

University of Montana

ScholarWorks at University of Montana

Graduate Student Theses, Dissertations, &
Professional Papers

Graduate School

1979

Family in the corporate state

Sandra Margrethe Gudmundsen
The University of Montana

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/etd>

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Recommended Citation

Gudmundsen, Sandra Margrethe, "Family in the corporate state" (1979). *Graduate Student Theses, Dissertations, & Professional Papers*. 5930.
<https://scholarworks.umt.edu/etd/5930>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Student Theses, Dissertations, & Professional Papers by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.

THE FAMILY IN THE CORPORATE STATE

By

Sandra M. Gudmundsen

B.A., University of Montana, 1974

Presented in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

1979

Approved by:


Chairman, Board of Examiners


Dean, Graduate School

6-7-79
Date

UMI Number: EP36731

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



UMI EP36731

Published by ProQuest LLC (2013). Copyright in the Dissertation held by the Author.

Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

All rights reserved. This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code



ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 - 1346

WOMEN AND THE FAMILY: AN EXAMINATION
OF FALSE UNIVERSALITY

Hegel's consideration of the family begins in the third part of the Philosophy of Right which is concerned with Ethical Life. In the Hegelian analysis of Right, of the development of the Idea of freedom as the embodiment of the free will, ethical life is "the unity of the will in its concept with the will of the individual."¹ Hegel terms ethical life the "truth" of the two abstract moments, Formal Right and Morality insofar as formal right is the will in its immediacy and its embodiment in an immediate external thing, while Morality is the will reflected from this external embodiment into itself. In synthesizing these two moments, Ethical Life is the stage of development of the Idea of the absolutely free will in which the good is not only conceptual, but is also realized both in the will reflected into itself and in the external world, resulting in the existence of freedom as substance, actuality, and as necessity. Thus, Ethical Life is ". . . the Idea in its absolutely universal existence."² Ethical substance however is similarly dialectical, involving three significant moments which are: 1) the natural mind or the Family, 2) the division and appearance of the natural mind or Civil Society, 3) the State as universal and objective

freedom even in the free self-subsistence of the particular will. The dialectical movement of this relationship thus begins with the actual and organic mind of a single nation which reveals and actualizes itself through the interrelation of the particular national minds until in the process of world history it reveals and actualizes itself as the universal world-mind whose right is supreme.

Ethical Life is the concept of freedom developed into the existing world as the good endowed with self-conscious knowing and action. It is also the nature of self-consciousness insofar as the ethical realm is the absolute foundation and ultimate end of self-consciousness.³ This is not to say, however, that the ethical order is purely transcendent, for it is a substance which rises to self-consciousness in individuals and is actualized only for that reason. As the unity of the concept of the will with the particular will, the Ethical Attitude presents an objective/subjective distinction, but it is one in which the subjective and objective elements so modify one another as to constitute two syntheses of object and subject, each of which is the totality of the Idea.

The first "totality" is ethical life regarded objectively. Its form is subjective which is to say that its substance is made concrete by subjectivity as infinite form. The State and its institutions (as ideal) exemplify the objectivity of ethical life but the legitimizing force of those

institutions depends upon the self-consciousness of the citizens. The other two stages of ethical life, viz. the family and civil society, also constitute a substantiality in Hegelian terms to the extent that each has subsistence in itself. In this sense, the family is a substance of which its members are accidents, although the substantiality is not external or visible. Instead the family's substance is its bond of love. In Hegel's view this love is reason in its immediacy, i.e., it is an immature form of reason. There is no explicit difference between substance and accident in the family for the family's focus is on its unity rather than on its differences. In the next stage, civil society, difference becomes explicit and the substance appears in the particulars. In this stage the individuals have risen above love to intelligence but it is concentrated on a private end. The third stage is then the synthesis of the first two or the particularization of the substantial mind of the nation into rational laws and institutions. Regarded objectively, the ethical order is thus a circle of necessity whose moments are the ethical powers regulating the life of the individual and culminating in the political situation in which what the state's compulsive power exacts, the individual also wills.

The second synthesis of the Ethical Attitude, i.e., of the unity of the concept of the will with the particular will, is the subjective view of ethical life. Here the

ethical will of the individual is aware of objective duties as the means by which one actualizes his own inner universality. This ethical substance and its laws stand over against the subject in one sense, having an absolute authority and power. At the same time these powers are not alien to the subject for they are directly linked to him by a relation in which the ethical order is the actual soul of self-consciousness.

Hegel argues that the laws and institutions of the Ethical Order are binding on the will of the individual because he distinguishes himself from them as subjective and therefore stands related to them as the substance of his own being. Furthermore, the individual finds his liberation in duty, first, from dependence on mere natural impulse and from the depression which as a particular subject he cannot escape in his moral reflection on what ought to be and what might be, and second, from the indeterminate subjectivity which remains self-enclosed and devoid of actuality. Thus Hegel argues that the individual acquires his substantive freedom in duty.

Hegel goes on to suggest that the substance of mind exists for the first time as mind when the habitual practice of ethical living appears as a second nature which is the soul of custom permeating the natural will. With this development the substantial Ethical Order attains its right and the validity of its right insofar as the self-will of the individual as opposed to ethical substance vanishes.

When his character is ethical, Hegel understands the individual as recognizing the universal as the end which moves him to act. Further, this individual knows that his dignity and the whole stability of his particular ends are grounded in this same universal. Thus subjectivity becomes itself the absolute form and existent actuality of the substantial order, and the distinction between the subject and the substance (i.e., the object or end of the subject) vanishes in the same way as the formal distinction between the individual's will and the ethical substance.

In belonging to an actual ethical order, the individual is guaranteed two rights, the first that of being subjectively destined to freedom, and the second the right to particular satisfaction. The first right of one's subjective destiny issues from the individual's conviction that his freedom realizes its truth in the Objective order and in the fact that an individual is actually in possession of his own essence or inner universality when he is a member of an ethical order. The second right to particular satisfaction is contained in the ethical substantial order since particularity is the outward appearance of that order. Thus Hegel suggests that right and duty coalesce in the identity of the universal will with the particular will. Further, a man who is part of an ethical order has rights insofar as he has duties and duties insofar as he has rights, which moves beyond the sphere of abstract right where I have a right and someone else has a corresponding

duty, as well as beyond the sphere of morality where the right of an individual's private judgment and will has not, but only ought to have, coalesced with duties and become objective. This ethical substance, as the unity of individual self-consciousness with its concept is for Hegel the actual mind of a family and of a nation.

The concept of this Idea, i.e., the union of self-consciousness and its concept, is mind as something knowing itself and actual. This mind then, objectifies itself in the movement running through the form of its moments, viz. universality, particularity, and individuality. The objectification of each of these moments is a different form of organization. Thus, the ethical mind in its natural or immediate phase is first the Family. Thus substantiality loses its unity and passes into division and the phase of relation which is Civil Society. Civil Society is an association of members as self-subsistent individuals in a universality which is only abstract. Their association is brought about by their needs, by the legal system, and by an external organization for attaining their particular and common interests. This external state is brought back to and unified with the state in the Constitution of the State which is the end and actuality of both the substantial universal order and public life.

From this sketch it is possible to begin extracting the more significant aspects of both regressive and progressive

tendencies in the Hegelian dialectic structuring the realization of the State and true self-conscious freedom. It is important to identify and separate the features of each tendency because the utopian idealism generated by the logic of Hegel's argument is critically undermined by the contradictory material conditions which it ignores. Nevertheless, the concept of a "necessary" movement structuring the progression of human history toward an actualization of human freedom is far too rich to simply dismiss. While such a concept may indeed bear little resemblance to the pattern of events in either our private or our public lives today, and may in fact suggest uncomfortable associations with the brutally executed notions "progress," "Manifest Destiny," or various religious crusades which legitimized acts of oppression toward particular groups or towards the natural environment, the idea of historical progression on a rational basis articulates the concern for a rational and ethical society that is rapidly fading from the discussion and consideration of "practical" men.

It is generally agreed that the democratic society protects individual rights by limiting individual freedom, but it is difficult to generate productive discussion of the nature of that paradigmatic state of individuality for which various concepts of rights and freedom are developed. Today as the problems of alienation as seen in loneliness, unsatisfactory personal relationships, and a decreasing ability to engage the objective substance of one's life, become more

acute, the meaning of individual or civil rights becomes more obscure. The traditional understanding of civil rights by means of a kind of training in the art of self-defense, wherein one acknowledges the rights of others in order to guarantee his own, apparently cannot speak to the situation in which one seeks integration with rather than protection from the general community. Without attempting to deny the importance of legal protection against the selfish, or particularistic, aims of other individuals in civil society, the primary concern for the individual and his property seems at the very least to address only part of the problems with which people are confronted as members of a social organization, viz. those concerning matters of contract, production, and private ownership. Beyond these parameters there is a sudden but deliberate emptiness about the concept of individual rights which, while theoretically based on the idea of individual freedom and self-determination, extends its would-be "non-interference" into an official negation of public responsibility for the quality of life made possible by the structure of interdependence in civil society, and consequently for the quality or actualization of human beings in that society.

The idea of public responsibility for the quality of life in democratic civil society fairly bristles with issues concerning restriction and imposition upon the individual insofar as the notion of human commonality is understood as

the homogenization of human variety. Thus Hegel's perception of a political situation in which the individual wills what the state's compulsive power exacts might all too easily be shunned as the totalitarian sort of political ideal that must result from any idealistic, naive scheme to realize a unity of individual wills. Were it not for Hegel's characterization of the State as the final and ultimate moment of the necessary progression of rationality, i.e., or Ethical Life, it would in fact be difficult to separate the specific features of individual actualization from individual repression with respect to the concept of the state. Thus, if the notion of personal autonomy is defined by reference to a fundamental opposition or difference of particular wills, the suggestion of agreement between individuals seems to be without practical application unless arbitrarily enforced by an authoritarian power. But Hegel's conception of ethical life rests upon the central feature of a circle of necessity uniting the three objective moments, universality, particularity, and individuality, and in so doing casts the nature of the political State in terms of the individual family.

The fact that it is the family rather than the state which objectifies the rational "moment" of universality demands first, that Hegel's vision of a political situation necessitating human freedom must be understood as the inclusion of the unique capacity of the family to know the individual above and beyond his accomplishments and/or "crimes,"

to be radically concerned about his welfare, and yet to perceive his importance as no greater and no less than that of any other family member. While the suggestion of total political unity appears to threaten the real possibility of individuality, the family's unity, to the extent that it provides care, concern, and guidance, and a generally sustaining environment for the individual's development, is the source of individuality, inevitably shaping it to some degree in or against its own character, but fundamentally giving individuality life, maintenance and its essential context. The success of family unity can be most profitably assessed in terms of the freedom of the individual family member in his relationships and activities outside of the family per se insofar as the causal connection between a neglected or deprived child (as well as a restricted and unhappy parent), and a socially irresponsible or aberrant citizen has been established through the work of social scientists and researchers.

Furthermore, Hegel's circle of necessity firmly connects the realization of the State with the experience of family unity in such a way as to demand a clear awareness on the part of the individual of his own dependence upon the source of unity for his fullest and most free being. In this sense Hegel's dialectic reveals the centrality of the experience of universality to the political situation in which the legitimization of authority can be in fact

traced to the individual as a free and responsible citizen. The emphasis on the sense of self as part of and dependent upon a group which peculiarly characterizes the family cannot be overstated, for it is particularly with the family that such a subordination of individuality can be understood as essentially progressive. It is important, however, not to confuse the contemporary increase in family disunity and instability with Hegel's perception of the family as rationality realizing objective universality and thereby conclude that it is only the family's nominal bonds which need be considered essential to the state, regardless of the way in which the individual is integrated into this family. A subordination of the individual to a family (or other group) which does not express care for the development of the individual, but rather a neglect and disregard for the individual that is tantamount to a denial of individual being, implies a concept of the family that has little to do with Hegel's ideal realization of freedom except as a point of critique. To confront the contemporary charges of domination and repression of individuality with respect to the family is to raise the question of control, now not only as it affects and divides family members, but also as it negates and falsifies the authority of the State.

Because Hegel does not distinguish between oppressive features of family life and those necessary to its substantiality, it is important to exclude those philosophic

arguments which overlook a regressive material manifestation from an overall appreciation of the movement from family to State. The issue of control is perhaps the question requiring the most immediate attention in a review of Hegel's treatment of Ethical Life insofar as the problem of domination within a family setting grounds the question of women's rights and by and large defines the questions of family effectiveness in contemporary society, as well as those experiences of estrangement and antagonism toward the family on the part of many individuals today. While it would be foolhardy to attempt to "answer" these questions, particularly given the conditions of democratic society, an analysis and critique of the Hegelian dialectic can open the question of how and why the family, as the primary moment of universality in most individuals' experience, loses its capacity to instill in its members a responsiveness and appreciation for what is basically the brotherhood of all men. The significance of this question, however, radically exceeds the level of "family counseling" insofar as its dimensions include, in the manner of Hegel's circle of necessity, the nature of the state and the legitimization of its authority.

In his essay, "A Study on Authority," H. Marcuse analyzes Hegel's construction of the state out of the will of individuals as a sketch of the development of authoritarian consciousness. He suggests that Hegel's ultimate goal of the free subordination of the individual will to

the general will of state requires a deliberate fostering of a state-upholding sentiment in the psyche of the individual for which the institutions of the state in their finished form are not adequate. The preparation for a voluntary recognition of, and subordination to, the state's authority must therefore begin much farther back in the history of the individual, viz. through the situation of the "corporations" of civil society to the family. The Corporations in Hegel's notion of civil society are the second ethical root of the state, and enable the individual to achieve civil recognition within the general community on the basis of his own recognition of the universality of that community's institutions. The family however, as the prior and more basic ethical root, brings out characteristics in the individual which enables him to become a part of the state which represents "objective" morality.⁴

The case was previously made for the importance of those characteristics, for which the family is the primary source, that generally develop a consciousness of linkage between individuals based not on the calculated realization of selfish aims, but rather on the realization that authentic free individuality must emerge from universality. By turning to the question of authoritarian consciousness, Marcuse focuses on the problematic character of that "universality" in its practical as opposed to theoretical development, first, by means of family organization, and later, by acknowledgment

of the state's legislative authority. The necessity of organizational authority in either case does not present the significant conflict with which Marcuse is concerned, but rather the relationship between servitude and domination which generally defines family organization and which contributes to the construction of an authoritative socio-political order. Much of his critique refers to Hegel's Phenomenology of Mind, but he also quotes from Hegel's System of Morality where the family is referred to as the "external openly manifested element of the relationship between domination and servitude in its indifference."⁵

For Hegel human existence is primarily self-consciousness, but self-consciousness is only 'in and for itself' when it is in and for itself through another. Marcuse observes, however, that this kind of recognition by another occurs for Hegel after a "life and death struggle in the realm of appropriation and property, work and service, fear and discipline." The domination of the master consists of greed for the enjoyment of things, appropriation as the sensuous acquisition of property, and the binding of the subordinated person through the 'work' which is forced upon him. In contrast, the servitude of the servant consists in his material powerlessness, his absolute fear of the master, his constant 'discipline' of service and most importantly in his being chained to his work which makes him dependent on things, and consequently on the master who owns them. Marcuse notes

here that Hegel's decisive insight is that domination and servitude only become possible through a particular form of the labor process.

Hegel goes on to argue that domination can only become real as a recognized power over the realm in which things are at its disposal through the labor performed in servitude, so that "the truth of independent consciousness is thus the consciousness of the bondsman."⁶ Hegel's explanation of this is that the features of the most extreme powerlessness and dependence, viz. Fear and Service (discipline and obedience) are the very forces that drive servitude out of its state of dependence by forcing the servant on pain of fear of the master, into the labor process where his real power will reveal itself and where he will come 'to himself'. Thus it is ultimately the serving-consciousness which has acquired its true form in the labor-process that is the real point of transition in the supercession of the domination-servitude relationship. From this Marcuse concludes that it is not absolute reason but absolute force that stands at the beginning of the 'objective spirit'.

With this conclusion Marcuse opens the fundamental dynamic of the Hegelian dialectic, viz. the force of reason advancing through its moments of objectification to its full realization, to the critical objections of those for whom the process of acquiring self-consciousness is easily confused with the process of providing the material basis for another's

physical, immediate comfort. In this sense Hegel's perception of the theoretical "forces" driving servitude out of its state of dependence grievously ignores the violent and repressive nature of the actively dominating force, as well as its implications for a political system requiring such a relationship at its root. While Hegel's perception of the human need for objectification in the real or natural world is grounded in the phenomenological process of self-realization by means of an engagement with the world in which one lives, the notion of the need for a dominating force introduces elements of inequality and disparity between individuals that give a logical basis to the exploitation of one individual's labor power by another. Thus the theoretical perception of a realizing of self-consciousness overlooks the extent to which an individual's labor can either be prevented from, or perverted in, objectifying individual being when the production process, as well as the product, are alienated from the laborer.

In his Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, Marx considers Hegel's treatment of the essence of man as self-consciousness from the point of view of the individual who leads an alienated life. Working within Hegel's phenomenological analysis of the estrangement of human essence, or the alienation of self-consciousness natural to an active, living being, Marx focuses on the manner of reappropriation of the "objective essence of man" in which

the moment of alienation experienced by self-consciousness is annulled or superceded, allowing consciousness to reunify itself. Marx argues that Hegel is merely concerned with annulling the objective character of the object insofar as consciousness, or reason, knows itself only by means of the process of externalization or estrangement of self-consciousness.⁷ Thus, Hegel finds the rational perception of the essential dependence of the self upon its various forms of objectification so binding upon the being of self-consciousness as to make the character of the estranged externalized consciousness inconsequential. In practical, everyday terms this is as much as to say that a critical approach to the material conditions of one's life is without practical obligation to change or in some way affect them, for the nature of being is such that its identity is, in the first place, dependent upon the conditions in which it finds itself reflected, and is in the second place, beyond the realm of those material conditions which only accidentally impose upon it. For Marx, the implication that self-conscious man can recognize, annul and supercede the spiritual world as self-alienation and yet confirm it in its alienated shape as his true mode of being is the root of Hegel's "false positivism." Calling this an attempt to put "reason at home in unreason as unreason," Marx objects to the implication that self-affirmation in contradiction with itself can yet be true knowledge and life. Instead he argues that if one knows

religion as alienated human self-consciousness, for example, then one realizes himself in annihilated and superceded religion, not in religion itself.⁸

In his critique Marx is particularly concerned with Hegel's act of compliance toward religion, the state, and its institutions insofar as Hegel's analysis of the dialectic between the rational individual and his world leaves the individual necessarily engaged with the reification of his alienated self-consciousness. For Marcuse, who approaches this process with an eye towards labor and production, the contradiction of "reason at home in unreason as unreason" negates the motive force of reason insofar as the movement of one's reappropriation of his objectivity is brought to a halt with the coexistence of the rational and the irrational. In terms of the dialectic between the family, civil society and the state, Hegel's compromise of reason at the point of one's recognition that what is the objectification of the self is in fact alienated self-consciousness implies that the individual's growth and development toward his freedom or necessary and full rationality is of secondary importance to his capacity to conform to the demands of a political and social situation that gives his particular identity form by opposing it.

