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**The Perceived Value of Women's Unpaid Work:**

**As Experienced by Eight New Zealand Women  
Born Between 1922 and 1946.**

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Philosophy in Women's Studies  
at Massey University**

**JUNE CAVE**

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## ***Dedication***

***This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my mother Dorothy Ross (nee Nixon) who has been my inspiration. Her love, patience and philosophical approach to life will always be remembered.***

## **Abstract**

At some time in their lives, most New Zealand women have undertaken unpaid work either in the home or in the community. Much of women's unpaid work is concerned with caring and nurturing. Women undertake the major share of child rearing, caring for sick and elderly relatives both within the home and in the community and emotional work within their family. Women also undertake most of the unpaid household maintenance in the home, from domestic labour to decision making and budgeting. Many women act as helpmeet to their husbands in support of their careers. A large proportion of women's unpaid work is connected with both informal and formal voluntary work in the community.

There is no question that this work is valuable, as it is critical to the New Zealand economy. However, many women believe that this work is not always valued by male partners, government policy makers, and in some cases, the women themselves. In certain contexts, this work is valued more than in others. And at certain periods of time this work has been valued more than at other times.

The method chosen for this research was a modified form of the grounded theory approach developed by Glaser and Strauss, as outlined by Kirby and McKenna (1989). The data was collected by conducting qualitative interviews with eight New Zealand women between fifty and seventy years of age. The interviewees were encouraged to relate their experiences of unpaid work and to reflect on their mothers' and daughters' experiences of unpaid work.

The women in this study had much in common, in that they had all been married, had adult children, and had undertaken a variety of unpaid work both within the home and in the community. However, along with the commonalities, there were differences. Six of the women were Pakeha and two were Maori. The twenty year age range among the women, meant that they experienced different economic and historical events. Some of the women came from a higher than average socio-economic level than others and some married into a higher socio-economic level.

The thesis records the interviewees' experiences of unpaid work in their own words, and analyses the data in order to discover whether this work is valued, by whom, in what context, and how over time the evaluation of this work has changed.

This study seeks to show how women's experiences of unpaid work, both in the home and in the community, have been valued, by whom, in what context and whether this evaluation has changed over time. Four specific areas are explored - the expectation that women will carry out the major proportion of unpaid work in the home and in the community - monetary reward for work compared with unpaid work - the sharing of unpaid work either in the home or in the community - and status gained through unpaid work. Because these women reflect on their own mothers' and daughters' experiences of unpaid work, it is possible to identify the changes which have occurred over this time, in the evaluation of women's unpaid work.

## ***Acknowledgements***

I wish to acknowledge the continuing support, patience and sound advice given to me by Dr Catherine Bray. Without this support I would never have completed this thesis. I would also like to thank Drs Alannah Ryan and Jenny Coleman for their assessment of the manuscript, and their helpful advice. I would like to thank my husband Roy for his support and for all the unpaid domestic work he has carried out while I have been working on this thesis. Last but not least I would like to thank my interviewees, Florence, Pam, Yvonne, Jill, Catherine, Pat, Te Ahumi and Betty. Without their contribution this thesis would not have been possible.

## **Preface**

It must be pointed out that much of the material in this thesis is gleaned from the experiences of the women interviewed. It is their perception of their own experiences of unpaid work both in the home and in the community, with comparisons made to the unpaid work of their mothers and their daughters. I have attempted to analyse these experiences and compare them with each other and with my own experiences of unpaid work, in order to discover whether and by whom this work is valued, in what context is it valued or devalued, and how over time this work is valued more than at other times.

There have been many limitations encountered in writing this thesis. Because of the number of interviewees, and the many categories of women's unpaid work researched, much data was gathered. It has not been possible to use all of this data, due to the required length of the thesis, and much valuable material had to be discarded. Although eight women were interviewed, which is a reasonable number for a Masters thesis, these women represent only a small proportion of the female population of New Zealand, and therefore the views expressed are those experienced by these women, and may not apply to other women.

Another limitation was that I was unable to interview a larger number of Maori women, and the two women whom I did interview, would not represent all Maori women. These two women were both married to Pakeha men, lived in urban environments and could be considered to be in a middle class, socio-economic bracket. Their experiences would not be the same as Maori women on a lower socio-economic bracket, or from a rural marae based environment. All of the women interviewed were heterosexual, and were or had been married. Their experiences may differ from the experiences of women in de facto relationships, unmarried women living alone, either with or without children, or lesbian couples.

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# Chapter One

## Background and Methodology

### Introduction

A large proportion of the work undertaken by many New Zealand women, both within the home and in the community, is unpaid. While many men do undertake unpaid work, according to a Ministry of Women's Affairs Report in August, 1997, thirty one percent of women's time is spent on unpaid work compared with twelve percent of men's time. Half of all unpaid work done by women in the household is caring for others, which includes caring for children, the sick and elderly as well as household maintenance. Women also work unpaid in the community, strengthening and bringing together community members and providing basic social services (Ministry of Women's Affairs, 1997). Women's unpaid work is critical to the New Zealand economy as it provides care for children, and care for other family and community members and without this work the total cost of government health and welfare services would be much higher.

This thesis is about women's unpaid work both within the home and the community. The question which are raised are by whom, when and in what context is this work valued, and whether over time this work has been valued more than at other times. Some of the queries which emerge throughout this thesis are: Does the expectation that women will carry out certain work de-value this work? Is paid work valued more than unpaid work? When unpaid work is shared, is this work seen to be of more value than when it is not? Is status an important factor for women when valuing unpaid work?

One reason for writing this thesis is that I, as a wife, mother and grandmother, born in the 1930s, like many New Zealand women, both Maori and Pakeha (in heterosexual/same sex relationships or single), have undertaken a considerable amount of unpaid work within the home and the community. This has often been combined with full time paid work.

The thesis will investigate the unpaid work of women from the early part of this century up to the present time. Eight women in the 50-70 age group have been interviewed about the paid and unpaid work they have undertaken so as to ascertain whether the unpaid work is valued, by whom, when, and in what context this work has been valued and if the evaluation of this work has changed over time. The interviewees have also related their own perceptions of the experiences of unpaid work undertaken by their mothers and their daughters, compared with their own. The purpose of this thesis is to compare the eight women interviewed, their perceptions of their mothers' and daughters' experiences of unpaid work and examine their similarities as well as their individualities. I will also take into account how historical events such as the Depression of 1929-1935, World War II, the post-war baby boom and present day economic changes have affected how the unpaid work undertaken by these women has been valued. The thesis will assess attitudinal changes, educational opportunities and the demographic situation of the women as they affect their unpaid work and the unpaid work of their mothers and daughters. The findings of this research will be analysed using grounded theory based on data collected from interviews, observations and the work of other feminist writers, to ascertain the value of this work.

This Chapter provides definitions of: "unpaid" work; "valuing" as it applies to women's unpaid work; "voluntary work", both formal and informal within the home and in the community; and of "status" as it applies to these women. This chapter will also present background data on the topic of the value of women's unpaid work, a description of the unpaid work carried out by women, and a discussion of the categories of women's unpaid work. Also presented in this Chapter is the methodology used in the gathering, coding and the categorising of data and the preparation, analysis and conclusions of the thesis. The Chapter will conclude with a self analysis and introduction of the interviewees.

Chapter II will provide a brief historical overview of some of the attitudinal, educational and economic changes in New Zealand beginning with the experiences of the settler women of the nineteenth century through to the early twentieth century, and up to the

present. This chapter will relate to the valuation of women's unpaid work over this time period and will link to the following chapters which describe and analyse the experiences of unpaid work of the women interviewed and their perceptions and understandings of the unpaid work carried out by their mothers and their daughters.

In Chapter III I will present the experiences of unpaid work of the interviewees themselves as gathered from the transcripts and other data collected. I will discuss whether this work is valued or devalued, by whom, and in what context is it valued or devalued.

In Chapter IV I will discuss the perception of the interviewees of the experiences of the unpaid work carried out by their own mothers and their daughters and compare this with the experiences of the interviewees, to ascertain how the value of this work has changed over time, due to changing attitudes, expectations and conditions. Also included in this Chapter is how education for girls has changed over the twentieth century and how this has affected the evaluation of women's unpaid work.

In Chapter V I will attempt to answer the questions, "Is women's unpaid work valued? By whom is it valued? In what context is it valued or devalued? How has the evaluation of this work changed over time? I will also reference secondary sources to support the thesis, and present some possible implications which may emerge in the twenty first century.

### ***I. Unpaid Work***

Unpaid work is any task which is undertaken within the home and the community for which the participant does not receive monetary reward. If these tasks were undertaken by a person from the paid workforce, they would receive payment.

Women can be involved in caring and nurturing, household management and voluntary work in the community. These are all tasks that many women perform daily in bringing up children, running a household, administering to sick, elderly or disabled relatives or in community service outside their homes. This does not mean that men do not perform

some of these tasks as well but often when men care for a dependent relative, care for a child or undertake domestic work in the home it is regarded as atypical and as suggested by Dalley (1996) this is

*in contrast to the case of women, where to disentangle the process is to be unnatural (Dalley, 1996:12).*

Table I presents results from the 1996 Census which indicate that women carry out the greater proportion of unpaid work in the home and 14 percent of men indicated that they did not carry out any unpaid work in the home while only 5.7 percent of women indicated that they did not carry out any unpaid work in the home. This evidence supports the findings in the interviews that the expectation is that women will undertake this unpaid work in the home. Women in the household are largely responsible for cooking, cleaning, shopping, washing and ironing, while men's domestic tasks usually consist of repairs or working outside of the house in tasks such as gardening, lawnmowing or home maintenance.

**Table I. Couple Type by Unpaid work (within the home) for the Population Resident in New Zealand in Private Dwellings.<sup>(1)</sup>**

Unpaid Work	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Unpaid Work in the home						
Household work	607506	83.60	682845	92.38	1290351	88.03
Caring for children	244704	33.67	309930	41.93	544634	37.84
Caring for aged, ill or disabled	33537	4.62	47580	6.44	81114	5.53
No unpaid work in the home	101691	13.99	42234	5.71	143922	9.82
Not specified/not available <sup>(2)</sup>	51228	---	38769	---	90000	---
<b>Total</b>	<b>777897</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>777897</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>1555794</b>	<b>---</b>

<sup>(1)</sup> This table includes counting of people where more than one type of unpaid work was specified.

<sup>(2)</sup> Includes cases where a partner is temporarily absent from the dwelling.

*From: Statistics NZ. 1996 Census, Families and Households 1996 Census of Population and Dwellings. p123.*

The statistics quoted in Table I indicate that women still appear to carry the largest share of home responsibilities. In a dual earner family, the husband would tend to let family time and space be intruded upon by work activities, while women were more likely to allow family matters to intrude into the work sphere (Sekera, 1986). With these attitudes, the husband would most probably place more importance on his career than

that of his wife's and in dual income families it is usually the wife that has to take time off work to take children to doctors or out of school functions (Brannen and Moss, 1993).

*i. Caring and Nurturing*

Caring falls into several categories. One area of caring and nurturing is child-care which ranges from birth through to adolescence and sometimes through to adulthood. Many grandmothers may find themselves caring for their grandchildren so that parents can have time out or undertake paid employment. Many writers believe that this contribution of unpaid work carried out by mothers and grandmothers often goes unrecognised. Woods (1993) suggests that mothering is often undervalued while Finch (1983) argues that the mothers are producing the next generation which ensures the continuation of capitalist relation of production and should be valued as such.

Many mothers take on the role of "educator" of their children. Anne Else (1996) believes that children

*probably learn more in the first five years than they do in the next twenty. From the day they are born, education and care go hand in hand (Else, 1996:34).*

Often when the child is of school age a mother may supervise homework, correspondence lessons or even home schooling. She may offer her services to the school on various committees such as Board of Trustees, Kohanga Reo, kindergarten, and play centre.

Many women care for elderly and sick relatives, usually after their own children have left home, but sometimes combining their care with caring for their own children with very little support from relatives and husbands. Many women who do undertake the care of the elderly, sick or disabled often sacrifice working in the paid workforce, work reduced hours, forgo promotion or change to a poorer paid but less demanding job (Craig, 1992).

Women provide 75-85% of relative care, according to Finch (1989), and the only common circumstances in which men provide substantial care is when they are looking after a disabled wife. Because women usually marry older men and live longer than men, they will most probably have to provide care for their partners. Women are more likely to be living alone by the time they need care and it will be mainly their female relatives that will care for them (Else, 1996:100).

## *ii. Household Management*

Women running a home are often experienced in managing the household and keeping to a budget. When supporting a husband in his career, they often act as receptionists, by taking telephone messages, talking to clients or suppliers, sometimes undertaking correspondence, banking and paying bills. Often these skills may go unrewarded especially when a women may wish to return to the paid workforce after many years of managing and budgeting for the family household. Many employers discount this administrative experience of women running a home and family. Some feminists have demanded that the skills acquired in running a home and caring for a family should be recognised and given credit for in the market place (Luxton, Rosenberg and Arat-Koc, 1990:3).

Shopping is an important and time-consuming aspect of household management. Many women will draw up a list of provisions needed for the week and push the trolley around the supermarket, return home to unpack the groceries and stock the refrigerator and pantry shelves. Pringle (1992:152) has suggested that a woman's value as housewife and mother is largely reflected in her success as a shopper. She believes that this has replaced the older emphasis on productive skills such as food preservation and home sewing. We have to presume that these women have the use of a motor vehicle. For those who do not have this "luxury", shopping becomes more tedious. Else (1996) states:

*Like shopping, many demands on carers assume a car. When there's no car, and no phone either, carers can barely cope.....Even when a car is available, dovetailing all the transport and fitting it in around everything else is a major daily exercise. (Else, 1996:38).*

Most women maintain the household by dusting, vacuuming, scrubbing, polishing, cleaning ovens and windows, washing clothes, mending clothes, gardening and often mowing lawns. If they have a male partner, he may help with these tasks, but other research has shown that women usually undertake the greater proportion of this work (Brannon & Moss, 1993). Sekaran (1986) states that

*the reason why there is not a more equal sharing of work in dual income families, is that husbands still identify with the instrumental (breadwinner) role and wives identify with the homemaker's role (Sekaran, 1986:26).*

It is usually women who send Christmas cards, remember birthdays, write letters of thanks, congratulations or condolence. Many women act as helpmeet to their husband to support him in his career. As Finch observes

*When a woman marries, she marries not only a man but also she marries his job, and from that point onwards will live out her life in the context of the job which she has married (Finch, 1983:1).*

Other feminist writers have emphasised the part wives play supporting their husbands in their careers (Finch, 1983; Habgood, 1992; Shaw, 1992; Waring, 1996). Finch (1983) states:

*It appears that the colonist image of the contented helpmeet in the happy home and the tired warrior in the jungle outside is by no means extinguished (Finch, 1983:87).*

She suggests that as a man rises in status and hierarchy in an organisation, it becomes more difficult for his wife to fail to act as a helpmeet and sometimes employers expect wives to provide this kind of support. Often, opportunities do exist whereby a wife will participate actively in aspects of her husband's work, thereby making a direct contribution through her own labour but for no additional financial reward. Often wives support their husbands by just listening to their problems, thereby relieving the tensions of work related issues. Farmer's wives are a good example of women who give unpaid support towards husbands. Shaw, when writing on farmers' wives, stated that the work remains unpaid and hidden from the wider society and their status in having an input on policy remains low. She found in her research that a lot of women's farm work is done in the home through finance, administration, communication, discussion and planning.

