pattern - i.e. a continuation worked round the birth of her children or is work pattern more arbitrary and transitory. Has there been a difference between pre-and post-motherhood work?
- b) - working conditions. Is job (or was last/main employment) entirely female, mixed, or predominantly male - is this linked to income - does she feel her working conditions would be different if any gender bias was altered. Would she feel differently about the job if any gender bias was changed, why and how? What does she enjoy most about the job (and dislike) - how important is the job to her (e.g. if husband's salary increased would she still work). How does she relate to her colleagues and superiors at work.
- c) - work politics. Extent of involvement T.U. (if involved - at what stage and why). How does she perceive the role of the T.U. in her own workplace/society in general, does she feel it does anything for her or for the future of her children. Ever been involved in any form of industrial action, if not, would she ever, for what reasons.
- d) - attitudes to working mothers - does she feel it is harmful or beneficial to the children (is it harmful or beneficial to the mothers). Under what conditions did/would she return to work. How did her mother tackle the problem. What does she feel about paternity leave/shared jobs/role swapping - are they viable options?

3. Marriage, the Family and the Community

- a) - questions about domestic reproductive responsibilities - who does what (home care and child care) - is there anything woman/husband always does or would never do - have there been any changes during marital life - what does the woman put these changes down to (her going to work, general societal changes, moving house). Has there ever been any discussion about who does what. How do wife/husband roles compare with that of parents - is there any element of domestic organising that husband does that father would never do - or vice versa. Does she feel son's/daughter's lives will be any different.
- b) - questions about attitudes to marriage. Why does she think marriage is so popular - what do people get out of it. What does she see as the advantages/satisfactions of being a wife and mother - anything she would like to see different - does marriage prevent her from doing something she would like to do. Ever think of not marrying and/or an alternative lifestyle - ever feel pressure (parental, peers) to marry. How would she like to see her childrens future (work, housing, marriage). Will they be better or worse off?
- c) - questions about friendships. What/where is the main locale for socialising (friends from work, husbands work, local area, previous residence). To what extent and when does/did she mix with other local women (when children were small?) How much contact with her family? Does she feel that her friends replace her family - was it different for her mother - in what ways. Would she like her family to live nearer to her.
- d) - questions about the home and the community. Does she feel that Westerhope is a community - what does she understand by that term - is the concept linked to her past experience or is it a more vague concept. In what ways is the 'community' around her worse/better than that of her childhood or previous residences - what does she put this down to? How would she like to see things develop/change. Is a sense of community important. Would she like to live somewhere else - what would be the criteria for moving elsewhere (bigger house, better area). Would she be willing to change tneure under any circumstances? How important is owning own home - would she and family have moved to



Westerhope if houses were available on different terms or would they have gone for a private house elsewhere. What does she see as the advantages/disadvantages of owning own home - has owning own home had any effect on lifestyle (woman working, location). Does she feel that mass home ownership in Westerhope has any relation to the sense of community?

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## CONCLUSION

## Conclusion

The aim of this thesis throughout has been to create a new, wider, more critical understanding of the inter-relationship between class gender, locale and tenure within civil society. The understanding put forward is not complete in the sense that it is finished or total. Rather I see it as an altered perspective that academics and activists could use to grasp more thoroughly what has been happening, what is happening now and what might happen (or be made to happen) next, in housing and tenure developments in British society. Consequently, to call this section a conclusion is a slight misnomer, for whilst it is the conclusion for this piece of work, it is not the conclusion of the study of the social relations of tenure. It has been a crucial part of my argument that those social relations are constantly changing, constantly in a state of flux, and will therefore never be concluded in the sense that they will achieve stasis. The ideas put forward in this thesis have attempted to show that tenure is not a static entity; to understand why a conclusion will always remain elusive; and to explore how those ideas might be usefully integrated into the traditional housing debate. The final section will thus address itself to three aims -

to recap and restate the material presented in the seven chapters

to draw out what I see as the main themes of the thesis and explore their contribution to current ideas about developing strategies for re-thinking tenure

to indicate where I see the main themes 'fitting in' with current concerns about housing and tenure.

Before I address those aims though, I want to make a brief, but important, point. The fieldwork section of the research was practically the last area of work I undertook. Whilst devising the questionnaire and doing the interviews, I became increasingly aware of the fact that my approach to these tasks was influenced by my own class and gender, and by my own family and housing histories and experiences. My understanding and appreciation of the survey and interview material was affected (I believe, positively) by my knowledge of, and involvement with, the way my mother lived and the way I and my sisters and friends live and house ourselves. Reading the relatively scarce literature on feminist research helped me to understand this process, integrate it into my work and acknowledge it as a crucial part of the research. However, on looking back over the thesis as a whole, I have realised that these considerations did not simply apply to the fieldwork alone but were an integral part of the more theoretical and technical aspects of the thesis, even though this is not acknowledged in the text.

The provision of, and access to, housing is an intensely personal issue as well as an intensely political one. As a single, working class woman trying to achieve a degree of independence and self-sufficiency, what I have researched and written about matters to me as much in my personal life as in my academic/work life. It has not been an abstract issue for me at any time in the writing of the thesis. I now feel strongly that to 'put aside' personal feelings and experiences when it comes to addressing housing issues is not only very difficult, but is also undesirable and in fact, may weaken any analysis attempted. I also feel that the perspective of tenure developed in this thesis necessitates a consideration and acknowledgement of personal, individual experience, (which is bound by class, gender, race and locale) as a way of coming to terms with tenure.

### A Brief Re-Cap

Rather than go through the thesis chapter by chapter, I want instead to present a 'global' summarised view of the material contained in the seven chapters.

Before any debate about tenure can begin, a house has to be produced i.e. land has to be sold, bought or leased, capital has to be borrowed or raised, labour has to be taken on, the raw materials have to be obtained, planning permission has to be granted and a market has to be found. So before housing is available for consumption, sets of relations and negotiations between parties with different and often conflicting interests come into play, and must achieve some sort of resolution and agreement in order to produce housing and consequently realise those interests. Such resolutions/agreements (e.g. between local authorities and private developers or banks and builders) may be firm and secure or they may be tenuous and fragile. Either way, the built form of a house is produced, a form which may last, relatively unchanged, for over one hundred years. (In 1979, 30% of the housing stock in England was built before 1919, 52% before 1944<sup>1</sup>).

Whilst the type of house built (spacious/cramped/etc.) may change significantly over time and place, the house itself, once produced, contains a legacy of assumptions about acceptable standards of living and acceptable forms of living. For example, the spacious family villa in the suburbs contrasted with high rise flats in the inner-cities. This legacy of assumptions is tangible, remains and endures and affects the life chances and life experiences of the people who occupy that house. It thus follows that any future housing policy which is geared

towards 'real choice' and 'equality of treatment'<sup>2</sup> for all people, must tackle the legacy of a built form which is partly founded on a particular view of society (i.e. as one bounded by family structures and ownership of wealth), and partly reflects the interests of the groups who profit from the production of housing in that form.

Beyond production and before consumption comes another set of circumstances i.e. the provision of housing. The landowners, the finance companies, the builder/developers and the construction workers produce the house, but it is the local authority, the building society, the private landlord etc. who generally makes that house available for consumption. These groups provide the accessibility of that house for the individual consumer. Obviously, the distinction between the two groups, producers and providers, is not always clear and definite (e.g. builders may 'provide' mortgages, local authorities may build housing using direct labour), but it is a distinction that needs to be made as the provision of housing to consumers goes on long after the house is built and can reflect and encompass different interests from the original producing group.

In order to maintain the economic and political stability of the country (and of course to allow change) people need housing and people need to be housed. Given the longevity of Britain's housing stock, the relations of provision remain a crucial vehicle for the negotiations and resolutions between the different groups involved in the consumption

of housing. At this stage of the analysis it is important to state these 'different groups' encompass practically everyone in society - as consumers of housing; as savers in building societies; as tax payers; as workers in construction or construction-related industries; as land-owners; as voters; as men and women desiring to live a certain lifestyle.

A critical aspect of the relations of provision is the creation and maintenance of different tenure forms. Fundamentally, tenure is a mechanism that determines and facilitates the different methods of gaining access to housing which, as a commodity, is generally too expensive to purchase outright for the individual consumer. Tenure is thus important to the consumer and the producer. However, the relations of tenure continue after the individual consumer gains access to the house and are generally the prerequisite for the continued occupation and consumption of the house (i.e. the requirement to pay weekly rent or regular mortgage payments). Thus the activities and policies of the providing groups remain crucial to the housing experience and opportunities to the majority of the population and, again, all attempts to redirect or radically change housing policies would have to consider the role of provision.



The relations of tenure though are not simply confined to legal and financial arrangements. Increasingly those relations have broadened until the tenure form of a house has come to determine the form, standard and location of that house; the groups of people able to gain access to that house; and consequently the health, well-being, security, opportunities and life chances of those people. For example, few single mothers are able to command an income that enables them and their child/ren to live as comfortably as their married counterparts. Figures<sup>3</sup> indicate that around 60% of single parent families are on low incomes (i.e. 140% of the Supplementary Benefit level or below). This affects the housing opportunities of these families, many of whom find themselves on the 'sink' estates owned by local authorities or in poor quality private rented accommodation<sup>4</sup>. Such a situation affects the educational opportunities, health and life chances of the child/ren of these families and the health and self image of the women. The type of housing provided, and the way that housing is provided, is strongly linked to its tenure and plays a large part in building up a life situation which makes many single mothers feel that they are being punished for their state.

The point is that tenure, as it operates now, is not neutral. Tenure, as a device that is meant to link people to housing, can be seen, on the one hand, as carrying out that task somewhat inappropriately and inefficiently. There is overcrowding and under-occupancy; homelessness (due to the inability to afford housing) and owner occupiers making large profits on the sale of their homes; young people unwillingly remaining in the parental home and empty houses; and local authorities spending more on Bed and Breakfast accommodation for homeless families than it would cost to build a home for them. On the other hand however, tenure can be seen not as carrying out its task inefficiently, but as

operating, quite efficiently at times, to maintain a system of relations and interests beyond those of producers and providers. The form and standard of housing and tenure are part of the negotiations, resolutions and agreements that take place between producers, providers and consumers (to make houses rentable/sellable i.e. to ensure the continued commodification of houses), but in essence, reflect and encompass more than just those specific interests.

Houses, as homes, are one of the most crucial arenas for the reproduction of social relations within civil society. The development of the tenure form, which is more flexible and long-lived than the original built form, creates a whole range of opportunities for capital in general and/or the state, to attempt to exert and impose a level of control and influence on this most critical arena. At different times, with varying levels of speed and subtlety, tenure has been redirected/reformed/manipulated/alterd in ways which can be seen as representing an intervention in the reproduction of social relations. For example, the run-down of council housing and the Right to Buy legislation, the proposed de-regulation of rent on new private rented property, the forthcoming legislative reforms covering and broadening the activities of building societies, can all be understood as more than just financial, producer-provider-consumer arrangements (though that's part of it), but as ways of creating and maintaining particular ideas about particular tenures and particular lifestyles are very much bound up with notions of class and gender and race that exist within civil society. So, the broadening of the meaning of tenure that has occurred this century is part of a process of reinforcing and reiterating the relations of reproduction (and consequently, production also). More than that however, housing form and the relations

of reproduction (and consequently, production also). More than that however, housing form and the relations of tenure are increasingly in the 'vanguard' in attempts to encourage change as well as reinforcing existing ideas. This point is expanded later.

I am aware that so far this analysis of housing and tenure has implied a process that has only one direction i.e. landowner producer provider (state) consumer. In part this was intended as it is important to be clear about the multi-faceted nature of housing in society today. However, having an individual (or more usually a family household) placed in a house, living out a pre-requisite lifestyle, is not the end of the story, just as a landowner deciding to sell some land is not the beginning. To understand housing and tenure in that way is not to understand the story at all.