To the extent that Hegel can be understood as concerned for the support and maintenance of the status quo, the family's universality thus begins to appear as quite a

bit less than the primary experience of the integration of the self into a group or community by means of caring, responsive and emotional bonds between human beings. Instead, the family experience appears as the primary experience of the self as circumscribed and restricted by a group on which it is radically dependent despite the impossibility of a holistic synthesis between the self as alienated and particular and his identity as family member. The specific split in self-consciousness facilitated by Hegel's acceptance of the "confirmation . . . of the self-estranged essence in its denial,"⁹ is therefore the rational origin of the split between an individual's identity in self-consciousness and reason, and his identity as a member of a productive unit. For men and women employed as wage labor, this personal fragmentation is most readily apparent as a feature of civil society and their activities in that sphere. For women, it is also a feature of family life negating not only the woman's experience of primary universality, but also the substantiality of familial unity at all insofar as the disparity between a woman's service to her family and that of the other family members to the family and the woman reduces her objective being in accordance with her presence as wife, mother, housekeeper, etc.

Marx's critique strikes at the rupture in Hegel's phenomenological dialectic as a point of logical breakdown that permits a philosophical justification of actual servitude.

With respect to the situation of women in the family, this rupture can be seen as the source of a more profound and socially far-reaching manifestation of the development of an authoritarian consciousness than the strictly logical criticism implies. To some extent it is the fact that the family does provide the historical source of the average individual's understanding of political organization that most critically demands the publicizing and analysis of the woman's "role" in the family insofar as what Hegel took to be the fundamental, ethical experience of universality must be acknowledged as flawed. In this sense it would appear at best naive to campaign, particularly at the risk of one's life, for the "ideal" society when the most elemental model of human unity and organization as based on bonds of human empathy and respect is itself the embodiment of negation, abuse, exploitation, and alienated consciousness.

If women can merely aspire to a rational negation of the role(s) provided for their participation and integration into the family as it is structured today it is doubtful that any real progress can be made by means of their new awareness. To the extent that the family remains a facade of unity that finds justification for the relationships of servitude and therefore domination on which it depends, the primary experience of all future individuals will be just as characterized by inequality and exploitation between human beings as it was before the idea of women's oppression

vis-a-vis the family caught public attention. In short, the simple condemnation of an enforced role such as that of wife and mother cannot compensate for the manifestations of self-abnegation which issue from the acceptance and use of alienated self-consciousness. It is not enough for women to recognize the extent to which their own development as an individual is stunted by the demands made upon them in the name of the experience of universality, for not only do they risk a daily decrease in their realization of "being-for-itself," i.e., their truly human potential, but they simultaneously contribute to the notion of a socially unavoidable level of exploitation by permitting and participating in an experience of false universality on which society as a whole depends for a reference in the construction of a rational society and State.

The problem at hand might therefore be defined as: how to liberate women from their restrictive and alienating roles as made necessary by the family without destroying the family in the process, with the most critical issue in terms of the current women's movement being whether or not there is really any progress made towards equal opportunity for a woman's realization of individuality if her social (in the sense of human) obligations are defined in terms of her relation to the family and child-rearing, and if her own development is contingent upon this definition. In this sense, it is important to confront the sexual division of

labor which seems to place the onus of social responsibility as squarely on the woman's shoulders in a revolutionary society as it does in bourgeois society; for if a woman must always define her individuality, i.e., self, in the face of the family's, and by extension other individuals', demands it is certain that any future revolutionary society will be as flawed by the dynamics of a domination-servitude relationship as any previously known. At the same time, the significance of femininity as it is used as a symbol for all of the features of a human relationship that are out of place in the routine activities of civil society must not be lost to the urgency of recouping women's historical "losses." Whether or not individual women can identify with the qualities of caring, warmth, emotional response, and noncalculative use of other human beings, it is hardly the legitimate aim of a revolutionary society to eliminate these aspects of human being, typically associated with femininity though they are, from the human spirit. Thus, it again becomes essential to recognize the extent to which a nominal rectification of the woman's role in the family is, e.g., by means of greater opportunities for integration into civil society, does not in fact contribute to the construction of a society in which genuine freedom, i.e., individuality, is a real possibility. Although the exclusion of women from various pursuits and activities in civil society certainly typifies the way in which women are prevented from experiencing the essential

externalization and objectification requisite to individual development, the dialectical relation between the family and civil society assures the eclipse of those very opportunities not only for women, but for most men as well, if the experience of universality in the family is not firmly established in the consciousness of the young, "pre-individuals."

Perhaps the most common and most frequent charge against any feminist movement is that of accusing the individual woman of neglecting her family out of her own egoistic concerns. It is primarily as a question of time and attention to "duty" that a woman finds herself faced with a choice between life as a member of the family and life as a member of civil society insofar as the family in bourgeois society cannot accommodate the woman who realizes and resents or refuses the limitations of a life confined to the parameters of the home. While the most binding imperatives, viz., those that are economic, for a woman's total absorption into her family differ widely from class to class, the criticism of her attempts to break this bondage as just offered on the basis of the needs of the family distinctly echoes the long history of conservative reaction to the women's movement. Indeed, it would appear that the notion of a universal feminine obligation to not only undertake motherhood, but to also devote a significant part of one's life as a woman to it, is so pervasive that even a revolutionary dream of the better or "ideal" society must return to the solid

material base of conscientious and ethical mothers who will provide the reproductive source of the future citizenry. But the woman of today must object to this kind of categorization of themselves as the reproductive organs of mankind first, on the grounds of their own being as consciousness and Hegel's sense of reason which, when denied free movement toward the as yet unrealized point of full development, stands as the negation of human freedom. They must also object out of a concern for the same historical progression that inspires all revolutionary consciousness insofar as any avoidable acquiescence to conditions imposed by the status quo interferes with that progression either directly or indirectly.

In his Introduction to the Critique of the Philosophy of Right, Marx accuses German philosophy of being the ideal prolongation of German history insofar as he finds Germans to be living their "post-history" in thought or in philosophy.¹⁰ "In politics," he says, "the Germans have thought what other nations did,"¹¹ acting in effect as their theoretical consciousness. Marx regards Hegel's criticism of the German philosophy of right and of the state as both a critical analysis of the modern state and the definitive negation of all the past forms of consciousness in German jurisprudence and politics, but notes the contradiction in the fact that while Germany can produce this speculative philosophy of right, the German representative of the

modern state which leaves the real man out of account is only possible because the modern state itself leaves the real man out of account.

Similarly, the speculative sort of criticism of the woman's role in the family today cannot of itself transform the woman's place in the family despite the public appearance of women in more of the activities and business of civil society. Marx goes on to say that the criticism of speculative philosophy of right suggests tasks that can only be solved by means of practical activity, which is to say that theoretical needs must become immediate practical needs.¹² In this sense, the theoretical needs of humanity vis-a-vis universality must be realized through the material imperatives of practical situations, the most immediate of which, with respect to the family, is the woman's release or liberation from the serving mentality of the individual to whom all responsibility for the mundane activities of caring for, sustaining and maintaining a family group devolve. Hegel's analysis of the family as the ethical root of the state is valuable as an articulation of the centrality of the woman's relationship within the family to the wider situations of society and the individual, but as philosophy it can only be realized by the abolition of those conditions which lock a woman into the roles of the maker of babies and homes at the expense of her own progress toward individuality.

At this point it would seem profitable to return to

Hegel's treatment of the family in the Philosophy of Right in order to begin making the distinctions between the aspects of the family that are necessary to the State in terms of Hegel's concept of the actualization of freedom, and those features which derive from the ideological foundations of particular interests.

As the immediate substantiality of mind, Hegel finds the family specifically characterized by love, which he says is the mind's feeling of its own unity. Thus, in a family the individual is conscious of himself as a member rather than an independent person. The right which an individual enjoys on the strength of family unity, that is the individual's life within this unity, takes on the form of right only when the family begins to dissolve. At that time, the family members begin to be self-subsistent persons and receive their 'share' separately by way of money, food, educational expenses, etc. The family is completed in three phases: 1) Marriage, or the form assumed by the concept of the family in its immediate phase, 2) Family Property and Capital (the external embodiment of the concept), 3) The Education of the Children and Dissolution of the Family.

As the immediate type of ethical relationship, marriage is first of all the moment of physical life, but through the self-consciousness of marriage, the natural sexual union is changed from a merely inward union to a union on the level of mind, i.e., into self-conscious love.

Hegel argues that marriage is in essence an ethical tie. Thus when it is treated only as a sexual relationship marriage is stripped of its other characteristics. Similarly when marriage is thought of as only a civil contract, it is degraded to the level of a contract for reciprocal use. And if marriage is based on love alone it is exposed to every contingency because love is a feeling, and therefore does not qualify as ethical life. Marriage therefore is more precisely characterized as ethico-legal love and does not include the transient, fickle, and purely subjective aspects of love. Hegel does allow that marriage may have a more obvious subjective source in the particular inclinations of two persons, but the objective source nevertheless lies in the free consent of the persons to renounce their natural and individual personality to this unity of one with another. In this sense marriage is their liberation, he says, because in it they attain their substantive self-consciousness. Hegel goes on to say that our objectively appointed end and therefore our ethical duty is to enter the "married state," and while the external origin of any particular marriage is fundamentally contingent, it mainly depends on the extent to which reflective thought has been developed.

Hegel finds the ethical aspect of marriage specifically in the individual's consciousness of this unity as their substantive aim, and therefore consisting of their love, trust, and common sharing of their entire existence as individuals.

While it begins with a contract, it is peculiarly a contract to transcend the standpoint of contract from which people view one another in their individuality as self-subsistent units. Furthermore, the identification of personalities whereby the family becomes one person and its members become its accidents is the ethical mind, which when considered in itself apart from a particular circumstance is the ground of the religious character of marriage and the family.

Hegel is careful to point out that no one facet of marriage makes up the whole range of its ethical character. Thus if the wedding ceremony is taken as only an external formality it is stripped of all significance except as a civil relation reduced to a mere fiat of civil or ecclesiastical authority. As such, the ceremony would appear as something not merely indifferent to the true nature of marriage, but actually alien to it. If marriage is understood as merely a formal condition which must precede the complete mutual surrender of the parties to one another, it appears to "bring disunion into their loving disposition, and like an alien intruder, to thwart the inwardness of their union."¹³ Thus, again: the specifically ethical character of marriage consists in the fact that the consciousness of the parties is crystallized out of its physical and subjective mode, and is lifted to the thought of what is substantive.

Hegel does characterize the difference between men and women as similar to that between animals and plants,

saying that women are capable of education but are not "made" for activities demanding a universal faculty such as the more advanced sciences, philosophy, and certain forms of artistic production. One sex he says is mind, the self-consciousness of conceptual thought and the volition of the final objective end, while the other is mind maintaining itself in unity as knowledge and volition of the substantive, but knowledge and volition in the form of concrete individuality and feeling.

Finally he says that marriage is essentially monogamy because it is personality, i.e., immediate exclusive individuality, which enters into this tie, and therefore the truth of this tie can only proceed from the mutual wholehearted surrender of this personality. Personality then, only attains its right of being conscious of itself in another to the extent that the other is in this identical relationship as a person. Marriage, and especially monogamy, is therefore one of the absolute principles on which the ethical life of the community depends.

However, the family as person (atomic individual) has its real external existence in property; and it is only when this property takes the form of capital that it becomes the embodiment of the substantial personality of the family. Hegel argues that as a universal and enduring person, the family requires possessions that are specifically determined as permanent and secure, which is to say it requires capital. In contrast to the arbitrariness of a single owner's

particular needs as one abstract moment of property, particular need as well as the selfishness of desire is transformed in family property into something ethical, into labor and care for a common possession. This capital is common property, and while no member of the family has property of his own, each has his right in the common stock. But this right may come into conflict with the father's right of administration because the family is exposed to partition and contingency. Finally, property is connected essentially to the conjugal relation, and only remotely to the clan or house, for marriage creates a new family independent of clans or houses.

Hegel regards the children of the family as the only external and objective existence of the unity of marriage. The children have the right to maintenance and education at the expense of the family's common capital, and the rights of the parents over the wishes of their children is limited by the object, viz. discipline and education. The punishment of children is not specifically concerned with justice, but rather with preventing the children from exercising freedom while still in the toils of nature and with lifting the universal into their consciousness. Similarly, the child's education has the positive aim of instilling ethical principles into the child in the form of an immediate feeling in which differences are not yet explicit, and the negative aim of raising children out of the instinctive physical

level to self-subsistence and freedom of personality, and so to the level at which they have the power to leave the natural unity.

Once the children have been educated to freedom of personality and are capable of holding free property and of founding families of their own, the original family moves into its time of ethical dissolution and the question of inheritance must be dealt with. The essence of inheritance in Hegel's view is the transfer of property which is in principle common to private ownership. This transfer becomes increasingly confused as the sense of family unity fades. The particular danger in Hegel's view at the time of dissolution, either through the father's death or when persons and families have become so dispersed through civil society as to have begun to gain self-subsistence, is that a man may squander his capital or bequeath it to someone outside the family. To the extent that the family's capital is an embodiment of the family unity however, Hegel regards bequests to friends as ethically justified only when the friendship was so close as to approximate the family relationship.

Finally, Hegel suggests that the family disintegrates essentially and through nature. In this sense the moments bound together in the family's unity must be released from the concept of the ethical idea to self-subsistent objective reality. This then is the stage of difference, or the determination of particularity which is related to universality

but in such a way that universality is its basic principle though only inward. The transition from the family to civil society is the emergence of the particular; the leaving behind of an undifferentiated universality and the arrival at the realm of appearance.

Marcuse lists three features of the Hegelian concept of the family that particularly qualify it for guiding the individual's development from subjective particularity to objective universality, i.e., Hegel's sense of authentic freedom: 1) It is a direct unification of individuals into a general community without the person as such being negated. 2) Its real character of general community is constantly in the individual's awareness. 3) Since the actual communal nature of needs and interests concern an actual universality (if limited) they are raised from the sphere of mere selfishness and are 'moralized'.

Taken by themselves, these aspects of the family emphasize the development of a collective or social consciousness in the individual that also integrates the notion of responsibility to, and freedom in the full scope of humanity. But Marcuse points out that all of these features are only realized in the specific relationship between family and property, which is the central focus of all features of the Hegelian family. Hegel's concept of the individual as an existing person is basically that he is a private owner, and Marcuse quotes Hegel in the Enzyklopädie, the "person only

becomes merged with himself in property, and only possesses the 'external sphere of his freedom' in property."¹⁴

But even if property is the first embodiment of freedom, and therefore is a substantive end, Hegel argues that it would not be possible to realize that actual universality which the sociopolitical order must possess for its authority if the individual remains tied to the 'arbitrariness' of private property. Thus individuals must transcend their selfish and egoistic ends in relation to the general community in order to facilitate their actual and objective universal end. Therefore the Hegelian system requires that property maintain itself as property yet shed its merely egoistic and private character. The family, particularly the rights of inheritance of the family, accomplishes this rather ambivalent task since the family property is owned by the whole family rather than a single member. The universality of the property is guaranteed by means of the limitations on the freedom of bequest, and being anchored in the family through inheritance for several generations, property is more or less entrusted to the individual by the general community. Marcuse suggests that by making the moralizing and eternalizing of property the specific function of the family, the state is elevated above the sphere of property insofar as society and the state are relieved of the task of the primary 'peremptory' safeguarding of property.

As the social entity for whom the moral evils of private property pose the least danger, the family in Hegel's analysis appears as mysteriously impervious to the vicious effects of social dissension, antagonism, and divisiveness as any ideological picture of "mother" and the family would have us believe today. In both cases the implication is that somehow the family, as substantial entity, exudes a protective cloak of lawful, ethical principles which shield each family member from the immoral chaos, passion, or irrationality of the greater social environment as long as that family member remembers familial "piety," executes his familial duties, and sets about contributing his bit towards fending off the roving and rootless rabble by starting his own family as soon as possible. Were it possible to consult those women who were at once expected "to do for" the family and to symbolize the purity, the love, and the morality of the family, the idea of the family's natural immunity to the vices of human greed, abuse, opportunism, and general inhumanity to others might be found strikingly over-generalized. To the extent that Hegel's attempt to transcend the particularity of private property by entrusting it to the family follows this kind of logic it is necessary to reconsider whether the moment of universality can actually be realized if the family is so "burdened" by the dynamics of private ownership, insofar as private ownership manifests itself as exclusivity and division among individuals in civil society along the lines of financial assets.

In the Manuscripts of 1844 Marx criticizes the concept of communism offered by the French Socialists Proudhon, Fourier, and Saint-Simon as immature and incomplete insofar as they have not "grasped the positive essence of private property and just as little the human nature of need."¹⁵ This immature communism, he argues, attempts an historical proof for itself by referring to disconnected historical phenomena opposed to private property whereas it is necessary that the entire revolutionary movement finds its empirical and theoretical basis in the movement of private property, which when positively transcended is the real appropriation of the human essence by and for man.

Because material private property is the "material perceptible expression of estranged human life," the movement of private property, i.e., production and consumption, is ". . . the perceptible revelation of the movement of all production until now, i.e., the realisation or the reality of man."¹⁶ The positive transcendence of private property therefore is the positive transcendence of all estrangement and the appropriation of human life, and furthermore is the return of man from a particular mode of production, of which the family is one, to his human or social mode of existence.

Marx emphasizes that this positive transcendence of private property cannot be understood as "direct one-sided gratification" in the sense of "possessing" or "having," for it is the appropriation by man of his total essence in

a total manner, i.e., as a whole man. Instead of the impoverished notion of private property as an object that is only "ours" when we have it, i.e., when it is used by us, Marx suggests that each of man's human relations to the world, whether of a physical or mental character is, in its orientation to an object, the appropriation of that object and the appropriation of the human world. Thus the transcendence of private property is the "complete emancipation of all human senses and qualities," which allows man to relate to things for the sake of the thing, but with the thing itself understood as "an objective human relation to itself and to man, and vice-versa."¹⁷ In this way need or enjoyment lose their egotistical character and nature loses its character of mere utility by becoming human use.

This phenomenological analysis clarifies the fundamental contradiction in the concept of private property which Hegel apparently sought to circumvent by means of the family's communal ownership to the necessary family capital. But even when the family's capital is pictured as a wholistic estate protected against dissolution by inheritance laws, Hegel's attempt to ground exclusive ownership in the substantial unity of the family seems to be only a disclaimer or qualification of the exclusive rights of private ownership insofar as we are now dealing with family against family rather than one independent individual against another. Ultimately it would seem that the effect of the family's sense of "having" on a

developing consciousness would be the same as that of an individualistic sense of possession, for it is difficult to imagine how the concept of "ours" as family could be kept from suggesting the concept of "mine" as individual.