Again this work may not be valued by outsiders and women's unpaid work in the market economy is not valued (Shaw, 1992).

### *iii. Voluntary Work*

Voluntary work has been described by Horsfield (1988:31) as any unpaid activity which is carried out for the benefit of someone else outside the home. This can be provided either on an informal neighbourly basis or through formal agencies which rely on unwaged labour. Areas where voluntary work is undertaken are in fundraising, marae support, community welfare organisations, school Boards of Trustees, Play Centres, Kohanga Reo, in the arts, religious and sporting and recreational organisations. This work is unpaid or in some cases low paid, sometimes expenses are met, honorariums paid or koha given.

Baldock (1990:4-5) defines a volunteer

*as a person who, on a regular basis, contributes his or her time and energy to a voluntary agency, statutory body, social action or self-help group concerned with issues of welfare, without being paid for this, other than in some instances through the payment of out-of-pocket expenses.*

This definition applies to what I have defined as "formal" voluntary work. Much caring work is undertaken outside the home on a voluntary basis for both formal and informal organisations or carried out just helping friends and neighbours. Craig (1989) states that

*Family and community care practices reflect the view that women's primary role is caring for all the other members of the family as well as dependent people in the community (Craig, 1989:105).*

Because women are either at home full-time or in low-paid employment they are often exploited by government funded caring organisations to work unpaid or low paid in community service. McKinlay (1992) has suggested that government decision-making policies rely on the availability of a pool of such volunteers and Craig (1992) sees their work as restricting their opportunities for participating in other areas of work and social life. Often, it appears that this band of self-less workers goes unrecognised and unrewarded by government even though they ease the load of under-resourced government funded institutions.

It is difficult to estimate the amount of unpaid work in the community that women undertake. The 1996 statistics on unpaid voluntary work undertaken by men and women outside the home applied only to couples and not to people living alone. Table II shows that in all areas except for that described as "other", women did considerably more unpaid voluntary work than men. 55 percent of men stated that they did not do any unpaid voluntary work outside the home as against 47 percent of women.

**Table II. Couple Type by Unpaid Work (outside the home) for the Population Resident in New Zealand in Private Dwellings 1996.<sup>(1)</sup>**

Unpaid Work	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Unpaid work outside the home						
Caring for children	77340	10.96	175944	24.42	253281	17.76
Household work	100683	14.27	108393	15.04	209073	14.66
Teaching/Training/ Coaching	86682	12.29	117006	16.24	203688	14.28
Admin/Policy Work	115979	22.11	175914	24.42	331893	23.28
Fund Raising	52461	7.44	81363	11.29	133821	9.39
Other	50139	7.11	43257	6.00	93398	6.55
No paid work outside the home	388215	55.04	338238	46.94	726456	50.55
Not specified/Not available <sup>(2)</sup>	72513	---	57390	---	129906	---
<b>Total</b>	<b>777897</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>777897</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>1555794</b>	<b>---</b>

(1) This table includes counting of people where more than one type of unpaid work was specified.

(2) Includes cases where a partner is temporarily absent from the dwelling.

*From Statistics New Zealand 1996 Census, Families and Households. 1996 Census of Population and Dwellings. p123.*

There is a host of voluntary community work undertaken by women connected with Play Centre, Kindergarten, and School Committees which Craig (1992:111) suggests are community projects which involve children and cannot be separated from household and child-care duties.

Craig argues that much of the community work done by women, such as caring for elderly relatives either in their own homes or somewhere else is of direct benefit to the state as, without the unpaid labour of these women, the state would have to provide the resources for this care. She stresses that the work that women do in the community

*has to be seen as non-productive in an economic sense, and women's lack of status has to be maintained in order for the State to increase its 'efficiency', Craig (1992:114).*

Craig also believes that in this way the State "*appears*" to be a "*liberal*" State, working in the interests of the community but in fact it acts as a capitalist, patriarchal State, which relies on women's unpaid and underpaid work and "*their position as the reserve army of labour*". The State relies on women's unpaid work in the community but is unable to recognise the status and productivity of this work alongside other statutory work in the social services (Craig, 1992:114).

Baldock & Cass (1988) believe that volunteer work fulfils an essential economic and ideological function for the state by providing social welfare services which could be provided by the government. During times of economic crisis when governments reduce welfare spending, these voluntary functions become of crucial importance. The voluntary sector is placed under considerable pressure to increase welfare services. It is because of the availability of unpaid female volunteers that these agencies are able to satisfy the increasing demands on their services (Baldock & Cass, 1988:279).

## ***II Valuing Women's Unpaid Work***

There is no question that much of the unpaid work carried out by women in the home and the community is of "worth", but the perception of many women is that this work is not always valued by all people. Sometimes the women themselves de-value this work. There are times when women devalue their own ability to meet the expectations that are often placed on them in their unpaid work. One example is when a woman is expected to have "innate" qualities with regard to mothering and she feels that she has failed when she cannot meet these expectations. Often this work is valued or devalued in certain contexts. Over time this work is devalued more than at other times.

To value something is to judge the worth of that thing. In a capitalist market economy, because women's unpaid work is considered to be unproductive, it therefore is perceived to have no value (Sassoon, 1987; Waring, 1988, 1996). Hyman (1997:67) also suggests that orthodox or neo-classical economists see 'objective' valuation through

price settled by supply and demand on the market as the only meaningful concept of value. In other words, work is evaluated in monetary terms. Hyman believes that economic activity is almost exclusively measured on market transactions where money changes hands, but that money is not the only measure of value.

As indicated above, there is an expectation that women will undertake certain unpaid work. It is expected that women carry out most of the caring and nurturing work, such as child rearing, caring for sick and elderly relatives both in the home and the community. Women are expected to undertake the major portion of the domestic labour in the home and many women accepted that "*a woman's place is in the home*". There is an expectation by churches, government policy makers and charitable organisations, that women who are not in the paid work force, will carry out much of the voluntary work in the community. When the worth of this work is measured, it could be assumed that it is of high value. But because of the expectation that women will carry out this work it may be that people do not actually value this work.

Monetary reward is not the only means of valuing work. When work undertaken is appreciated, admired or when a person receives positive feedback for his/her work, this is evidence that this work is valued.

When unpaid work is shared this work is valued more than when it is undertaken solely by one person. When the division of domestic labour in the home becomes more egalitarian, it is assumed that the male partner is placing more value on this work. Much formal voluntary work is shared with others and this can be seen on maraes, in church groups and in service organisations. On the other hand much informal voluntary work is carried out individually and may be perceived to be not valued as highly as the formal voluntary work.

In some cases a person can achieve status through both paid or unpaid work carried out by themselves or by their partner. This can be achieved through acting as helpmeet to a partner, competing for high standards in domestic labour among friends and neighbours.

Often the status gained can be valued higher than the actual work undertaken. When unpaid work achieves increased status, it is more highly valued.

### **III. Status**

According to the Penguin Dictionary of Sociology, status is

*used as a synonym for honour or prestige, and social status denotes the relative position of a person on a publicly recognized scale or hierarchy of social worth (Penguin Dictionary of Sociology, 1994:411).*

Often women gain status either through their father's or their spouse's occupation or standing in the community. Sometimes a woman can gain status in her own right through her own career, or when she becomes prominent in public affairs or politics. Status can also be determined by behaviour, possession of material goods, physical appearance and dress. For example if a woman does not come up to the standards that are expected of her, in being an efficient and capable housewife, she can lose status in the eyes of her peers.

I have used these definitions in analysing and interpreting the women's experiences of unpaid labour. In the following section I will discuss the methods used in gathering information for this research and analysing the findings. I have used a qualitative approach but where relevant I have supported my results with quantitative statistics. The method for gathering, coding, categorising and analysing the data is based on a modified version of grounded theory as recommended by Glaser & Strauss (1967) and as outlined by Kirby & McKenna (1989). A key aspect of this method is the interrelationship between the collection of data, the coding and the analysis of the data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

## Methodology

For my research on the value of the unpaid work undertaken by women in the home and in the community, interviewees were chosen from women in the fifty - seventy age group, as this group of women, because of their age, have been brought up at a time when much of the unpaid work carried out by these women was expected of them. The women chosen were all mothers and grandmothers and by gathering information on their own experiences, and their perceptions of their mothers' and daughters' experiences of unpaid work, an understanding can be gained as to the changes which have occurred over the lifetimes of these women in the value of this work.

I found that not enough research has been undertaken on women in this age group in New Zealand. Research carried out by Russell (1981) suggests that attitudes towards ageing women are socially constructed and that old people are conceptualised as somehow "*different*" from other adults. Peace (1988) and Arbor and Ginn (1991) suggest that feminist studies are usually limited to women under 60 years of age and older women are either not included or treated as of little importance. Bonita (1993) comments that the media image of older women does not portray them as they are in reality and Ingrisich (1995) found that older women often tried to evade the conflicts between society's expectations and their own aspirations and adapt to society's standards by taking on the roles of '*good mother*', '*good grandmother*' or the '*perfect daughter*'. I found the above sources to be helpful in comparison with my own research. One reason for choosing these older women for this research was that they had adult daughters/daughters-in-law who had children of their own. Also these women could recall the experiences of their own mothers who were born at the beginning of this century, thereby giving an overview of the value of the unpaid work undertaken by women over the twentieth century.

Six of the women were known to me. Five of these women were initially contacted by telephone; the sixth woman was approached in person. The names of the other two women were given to me by one of the interviewees who spoke to them personally and they later approached me by telephone. Six of the women were Pakeha (five of these

were born in New Zealand and one in Britain) and two were Maori. During my research I realised there were many experiences which I shared with the interviewees. I was in the same age group as the women I interviewed and was also a wife, mother and grandmother, and had undertaken similar unpaid work in the home and in the community. I therefore have included myself as a subject in the research. This approach to research is supported by DuBois (1991). Feminist methodology should allow for intersubjectivity which will allow the researcher to compare work with her own experiences as a woman and social scientist and to share it with the researched. The subjects can then add their own opinions to the research and therefore change it (DuBois, 1991).

During my research I have compared the experiences of the interviewees with my own experiences. I have discussed this work with the interviewees, who have given me their opinions on various aspects of it. Any changes which have been made have emerged from my own analysis of the interviews. I have tried to allow the theory to emerge from the words of the women I interviewed.

Women come from different socio-economic and racial backgrounds and within every class, race and culture these individual women also have conflicting experiences. Because of this I believe that there cannot be just one universal truth based on experience, but many truths. Women's experiences are an important starting point for feminist research but I feel it is necessary to move away from the belief in a universal truth and move towards a multiplicity of truths which change over time, place and conditions and which can incorporate the differences among women and within themselves. Harding (1987) challenges the notion of women's identity and experience as being fixed and not able to be changed. This non-fixation of women's identity was an important aspect in the interviews and is evident in the evolution of the women's lives as they experienced changes in their economic situation, and their own and society's ideological values.

I decided to use the interview method of gaining data for my research as I believed that this was the best method of gaining an understanding of the experiences of these women.

By interviewing in an informal and friendly environment, these women were able to share their experiences freely. I believed that if I had used a quantitative approach by means of questionnaires, it would not have produced the information that was necessary for my research. Structured questions may have produced the answers that the interviewees felt were required and they may not have expressed their thoughts freely. Another reason for using the interview method is that often when women are reminiscing about their experiences, they uncover feelings and emotions which may have been hidden to them. This aids in the development of their thinking and the analysis of the interviews.

I prepared a sample of open-ended questions using a qualitative approach which would allow the women to speak freely on their experiences of unpaid work. This research has concentrated on the value of women's unpaid work. The interviewees were encouraged to relate their own experiences in an attempt to discover their views, if any, on whether they believed their unpaid contributions were valued, by whom, in what context, and how over time this may have changed. It was also important to take into account the historical events which have occurred over the life times of the interviewees, and the economic, attitudinal and educational changes as well as the differences in the demographic position of families of these women.

Before interviewing the women, I did a self analysis using the sample of open-ended questions described above and this is discussed later in this Chapter. This self-analysis was carried out so that I could assess the suitability of the questions and change them where required. It was also a useful exercise, as I found that I was recollecting happenings and emotions which had lain dormant over the years. This made me aware of the possibility that the interviewees may have similar experiences during and after the interviews.

An introductory Information Sheet and Consent Form, approved by the Massey University Ethics Committee,<sup>1</sup> was presented to the eight interviewees who were assured that the information given would be used for research purposes only and that they could

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendices 1 and 2.

withdraw from the interview at any stage. Interviews were tape recorded but the interviewees had the option to request to have the tape recorder turned off at any time during the interviews. They were also informed that on completion of the interviews the tapes would be stored safely. To preserve anonymity first names only were used by four of the interviewees and four requested that another name, chosen by themselves, be used and any identifying data, other than the name chosen, were removed from the transcriptions.

When I considered the approach I would take, I realised that it was most important that I remain responsive to the interviewee and avoid a hierarchical relationship, by instigating a more collaborative approach. This approach has been suggested by Oakley (1981). It must be pointed out here that although we did share experiences, I as interviewer and researcher, still had an advantage over the interviewee, in that I remained in control of the research. I was also aware that any sensitive topics raised within the interviews could also cause a problem. One area where research could be threatening is where it intrudes into the private sphere or delves into some deeply personal experience. When sensitive issues did arise during my research interviews, I took the approach of self-disclosure which was described by Lee and Renzetti (1993). This meant that I related experiences which I had encountered which were similar to those of the interviewee. This approach of shared experiences, put the interviewee more at ease when she realised that she was not alone in these particular experiences (Edwards, 1993; Lee and Renzetti, 1993)

The interviews were of 1½ - 2 hours duration, on the whole ran smoothly and interviewees mostly gave their information freely. One interview did not come out on the tape and had to be repeated at a later date. At one stage, one of the interviewees asked me to turn the tape off while she discussed some of her experiences. During one interview there was an interruption by the daughter of the interviewee who appeared quite concerned about the wellbeing of her mother, but when the purpose of the interview was explained she was quite agreeable to it being carried out.

I realised that it was important that I describe to the interviewees why the research was being done and how it would be conducted. Some questions were gleaned from the interviewees themselves, which assisted in the research approach, thereby ensuring a shared approach between myself and the interviewee. I also believed it was important to have a good rapport between the participant and myself and thus the interviewee can become a collaborator in the research. This was achieved to a certain extent, in that the interviewees often put forward their own views on certain subjects which added new insights into the topic being researched. By putting myself in the position of the interviewee and her experiences, and by respecting her confidence and being in sympathy with her, I could then reform the questions in the light of her experience. Kirby and McKenna (1989) believe that collaboration between a researcher and a non-researcher is useful as it offers substantive feedback and personal support.

The interviewees were prompted where there were gaps or contradictions or when I wanted to find out more about a particular subject raised by the interviewee. This was carried out in order that I did not influence the narrator in any way to give the answers that they thought were expected, and to coax them to relate their own experiences and feelings.