People (unless they are exceptionally privileged) do not happily and willingly slot into the prerequisite lifestyle that 'fits' their tenure. On the one hand, people do resist or try to affect what is there e.g. tenants associations that campaign for better management etc., Women's Aid providing refuge from 'private' domestic violence; owner occupiers threatening to withdraw support from political parties that advocate the abolition of mortgage interest tax relief. Struggles and changes exist on this level all the time. On the other hand, people, as individuals and households, may slot into the <sup>prere</sup>prerequisite lifestyle of their tenure and housing form, but at a cost to themselves and, consequently, at a cost to the 'image' and meaning of the tenure and the social relations that are meant to be reproduced in that tenure. I am thinking here particularly of women, part of whose rationale for marrying is that it is the only way they can secure a decent home and may thus

remain in unhappy marriages; of young couples who over-commit themselves on mortgages, placing themselves under great strain; and of the tenants of 'problem' estates who gradually come to accept, take on and even foster the image of themselves held by wider society and reflected in their housing experience. What I am basically saying is that attempts to impose particular ideas and lifestyles through housing and tenure forms in order to maintain and/or control social relations, can be dysfunctional and is therefore not the simple 'happy ending' to the chain of events and interests in housing.

Far more fundamentally however, the activities, actions and wishes of individuals (as women, men, husbands, wives, mothers, etc.) are not restricted in their influence to the resistance or acceptance of the 'final' housing and tenure form. Because housing is so crucial, in terms of opportunity, life chances etc. (the very reasons why tenure and housing are critical in the reproduction of social relations), the nature and relations of housing production, provision and consumption are of very immediate concern to individuals in society. Such concerns may, and often is, voiced through organised groups - be it the building trade unions, members of a local council, neighbourhood/community groups, womens' groups etc. The product (housing form and tenure) is not just presented to, and accepted by, passive households, but is rather formed and changed by the interaction of producers, providers, consumers, the state etc.

As a consumer of housing, an individual may interact with the other groups in a variety of ways - as a mortgagee voting against a party advocating the abolition of mortgage tax relief; as a worker striking

for higher wages to cope with increased housing costs; as a mother campaigning for more play-space on an estate. The point is that changes and developments in different areas of peoples' lives are emeshed with, or work their way through to, housing experience and the meaning their particular tenure has for them. Thus the negotiations and interactions between different groups involved in housing, have come to incorporate more than just the strict housing experience, but also to take account of the whole array of events and circumstances that make up people's daily lives. Tenure relations are relatively adaptable to this form of incorporation (though not always, as we will see later), not because of some inherent 'self-correcting' mechanism, but because tenure relations themselves are the proudct of negotiation and interaction and reflect the strength, subtleties, weaknesses etc. of the different groups at various times.

The implications of this analysis will be explored in the next section, but before the conclusion moves beyond re-cap, there are a few more points I want to restate. If the analysis seen above is to be developed further then a range of issues need to be re-examined i.e. the basic elements of the analysis need to be broken down and re-assessed. To accept the perspective on tenure I have developed, necessitates an acceptance of the crucial, determining nature of the arena of reproduction i.e. that what occurs in the home and the community is not secondary or crudely superstructural, but is 'base' and dynamic. It also necessitates an acceptance that the relations between men and women, adults and children, the white population and the black population, the working class population and the middle class population, in the 'private' realm are as important as relations at the point of production and/or within the public realm. It is as crucial to question why households generally

conform to men and women in heterosexual marriage with children as it is to question why few professional workers find themselves in council housing.

Equally, it is as important to examine what happens within households as well as between households and other agencies, when trying to construct an adequate, dynamic perspective on housing and tenure form. For all these elements are bound up in the process of forming tenure relations just as they are all bound up in forming relations in civil society. To exclude, or give less emphasis to any of these elements, is to weaken or distort the understanding developed.

As a consequence of this, research into the formation and development of the meaning of tenure, must take particular account of the events that encompass an individual's housing experience, as well as the wider economic, political and social events occurring constantly in society. Obviously a researcher cannot 'tap into' the minute details of the lives of everyone s/he researches before an adequate account can be presented. Rather, an account of tenure relations needs to be able to incorporate the individual over time and place (e.g. as a middle class white housewife who used to be a single, young working woman; or as an unemployed black young whose parents were brought up in a different culture), alongside considerations of the impact of economic, political and social change.

Developing Strategies for Challenging and Changing Tenure Relations

"One of the key housing issues of the future is going to be that of housing tenure. For years we have been heading towards a society heavily polarised by type of housing and income, especially between owner occupation and public renting.... To reverse it, there needs to be a broad balance of advantage - financial, social and legal - between tenures."<sup>5</sup>

There can be little doubt that the issue of tenure is more and more likely to be on the agenda in political discussion about the future of housing policy in Britain. As I have just argued, whether the area of policy under discussion is housing finance or design or allocation or repair or race and gender equality, the question of tenure is now of necessity incorporated into that discussion. What I want to do in this section is to draw out the main themes of the thesis and examine their potential contribution to, and their commentary on, developing strategies for challenging tenure relations. In the last section I want to turn my attention to several tangible and current concerns, namely the Report of the Inquiry into British Housing 1985; low income owner occupation; and the privatisation of council sector housing.

I want to start by addressing the issues raised by the Labour Housing Group in their book "Right to a Home" (1984), some of which were developed in the Labour Party's manifesto paper "Better Homes for the Future" (1985). I have selected this particular piece of work as I believe it provides a useful and interesting analysis of the contemporary thinking about tenure and possible ways of changing tenure. The book, and the paper, contain specific measures and proposals that are too complex and technical to examine in detail here. More important for the purpose of this section, is the overall theme developed in that

literature, namely, tenure neutrality. I want to examine the potential and viability of this strategy in the light of the ideas and analyses that have emerged from my own work.

It is obvious that the divergence between the two main tenures, owner occupation and council rented, is one which has a relatively recent history. The three tenures of home ownership, local authority rented and private rented, have existed for some time and have developed and evolved over this century along the lines described in chapter three of this thesis. However, it is really only since the Second World War that owner occupation and renting have developed their almost oppositional natures. As D. Griffiths, the Chairman of the Labour Housing Group explains:

"... as private renting has continued to wither, the rise of joint dominance of council housing and home ownership, each developing along its own separate lines, has produced what, by European standards, is a very rigid two-sector housing system. At a fairly early stage in their lives, most - not all - households gained access to one or other of the major sectors. Characteristically, adequate financial resources are the passport of home ownership, and the production of children the key to the allocation of council housing. The two 'packages' are very different. The council tenant is (at least in theory) vouchsafed a comprehensive housing service from the landlord, is required to take little personal responsibility for the home, but equally has little control over the standard of service received. The owner occupier, in contrast, is expected to be highly self-reliant, taking full responsibility for their home and with no way out should things begin to go wrong."<sup>6</sup>

I agree with Griffiths that these two 'packages' are not 'equal but different', but instead have come to represent inequalities of standard, cost, benefit, treatment, choice and status. These inequalities are very real and exist even for those in the worst owner occupied



property and the best council rented property (e.g. ability to get credit, status etc.), although of course the inequalities are diluted by the time they reach these extremes. For most people in the two tenures, the inequalities/differences are nothing short of stark. However, to start from this state of affairs and to go on to argue that the advantages and disadvantages of the tenures should be reversed in order to equalise housing is, I believe, to underestimate the impact of owner occupation on society and consequently to misunderstand the nature of tenure relations and the meaning of tenure, not only for tenants and owners, but also for all the other groups/factions/agencies involved. I want now to expand this line of thought in the light of my research.

In the post war period, owner occupation has found a new mass market - rising from 32% of the housing stock in 1938 to 58% in 1981 (Census Figures). In order to understand the meaning of this mass tenure, a brief look at the antecedents to this boom is necessary. Whilst the foundations of tenure patterns were laid before the outbreak of the Second World War (see chapter three), it was in the post war period that the 'take off' of tenure divergence really began. The women I interviewed in my field work were all born between the years 1940-1955 and consequently spent all or part of their childhood in the immediate post war period. More crucially, their parents had lived through the hardships of the 1930s and the war years. Many of the women's fathers worked in those industries (ship-building, coal mining, heavy engineering) that were struck particularly hard by the economic recession of the 1930s, and were then involved in the disruption and privation of the

war years. One theme that emerged from the in-depth interviews was the level of disruption of hardship that occurred in the early years of many of the women's lives. Families were split up, housing was insecure and impermanent and the future was uncertain.

However, once the fathers had been demobbed and/or resumed full-time employment and/or settled with their families again, prospects for the women and their parental families improved. For example, the survey material showed that, at birth, the majority of the women (62%) were living in older, private rented accommodation (with 16% in owner occupied property; 12% in council housing and 10% in tied/forces accommodation). 74% of the women moved at least once whilst with their parental families and most moved from private rented accommodation to the new council housing built after the war, with a significant proportion moving into owner occupied property<sup>7</sup>. The point is that most of these women were growing up in an atmosphere of increasing prosperity and security and this initially was linked to the move from the private rented sector to the growing council rented and owner occupied sectors. The material from the in-depth interviews supports this (see chapter seven), and there seems to have been a general feeling that 'things were getting better' for this broad section of the population.

The women from my sample began embarking on marriage from the late 1950s onwards, and their housing choices after their marriages reflect this broad trend towards greater financial prosperity and security. After their weddings 44% of the sample moved into owner occupied property (though my reading of the survey material suggests this was a trend that grew as time progressed) and only 1% moved into

council housing even though this was the dominant tenure of their parents at that time. 42% of the sample initially moved into older private rented accommodation. However, after their first move, only 6% were in private rented accommodation, 8% in council housing and 70% were in owner occupied property<sup>8</sup>. From the interview material it seems that many of the women moved into private renting with their new husbands (with both in employment, rents were affordable) whilst they waited for the offer of a council house/flat and/or until they saved enough for a deposit on a house. Unable to get a council house (or in some cases buy property) of a comparable standard with, or the same location of, their parents, many of the women moved into the newly built, relatively cheap private housing in Westerhope, taking advantage of the 'arranged' mortgages that were on offer.

Two crucial points emerge from this, which also tally quite closely with broader, national trends. Firstly, that the decision whether to enter owner occupation or council renting was, especially in the late 1950s and early 1960s, quite marginal and arbitrary. Secondly, that once in owner occupation, there was an almost unanimous tendency to remain in that tenure. For these women and their marital families are part of that section of the population that has 'reaped' the benefits of owner occupation, entering it at a crucial phase and remaining in occupancy, steadily paying off the mortgage (usually with the help of two incomes), whilst inflation and the boom in house prices, increased the real value of their homes. At the same time, the standard of accommodation in the two other tenures was starting to deteriorate and the desirable/undesirable dichotomy between the different tenures

was beginning to 'take off' in tangible and material ways as well as in ideological and political terms. For the women in Westerhope, their shift into owner occupation has been equated with wealth accumulation (especially in many of their parents have since moved into that tenure), an increase in living standards and an almost imperceptible increase in status, especially when compared with their counterparts in the council and private rented sectors.

On the one hand, this increase in prosperity was unexpected for most of the women in the sense that the 'package' of owner occupation was still relatively unknown when they entered that tenure. The benefits they have since gained can be seen as welcome but unplanned, as a break from their parents' housing experience. On the other hand, as pointed out earlier, the general life experience of these women before owner occupation developed its tenure advantage, was one of aspiration, improvement and a belief in steady prosperity as a reward for hard work. On this level, the package of owner occupation that developed 'fitted in' with their previous experience and their aspirations. Also, the women's contribution to this relatively prosperous lifestyle, through their paid employment, cannot be under-emphasised. In essence, their lifestyles are linked to the way class and gender relations have been changing for that section of the population which, in turn, is linked to their tenure and locale. Tenure here is not merely a set of rules and financial arrangements, but an historical event that reflects, incorporates and part-creates their life experiences. It is interesting to note that research carried out by C. Stubbs<sup>9</sup> on council house sales in Sunderland indicates that those operating the 'Right to Buy', share many of the motives expressed by the residents of Westerhope. Also, a recent article in Housing Review, "Who Becomes a

Home Owner?" by M. Kleinman and C. Whitehead indicates that those now taking advantage of the 'Right to Buy' legislation 'fit in' with the characteristics of the sample population I surveyed in Westerhope, thus:

"Among current initiatives only the 'Right to Buy' involves significant numbers of households - and the majority of those council tenants who take up the right to buy fit the traditional profile, being skilled workers with families, if anything rather older than the average new owner occupier."<sup>10</sup>

To return to the ideas and proposals of the Labour Housing Group. The current position of owner occupiers who entered that tenure just before and during its mass expansion, makes 'sense' to those owners in the wider context of their lives. (I do not, however, wish to imply that they 'deserve' that position and that tenants 'deserve' theirs). Consequently, attempts to neutralize or equalize tenure, would have to tackle a great deal more than just the superficial legal and financial rules and regulations that tenure seem to represent for the Labour Housing Group. The Labour Housing Group argue for a "reform of housing finance"; "positive discrimination in favour of public sector housing finance"; "greater rights for tenants with greater obligations for owners"<sup>11</sup>. Whilst I personally agree with such measures and see them as vital for ensuring a better quality of housing for wider sections of the population, I would argue that in themselves they would not bring the 'equality between tenures' that the Labour Housing Group seems to desire.