At the same time, it is questionable that the concept of "ours" as family can be kept distinct from the concept of "ours" as human species. Again in the Manuscripts, Marx writes that man is a species being because he adopts the species as his object in practice and in theory, and because he treats himself as the actual living species, i.e., as a universal and therefore free being.¹⁸ The whole character of a species is contained in the character of its life-activity which for man is free, conscious activity in which man's own life is an object for him.¹⁹ Estranged labor, however, reverses the relationship between a man and his life-activity so that he makes his life-activity a mere means to his existence instead of an object of his will. Private property as the product and the necessary consequence of estranged labor, as well as the means by which labor alienates itself therefore institutionalizes the alienation of truly human, social property, which is essentially the estrangement of man's species nature from man. The extent to which this estrangement ". . . means that one man is estranged from the other, as each of them is from man's essential nature. . ." ²⁰ underscores the futility of attempting to counteract these effects of private property by means

of the family, particularly when the family's substantial bond is manifested in property or as the care and activity of the family with respect of property.

The contradiction inherent in the family's relationship to private property is even more clearly demonstrated in the case of the woman who is all too often considered a part of the family property herself, or is regarded as a servant or caretaker for whom the maintenance of property is actually a matter of self-fulfillment. This is, of course, the relation to the family and its material "substance" against which many women today most vigorously protest, but it is significant that this denial is expressed as a demand to be equally able to realize their individuality by means of a liberation from attention to family property, i.e., duties, etc. For those women who have realized that their activity, or labor, for the family is an unfree activity insofar as it is determined and demanded by family members who are under no similar obligations, the presence of estranged labor and its concomitant manifestation as private property is no surprise. Ultimately it is the feminist outcry against the restriction and emptiness (in the sense of self-objectification) of the family situation that points to the failure of the family to counteract the egoism and estrangement of private property precisely because the bourgeois family demands that a woman participate in a form of alienated labor for the production and reproduction of

the family as determined by the needs of the non-workers, i.e., the young who are preparing to leave the family and the man (usually) whose activity is other than housework and child-rearing. It should be emphasized at this point that the importance of a woman's estrangement from the labor of maintaining a family is directly connected to the concept of the family as the 'root' of society and the subsequent pervasion of alienated labor as an acceptable and familiar condition. In this sense, the woman's question is basic to the estrangement of labor throughout society, making her "gains" in civil society as the "equal" of her husband obviously flawed insofar as they too exhibit the features of alienation and exploitation criticized in the family.

Marx's treatment of private property that we have been considering primarily deals with its phenomenological effect upon the individual to whom the concept of species being becomes increasingly vague and unreal, while the idea of truly human, social property becomes increasingly idealistic. The problem of private property, however, can be seen to invade the family from the very moment of its (the family's) beginning insofar as marriage is objectified and made substantial in a relationship to property which is exclusive. To the extent that marriage and the family are intended to establish the boundaries between "our" things and "their" things, and to limit the obligations of "our" cooperative efforts to the practical, i.e., commercially expedient,

scope of this particular family's productive activity, it is questionable that Hegel's ideal of self-conscious love is ever realized. In this sense the concept of marriage is such that it represents for any two particular members of civil society an economic union in which a union on the level of mind is of little consequence.

Contemporary trends point to the degree that marriage has indeed become identified with a kind of business partnership, where the business is to both accumulate capital and produce heirs for its inheritance, but also point to the fact that the structure of marriage in bourgeois society actually has a damaging effect upon the union of minds or self-conscious love. As the practice of sequential marriage is becoming more acceptable, many other people refuse to admit the institution, as ceremony and legality, into the realm of their relationship in an attempt to clearly differentiate between their human, emotional bonds and a business agreement. Both cases evidence to extent to which marriage as a property arrangement reduces the dimension of human response and feeling in the interests of material gain.

Although the processes by which marriage is losing, or has lost, its ideal character as ethico-legal love properly demand sociological analysis, the fact that marriage cannot be simplistically defined as a love relationship with a unique effect on one's economic concerns is important in working out the problem of liberating the woman of the family without

destroying the family, specifically, without destroying its capacity to engender a consciousness of unity and commonality among human beings. Clearly, if it is the family's property and imposition of estranged labor that can be seen to falsify the ideal characteristics which would contribute to the advance of reason towards freedom, it is not the family per se that must be "abolished," but its limiting and alienating features. Particularly as the world becomes increasingly interdependent and global in scope, the aspects of the family which have in the past been necessary for its survival, and therefore for the survival of its members as individuals (such as its capacity to cooperate as a productive unit apart from the organization of civil society, and to provide for most of the needs of its members in a relatively self-sufficient fashion) should today be given the kind of critical analysis that would be capable of understanding the family in a new sense. Instead of looking for ways in which the family as economic unit may reassert itself in civil society, it would seem timely to reconsider the relationships of family members to the family with respect to human beings' unique potential for recognizing their species as their essential being.

In criticizing the French philosophers, Marx observes that their proposal to replace marriage with the 'community of women' is simply to make women communal property with the same aspects of prostitution as is distinctive of the concept

of "universal" private property. Marx criticizes this approach as the expression of infinite degradation in which man exists for himself. Instead he argues that the relation of man to woman is the direct, natural, and necessary relation of person to person, in which man's relation to nature is immediately his relation to man, and his relation to man is immediately his relation to nature. Furthermore, he finds in this relationship the expression of man's own progress towards the full realization of his human and natural essence.

From this relationship one can therefore judge man's whole level of development. From the character of this relationship follows how much man as a species being, as man, has come to be himself and to comprehend himself; the relation of man to woman is the most natural relation of human being to human being. It therefore reveals the extent to which man's natural behaviour has become human, or the extent to which the human essence in him has become a natural essence--the extent to which his human nature has come to be natural to him . . . and . . . man's need has become a human need . . . the extent to which he in his individual existence is at the same time a social being.²¹

Hegel argued that marriage must be monogamous because personality only attains its self-consciousness through consciousness of itself in another, but to the extent that legal monogamy militates against man's realization of truly human behavior by encasing the relationship to man and to nature in the legal and ideological trappings of ownership and estranged labor, it is apparent that marriage does not facilitate the attainment of self-consciousness. And if the demands of ownership and estranged labor are such that

an individual's relationship to another person must be exclusive of all other such relationships, it is apparent that marriage is not the sort of necessary relationship to nature conducive to man's developing consciousness of his species essence, i.e., of his capacity for free conscious activity, but rather the obstruction to this rational development which ceases its movement in the essentially accidental relationship of two particulars.

Although an emphasis on the nature of a woman's role in the family is frequently a sign that the "Woman Question" has been shelved while the more important matter of bringing about the revolution is discussed, it seems apparent that it is specifically the conditions of this role in bourgeois society that inform the particular questions of women's alienation from civil society and from their own personal development and being. To abstract women from the family role is to suggest that women are only an oppressed minority seeking access to the opportunities of civil society as would any group of oppressed men. The question is then a matter which is not peculiar to women, or to a woman's consciousness insofar as it leaves the individual woman alone to work out a compromise between private and public life in her own particular (and alienated) situation. The significant risk facing society as a whole is the apparent trend towards just this sort of compromise insofar as it furthers the perversion of man's relationship to his life-activity. Hegel's location

of the family as the Ethical root of the State speaks directly to the human need to realize the bonds of mutual concern and respect in humanity as a whole, and the historical centrality of the woman to the family generates in her demands for greater opportunity, etc., a universal concern for the nature of our source of species-consciousness. Nevertheless, Hegel's conception of the family itself is far too limited to structure the kind of experience that will be necessary for the realization of genuine human freedom. It is particularly in respect to these inadequacies that feminist demands gain a universal and revolutionary character.

FOOTNOTES

¹Hegel, Philosophy of Right, trans. and ed. by T. M. Knox (London, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), addition #20, p. 234.

²Ibid., p. 36 (par. 33).

³Ibid., p. 142.

⁴H. Marcuse, "A Study on Authority," in Studies in Critical Philosophy, trans. by Joris De Bres (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972), p. 105.

⁵Ibid., p. 108.

⁶Ibid., p. 109.

⁷Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Collected Works, Vol. 3: Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 (New York: International Publishers, 1975), pp. 334-335.

⁸Ibid., p. 339.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Karl Marx, Collected Works, Vol. 3: Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law (New York: International Publishers, 1975), p. 180.

¹¹Ibid., p. 181.

¹²Ibid., p. 183.

¹³Hegel, Philosophy of Right, p. 113.

¹⁴Marcuse, Studies in Critical Philosophy, p. 106.

¹⁵Marx, Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law, pp. 296-300.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 297.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 300.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 275.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 276.

²⁰Ibid., p. 277.

²¹Ibid., p. 296.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Hegel. Philosophy of Right. Translated and edited by T. M. Knox. London, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1972.
- Marcuse, H. Studies in Critical Philosophy. Translated by Joris De Bres. Boston: Beacon Press, 1972.
- Marx, Karl. Collected Works. Vol. 3: Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law. New York: International Publishers, 1975.
- Marx, Karl and Frederick Engels. Collected Works. Vol. 3: Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1843-44. New York: International Publishers, 1975.

THE REIFICATION OF SEXUAL BEING: A DIALECTICAL
APPROACH TO WOMEN'S LIBERATION

PREFACE

Woman's fight for personal freedom and civil equality is essentially grounded in the notion that feminity is not a limiting condition. Thus the struggle is seeking to prove that because a woman's physique is generally less suitable for heavy manual labor, or because of her more immediate and more demanding relation to the biological reproduction of the species, a woman is merely sexually distinct but not sexually inferior. To a certain extent the feminist argument seems forced to employ the logic of the mind-body dualism in order to establish the irrelevance of physical function in matters of rational, i.e., intellectual and moral, capacity. In the words of Plato's argument for the equality of women, anatomical distinction does not imply differences that are relevant for "our purpose," which in Plato's case is the discrimination between individuals suited for Guardianship and those suited only for material maintenance of the Republic. Similarly women today argue that the feminine function in sexual reproduction does not limit individual function in human society.

True to the liberal, democratic, and especially American tradition, the struggle against individual oppression by virtue of group affiliation, or in this case

physical categorization, initially appears to be a move which is wholeheartedly in support of self-determination and the right of individual variance. Thus the woman who is able to claim her freedom from the stereotypical roles and activities of women in general should find her freedom for individual expression greatly improved. The logic is straightforward and direct, moving within the tradition of bourgeois individualism and the historical expansion of civil rights. It would be pointless to deny that this logic does in fact work to the extent that equal opportunity programs and provisions make it possible for women to gain access to educational or career experiences which inevitably contribute to anyone's development as an individual. But it is as necessary to identify the inherent flaw in the logic of bourgeois privatism as it affects the women's struggle as it is to support the struggle in its efforts to break down (and/or through) the obstructions to feminine development in bourgeois society. There are two major reasons which I find to press the importance of such an analysis.

First, to the extent that the women's movement is potentially the most broadly based issue-oriented group on the political scene today, the well-publicized split between women who find total personal fulfillment in the home and those who insist that individual being must include life and activity outside the home threatens to render the women's movement as divided and consequently impotent as any past

attempt to unify a genuinely revolutionary consciousness. Furthermore, this split can extend beyond the obvious division between those who assume that the pursuits of children and education or careers are mutually exclusive, and can result in an internal estrangement from one's own capacities for independent thought and action. Thus because the alternative to the bourgeois family and home life is posed as an active public life subject to all of the qualifications of success in bourgeois society, those women who, like many men, find activity and participation in the mainstream of contemporary society unacceptable, seem to share the sentiments of women strongly defensive of family and children, even though they are distinctly independent and self-determined individuals.

Second, to the extent that the women's movement claims for its goal the liberation of human potential, but structures its struggle according to a formal concept of equality, it is marked by a reified notion of human being which cannot account for sexual human being. Thus the victory of the fully equal woman, and the fully legally-endowed woman, is the victory of the woman who appears as the non-sexual individual. In this sense, the internal fragmentation that is required for the utilization of the "freedom" to engage in market activities by selling one's labor power is now repeated, not only by its greater extension, but by the necessary sacrifice of the sexual

dimension of personal being required for the full enjoyment of civil rights. The crisis of the content of women's liberation is thus the crisis of sexual being as essential to individual human being.

KANTIAN REALITY: THE INTELLIGIBLE
CONTINGENCY

Kant begins his introduction to the Critique of Pure Reason with the assertion that all knowledge must begin with experience. The human "faculty of knowledge" would be inactive, he argues, unless objects affected the senses in such a way as to (1) produce representations, (2) arouse the understanding to compare these representations, and (3) by combining or separating them, develop the knowledge of objects which is known as experience.¹ The Kantian picture of human understanding is that of a product of the experiential given and the conceptual given(s), or of the reality of material being and rational perception, the former (in both cases) being in principle unknowable (in a direct sense). Kant recognized that the determinative force of the structure of our perceptive faculties had to be analyzed and understood if the Enlightenment vision of a thoroughly rational and knowable world was to achieve the status of truth. Thus for Kant the crucial question with respect to our empirical knowledge is that of ". . . what our own faculty of knowledge . . . supplies from itself."²

In the first part of the Transcendental Doctrine of Elements, the Transcendental Aesthetic, Kant gives a fairly concise statement of the primary constituents of human

understanding. On the material side of any cognitive experience stands the object, the worldly given, which is the source of all thought and yet ultimately unknowable in itself. Intuition, as both a property and a capacity, is the bridge which issues from the intellectual side of the experience and represents the ultimate limit to the relationship between rationality and the world. Intuitions are yielded only by sensibility and all thought (as a means of understanding) is directed to intuition, Kant argues, but the relationship between knowledge and its object(s) is fundamentally a process of mediation and intervening steps. To the extent that Kant posits the reality of material existence beyond human understanding he defines appearance as precisely ". . . the undetermined object of an empirical intuition. . ." ³ but the Kantian use of the term 'appearance' is limited to the labeling of the unknown. Matter resides in appearance and is subject to perception only "a posteriori," or through the process of sensation, Kant believes, but this matter has no determinative force. In its inaccessibility, the appearance lacks form and thus has no viable place in the ordered relations which constitute human understanding and consequently systematic reality. The form of all appearance, Kant argues, ". . . must lie ready for the sensations a priori in the mind, and so must allow of being considered apart from all sensation." ⁴

Kant's analysis of human understanding focuses upon

reason's inability to make the "leap" towards the synthesis of definition of an object such that the principles of the object cannot be deduced from concepts but must be indirectly surmised by relating concepts to possible experience.⁵ Kant's effort to establish a thoroughly systematic rationalism depended upon the capacity of the system to allow for the deduction of every given aspect from its basic principle. In his critical reconsideration of the Kantian analysis, Georg Lukacs argues that this notion of "intelligible contingency" is not the recognition of any facticity or content. Rather it is the absorption of the given into the system of concepts in such a way as to produce a "methodically purified world" in which rational categories are not applied to the real material substratum but to an intelligible subject matter.⁶ Lukacs identifies this process of absorption as the origin of the "double tendency" of bourgeois philosophy, i.e., the origin of the tendency to acquire an increasing control over the details of existence at the expense of the concept of existence as a whole.

In many ways, the struggle for woman's liberation appears to be snagged in the confusion of the intelligible subject matter for the real material substratum. We are, most of us, very clear about the extent to which femininity cannot be defined along the lines of traditional feminine helplessness, weakness, and dependence in contrast to traditional

male strength, reliability, and protectiveness. We are not at all clear about the nature of femininity, or consequently masculinity, in its positive sense, and to the extent that the mere suggestion of sexual identification appears to threaten the demand for equal recognition by the legal and economic institutions of our society, there is little significant effort being made to achieve some substantial understanding of the human implications of sexual bifurcation. Instead the concept of femininity is being more and more closely associated with the array of Kant's "things-in-themselves," i.e., it is increasingly becoming understood as an entity fundamentally characterized by given-ness and separated from human understanding by the same void which extends between all objects whose origins cannot be accounted for in terms of systematic rationalism and the concepts which deliver the whole of human knowledge. What we have come to understand about femininity is that biological distinction of itself does not determine social behavior. What we have not begun to understand is the way in which human social behavior depends upon that biological distinction.

It is specifically the dialectics of sexuality which is immediately threatened by the current tendency to treat sexuality as a merely recreational concern that ought not intrude upon the business of making one's mark upon the world. This is not, however, to suggest that

a return to sex stereotyping and the relegation of woman to the family and strictly domestic concerns is in order. That woman's place and function in the bourgeois, patriarchal family did imprison the total individual in a role whose virtue it was to be the support and comfort of the "superior" human being is not in question, nor can there be any doubt that a relationship bound by so rigid a form is unable to sponsor the growth and self-realization of the individual. But to the extent that one's being is only actualized by and through the activity of becoming, either in mediating interaction with the world or in immediate relation with other human beings, there is no real prospect for the liberation of femininity. Rather the reduction of the significance of one's biological identity is an extension of the impulse of systematic rationalism to dismiss the given in favor of its own deductive detail when it becomes expedient to do so. Thus as Lukacs comments with respect to the action understood from the contemplative stance:

. . . action, in the sense of changing reality, of an orientation towards the qualitatively essential and the material substratum, . . . consists in predicting, in calculating as far as possible the probable effects of those laws and the subject of the 'action' takes up a position in which these effects can be exploited to the best advantage of his own purposes. . . . on the one hand, the more the whole of reality is rationalised . . . the more such prediction becomes feasible. On the other hand, it is no less evident that the more reality and the attitude of the subject 'in action' approximate to this type, the more the subject will be transformed into a receptive organ ready to pounce on opportunities created

by the system of laws and his 'activity' will narrow itself down to the adoption of a vantage point from which these laws function in his best interests. . . .⁷

To the extent that the system has never operated in the best interests of the independent and self-respecting woman, nor in the best interests of the compassionate and cooperative man, its accommodation of women and the ideological promulgation of sexless equality must be recognized as a matter of systematic convenience and not confused for genuine human liberation.

LAW AS A FORMAL CALCULUS

Although the legal struggle for women's rights is grounded in and informed by what is referred to as the essentially human yearning for self-reliance and self-direction, it is limited by the sense of justice to which it speaks, i.e., the justice which prevails in a world of legally buttressed unfreedom. Here justice is apparently achieved when women do not find their processes of mediation in the world and their engagement with other human beings recapitulating their traditional, repressive role in the patriarchal family. Legal justice is expected to be realized with the creation of the opportunity for the existence of the independently equal female person by the official recognition of the sexlessness of labor power, and of the potential rootlessness, i.e., mobility, of the woman who is independent of

the man. It can be expected that this recognition will make it possible for some women to realize the extent of social integration enjoyed by some men, but it can also be expected that an official legal recognition of sexual equality will be manifested as an indiscriminate denial of human sexuality in the public arena.

The occlusive feature of the legal arbitration of social relationships is not a unique phenomenon peculiarly arising with the issue of feminine equality. Rather it is the mark of the reified development of law that social relationships must be reduced to those few elements which allow of prediction, i.e., which can be counted on to support and facilitate a particular form of economic production. Lukacs locates the origin of the reified development of law in the period of the bourgeois revolution with the struggle against the notion of the Divine Right of Kings and hierarchical privilege. From the start the fight was the struggle of form versus content, he argues, rather than a conflict of principles, with the revolutionary class refusing to acknowledge the validity of a legal relationship which they saw as existing merely in fact.