It was difficult not to get emotionally involved, and on some occasions I remained with the interviewee after the interview and initiated a de-briefing of the situation, by talking about a particular issue. Edwards (1993) has suggested that a subject can be left with her emotional life in pieces and no one to help put it back together. When a researcher is faced with the obvious distress of an interviewee over a sensitive topic, she suggests a self-disclosure approach which would vary from woman to woman. This self disclosure would involve the interviewer disclosing her own similar experiences in order to be sympathetically attuned to the interviewee. Under some circumstances, self-disclosure by the researcher can help lessen any disturbing effects of an interviewee's own disclosures on a sensitive research topic. Self-disclosure can also allow participants to become co-researchers.

In one instance there was a need for a follow-up phone call, which meant lending a sympathetic ear but it was necessary not to become too involved in the situation and retain the position of researcher (Edwards, 1993). I found that at times it was necessary to talk to my supervisor, Catherine Bray, who acted as a mentor and who respected the anonymity of the interviewee.

My experience during the interviews was that many of the women did open up and divulge their experiences of joy, love and satisfaction as well as frustration, disappointment, self-deprecation and even resentment. This is supported by Oakley (1981) who suggests that in her 1974 research, she was asking a great deal from her interviewees. She reported that nearly three quarters of the women interviewed stated that they were able to reflect more on their experiences than they would otherwise have done, there was a reduction in their level of anxiety and/or reassurance of their normality, and the research gave them a valuable outlet for the verbalisation of their feelings.

At the conclusion of the interviews, interviewees were informed that they could have access to a summary of the findings of the research if they wished and were given a small token of appreciation for their cooperation. All participants were sent a letter of thanks<sup>2</sup> after the interviews. All of the interviews were transcribed, and collated for relevant material. Six transcripts were perused by the interviewees but the remaining two interviewees were not interested in reading their transcript. Some interviewees were surprised when they read their transcripts, as they were typed back verbatim from the tapes. In some cases they requested that adjustments be made and this was done where relevant and I assured them that the transcripts would be edited so as to render them more coherent.

In carrying out the interviews, gathering data and analysing findings, I used a grounded theory approach. On a separate sheet of paper I listed the names of the interviewees and their allotted code number (0.1 - 0.8). If these women were going under another name, this also was listed. This information was placed in an Identity file which was kept

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 3.

separate from their data in order to protect the identity of the interviewees. The transcripts were typed out and were headed with the preferred name of the interviewee and the code number allotted to them. The tapes were then labelled with the code number only, and stored in a safe place.

The next step was to collate data from the transcripts and from research articles, newspaper cuttings, reports etc. and to sort this data into categories. The categories were decided after reading the transcripts and gleaning information which emerged from the words of the interviewees. Initially, I compiled the data into categories which were coded for easy reference. The amount of categories, which was substantive to begin with was eventually narrowed down into the following: administration, ageing, background, caring and nurturing, daughters, division of labour, education, housework, helpmeet, invisibility, leisure, marriage, motherhood, paid work, parents, value, voluntary labour. These data in these categories were all filed in separate folders.

What emerged from the transcripts was that the unpaid work undertaken by these women could be divided into three main categories: caring and nurturing, household maintenance and voluntary work in the community. From these categories several sub categories emerged. For example, caring and nurturing could be broken down into the following areas: motherhood, caring for sick and elderly relatives, emotional work, and caring for grandchildren. Household maintenance could be broken down into: domestic labour, administration, helpmeet and gender division of labour. Voluntary work could be divided into both formal and informal work. I considered that the interviewee's experiences of both education and paid work were important areas for analysis and these two categories were maintained.

Because the interviewees discussed their perceived recollections of the experiences of their mothers and daughters, it became apparent that there should be a category for family background (which included parents) and also for daughters. Much of the data overlapped into several categories and needed to be copied and placed in the relevant folders. Some of the categories became redundant, but were not discarded.

Notes and jottings of ideas were collected throughout the research so as to allow personal experiences, thoughts and feelings to enter into the research information on the same level as those of the interviewees. This was achieved by self analysis, or collecting data apart from the interviews, which were noted, dated and analysed, for possible future use in the research. Kirby and McKenna (1989) refer to this process as comparing and linking “bibbits”<sup>3</sup> which help the researcher to understand the specific and overall properties, patterns and relationships between data and between groups of data. This material was then collated into the appropriate category and placed into folders along with the data collected from the interviews. In some cases these notes needed to be photocopied as they applied to several categories. Some of this material was used and some was discarded. This process follows a modified form of the grounded theory approach of Glaser & Strauss (1967) as described in Kirby & McKenna (1989). This method of researching is described by Kirby and McKenna (1989) as recording “conceptual baggage” which is the record of the experience and reflections of the researcher that relate to the focus of the research.

Glaser (1978) has suggested that when using grounded theory, there is no “*preconceived framework of concepts and hypotheses*” to prescribe the specific data for collection (Glaser, 1978:44). I began this research with certain assumptions. For example, after reading feminist works such as Waring (1996) and Finch, (1983), my original question was concerned with the visibility of women’s unpaid work, but this became problematical as what the women were telling me was not that this work was invisible but that it was not always valued. This led me to the questions which were raised, which were whether women’s unpaid work is valued, by whom, in what context is it valued or devalued, and how over time this work has been valued more than at other times. I also realised that over the life times of the interviewees, the attitudes towards their unpaid work has changed owing to historical events, economic, educational, attitudinal and demographic changes.

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<sup>3</sup> Bibbit: a passage from a transcript, a piece of information from field notes, a section of a document or snippet of conversation recorded on a scrap of paper that can stand on its own but, when necessary, can be relocated in its original context (Kirby & McKenna, 1989:135).

Similarities and differences among the eight interviewees, materialised after the interview material was collated. For example the major finding which emerged from the interviews was that all of the women stated that there was an expectation that women would carry out much of the unpaid work both in the home and the community. The two Maori interviewees, although similar in ethnicity, differed in that one was from an urban background and the other from a rural marae based background. This difference exposed different experiences when these women talked about their mothers. The women interviewed came from various socio-economic backgrounds and some had through marriage, entered higher socio-economic levels than others.

New questions and ideas surfaced from the interview material which expanded into other areas. The result was individual women telling of their experiences of unpaid work in their own words. These experiences have helped me to discover whether women's unpaid work is valued, by whom, in what context is it valued or devalued, and how over time this work has been valued more than at other times.

Although this research was qualitative research, it has been helpful to introduce some quantitative statistics, some in the form of tables, in order to make comparisons or verify analytical deductions. These quantitative additions were used where relevant to the research and were introduced in keeping with the grounded theory approach of gathering data and collating it into relevant categories.

In summary, this thesis will examine many aspects of the experiences of older New Zealand women's unpaid work both within the home and in the community in order to ascertain whether this work is valued, by whom, in what context is it valued or devalued, and how over time this work has been valued more than at other times. Attitudinal, economic and educational changes over the time period will be taken into account in the discussion and analysis of the unpaid work undertaken by these women.

Below I have included a self analysis which was prepared after a self-interview using the same sample of qualitative questions as was used for the interviews with the eight chosen women. This will be followed by an introduction to the interviewees.

### *Self Analysis*

When I undertook a self analysis of my unpaid work, I posed the question: "What was the first time I thought about unpaid work?" On reflection, I realised that the first time I had given a thought to women's unpaid work was when I was sixteen and just venturing forth into the paid workforce. My paternal grandmother had always lived with us in a family which consisted of my mother, my father, my older brother, myself and my younger brother. My grandmother ran the household and my father gave her a housekeeping allowance. When my older brother and I started out in the "paid workforce", we gave our board money (10/- a week) to our grandmother. My mother held a very subordinate position in the family and used to attend to most of the household chores, except the cooking which was definitely my grandmother's domain, without any financial reward or gratitude. I remember complaining to my mother that my washing hadn't been done. My mother retorted that I could always do it myself and that she wasn't paid to do my washing. That is when I started doing my own washing and ironing and appreciating my mother's position as an unpaid worker, and of very little standing in the hierarchy of the family. My own experience has prompted me to discover how other women perceive their unpaid work both within the home and in the community, and whether they consider this unpaid work to be valued, by whom, in what context is it valued or devalued, and how over time this work has been valued more than at other times.

In the next section of this thesis I will introduce the interviewees whose stories, I believe, are unique. As each story unfolds the story teller discloses the valuable but often undervalued work that many women carry out throughout their lives.

### **Introduction to the Interviewees**

I interviewed eight women in the fifty to seventy age group and encouraged them to relate their own experiences of unpaid work in an effort to ascertain whether this work is valued, by whom, in what context is it valued or devalued, and how over time this work

is valued more than at other times. The women chosen had some similarities with each other and with myself but also there were some individual differences. For example they were born between 1922 and 1946 and six of these women had experienced the Great Depression and also World War II. One woman was born in 1941 during World War II and the other in 1946 immediately after the war. Most of the women did not see paid work as a career but as an interlude between leaving school and marriage. Most of the women did not expect that they would undertake paid work after marriage. Motherhood was considered to be a most valuable occupation by all of these women.

Because of the twenty year time span among the women interviewed there is an overlap among the ages of some of the mothers, interviewees and daughters. Florence, the oldest of the interviewees was born in 1922 and Betty's mother was born in 1923. Betty is the youngest of the interviewees and was born in 1946 which is the same year as Florence's eldest daughter. It must be pointed out that Florence's experiences could be similar to Betty's mother as both were young unmarried women during world War II. Betty could be described as one of the baby boomer generation as she was born immediately after World War II and her experiences and attitudes could be similar to Florence's eldest daughter. Some of the children of the interviewees were born in the late 60s and 70s and could not be described as "baby boomers"

It is difficult to place the women that I interviewed in a particular social class. Yvonne and Pam came from a higher socio-economic background before their marriage, but Yvonne is now a single woman on Guaranteed Retirement Income (GRI) and Pam's partner has been employed as a low income farmer and later as a minister of religion. Pam admits that they are not well off now, but there is a certain amount of social status in being a church minister. Jill and Catherine, who came from working class backgrounds before marriage are both married to professional men running their own businesses. Betty came from an urban Maori working class background and her partner's position in the organisation that he worked for was a high profile one, but Betty admits that even though the expectation was there for them to dress the part and socialise, in the early days they didn't even own their own home and had a company car.

Pat came from a working class background and her partner was an accountant in a large organisation. Because of his ill-health he had to take early retirement which placed financial stress on the family. Florence came from a farming background, she relates how her mother came from a home where they had servants, and her father owned his own farm but her husband was a farm labourer. Te Ahumi's background was marae-based, which cannot be easily ascribed a class in the industrial capitalist sense.

In these brief profiles I will outline the background of the interviewees indicating their place in the family, their parents' occupation where known, their education, paid work and voluntary work undertaken by them. I will also relate their marital status and number of children in the family. I will give a brief profile of myself and follow with the interviewees in chronological order.

### *My Profile*

I am Pakeha<sup>4</sup> and was born in 1933, the second child in the family, with two brothers, one eighteen months older and the other six years younger than myself. My father was a public servant and was considered to be the breadwinner in the family. My mother did not undertake any paid work outside the home while her children were young, but did do embroidery and tatting, which she sold to make extra money. I was persuaded to leave school mid-way through my fifth form year, just prior to my sixteenth birthday and did not sit School Certificate, but later managed to achieve this at the age of thirty seven. As I was a girl, it was thought sufficient for me to obtain a useful job as an interlude between leaving school and getting married, while both of my brothers stayed on at school until they had attained University Entrance, this being seen as necessary for a boy to obtain in order for him to go into a lifelong career. I had taken a commercial course at high school, and my father found me a position in a government department as a shorthand typist.

I met my first husband when I was seventeen; we were married when I was nineteen and by the time I was twenty three I had three children, two boys and a girl. My fourth

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<sup>4</sup> Name given to European settlers meaning *white foreigner* (Sinclair, 1986:331)

child and second daughter was born five and a half years later when I was almost twenty nine. In the early years of motherhood, I had several part-time paid positions which fitted in with school and kindergarten hours. When my youngest daughter was seven, I obtained a fulltime secretarial position at a university. I served on both kindergarten and school committees and helped in fund raising activities to build a kindergarten, school swimming baths and school halls and in later years have been an active member on two community committees and helped in the local library on Saturday mornings in the small town where I resided.

I was widowed when my youngest child was sixteen and have since remarried and over the past fifteen years have been studying at university. In my first marriage my income from paid work was a necessary contribution to the running of the household. In my present marriage I have been the primary wage earner.

### *Florence*

Florence is Pakeha and is the eldest of the women interviewed, born in 1922. She was the second daughter in a family of two girls and two boys and was brought up on a farm, her father being a shearer and drover. Florence's mother came from a town environment and found it difficult adapting to farming life and didn't undertake any paid work outside the home after her marriage. Florence had four years at secondary school and then went nursing, a career which she expected to be for her lifetime. But she married a farm worker when she twenty two, had her first child nine months later and had five children altogether, four girls and a boy. She did not undertake any paid work after she married, but not only carried out a lot of voluntary work for the church and schools, she also took in over sixty foster children. In her later years, Florence nursed her husband who has Alzheimer's disease and is now in a nursing home. She still undertakes hospital visiting and voluntary work for the church.

### *Pam*

Pam is Pakeha, was born in 1927, and has two sisters - one older and the other her twin, whom she stated was half an hour younger than her. Pam's mother was very "houseproud" and everything had to be in its place. Her father was a dental technician

and during the Depression the dentist that he worked for couldn't afford to keep him on so he went to work for his brother. Pam described her mother as a very careful manager and budgeter who also did all the sewing and knitting for the family.

Pam's parents wanted her to leave school at the end of the fourth form but her teacher persuaded them to let her complete her sixth form year. She left school when she was seventeen and then trained as a dental nurse. Her mother took on a paid position working in an office in order to buy the clothes that Pam needed for her training.

Pam married at twenty five and had two children, a girl and a boy, having her first child when she was twenty six. It was a government policy that dental nurses had to re-apply for their positions when they married, but as Pam's husband was farming, she did not re-apply, but when her second child was two she went back to dental nursing as she and her husband were struggling financially.

Later Pam's husband decided to go into the ministry and Pam supported him while he was studying and has been the breadwinner throughout most of her marriage. She has done a great deal of voluntary work, mostly connected with the church. Pam has suffered ill health from a heart condition and this made her double burden of paid and unpaid work very stressful, but she did have a lot of support from her husband. More recently Pam had a quadruple heart by-pass and believes that she is now very fit.

### *Yvonne*

Born in 1928, Yvonne is Pakeha and was an only child. She described her mother as a *Victorian* mother, very quiet and dignified, who married later in life and was thirty six when Yvonne was born. Her mother did not undertake any paid work while married, but was described as very house proud and a good manager. Yvonne's father died when she was twelve years old and this had a large bearing on her life. She found her mother rather a cold person and she felt that her childhood was very lonely.

Yvonne's ambition was to be a hairdresser, but her mother thought that this work was *undignified* and she was encouraged to work in an office. She was married when she was twenty four and had four children, two girls and two boys, the first child being born when she was twenty seven. After her marriage, she worked with her husband in their footwear business, but when their marriage broke up in 1976 they sold the shop and Yvonne worked elsewhere as a salesperson. She later gave up work to care for her elderly mother. Yvonne has undertaken a lot of voluntary work for service organisations and often does hospital visiting. She is now retired and living on her own, but undertakes casual paid work from time to time, as well as voluntary work.