Under the heading "A Political Strategy", a member of the Labour Housing Group writes:

"The obligation of society is to ensure that adequate provision is made for all ..... For socialists there is no reason why the distinction between owning and renting a home an individual occupies should be vested with merit or opprobrium... The essential step towards achieving this, of course, is to remove the privileges of owner occupiers, so as to separate the legitimate preferences of many people to own the homes they occupy from the web of tax benefits and status symbols which surround home ownership in contemporary British society."<sup>12</sup>  
 (Author's emphasis)

Such statements, whilst containing some useful reforming ideas, fail to take account of what the tenure of owner occupation has meant for buyers in the post war period. Many of these owners have already accumulated their wealth, have brought up their children with expectation of security for the future (something to pass on to the children i.e. flows of wealth) and have seen real, tangible rises in their living standards through the 'trading up' process. As stated earlier, tenure has become bound up with changing life situations, the changing experience of class, gender and locale. Just as the tenure form of owner-occupation (or council or private renting) is not designed, constructed and imposed from above onto owners, so attempts to neutralize/equalize tenure cannot be implemented by political will alone. As the Housing Policy Review argued in 1977:

"radical alteration poses formidable problems both of principle and practice. Moreover, current arrangements have been woven into the long-term plans of most households. It would not be reasonable to replace them unless the case for doing so was overwhelming."<sup>13</sup>

What has to be 'tapped into' and tackled are the negotiations/power relations/resolutions that make up the entirety of the social relations of tenure:

### Current Concerns

"Homelessness increases, the condition of the housing stock deteriorates, ill-health and misery among the people deprived of decent housing gets worse."<sup>14</sup>

Despite the above quote (on the publication of the Report of the Inquiry into British Housing 1985) I think it can be argued that, in some ways, the present Conservative administration (from 1979 onwards) have understood the sense and meaning of tenure, in that they have grasped and 'fed into' the interests and amounts of power, of the different groups and factions involved in housing. For example, it is an economic reality, as argued by the Inquiry, that the housing deprivation mentioned above could be eliminated if resources were redistributed i.e. if mortgage interest tax relief was abolished and replaced with needs-related housing allowances for tenants and owners. Yet, especially under this government, this seems unlikely to happen as it is a political reality that, despite the huge and growing cost of this relief (around £3.5 billion in 1984-85, an increase of 15% on the previous year), the abolition of the relief would be extremely unpopular amongst the electorate. In this last section of the conclusion I want to look at a few current, very real, concerns that are being voiced about the future of housing and the responses to those concerned, within the context of my analysis of the social relations of tenure.

The Inquiry, chaired by the Duke of Edinburgh, is a useful illustration of the problems manifested in the current housing and tenure system. U.e. that many of those on low incomes are facing increased difficulties in finding and keeping a decent house; fewer new homes are being built; many homes are falling into disrepair; there is an increase in homelessness and over-crowding; and there is a real shortage

of decent rented accommodation. The Inquiry is also a useful illustration of the difficulties faced when trying to devise solutions that are based on challenging or re-addressing the tenure imbalance i.e. abolishing mortgage interest tax relief.

An example of this is the reluctance and wariness held by the three main political parties around the issue of mortgage tax relief - especially its outright abolition. In the case of the Labour Party there is still a commitment to some form of relief despite contrary recommendations from the Labour Housing Group.

The Inquiry is correct to insist that the relationship between the three tenures must be acknowledged and that therefore all its proposed reforms must be taken as a package. It has been part of my thesis that the development of the forms and relations of the three tenures are inextricably linked, that they are different manifestations within civil society of the social relations involved in the production and consumption of housing. Consequently, the rise in homelessness, and deterioration of some of the housing stock etc. are very much part of the social process that also produces inter-generational flows of wealth etc. However, it is far too simplistic to state that the advantages and disadvantages in housing are neatly divided between the tenures and that the problems manifested in the housing system are a result solely of tenure inequalities. It is a documented fact that there is as much inequality (of standard, cost, financial gain) within each tenure as between each tenure. Prosperous families do not automatically slot into owner occupation, or less prosperous into council housing. In fact, to expand owner occupation further (and it must be remembered that several of the groups involved in housing depend on the extension of the market



e.g. builder/developers) necessitates breaking into new markets that seem to be including people on lower, less secure incomes. Elaborate schemes are now in operation or are being proposed to help people attain owner occupation - the implication being that these people would not be able to afford to buy under 'normal' circumstances.

The point is this, that the relationship between the tenures operates to favour owner occupation as the most advantageous tenure and that this state of affairs represents part-loss, part-gain for all the groups involved in housing. Thus, the readdressing of the tenure imbalance would be a very intricate and politically, socially and economically difficult affair. To support and encourage the owner-occupied market (as the Conservative administration undoubtedly does) is thus in part politically advantageous. However, it is that tenure's very popularity and promotion that is causing severe problems for many owners and tenants and is thus giving those people a different meaning and sense of that tenure. The form, meaning and relations of tenure are continually under negotiation and part of this negotiation now is the experience of the 'troubled' owner as well as the 'benefiting' owner. Also as housing is increasingly privatised, the experience of the tenant turned owner and the council tenant turned private tenant, is becoming part of the negotiations and power conflicts that come to form the relations of owner occupation. I want to expand this by looking at the plight of two groups, the low income owner occupiers and the 'privatised' council tenants, for these groups and their experiences - contrary though they seem to the 'normal' experience of owner occupation - will have an impact and influence on the meaning and development of that tenure just as much as the proposed reforms of the political parties.

One of the major housing problems facing Britain today is the decay of the housing stock. In 1982 the Department of the Environment published the "English Housing Condition Survey", which found that in the preceding year over one million homes were unfit, 3.9 million were fit but lacking amenities, .57 million were fit but required repairs costing over £7 thousand. In all, 18% of the housing stock required repairs costing over £2.5 thousand with much of this stock being found in the inner cities. Currently, with the cuts in the housing improvement grants etc., the rate of deterioration is outstripping the rate of improvement. Going along with what I wrote earlier, it is not surprising that the majority of this deteriorating housing stock is to be found in the council or private rented sectors - a factor which contributes to the 'desirability' of owner occupation. However the House Condition Survey showed that 8% of owner occupied dwellings were unfit or lacked basic amenities and that 10% required repairs of more than £2.5 thousand. Given the way the housing market operates, it is, generally, in the financial interests of owner occupiers to main<sup>tain</sup> their property. Therefore, it may be generally assumed that those who live in houses in disrepair do so because they are unable to meet the cost of repair, even though this threatens, not only their standard of living, but also the long-term profitability of their housing. Consequently, poorer and/or elderly owner occupiers, or those experiencing disruption (marital breakdown, unemployment, sickness) can face acute problems that run counter to the expectations of society.

This problem was recognised by the Inquiry into British Housing, who advocated a system of loans and grants within a government - administered legal and financial framework of assistance, to help owner occupiers maintain their homes. Yet the current government has largely dismantled

the state improvement grant scheme on the premise that private enterprise (i.e. building societies) will provide the finance (i.e. loans with high interest rates) for home improvement and repair. There seems to be an assumption that the private sector should deal (and should be able to deal) with the problems of owner occupation, and the state should not.

Another concern or problem linked to the above, is the growing trend of house repossessions due to mortgage arrears. Due to the 'private' nature of the issue, the true extent of the problem and the detailed causes of arrears and repossessions, remain partly hidden, but figures indicate that around 50 thousand repossessions were carried out in 1985 - a 100% increase since 1980. A combination of the extension of home-ownership into lower income groups, with the economic recession, increased marital breakdown etc. seems to lie behind this growing trend.<sup>15</sup> For lower income groups, owner occupation, rather than providing them with security and financial gain, actually comes to represent an additional 'vulnerability' to their lives. For lower income groups, especially those new to the tenure, there is seldom room to manoeuvre around their mortgage repayments. A woman giving up work to have a baby, a worker losing his/her overtime, a few months sickness, a rise in the interest rates, can wipe away all the advantages of homeownership. Local authorities' reluctance to accept such people as 'unintentionally' homeless leaves many worse off than before they first took out their mortgage. As J. Doling et al. graphically write:

"All this is a far cry from the traditional view of the owner-occupier as someone who, once their foot is on the ladder, can, over the course of their life, be expected to scale several rungs to their promised place in the sun. In fact it is becoming increasingly common to find that the housing ladder goes down as well as up. Yet the back-up mechanisms, notably housing subsidies, social security and council house allocations are ill-designed to help the owner occupiers who fall into debt."<sup>16</sup>

What I am trying to argue is that the disadvantages of owner occupation, which are a product of its 'success' and advantaged position, are not only creating real political, economic and social problems for the private institutions concerned with owner occupation (and consequently the state), but are also bringing about a new understanding, and re-negotiation, of the relations of the tenure of owner occupation. Owner-occupation has always been equated with decent standards; means of self-expression; control; good investment in inflationary times. If that equation is weakened through the changing and diverse housing experience of owners, then the meaning, status, popularity and social relations of the tenure would shift, creating not only a new and different understanding of owner occupation, but of the other tenures also. During the interviews I carried out, I asked the women how they saw their children's futures. All of them expressed concern about their children's chances of obtaining the sort of employment that would allow them to live at the same standard as their parents. (NB few of the children had professional backgrounds and the jobs their parents had (are) largely the sort that are getting scarce in the North East). The insecurity of the children's futures seemed to be one of the few things that marred the 'success' of the women's lives. However, several women mentioned that at least they would be able to financially assist their children

due to their own financial security e.g. lending/giving money for a deposit on a house, supplementing a grant whilst at university etc. Again such motives seem to lie behind council house sales<sup>9</sup>. Owner occupation appears less stable and more risky now than at any time in most people's housing experience and its future as a tenure that guarantees decent standards, investment etc. is not so secure. At the same time however, the other tenures have not grown in security, quality etc. to compensate for this weakening of owner occupation because, of course, the popularity of owner occupation is partly dependent on the decline of the other tenures.

Overall, the housing experience of many people, especially those with less economic power because of their employment status, gender, race, marital status etc., will become more 'troubled' and insecure - throughout the tenures - and this will come to affect the wider understanding of those tenures. Yet again at the same time, owner occupation can provide a degree of security, of financial 'bargaining' power that the other tenures do not. For example, owner occupying parents are generally more able to help their offspring set up their own homes etc. even if it means extending their own mortgages; owners can get loans (and are encouraged to do so) to carry out repairs and improvements in ways that council or private tenants cannot; even in the case of mortgage areas and repossessions, owners may be able to redeem some equity from the house - evicted tenants do not have this; and elderly owners can 'trade' their homes for financial assistance or private sheltered accommodation - again, tenants cannot.

What Next?

Thus, the situation as regards the future of housing tenure and owner-occupation is complex, but it is a complexity that needs to be grasped and understood if workable strategies are to be devised. The Conservative government has recently 'moved on' from the Right to Buy legislation to the wholesale sale of council estates, some with, some without tenants' consent to private developers. People are shifting from one tenure to another whilst living in the same property and without any real choice in the matter. Such policies and activities are bound to affect people's experience of housing and tenure and thus come to affect the relations and meanings of tenure. Future research into the development of housing and tenure needs therefore to consider the effects and manifestations of such changes.