At this time, the bourgeois class, in order to facilitate its own ascendancy, defied the prevailing order on the basis of the assumption that the formal equality and universality of law, as expressed by the concept of natural law, was able to determine the content of the law actually

regulating social relationships.⁸ But while the fight to realize the universal extension of human rights suggested by natural law was the attempt to ground law in reason and give it a rational content, the consolidation of bourgeois law after its first victories was the systematic abandonment of that rational project. Bourgeois law had to allow a wedge to be driven between the formal categories of law and its factual content in order to guarantee the political and economic content of its legal institutions and in order to halt the appeal of the opposition to its perception of the content of natural law. Out of this period of victory and consolidation, Lukacs suggests, law in bourgeois society gained the specific character of a formal calculus by means of which the legal consequences of particular actions can be most accurately determined.

Lukacs argues that the real basis for the development of law is a change in the power relations between classes, but that it is just these relations which are the limits of the closed system of statutes. To the extent that calculability is crucial to modern capitalism, it is necessary that the economic system be surrounded and supported by a system of justice and an administration which are similarly predictable. Lukacs points out that the transition from the old capitalist forms of acquisition to modern capitalism's strictly rational organization of work on the basis of rational technology could not have come into being if the dispensing of justice

had been in any way "capricious." This need for calculation was thus the revolutionary bourgeois need for rational systemization and the abandonment of empiricism, tradition, and material dependence.

It is similarly the contemporary bourgeois need to discard the forms of human relations which no longer function as an aid for and support of the socioeconomic order but rather thwart its efficiency and challenge its authority. In this sense it is the family which becomes an obstacle to the smooth operation of a system of production which depends upon the worker who is above all mobile, available, and free of any real dependents. It can be shown that capitalist production previously relied upon the nuclear family for the reproduction of labor power qua labor power, and to some extent this is still the case: We have not yet accommodated the science of "cloneing" or test-tube babies, although the theory is reputedly within our reach. But the family's vulnerability to the demands of an increasingly inclusive system of education, entertainment, and recreation is demonstrated both by the virtual disappearance of the extended family and by the "crisis" of the nuclear family. Considering the hours a child spends in school, in after-school activities and lessons, at summer camp, and of course in front of the television, it is clear that it is not the family, i.e., the significant and essentially specific adults in a child's life which prepares the next generation for their

stint of labor in the productive processes. This training and "conditioning" can be, and is, more efficiently done through the agencies and institutions of the social system itself. Thus the stable family is really of minimal use to the productive system, five years perhaps at the most, and poses a proportionally greater problem in its unprofitable function as the social unit which can nurture and create truly human relationships.

THE CONTEMPLATIVE STANCE: REIFICATION
AS A PROCESS

Lukacs defines the essence of rational calculation as ". . . the recognition and the inclusion in one's calculations of the inevitable chain of cause and effect in certain events -- independently of individual 'caprice'."⁹ The advantage of this rational calculation is that one may determine what the chain of cause and effect in certain events should be, and then arrange one's life to make the most of it, or one may take advantage of protective devices and preventive measures to guarantee the predetermined sequence which appears most profitable. Because this approach to the world is grounded in the assumption that knowable laws govern all of the events which structure an individual's life and can therefore make it possible for the individual to achieve his greatest personal advantage by deferring to the movement of those laws, Lukacs suggests that it is a contemplative

posture. He argues that there is no qualitative difference in the structure of consciousness between that of the worker whose behavior is determined by the machine he observes, the entrepreneur who seeks to employ a particular type of mechanical development, and the technologist who seeks some form of profit in the appropriation of scientific principles by technology.¹⁰ It may be added that the same kind of contemplative stance is apparent in the individual who attempts to live up to the ideological picture of "perfect" family life in all its faddish variations by conscientiously following the prescription of the latest sex manual, child-raising manual, or cookbook. It is significant that family tradition and custom which also directs (to varying degrees) how one relates to one's spouse, how the children are raised, and how and what one eats is distinct in its nonrational character insofar as it is not calculated to coincide with the demands of the greater socioeconomic environment but finds its identity in standing apart from the world of public affairs.

But the adoption of a contemplative approach to the world, wherein one seeks independence through accommodation does not only divide the individual from the lawfully regulated society into which he must by calculation find gainful entry. Lukacs finds that the individual develops a contemplative attitude toward his own objectified and reified faculties such that they are not perceived as organic parts of his

personality. Instead, his qualities and abilities are perceived as things which he can own and possibly capitalize upon without the danger of betraying an essentially unified subjectivity.¹¹ The extent to which this internal process of reification is expected and assumed in all human relations is well illustrated by Lukacs' reference to Kant's description of marriage as ". . . the reciprocal use made by one person of the sexual organs and faculties of another,"¹² for it is the prevalence of just this perception of marriage today which most deservedly draws criticism and calls for negation.

This kind of explicit denial of the whole person with whom one is engaged in a relationship expresses the complete rationalization of the world and the self in which calculation comes to be known as the supreme skill, predictability the supreme value, and individual success a matter of manipulative cunning. Despite the difficulty of reaching any agreement on the reality of the feminine essence, it is generally agreed that the traditional implications of the descriptive term 'femininity' are those traits which are opposed to logical and calculating determination. Intuition, emotional and irrational response, and, above all, love stand forth as the mark of the quintessential feminine character. As Lukacs' analysis of the development of reified law has show, intuitive decision-making and "emotional" reaction to the affairs of bourgeois market activity simply have

no place in the world of rational economics. Similarly as Horkheimer observes with respect to the family's socializing function, "If the individual . . . is to be . . . habituated not to despair in the hard world . . . but to face it courageously, a pitiless lack of consideration for himself and others must become second nature to him,"¹³ obviating any possible significance of "love." The point is that the dimensions of human being which are traditionally, albeit questionably, associated with femininity are a liability to the individual who demands entry into the reified economic and political world and who intends to achieve some degree of success in that activity.

To be sure, the correlation of femininity with the nonrational virtues is to fall dangerously near to the sin of begging the question, for it is precisely such myths about womanhood and its capacities that the women's movement and Equal Opportunity Programs seek to explode. Nevertheless, it is the case that the newly "emancipated" woman will have to relinquish what shreds of the nonrational dimension of human being have been left her by default if she is to accomplish the integration into the reified world of economic and political activity which is to be made possible by the "opening of doors," etc. In his book, The Crisis of Psychoanalysis Erich Fromme describes the precedent set during the French Revolution for this kind of non-liberating "emancipation." At that time the theory that "souls have no sex" became a

significant force in the bourgeois revolution and formed the basis of the demand for women's political equality. But, Fromme argues, women's equality actually meant that woman was in her essence the same as man in bourgeois society. "Emancipation did not mean, therefore, that she was free to develop her specific, as yet unknown, traits and potentialities; on the contrary, she was being emancipated in order to become a bourgeois man."¹⁴ Again, it is important to recognize that the strategy of the women's movement is determined by the goal of exposing the fallacies of sexual identity which restrict an individual to specific sorts of activities on the basis of their gender. The contradiction of this intention to free the individual from the restraints of sex stereotyping is that in order to prove that she too has the capacities for efficiency and logic, the woman must separate those specific aspects out of her total being, just as the socially acceptable man must, and begin to define herself totally in terms of them. Unless she is able to develop a contemplative attitude toward her own reified faculties, the extension of economic and political opportunities to women will only serve to prove the nondialectical concept of sexual difference which has so far barred the genuine integration of the feminine into society and which has consequently established a firm wedge between the private and the public along the lines of the irrational versus the rational.

Lukacs identifies the novel aspect of modern rationalism as its claim to the discovery of the principle by which all material phenomena in both nature and society are connected. Whereas previous formal systems limited their predictions and calculations to the specific material of their focus, modern bourgeois rationalism claims to be the universal method by which to obtain knowledge of the whole of existence. It is this claim which undermines the rational project insofar as the attempt to make rational categories universally significant collides with the given-ness of empirical facts. Furthermore, Lukacs suggests that the attempt to make a universal systematization of every given aspect of experience cannot resolve either the problem of the whole, or the problem of the ultimate substance of knowledge which is necessary for the completion of the system.¹⁵ Lukacs finds that both of these problems are most clearly and most functionally resolved in Kant's notion of "intelligible contingency," or the compromise between the ideal of thorough-going rationality and the irrational given, the "thing-in-itself."

SEXUAL IDENTITY: THE QUESTION OF BEING

It is traditional to think of the relationship between men and women as a problem beyond rational solution

primarily because communication between them is basically flawed. The tendency is to mythologize the conflicts and misunderstandings as a "fact of life" and proceed on the assumption that men have their sphere of life, women theirs, and while both are absolutely necessary, communication between them is not. The tension produced by the mutual lack of understanding of each other adds variety and spice to life somewhat on the principle of the attraction of opposites, and it really is not worthwhile to challenge the natural sexual division of perception. Actually, this seems to be a nicely workable arrangement, not only allowing for difference but glorifying it as well, but for the problematic character of the unified and ultimately single world and its values. Events may allow two or more interpretations, but they remain fundamentally unique or they are shown to be separate events of a differing time and character. Thus we agree to disagree on the grounds of sexual difference at a cost which is generally either the denial of the importance of that difference or the denial of the importance of its confrontation.

1. The Platonic Dialectic: The Logos of Being

In his essay, "On the Problem of the Dialectic," Marcuse analyzes the meaning of the dialectic beginning with its original use by Plato, in order to gain a critical perspective on its use in contemporary philosophy and in Marxist

theory and practice. When the dialectic appears in contemporary philosophy as a kind of "salve" for the apparent necessity of contradiction, Marcuse suggests, it has been misused as a means to avoid identifying contradictions in the material world, much as when the disparity between perceptions and responses of persons of opposite sex is dismissed as inevitable and therefore beyond practical concern. Within Marxism, a similar tendency to accept that which is contradictory in its unresolved state is manifested in the view that the dialectic is either a "residue of Hegelianism" which might as well be removed from Marxist theory and practice, or is a practical danger insofar as what is actually a regressive action might be claimed as a necessity.¹⁶ This latter situation generally describes the attempt to trivialize the gaps and holes in communication between the sexes and to establish either one sex role or the other as the normative model for all social activities. Even when such an attempt involves the denunciation of the oppressive conditions of women, the tendency to accept a "natural" contradiction in sexual interaction sustains the value of a single sexual character which can be only arbitrarily isolated.

Marcuse argues that Plato understood the meaning of the dialectic in its most fundamental sense, i.e., in terms of its relation to "true being." In Plato's work the dialectic is associated with the highest expression of human knowledge and belongs to the Greek sense of Logos, both as

the Logos of being and as the Logos of human discourse which makes true being "visible." In the Republic, Marcuse finds dialectical human discourse referred to as a "power" by means of which human reason is able to "see" being as it is in itself, i.e., in "truth," while in the Philebus he notes Plato's opposition to the abuse of the dialectic as simply an "instrument of cognition" or methodology which everyone can apply anywhere.¹⁷ The necessary relation between the dialectical ability and the comprehension of true being does not suggest that one might expect to find every individual in some sort of obvious opposition to another individual, such as woman to man, which automatically reveals the truth of the individual's being, for this simplistic application of the dialectical method does not proceed beyond the apparent disparity and unity.

For Plato, true being consists in the unity which is obscured by the multiplicity of material objects and individuals and thus eludes the grasp of purely empirical reasoning. Furthermore, true being is itself dialectical and therefore requires that the effort to conceptualize what belongs together must be accompanied by the effort to separate what only appears to be linked together. Ultimately it is not the form of opposition which is presented by the world that represents Plato's sense of the dialectic in relation to the Logos of being, but rather the rational capacity to probe beyond that form and confront the tension of opposites

unencumbered by the immediate multiplicity of the world. In this sense we may expect to find that masculinity and femininity have a true unity and a true difference beyond that which we immediately encounter and yet which are available only to the rational process of making distinctions as first suggested by the immediate engagement with difference.

In the dialogues following the Republic, Marcuse finds Plato's conception of the dialectic moving towards the idea of the being of Being itself. In the Theatetus, Plato clearly states that the state of being can only be understood as a process of becoming, which is the result of movement, change, and combination with other being, and that there is no moment of absolutely independent being about the individual at all. Marcuse points out that this unceasing movement and unification must also apply to the ultimate Ideas which determine being in Plato's epistemology such that their ideal being is not simply unique and unambiguous, but is inclusive of multiplication, ambiguity, and finally coherence. Coming to terms with the being of being itself is thus the problem of locating the unity in multiplicity while maintaining the multiplicity: i.e., it is the problem of comprehending how being achieves being without interrupting the movement and therefore arbitrarily isolating what is only an aspect of the movement that is being.¹⁸

My difficulty in coming to terms with the nature of

sexual being begins with the ambiguity of the particular (or the many) rather than with that of the one, insofar as it is the character of femininity and its liberation which is in question. Nevertheless, Plato's sense of the dialectic's ontological dimension in which the main concern is to locate the one in the many without prohibiting its movement is instructive. Plato denies that being is either movement or permanence, sameness or difference, and insists on something beyond such oppositional situations. Instead, it is Marcuse's conclusion, from Plato, that everything which exists does so by being different from everything else. It is clear that this is a crucial determination for the concept of sexual identity because it squarely confronts the necessity of contrast. Whatever we may find femininity to be we cannot expect to find it in isolation, for it is only in distinction to that quality of sexuality which is different from it, masculinity, that femininity achieves a genuinely forceful presence.

Marcuse refers to Plato's explanation in the Sophist of the necessary relation between every existing individual and its specific nonbeing as the point at which the individual is differentiated not only from other individuals but also from Being itself.¹⁹ Again the concept of difference is central to the identity of the individual for it is the factor of difference between the individual and its appropriate nonbeing which distinguishes it from that which is

neither difference nor sameness (Being). In this sense, that which constitutes the individual's other is of fundamental importance to the individual's identity both for its distinction among individuals and for its distinction as an individual. Similarly being itself has no sexuality even though it must suggest sexuality in order to suggest life at all. The sexuality of the existing individual however can only be made to be ambiguous to the extent that the difference between male and female is obscured and repressed.

For Plato the relation between existing individuals cannot be other than a dynamic one for the freezing of a particular relation denies the movement of becoming which is essential to his concept of true being. As Marcuse finds in the Philebus, Plato's insight into the dynamism of being is dominated by the concern for that which has achieved being, or that being which is unified and yet a plurality. Plato's approach to this problem of becoming focuses upon the emergence of being from every relationship of being and nonbeing which must consequently engage in another such relationship. He suggests a threefold classification of being with which to account for the various terms of the dialectic of being: 1) the determined, 2) the undetermined, and 3) the underdetermined-being becoming determined being. It is this third category which represents the true and essential being.²⁰ The dynamic character of this third category responds to Plato's sense of the movement, change, and

multiplicity which "is" being and to understand it requires the use of dialectical reason.

At the same time Plato's concept of the achievement of being stresses the potential for unity, permanence, and sameness which also characterizes being insofar as Plato believes being must find shape in the flux of its existential relationships. Thus it would seem that the relationship between being and nonbeing is structured by points or moments of essential unity in which what had been a developing being is at rest in a certain stage of development. In this sense, the contrast that is necessary for the definition of femininity would become unnecessary once the characteristics of feminine sexuality have achieved a certain self-sufficiency comparable to the achievement of being. Indeed, the notion of the merely incidental nature of sexual contrast tends to dominate the concept of sexual identity such that one's sexual being is not understood as dependent upon its appropriate other. It is this trivialization of sexual contrast which leads to a neglect of the dialectical nature of sexuality in the question of feminine liberation.

It is, however, the specifically Platonic approach to the rational dialectic of being which perceives the relation between universal and particular being in the objective dimension of Logos and concepts. To the extent that Plato is concerned with the nature of being in itself, he is concerned not with the active achievement of being for itself

but rather with the achievement that is at least cognitively static. Thus it is a temptation to dismiss the dialectic as merely a necessary method which most closely parallels the form of the problem of discerning true being, true unity, amidst the multiplicity and flux of particular being, and similarly to dismiss the dialectic as merely the most viable means for picking out the elements of femininity from the field of sexual characteristics in general. Such a dismissal, however, also dismisses the individual for whom being means the subjective involvement in becoming. Sexuality is not a matter of objective decision for the individual for such objectivity would render it meaningless. It is rather in the relation to its nonbeing or significant otherness that sexuality realizes the meaning of masculinity or femininity, and this is a subjective realization for it is achieved through essentially subjective relationships.

2. The Hegelian Dialectic: Historical Being

Plato's consideration of the completion of the meaning of the dialectic suggests that becoming accomplishes a static sense of being expressed by the Logos of being itself and the objective concepts which are used to understand that Logos. To the extent that Plato's major concern with the dialectic is the process of becoming of being in itself, it is beyond the influence of the consciousness of the subjective particular just as the particular sexuality of the individual

is realized in only the universal sense when it is abstracted from the subjective dimension of relationships. Nevertheless, Plato's sense of the achievement of being insofar as the process of becoming in its entirety continually resolves into moments of particular being is what Marcuse locates as the origin of the insight into the historicity of being.²¹ With Hegel this insight is developed into an understanding of the essential evolution of all being in which the necessity of becoming grounds every moment of being in that previous moment from which it has developed.

The Hegelian effort to retrieve the ontological dialectic from the dimension of the objective begins with the conception of philosophy as that which establishes itself in a processual fashion, first by creating its own moments and then by passing through all of them. In the Phenomenology of Mind, Marcuse finds that Hegel's sense of this dialectical movement is that it is the "truth" of philosophy insofar as ". . . its very concept (the concept of philosophy) implies its existence."²² The dialectical method is the real dimension of the method of philosophy for Hegel because it is able to comprehend each moment of being as a result of a becoming which reflects the nature of the totality of being. Specifically, the dialectical method is able to free all being from its apparent rigidity and isolation, much as it is able to penetrate the multiplicity for Plato, but then for Hegel is able to consider being in its true essence by comprehending

the evolutionary movement of the whole into a new and "higher" being. Marcuse emphasizes that this is a sense of the necessity of becoming in which the real dimension of each being is determined by that from which it has developed. Thus being itself is the origin and the basis of the dialectic for Hegel, rather than the dialectic being simply a means of knowing or grasping the meaning of being by a cognitive subject.

Hegel's insight into the historicity of the dialectic suggests a process of development which cannot be abstracted from the individual in which it is realized, such as is suggested by the notion of an objective scheme according to which individuals will be found to conform. Typically, the growth and development of an individual's sexuality tends to be regarded as just such an objective process, with one's tastes and abilities developing according to the statement of one's genitals despite one's experiences or lack of experiences and their effect on one's sense of self. A similar attitude toward the nature of one's sexual being and its transcendent ability to become established and sustain the self independently of one's interactions with other persons appears to inform the critical and practical attempts to overcome sexual oppression insofar as those attempts seek to minimize the consideration of sexual difference in a world where the productive processes move farther and farther away from the sense of a natural division of labor. Hegel's concept of

the individual as the embodiment of the origin of which it is also the result is particularly instructive in its assertion of the significance of the ground of one's being. This can only lie in that from which one has developed, for genuine and necessary sexual identity must be the result of subjective dialectical sexual development. Thus it becomes important to question the nature of sexual distinction for which any real and present recognition of sexual difference is seen either as a threat or a potential threat to the supposedly non-sexual dimensions of the individual.