### *Jill*

Jill is Pakeha and was born in 1933 and was the second daughter in a family of three girls and one boy. Jill's father was employed in a government department and was in the Home Guard during World War II. She remembered that her mother did a lot of dressmaking, both for the family and for other people, the latter most probably to supplement the family income. When Jill was at high school, her mother went out to work in a local factory.

Jill stayed on at school until she was seventeen and sat School Certificate and then left to work in an office, where she stayed until she married at the age of twenty two. She had her first child when she was twenty three and had five children, three girls and two boys. When Jill married, her husband was studying for a profession and she supported him, primarily by giving him moral support while he was studying. She did not undertake very much paid work when the children were young, except for doing some typing at home but later her hobby of designing kitchens became a profitable money-earner. Jill has undertaken a lot of voluntary work for various service organisations and has also cared for both her aged mother and mother-in-law, who are now both in a retirement village.

### *Catherine*

Catherine was born in England in 1934 and was the oldest girl and has a sister who is eleven years younger than she is. Catherine's father served overseas during World War

II, while her mother helped provide meals and look after children in the air raid shelters. Her mother did undertake some part time office work after the war and later when she was in her sixties went into fulltime office work.

Catherine went to technical school and left school at seventeen and worked in an office. She met her first husband in England and followed him out to New Zealand and they were married there when she was twenty three. They had four children, three girls and one boy, the first child was born when Catherine was twenty four. When she was first married, Catherine ran a food outlet with her mother-in-law and later she helped her husband, who was a salesman, in his show room. When their marriage broke up, Catherine's youngest daughter was only two years of age, and Catherine had to struggle to combine motherhood with earning a living. Later Catherine re-married a successful business man. She has carried out a lot of voluntary work for several service organisations and also has cared for elderly people in the community.

### *Pat*

Pat is Pakeha and was born in 1936. She is the youngest by ten years, of four children, two boys and two girls. During the Depression, Pat's father was out of work and conditions were very difficult for the family. He served overseas during World War II and while he was overseas, her mother worked in a local factory. Pat described her mother as a strong, domineering character who "*ruled the roost*" but her father was still considered to be the "head of the household".

Pat wanted to be a Plunket Nurse, but was discouraged from doing this by her mother, as the training would be too expensive. When she was fourteen she had a lung infection which meant that she lost a lot of schooling and she left school at the age of fifteen to work in an office as a typist. When she was nineteen she married an accountant and they later had seven children, three girls and four boys. Pat did not undertake paid work outside the home while the children were young but did do some paid work at home, such as making dolls and winding elastic. After eighteen years as a full time mother, she did undertake paid office work for a short period. She has carried out a great amount of

voluntary work both for the church and a service organisation and has undergone training for counselling work, which has led to a paid position with the organisation. Her husband retired early due to ill health and this has placed a lot of stress on Pat and the family.

### *Te Ahumi*

Te Ahumi is Maori and was born in 1941 and is affiliated to Ngati Kahunguru on her mother's side and Tainui and Tu-Wharetoi on her father's side. She was the oldest daughter in a family of thirteen children, six girls and seven boys, one of her brothers being mentally handicapped. When she was younger she helped her mother in the home and in looking after the younger children. Her mother did a lot of voluntary work for Plunket, scouts, guides and marching and did baking for school gala days as well as providing crocheting and embroidery for raffles to raise funds. Both of her parents were committed to working on their local marae, and Te Ahumi described her mother as being "up front" on the marae.

Te Ahumi's father believed that the children should have a good education but Te Ahumi left school at fourteen and first worked in an office but later went nursing. She was married when she was twenty three, had five children, the last two being twins, and had her first child when she was twenty four. Te Ahumi admits that she did not value her Maoritanga until she was forty, when she undertook remedial reading at a Maori Boys College. She now does a lot of work on the local marae and is involved with the Maori Women's Welfare League and caring for sick and elderly people.

### *Betty*

Betty is Maori and is the youngest of the women interviewed and was born in 1946. She is affiliated to Ngati Kahungunu ki Wairarapa on her mother's side and Whanau-a-Apanui on her father's side. Betty was the eldest of five children, three boys and two girls. Her father went overseas during World War II with the Maori Battalion and later served with the Jay Force in Japan immediately after the war. Betty's parents were married after she was born, when her father returned from Japan. There was another son which her mother bore while Betty's father was in Japan, who wasn't fathered by her

husband and Betty's mother was forced by her mother-in-law to give him up for adoption. Betty's mother kept this a secret from the family and it was only disclosed at the time of her death.

When Betty was at high school, her mother undertook paid work in a local sack factory to bring some more money into the family. Betty described her mother as a very lonely woman who had been brought up on a marae but after her marriage lived in an urban environment. Betty left school after gaining School Certificate and went to train as a kindergarten teacher. She married when she was twenty one and had three boys, her first child was born when she was twenty three. She did some part time paid work when her children were young and when the children were older, from time to time worked full time. Her husband was in a senior position in an agricultural firm and there was the expectation by his employers that Betty would be a supportive wife. Betty has undertaken a great deal of voluntary work for several service organisations and is also a very active grandparent to her two little granddaughters.

In order to understand the experiences of these women, their mothers and their daughters, with regard to the unpaid work that they have undertaken over the years from 1900 to the present day it is necessary to be aware of the historical, attitudinal, educational and economic changes that have occurred over that time span. These are presented in the next chapter which presents a brief historical overview of attitudinal, educational and economic changes in New Zealand over the time period from 1900 to the present day.

Table III. Profile of Interviewees

Name	Ethnicity	Schooling	Work Before Marriage	Age When Married	Number of Children	Occupation of Husband	Paid Work After Marriage	Unpaid Community Work*
Florence b. 1922	Pakeha	Four years secondary	Nursing	22	5	Farm worker	-	Church work Caring for elderly Fostering children
Pam b. 1927	Pakeha	Four years secondary	Dental nursing	25	2	Farmer Minister of religion	Dental nursing	Church work
Yvonne b. 1928	Pakeha	Four years secondary	Office work	24	4	Own business	Shop work	Service organisation Caring for elderly
Jill b. 1933	Pakeha	Four years secondary	Office work	22	5	Professional	Office work Designing kitchens	Service organisation Caring for elderly
Self b. 1933	Pakeha	two years six months secondary	Office work	19	4	(1) Painter & decorator (2) Self employed	Office work	Community work
Catherine b. 1934	Pakeha (born England)	Four years secondary	Office work	23	4	(1) Salesman (2) Business man	Office work	Service organisation Caring for elderly
Pat b. 1936	Pakeha	Two years secondary	Office work	19	7	Accountant	Casual work at home Office Counselling Nursing	Church work Counselling
Te Ahumi b. 1941	Maori	Two years secondary	Office work Nursing	23	5	Truck driver		Marae work Maori Women's Welfare League Caring for sick and elderly
Betty b. 1946	Maori	Four years secondary	Kindergarten teaching	21	3	Agricultural officer	Rest home work Crippled Children School for Deaf Tutoring Contract work	Service organisation

\* All of the women have undertaken unpaid voluntary work for educational organisations, Plunket, cubs or guides, which all of the women have been involved in to a certain extent.

## Chapter Two

### Historical Overview

In this Chapter I will briefly outline historical events which occurred in New Zealand leading up to and during the twentieth century, which influenced the attitudes towards New Zealand women's unpaid work within the home and the community, and the value which was placed on this work.

The arrival of the Maori to New Zealand can be traced to 1350. Most of the Maori tribes can trace their descent from ancestors who came in great ocean-going canoes, Tanui, Te Arawa, Aotea, Takitimu, Tokomaru and many others. There is evidence to suggest that the Maori came from the legendary Hawaiki which was believed to be in Eastern Polynesia. The Maori belong to a number of tribes each tracing its origin to the original canoes. The tribe was an extended kinship organisation made up of hapu (sub-tribes) and whanau (family groups). The greater part of life was a communal experience and most activities were shared and were performed for the sake of the community. Land was the most important form of property and belonged to the tribe. However, the sub-tribe, the family and the individual had hereditary rights to use this land (Sinclair, 1986).

General tasks carried out were accomplished by community cooperation. Planting, weeding and digging of the kumara (sweet potato) were carried out by the whole family and when their own work was completed people helped their neighbours. Large gatherings which required feeding the assembly was a community activity. The men would go out fishing and the women would collect shell fish. Men chopped the wood and prepared the fires while the women scraped baskets full of potatoes (Buck, 1970).

One limitation of this thesis is that time has not allowed me to research the experiences of Maori women in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. I have concentrated on the experiences of the early Pakeha settlers who arrived early in the nineteenth century to a land which was bush covered and inhabited by the Maori. When the European settlers arrived, the women pioneers worked hard alongside their menfolk both outside the

home, and within the home. Their toil was considered valuable and necessary for their survival. The experiences of some of these women have been recorded in their letters and diaries which recount their hardship, loneliness, and sometimes bravery, in a land which was often hostile and primitive (Drummond, 1960; MacGregor, 1973; Woodhouse, 1988; Tunnicliff, 1992 & Ell, 1993). In many cases these women would draw water from wells or creeks to be used for washing and baths.

*Washing was now done near the well, where two large tubs sat on a bench while the copper was set in the bank on raised bars. On Saturdays the tubs were taken into the kitchen for baths, hot water being carried from the copper.....(MacGregor, 1973:63)*

Sometimes the washing was done in the creek and the food was kept cool in a wooden meat safe placed in a fern-filled cave under a waterfall (MacGregor, 1973:167) Much of the cooking was done in a camp oven in the open fire inside the house but sometimes outside, when these women were living in makeshift accommodation such as tents or whares. One woman describes making bread in a camp oven.

*When making bread the camp oven was hung on a hook over the fire, the lid laid in the embers until it was nice and hot, then put on the oven, and a shovelful of hot embers laid on top to keep it warm. The oven was turned round occasionally so that the bread would be baked evenly on all sides. (Ell, 1993:75).*

Apart from baking bread, these women made butter, trimmed lamps, made candles, soap and cheese. Floors were often scrubbed clean with fine sand. Ironing was done by means of a "box iron", flat iron or charcoal iron. The box iron was a steel frame made in the shape of the present day iron and was heated by a small heater which was made very hot in the embers of the fire, then lifted out with a pair of tongs and dropped into the iron through a sliding door at the back which was then tightly closed to keep the iron hot (Ell, 1993:76).

Many of these women toiled with their husbands on their bush clad properties, felling trees, burning scrub, raking and clearing bush to make a farm, digging post-holes, carrying battens, pit sawing timber for their houses as well as toiling in the home making bread, candles, soap and furniture (by covering boxes with chintz.) (MacGregor, 1973:46). Many stores had to be procured by travelling by horse back for three to four hours. Often stores only arrived once a year so food had to be preserved.

There were few medical facilities for the early settlers in New Zealand and many lived in isolated areas. Often when Pakeha women gave birth to their children they had only the help of a Pakeha neighbour or nearby Maori women. Many became accomplished nurses and midwives and gave assistance to other settlers and often to Maori women. Necessity forced some to become authorities on curing common ailments with native plants. In the 1870s a woman, Selina Sutherland, fought an outbreak of typhoid in Alfredton and she turned the woolshed into a makeshift hospital. This led her to organise a campaign to raise funds for a hospital at Masterton and she rode all over the district begging for donations (MacGregor, 1973:188-189).

Novitz (1988) suggests that, to Pakeha settlers in New Zealand, the home was seen as the haven which men could retreat to at the end of the day, "*sustained by the labour and love of wives*" (Novitz, 1988:26). Although only a minority of married women were officially in the paid work force, many women supplemented their husband's wages by dressmaking, taking in washing, caring for other people's children or providing meals and accommodation for boarders. (Novitz, 1988).

### ***1900s-1920s***

In the later part of the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth century there were many theories expounded by notable medical men (Dr Lindo Fergusson, Dr Truby King and Dr F.C Batchelor) which advocated against over-education for women and propounded the desirability of women to prepare for motherhood and domestic duties (Olssen, 1980, Fry, 1988). There were grave concerns that for women, entry into a profession had become more important than motherhood. In 1899 Dr Lindo Fergusson, a Dunedin eye specialist, expounded his theory on the link between eye-strain and nervous diseases, particularly among girls. He attributed this to an "*over-burdened sixth form syllabus*" and he feared for the future of the race. He believed that between the ages of twelve and fifteen, girls should concentrate on English subjects, sewing, cooking, dressmaking and knitting which were of much value to girls if they were to become wives (Fry, 1988).

Dr Truby King spoke of the evil effects of

*over pressure among girls, in impairing the potentialities of reproduction and healthy maternity* (Olssen, 1980:169).

Many of the mothers of the women interviewed would have been greatly influenced by Sir Truby King, Director of the Mental Asylum at Seacliff, lecturer at the Medical School, and founder of the Royal New Zealand Society for the Promotion of Health of Women and Children (Plunket Society)<sup>1</sup> who was influential in promoting motherhood and stressing maternal responsibility for infant welfare and character development and discouraged work outside the home for mothers as it was *positively hazardous to the continued health of the body political* (Montgomerie, 1986:3).

In 1909, Sir Truby King and his friend Dr F. C. Batchelor, advocated that girls should be directed into "*domestic management and economy, physiology and hygiene*" which would provide a "*wholesome preparation for marriage*" (Fry 1988). Dr Batchelor, a specialist in women's diseases, believed that

*to enter on a course of study for which Nature never intended them, and which undoubtedly in a considerable number of cases is followed by an inadequate development of those organs and functions which are characteristic of healthy womanhood* (Olssen, 1980:167).

Batchelor wanted the schools to prepare girls for domestic duties and motherhood. In 1910 Mr G George, director of the Auckland Technical School, at the 1910 Education Conference stated that the

*natural function of every girl was to become a wife and mother and that the schools should do everything possible to educate the girl along the lines she ought naturally to go* (Tennant, 1986:93).

Batchelor, King and George are all male voices and were possibly voicing their own fears from a male point of view. They may have felt threatened by the fact that women may renounce motherhood, marriage, or housework in favour of leading an independent life where they are not subordinate to or dependent on their husbands.

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<sup>1</sup> The Plunket Society was founded in 1907 by Sir Truby King and was named after its first patron Lady Plunket. Dr Truby King was superintendent of the mental asylum at Seacliff and initiated the movement to lower the incidence of infant mortality and played an important part in articulating a new philosophy of child raising. (Olssen & Levesque, 1978:12)

According to Olssen (1980) for most women, the world of paid work was intended to be an interlude between school and marriage. The majority of young working women in the early part of the twentieth century, were not interested in a career other than marriage, but Olssen believes that experience in the work-force gave them greater economic independence, wider social contacts and a sense of their own dignity and importance. It was these attitudes and expectations which they brought to their marriages.