As someone that has spent most of her life in academia, I know it is only too easy to criticise what is there and what people want to be there, without putting anything in its place. It is always more difficult to create original ideas than to create original criticisms. Yet, without fully grasping the real situation of people's lives and their experience of, and attitudes towards, housing (which involves being critical of current analyses), it is impossible to put forward viable, workable alternatives. Most of this thesis has been dedicated to challenging and re-examining the concepts that underpin the current housing debate, especially in relation to owner occupation. However, in doing that, I believe a way has been opened up for the development of new lines of thought and research about the meaning and future of tenure in Britain. For, in essence, people do not only produce, provide

and consume housing, but occupy it - i.e. they live out their lives as men, women, black, white etc. Such housing realities have to be grasped and accounted for. New ideas should not merely try to accommodate such realities, but, in fact, should come from those realities.

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4. A point confirmed at a recent conference "Women and Housing", Newcastle, 19.2.86.
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7. See Table 5.3, Chapter 6 of this thesis.
8. See Table 6.1, Chapter 6 of this thesis.
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16. J. Doling, *et.al.*, *op.cit.*, pp.94-95.



17. I am referring here to the specific combination of builder/developers. Many companies involved in housing can (and do) make profits from contracting to the public sector, but their operations here are quite distinctive from those associated with speculative development.
18. see The Guardian 18/2/1986.

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RESPONDENT NUMBER

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HOUSING QUESTIONNAIRE

ADDRESS

DATE

TIME STARTED

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Q.1 HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURE

Cols 4 - 67

Person No	Relationship to Interviewee	Occupation		School	Age last birthday	M	F	M	S	W	D	Sep	0-5	6-15	16-24	25-60	60+
		FC	PT														
1		1	2	3		1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
2		1	2	3		1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
3		1	2	3		1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
4		1	2	3		1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
5		1	2	3		1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
6		1	2	3		1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
7		1	2	3		1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
8		1	2	3		1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
9		1	2	3		1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Codes for relationship

Self	1	Father (in law)	6
Husband	2	Other relative	7
Daughter	3	Friend/non-relative	8
Son	4		
Mother(in law)	5		

MARRIAGE DETAILS

2. What was the date of your present marriage

--	--	--	--	--

cols 68-72

3. Have you been married before  
NO  
YES, ONCE  
YES, TWICE

1
2
3

col 72

GOTO 6  
GOTO 4---6  
GOTO 4-5-6

4. What was the date of your first marriage

--	--	--	--	--

cols 73-76

How long did your first marriage last  
UNDER 5 YRS  
BETWEEN 5-10YRS  
OVER 10 YRS

1
2
3

col 77

What was the reason for the termination of  
your first marriage  
DIVORCE  
WIDOWED

1
2

col 78

Punch 2

5. What was the date of your second marriage

--	--	--	--	--

cols 4-7

How long did your second marriage last  
UNDER 5 YRS  
BETWEEN 5-10 YRS  
OVER 10 YRS

1
2
3

col 8

What was the reason for the termination of  
your second marriage  
DIVORCE  
WIDOWED

1
2

col 9

HOUSING INFORMATION PRE-PRESENT MARRIAGE

6. Where did you live before your present marriage starting from your early childhood - only including those residences of more than 6 months duration

RESIDENCE ONE  
LOCATION

NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT  
TYNE & WEAR (other than above)  
NORTHUMBERLAND  
DURHAM  
ENGLAND (other than above)  
SCOTLAND  
N. IRELAND  
S. IRELAND  
WALES  
OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
1

COLS  
10  
11

If NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT, specify

--	--

cols 12-13

TYPE OF DWELLING

BUNGALOW/HOUSE : DETACHED  
                  : SEMI-DET  
                  : TERRACED  
FLAT : TYNESIDE  
          : MULTI-STOREY  
          : CONVERTED HSE  
          : BEDSIT  
MAISONETTE  
FORCES CAMP  
INSTITUTION  
DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
1
2

COLS  
14  
15

TENURE

OWNER OCCUPIED  
RENTED : FROM COUNCIL/NEW TOWN  
          : FROM HOUSING ASSOC  
          : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/F  
          : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/UF  
          : FROM INSTITUTION  
FORCES ACCOMMODATION  
TIED ACCOMMODATION  
DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9

col 16

AGE OF DWELLING

PRE-1919  
BETWEEN THE WARS  
POST 1945  
DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

1
2
3
4

col 17

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE

UNDER 1 YEAR  
BETWEEN 1-5 YEARS  
BETWEEN 5-10 YEARS  
OVER 10 YEARS  
DON'T KNOW/ CAN'T REMEMBER

1
2
3
4
5

col 18

TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD

WITH ONE PARENT/FAMILY HSEHOLD  
WITH TWO PARENTS/FAMILY HSEHOLD  
WITH ONE PARENT & OTHER RELS  
WITH TWO PARENTS & OTHER RELS  
SHARING WITH FRIENDS  
LIVING ALONE  
LIVING ALONE IN HOSTEL  
MARRIED WITHOUT CHILDREN  
MARRIED WITH CHILDREN  
SINGLE/SEP WITH CHILDREN  
COHABITING

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
1	
2	

col  
19

20

HOUSING INFORMATION PRE-PRESENT MARRIAGE

6. Where did you live before your present marriage starting from your early childhood - only including those residences of more than 6 months duration

RESIDENCE TWO  
LOCATION

- NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT
- TYNE & WEAR (other than above)
- NORTHUMBERLAND
- DURHAM
- ENGLAND (other than above)
- SCOTLAND
- N. IRELAND
- S. IRELAND
- WALES
- OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN

1		c o l s 21
2		
3		
4		
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6		
7		
8		
9		
1	22	

If NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT, specify

		cols 23-24
--	--	------------

TYPE OF DWELLING

- BUNGALOW/HOUSE : DETACHED
- : SEMI-DET
- : TERRACED
- FLAT : TYNESIDE
- : MULTI-STOREY
- : CONVERTED HSE
- : BEDSIT
- MAISONETTE
- FORCES CAMP
- INSTITUTION
- DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

1		c o l s 25
2		
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5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
1	26	
2		

TENURE

- OWNER OCCUPIED
- RENTED : FROM COUNCIL/NEW TOWN
- : FROM HOUSING ASSOC
- : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/F
- : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/UF
- : FROM INSTITUTION
- FORCES ACCOMMODATION
- TIED ACCOMMODATION
- DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

1		c o l s 27
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		

AGE OF DWELLING

PRE-1919  
BETWEEN THE WARS  
POST 1945  
DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

1
2
3
4

col 28

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE

UNDER 1 YEAR  
BETWEEN 1-5 YEARS  
BETWEEN 5-10 YEARS  
OVER 10 YEARS  
DON'T KNOW/ CAN'T REMEMBER

1
2
3
4
5

col 29

TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD

WITH ONE PARENT/FAMILY HSEHOLD  
WITH TWO PARENTS/FAMILY HSEHOLD  
WITH ONE PARENT & OTHER RELS  
WITH TWO PARENTS & OTHER RELS  
SHARING WITH FRIENDS  
LIVING ALONE  
LIVING ALONE IN HOSTEL  
MARRIED WITHOUT CHILDREN  
MARRIED WITH CHILDREN  
SINGLE/SEP WITH CHILDREN  
COHABITING

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
1
2

c  
o  
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s  
30

31

PERSONAL INFORMATION (PRE-SENTENCE REPORT)

6. Where did you live before your present marriage starting from your early childhood - only including those residences of more than 6 months duration

RESIDENCE THREE ---  
LOCATION

- NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT
- TYNE & WEAR (other than above)
- NORTHER IRELAND
- DURHAM
- ENGLAND (other than above)
- SCOTLAND
- N. IRELAND
- S. IRELAND
- WALES
- OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN

1	c o l s 32
2	
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7	
8	
9	
10	33

If NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT, specify

	cols 34-35
--	------------

TYPE OF DWELLING

- BUNGALOW/HOUSE : DETACHED
- : SEMI-DET
- : TERRACED
- FLAT : TYNESIDE
- : MULTI-STOREY
- : CONVERTED HSE
- : BEDSIT
- MAISONETTE
- FORCES CAMP
- INSTITUTION
- DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

1	c o l s 36
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	37
11	

TENURE

- OWNER OCCUPIED
- RENTED : FROM COUNCIL/NEW TOWN
- : FROM HOUSING ASSOC
- : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/F
- : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/UF
- : FROM INSTITUTION
- FORCES ACCOMMODATION
- INSTITUTION
- DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

1	col 38
2	
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5	
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7	
8	
9	
10	
11	



AGE OF DWELLING

PRE-1919  
 BETWEEN THE WARS  
 POST 1945  
 DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

1	col 39
2	
3	
4	

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE

UNDER 1 YEAR  
 BETWEEN 1-5 YEARS  
 BETWEEN 5-10 YEARS  
 OVER 10 YEARS  
 DON'T KNOW/ CAN'T REMEMBER

1	col 40
2	
3	
4	
5	

TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD

WITH ONE PARENT/FAMILY HSEHOLD  
 WITH TWO PARENTS/FAMILY HSEHOLD  
 WITH ONE PARENT & OTHER RELS  
 WITH TWO PARENTS & OTHER RELS  
 SHARING WITH FRIENDS  
 LIVING ALONE  
 LIVING ALONE IN HOSTEL  
 MARRIED WITHOUT CHILDREN  
 MARRIED WITH CHILDREN  
 SINGLE/SEP WITH CHILDREN  
 COHABITING

1	C O L S	41
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
1	42	
2		

6. Where did you live before your present marriage starting from your early childhood - only including those residences of more than 6 months duration

RESIDENCE FOUR

LOCATION

- NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT
- TYNE & WEAR (other than above)
- NORTHUMBRIA
- DURHAM
- ENGLAND (other than above)
- SCOTLAND
- N. IRELAND
- S. IRELAND
- WALES
- OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN

1	C O L S 43
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	44

If NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT, specify

cols 45-46

TYPE OF DWELLING

- BUNGALOW/HOUSE : DETACHED
- : SEMI-DET
- : TERRACED
- FLAT : TYNESIDE
- : MULTI-STORY
- : CONVERTED HSE
- : BEDSIT
- MAISONETTE
- FORCES CAMP
- INSTITUTION
- DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

1	C O L S 47
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	48
11	

TENURE

- OWNER OCCUPIED
- RENTED : FROM COUNCIL/NEW TOWN
- : FROM HOUSING ASSOC
- : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/F
- : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/UF
- : FROM INSTITUTION

1	col 49
2	
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AGE OF DWELLING

PRE-1919  
BETWEEN THE WARS  
POST 1945  
DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

1	col 50
2	
3	
4	

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE

UNDER 1 YEAR  
BETWEEN 1-5 YEARS  
BETWEEN 5-10 YEARS  
OVER 10 YEARS  
DON'T KNOW/ CAN'T REMEMBER

1	col 51
2	
3	
4	
5	

TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD

WITH ONE PARENT/FAMILY HSEHOLD  
WITH TWO PARENTS/FAMILY HSEHOLD  
WITH ONE PARENT & OTHER RELS  
WITH TWO PARENTS & OTHER RELS  
SHARING WITH FRIENDS  
LIVING ALONE  
LIVING ALONE IN HOSTEL  
MARRIED WITHOUT CHILDREN  
MARRIED WITH CHILDREN  
SINGLE/SEP WITH CHILDREN  
COHABITING

1	c o l s 52
2	
3	
4	
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9	
1	53
2	

HOUSING INFORMATION PRE-PRESENT MARITAL

6. Where did you live before your present marriage starting from your early childhood - only including those residences of more than 6 months duration

RESIDENCE FIVE

LOCATION

- NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT
- TYNE & WEAR (other than above)
- NORTHUMBRIA
- IRISH
- ENGLAND (other than above)
- SCOTLAND
- N. IRELAND
- S. IRELAND
- WALES
- OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN

1	
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9	
10	

cols  
54  
55

If NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT, specify

1	
---	--

cols 56-57

TYPE OF DWELLING

- BUNGALOW/HOUSE : DETACHED
- : SEMI-DET
- : TERRACED
- FLAT : TYNESIDE
- : MULTI-STORY
- : CONVERTED HSE
- : BEDSIT
- MAISONETTE
- FORCES CAMP
- INSTITUTION
- DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

1	
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11	

cols  
58  
59

TENURE

- OWNER OCCUPIED
- RENTED : FROM COUNCIL/NEW TOWN
- : FROM HOUSING ASSOC
- : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/F
- : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/UF
- : FROM INSTITUTION
- FORCES ACCOMMODATION
- INSTITUTION
- DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