Hegel's analysis of the subjective character of historical being also raises the question of the relation of sexual identity to one's full sense of individual or personal being, for if one's sexual identity is merely a bit of attached data to be used or ignored at will, there is clearly no fundamental violence done to the individual when sexual differentiation is obscured. If, on the other hand, sexual identity in some sense grounds and informs the whole of individual being, not only in terms of shaping and developing one's responses to the world, but also in terms of its constitutive force with respect to the totality of being, the eradication of genuinely sexual distinction from the arena of human engagement and activity threatens both a reduction of individual being and a repression of human being itself. In this sense it is the individual which is the substance of the essential being of being, or as Marcuse finds it in the

Phenomenology of Mind, it is the substance of the individual mind, the subject, which undertakes the "tremendous labour of world history" by giving shape to the whole of the potential content of the universal mind.²³

To the extent that the philosophical method, i.e., the dialectical method, is indeed able to consider the nature of the totality by means of the comprehension of the particular being, it is the task of philosophy to question the nature of sexual distinction not only in terms of its reified and nondialectical imposition, but also in terms of its historical perseverance which Hegel suggests is an evolutionary process towards a "higher" and ultimately free being. It appears possible of course to reduce this historical pervasiveness to the necessity of biological determination, but such a reduction forfeits any capacity to deal with the specifically human nature of sexuality insofar as it reduces sexuality to a phenomenon so broad in scope that it includes far more than animals but anything which lives at all. The biological basis of sexuality is not in question, nor does it figure significantly in the self-consciousness of Hegel's concept of the universal mind, but the true and fully free realization of human sexuality towards which the individual processes of becoming are directed is a dimension of self-consciousness without which a realization of the total sense of human being would be incomplete. Thus we may return to Hegel's sense of the self-understanding of the individual mind as necessary

for the self-understanding of the universal mind and reassert the twofold nature of the philosophical task which arises with the determination to take action against the outrage of sexual oppression. If sexual discrimination in the matter of individual becoming is repressive and arbitrary, the denial of human sexuality as it is developed in and by the differentiation of individual being is repressive and arbitrary as well.

Marcuse argues that Hegel's concept of the historical dialectic is grounded in the concept of being as "self identification in other being."²⁴ As developed in the Phenomenology of Mind, this concept of being includes both the essential movement of all being and the oneness and sameness that allows for the cognitive subject who is able to conceptualize and claim his own identity. In this sense, the self-preservation of being throughout the various contradictions of its movement, i.e., throughout its encounters with other being and with its own nonbeing, is the subjective development which ultimately creates that which Being (not individual being) really is. The subjective development is thus distinctive of a particular individual for whom relation to another individual does not bring the movement of this development to a pause or halt but rather gives it articulation through the "contradiction" of its own movement in its contrast to that of the other. This relation to other being is a moment of unity which must encompass fundamentally diverse and individual beings in such a way as to preserve the identity of

the minds or consciousnesses for whom the unity brings individual definition. Unity is not in this sense, any more than it can really be in the expression of sexual love, the submergence of the individual into a "whole" of a separate and novel identity, for to the extent that it is a moment in which self-identification in other being is achieved, this unity is itself only the result of the active becoming of two separate individuals.

Furthermore, this unity is an essential moment in the expression and realization of individuality for it is the moment in which the movement that defines individuality is preserved precisely in the affirmation of the union, the moment in which the identity of the individual cannot be in doubt because it is by means of that identity that the union is achieved. The intimate and psychologically profound relationship of sexual love must be the archetypical moment of union between two individuals, for it is in this relationship that difference is immediately understood as both the source and the scope of joy. This difference however, is that differentness which is essential to individual being and is no more a matter of simplistic physical categorization than it is a matter of disagreement over daily routine. Rather it is the differentness which is the result of a particular individual's becoming, or that differentness which grounds and informs the unique identity of the individual. It is in coincidences with this essential differentness that the

historical dialectic of the individual's development achieves, in Hegel's terminology, "self-identification in otherness," or as Marcuse puts it, it is through the concretely subjective involvement in which one affects and is affected by others that individual being ". . . receives itself and behaves as a self."²⁵ Sexual love, as the subjective relationship of individual human sensuality, both physical and mental, is thus the moment which can preserve the diversity of individual being in the unity which binds two individuals together. But in its reified expression as a legal or merely customary contract it is as removed from the preservation of diversity as it is from the realization of what is in Hegelian terms the self-understanding of the universal mind.

3. The Marxian Critique: The Task of Historical Realization

Hegel's insight into the historical dialectic achieves its greatest force at the level of theoretical construction. If we accept, and consequently undertake, the aphoristic Hegelian motto: "The real is the rational and the rational is the real," the development of human sexuality and sexual difference can be understood as a necessary condition for human freedom. But Hegelian idealism, despite its historical emphasis, only provides for an understanding of that development as a total, and completed system. From the perspective of a single, finite, and above all particular human existence, i.e., that of the historical subject, the Hegelian articulation

of human development appears to suggest a degree of evolutionary inevitability which could easily justify the suppression of critical thought and action. For Marx, the necessity of countering the Hegelian exaggeration of universal human being was as clear as the necessity of preserving and employing Hegel's dialectical method:

But because Hegel has conceived the negation of the negation, from the point of view of the positive relation inherent in it, as the true and only positive, and from the point of view of the negative of all being, he has only found the abstract, logical, speculative expression for the movement of history, which is not yet the real history of man as a given subject, but only the act of creation, the history of the origin of man.²⁶

The task of history, therefore, once the world beyond the truth has disappeared, is to establish the truth of this world. The immediate task of philosophy, which is at the service of history, once the holy form of human self-estrangement has been unmasked, is to unmask self-estrangement in its unholy forms. Thus the criticism of heaven turns into the criticism of the earth, the criticism of religion into the criticism of law and the criticism of theology into the criticism of politics.²⁷

As the most basic form of human difference, the concept of sexual distinction is at once the most and least clear, the most and least simple, for the reality of sexual identity consistently eludes categorization and definition. As a foundational aspect of social human being, human sexuality is still not only an "unholy form of human self-estrangement," but a means and a source of human (both male and female) victimization for we persist in social

relationships that assume an adequate understanding of sexual being in the face of conscious ignorance. Indeed, the traditional exemption of sexual being from the dimension of human advancement still casts a shadow over the legitimacy of a philosophical enquiry into human sexuality, even though it is precisely the notion of sexuality as a self-evident, non-developmental given that binds sexual expression to experience of complication, guilt, hate, and fear.

At this point the concepts of masculinity and femininity represent an historical form of oppression which, unless or until it is overcome, denies the realization of human history. Nevertheless, it is by means of the recognition of the material basis of these concepts that human development must progress. As the real historical subject who understands the potential of the historical dialectic and yet claims it for his own, the individual may thus profitably turn to Marx's analysis of human sensuality as an outline of the necessary elements of a genuine and free human sexuality.

HUMAN SENSUALITY: THE PROCESS OF DIALECTICAL DEVELOPMENT

In the third of his 1844 Manuscripts, Marx writes:

All history is the history of preparing and developing "man" to become the object of sensuous consciousness, and turning the requirements of "man as man" into his needs.²⁸

History, he says, is a real part of natural history, and ultimately natural science will be one with the science of man.

The basis of this prediction is Marx's sense of the essential humanness of man's sense perception, not as the appropriation of "non-human" nature by the human perceiver, but because immediate, sensuous nature is for man human sensuousness. Man is the immediate object of natural science because it is only in the form of the "other man" that sensuous nature is present to him in its unmediated, natural being. On the other hand, nature is the immediate object of the science of man because man is nature and can only achieve self-understanding with respect to his sensuous powers in the science of the natural world. What Marx suggests is that human sensuousness is the means by which both man and nature must be understood for because man finds the material for his objectification and therefore realizes his own consciousness in nature, the nature which develops in human history is man's real nature.

Marx's analysis is of course particularly concerned with the extent to which the human aspect of nature exists only for social man thus necessitating the abolition of private property. While nature should exist as the bond between men in which each of one's human relations to the world, i.e., seeing, hearing, thinking, loving, etc., is the appropriation of human reality in its orientation to the object, private property is the expression of the fact that man's objectification is also the alienation of himself. Instead of the realization of human nature, which is the realization

of all the physical and mental senses, Marx finds that the sense of having, of direct possession, which is central to the concept of private property, estranges the senses by reducing man's engagement with nature to the dimension of use and, ultimately, capital. The abolition of private property is thus the emancipation of all human sense and qualities such that the senses become "theoreticians" in their practice, i.e., that the senses become as able to discern the distinctions in the object of sensual comprehension as the trained mind is able to make distinctions with respect to the object of its theoretical comprehension. In the same way that Plato understood dialectical human discourse as a "power" enabling human reason to comprehend true being, Marx suggests that truly human sense perception is a power which, when able to discriminate between its "crude," generalized object and its aestheticized and particular object, is able to understand the "truth" of its human nature. Thus the indiscriminate sexual relationship, as a most appropriate example of an only incidentally human relationship, represents a preemptive concern with the physical function even when it assumes a Casanova style of adoring appreciation for Love in general, Women in general, or Men in general. To the extent that the relationship merely satisfies the general capacity of the individual, it aborts the theoretical character of an essential social relation through which two individuals might objectify, and thereby realize, themselves.

When the senses become "theoreticians" in their practice, Marx argues, their object is transposed into the objective human relation both to itself and to man.²⁹ In this sense the nature of the object of human sense perception for the social man is not limited by the use to which it can be put in the exclusively human world, although the human relation which it must come to objectify has constitutive force. At first blush it might appear that Marx is suggesting a sophisticated but nonetheless "mystical" relationship between man and nature such that nature is what we perceive it to be with practical considerations merely illusory. But Marx particularly emphasizes the extent to which man is the object of natural science because it is in nature and through man's sensuous activity that man realizes or objectifies his own being. He refers to the history of industry as the "open book of man's essential powers" and defines industry as the actual, historical relationship of nature to man even though he understands the development of nature in human history through industry as its estranged form of development.³⁰ Despite its dehumanizing effect, industry as the practical medium by means of which man's understanding of nature has transformed human life and prepared human emancipation is the foremost expression of the centrality of man's self-objectification in nature, i.e., it is the expression of the centrality of his sensuous human relations to the achievement of truly human life.

To the extent that human sexuality describes the immediate relation of man and woman, it is the expression of human sensuality in which nature for the individual is the human essence. For Marx it is in this natural species-relationship that ". . . man's relation to nature is immediately his relation to man. . ." and that man's social development is most clearly perceived.³¹ In this sense, one human being's need for another is the expression of the social being of the individual who realizes his sensuous "power" through a natural but distinctively social relation. But it is necessary to see in Marx's beautiful phrasing the ideal of a sexual relationship which while not beyond human experience, is certainly dependent upon the human development and realization of sexuality. One of the most significant insights of feminist theory is that which penetrates the guise of protection and concern which masks a fundamental inability to develop such a relation except through domination and possession. Actions which seek to expose and destroy those conditions which support the reduction of human sexuality to the typical one-sided appropriation associated with private property (in Marx's terms, the sense that an object is only "ours" when we "have" it, when it is used by us)³² are therefore potentially liberating for human nature, at least in their conception. But to the extent that the institution of private property has had an equally dehumanizing effect on all of the human senses this is an insight which must

radically transform all of human sexuality, just as the emancipation of all human sense must be thorough, in order for need or enjoyment to lose its egotistical character and in order for nature to become truly human nature.

Marx writes that when the objective world becomes the world of man's essential powers all objects will conform and realize man himself, and man himself will become the object.³³ He suggests that a radically social society is one in which the need and enjoyment of other men will be also the individual's appropriation, and in which the individual's activity with others will become an organ for expressing one's own life and a mode for appropriating human life. In the subjective aspect of sensuality, he suggests, the senses of the social man are essentially different from those of the nonsocial man because the full richness of subjective human sensibility can only be achieved through the objectively unfolded richness of man's essential being. Thus the sense object can only be the confirmation of an individual's essential power if that power has been developed by and through the experience in such a way as to seek out and respond to that object. Only music can awaken the sense of music, Marx points out, and yet only the man with a musical ear can appreciate beautiful music. Similarly, the starving man is only concerned with the abstract existence of food, not with its human form. Marx does not identify it but it is clear that human sexuality is susceptible to the same

kind of impoverished and abstract existence if the power of sexual response is crippled by appropriation of the objectification of the human essence.

Marx does say that this objectification of the human essence is required, both in its theoretical and practical aspect, to make man's sense human and to create the human sense corresponding to the full wealth of human and natural substance.³⁴ It is this sense of the evolution of human sensuality which must inform the dialectics of human sexuality insofar as the liberation of sexuality in general, and femininity and masculinity in particular, must create the conditions for the realization of the human essence in the sexual relationship. When the struggle for liberation makes the demand for conditions which militate against the expression of sexuality in order to free the individual it is urgently necessary to distinguish the arbitrary sexist notion of proper sexual roles from the expression of human sexuality through which human sense is created and men and women's sense is made human. While the diversity of human individuality makes the definition of the individual according to group characteristics patently absurd, the extent to which man is a sensual being who realizes himself in nature and for whom the sexual relationship is his most immediate social relation implies the falsity of denying the essential sexual being. Thus, to define a woman only in terms of her husband and family ignores and represses her individual

identity. But to renounce any and all commitments between the sexes because they seem to have no possibilities other than the patriarchal form is not only to ignore the primary source of self-realization but is also to substitute an equally oppressive definition of the self, i.e., that of the private individual for whom human exchange and intercourse must always be a measurable compromise. Because human beings are not abstractly sexual beings, except by virtue of their estranged and alienated sensuality, it is specifically one's femininity or masculinity which must be realized if the relationship truly objectifies man's essence.

THE PROMISE OF THE DIALECTIC:

HUMAN SPECIES BEING

In the first of the 1844 Manuscripts, Marx defines man as a species being because, as he puts it, ". . . man . . . treats himself as the actual, living species; because he treats himself as a universal and therefore free being."³⁵ Man's particular distinction from animals, he says, is that whereas the animal is immediately one with its life activity, man is able to make his life activity the object of his will and his consciousness. While animals do produce, they can only produce what they immediately need and each animal's product belongs immediately to its physical body. Man however produces even when he is free from physical need and, Marx suggests, only truly produces in this state of freedom.

Man is able to confront his product freely, i.e., he does not have to immediately involve it in his physical being, and man can produce in accordance with the laws of beauty. All of these aspects of man's productive life demonstrate his species-being insofar as they express the whole character of the species. The object of man's labor is thus the objectification of man's species-life. Its estrangement from him is an appropriation of his real objectivity as a member of the species. In the process human species-consciousness is reduced to a concept of the means to physical existence.

Furthermore, the estrangement of man from his life activity is the estrangement of man from man. When man confronts himself in the objectification of his species-life, he also confronts the other man, for it is man's essential nature, man's universal being, which is objectified in that product. In this sense, the degradation of man's spontaneous free activity to a means alienates all men from their essential nature, i.e., their species-being, and consequently limits the life of the species to the concept of the means for an individual life.³⁶

To the extent that man's natural species relationship is the "direct, natural, and necessary relation of person to person," and, for Marx, the relation of man to woman,³⁷ the categorization of man's sexual being as a mode of appearance subject to the scheduling of the business world stands out as a further alienation of man's species activity. In

this case, however, it is not the material product of the activity which is initially appropriated and presented to the individual as an alien, nonsocial thing, i.e., as a commodity, in the manner that the products of labor are. Rather it is the case that a dimension of human being is presented to the individual as an expendable and negligible aspect of facticity which can be overcome through the sophisticated application of rational definition, i.e., through the internalization of a reified understanding of the apparently disparate elements of human being. Thus the tendency to insist on the nonsexual recognition of all human beings can be seen to intensify man's estrangement from man, not as a direct appropriation of a product, but rather by straining the most natural and direct relationship through intimations of an inevitable oppression and abuse which will result. The appropriation is executed at this level by means of the perpetration of the sense that the direct man-woman relationship is only infrequently compatible with the freedom of the individual, and that the sophisticated human being cannot allow himself the involvement of a natural species-relationship lest he in some way sacrifice his personal self.

CONCLUSION

The Marxian concept of man's species-being is central to the radical nature of the determination to develop the theoretical capacity of human sexuality, for it is this concept

which asserts the necessity of the social realization of human being for the possibility of individual human freedom. Women cannot expect to fulfill their own unique and essentially feminine potentials by simply denying that the sexual identity with which they are born has any relevance to their lives as modern, twentieth-century, technologically-adjusted individuals. To opt either for the demand that femininity is of no importance to the qualifications for the traditionally masculine pursuits or for the assertion that masculine and feminine qualities are interchangeable, existing in relatively equal proportions in a standard, universal human psyche, is to reduce the women's struggle to the plaintive appeal of yet another "outgroup" wanting to be let "in." If women, by virtue of their femininity, have a genuinely unique and as yet undeveloped contribution to make to the evolutionary process of the self-understanding of being itself, and thereby to the process of the evolution of human nature, it is imperative that the nature of femininity at least be preserved until it is understood. The necessity of this conservation is underscored by the dialectical nature of all being which implies that masculinity too is confronting a fundamental struggle for liberation from its rigid antithetical stigmatization vis-a-vis the feminine. In short, it is the whole, i.e., the unity, and the "truth," of human sexuality and consequently the universal character of human being which is in question. If it has been held

in a dehumanizing bondage by the form of the patriarchal family, it must find its liberation in the content of the essentially human, sexual, species-activity.

FOOTNOTES

¹Immanuel Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, trans. by Norman K. Smith (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965), p. 41.

²Ibid., p. 42.

³Ibid., p. 65.

⁴Ibid., p. 66.

⁵Georg Lukacs, History and Class Consciousness (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1971), p. 116.

⁶Ibid., p. 120.

⁷Ibid., p. 130.

⁸Ibid., p. 107.

⁹Ibid., p. 98.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid., p. 100.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Max Horkheimer, "Authority and the Family," in Critical Theory: Selected Essays, trans. by Matthew J. O'Connell and others (New York: Seabury Press, 1972), p. 99.

¹⁴Erich Fromm, Crisis of Psychoanalysis (Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett Publications, Inc., 1970), p. 117.

¹⁵Lukacs, Class Consciousness, pp. 113-15.

¹⁶Herbert Marcuse, "On the Problem of the Dialectic," TELOS (Quarterly Journal of Radical Social Theory) XXVII (Spring 1976):14.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 14-15.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 15.