Tennant (1986) suggests that as late as 1912, the Minister of Education found that the ratio of girls to boys in primary schools in New Zealand was lower in the five to seven age group. Girls were sent to school later than boys and withdrawn sooner than boys. Parents did not see the need for a girl to receive secondary schooling. Tennant (1986) believes that the pressures which were put upon girls to “*conform to the womanly ideal*” directed them towards appropriate courses. She states:

*“The successful adaptation of young women to this role was viewed as a panacea for a multitude of social ills - a simple and above all economical solution to existing problems. In their most sanguine pronouncements, the advocates of domestic training anticipated not only the regeneration of the race, but comprehensive and unqualified domestic happiness - the appeasement of the national temper through the provision of nutritious, well-cooked meals and comfortable, attractive homes”*  
(Tennant, 1986:90)

The urban households in the early years of the twentieth century were efficiently run by women who contributed to the household economy by their domestic skills and by making and maintaining clothes and preserving food in order to save money. The mothers of the interviewees were born between the early 1900s and 1920s and with little in the way of labour-saving devices, housework took up the major part of a woman’s day. At that time there was a high degree of house pride among urban women, they valued “spotless cleanliness” and “impeccable order” within the house (Toynbee, 1995). Urban male breadwinners often contributed their wages to the household and produced vegetables for household use. Many participated in home maintenance, but some men’s work activities were confined to breadwinning. Most mothers were principally involved in domestic chores and child rearing, while fathers quite often worked and took their leisure independently of other family members. “Work” came to be seen as paid employment in the formal economy and “home” the place where working men

*could rest in the bosom of their families after a hard day's labour"* (Toynbee, 1995:87).

Men could also choose to spend their leisure which was the reward for their day's work, elsewhere or in the company of other men. For the vast majority of women, home was no haven but

*the place of work, more of a fortress from which they could not escape* (Toynbee, 1995:87).

Patriarchal authority was legitimated, accepted and reinforced by both church and government. Heads of households were expected to keep order and discipline. But while women were undoubtedly subordinate to men in terms of decision making and influence in public life, they privately wielded considerable influence as mistresses of their own households. In fact many working-class women were regarded by their children as all powerful. They managed the household, delegated work and controlled the family purse (Toynbee, 1995). But as pointed out by Toynbee

*If patriarchy existed in the working class, it took the form of fathers' general 'absenteeism' and social distance as far as the domestic domain was concerned. The husband/father's role was to provide for the family, but having brought in the money, they were free to do as they wished. A good husband and father was a good breadwinner. As breadwinners, they were cherished* (Toynbee, 1995:93).

However, some changes did take place in family life over the first two decades of the century as some men did become involved in some form of housework or childcare, but it was in a limited way. Some men helped their wives with the mangling or other aspects of clothes washing which was considered heavy work, which is associated with the concept of the "*delicacy of women and the strength of men*" (Toynbee, 1995:104).

In the early twentieth century if women did carry out voluntary work it would probably have involved fund-raising and supporting the local church (Toynbee, 1995). Many women living in country areas would offer help to others, such as providing cooked food when a neighbour was ill. Toynbee has indicated that some women would help at confinement in the neighbourhood or in the case of older women, advise in health problems associated with young babies. Toynbee believes that women's community work

*served to establish them in women's social networks which were so important to family health and therefore prosperity.* (Toynbee, 1995:138)

Much of the voluntary work carried out by these women would be informal rather than formal voluntary work and lack of transport would have restricted these women.

### *The Great Depression 1929-1935*

One of the major events mentioned by interviewees which affected their parents was the Great Depression of the late 1920's early 1930's. New Zealand relied on the sale of wool, dairy products and meat to the United Kingdom. Between 1929 and 1932 Britain was hit badly by the worldwide slump and was unable to afford to buy these products from New Zealand. During these years farmers found that their incomes had been halved and they still had to meet their mortgage charges (Simpson, 1976). They had less money to spend and the economy began to deflate at a rapid rate. Government spending fell from eight million to two million pounds a year. People stopped building houses and the goods available for consumption fell by 27 percent. By the end of 1932 there were 100,000 unemployed men out of a population of just over one and a half million. During the depression, public servants were assured of work but they took a ten percent cut in wages.<sup>2</sup> Simpson (1976) points out that

*a whole generation of growing children lived on bread and butter and tea (Simpson, 1976:83).*

Ebbett (1981) describes women in the 1930's as being "*experts at making do*" and "*making ends meet*" including those who were "*well to do*". Nothing was wasted and women took pride in being good housewives and many used to make their own soap. The motto of these women was "*Waste not, want not*". Ebbett states

*There was a moral obligation not to waste anything in those hard days. It was also an ingrained habit in women who were daughters and grand daughters of the pioneers. (Ebbett, 1981)*

Novitz (1988) believes that the Depression exerted contradictory pressures on women. The ideology of women's domesticity was used to discourage women from entering paid work, while the necessity to meet their families' needs, pushed women into finding paid work. This situation lasted until the war years when women were encouraged to enter

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<sup>2</sup> In 1931 Public Works were virtually stopped and unemployment peaked at just under 80,000 in 1932. The only solution that the Forbes Government could propose was to cut wages, reduce the number of jobs, reduce government activity and abolish some of it. Early in 1931 Civil Service wages were cut 10% and private firms were asked to follow suit. (Sutch, 1969:210)

the paid work force. When the war ended and the men came home again, women were encouraged to be involved full time in caring for their families (Novitz, 1988).

### *World War II 1939-1945*

World War II affected the parents of the interviewees in different ways but like the depression years, the war was a great leveller of people. Again this was a time for economising and “*making do*”. Food and clothing was rationed and nothing was wasted. Many people had close relatives serving overseas, or in the Home Guard, and all were affected by rationing of essential commodities.

World War II in New Zealand brought about a great deal of patriotism and people felt they must do all they could to help the war effort. Simpson (1976) believes that when Japan came into the war, the war got very close to the people in New Zealand. This reality caused people to do what they could in the way of their war effort and going along with the necessities of rationing. Many young women were caught up in “*war work*” which was considered “*essential work*”. May (1988) describes this time as a time where traditional codes and responsibilities cut across new work experiences and new kinds of independence. Many women were running their households without the help of their male partners and were responsible for making major decisions or were entering the paid work force undertaking work which traditionally had been undertaken by men.

World War II was a time when many women entered the paid workforce, but prime importance was still placed on motherhood. May (1988) believes that this was a time when old divisions between men and women broke down, but still accentuated the separation of the male and female worlds. While the male world was symbolically centred around military service overseas, the female world was to “*keep the home fires burning*” at home and in the work place until the “*boys came home*” (May, 1988:58).

May (1988) described the war years as a time when courtship, engagement and marriage were disrupted. For some, marriage was delayed, for others “*engagement and marriage were squeezed into a three week whirl*.” The war years brought “*new codes of behaviour for women*”. The divorce rate doubled and there was a rise in the illegitimate

births. (May, 1988:60). May describes this time as a time of double standards, where women were expected to both be faithful to the men overseas and be charming hostesses to soldiers at home, but these double standards did not apply to the men who served in the armed services.

### *Post World War II*

Between the 1930s and the 1940s there was a decline in population in New Zealand, reflecting the hard years of the depression and the greater reluctance of women to have children. The population decline at this time was also due to a drop in immigration. New Zealand statistics show that the depression of the thirties caused departures to exceed arrivals by 9,918 from 1931 to 1935 (New Zealand Year Book, 1996). As can be seen in Table IV immigration exceeded departures between 1935 and 1939 by 9,987 and dropped down again between 1940-1944 to 3,983 more arrivals than departures and steadily increased from 1945 - 1964.

**Table IV. Immigration, Emigration, and Excess of Arrivals Over Departures - 1860 to 1963.**

Period	Arrivals	Departures	Excess Arrivals over Departures
1860-64	132,225	45,301	86,924
1865-69	62,561	33,493	29,268
1870-74	87,469	27,216	60,253
1875-79	103,358	30,532	72,826
1880-84	75,023	43,337	31,686
1885-89	74,987	77,403	-2,416
1890-94	98,953	86,310	12,643
1895-99	95,051	85,349	9,702
1900-04	136,968	98,993	37,975
1905-09	191,646	144,786	46,860
1910-14	204,052	168,158	35,894
1915-19	95,836	89,045	6,791
1920-24	197,480	150,133	47,347
1925-29	196,124	165,923	30,201
1930-34	112,730	118,999	-6,269
1935-39	173,913	163,926	9,987
1940-44	38,617	34,634	3,983
1945-49	144,269	123,550	20,719
1950-54	303,588	236,206	67,382
1955-59	388,727	337,146	51,581
1960-64	704,110	647,266	56,844

*Statistical Report on Population and Buildings for the Year 1935-36 and subsequent reports. In New Zealand Year Book, 1966.*

During the World War II years, many marriages were postponed and immediately after the war the birth rate began an upward trend which was to stay constant until 1961. May (1988) suggests that this rise in birth rate was due to the delay in marriage during the war, couples marrying at a younger age and more people marrying than before.

The New Zealand education system embodied contradictory prescriptions for girls. These women were to experience a set of cultural practices based on the assumptions of both a liberal ideology of equality of opportunity and an ideology of domestic femininity (Middleton, 1985 in May, 1988). The Thomas Report of 1944, outlined equal educational opportunity, but according to Middleton, (1985b) and Fry, (1986) (quoted in May, 1988), even though the school curriculum was ostensibly the same for boys and girls, girls still followed a separate pathway. Girls were getting more education than before but more boys were going to university. The Thomas Report (1944) recommended that the sexes be kept apart both in class and at play (May 1988).

The demand for labour shot up after the Second World War and women were in great demand to work in factories, domestic jobs in hospitals, shop assistants, office workers, teachers and nurses. But there was a belief in New Zealand in the post World War II years that the prosperity of the nation lay in rapidly increasing the population (Middleton, 1988). According to Else (1996) social attitudes lagged far behind the facts. There was a movement of Maori women into the towns and Polynesian women from the Pacific Islands were brought to New Zealand to work in factories and cleaning jobs. Pakeha women were in great demand and worked in factories, shops, offices or as nurses or teachers. The skills of these women were needed but mothers of young children were criticised for taking on paid work. This attitude lasted well into the 1970s when women were not supposed to “*go to work*” until their youngest child turned five (Else, 1996). Later in the 1980s, when unemployment started to grow, employed married women were attacked as “*job stealers*” (Else, 1996).

As can be seen, the interviewees left school at a time when there was full employment (the late 1940s to the 1960s). According to Dunstall (1981) the twenty years after

World War II was a time of full employment which underpinned ever-increasing affluence. It was a period of sustained prosperity and the State took on new dimensions

*Maintaining affluence, tempering inequalities, ensuring security, and helping to maintain the high degree of uniformity in New Zealand life. To the comfortable and the complacent, the ethos of equality had been realised in the social pattern (Dunstall, 1981).*

The Labour Government took office in 1935 and its aim was that of full employment. When the Labour Government was defeated in 1949 by the National Government under S.G. Holland as leader, their policy was also that of full employment (Sutch, 1969). This was a time when the State provided free medical and hospital care, free education, and family benefit for all mothers and the expectation was that when they retired they would receive a state funded superannuation. When the Labour Government came into office in 1935 they abolished the means test which applied to the elderly, invalids, orphans and the unemployed. Universal superannuation for those 65 and over was introduced in 1941 and in 1968 the eligibility age was reduced to 60. Family benefits, hospital attention and medicines and drugs were now free of an income test. Free textbooks for both secondary and primary pupils were available (Sutch, 1969). There was an opportunity for people to have low interest rate mortgages or affordable state houses. By 1940, two out of every three houses were built by the State and a substantial part of private housing was financed by the State (Sutch, 1969).

### ***The 1950s***

During the 1950s the “*cult of domesticity*” emerged. Olssen and Levesque (1978) suggest that after the war women were “*pushed and cajoled*” out of jobs and the “*suburban ideal of home and garden was enjoyed by those born since 1910*” (Olssen and Levesque, 1978:18). The National Government which took office in 1949 continued to build State houses (originally initiated by the previous Labour Government, after the Depression). Family benefit payments (also initiated by the previous Labour Government) were increased from 10/- to 15/- per week per child, and the State began to subsidise homes for the aged. In 1954 the Labour Government offered housing loans at three per cent interest. This was reinforced by the ability to capitalise family benefit up to a limit of one thousand pounds in order to build or purchase a new home (Chapman, 1981). The family of the 1950s and 60s became more nuclear, in that it comprised

husband, wife and children, and relatives were no longer expected to look after the aged or infirm.

May (1988) suggests the media image of the 1950s was confusing. She describes the different faces of femininity - "*from the married woman as a sensible housewife to the single working "girl" available for marriage.*" There were assumptions that "*being a wife was a passport to move out of the workforce*" (May, 1988:115). The husband's wage would be sufficient for two and the wife would be busy looking after the household. It was considered that the "*working mother*" was placing the marriage under threat and the emotional, physical and moral well-being of her children in jeopardy.

The perception was that unless a woman "*had to work*" because there was no breadwinner, a married woman in paid employment was working for pin money. Toynbee (1995) suggested that women's earnings have been referred to as 'pin' money for over a century. The original term referred to the money that women made from their produce and it was believed that this money would be used to buy essential items, including pins, "*to make the task of constant clothes-mending a little easier.*" (Toynbee, 1995:192).

Married women would generally undertake paid work until the birth of their first child, stay home full time while the children were at school and when the children were older, become part of the paid work force again, preferably on a part time basis. The work would balance the limitations of the breadwinner's wages without disturbing his "*head of the household*" status (May, 1988).

Friedan labelled the primacy of women's roles as a wife and mother as the "*feminine mystique*". It was assumed that women's equality was vested in her unique role as a wife and mother, and although women could take advantage of new opportunities for women, these activities must be fitted around the traditional feminine role. Friedan believed that the "*mystique*" crushed women's individual potential and therefore developed "*the problem that has no name.*"

*The problem lay buried, unspoken, for many years in the minds of American women. It was a strange stirring, a sense of dissatisfaction, a yearning that women suffered in the middle of the twentieth century in the States. Each suburban wife struggled with*

*it alone. As she made the beds, shopped for groceries, matched slipcover material, ate peanut butter sandwiches with her children, chauffeured Cub Scouts and Brownies, lay beside her husband at night, she was afraid to ask even of herself the silent question: 'Is this all?'* From Friedan (1963:13). "The Problem That Has no Name" in *The Feminine Mystique*.

In the 1950s a good wife would sew clothes for herself and her children, would preserve fruit and vegetables, would knit for the family and would fill the tins with cakes and biscuits. Anne Else (1996) believes that this "*home production*" was a central part of scrimping and saving and was highly skilled work. At that time it was cheaper to make your own clothes than to buy expensive ready-made clothes. Washing machines, refrigerators and vacuum cleaners were available on the market, but these items were expensive and many families could not afford these "*luxuries*".

By the end of the 1950s these commodities were seen as necessities, as new homes were built without coppers; meat and produce required refrigerators; and carpets replaced linoleum and therefore there was a perceived need for vacuum cleaners. These "*luxury*" commodities removed much of the drudgery from housework, but because of this, and the media image which was promoted, these women still competed for the whitest wash, the cleanest house and the best dressed children.

Jackson (1992) suggests that

*the domestic science movement came into its own, elevating housework to a skill any women could be proud of. The kitchen became the control centre of the home and women were encouraged to raise their standards and invest in these new household technologies* (Jackson, 1992).

The home focussed women's magazines flourished. Magazines such as "*New Idea*", "*NZ Women's Weekly*", "*Stitch*" and "*Enid Gilchrist*" all encouraged New Zealand women in their role of domesticity.

### ***The 1960s and 1970s***

During the 50s and 60s, according to Spoonley, Jesson & Ryan (1988) women accepted that motherhood could be a career as important for them as the jobs to be found in the paid workforce.