1	
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10	

col 60

AGE OF DWELLING

PRE-1919  
BETWEEN THE WARS  
POST 1945  
DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

1
2
3
4

 col 61

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE

UNDER 1 YEAR  
BETWEEN 1-5 YEARS  
BETWEEN 5-10 YEARS  
OVER 10 YEARS  
DON'T KNOW/ CAN'T REMEMBER

1
2
3
4
5

 col 62

TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD

WITH ONE PARENT/FAMILY HSEHOLD  
WITH TWO PARENTS/FAMILY HSEHOLD  
WITH ONE PARENT & OTHER RELS  
WITH TWO PARENTS & OTHER RELS  
SHARING WITH FRIENDS  
LIVING ALONE  
LIVING ALONE IN HOSTEL  
MARRIED WITHOUT CHILDREN  
MARRIED WITH CHILDREN  
SINGLE/SEP WITH CHILDREN  
COHABITING

1	c o l s
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
1	64
2	

HOUSING INFORMATION PRE-PRESENT MARRIAGE

6. Where did you live before your present marriage starting from your early childhood - only including those residences of more than 6 months duration

RESIDENCE SIX  
LOCATION

- NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT
- TYNE & WEAR (other than above)
- NORTHUMBERLAND
- DURHAM
- ENGLAND (other than above)
- SCOTLAND
- N. IRELAND
- S. IRELAND
- WALES
- OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN

1	c o l s
2	
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9	
10	65
11	66

If NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT, specify

		-cols 67-68
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TYPE OF DWELLING

- BUNGALOW/HOUSE : DETACHED
- : SEMI-DET
- : TERRACED
- FLAT : TYNESIDE
- : MULTI-STOREY
- : CONVERTED HSE
- : BEDSIT
- MAISONETTE
- FORCES CAMP
- INSTITUTION
- DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

1	c o l s
2	
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9	
10	69
11	70

TENURE

- OWNER OCCUPIED
- RENTED : FROM COUNCIL/NEW TOWN
- : FROM HOUSING ASSOC
- : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/F
- : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/UF
- : FROM INSTITUTION
- FORCES ACCOMMODATION
- TIED ACCOMMODATION
- DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

1	col 71
2	
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9	

AGE OF DWELLING

PRE-1919  
BETWEEN THE WARS  
POST 1945  
DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

1
2
3
4

col 72

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE

UNDER 1 YEAR  
BETWEEN 1-5 YEARS  
BETWEEN 5-10 YEARS  
OVER 10 YEARS  
DON'T KNOW/ CAN'T REMEMBER

1
2
3
4
5

col 73

TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD

WITH ONE PARENT/FAMILY HSEHOLD  
WITH TWO PARENTS/FAMILY HSEHOLD  
WITH ONE PARENT & OTHER RELS  
WITH TWO PARENTS & OTHER RELS  
SHARING WITH FRIENDS  
LIVING ALONE  
LIVING ALONE IN HOSTEL  
MARRIED WITHOUT CHILDREN  
MARRIED WITH CHILDREN  
SINGLE/SEP WITH CHILDREN  
COHABITING

1	
2	
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8	
9	
1	
2	

col  
s  
74  
75

HOUSING INFORMATION PRE-PRESENT MARRIAGE

5. Where did you live before your present marriage starting from your early childhood - only including those residences of more than 6 months duration

RESIDENCE SEVEN

LOCATION

- NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT
- TYNE & WEAR (other than above)
- NORTHUMBERLAND
- DURHAM
- ENGLAND (other than above)
- SCOTLAND
- N. IRELAND
- S. IRELAND
- WALES
- OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN

If NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT, specify

TYPE OF DWELLING

- BUNGALOW/HOUSE : DETACHED
- : SEMI-DET
- : TERRACED
- FLAT : TYNESIDE
- : MULTI-STOREY
- : CONVERTED HSE
- : BEDSIT
- MAISONETTE
- FORCES CAMP
- INSTITUTION
- DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

TENURE

- OWNER OCCUPIED
- RENTED : FROM COUNCIL/NEW TOWN
- : FROM HOUSING ASSOC
- : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/F
- : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/UF
- : FROM INSTITUTION
- FORCES ACCOMMODATION
- HEEL ACCOMMODATION
- DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

PUNCH 3

1	c o l s 4
2	
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8	
9	
10	5

cols 6-7

1	c o l s 8
2	
3	
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5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	9
11	

1	col 10
2	
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8	
9	
10	



AGE OF DWELLING

PRE-1919  
BETWEEN THE WARS  
POST 1945  
DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

1	col 11
2	
3	
4	

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE

UNDER 1 YEAR  
BETWEEN 1-5 YEARS  
BETWEEN 5-10 YEARS  
OVER 10 YEARS  
DON'T KNOW/ CAN'T REMEMBER

1	col 12
2	
3	
4	
5	

TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD

WITH ONE PARENT/FAMILY HSEHOLD  
WITH TWO PARENTS/FAMILY HSEHOLD  
WITH ONE PARENT & OTHER RELS  
WITH TWO PARENTS & OTHER RELS  
SHARING WITH FRIENDS  
LIVING ALONE  
LIVING ALONE IN HOSTEL  
MARRIED WITHOUT CHILDREN  
MARRIED WITH CHILDREN  
SINGLE/SEP WITH CHILDREN  
COHABITING

1	COLS 13
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
1	14
2	

HOUSING INFORMATION APPROPRIATE TO Q14

6. Where did you live before your present marriage starting from your early childhood - only including those residences of more than 6 months duration

RESIDENCE EIGHT  
LOCATION

- NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT
- TYNE & WEAR (other than above)
- NORTHUMBERLAND
- DURHAM
- ENGLAND (other than above)
- SCOTLAND
- N. IRELAND
- S. IRELAND
- WALES
- OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN

1	c o l s  15
2	
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9	
10	16

If NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT; specify

1	cols 17-18
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TYPE OF DWELLING

- BUNGALOW/HOUSE : DETACHED
- : SEMI-DET
- : TERRACED
- FLAT : TYNESIDE
- : MULTI-STOREY
- : CONVERTED HSE
- : BEDSIT
- MAISONETTE
- FORCES CAMP
- INSTITUTION
- DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

1	c o l s  19
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9	
10	20
11	

TENURE

- OWNER OCCUPIED
- RENTED : FROM COUNCIL/NEW TOWN
- : FROM HOUSING ASSOC
- : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/F
- : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/UP
- : FROM INSTITUTION
- FORCES ACCOMMODATION
- INSTITUTION
- DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

1	col 21
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

AGE OF DWELLING

PRE-1919  
BETWEEN THE WARS  
POST 1945  
DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

1	col 22
2	
3	
4	

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE

UNDER 1 YEAR  
BETWEEN 1-5 YEARS  
BETWEEN 5-10 YEARS  
OVER 10 YEARS  
DON'T KNOW/ CAN'T REMEMBER

1	col 23
2	
3	
4	
5	

TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD

WITH ONE PARENT/FAMILY HSEHOLD  
WITH TWO PARENTS/FAMILY HSEHOLD  
WITH ONE PARENT & OTHER RELS  
WITH TWO PARENTS & OTHER RELS  
SHARING WITH FRIENDS  
LIVING ALONE  
LIVING ALONE IN HOSTEL  
MARRIED WITHOUT CHILDREN  
MARRIED WITH CHILDREN  
SINGLE/SEP WITH CHILDREN  
COHABITING

1	c o l s 24
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
1	25
2	

HOUSING INFORMATION PRE-PRESENT MARRIAGE

5. Where did you live before your present marriage starting from your early childhood - only including those residences of more than 6 months duration

RESIDENCE NINE

LOCATION

- NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT
- TYNE & WEAR (other than above)
- NORTHUMBERLAND
- DURHAM
- ENGLAND (other than above)
- SCOTLAND
- N. IRELAND
- S. IRELAND
- WALES
- OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN

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1

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o  
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26

27

If NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT, specify

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cols 28-29

TYPE OF DWELLING

- BUNGALOW/HOUSE : DETACHED
- : SEMI-DET
- : TERRACED
- FLAT : TYNESIDE
- : MULTI-STOREY
- : CONVERTED HSE
- : BEDSIT
- MAISONNETTE
- FORCES CAMP
- INSTITUTION
- DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

1
2
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8
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1
2

c  
o  
l  
s  
30

31

TENURE

- OWNER OCCUPIED
- RENTED : FROM COUNCIL/NEW TOWN
- : FROM HOUSING ASSOC
- : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/F
- : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/UF
- : FROM INSTITUTION
- FORCES ACCOMMODATION
- INSTITUTION
- OTHER

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9

col 32

AGE OF DWELLING

PRE-1919  
BETWEEN THE WARS  
POST 1945  
DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

1
2
3
4

col 33

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE

UNDER 1 YEAR  
BETWEEN 1-5 YEARS  
BETWEEN 5-10 YEARS  
OVER 10 YEARS  
DON'T KNOW/ CAN'T REMEMBER

1
2
3
4
5

col. 34

TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD

WITH ONE PARENT/FAMILY HSEHOLD  
WITH TWO PARENTS/FAMILY HSEHOLD  
WITH ONE PARENT & OTHER RELS  
WITH TWO PARENTS & OTHER RELS  
SHARING WITH FRIENDS  
LIVING ALONE  
LIVING ALONE IN HOSTEL  
MARRIED WITHOUT CHILDREN  
MARRIED WITH CHILDREN  
SINGLE/SEP WITH CHILDREN  
COHABITING

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
1
2

c  
o  
l  
s

35

36

HOUSING INFORMATION - PRESENT MARRIAGE

6. Where did you live before your present marriage starting from your early childhood - only including those residences of more than 6 months duration

RESIDENT TEN

LOCATION

- NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT
- TYNE & WEAR (other than above)
- NORTHUMBRLAND
- DURHAM
- ENGLAND (other than above)
- SCOTLAND
- N. IRELAND
- S. IRELAND
- WALES
- OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN

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4	
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7	
8	
9	
10	

COLS  
37  
38

If NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT, specify

--	--

cols 39-40

TYPE OF DWELLING

- BUNGALOW/HOUSE : DETACHED
- : SEMI-DET
- : TERRACED
- FLAT : TYNESIDE
- : MULTI-STOREY
- : CONVERTED HSE
- : BEDSIT
- MAISONETTE
- FORCES CAMP
- INSTITUTION
- DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

1	
2	
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4	
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6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	

COLS  
41  
42

TENURE

- OWNER OCCUPIED
- RENTED : FROM COUNCIL/NEW TOWN
- : FROM HOUSING ASSOC
- : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/S
- : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/UF
- : FROM INSTITUTION
- FORCES ACCOMMODATION
- INSTITUTION
- DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

1	
2	
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4	
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7	
8	
9	

cols 43

AGE OF DWELLING

PRE-1919  
BETWEEN THE WARS  
POST 1945  
DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

1
2
3
4

col 44

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE

UNDER 1 YEAR  
BETWEEN 1-5 YEARS  
BETWEEN 5-10 YEARS  
OVER 10 YEARS  
DON'T KNOW/ CAN'T REMEMBER

1
2
3
4
5

col45

TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD

WITH ONE PARENT/FAMILY HSEHOLD  
WITH TWO PARENTS/FAMILY HSEHOLD  
WITH ONE PARENT & OTHER RELS  
WITH TWO PARENTS & OTHER RELS  
SHARING WITH FRIENDS  
LIVING ALONE  
LIVING ALONE IN HOSTEL  
MARRIED WITHOUT CHILDREN  
MARRIED WITH CHILDREN  
SINGLE/SEP WITH CHILDREN  
COHABITING

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
1
2

c  
o  
l  
s

46

47

FAMILY DETAILS

7. Did you ever live in a single parent household as a child.

NO  
YES

1	col 48
2	

If YES, for how long

UNDER 1YR  
BETWEEN 1-5 YRS  
BETWEEN 5-10 YRS  
OVER 10 YRS

1	col 49
2	
3	
4	

8. How many sisters and brothers did you have, please include anyone brought up with you who you would regard as a sister or brother.