- ¹⁹Ibid., p. 15.
- ²⁰Ibid., p. 17.
- ²¹Ibid.
- ²²Ibid., p. 18, quoting from Hegel's Phenomenology of Mind, Georg Lasson ed., p. 31.
- ²³Ibid., p. 19.
- ²⁴Ibid., p. 27.
- ²⁵Ibid.
- ²⁶Karl Marx, Critique of the Hegelian and Philosophy as a Whole, volume 3 in Collected Works (New York: International Publishers, 1975), p. 329.
- ²⁷Karl Marx, Contribution to Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law, volume 3 in Collected Works, *ibid.*, p. 176.
- ²⁸Karl Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, volume 3, in Collected Works, *ibid.*, p. 303.
- ²⁹Ibid., p. 300.
- ³⁰Ibid., pp. 302-303.
- ³¹Ibid., p. 295.
- ³²Ibid., p. 300.
- ³³Ibid., p. 301.
- ³⁴Ibid., p. 302.
- ³⁵Ibid., p. 275.
- ³⁶Ibid., pp. 276-277.
- ³⁷Ibid., p. 295.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Fromm, Erich. The Crisis of Psychoanalysis. Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett Publications, Inc., 1970.
- Horkheimer, Max. Critical Theory: Selected Essays. Translated by Matthew J. O'Connell and others. New York: Seabury Press, 1972.
- Kant, Immanuel. Critique of Pure Reason. Translated by Norman K. Smith. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965.
- Lukacs, Georg. History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics. Translated by Rodney Livingstone. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1971.
- Marcuse, Herbert. "On the Problem of the Dialectic." *TELOS* XXVII (Spring 1976):14-15.
- Marx, Karl. Contribution to Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law. In Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels, Collected Works, Vol. 3. New York: International Publishers, 1975.
- _____. Critique of the Hegelian and Philosophy as a Whole. In Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels, Collected Works, Vol. 3. New York: International Publishers, 1975.
- _____. The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844. In Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels, Collected Works, Vol. 3. New York: International Publishers, 1975.

INDIVIDUALITY: A CASE FOR
FAMILY UNITY

PREFACE

In the first paper, "Women and the Family: A Case of False Universality," we have been able to examine the idea of the family in terms of its essential relation to civil society. By following Hegel's formulation of the family as the ethical root of the state we have seen that despite its subjective and particularistic appearance, the family is not conceptually complete until its relationship to the society which surrounds it is defined. For Hegel the family is the natural source of ethical human behavior because it exists as a single entity which does not, because it cannot naturally, act against itself. Against Hegelian idealism, however, the concrete nuclear family appears too often to be a sorry contortion of neglected possibilities and a misunderstood identity. As was shown in the first paper, woman's subordinate role in the family vitiates the experience of human universality thereby systematizing the acceptance of the exploitation of woman's more immediate involvement with sexual reproduction.

Woman's oppression by the traditional family structure is currently understood from the point of view of a sexless individual for whom the opportunities of civil society seem unjustly remote and inaccessible. The argument

of the second paper, "The Reification of Sexual Being," asserts that masculinity or femininity (one's sexual identity) has an essential relationship to one's individual being and therefore cannot be shunted aside in an emancipatory theory of individuality. In this paper the primary concern was to locate the nature of sexual being in its dialectical relationship to its sexual opposite in order to reveal the false concept of liberation which pervades the Woman's Liberation Movement. While many of the movement's accomplishments are important and necessary reforms, I believe it is equally necessary to recognize that the concern for personal realization, particular rights and individual freedom is the standard justification for the isolated individual life and the atomistic character of modern society. In the absence of both an understanding of and an appreciation of the social foundation of human being, which is epitomized by the sexual relationship, the Woman's Movement actually tends to contribute to the intensification of the modern alienated consciousness by insisting that sexual identity be reduced to an accidental aspect of the fully public individual.

The sexual relationship is central to the concept of the family, in all of its possible variations, for it is through the experience of this intimate human relationship that the conscious substitution of "we" for "me" occurs. Today the family is being so severely scrutinized for its repressive relationship to the individual that its unique

capacity for transforming the egotistical concern for the self into a radically social concern is not simply overlooked but forgotten. As we seek to reform the bourgeois family by ridding it of its arbitrary power relationships and oppressive demands upon certain of its members (both male and female) it is crucial that we do not obliterate the most natural social grouping and with it the perception of social relationships as integral to individual identity. Should our idea of the family succumb to the antisocial insistence that the individual's freedom is defined by the absence of social ties and obligations, it is my contention that the experience of individual human freedom itself will no longer be a real possibility.

To the extent that we have accepted the idea of social existence as a self-imposed restriction of original rights and freedoms, it is difficult for us to make sense of the idea of any natural and necessary relationship which would shift the emphasis from the single individual to two or more individuals determined to succeed in a cooperative effort. It is a most significant reflection of the misunderstood nature of a communal experience that we tend to identify the family with the legal "possession" of another person and miscellaneous accompanying (physical) property. But this misperception, or blindness, with respect to the family, is the result of a specific historical development in which the reduction of the extended family to the present nuclear family is blatantly

paralleled by the development of political, economic, social, and psychological egoism.

Today the family's foundational relationship to human society has been put into question by the capacity of modern technological society to substitute disparate and fragmented institutional experiences for the myriad of developmental experiences which occur with spontaneity in the organically unified family. By allowing institutions to move into the vacuum of parental authority and by allowing the real material expression of a unified human will to atrophy, I believe we tacitly agree to an appropriation of the means for the realization of human being. We have a precedent for this particular form of appropriation of humanity in our American history. The monstrous system of black slavery required, as a part of its violent foundation, the complete violation of the black family and social structure. Indeed, while the circumstances may be historically altered, the horrors of both slavery and the slave mentality are, I believe, the very real implications of the total disappearance of the family.

My first paper sought to understand Hegel's provocative idea of the universality of the family. My second paper attempts to demonstrate that all features of human being can only be realized in dialectical human interaction. My third paper must now move towards a theory of the family which will incorporate the essential dialectic of human

being in an experience of genuine universality. It is my intention to show that the family may be understood as a social institution with the potential for revolutionary praxis, because its essential nature as defined by Hegel is also the essence of human solidarity.

FREEDOM IN NAME ALONE

We live today in a society whose ultimate justification is the protection of individual rights and freedoms but which is distinctively marked at the subjective level by the pervasive doubt that a meaningful identity is even possible. While the contradiction, whether recognized or unrecognized, is the source of an intense frustration and anxiety, particularly when ignited by the pressures to achieve self-reliance and individual efficacy, the doubt itself drives the machinery of open-ended, irrational consumption. The concept of individuality abstracted from the material circumstances which are its only real foundation, has become the expression of a raw dissatisfaction with what appears to be the primary limitation upon personal activity: financial incapacitation and/or productive inadequacy. But the network of social-economic-political relationships has as little interest in promoting the development of genuine human individuality as General Motors has in producing a car that will last beyond the guarantee, for it is the desperate belief that identity and uniqueness can be bought that sustains the solid mass of consumers who can be talked into buying anything.

It is only in the context which expects, appreciates, and sponsors individuality that the concept of individual freedom can be prevented from disappearing behind its

ideological formulation as a kind of self-evident condition to which human beings somehow "naturally" aspire. As individuals find themselves increasingly losing any clear sense of self (as evidenced by the phenomenal sales of "Do-It-Yourself Self-Repair" books) our society displays an increasingly authoritarian control of the possibilities of human growth. The contradiction is most apparent in the clash of the premium placed on the opportunities for personal development with the discredited notions of meaning and purpose. The prevalent sense of "purpose" today is, by and large, a concept of personal success as measured by the established and immediate categories of money and power. A position of power and authority in the economic-political structure of society delivers a field of practical affairs whose manipulation and management can, in the absence of a critical perception of their artificial character, describe a particular individual by identifying his functions. At the same time a deliberate attempt to express the humanistic response to those same practical affairs can be used as a proof of "independent" thought depending upon the current receptivity towards a manipulation of the "abstract" concepts of humanity, nature, and ideological noninterference. Both approaches are characterized by an attempt to appropriate an identity by assuming the attitude and posture which links one to a particular social function.

To the extent that such a function is stabilized by

practices and institutions that are beyond the direct influence of the individual it is the requirements of the position which determine the relationships being actively carried out by the individual whose personality absorbs and embodies the particular function. Responding as a particular "point of view" or interest, whose actual existence is regarded as proof of the social capacity to tolerate personal difference, the individual cannot transcend the perspective of the position he occupies without resigning the attendant distinction it confers upon him for the "position" itself is structurally unable to grow. The personal distinction he enjoys as he gives life to the nonliving but rational institutionalization of human debate is a costume at base, appropriate to a certain set of circumstances, a certain staging and no other, insofar as the authority with which one is able to direct or analyze the events of one time and space is a derivation of the established structure of social processes.

An expanse of human possibility which can only become a part of the human experience through individual becoming remains unexplored and thus unrealized. The extent to which the capacity to scan one's personal horizon of possibilities is diverted into the systematically encouraged emphasis upon the rights of an empty individuality is the measure of our loss of personal freedom for it is the evidence of the shallowness with which human potential is perceived. When the theory

of individual freedom is excused from the responsibility of facilitating the realization of human difference, whether on the grounds that toleration is sufficient or that toleration exhausts the proper range of social involvement, the theory is severed from its true ground, the concrete processes of human becoming. Individuality, as a concept, as an ideal, and as a genuine human need, is first reduced to an equivalency with general human activities and then is gutted. Instead of invoking the wonder of infinite human potential the word itself is used only when the implications of qualitative human difference can be ignored: When the prospect of individual expression harbors no real surprise vis-a-vis the established order of things.

THE MEANING OF "INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM"

In his essay "Democratic Theory: Ontology and Technology," C. B. Macpherson develops the argument that Western democracy, as distinct from the communist theory of democracy or populist democracy, ". . . is for market society. . ." ¹ The emphasis upon individual freedom of choice which structures Western democratic theory, he argues, significantly exceeds the right to a choice between political parties. The individual's right to free choice in Western theory includes the rights to a choice concerning the use of one's income, one's capital, and one's skills and energy. On the other hand, the liberal market system (capitalist economics)

requires that one enter voluntary contractual exchanges of one's person and/or property which ultimately violate the individual's right of autonomy. But the premise that the human individual is fundamentally motivated by the rational desire to maximize his utilities, both as material goods and as (relatively) immaterial pleasures, provides a theoretical justification for an economic system which must force the individual into a position that denies self-direction and a functional reconciliation with the principle of the absolute priority of individual autonomy. Furthermore, Macpherson argues, it was necessary that an incentive to continuous exertion on the part of the individual be institutionalized insofar as the traditional, feudal obligation to work was defused by capitalist market arrangements. That incentive was achieved with the ideological entrenchment of the concept of a right of unlimited individual appropriation which found its moral justification in the new postulate of human nature peculiar to modern liberal market society, viz. that it is man's nature to seek satisfaction of unlimited desires both innate and acquired.²

For Macpherson this ontological assumption declares a degree of individualism that is still the ideological foundation of our system of production insofar as that system relies upon market incentives, and it is clearly the case that the picture of unrestricted appropriation exerts tremendous appeal for the majority of citizens who share the conceptual

constructs of Western democratic theory. But while Macpherson argues that the concept of man as infinite consumer is incompatible with an equally forceful postulate of Western democratic theory, the concept of every man's right to "maximize," or make the most of his individual human powers, he does not undertake a critique of the tenuous association of individuality, or self-maximization, with the privatized market activity of individual appropriation and consumption. He recognizes that the right of unlimited appropriation undermines the universal right of self-realization throughout Western market society, but he calls for the rejection of the market concept of man's essence, i.e., the postulate of man's essence as infinite consumer and infinite antagonist of scarcity.³ The original problem of drawing men into the productive process has been replaced today, he suggests, by the problem of providing alternative outlets for the human energy that was previously expended in labor. Ultimately, Macpherson implies that the promise of the technological revolution lies in its capacity to provide universal maximization of individual powers through the established channels of market activity and, consequently, by means of the modern psychological phenomenon of individual dependence upon commodity exchange.

Macpherson's argument thus conforms to the traditional democratic theorist's assumption of the existence of human

individuality itself and remains committed to the ideal of the preservation and guarantee of individual rights by means of a liberal market economy. In this sense human individuality is understood as an automatic by-product of the physical separateness of human beings, a matter of their disparate centers of physical need and mental perspective which are unalterably bound "inside" the perimeters of the physical body. There appears to be no need to call the criteria of individuality into question from this point of view because conformity is only the result of external forces, specifically the restriction of personal freedom.

According to this empirical definition of individuality, the least imposition of rules and regulations governing the activities of the individual that is possible within the social circumstance becomes the concrete expression of individual freedom. Concurrently the concept of genuine human difference is steadily removed into the range of its politically divisive connotations: conflict, opposition, and competitive struggle. Individuality in these terms is the aspect of everyone's social existence which is threatened by one's existence as a part of a group and which is most vulnerable to violation from social engagement. Given this understanding, the suggestion that it is the lack of social engagement which most endangers the real existence of the individual appears to be the assertion that the social structure within which one lives ought to be given priority over

the individual. And in the age of modern democracy a conferral of normative priority upon any framework of social organization which can be understood as a (or the) state is in no uncertain terms a declaration of the institutional denial of individual freedom and autonomy.

To the extent that individual freedom is defined as the absence of the influence of external pressures upon individual thought and action the common concept of totalitarianism is the coerced submission to commands and authoritarian directives which issue from the higher levels of a hierarchically arranged governmental structure. Indeed, structural totalitarianism epitomizes the violation of individuality because it discards the significance of the individual moral conscience in practical and ethical decision-making and denies the right of the individual to self-determination. But because the concept thus derives from a quantitative analysis of the rights and liberties withheld by the state, the dimension of individual oppression which can occur without the presence of officers who give orders, enforcement squadrons to back them up, or the existence of such wretched living circumstances as would force an otherwise proud individual into the attitude of a slave remain hidden.

The concept of totalitarianism may imply individual oppression, but when that oppression is wholly understood as a matter of legal concerns and political structure the need

to establish the reality of human individuation in order to defend it is forgotten. Instead, it seems enough if one's sociopolitical situation is such that, should the occasion arise in which one's dissent is evoked, dissent is theoretically conceivable in terms of one's political, i.e., ideological, freedom to disagree. Dissent, resistance, and even autonomy are human capacities which it is understood can only be protected from the possibility of manipulation by being totally excluded from the range of public responsibility. But no indictment of the strength and resilience of the particular will is more clear than that which is revealed by the demand for so complete an insulation of the particular will from external (nonpersonal) influence that ethical dialogue and debate rarely escape what are by now the platitudes of relativism. The necessity of protecting the single individual from the arbitrary exercise of authority through force cannot be allowed to create an acquiescence to the principled ignorance of the fragility of genuine human individuality because to acquiesce in the reification of the concept is to quicken the totalitarian implications of a society which tolerates dissent because there is none.

THE PROMISE OF THE GROUP: INDIVIDUALITY

In order to be meaningful the concept of individual freedom must be grounded in the experience of oneself as a

being who constitutes an aspect of the group that is only actualized by means of one's real particular existence. The isolated or alienated individual who lives with no conscious relation to any group except a vague regional or national identification is deprived of the means for developing a concrete expression of his own distinctiveness. For while the social individual is able to clarify and refine his particular talents by relying upon the collective activity of the group, the isolated or alienated person must face the whole range of his needs and wants alone. The capacity to meet the imperative of production and reproduction requisite for the maintenance of life is not in itself a sufficient condition for the realization of one's human being, i.e., for unique self-development. The human organization or definition of work is crucial to the concretization of the possibilities for the human objectification which the production process should provide insofar as the mechanization of any human activity locks the individual into his particular task as a nonthinking part of a whole which is externally orchestrated. In this sense the assembly-line wage earner and the aspiring "self-sufficient" refugee from the wage labor system share the alienated consciousness of workers for whom there is no alternative to routine and repetitious labor. For those who escape direct participation in the dehumanized process of production, as well as for those who do not, there is no perception of the violation of human rights inherent in the exclusive atomistic approach to the

satisfaction of human need.

The repression of the possibilities for genuinely human development intrinsic to the processes of production is reinforced and amplified with the identification of 'human individual' and undifferentiated (abstract) 'consumer'. As a systematic feature of modern bourgeois society, isolated market activity has become the major focus of human interaction because the fixed nature of market exchange appears to be the best, if not the only, guarantee of freedom for individual taste and inclination. At the present stage of monopoly capitalism the array of commodities must be recognized as at least a psychological placebo which although impotent in terms of real individual development, somehow manages to sedate the vital human drive for self-actualization. Thus the pleasing availability and accessibility of goods (and services) which promise both instant gratification of desire and the most rapid execution of any given endeavor possible binds human creativity. The suggestion that the necessary processes of objectification, i.e., the spatial, temporal realization of the self in the world, can be a matter of "good business" constricts the possibilities for human becoming by replacing the ideal of human excellence with the type of market omnipotence.

When the twenty-four hours of a typical citizen's day in modern technological-industrial society are accounted for, it is clear that cooperative, collective human endeavor

is attacked on two fronts: First, in our place and time of employment by the pervasive alienation of the laborer, and then in our place and time of "personal life" by the palliative of consumption. As it becomes more and more difficult to escape the glitter of the aggregated market array, it is proportionately more and more difficult to engage directly with other human beings, despite the increasing proportion of "free" time, i.e., time not absolutely required by productive labor, in which to do so. The direct relation between the increasing potential for individual freedom and the increasingly collective character of production must be dismissed by the understanding which grounds individual freedom in the opposition of private being and economic activity (both production and consumption). By denying the fact and the necessity of continuity in human endeavor, the mythically fragmented character of economic activity has become the standard by which all human relationships, all processes of human objectification, are understood. Thus the individual's "freedom" is his "right" to acquire and dispose of both property and personal relationships at will.

To the extent that the family provides the structure for and the justification of a commitment to other individuals which spontaneously takes priority over personal impulse and even personal need, the family realizes an essential feature of subversive, i.e., revolutionarily free, society. But it is only when such a commitment is made eagerly and

almost unconsciously as a natural striving of the self towards its own fulfillment that the family presents the genuinely social experience, the perception of others as essential to individual being. When family commitment is expressed in terms of self-sacrifice, defined as a duty, and treated as a "proof" of moral conscience the family itself must at base represent the perceived limits to personal growth because it is ultimately understood only as a responsibility, i.e., a burden, undertaken out of deference to social custom. And to the degree that the most elementary experience of social human life is appropriated as an institution of a particular social-economic order, the experience ceases to be the means for human development and appears instead as a source of human oppression.

THE FAMILY AS THE STARTING POINT

When Aristotle undertook the project of analyzing man's political being he began with an analysis of the family. While the central task of his Politics is the identification and definition of the state or political community which aims at the "highest" good, Aristotle's method requires that the first book of the Politics be given over to a study of the family and its constitutive parts: the household economy, the slave property, children, and wives. "As in other departments of science, so in politics, the compound should always be resolved into the simple elements or least parts of the

whole,"⁴ he writes, indicating that to approach the concept of the state without investigating its origins would be to deny the most basic elements of political association and thereby invite the repression of those basic human relationships.

Aristotle's contention is that the state naturally precedes both the family and the individual because the "whole is of necessity prior to the part"⁵ and because the individual is radically dependent upon the state, but it is family relationships which he finds fundamentally determinative with respect to political relationships. Not only are they analogous, as in the comparison of the king's relationship to his subjects with the paternal relationship of father to son, but family relationships also imply the kinds of political relationships which define the community. Thus Aristotle advises the education of women and children be "trained with an eye to the constitution" because most of these individuals are or will become citizens.⁶ To the extent that every individual begins his life in a state of dependency upon the limited community of the family, Aristotle recognized the family experience as the archetypical process of human intercourse. Aristotle was the first of many social theorists in the Western tradition to suggest that the family is the active model of political existence insofar as it initiates every individual citizen into an increasingly broad and more complex network of dependency relationships that ultimately define human community. Aristotle, however, did not question

the nature of those relationships.