*The adjustment and reconstruction of the immediate post-war period led into a decade of new consumerism, a certain acceptance of family roles and a continued endeavour to forget the past.....(Spoonley et al., 1988:15).*

The period between the late 1930s and mid 1960s was one of sustained growth in the economy accompanied by a gradual rise in the standard of living. Changes occurred in 1967

*which divided New Zealand as a country of the Economic Miracle of full employment and social stability and welfare, into an ordinary capitalistic economy with its fluctuating mass unemployment, its occasional productive stagnation and double-digit inflation and its balance of payments defects* (Rosenburg, 1986:15)

Spoonley *et al.* (1988) suggest that changes were also happening in the structure of the paid work force as more women (particularly married women) were entering full time paid employment and there was a higher proportion of the workforce involved in the service sector and as State employees. New Zealand continued to urbanise and large numbers of Maori people moved to the cities. They were joined by migrants from the Pacific Islands.

During this period there was an emergence of new political groups. The feminist groups began to appear in 1970, Nga Tamatoa in 1970 signalled the arrival of a new Maori radicalism, gay liberation had arrived in 1972 and peace and environmental groups sprang up (Spoonley *et al.* 1988). It was due to these social and political changes during the late 60s and 70s that, according to Spoonley *et al.* (1988), the New Right emerged in New Zealand.

With the emergence of women's liberation groups in New Zealand in 1970, women were being given advice on how to manage work and family without stress, they were advised against shift work or "on call" work and cautioned about the impact of full time work on children or husbands. In 1966 Sonja Davies lobbied to promote good quality childcare for the children of parents in paid employment, and the Society for Research on Women was formed as there was little research at that time on New Zealand women. A popular topic at lectures, seminars and in magazines was "The Changing Role of Women" and advice was given on *how women could reorder their priorities so that family would not suffer if they worked* (May, 1988:197-8).

With the increasing participation of women in the paid workforce, the role of the male breadwinner was altered, although May (1988) believes that the concept of the

breadwinner's role was still strong *with few men feeling able to opt into part-time work or to stay at home*. Immediately after the war a married man was judged by his ability to be a "good provider" but by the 1980s, with more married women working, it was being accepted that while a breadwinner's wage may be the mainstay of a family's income, this wage needed extra support. May (1988) believes that paid work reinforced the independence and self sufficiency of women, particularly by weakening male control over spending decisions.

Still the divisions between men's work and women's work were strong and it was mainly educated women moving into skilled jobs who were more likely to achieve some sort of equality, but they were still placed at the lower end of the promotion and wage scale. Women still continued to have the major responsibilities for child rearing and earned 75% of the male wage (May, 1988).

### ***Social and Economic Changes of the 1980s and 90s.***

In New Zealand in the 1960s there were shifts in the perception of race, culture and class; more openness towards sexuality with more freely available means of contraception; a powerful and imported teen-age culture; a small "counter culture" that existed alongside mainstream social and cultural traditions; and the brief expression of an ideal of a new utopia through liberation politics (May, 1988:175).

By the time the daughters of the interviewees reached adulthood there had been a more generous economic investment in their childhood years in comparison to their mothers' lives, in that they had a sounder education and they had a broader range of options and opportunities available than their mothers would have dreamed of (May, 1988:175).

In recent years steps have been taken towards equality of subjects offered to boys and girls in schools, but Szirom (1988) believes that schools still maintain a sexually exclusive curriculum which she suggests denies the experience of women and their place in culture. This she states, is because males set the agenda and define the reality. History is taught from a male perspective and role models that are presented to young

women compound their perception that women hold a lesser place in the world. (Sziron, 1988).

Despite this, it could be said that role stereotyping for women is broadening in the education system in New Zealand and according to Kearney, (1979)

*the increase of voluntary childlessness may control a re-examination and challenge to the centrality of motherhood to adult female identity.*

Between 1971 and 1986, 26% - 35% of women were in the paid workforce and there was the concept that these women worked for their own well being rather than to assist the family. Women still continued to work in the home, but the focus of work shifted towards paid employment. The priorities of the older women who undertook paid work had been hidden behind their unpaid work connected with the family and the home. The priorities of the younger women were that their home responsibilities were being hidden behind their paid workforce participation. However, the daily reality for most women was still a balancing act (May 1992).

Many women today are more inclined to undertake careers which they can return to after the birth of their children. Dual earner families have become more common than at the time of their mothers and grandmothers. In recent times, there has been a major change in housework in that few women are involved in home production like sewing, bottling and baking. According to May (1988),

*The ethic of waste not want not was ingrained into the women of this study during their depression childhood-adolescence, put to good use during a war of shortages, and even demonstrated to my generation in the 1950s. But the later temptations of ready mades, disposables, and packaged food, accompanied by a lifestyle with other priorities, caused such skills as turning sheets, making soap, cobbling shoes, unravelling jerseys, and unpicking old clothes to be unnecessary and thus forgotten. (May, 1988:51).*

Cooking is easier than it used to be but according to Else (1996) it is more demanding.

*Gone are the days of the repeating weekly menu, starting with roast on Sunday and cold meat or rissoles on Monday. Now women are expected to provide 'exciting' meals from all over the world - just like restaurants. (Else, 1996:22).*

The New Zealand fast food sales rose by nearly 30% between 1991 and 1994 whilst sales of semi prepared foods are also rising. Pasta sales went up 50%, probably due to the

availability of instant sauces (Else, 1996). This trend can be linked to more women in the paid workforce with less time to spend preparing meals.

There was an increase in the amount of labour saving devices in homes over this period. 1995 statistics show that 97 percent of New Zealand homes had washing machines, 29 percent had separate refrigerators and 79 percent had combination refrigerator/freezers, 72 percent had microwaves, 55 percent had separate freezers, 62 percent driers, 28 percent dishwashers, 94 percent had electric ranges or wall ovens and 10 percent had gas, coal or oil-fired ranges (New Zealand Official Yearbook 1996). According to Else (1996)

*The automatic washing machine has certainly taken much of the drudgery out of laundry work. But it has also boosted the quantity and variety of washing done in households. Standards of personal and household cleanliness are higher, clothing, towels and sheets are changed more often. Machines don't collect, sort, hang out or iron the washing, and driers cost too much to run all the time. More consumer 'choice' means an ever-expanding range of fabrics, more and more of them labelled firmly, 'HANDWASH ONLY', (Else, 1996:17).*

1995 statistics show that there is a growing trend for families to own more than one car (see Table V) (New Zealand Official Yearbook, 1996).

**Table V. Household Transport**

Number of motor vehicles*	1986 Census		1991 Census	
	Households	Percentage of total†	Households	Percentage of total†
0	142,593	13.4	143,232	12.4
1	525,048	49.4	538,227	46.7
2	302,415	28.4	356,814	31.0
3	69,525	6.5	84,537	7.3
4	17,334	1.6	21,411	1.9
5 or more	6,177	0.6	8,097	0.7
Not specified	25,509	--	25,347	--
Total	1 088,598	100.0	1 177,665	100.0

\*Includes cars, station-wagons, vans, trucks, and other vehicles used on public roads (excludes motorcycles and scooters), Business vehicles if available for private use are also included. † Calculated on specified cases only. Source: Statistics New Zealand (New Zealand Official Yearbook 1996)

As more women become involved in the paid labour force, it could be expected that their male partners would take more part in unpaid household duties, but Toynbee, (1995) believes that there is little solid evidence that husbands are sharing the double burden of

both paid and unpaid work, in any comparable way. Hyman (1994) states that most women in paid work do most of the essential home production themselves in addition to their labour force activity (with varying degrees of participation by male partners, where relevant). Australian and New Zealand evidence is that women in paid work have a longer working week than those engaged full time in home production, although they spend less time than the latter on household work (Hyman, 1994).

Since the mid 1980s, there have been substantial social and economic changes taking place in the country which have been shaped by national and international forces. The consequences have had a dramatic impact on many individuals, families and communities. The fourth Labour government was responsible for many social policy changes which were carried on by the Bolger-led National government and highlighted in 1986 by the Royal Commission on Social Policy (Cheyne, O'Brien & Belgrave, 1997). The changes which occurred over this period which include the privatisation of State Owned Enterprises have brought about rising unemployment, cuts in benefits and a reduction in government spending. Those who are fortunate to have employment are faced with high mortgage rates, higher costs for tertiary education, higher health costs and the need to provide for their own retirement. The incidence of women in the paid workforce has risen, which has meant that fewer women are available to undertake unpaid formal voluntary work in the community. Projected figures show that the incidence of women in the paid workforce is likely to increase. New Zealand Population, Labour Force and Household Projection figures for 1991-2031 indicate that future average paid working life for males will drop from the base level of 43.4 years at 1988 to 41.0 and 42.5 years respectively by 2001. In contrast, the participation rates for females are likely to continue to increase with the corresponding average paid working life rising from 31.0 years to 32.4 and 34.6 years respectively over the same period (NZ Department of Statistics, 1991).

When these figures are taken into account, and because much of the formal voluntary work is undertaken by women, many of them not in the paid workforce, we must assume that the pool of prospective female voluntary workers will be diminished. Voluntary organisations in Palmerston North in 1995, and the number of voluntary workers

involved in these organisations are outlined in Appendix 4. A directory of community groups in Palmerston North 1995/1996 listed over eighty three active groups in the Community Services Council network in the Palmerston North area (Palmerston North Community Services Council, 1996) with an approximate total of voluntary workers of over 1400 volunteers<sup>3</sup>.

Of course, not all women are in full-time paid work. At the other end of the scale are those who are on benefits. They are faced with higher rental accommodation and rising costs of living which has meant that much of their time is spent in just making ends meet. Stephens (1994) suggests that even before the 1991 benefit cuts, New Zealand had a substantial problem of poverty. He states that 20% of households and some 611,000 people who constituted 17.8 percent of the population were poor, and argues that the poor in New Zealand are mainly households with children, with poverty increasing with family size. Younger households also tend to be poor, especially after housing costs are paid, indicating the reduction of living standards brought about by high mortgage repayments. He also believes that Housing Corporation tenants have a high incidence of poverty which increases after housing costs are considered. Despite the fact that rents are income related, the housing costs of Housing Corporation tenants exceeds the average housing costs (Stephens, 1994).

In a report on social assistance presented by the Honourable Jenny Shipley in July 1991, she stressed that the government could no longer sustain the welfare system as it had been in the past. She urged individuals to take a greater degree of responsibility for their own progress in the world (Shipley, 1991). Since 1991 we have seen a movement in policy-making towards solving social problems by returning these problems to the community. In 1996 the Business Round Table supported a study undertaken by David Green on the Welfare State in New Zealand. In his conclusions he stated:

*We should each plan ahead against foreseeable contingencies and make provision, perhaps through mutual associations like those of former days, or perhaps through means as yet undiscovered.....charity law should be changed to ensure the genuine independence of voluntary welfare associations, Parents should assume responsibility for their children's education.....All schools and institutions of higher learning should be returned to civil society, and none owned or managed by the government.....Medical care should be paid for by insurance or out-of*

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<sup>3</sup> See Appendix 4.

*pocket....Hospitals should not be owned by the government. Pensions and provision of income for insurable contingencies should be a private responsibility.*  
(Green, 1997).

By reverting to these right wing ideologies as suggested by Green, we can expect a greater division between the rich and the poor. Charitable organisations can barely exist on the subsidies they receive from the government. If these subsidies are removed they will depend on charity from those who can afford it. With the recommendation of the government policy makers for more people to take responsibility for their well-being, people may become more self-serving. Rather than provide money to charities, they will need to put more money aside for the education for their children, for their health and for their eventual retirement. With more women in the paid workforce, there may be fewer women available to undertake the voluntary work which is necessary for these charitable organisations to survive. Those people who are on a low socio-economic level, may be unable to finance their children's education, their health requirements, or their retirement. Therefore the policies as suggested by Green can only result in those in the high socio-economic level receiving first class education, health care and comfortable retirement, while those at the other end of the scale will receive poor education, poor health care, and poverty and destitution in their old age.

Studies are showing that cost benefits are limited and based on an increased burden on families and increasing exploitation of women's unpaid labour (Cheyne, O'Brien & Belgrave, 1997). The change from State provision to community care will mean more care by the family and this will mean by women in particular. Women will be affected by the level and character of changing social services for children, the sick, the disabled and the elderly (Cheyne *et al.* 1997).

According to McPherson (1993), the family has traditionally been the primary source of social, physical and economic support for the aged. The major caregivers are daughters without dependent children who do not participate in the labour force. Research by McPherson (1993) has shown that in New Zealand and overseas, families and in particular, middle-aged daughters, are still the main source of social and emotional support and care for the aged. She states that lack of such support was a prime factor

which led to “institutionalisation”, but as the demand for family support for the elderly is increasing, government is moving away from State provision towards family responsibility, the potential availability of which may in fact be decreasing. Because of the changing demographic trends in New Zealand due to smaller family size, increased marital disruption and the growing number of women between 40-59 in the paid workforce, some cohorts of elderly women will be more vulnerable than others in the potential unavailability of family support (McPherson, 1993).

In a report from the Royal Commission in Social Policy (1988) it was stated that voluntary groups often increased choice and flexibility by providing services close to the source of demand. Their services are generally cost-effective. By involving volunteers they increase participation and are therefore an important part of the democratic process.

*A vigorous, independent voluntary sector, sometimes working in partnership with the state, should be recognised and encouraged both by Government and others in the community. (Royal Commission in Social Policy, 1988).*

The recent trend of shifting more responsibility from central government to local level and caring for fewer people in institutions means that more responsibility must be undertaken by local communities. This will involve an increase in women’s activities where they become involved on Boards of Trustees, Area Health Boards or care of family members and friends who can not be cared for in institutions (Ministry of Women’s Affairs, 1989). This may cause a dilemma with more women joining the paid workforce with less time on their hands to undertake this voluntary work.

## **Conclusion**

Over the time span in the lives of the interviewees, there have been many social and economic changes which have affected women’s involvement in unpaid work both within the home and in the community. In this chapter I have briefly outlined some of the major historical events which have influenced these women, their mothers and their daughters, and the work, both paid and unpaid, that they have undertaken. I have also discussed the changing attitudes towards education for girls, women’s paid labour, unpaid labour, both within the home and the community, and gender division of unpaid household labour over the life time of the interviewees. These changes have been shaped by major

historical events, economic stability/instability, and feminist and union movements which have agitated for more equality for women both within the home and the workplace.

As stated in Chapter I, there is an overlap in the ages of some of the interviewees and their mothers and daughters. The oldest of the mothers were born in the late 1800s and the youngest in 1923. The oldest of the interviewees was born in 1922 and the youngest in 1946, while the oldest daughters were born in 1946 and the youngest in the 1970s. Some of the interviewees' mothers would have experienced the first World War. Some were mothers during the Great Depression and World War II while the younger ones were unmarried at the time of World War II. Some of the interviewees were born before the Depression, some during the Depression, while one was born during World War II and one immediately after and could be classified as a "baby boomer". Most of the daughters were baby boomers, but the younger ones, who were born in the 1970s could not be classified as such. Therefore because of the overlapping of the time span, not all of the women would have the same experiences of unpaid work and attitudes towards their education, their paid employment and the gender division of household labour could be different.