NUMBER OF SISTERS  
NUMBER OF BROTHERS

	col 50
--	--------

	col 51
--	--------

Total number of children in household

		col 52-53
--	--	-----------

9. Where do your sisters and brothers live now (Start with eldest)

SISTER ONE

NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT  
TYNE & WEAR (other than above)  
NORTHUMBERLAND  
DURHAM  
ENGLAND (other than above)  
SCOTLAND  
N. IRELAND  
S. IRELAND  
WALES  
OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN  
DON'T KNOW/NOT APPLICABLE

1	c o l s 54
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
1	55
2	

SISTER TWO

NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT  
TYNE & WEAR (other than above)  
NORTHUMBERLAND  
DURHAM  
ENGLAND (other than above)  
SCOTLAND  
N. IRELAND  
S. IRELAND  
WALES  
OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN  
DON'T KNOW/NOT APPLICABLE

1	c o l s 56
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
1	57
2	



SISTER THREE

NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT  
TYNE & WEAR (other than above)  
NORTHUMBERLAND  
DURHAM  
ENGLAND(other than above)  
SCOTLAND  
N. IRELAND  
S. IRELAND  
WALES  
OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN  
DON'T KNOW/NOT APPLICABLE

1		c o l s
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
1		58
2		59

SISTER FOUR

NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT  
TYNE & WEAR (other than above)  
NORTHUMBERLAND  
DURHAM  
ENGLAND(other than above)  
SCOTLAND  
N. IRELAND  
S. IRELAND  
WALES  
OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN  
DON'T KNOW/NOT APPLICABLE

1		c o l s
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
1		60
2		61

SISTER FIVE

NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT  
TYNE & WEAR (other than above)  
NORTHUMBERLAND  
DURHAM  
ENGLAND(other than above)  
SCOTLAND  
N. IRELAND  
S. IRELAND  
WALES  
OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN  
DON'T KNOW/NOT APPLICABLE

1		c o l s
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
1		62
2		63

BROTHER ONE

NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT  
TYNE&WEAR(other than above)  
NORTHUMBERLAND  
DURHAM  
ENGLAND(other than above)  
SCOTLAND  
N. IRELAND  
S. IRELAND  
WALES  
OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN  
DON'T KNOW/NOT APPLICABLE

1		c o l s
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
1		64
2		65

BROTHER TWO

NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT  
TYNE & WEAR (other than above)  
NORTHUMBERLAND  
DURHAM  
ENGLAND(other than above)  
SCOTLAND  
N. IRELAND  
S. IRELAND  
WALES  
OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN  
DON'T KNOW/NOT APPLICABLE

1		c o l s
2		
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5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
1		66
2		

BROTHER THREE

NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT  
TYNE & WEAR (other than above)  
NORTHUMBERLAND  
DURHAM  
ENGLAND(other than above)  
SCOTLAND  
N. IRELAND  
S. IRELAND  
WALES  
OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN  
DON'T KNOW/NOT APPLICABLE

1		c o l s
2		
3		
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5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
1		68
2		

BROTHER FOUR

NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT  
TYNE & WEAR (other than above)  
NORTHUMBERLAND  
DURHAM  
ENGLAND(other than above)  
SCOTLAND  
N. IRELAND  
S. IRELAND  
WALES  
OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN  
DON'T KNOW/NOT APPLICABLE

1		c o l s
2		
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7		
8		
9		
1		70
2		

BROTHER FIVE

NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT  
TYNE & WEAR (other than above)  
NORTHUMBERLAND  
DURHAM  
ENGLAND (other than above)  
SCOTLAND  
N. IRELAND  
S. IRELAND  
WALES  
OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN  
DON'T KNOW/NOT APPLICABLE

1		c o l s
2		
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5		
6		
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8		
9		
1		72
2		

10. Are your parents still alive

JUST MOTHER ALIVE  
JUST FATHER ALIVE  
NEITHER ALIVE  
BOTH ALIVE

1
2
3
4

col 74  
GOTO 12

11. Where do your parents live now

MOTHER

NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT  
TYNE& WEAR (other than above)  
NORTHUMBERLAND  
DURHAM  
ENGLAND(other than above)  
SCOTLAND  
N. IRELAND  
S. IRELAND  
WALES  
OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN  
DON'T KNOW/NOT APPLICABLE

1
2
3
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6
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8
9
1
2

C  
O  
L  
S  
75  
76

FATHER

NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT  
TYNE & WEAR(other than above)  
NORTHUMBERLAND  
DURHAM  
ENGLAND(other than above)  
SCOTLAND  
N. IRELAND  
S.IRELAND  
WALES  
OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN  
DON'T KNOW/NOT APPLICABLE

1
2
3
4
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6
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8
9
1
2

C  
O  
L  
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77  
78

12. Of those of your grandparents still alive,  
where do they live now.

MOTHER'S MOTHER

NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT  
TYNE AND WEAR(other than above)  
NORTHUMBERLAND  
DURHAM  
ENGLAND(other than above)  
SCOTLAND  
N. IRELAND  
S. IRELAND  
WALES  
OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN  
DON'T KNOW/NOT APPLICABLE

PUNCH #

1
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4  
5

MOTHERS FATHER

NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT  
TYNE & WEAR(other than above)  
NORTHUMBERLAND  
DURHAM  
ENGLAND(other than above)  
SCOTLAND  
N. IRELAND  
S. IRELAND  
WALES  
OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN  
DON'T KNOW/NOT APPLICABLE

1		c o l s
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9		
1		7
2		

FATHERS MOTHER

NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT  
TYNE & WEAR(other than above)  
NORTHUMBERLAND  
DURHAM  
ENGLAND(other than above)  
SCOTLAND  
N. IRELAND  
S. IRELAND  
WALES  
OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN  
DON'T KNOW/NOT APPLICABLE

1		c o l s
2		
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1		8
2		
1		9
2		

FATHERS FATHER

NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT  
TYNE & WEAR(other than above)  
NORTHUMBERLAND  
DURHAM  
ENGLAND(other than above)  
SCOTLAND  
N. IRELAND  
S. IRELAND  
WALES  
OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN  
DON'T KNOW/NOT APPLICABLE

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1		10
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1		11
2		

13. Where did your grandparents live when your parents were children(i.e.the parent(s) they lived with.

MOTHER'S PARENT(S)

NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT  
TYNE & WEAR(other than above)  
NORTHUMBERLAND  
DURHAM  
ENGLAND(other than above)  
SCOTLAND  
N. IRELAND  
S. IRELAND  
WALES  
OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN  
DON'T KNOW/NOT APPLICABLE

1		c o l s
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
1		12
2		
1		13
2		

FATHER'S PARENT(S)

- NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT
- TYNE & WEAR(other than above)
- NORTHUMBERLAND
- DURHAM
- ENGLAND(other than above)
- SCOTLAND
- N. IRELAND
- S. IRELAND
- WALES
- OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN
- DON'T KNOW/NOT APPLICABLE

1	c o l s
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
1	15
2	

14. When you were a child, were there any other adult relatives living in your household (for more than 6 months)

NO  
YES

1	col 16
2	

15. What job did your father do when you were a child (ie aged 5)  
OCCUPATION

			col 17-19
--	--	--	-----------

What job does he do now(if applicable)  
OCCUPATION

			cols 20-22
--	--	--	------------

16. Did your mother do paid work outside the home when you were aged under 5 yrs

NO  
YES  
DON'T KNOW  
NOT APPLICABLE

1	col 23
2	
3	
4	

If YES specify OCCUPATION

			cols 24-26
--	--	--	------------

Did your mother work full time or part time

FULL TIME  
PART TIME  
CAN'T REMEMBER

1	col 27
2	
3	

Did your mother do paid work outside the home when you were aged between 5 and 11 years

NO  
YES  
DON'T KNOW  
NOT APPLICABLE

1	col 28
2	
3	
4	

col 29-31

If YES, specify OCCUPATION

Did she work full time or part time

FULL TIME  
PART TIME  
CAN'T REMEMBER

1  
 2 col 32  
 3

Did your mother do paid work outside the home during your remaining time at school

NO  
YES  
DON'T KNOW  
NOT APPLICABLE

1  
 2 col 33  
 3  
 4

If YES specify OCCUPATION

col 34-36

Did she work full time or part time

FULL TIME  
PART TIME  
CAN'T REMEMBER

1  
 2 col 37  
 3

Did your mother do paid work outside the home after you left home

NO  
YES  
DON'T KNOW  
NOT APPLICABLE

1  
 2 col 38  
 3  
 4

If YES specify OCCUPATION

cols 39-41

Did she work full time of part time

FULL TIME  
PART TIME  
CAN'T REMEMBER

1  
 2 col 42  
 3

Does your mother do paid work outside the home now

NO  
YES  
DON'T KNOW  
NOT APPLICABLE

1  
 2 col 43  
 3  
 4

If YES specify OCCUPATION

col 44-46

Does she work full time or part time

FULL TIME  
PART TIME  
CAN'T REMEMBER

1  
 2 col 47  
 3

HOUSING INFORMATION POST PRESENT MARRIAGE

17. Can you tell me where you have lived during your present marriage

RESIDENCE ONE

LOCATION

NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT  
 TYNE & WEAR ( other than above)  
 NORTHUMBERLAND  
 DURHAM  
 ENGLAND (other than above)  
 SCOTLAND  
 N. IRELAND  
 S. IRELAND  
 WALES  
 OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN

1		C O L S	
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			48
7			
8			
9			
1	49		

If NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT, specify district, if district is WESTERHOPE, specify ESTATE

		cols 50-51
--	--	------------

TYPE OF DWELLING

BUNGALOW/HOUSE : DETACHED  
 : SEMI DET  
 : TERRACED  
 FLAT : TYNESIDE  
 : MULTI STOREY  
 : CONVERTED HSE  
 : BEDSIT  
 MAISONETTE  
 FORCES CAMP  
 INSTITUTION  
 OTHER

1		C O L S	
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			52
7			
8			
9			
1	53		
2			

TENURE

OWNER OCCUPIED ( by self)  
 OWNER OCCUPIED (by others)  
 RENTED : FROM COUNCIL/NEW TOWN  
 : FROM HOUSING ASSOC  
 : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/F  
 : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/UF  
 : FROM INSTITUTION  
 FORCES ACCOMMODATION  
 TIED ACCOMMODATION  
 DON'T KNOW

1		C O L S	
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			54
7			
8			
9			
1	55		

AGE OF DWELLING

PRE 1919  
BETWEEN THE WARS  
POST 1945  
DON'T KNOW

1	
2	col 56
3	
4	

DATES OF OCCUPANCY

					cols 57-60
--	--	--	--	--	---------------

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE

UNDER 1 YEAR  
BETWEEN 1-5 YEARS  
BETWEEN 5-10 YEARS  
OVER 10 YEARS

1	
2	
3	col 61
4	

TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD

LIVING WITH OWN PARENTS  
LIVING WITH HUSBANDS PARENTS  
LIVING WITH OTHER RELATIVE(S)  
SHARING WITH FRIENDS  
OWN HOUSEHOLD (H/D & C/H)  
LIVING ALONE WITHOUT H/D  
LIVING WITH OTHERS BUT WITHOUT H/D

1	
2	
3	col 62
4	
5	
6	
7	



HOUSING INFORMATION POST PRESENT MAP SHEET

17. Can you tell me where you have lived during your present marriage

RESIDENCE TWO

LOCATION

NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT  
 TYNE & WEAR ( other than above)  
 NORTHUMBERLAND  
 DURHAM  
 ENGLAND (other than above)  
 SCOTLAND  
 N. IRELAND  
 S. IRELAND  
 WALES  
 OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN

1	c o l s  63
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
1	64

If NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT, specify district, if district is WESTERHOPE, specify ESTATE

	cols 65-66
--	------------

TYPE OF DWELLING

BUNGALOW/HOUSE : DETACHED  
 : SEMI DET  
 : TERRACED  
 FLAT : TYNESIDE  
 : MULTI STOREY  
 : CONVERTED HSE  
 : BEDSIT  
 MAISONETTE  
 FORCES CAMP  
 INSTITUTION  
 OTHER

1	c o l s  67
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	68
9	
1	
2	

TENURE

OWNER OCCUPIED ( by self)  
 OWNER OCCUPIED (by others)  
 RENTED : FROM COUNCIL/NEW TOWN  
 : FROM HOUSING ASSOC  
 : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/F  
 : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/UF  
 : FROM INSTITUTION