Nearly 2,000 years later, J. J. Rousseau began his analysis of political society with the assertion that the family is the primitive model of political societies.⁷ For Rousseau it is specifically the father's care for his children as it compares to the task of governing the citizens of the state which marks the important connection between the family and the state for it is his sense that the existence of both kinds of societies is grounded in the need of their members for that society. The natural "physical" family comes into being only when the preservation of the children requires it and disintegrates when they are grown. Similarly, the association of individuals in the body politic (state) is fundamentally the result of man's inability to preserve himself as an isolated individual in the "State of Nature." Rousseau's concept of the social contract rests as much on the principle of voluntarily submitting to a supreme authority in order to further one's self-interest as did the Hobbesian scheme, insofar as the "General Will" is endowed with the authority to act in the best interests of the citizens. But for Rousseau that authority is as subject to critical evaluation and judgment as we commonly believe the exercise of paternal authority in the family is today, for it is only in order to protect and further the common good that Rousseau suggests the centralization of political authority. Thus it is only to

the extent that the benefit of the governed is realized that human authority, political or paternal, is justified. Rousseau's analysis of the basic meaning of social organization takes advantage of the family's immediate involvement with the health of its members in such a way as to render the concept of authority into a concept of practical human strength.

With Hegel's identification of the family as the source of the state's ethical being the concept of this primary human community is linked not simply to the necessity of human cooperation but to the fundamental possibility of moral human life. The substance of the family in Hegel's analysis is expressed in the common interest and common identity of all of the family's members as a whole and to the extent that the family constitutes a moment of universality which each individual recognizes his particular interest only in terms of the interest of the whole, the family's actions have an ethical character. Hegel's concept of ethical human being thus begins not in the range of personal commitments and judgments but rather with the subjective experience of the significance of the welfare and "happiness," broadly speaking, of others. According to the Hegelian dialectic it is out of the consciousness of oneself as a being who transcends his individuality that the true nature of morality arises, i.e., the appreciation of every subjective expression of being as an expression of the necessary and genuinely free

(Universal Spirit) and the consequent recognition of the irreducible value of every individual as an essential aspect of the necessary, objective Being.

It is clear that, despite its decidedly nonpublic character, the concept of the family has occupied an important place in social-political theory from the earliest efforts to analyze human society. Even as the actual family in American society loses its grip upon the individual, the concept of the family still contributes significantly as a model of social human relations to the continuing efforts to understand the nature of the individual's integration into the social whole. In a recently published article, "Marx, Sex, and the Transformation of Society," Virginia Held suggests that Marx's statement of the definitive nature of the man-woman relationship (" . . . the relation of man to woman is the most natural relation of human being to human being. It therefore reveals the extent to which man's natural behavior has become human. . . .")⁸ is a possible model for the development of human relationships which will be able to transcend the bourgeois tenet of self-interest and mutual use by individuals of one another to their own advantage.

Held argues that Marx's conception of the man-woman relationship as the sensuous manifestation, the observable fact of the extent to which the human essence has become nature to man, can profitably direct both our reflective understanding of and our concretely present search for the

genuinely cooperative society. The strength of this argument, it seems to me, lies in the reality of our knowledge of and engagement in relationships which are specifically characterized by a true mutuality of concern and respect for other human beings, for it is the experience of a self-transcendent concern and love for human being which significantly challenges the bourgeois definition of man as a grasping, infinitely desirous, egotistical, center of wants and needs. Held goes on to suggest that to the extent that the man-woman relationship can defy the asocial imperatives of bourgeois consciousness it might profitably be studied as a key to the nature of sound alternatives to the concept of community which assumes a natural antagonism between any two individuals.

Furthermore, we can observe that the social and political theory most in need of development, and probably of greatest interest in recent years, is the theory of community. An understanding of the relation between man and woman has not yet really begun to be tapped for insights into conceptions of community, though it is probably the most fruitful source of insight for such conceptions, and for discovering whatever it is that lies deepest at the heart of society.⁹

It is my contention that while the man-woman relationship does manifest at least the potential for a radically alternative approach to human relations in general, that potential is stunted and repressed by the imposition of restrictive family forms (most commonly patriarchal family structures) upon it. An equally grave threat however, to the realization

of that potential is inherent in the modern devaluation of family life and commitments, for the expansion of atomistic self-perception can only be at the expense of what sense of collectivity and mutuality we still possess.

THE FAMILY AS TOTALITARIAN: HORKHEIMER'S
CATEGORY OF AUTHORITY

In his essay "Authority and the Family," Max Horkheimer argues that authority is a central category for history insofar as men's personalities, their "drives and passions, their characteristic dispositions and reaction patterns," are shaped by and reflect the power-relationships which define the social life-process of their particular time.

Over the whole time-span embraced by historical writing, men have worked in more or less willing obedience to command direction. . . . Because the activity which kept society alive and in the accomplishment of which men were therefore molded occurred in submission to an external power, all relationships and patterns of reaction stood under the sign of authority.¹⁰

Although the bourgeois revolution began as the struggle against the authority of tradition and the established social hierarchy, Horkheimer contends that authority-motivated behavior and authority-based thinking were far from outmoded. The rise of bourgeois individualism centered around the demand for freedom from the old bonds of feudal relationships of dependence which were becoming

increasingly untenable as the feudal mode of production failed to meet the needs of an increasing population and civil and ecclesiastical bureaucracies became unable to deal with an increasingly complex society. However, the bourgeois revolution introduced not only a new authority but new forms of dependency relationships upon that authority as well, viz. the dependence of both producer and consumer upon market activity as dictated by the reified authority of the economy which is both immune to and alien from the influence of men's collective and conscious direction.

Instead of treating submission to economic circumstances as a part of one's dependency upon socially established authoritarian relationships bourgeois philosophy sought to ground the inevitable dependence of the individual upon his social context in natural circumstances and to present the justification of that dependence as insight into eternal matters of fact.¹¹ Obedience and submission to the needs of the established structure of social production could no longer be compelled by the imperative of maintaining a proper relationship to God once the link between earthly social-political order and God's purposes was broken. For bourgeois consciousness authority became ". . . not even a relationship but an inalienable property of the superior being, a qualitative difference."¹² The rational, self-sufficient man, who is the paradigm of bourgeois consciousness, voluntarily adapts to natural authority of economic

necessity and its attendant class divisions and property systems out of rational self-interest.

Here then, is a philosophical system in which the individual is conceived, not in his involvement with society and nature, but abstractly and as a purely intellectual essence, a being which must now think of the world and acknowledge it as an eternal principle and perhaps as the expression of his own true being.¹³

The patriarchal family is the fundamental social institution by means of which the individual is habituated to the authority relationships of bourgeois society, Horkheimer suggests. Both the father's natural strength and his capacity to earn and/or possess all of the family's money represent natural facts against which children must not rebel and for which they must have esteem. "In consequence of the seeming naturalness of paternal power . . . growing up in the restricted family is a first-rate schooling in the authority behavior specific to this society."¹⁴ When as an adult the individual finds himself subject to the authority of the social network of economic relationships and without any means of redress or appeal, any perception of the contradiction of his theoretical sovereignty and freedom as a rational being is occluded by his familiarity with the necessity of accepting social circumstances as they are and "adapting" to reality. The child's dependence upon the patriarchal, restricted family smoothly translates into the adult's dependence upon the amorphous and alien economic system of bourgeois society insofar as both group forms

repress communal reflection and decision and amplify the perception of so-called "natural," i.e., reified authority.

For the formation of the authority-oriented character it is especially decisive that the children should learn, under pressure from the father, not to trace every failure back to its social causes but to remain at the level of the individual and to hypostatize the failure in religious terms as sins or in naturalistic terms as deficient natural endowment.¹⁵

Horkheimer's critique of the traditional patriarchal family presents an exceptionally clear analysis of the appropriation of the means for human intercourse and development by particular economic interests. To the extent that the situation of human intimacy and mutual concern is structured by rigid domination-servitude relationships it is clear that the unique potential of both child and adult is denied. But if Horkheimer's argument that authority is a basic historical category is accepted it is also clear that the family cannot be disassociated from the exercise of authority simply by the recognition that traditional paternal authority is largely arbitrary. At the practical level of production in response to material need the processes of organizing, directing, and focusing the collective capacities of men will always require that some authority be exercised and obeyed if that capacity is to be most profitably exploited. Although the family today is rarely the productive economic unit it once was, the division of labor and various delegations of responsibility which still occur demonstrate a

recognition of the authority of the source of that organization and decision-making which stabilizes the family around its own particular structure. And despite its innovative appearance, the mere substitution of the woman for the man, or a maternal for a paternal figure of authority, is only incidentally effective in retrenching the family's function of instilling an "authoritarian consciousness" in its members when the ultimate responsibility for the family's business and welfare is understood as a form of dictatorial license. More importantly, however, the unalterable and undeniable dependence of the family's children upon the strength and competency of its adults is a small scale model of the necessary dependence of all individuals upon others with greater experience, resources, or ability. In this sense, to refuse to recognize the authority of another's competence or understanding is to pursue a self-destructive kind of "independence."

The vacuum created by ignoring the need for an established means of reaching an ultimate decision or of consolidating a collective effort is all too quickly filled by the anonymous authority of impersonal economic interests. While the perpetuation of the traditional relationships of authority within the family is, as Horkheimer suggests, the perpetuation of a repressive conditioning for assimilation into an alienated work force, the refusal to recognize that human life and growth is inevitably structured by the

exercise of authority creates a situation in which individuals are no more capable of self-direction than when self-direction is deliberately denied. In the absence of long-range planning, firm decisions, and a reliable source of judgment individual freedom is lost to the confusion of immediate appeal and impulse which ultimately denies the capacity to choose by obstructing the experience of genuine choice. To the extent that autonomy depends upon rational thought and choice it is clear that the necessary exercise of authority must be such that individual thought and action is encouraged and yet focused upon those interests that are genuinely universal. Therefore the struggle to reclaim the family for the individual is inseparable from the struggle for self-government and autonomy. The tradition of representative democracy would seem to demonstrate that an appeal to participatory government is neither radical nor innovative, but it is not the procedures of debate and compromise that are most significantly in question with respect to the family's structure. Rather it is the determination to bring the facts and circumstances of one's life within the range of human control by means of a conscious recognition of and understanding of collective interdependence and productivity which must direct the exercise of authority. Thus in order to undermine and abolish the formation of the authority-oriented character which is incapable of understanding or even assessing its social situation and which is locked into

a privatized individualism that prevents any possible overcoming of "natural" facts, it is crucial that the family provide an experience of collective learning, consideration, calculation, and decision-making; i.e., an experience in which the actions of the group are authorized by a single voice that is spoken by all.

THE FAMILY AS A COLLECTIVE

In order to exist the family must be able to command from its members a recognition of and a commitment to its independent being. This means, however, that each individual member must find himself addressed in another entity (the group) for which he is a necessary but never a sufficient condition. When the family must impose such a commitment upon the individuals of whom it consists, an imposition in which the family is particularly successful, the family exists as a social institution that has broken with its human content and no longer represents a structure in which the continuing process of human development is focused and fostered. If any individual who is counted as one of the family's members in terms of his contribution to the family's working or playing activities and in terms of his dependence upon the family's resources is at the same time excluded from the concept of the family as only one of an assortment of particular beings who have been collected under its familial rubric, the family itself is dead. While the institutional

structure may continue to function within the system of social and economic relationships as the administrative agency most directly concerned with distribution and reproduction, the "family" that must return to an identification of the traditional or empirical connections between its members in order to demonstrate its coherence only succeeds in demonstrating the alienation of those individuals from that which is essentially theirs.

1. Form versus Content

The picture of two or three generations of biologically related persons living together is one of the more rare instances of family life in modern society. We have not, however, abandoned the concept of the family to the archives of outmoded customs but rather seem to be seeking to give it a new and historically more appropriate application. To the extent that we can no longer rely on the external form to identify the family, i.e., the presence of hetero-sexual parents, children, grandparents, and assorted "kin," we must reconsider the relationships existing between individuals who are living together in a shared situation under shared circumstances. When familial traits must be acknowledged in a group, e.g., a sense of some degree of mutual responsibility for one another's welfare and a desire to consider every member of the group when a decision is made, the group has a legitimate claim to the identity of a family.

Furthermore, the criterion of family substance must refer to the emotional relationships which bind particular individuals together. Thus a legally recognized relationship, e.g., marriage or the parent-child relationship, may prove to be much less substantial as a family relationship than one which is wholly based in a nonlegal commitment. Our concern for the family as a fundamentally human relationship cannot be anachronistically limited to an association of individuals who share a common genetic heritage for two reasons: First, because to do so would be to deny the historical movement from the sense of the primacy of the biological relationships to the contemporary sense that the biological relationship may be less meaningful, if not meaningless, in comparison with all newly possible human contacts. Secondly, as a result of the realization that one is not limited to the society of one's traditional family, the individual is presented with the possibility of moving beyond the merely formal or legalistic family relationships on which he would have been so acutely dependent in the past. While this freedom of movement threatens the traditional concepts of family cohesion and family commitment, it is nevertheless the source of the possibility for a genuinely human family. Without the freedom to move out of cruel, or stultifying, or simply unsatisfactory relationships individuals were locked into a structure of interpersonal relationships which were frequently shaped by a sense

of the unquestionable "rightfulness" of authoritarianism or the inevitability of being "claimed" by some social group in a random fashion.

Traditionally, the family into which one is born represents the primary "given" in an individual's life, the condition and fact of his existence that predates his ability to accept or reject or change such conditions as will exert a considerable influence upon his own being. The extent to which the notion of rational deliberation seems inappropriate to an identification of families and how they are formed reflects the special, almost a priori status that must be allowed the family as a biological or legal entity insofar as the family in these terms cannot be recognized as an object of rational consideration. Instead the family which understands its own identity as essentially the material product of actual human reproduction, or the intent to reproduce, epitomizes the experience of what amounts to an arbitrary subordination of the individual to a social structure.

2. The Human Development of Individuality

Since the notion of social interdependence confuses the picture of a self-reliant individual who need not compromise his impulses or desires, the working model for social relationships in civil society has become that structure of efficiency and human indifference which best seems to guarantee fair and sufficient distribution of the social product

without interfering in the individual's personal life. Against the antagonistic character of the activity by which one participates in "productive" society, the family stands as an experience of group participation which assumes not only the right but the responsibility to penetrate the dimensions of "personal" concerns such as emotional health, ambitions, and even one's moral codes and standards. Clearly this level of involvement subjects the individual family member to a greater or lesser degree of psychological domination, perhaps reinforced with physical domination, that openly seeks to prevent the individual from behavior that is simply the acting out of his innate and "unpolluted" proclivities. Nor is this "interference" with the individual's behavior and consciousness limited to the children of the family who seem most legitimately subject to adult guidance and training, for the family experience necessarily includes all of its members in the actualization of the values, and beliefs, by which it knows itself as a particular group. Without the active expression of individuality consciously attempting to implement the principles of a specific behavior the group has no substantiality either as a cohesive association or as the social unit which counters and ameliorates the deliberate indifference of civil society towards the essentially human dimension of life, i.e., towards both the spiritual, ethical, aesthetic dimensions of the individual and his reflective understanding of these dimensions.

Thus to the extent that the "personal" realm of belief and value is the stuff (content) of human intercourse within the family the inevitably direct and personal engagement of individual family members with one another simultaneously makes the existence of genuinely human value a real possibility and opens the door to an arbitrary control and manipulation of that human value. In this sense the capacity of the family to override the independent integrity of its members by means of an authoritarian disregard for individuality eludes the simplistic either/or disjunction. To insist that the level of immediate interaction which characterizes family relationships should be transposed from the limited and therefore personalized context of a family group to the extended and impersonal context of civil society in general is to ignore the necessary conditions of a relationship which can engage individuality without controlling it. At the same time, the restriction of relationships which seek out and express, and consequently develop, not only the unique aspects of one's being but also the means of distinguishing between autonomy and heteronomy (or decision and suggestion) is to mistake the accidental arbitration of human association (i.e., the biological or legal definition of family) for the truly necessary mediation of all human being.

3. The Group as Sponsor

Through its multitude of forms and adaptations the family (as a concept) epitomizes the experience of human concern for others. Regardless of how many people a particular family includes or what their actual blood relationship to one another is, the mark of their specifically familial unity is a more or less constant perception of one another as beings whose presence or absence is of utmost significance. Each individual member of the family makes a unique contribution to the identity of his family by standing apart from his "relatives" as an individual who is known in terms of his specific personality and potential. He stands out as a particular expression of the being of the whole which no other family member is capable of expressing. He is, in a very literal sense, an irreplaceable element of the family group for his personality, i.e., his individual nature, is not simply acknowledged to be only his alone but is specifically valued by the group as a manifestation of the diversity and real human richness of the group.

To the extent that this individual does enjoy the trust and tolerance and support of his family, he experiences at a very elementary but psychologically essential level the meaning of individual freedom. While he may have little or no understanding of the legal significance of individual rights, the family's recognition of and esteem for his distinct, personal being must suggest the real basis of

individual development and being, i.e., the freedom to actualize and extend the dimensions of the self in an autonomous fashion.

As Marx has described, human beings who are totally submerged in the crude and brutal struggle to meet their physical needs do not have the specifically human capacity to draw the sensual and intellectual distinctions which mark human perceptions as profoundly other than animal or nonhuman perception. Similarly, human beings who are consumed by the struggle to assert their private claims to the products of human society against the same claims of others are submerged in the undifferentiated categorization of all human being. The abstract articulation of personal rights as an elementary ideological premise ultimately acts against the realization of individuality by reducing the significant aspects of individual being to the concerns of administered equality. Thus "individuality" implies the right to be indistinguishable from everyone else insofar as everyone has the same right to work for the same wages in order to be able to afford the same level of market activity which is generally assessed as necessary for a "typical" kind of well-being. Of course, it cannot be forgotten that far too many people do not begin to enjoy the typical or standard level of well-being, not only outside the United States but inside as well. The fact of substandard living conditions and the correlative reduction of educational and employment and

ultimately human opportunities underscores the immediate urgency of a quantitative economic distribution of goods and services. But it is only within the context of an institutional tendency to dismiss the general, undifferentiated claims to the means of human life that the use of the "flat" sense of individuality is justified.

THE BETRAYAL: THE FAMILY VERSUS
THE INDIVIDUAL

Whether because of its conceptual proximity to the most basic concerns of human existence (food, shelter, reproduction) or because of its status as an absolute given against which reason should have no appeal lest the "natural" (as distinct from the human and therefore morally fallible) order of things be violated, the family thus stands opposed to the individual. It is not only the first social group or unit to claim him as a dependent but also the first to demand that he represent the specific character and being of the group in his individual thoughts and actions. On the one hand the individual's family holds the resources which are indeed necessary to his being, i.e., it must provide for his physical needs in at least a minimal fashion and, for better or worse, it inevitably fulfills the classic socializing functions, transmitting the culture, language, values, etc. which enable the individual to participate in human society. On the other hand, the delegation of this

responsibility to the family dictates a relationship of dependency between the individual and the group which can reduce the individual to a simple functionary. In this sense the family tie no longer simply sustains the individual by means of the family's capacity to meet his basic (physiological and psychological) needs and wants, but actually generates a submissive consciousness in the individual who must find a place within the family "unity" rather than create one.