In Chapter III I will endeavour to investigate the value of women's work as experienced by the interviewees in order to discover whether this work is valued, by whom, in what context is it valued or devalued, and how over time this work has been valued more than at others. In Chapter IV I will present the reflections of the interviewees as to how they perceive the experiences of both their mothers and daughters' unpaid work and compare this with their own experiences. All of these results will be examined in the context of historical, economic and social changes that have occurred and have affected attitudes towards women's work both paid and unpaid.

## **Chapter Three**

### ***Assessments of Our Own Unpaid Work***

#### **Introduction**

As stated in the Introduction, the questions raised in this thesis are: is women's unpaid work valued, by whom and in what context is it valued, and whether over time this work has been valued more than at other times. In Chapter Two I discussed the major historical events which occurred in the lives of the women interviewed, in order to give an overview of how these historical events have contributed to the value of women's unpaid work. Six of the women interviewed were children or growing up during the Great Depression (1929-1935) and World War II (1939-1945), one woman was born during World War II and another immediately after World War II. These women grew up and left school at a time of full employment, free or subsidised health care and educational services and there was provision for guaranteed retirement income for all. They all had labour-saving devices in their homes and access to motor vehicles, although many did not have these facilities in the early years of marriage. In order to investigate the value of the unpaid work carried out by the interviewees, it is necessary to take into account the historical, economic, attitudinal and educational changes that occurred over their life time.

This Chapter presents the experiences of unpaid work undertaken by the interviewees both in the home and in the community. In Chapter Four I will discuss the interviewees recollections of their mothers' experiences of unpaid work, and their understanding of the unpaid work carried out by their daughters in order to ascertain whether the value of this work has changed over time.

As stated in Chapter One, I have used a qualitative approach to interviewing, asking open-ended questions in order to gain an insight into the experiences of these women. I have attempted to compare my own experiences of unpaid work with those of the interviewees, a method which DuBois (1991) believes should allow for inter-subjectivity,

therefore allowing the researcher to share experiences with the people being researched who can then add their own opinions to the research.

Harding (1987) has influenced my research in that she suggests that women's experiences in the plural move towards the theory of a multiplicity of truths. Women's experience is an important starting point for feminist research but it is necessary to move away from the belief of a universal truth towards a multiplicity of truths which change over time, place and conditions and which incorporate the differences among women and within themselves. Although these women have had many similar experiences they come from different social backgrounds, their ages range from fifty years to seventy years, and they are of different ethnic origins, five being Pakeha New Zealanders, two being of Maori origin and one being born in Britain. Two of the women interviewed have experienced broken marriages, one has since remarried, while the remainder are still with their partners, although one woman's partner is in a rest home as he suffers from Alzheimers disease.

During the interviews the women were asked to comment on their own experiences of unpaid work. As mentioned earlier, the original theme for this thesis was to be "is women's unpaid work invisible?" but because the interviews revealed that this work was by no means invisible this question became problematical. What was emerging was that although women's unpaid work was valuable, it was not always valued. The actual questions which were raised with the interviewees were, is this work valued, by whom, in what context is it valued or devalued, and has this work been valued more sometimes than at others.

The relevant information for this Chapter emerged from the transcriptions of the interviewees which have been collated and separated into categories and sub-categories, using a modified grounded theory approach (Kirby & McKenna, 1989). The three categories which emerged from the words of the interviewees, were caring and nurturing (which included motherhood, caring for sick and elderly relatives, caring for grandchildren and emotional work); household maintenance (which included domestic work, administration, and acting as helpmeet to male partners); and voluntary work

(which included formal voluntary work for churches and charitable organisations, and informal voluntary work such as networking, Plunket and marae work).

In this chapter I have presented the experiences of unpaid work undertaken by the interviewees which have been analysed in order to ascertain what value has been placed on this work. I have also presented the conclusions reached as to the value or perceived value of this work.

### **What Value Was Placed On Our Unpaid Work?**

#### ***I Caring and Nurturing***

Women's caring work is the major component of unpaid work undertaken by many women. This work encompasses: motherhood (which includes childbirth, child rearing, educating, transporting children and all the tasks involved in being a mother such as being involved in kindergarten, Plunket, sporting, and cultural organisations related to children's wellbeing); caring for sick and elderly relatives; emotional work (such as problem solving, sympathising and arbitrating, sexual relationships); and caring for grandchildren. Much voluntary work in the community, both formal and informal can be classed as caring and nurturing work.

#### ***i. Motherhood***

##### ***(a) The Labour of Childbirth***

de Beauvoir (1949) wrote that

*It is in maternity that woman fulfils her physiological destiny, it is her natural "calling", since her whole organic structure is adapted for the perpetuation of the species (de Beauvoir (1949:51).*

Not all women would agree with this statement but the women interviewed all appeared to have had a wish to "*fulfil their physiological destiny*". The interviewees enjoyed being mothers and described it as a wonderful experience. I was married at nineteen and had my first child ten months later. My first three children were born within three years and after an interval of five and a half years my fourth child was born. By then I felt I had, in the words of de Beauvoir, fulfilled my "*natural calling*" and no longer had any desire to "*perpetuate the species*".

As discussed in Chapter II, immediately after World War II, the birth rate began to rise. This was a time when family benefits were increased and the “baby boomers” were born. As stated earlier, because of the twenty year age difference among the eight interviewees, Betty was born in 1946 and is actually a “baby boomer” herself, and both her and Te Ahumi’s children could not be classified as such. Te Ahumi was born in 1940.

As can be seen in Table VI, the average age of marriage for the interviewees was twenty two and the average age for the birth of the first child was twenty three. This indicates that most of the interviewees had given birth to their first child within the first year of marriage. These women, with the exception of Betty and Te Ahumi, would have had their first child before the advent of the contraceptive pill and contraceptive devices and practices were either unreliable or extremely inconvenient. (ie diaphragm, condoms or rhythm method).

**Table VI. Age of Interviewees at marriage, and birth of first child and number of children**

Name	Age when married	Age at birth of first child	Number of children
Pat	19	20	7
Pam	25	26	2
Betty	21	23	3
Jill	22	23	5
Yvonne	24	27	4
Te Ahumi	23	24	5
Florence	22	22	5
Catherine	23	24	4
Self	19	20	4
Average	22	23	4.33

Generally, fathers were excluded from the delivery room when their children were born, indicating that the labour of childbirth was primarily the task of the mother and the father’s part in this process was devalued. Because the perception was that this work was solely the responsibility of the mother I conclude that this work was devalued by the fathers. My recollection of the birth of my own children was that of being delivered at the maternity hospital and being left there to “get on with it”. On the other hand

because the interviewees all declared that it was a wonderful experience, I conclude that they valued the labour of childbirth.

*(b) Child Rearing*

Rich (1976) has written:

*“To have borne and reared a child is to have done that thing which patriarchy joins with physiology to render into the definition of femaleness. But also, it can mean the experiencing of one’s own body and emotions in a powerful way. We experience not only physical, fleshly changes but the feeling of a change in character. We learn, often through painful self-discipline and self-cauterisation, those qualities which are supposed to be “innate” in us: patience, self-sacrifice, the willingness to repeat endlessly the small, routine chores of socialising a human being. We are also often to our amazement, flooded with feelings both of love and violence intenser and fiercer than any we had ever known” (Rich, 1976:18-19).*

These words of Rich are echoed in the experiences of the interviewees. They all admitted to the experiences of wonder and joy of motherhood but also admitted to feelings of inadequacy in their role of mother. As Rich states, the qualities of patience and self-sacrifice are supposed to be “innate” in a mother, however these women all had to learn these qualities through their experience and at times mistakes.

Pat had seven children, four boys and three girls (one of her daughters was adopted), and believed that her years of rearing children were “*really good years*” but admits that “*if I knew what I know now, I would have done it differently*”.

Pam believed that she placed a lot of emphasis on motherhood but felt that she was probably an over-protective mother. She had two children, one boy and one girl and sees her son as “*lacking confidence*” and her daughter as being “*ultra sensitive*”.

Betty had three boys and believed that she was quite skilled in looking after children, being the eldest in the family and also having been a kindergarten teacher, but she admits that when she did have her children she was actually very “*ill equipped*.”

When my eldest son was born, I experienced the feeling of being a very naive young mother, unprepared for the great responsibility of raising a child.

The conclusions from these transcripts are that it is apparent that these mothers not only valued their motherhood, they enjoyed the experience, but in some cases where they doubted their ability as mothers, they under-valued their own work as mothers when they believed that they could not meet the expected standards.

Jill had five children three girls and two boys and admits that she really enjoyed motherhood and didn't notice that it was hard work. She believes that she did things for her children which she doesn't think mothers do today.

*Like if it was raining I'd ..... greet them at the door with warm towels - and hot soups and cocoas and I would have just lit the fire before they came in and things like that..... Read them lots of stories.*

Te Ahumi had five children, three girls and two boys, the last two being twins, and saw motherhood as “*the most wonderful experience*”. She admits to being very busy and after the twins were born

*They were last. And then I desperately wanted to go and have more children but it wasn't to be. So I started looking after other people's children.*

It was at this time that Te Ahumi felt there was a “*vacuum*” in her life and that was when she decided to take in foster children. She stated that this was a busy and stressful time and that some of the children were difficult and this affected her own children.

*.....because they were so used to having their parents to themselves, and this was no longer the case. Sometimes there were six of them.*

Like TeAhumi, Florence also took in foster children. She had her first child nine months after she was married and had four girls and a boy. She thought it was “*terrific*” to be a mother and had been told that she would not have any more after her first child was born but still managed to have five children. She would often have two or three foster children at a time. Florence admits that she became very attached to these children.

*Oh I loved every one of them. I felt so sorry for them. I would have liked to have kept them always. No they came from so many places where they had been so badly hurt and mentally and physically abused in so many ways. All in different ways, you know and all they wanted was love and caring for. And I just loved having them.....*

Florence and Te Ahumi would have been reimbursed for expenses for caring for foster children, but it cannot be assumed that this was paid work. It is interesting to note that Smith (1988), a lecturer in social work practice at the University of New South Wales,

Australia, believes that the care of children in the home is not counted as labour which requires skill and expertise and that foster care has historically been firmly embedded in the values of voluntarism and charity and can be seen as an extension of the natural role of mothering. Because this work is not counted as skilled labour by government policy makers, it is de-valued, and therefore because it is seen as an extension of mothering, child rearing is also de-valued. But both Florence and Te Ahumi valued their work and it could be perceived that Florence's foster children valued this work, as they still visited her.

Catherine was twenty four when her first child was born and she had three girls and one boy. She recalls that she was always there for her three older children but feels guilty about her youngest daughter who was two years old when her first marriage was dissolved. She describes the difficulty she encountered trying to combine the two roles of mother and breadwinner. Catherine felt her youngest daughter missed out a lot because she couldn't spend as much time with her as she had done with her older children.

*More because I didn't have the time because I was working full time anyway and then I had two boarders, so by the time I got home, I got home about six o'clock and I would have to get on to the meals and things. By the time I had sorted all that out, did the ironing, .....*

These were hard years for Catherine as she had to go into paid work and found it difficult to find suitable childcare for her youngest child.

*.....S... always said to me that she felt the odd one out..... and she said as she grew up she felt terribly lonely, because she didn't see that much of me .....*

Catherine through necessity was forced to combine the two tasks of motherhood and "breadwinner". Because of this the contradictions arise where she valued her paid work because it paid the bills, she valued her unpaid work of mothering in the case of her three older children, but she believed she failed as a mother with regard to her youngest daughter and therefore devalued her ability to carry out this work. Catherine's youngest daughter also indicated that she felt she was "the odd one out" and even though Catherine's paid work was necessary, her daughter believed it took precedence over the mothering she felt Catherine should have given to her and the conclusion reached is that

she also valued motherhood but believed that Catherine had failed in her mothering work.

With the increase of the population after World War II (See Chapter Two) the government policy makers increased family benefit and the perception could be that they did place some value on motherhood. But most of the interviewees did not believe there was much value put on motherhood by the government policy makers or in some cases by some members of the public.

*Pat..... Oh I don't think they see that as big value at all really. I've never heard anyone say that this is enormously valuable work that women are doing, that you should do it above all else.*

*Jill - I place it very highly. I think it's the most important thing that anyone does for the nation. Yes it's an important job. A very important job. And I wanted to do it and I enjoyed doing it. ....I think that they are forever insisting that women need to go out and work and I really think they should be in the home.*

*Florence - Well I don't think they really see what's going on.....I don't think they live in a home where there is family and see what really is needed to be done and the sort of things mothers do. Or are expected to do.*

Betty believed that mothers were seen as numbers and that the government policy makers advocate that they can provide certain services, but she didn't believe that there was much help available when she was a young mother. Pam believed that mothers were the children's first teachers and felt that there was not much value placed on this by government policy makers.

Jill was critical of women in paid work whom she felt looked down on women who are not in the paid workforce, but she felt that the mothers who stayed home did a better job of raising their children than those who went out to paid work.

*I still think it's put down a lot.*

Similarly, Catherine assumed that women who were in paid work looked on women at home with young children as having an easy time.

*.....because they have to go out to work. But then at the same token they can give that away at five o'clock and a woman with two or three pre-school children can't or even with older children can't either. I think there should be some sort of reward for those people.*

Jill's assumption that women who stayed home were better mothers, is a common assumption which cannot be verified. Stewart & Davis (1996) state that many of the women they interviewed spoke of feeling judged by family and friends, with regard to the hours they worked, their childcare arrangements, and the quality of their parenting, when they balanced paid work with child care. Catherine's assumption that women in paid work believed that the women who stayed home had an easier time could be true. Some of the interviewees, including Catherine have combined both motherhood and paid work and they all related that they were stressed much of the time. This does not mean that women at home full time are not as busy as those that combine paid work with unpaid work, but those who are in paid work would most probably have deadlines to meet that would not always apply to those women who worked full time at home. On the other hand, many of the women who did combine both paid work and unpaid work may not place the same priorities on the unpaid work as those that were home full time.

Jill and Catherine believed that motherhood should be rewarded by the government policy makers. Many feminist writers such as Hyman (1994), Else (1996) and Briar (1997) support the concept of a Universal Basic Income (UBI) which would be a regular guaranteed payment geared to the cost of living and given to every man, woman and child irrespective of income or employment. Briar (1997) suggests that UBI is a means by which economic inequality and women's economic insecurity can be reduced and a process of giving women economic security and financial independence from men. It is also a way of resourcing the unpaid work which is undertaken by women in caregiving and domestic labour. I asked Betty, Jill, Florence and Pam whether they felt that mothers should receive a Universal Basic Income. Betty was apprehensive about this. She believed that mothers who stayed at home to care for their children deserved some sort of recognition but was concerned that a UBI would just become the same benefit with a new name.

*But if the parents are given that feeling "you're doing a good job" and "hey thanks for taking care of your own children". I think, you know, there's only good comes out of that.*

Jill believed that mothers should be paid to stay home and rear their children as it would open up more jobs for others in the paid work force. She felt that there was too much pressure placed on women with children to go out to paid work.

*I don't think it's rated highly. And until it's paid it will never be rated highly. No one will ever think it's the best work that's done in the country.*

Pam was hesitant about whether mothers should be paid for the work that they did but believed that in the case of parents who had the finance, their children would have to be better off. Florence did not think mothers should receive payment. She believed bringing up a family was the responsibility of the parents and they shouldn't be asking for somebody to come in “and give us something to look after our children”.