1	c o l s  69
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	70
9	
1	
2	

AGE OF DWELLING

PRE 1919  
BETWEEN THE WARS  
POST 1945  
DON'T KNOW

1
2
3
4

cols 71

DATES OF OCCUPANCY

--	--	--	--

cols 72-75

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE

UNDER 1 YEAR  
BETWEEN 1-5 YEARS  
BETWEEN 5-10 YEARS  
OVER 10 YEARS

1
2
3
4

col 76

TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD

LIVING WITH OWN PARENTS  
LIVING WITH HUSBANDS PARENTS  
LIVING WITH OTHER RELATIVE(S)  
SHARING WITH FRIENDS  
OWN HOUSEHOLD (H/D & C/H)  
LIVING ALONE WITHOUT H/D  
LIVING WITH OTHERS BUT WITHOUT H/D

1
2
3
4
5
6
7

col 77

HOUSING INFORMATION POST PRESENT MARRIAGE

17. Can you tell me where you have lived during your present marriage

RESIDENCE THREE

LOCATION

NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT  
 TYNE & WEAR ( other than above)  
 NORTHUMBERLAND  
 DURHAM  
 ENGLAND (other than above)  
 SCOTLAND  
 N. IRELAND  
 S. IRELAND  
 WALES  
 OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN

If NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT, specify district, if district is WESTERHOPE, specify ESTATE

TYPE OF DWELLING

BUNGALOW/HOUSE : DETACHED  
 : SEMI DET  
 : TERRACED  
 FLAT : TYNESIDE  
 : MULTI STOREY  
 : CONVERTED HSE  
 : BEDSIT  
 MAISONETTE  
 FORCES CAMP  
 INSTITUTION  
 OTHER

TENURE

OWNER OCCUPIED ( by self)  
 OWNER OCCUPIED (by others)  
 RENTED : FROM COUNCIL/NEW TOWN  
 : FROM HOUSING ASSOC  
 : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/F  
 : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/UF  
 : FROM INSTIEUTION  
 FORCES ACCOMMODATION  
 CIVIL ACCOMMODATION  
 UNDETERMINED

PUNCH FIVE

1		C O L S 4
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
1	5	

		cols 6-7
--	--	----------

1		C O L S 8
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
1	9	
2		

1		C O L S 10	
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
1			10
2			

AGE OF DWELLING

PRE 1919  
BETWEEN THE WARS  
POST 1945  
DON'T KNOW

1	col 12
2	
3	
4	

DATES OF OCCUPANCY

				cols 13-16
--	--	--	--	---------------

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE

UNDER 1 YEAR  
BETWEEN 1-5 YEARS  
BETWEEN 5-10 YEARS  
OVER 10 YEARS

1	col 17
2	
3	
4	

TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD

LIVING WITH OWN PARENTS  
LIVING WITH HUSBANDS PARENTS  
LIVING WITH OTHER RELATIVE(S)  
SHARING WITH FRIENDS  
OWN HOUSEHOLD (H/D & C/H)  
LIVING ALONE WITHOUT H/D  
LIVING WITH OTHERS BUT WITHOUT H/D

1	col 18
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	

HOUSING INFORMATION POST PRESENT MARRIAGE

17. Can you tell me where you have lived during your present marriage

RESIDENCE FOUR

LOCATION

- NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT
- TYNE & WEAR ( other than above)
- NORTHUMBERLAND
- DURHAM
- ENGLAND (other than above)
- SCOTLAND
- N. IRELAND
- S. IRELAND
- WALES
- OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN

1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
1		

c  
o  
l  
s  
19  
20

If NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT, specify district, if district is WESTERHOPE, specify ESTATE

--	--

cols 21-22

TYPE OF DWELLING

- BUNGALOW/HOUSE : DETACHED
- : SEMI DET
- : TERRACED
- FLAT : TYNESIDE
- : MULTI STOREY
- : CONVERTED HSE
- : BEDSIT
- MAISONETTE
- FORCES CAMP
- INSTITUTION
- OTHER

1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
1		
2		

c  
o  
l  
s  
23  
24

TENURE

- OWNER OCCUPIED ( by self)
- OWNER OCCUPIED (by others)
- RENTED : FROM COUNCIL/NEW TOWN
- : FROM HOUSING ASSOC
- : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/F
- : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/UF
- : FROM INSTITUTION
- FORCES ACCOMMODATION
- DEER ACCOMMODATION
- NON TENANCY

1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
1		
2		

c  
o  
l  
s  
25  
26

AGE OF DWELLING

PRE 1919  
BETWEEN THE WARS  
POST 1945  
DON'T KNOW

1
2
3
4

col 27

DATES OF OCCUPANCY

--	--	--	--

cols  
28-31

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE

UNDER 1 YEAR  
BETWEEN 1-5 YEARS  
BETWEEN 5-10 YEARS  
OVER 10 YEARS

1
2
3
4

col 32

TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD

LIVING WITH OWN PARENTS  
LIVING WITH HUSBANDS PARENTS  
LIVING WITH OTHER RELATIVE(S)  
SHARING WITH FRIENDS  
OWN HOUSEHOLD (H/D & C/H)  
LIVING ALONE WITHOUT H/D  
LIVING WITH OTHERS BUT WITHOUT H/D

1
2
3
4
5
6
7

col 33

HOUSING INFORMATION POST PRESENT MARRIAGE

17. Can you tell me where you have lived during your present marriage

RESIDENCE FIVE

LOCATION

- NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT
- TYNE & WEAR ( other than above)
- NORTHUMBERLAND
- DURHAM
- ENGLAND (other than above)
- SCOTLAND
- N. IRELAND
- S. IRELAND
- WALES
- OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
1	

cols  
34  
35

If NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT, specify district, if district is WESTERHOPE, specify ESTATE

--	--

cols 36-37

TYPE OF DWELLING

- BUNGALOW/HOUSE : DETACHED
- : SEMI DET
- : TERRACED
- FLAT : TYNESIDE
- : MULTI STOREY
- : CONVERTED HSE
- : BEDSIT
- MAISONETTE
- FORCES CAMP
- INSTITUTION
- OTHER

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
1	
2	

cols  
38  
39

TENURE

- OWNER OCCUPIED ( by self)
- OWNER OCCUPIED (by others)
- RENTED : FROM COUNCIL/NEW TOWN
- : FROM HOUSING ASSOC
- : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/F
- : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/UF
- : FROM INSTITUTION
- FORCES ACCOMMODATION
- TEMP ACCOMMODATION
- DON'T KNOW

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
1	
2	

cols  
40  
41

AGE OF DWELLING

PRE 1919  
BETWEEN THE WARS  
POST 1945  
DON'T KNOW

1	col 42
2	
3	
4	

DATES OF OCCUPANCY

				cols 43-46
--	--	--	--	---------------

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE

UNDER 1 YEAR  
BETWEEN 1-5 YEARS  
BETWEEN 5-10 YEARS  
OVER 10 YEARS

1	col 47
2	
3	
4	

TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD

LIVING WITH OWN PARENTS  
LIVING WITH HUSBANDS PARENTS  
LIVING WITH OTHER RELATIVE(S)  
SHARING WITH FRIENDS  
OWN HOUSEHOLD (H/D & C/H)  
LIVING ALONE WITHOUT H/D  
LIVING WITH OTHERS BUT WITHOUT H/D

1	col 48
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	



HOUSING INFORMATION POST PRESENT MARRIAGE

17. Can you tell me where you have lived during your present marriage

RESIDENCE SIX

LOCATION

NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT  
 TYNE & WEAR ( other than above)  
 NORTHUMBHERLAND  
 DURHAM  
 ENGLAND (other than above)  
 SCOTLAND  
 N. IRELAND  
 S. IRELAND  
 WALES  
 OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN

1	c o l s
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
1	50

If NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT, specify district, if district is WESTERHOPE, specify ESTATE

	cols 51-52
--	------------

TYPE OF DWELLING

BUNGALOW/HOUSE : DETACHED  
 : SEMI DET  
 : TERRACED  
 FLAT : TYNESIDE  
 : MULTI STOREY  
 : CONVERTED HSE  
 : BEDSIT  
 MAISONETTE  
 FORCES CAMP  
 INSTITUTION  
 OTHER

1	c o l s
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	53
9	
1	54
2	

TENURE

OWNER OCCUPIED ( by self)  
 OWNER OCCUPIED (by others)  
 RENTED : FROM COUNCIL/NEW TOWN  
 : FROM HOUSING ASSOC  
 : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/F  
 : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/UF  
 : FROM INSTITUTION  
 FORCES ACCOMMODATION  
 FUEL ACCOMMODATION  
 DOMESTIC

1	c o l s
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	55
9	
1	56
2	

AGE OF DWELLING

BEFORE 1919  
BETWEEN THE WARS  
POST 1945  
DON'T KNOW

1
2
3
4

 col 57

DATES OF OCCUPANCY

--	--	--	--

 cols 58- 6

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE

UNDER 1 YEAR  
BETWEEN 1-5 YEARS  
BETWEEN 5-10 YEARS  
OVER 10 YEARS

1
2
3
4

 col 62

TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD

LIVING WITH OWN PARENTS.  
LIVING WITH HUSBANDS PARENTS  
LIVING WITH OTHER RELATIVE(S)  
SHARING WITH FRIENDS  
OWN HOUSEHOLD (H/D & C/H)  
LIVING ALONE WITHOUT H/D  
LIVING WITH OTHERS BUT WITHOUT H/D

1
2
3
4
5
6
7

 col 63

HOUSING INFORMATION POST PRESENT MARITIME

17. Can you tell me where you have lived during your present marriage

RESIDENCE SEVEN

LOCATION

NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT  
 TYNE & WEAR ( other than above)  
 NORTHUMBERLAND  
 DURHAM  
 ENGLAND (other than above)  
 SCOTLAND  
 N. IRELAND  
 S. IRELAND  
 WALES  
 OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN

1	c o l s 64
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
1	65

If NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT, specify district, if district is WESTERHOPE, specify ESTATE

	cols 66-67
--	------------

TYPE OF DWELLING

BUNGALOW/HOUSE : DETACHED  
 : SEMI DET  
 : TERRACED  
 FLAT : TYNESIDE  
 : MULTI STOREY  
 : CONVERTED HSE  
 : BEDSIT  
 MAISONETTE  
 FORCES CAMP  
 INSTITUTION  
 OTHER

1	c o l s 68
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	69
9	
1	
2	

TENURE

OWNER OCCUPIED ( by self)  
 OWNER OCCUPIED (by others)  
 RENTED : FROM COUNCIL/NEW TOWN  
 : FROM HOUSING ASSOC  
 : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/F  
 : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/UF  
 : FROM INSTITUTION  
 FORCES ACCOMMODATION  
 FUEL ACCOMMODATION  
 INSTITUTION

1	c o l s 70
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	71
9	
1	
2	

AGE OF DWELLING

PRE 1919  
BETWEEN THE WARS  
POST 1945  
DON'T KNOW

1	col 72
2	
3	
4	

DATES OF OCCUPANCY

				cols 73-76
--	--	--	--	---------------

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE

UNDER 1 YEAR  
BETWEEN 1-5 YEARS  
BETWEEN 5-10 YEARS  
OVER 10 YEARS

1	col 77
2	
3	
4	

TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD

LIVING WITH OWN PARENTS  
LIVING WITH HUSBANDS PARENTS  
LIVING WITH OTHER RELATIVE(S)  
SHARING WITH FRIENDS  
OWN HOUSEHOLD (H/D & C/H)  
LIVING ALONE WITHOUT H/D  
LIVING WITH OTHERS BUT WITHOUT H/D

1	col 78
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	

HOUSING INFORMATION POST PRESENT MARRIAGE

17. Can you tell me where you have lived during your present marriage

RESIDENCE EIGHT

LOCATION

NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT  
 TYNE & NEAR ( other than above)  
 NORTHUMBERLAND  
 DURHAM  
 ENGLAND (other than above)  
 SCOTLAND  
 N. IRELAND  
 S. IRELAND  
 WALES  
 OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN

If NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT, specify district, if district is WESTERHOPE, specify ESTATE

TYPE OF DWELLING

BUNGALOW/HOUSE : DETACHED  
 : SEMI DET  
 : TERRACED  
 FLAT : TYNESIDE  
 : MULTI STOREY  
 : CONVERTED HSE  
 : BEDSIT  
 MAISONETTE  
 FORCES CAMP  
 INSTITUTION  
 OTHER