To be sure, this family exhibits the tangible properties of a group, i.e., the association of two or more individuals, a general identity which exceeds that of any single individual, etc., but it does so on the basis of an ultimately arbitrary or happenstance collectivity. The biological criteria of family relationships is fundamentally an institutionalization of the result of certain actions and circumstances over which we have not yet achieved total control. What modern science and technology have been able to accomplish is the deliberate prevention of conception or denial of conception (abortion), i.e., the obstruction of the normal processes of reproduction which would otherwise result in the creation of a new, individual life. But when those processes are not obstructed or interfered with, they remain as much beyond the control of human rationality and planning as they have ever been. Thus the extent to which the creation of potential human individuality is still the

object of human reproduction remains a critical problem for the biological definition of the family.

When we respond to an occasion of successful human birth with a profound sense of joy and wonder we express more than a simple, unqualified delight at the miracle of life. Human life in its temporal and finite form is the means by which any given set of circumstances can be overcome, for it is not only subject to the conditions with which it shares the character of material reality but also possesses the capacity to understand them. Thus far human being has retained the capacity to deviate from predictable responses, i.e., to sustain an adherence to concepts and principles and beliefs in the face of circumstantial and situational pressure(s) to deny them, and in so doing has persisted in the unfolding of real, existent value. But it is only to the extent that individuals can envision the situation that ought to be, that a challenge is made to the one that is, and that vision, for all its universal application, is fundamentally a product of particular perception. Similarly it is the unique expression of the artist's vision or the musician's composition which forms the tangible contribution to the realization of the human capacity for aesthetic creation and while it is the understanding of universals which inspires that work, it must be carried out by individuals. Thus each particular human birth, understood as distinctively human, is the occasion of paradigmatic

renewal for it represents the reality of possible human progress and achievement that will always historically exceed the world as it is.

When individuals are bound to a specific group either by virtue of their blood relationships or by relationships grounded in a legal commitment their integration into that group can reduce to a merely nominal claim of connectedness and yet be taken as a kind of "evidence" that one is not alone in the world, i.e., as a hedge against the "quiet desperation" of alienated individualism. In this sense, biological and legal ties are understood to be the substantial social relationships without which the individual would be simply absorbed by the wider society which surrounds him. To the extent that the social reality is such that only the conceptual absence of human confrontation and engagement can structure and clarify the notion of individual rights and freedoms, this sense of the family arbitrates the apparent conflict between the social (i.e., human) needs of the individual and his life as a "free and equal" citizen.

Historically the presence of mutual concern and love between family members appears as a kind of luxury in that it was possible and even necessary to maintain the family despite their absence. The modern development of the individual's capacity to live alone marks our era as a period in which family relationships are remarkably voluntary. Which family, if any, the individual will accept as a

constitutive principle if his life depends upon the relationship between the demands made upon the individual by the group and his own demands with respect to what the family is able to provide for him. When the family appears as the object of a conflict between the individual's need for the intimacy of family life and his need for personal freedom it betrays an unnecessary antagonism between its institutional structure and its human "elements."

THE PROMISE OF THE INDIVIDUAL: THE GROUP

Social identity must rest upon the real character of a social group as it is manifested in the several particular expressions of human being by which it is comprised if it is to avoid the totalitarian alternative, viz. the derivation of individual identity from the contrived collective representation of the state or group. Without the existence of the individual the group has only an abstract, though not necessarily rational, kind of identity insofar as it is unrelated to the material development of its real being, the individual. Profoundly inhuman implications must always accompany this authoritarian kind of social identity which can be imposed upon any subject in the manner of empty categorization as determined by any arbitrarily chosen conceptual (i.e., ideological) arrangement.

To the extent that the individual's significance is reduced to his function as representative of and contributor

to the social identity which both precedes and supercedes him, individual development and growth is reduced to the exercise of duty and obedience to orders for which the superior being and purpose of the group is the only authority. In this situation, the determination to weld a social identity out of the available human resource assumes the power both to discharge individuality in the name of a greater, because collectively stronger, being and to ascertain the essential nature of that collective being without reference to its real elements. Thus individuals who accidentally share certain characteristics such as place of birth or race are united around a sense of commonality which is defined in terms of a deliberately exclusive sense of humanity and human potential. The ultimate perversion of the collective consciousness of a group experience is the denigration of personal moral reflection which not only denies the classical definition of the self-directive man but also represses the rational perception of genuinely universal human relationships, i.e., those which transcend the diversity of circumstance without devaluing it.

Any group which assumes the power of conferring the substance of one's identity upon its members as that identity is defined by the needs of the group demonstrates an obliviousness to the means and the value of human being that readily facilitates the operation of particular interests. If the ideology clearly pronounces the futility and absurdity

of individual effort as in a totalitarian or fascist society there is no question but that the group, as it is consolidated into a representation of whatever interests find themselves able to dominate its endeavors, merely employs human being as the means by which the group acts. On the other hand, where the ideological articulation of the group's nature retains the concept of individuality as a central tenet of its own theory, it cannot be automatically understood as a demonstrably significant or real value. But even when the idea of individuality is allowed only a superficial justificatory function in the conceptual framework of social institutions its strength as a fundamental human value militates against the complete subordination of the individual within his society. As long as the social body is at least nominally dedicated to the protection of every individual's existence as a unique particular it must employ the term which has the power to suggest challenge and refusal on the part of the individual. While genuine human difference is clearly threatened by the recession of its possibilities, the emphasis upon the evil of any social tampering with individual identity and will can sustain a conceptual tension between social identity and individual being from which a critical attitude towards the demands and values of the group may grow. In this sense the democratic premium upon individual rights and freedoms is, despite its theoretical abstraction and practical emptiness, crucial to the reality of

an identity which is separate from that of the group and different from that of any other member of the group because it demands that the presupposed individual be concretely identified.

FROM HUMAN INTIMACY TO HUMAN INTERDEPENDENCE

Within the context of a group individual action is an embodiment of the interest and purpose of the whole group for it reflects the shared resources and possibilities of the common situation. But the collective character of that act is only its abstract characterization for as an individual act it underscores the extent to which the collective identity of the group is constituted by individuals. That the group may, and often does, act as a body does not preclude the independent activity of its diverse members who share the circumstances and conditions of their lives but not the composition of their souls. Rather it is from the foundation of the recognition of their common interests that each member's separate identity emerges because it is in that recognition that the opportunity for self-realization is secured.

Through the recognition of common ends and their shared efforts to attain those ends each member can be freed from what would be the overwhelming task of production and reproduction to meet one's personal needs in much the manner of Marx's analysis of the collective character of labor.

Within the family, however, the collective capacity to promote individual freedom is not a matter of the expansive potential of cooperation in material production but rather issues from the concept of the family as the objective structure within which subjective human being is able to take its individual shape and form. The freedom for individuality that is offered by the family thus only begins with the identification of the family's fundamental purpose with an adequate provision for personal needs. In an epoch marked by an increasingly rapid establishment of "public" institutions which are not only capable of, but even sometimes better at, fulfilling the traditional functions of the family, the radical value of the family is its capacity to provide both the concept of and the experience of those conditions of human intimacy and engagement which are essential to the expression and development of true human individuality.

But to the extent that the being of the family can only exist as the active processes of becoming by means of which each individual member becomes himself, the alienation of family members is far more than an appropriation of property understood in the possessive sense. Rather, the family that stands in opposition to its members as an independently established entity denies to those individuals the fundamental experience of oneself as simultaneously subject and object. Until one can understand that he is an essential constituent of a social group which appears as "other",

apart and at a distance from himself, there is little real possibility of his assuming responsibility for its actions except or until he can claim exclusive leadership. When the family appears distinctly other and different the elementary experience of social human being for the individual is so dominated by limitations and restraints, that the concept of social groups cannot escape its influence, not simply because of the individual's personal fear but most importantly because that paradigm group which should be available as a concise and uncluttered model of collective work and play is missing. The shallow scientific understanding of the anthropological conclusion that man is a "gregarious" animal is revealed in the experience of even our most intimate and basic relationships as a part of an involuntary association with others who do not necessarily find our own (subjective) interests expressing theirs. The current tendency to push the sociologist to a more and more "scientific" accumulation of data on human nature and its manipulation by the group increasingly appears to be the only alternative the anarchic anti-resolutions of the continuing conflict between family responsibilities and personal freedom. But the scientific sociological management of human collectivity will no more be the form of either self-determination or self-government than is the scientific management of the labor process a means of facilitating the humanization of social labor.

The prospect of a science of human behavior that could

dictate the necessary conditions for a stable social order has in its favor the capacity to illuminate the circumstances in which the individual will relinquish his claim to the rights of self-direction. If such understanding could motivate the elimination of social structures which incorporate the individual without expressing him it would indeed have progressive implications. However, the determination to manage and control the obstreperous "facts" of material existence which pervades the scientific approach thus far suggests that our understanding of human behavior will be used for systematizing human interaction, particularly in order to guarantee and protect the operation of interdependent production lines.

CONTINUITY VERSUS OPPORTUNITY: THE
CONFLICT BETWEEN "ME" AND "WE"

Freedom for individual development must imply both the nonchanging essence which develops and the changing appearance by which that development is marked, for the "freedom" which simply permits an episodic accumulation of varied experience is the means through which human individuality is dissipated and spent. Without the binding force of a dimension of one's being that is carried forward into each new experience and confronted with the challenge of the possibilities peculiar to that experience, the individual has no resistance against the demands of the new

situation and must submit to a thorough internalization of the sociological phenomena in each new setting. The vulnerability of the rootless individual can be illustrated by the common case of accepting employment with a company or firm towards which one feels initially at odds. All too soon the values and beliefs which would set the individual against the very economic activity that offers him a salary are forgotten or renounced as the impractical ideals of a more naive age. But a parallel dynamic can also be noted in the flexible identity of the individual who either pursues or settles for the serial form of interpersonal relationships. In this case, the cost of preserving his "freedom" is not solitude but the lack of a truly distinctive life style or character such as would demand an equally distinctive companion.

To the extent that the necessity of making such adjustments is less noticeable as the opportunities for moving freely from one experience to the next without making significant commitments to either people or projects increase, individuality is already a disappearing aspect of human being. Thus in the frantic scramble to program excitement, novelty, and generally new experience into our lives we tend to find the same patterns of relationships and learning recurring again and again despite the variation in circumstance. Indeed, the possibility of growth through experience already tends toward a simple resituation and voyeurism insofar as

the longing for an objective engagement with the world as other (in general) is diverted into the temporary pleasures of nonparticipatory entertainment.

On the other hand, it is a mistake to suppose that the substance of individuality must always be threatened by the availability of numerous experiences peculiar to twentieth century technological society, for access to conceptual and circumstantial environments beyond that into which one is born is as much a prerequisite for the transcendence of provincialism as it has ever been. Rather it is the assumption that that access alone is sufficient for the discovery and development of one's being, i.e., the assumption that it is only the situational features of one's existence which are responsible for the promotion or prevention of personal growth, which must be critically assessed.

In modern society access to the experience of other environments means not simply mobility and communication but a devaluation of the bonds which mark an interpersonal relationship for in order to make use of the technological means of travel and change, one must be able to leave one situation and enter another. While this devaluation is apparently co-existent with the logic of individual primacy, it is also the source of a form of individual oppression against which the individual is singularly helpless because his resistance appears to be directed against himself. It is not often that the individual who chooses to leave his family or "primary"

group setting and throw himself as much upon his own resources as possible is able to walk "away" from human society. Rather the act of disconnecting oneself from the social unit to which one has been related through mutual concern and identification is simultaneously an entry into the social world which can be perceived as a whole only to the extent that it can be recognized as a particular collection of individuals. With the ideology of separate and generally opposed interests predominate and the fear of being maneuvered into an unprofitable sacrifice of one's own resources pervasive, the individual faces himself as a being who exists in a crowded but fundamentally isolated condition. If it were possible for him to ignore the inescapable physical proximity of other human beings the individual would at least be pursuing his personal interest in a logically defensible manner. But as the conceptual and practical dismembering of human effort continues, and his focus on the particular concerns of his own abilities and wants intensifies, the occlusion of the meaning of his individual growth and activity must result. In this sense the individual is either forced to insist that his endeavors are solely motivated by a private and incommunicable inspiration towards objective "production" or to admit that he acts in a wholly impulsive fashion without reference to any kind of constant theme such as would justify each new attempt. The catchall explanation of an exclusive focus on selfish interests, viz. the logic of self-preservation

extended beyond the facts of a brute animal existence, can be employed to give a rational veneer to the dictum of modern competition at the individual level but it is increasingly unable to account for the decidedly nonpreserving attack individuals make upon their own physical and mental being. Instead the vacuum produced by the devaluation of purpose and meaning with respect to human endeavor as a self-initiated and self-directed and ultimately self-expressive project is filled by the purpose of a system which operates not in human qua human-as-universal interest but only in the interest of maintaining and expanding a particular locus of power and authority.

THE VIOLATED POTENTIAL: ISOLATION
INSTEAD OF INTEGRITY

Although the perversion of the family as a model of genuinely participatory social-political organization is a crucial violation of human rights and aspirations, the same process of alienation that effectively closes the individual to the real human potential for collective vision and effort reaches beyond the public dimension of one's life. To the extent that individuality is not a given, i.e., that the human infant is recognized as an individual only insofar as the identity of his parents and family are brought to bear upon him by others and not by virtue of an active assertion of his own being, the essential human potential for a unique

(personal) identity remains only a potential unless it is engaged by the dialectics of human interaction. Again, it is tempting to lean on a part of the (relatively) scientific summation of the processes of human development by the modern sociologist who also perceives human being as the product of social life and interaction. But whereas the sociological understanding treats human exchange as the transmission of behavior and language necessary for a group to function, i.e., as the means by which the "mechanics" of the requisite socialization processes are accomplished, the concept of the dialectics on which human being depends has as its object the realization of human individuality. In this sense the interaction between individuals is the mediating activity between that which the individual is and that which he is not, manifested in a radically human context.

Not only by means of but because of the inevitably social character of human existence, paradigmatically illustrated by the family, human being can achieve a radically diverse independence. That independence is and will be commensurate with the nature of universal value because its reality is beyond the influence of particular circumstance and yet only realized in spatial, temporal, i.e., fully concrete, terms. The essence of human individuality cannot be found in the separation of particular human being from its universal, i.e., from the concept of the constitutive

features of human being, for the individuality of isolation is only by default. Cut adrift from the regulative principles of human being which can never be so eloquently expressed in abstraction as to substitute for the communication of beauty or justice or truth in objective human relationships (i.e., extra-personal or trans-personal), human individuality is only the shell of a profoundly accidental and consequently alien being. But to the extent that the individual subjectively gathers the universality of human being into the substance of his particular being and yet exercises the freedom of that particular material being to act (in the manner of Kant's autonomous man) in accord with his own "legislation" he is not a separate human being made "individual" by an irresolvable antagonism towards others, but is rather an individual human being whose separateness is the result of his being with others.

This is not the separateness of a particular being who must withhold himself from the interdependent relations of the group in order to guarantee his freedom to think differently and perhaps disagree, but rather the separateness which is an ontologically constitutive feature of the human experience. The point is not to suggest that the physical discreteness of our bodies may be transcended by being ignored but rather to illuminate the significance of the physical limits of ourselves insofar as they both suggest separate identity and demarcate what should be the

difference. But the discrete character of our physical being can no more compel genuine individuality than it can defend the rights and freedoms on which individuality depends, for in the wake of the processes of social homogenization and control our physical separateness is only a fragile symbol of what ought to be the strength and independence of every human perspective.

The concrete realization of the ontologically human expression of essential individuality occurs only insofar as the generality of human being with which every particular being is born is overcome. True human difference is a function of the social character of human development for it can only issue from the experience of human commonality, i.e., the development of the self in human terms. In the same way that the humanization (the human development) of the senses depends upon the exposure of what are initially only the general capacities of perception, taste, sight, sound, and cognition, etc., to their appropriate objects as those objects reflect historical human being, the development of individuality depends upon the interaction with other human individuals who embody human history. It is this confrontation which defines the difference between the self which grows but never ceases to be itself and all other human being which, while infinitely particular in its appearance, forms a totality as the substance of continuing dialectical relationships to the individual.

CONCLUSION

Lacking a foundation of values and principles which recognize in all other human being not only the source but the guarantee of human life as the unfolding of difference, personal distinction mutates into the attempt to dominate. When the concept of qualitative individuality, of the unique expression of universal human being, is repressed the universally human yearning for individuality can be seen to attempt to command a recognition of the self through the exclusion of others. Clearly the occlusion of universal human value, truth, beauty, justice, etc., spawns an ignorance of human worth which threatens all individuality by suggesting that the only possible transcendence of human generality is the egotism of crude survival and conquest. In the same vein, the persistent fear of actualizing the universality of human being, as manifested in the failure of families and the preoccupation with personal freedom, has already resulted in a mass mockery of what is in truth the most precious and most difficult of human achievements. But this mockery pales in significance beside the alternatives to a genuine individuality: The eclipse of the concept of individuality as an active process and the concrete completion of its reification, the fully particularized individual.

FOOTNOTES

¹C. B. Macpherson, Democratic Theory: Essays in Retrieval (London: Oxford University Press, Ely House, 1975), p. 25.

²Ibid., pp. 25-30.

³Ibid., p. 38.

⁴Aristotle, The Basic Works of Aristotle, ed. by Richard McKeon (New York: Random House, 1941), 1252^a 20, p. 1127.

⁵Ibid., 1253^a 20, p. 1129.

⁶Ibid., 1260^b 15, p. 1145.

⁷Jean-Jacques Rousseau, The Social Contract and Discourse on the Origin of Inequality, ed. by Lester C. Crocker (New York: Washington Square Press, 1977), p. 8.

⁸Virginia Held, "Marx, Sex, and the Transformation of Society," in Women and Philosophy: Toward a Theory of Liberation, ed. by Carol C. Gould and Marx W. Wartofsky (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, Capricorn Books, 1976), p. 168.

⁹Ibid., p. 171.

¹⁰Max Horkheimer, "Authority and the Family," in Critical Theory: Selected Essays, trans. by Matthew J. O'Connell and others (New York: Seabury Press, 1972), p. 69.

¹¹Ibid., p. 86.

¹²Ibid., p. 103.

¹³Ibid., p. 79.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 107.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 109.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aristotle. The Basic Works of Aristotle. Edited by Richard McKeon. New York: Random House, 1941.
- Held, Virginia. "Marx, Sex, and the Transformation of Society." In Women and Philosophy: Toward a Theory of Liberation. Edited by Carol C. Gould and Marx W. Wartofsky. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, Capricorn Books, 1976.
- Horkheimer, Max. "Authority and the Family." In Critical Theory: Selected Essays. Translated by Matthew J. O'Connell and others. New York: Seabury Press, 1972.
- Macpherson, C.B. Democratic Theory: Essays in Retrieval. London: Oxford University Press, Ely House, 1975.
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. The Social Contract and Discourse on the Origin of Inequality. Edited by Lester C. Crocker. New York: Washington Square Press, 1977.