TENURE

OWNER OCCUPIED ( by self)  
 OWNER OCCUPIED (by others)  
 RENTED : FROM COUNCIL/NEW TOWN  
 : FROM HOUSING ASSOC  
 : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/F  
 : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/UF  
 : FROM INSTITUTION  
 SERVICES ACCOMMODATION  
 OTHER ACCOMMODATION  
 OTHER

PUNCH SIX

1	c o l s 4
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
1	

	col 6-7
--	---------

1	c o l s 8	
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		9
1		
2		

1	c o l s 10
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
1	
2	

AGE OF DWELLING

PRE 1919  
BETWEEN THE WARS  
POST 1945  
DON'T KNOW

1	col 12
2	
3	
4	

DATES OF OCCUPANCY

					cols 13-16
--	--	--	--	--	---------------

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE

UNDER 1 YEAR  
BETWEEN 1-5 YEARS  
BETWEEN 5-10 YEARS  
OVER 10 YEARS

1	col 17
2	
3	
4	

TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD

LIVING WITH OWN PARENTS  
LIVING WITH HUSBANDS PARENTS  
LIVING WITH OTHER RELATIVE(S)  
SHARING WITH FRIENDS  
OWN HOUSEHOLD (H/D & C/H)  
LIVING ALONE WITHOUT H/D  
LIVING WITH OTHERS BUT WITHOUT H/D

1	col 18
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	

HOUSING INFORMATION POST PRESENT MARRIAGE

17. Can you tell me where you have lived during your present marriage

RESIDENCE NINE

LOCATION

NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT  
 TYNE & WEAR ( other than above)  
 NORTHUMBERLAND  
 DURHAM  
 ENGLAND (other than above)  
 SCOTLAND  
 N. IRELAND  
 S. IRELAND  
 WALES  
 OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
1

cols  
19  
20

If NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT, specify district, if district is WESTERHOPE, specify ESTATE

--	--

cols 21-22

TYPE OF DWELLING

BUNGALOW/HOUSE : DETACHED  
 : SEMI DET  
 : TERRACED  
 FLAT : TYNESIDE  
 : MULTI STOREY  
 : CONVERTED HSE  
 : BEDSIT  
 MAISONETTE  
 FORCES CAMP  
 INSTITUTION  
 OTHER

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
1
2

cols  
23  
24

TENURE

OWNER OCCUPIED ( by self)  
 OWNER OCCUPIED (by others)  
 RENTED : FROM COUNCIL/NEW TOWN  
 : FROM HOUSING ASSOC  
 : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/F  
 : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/UF  
 : FROM INSTITUTION  
 FORCES ACCOMMODATION  
 OTHER ACCOMMODATION  
 INSTITUTION

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
1

cols  
25  
26

AGE OF DWELLING

PRE 1919  
BETWEEN THE WARS  
POST 1945  
DON'T KNOW

1
2
3
4

col 27

DATES OF OCCUPANCY

--	--	--	--

cols  
28-31

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE

UNDER 1 YEAR  
BETWEEN 1-5 YEARS  
BETWEEN 5-10 YEARS  
OVER 10 YEARS

1
2
3
4

col 32

TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD

LIVING WITH OWN PARENTS  
LIVING WITH HUSBANDS PARENTS  
LIVING WITH OTHER RELATIVE(S)  
SHARING WITH FRIENDS  
OWN HOUSEHOLD (H/D & C/H)  
LIVING ALONE WITHOUT H/D  
LIVING WITH OTHERS BUT WITHOUT H/D

1
2
3
4
5
6
7

col 33



HOUSING INFORMATION POST PRESENT MARRIAGE

17. Can you tell me where you have lived during your present marriage

RESIDENCE TEN

LOCATION

NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT  
 TYNE & WEAR ( other than above)  
 NORTHUMBERLAND  
 DURHAM  
 ENGLAND (other than above)  
 SCOTLAND  
 N. IRELAND  
 S. IRELAND  
 WALES  
 OUTSIDE GREAT BRITAIN

1		C O L S
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
1		34
1		35

If NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT, specify district, if district is WESTERHOPE, specify ESTATE

		cols 36-37
--	--	------------

TYPE OF DWELLING

BUNGALOW/HOUSE : DETACHED  
 : SEMI DET  
 : TERRACED  
 FLAT : TYNESIDE  
 : MULTI STOREY  
 : CONVERTED HSE  
 : BEDSIT  
 MAISONETTE  
 FORCES CAMP  
 INSTITUTION  
 OTHER

1		C O L S
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
1		38
2		39

TENURE

OWNER OCCUPIED ( by self)  
 OWNER OCCUPIED (by others)  
 RENTED : FROM COUNCIL/NEW TOWN  
 : FROM HOUSING ASSOC  
 : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/F  
 : FROM PRIVATE L/LORD/UF  
 : FROM INSTITUTION  
 FORCES ACCOMMODATION  
 TIED ACCOMMODATION  
 DON'T KNOW

1		C O L S
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
1		40
1		41

AGE OF DWELLING

PRE 1919  
BETWEEN THE WARS  
POST 1945  
DON'T KNOW

1	col 42
2	
3	
4	

DATES OF OCCUPANCY

				cols 43-46
--	--	--	--	---------------

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE

UNDER 1 YEAR  
BETWEEN 1-5 YEARS  
BETWEEN 5-10 YEARS  
OVER 10 YEARS

1	col 47
2	
3	
4	

TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD

LIVING WITH OWN PARENTS  
LIVING WITH HUSBANDS PARENTS  
LIVING WITH OTHER RELATIVE(S)  
SHARING WITH FRIENDS  
OWN HOUSEHOLD (H/D & C/H)  
LIVING ALONE WITHOUT H/D  
LIVING WITH OTHERS BUT WITHOUT H/D

1	col 48
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	

18. Can you indicate briefly why you moved to Westerhope

		cols 49-50
--	--	------------

19. What do you think of Westerhope as a place to live for you and you r husband

		cols 51-52
--	--	------------

20. What do you think of Westerhope as a place to live for your children

		cols 53-54
--	--	------------

EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION

21. What was your husband's job when you first met him  
Specify OCCUPATION

cols 55-57

--	--	--

What was your husbands job when you were married  
Specify OCCUPATION

cols 58-60

--	--	--

What is your husbands job now  
Specify OCCUPATION

cols 61-63

--	--	--

What does your husband currently earn (approx)  
GROSS  
NETT

cols 64- 67

--	--	--	--

cols 68-71

--	--	--	--

22. Since leaving school (ie after 16 yrs) have you  
undertaken any further education (include any  
professional or vocational courses)  
Specify and state nature of course ie full time


c  
o  
l  
s  
7  
2  
+  
7  
3

23. If respondent has worked in the past year,  
or is currently employed - What do you earn  
GROSS  
NETT

cols 74-77

--	--	--	--

PUNC:  
SEVE:

--	--	--	--

cols 4- 7

JOB ONE

24. Can you give me details of your employment since leaving full time education ( ie jobs of more than 6 months duration)  
Specify OCCUPATION

cols 8-10

--	--	--

DATES EMPLOYED

cols 11-14

--	--	--	--

Was the job full time or part time

FULL TIME  
PART TIME

1
2

col 15

Length of time in the job

UNDER 1 YR  
BETWEEN 1-3 YRS  
BETWEEN 4-7 YRS  
BETWEEN 8-10 YRS  
OVER 10 YRS

1
2
3
4
5

col 16

JOB TWO

24. Can you give me details of your employment since leaving full time education ( ie jobs of more than 6 months duration)  
Specify OCCUPATION

cols 17-19

--	--	--

DATES EMPLOYED

cols 20-22

--	--	--	--

Was the job full time or part time

FULL TIME  
PART TIME

1
2

col 24

Length of time in the job

UNDER 1 YR  
BETWEEN 1-3 YRS  
BETWEEN 4-7 YRS  
BETWEEN 8-10 YRS  
OVER 10 YRS

1
2
3
4
5

col 25

JOB THREE

24. Can you give me details of your employment since leaving full time education ( ie jobs of more than 6 months duration) Specify OCCUPATION

cols 26-28

--	--	--

DATES EMPLOYED

cols 29-32

--	--	--	--

Was the job full time or part time

FULL TIME  
PART TIME

1
2

col 33

Length of time in the job

UNDER 1 YR  
BETWEEN 1-3 YRS  
BETWEEN 4-7 YRS  
BETWEEN 8-10 YRS  
OVER 10 YRS

1
2
3
4
5

col 34

JOB FOUR

24. Can you give me details of your employment since leaving full time education ( ie jobs of more than 6 months duration) Specify OCCUPATION

cols 35-37

--	--	--

DATES EMPLOYED

cols 38-41

--	--	--	--

Was the job full time or part time

FULL TIME  
PART TIME

1
2

col 42

Length of time in the job

UNDER 1 YR  
BETWEEN 1-3 YRS  
BETWEEN 4-7 YRS  
BETWEEN 8-10 YRS  
OVER 10 YRS

1
2
3
4
5

col 43

JOB FIVE

24. Can you give me details of your employment since leaving full time education ( ie jobs of more than 6 months duration)  
Specify OCCUPATION

cols 44-46

--	--	--

DATES EMPLOYED

cols 47- 50

--	--	--	--

Was the job full time or part time

FULL TIME  
PART TIME

1	col 51
2	

Length of time in the job

UNDER 1 YR  
BETWEEN 1-3 YRS  
BETWEEN 4-7 YRS  
BETWEEN 8-10 YRS  
OVER 10 YRS

1	col 52
2	
3	
4	
5	

JOB SIX

24. Can you give me details of your employment since leaving full time education ( ie jobs of more than 6 months duration)  
Specify OCCUPATION

cols 53-55

--	--	--

DATES EMPLOYED

cols 56 59

--	--	--	--

Was the job full time or part time

FULL TIME  
PART TIME

1	col 60
2	

Length of time in the job

UNDER 1 YR  
BETWEEN 1-3 YRS  
BETWEEN 4-7 YRS  
BETWEEN 8-10 YRS  
OVER 10 YRS

1	col 61
2	
3	
4	
5	

JOB SEVEN

23. Can you give me details of your employment since leaving full time education ( ie jobs of more than 6 months duration)  
Specify OCCUPATION

cols 62-64

--	--	--

DATES EMPLOYED

cols 65 - 68

--	--	--	--

Was the job full time or part time

FULL TIME  
PART TIME

1	col 69
2	

Length of time in the job

UNDER 1 YR  
BETWEEN 1-3 YRS  
BETWEEN 4-7 YRS  
BETWEEN 8-10 YRS  
OVER 10 YRS

1	col 70
2	
3	
4	
5	

JOB EIGHT

24. Can you give me details of your employment since leaving full time education ( ie jobs of more than 6 months duration)  
Specify OCCUPATION

cols 71-73

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DATES EMPLOYED

cols 74-77

--	--	--	--

Was the job full time or part time

FULL TIME  
PART TIME

1	col 78
2	

Length of time in the job

UNDER 1 YR  
BETWEEN 1-3 YRS  
BETWEEN 4-7 YRS  
BETWEEN 8-10 YRS  
OVER 10 YRS

1	col 79
2	
3	
4	
5	

JOB NINE

24. Can you give me details of your employment since leaving full time education ( ie jobs of more than 6 months duration) Specify OCCUPATION

PUNCH EIGHT

cols 4-6

--	--	--

cols 7-10

--	--	--	--

DATES EMPLOYED

Was the job full time or part time

FULL TIME  
PART TIME

1
2

 col 11

Length of time in the job

UNDER 1 YR  
BETWEEN 1-3 YRS  
BETWEEN 4-7 YRS  
BETWEEN 8-10 YRS  
OVER 10 YRS

1
2
3
4
5

 col 12

JOB TEN

24. Can you give me details of your employment since leaving full time education ( ie jobs of more than 6 months duration) Specify OCCUPATION

cols 13-15

--	--	--

cols 16-19

--	--	--	--

DATES EMPLOYED

Was the job full time or part time

FULL TIME  
PART TIME

1
2

 col 20

Length of time in the job

UNDER 1 YR  
BETWEEN 1-3 YRS  
BETWEEN 4-7 YRS  
BETWEEN 8-10 YRS  
OVER 10 YRS

1
2
3
4
5

 col 21