Yvonne believed that it would be difficult to pay mothers for the work they did, but agreed with the concept on principle. She felt that motherhood was an important job and that many mothers did need some help.

Both Te Ahumi and Catherine didn't think that government policy makers valued motherhood and believed that mothers should be paid as they were performing a very important job.

*Catherine - I think that they go through as much stress in the home as they would if they were going out to work because it's twenty four hours a day.....I think if they got paid for a certain amount of work in the house, they'd probably have incentive about it as well in doing things and I think it would make the home a lot happier really. So, you know, if someone's full time in the home and especially with children as well, I think with children it can be very, very stressful, and you know, I feel that if they went to work and they get stressed out they are getting paid for that.*

In summary, the interviewees all admitted to enjoying motherhood, but Betty and Catherine had some reservations as to their ability. Pam considered herself to be a good mother, but is disappointed at the lack of confidence of her children and believes that she may have been over-protective. These feelings of doubt which are raised by these mothers indicate that although they all valued motherhood, they actually under-valued their own work as mothers because they could not attain the standard they believed was required.

On the other hand both Te Ahumi and Florence's great love of children and their concern for the well-being of deprived children, led them to take in foster children. Because they valued their ability as mothers of their own children they were prepared to take in other people's children. But their experiences of fostering were different, with Te Ahumi

believing that her own children suffered and Florence not wanting to part with the children. Florence valued her work as a foster mother and because her foster children loved her it must be concluded that they also valued her work. Contradictions arise in the case of Te Ahumi as her children may have suffered through the addition of foster children into the home and therefore I conclude that her children may not have valued her work as foster mother.

Most of the women believed that mothers should receive some payment for their work, which would acknowledge the value of this work, but there was some hesitancy as to whether this should be in the form of a UBI.

*(c) Children's Sporting, Cultural and School Activities*

Generally the interviewees supervised their children's homework, with fathers occasionally listening to their reading. Pat's partner did take on the things that "*she couldn't manage*". Pat did admit during the interview that she believed that her husband was "*cleverer*" than she was and this was also echoed by Jill who said her husband handled the more intellectual aspects of children's homework as he had a "*better education*" than she had. I conclude that these women all valued this aspect of motherhood, but both Pat and Jill, by underestimating their ability, are devaluing the contributions that they made.

Weekday school events, such as school trips and sports meetings, were usually attended to by the mothers (except for Pam, whose husband was available). Weekend sport was a shared activity with fathers generally playing an equal or in some cases larger part (as with Pat). I recollect attending athletics and swimming events by myself during the week but sharing week-end sport attendance with my husband. Like Jill my children undertook different sports and were involved in swimming, soccer, rugby, hockey athletics, cross country and softball. Saturdays were often spent in giving the children encouragement at their various activities.

All of the women interviewed had undertaken voluntary work with pre-school, school and other organisations connected with their children's activities. Most of the women

would consider this unpaid voluntary work to be part of the work of being a mother and necessary for the wellbeing of their children.

*Pat - Oh yes, I felt it important to be part and parcel of whatever they were involved in. Cake stalls and goodness knows what.*

Pat considered that there was value in being involved with these fund raising activities as it was in her opinion that her children got a better deal. She stressed that to her it was having a

*generosity of spirit in giving your time and energy and thinking it's what you do without expecting rewards and things or money back.*

The other interviewees did not express themselves as Pat has as having a generosity of spirit but they did give their time and energy for the perceived benefit of their children. Betty and Jill were also involved in fundraising for schools which involved baking cakes for cake stalls and being involved in functions such as beer and wine festivals.

*Betty - You know, at least once a month cake stalls and chicken and something or other evening, beer and wine festivals and all that sort of thing. Wine and cheese yes, beef and burgers.....*

*Jill - I was mother's help at kindy. That seemed to be fairly often. And I was on the kindy committee. School committee. I did voluntary work for school. ....I did a lot for Plunket.*

Jill was involved in banking, mending books and fund raising and volunteered for playground duties at the school, and she sometimes supervised the children who were on road patrol. At one time she was involved in the high school cafeteria which usually meant peeling potatoes and serving on the tables. Yvonne, Te Ahumi, Florence and Catherine were involved with Plunket, play centre, kindergarten and school committees.

If this work benefits their children then it must be concluded that this work is valued by the interviewees, by the school and possibly by the children. It could also be concluded that the government policy makers would value this work, in that it lessened their obligation to supply funds for the amenities required by these organisations. But the contradiction arises when it is considered that there was an expectation that these women would undertake this work. The children certainly benefitted from this work but we cannot assume that they valued it. The children of parents who did not take part in these activities would also have benefitted from this work. It is difficult to conclude that

the mothers who were not involved in this work did not value it as there could be many contributing factors preventing these women from being involved - such as socio-economics, paid work commitments, reticence in being involved etc.

## ii. *Caring for Sick and Elderly Relatives*

Munford (1992:91) argues that women are encouraged to stay home and care for family members and are often criticised if they don't make sacrifices for the family. She believes that some women are compared to others who supposedly enjoy caregiving and are criticised if they cannot keep up with this 'norm'. In my sample of women, there is a definite contrast in attitudes towards caring for their elderly relatives. Yvonne, Betty and Te Ahumi, for example, did not find it as irksome as Jill did. This does not indicate that Jill cared less about her elderly relatives, but that it was more of a duty which was expected of her. Pat admitted that she didn't get on well enough with her mother who was put in a rest home by the family.

Dalley (1996:8) believes that there should be a distinction between '*caring for*' and '*caring about*'. The first is to do with the task of tending for a person, the second is to do with feeling for another person. Therefore, just because a woman doesn't enjoy caring for an elderly relative, as in Jill's case, or abdicates the caring role altogether, as with Pat, does not mean that she doesn't 'care about' that person. But those people who follow this ideology may consider a woman to be 'deviant' if she does not conform to the 'norm'. Even though some of the women interviewed did not exactly state that they did not enjoy caring for their elderly relatives, there may have been some reluctance on their part to admit to disliking their caring obligations and therefore appear to be 'deviant'.

It is not generally expected of men to tend to the everyday needs of a sick or elderly relative. Nor is a man considered 'deviant' if he goes out into the paid work force to earn money and leaves the caring for a loved one in the hands of a third person. The expectation is that he will be the main provider of income in the family. Jill's husband did not care for his mother as it was expected that Jill would do this. In Jill's case there

was an expectation that she would care for both her mother and mother-in-law and as stated earlier, when it is expected of someone to undertake a task this task may be de-valued. On the other hand if Jill's husband had cared for his mother, because it is not expected of men to care for a person, this would be valued as something special.

Many women have the responsibility of caring for elderly parents and Jill, Betty, Te Ahumi and Yvonne all undertook this task. Betty cared for both of her parents just before they died, but this was a family effort and like many Maori families, they all played their part. Their father was never left alone up until the time that he died. The caring for Betty's father was a family effort and involved Betty's sister, brothers and her husband as well.

*Everybody came in on it, and we all slept in the room with him. ....*

When Betty's mother died they weren't able to be there as a family as she was rushed into hospital one morning and died the next day. It was a different case with Betty's Pakeha mother-in-law who ailed for a long time and Betty's husband made the decision to put her in a rest home. It could be surmised by these contrasting reports on the care of Betty's Maori parents and Pakeha mother-in-law, that the difference in caring is a cultural one, but when you consider the length of time of these caring exercises, it was not so binding looking after shorter term illness, such as with Betty's parents, stressful as it may be, as it is looking after long term illness such as in the case of Betty's mother-in-law, Jill's parents and Florence's husband.

Both Jill's mother and mother-in-law were widows and living alone and the expectation was that Jill would look after them. Added to the difficulties that arose from this was the fact that Jill's mother-in-law had had a leg amputated and was confined to a wheelchair.

Else (1996:110) suggests that women are more likely to be living alone when they need care and it is more likely to be their female relatives that will care for them. This is certainly the situation in the case of Jill's mother and mother-in-law. They both had home help, but Jill's mother had never driven a car, so Jill recalls twenty years of driving her to get groceries and shopping and delivering "*lots of meals*"

*They won't take taxis, so if they want to go somewhere - to doctors, eye specialist, ear specialist, Grandma with her leg, lots of running round for that.*

It is evident that neither Jill nor her mother-in-law expect Jill's husband to care for his mother and despite the fact that Jill shows some resentment, she still feels responsible for the care of both her mother and mother-in-law. It is this expectation that women will be the carers and nurturers which allows government policy makers to rely on their unpaid work in caring for their elderly relatives and therefore relieve the cost of care on the State. Economically it is of value to the government policy makers if women like Jill undertake the care of their elderly relatives. But as stated earlier because of this expectation that she will do this work the work is perceived to be of less value.

*..... I don't think they know just how much you have to do and how much it interferes with your life. Perhaps it's expected of a woman because she is my mother and the other one is my partner's mother.*

Jill is also resentful that the care of her mother and mother-in-law falls on her shoulders because the other members of the family are living a distance away.

*Yes they take it for granted that people will do this but what they don't take in is that there is usually only one within a family. The rest aren't doing it. In this case I've got two mothers because my partner's only sister lives in England. Mine don't live here.*

She talks about the unfairness of the situation where she has had twenty years of caring for her parents. This highlights the suggestion made by Dalley (1996:10), that love for the person can become fractured and distorted by feelings of obligation, burden and frustration.

*I've spent nearly twenty years looking after my parents. Whereas my brother and sisters haven't. When they come down they'll spend a lot of time with them but it's only for a week.*

In Jill's situation it can be concluded that she values the work she is doing but feels she is taken for granted by her parents, her extended family and by government services. Jill is not in paid work and is therefore available to undertake this work. She lives in proximity to her mother and mother-in-law, while the extended family live some distance away. Therefore the expectation of the extended family and government policy makers is that she will carry out this caring work. I conclude therefore, that because of this expectation this work is under-valued by her family and by government policy makers.

Yvonne and Te Ahumi had experiences which contrasted with Jill's with health services, when their parents were sick and they believed they received a lot of help. Yvonne gave up her paid work to look after her mother but admits that she quite liked doing it, and only felt stressed on "*the odd occasion*". She had help from the district nurse who would come in and bathe her mother. Therefore I conclude that when people do receive assistance from health services for their caring work, this work is perceived to be valued more.

Caring is not only confined to the home. Some of the interviewees went out into the community and cared for sick or elderly people. Florence, Yvonne, Te Ahumi and Catherine, all cared for people in the community.

Catherine believed that the government policy makers could do more to help elderly people. She did not think they put much value on the voluntary work which is done for the elderly.

*Yes, I think with the elderly, they need all the help they can get.....as you get older things break down like a car and, and its very expensive for them. You see I go out to these places and some of them can't afford the heating you know and they stay either in bed and put the blanket on or they will put lots of woollies on and they feel the cold, because the elderly feel the cold and I think the government could sort of even pay for their electricity. I think they maybe could help them more with medical things because when they get to that age they need to be comfortable. They don't eat a great deal either. It's not food, it's comfort and warmth.*

The task of caring for a sick spouse can be very stressful for the carer, as it was in the cases of Florence and Pat. There is no doubt that they cared about their partners, but their interviews indicate the disappointment in their lives through their partner's illnesses. Pat regrets lost opportunities and lost income, because her partner retired early through illness. She doesn't remember getting a lot of help from outside organisations.

*Well I remember at one point him being extremely ill and not being able to get out of bed and sort of ringing up trying to get some help from a whole heap of places and it seemed like hitting brick walls really. I dread to think of it if it comes to that point, how much help will be available.*

Florence's husband has Alzheimers disease and is now in a nursing home, but Florence has cared for him for twelve years. She has not had a lot of help from outside organisations except for an organisation called AARDS (Alzheimers and Related

Diseases Society) which supports relatives of people with Alzheimers. She believed that people just didn't want to know about people who had Alzheimers.

Florence visits her husband two or three times a week and admits that he is getting to the stage where he wanders and gets abusive. Her family don't go to visit their father now as they find it is too stressful.

*No they used to but they find it too much. It's not Dad. No they say "Mum I can't really". My eldest daughter would I think, if she was nearer. But that's too far away and she said the other night when I rang her "I wish I was closer Mum".*

Florence observes a partner whom she loved dearly getting further removed from her as his mind deteriorates with Alzheimers.

*At times I have found it very stressful because I loved him so much, and it's not him.....*

Both Pat and Florence admit that there has often been little support for them over the years of their partners' illnesses, indicating that the work they are doing is under-valued by government agencies and in Florence's case, her family.

As with the care of older relatives when it comes to caring for a spouse later in life, it appears "natural" for a woman to undertake this task (Rose & Bruce, 1995:126). Rose & Bruce believe that the *superior gender*<sup>1</sup> brings esteem and therefore value, to a task which is undervalued when done by women, especially older women. The conclusions I have arrived at are that often work is valued more or less depending on who is doing this work. Pat and Florence cared for their husbands as that was expected of them because they were women and the perception was that it was natural for women to care for sick spouses. But when a man cares for a sick spouse, because what he is doing is out of the ordinary, his work is valued more. Rose & Bruce (1995:127-128) found that men would express their feelings of sadness and resignation, frustration and anger at what had happened to their wives and to their lives which was seen as admirable in a man, but for a woman, because it is her "natural" duty, she is under an obligation to perform well.

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<sup>1</sup> My emphasis

Rose & Bruce (1995:126-127) suggest that women caring for a partner grieved for lost persons and for a diminished relationship. Where men felt accomplishment for their caring work, women did not take such comfort as caring was what was expected of them and only failure to care would bring attention. They go on to say that women's equally conscientious care which gave them little respite, did not produce the sense of pride displayed by men in the same position.

In summary therefore, Betty describes the caring for her sick parents as being a family-shared function. This appears to be typical of many Maori families and such occasions extend to the whole whanau.

*I think all our family have the expectation that those people that are closest to the person that is ill - will be there right to the moment that they pass away*

When Betty's story is compared to that of Jill, who admits she has had over twenty years of caring for both her mother and mother-in-law who are both now in their nineties, with very little help from other members of the family, the possibility arises that work shared among families is valued more than when it is carried out by one person within the family. Jill's interview indicates a certain amount of anger and frustration over her function as carer. She is resentful because this load has fallen on her while the rest of the family, who live out of the area, are free from this burden of caring, and expect Jill to undertake this work. Both Jill and Betty have cared for mothers-in-law, while there has been very little contribution from their partners. It is concluded that when caring work is shared, such as in the case of Betty's family it is valued more than when it is left to one person such as with Jill.

Florence, Jill, Yvonne, Te Ahumi and Catherine, like many women, have all cared for sick or elderly people other than their own family members. This has been done in a period of their lives when they were not undertaking paid work. If these women had been in the paid work force, they may not have been able to undertake this work. This reinforces the theory of Finch (1989) that while women are out of the paid workforce they will be expected to undertake the care of other people. This same expectation is not expected of men, who are more likely to be in the paid workforce.

### iii. *Caring for Grandchildren*

There is very little scholarly writing on the relationship between grandparents and their grandchildren, but quite a lot of juvenile literature has been written which includes a grandmother figure. A literature search in the library on grandmothers, revealed that the only references were under the topic of “ageing” and “aged”. This is surprising as many women become grandmothers in their mid-forties or early fifties and would not consider themselves as being “aged”. The depiction of grandmothers in children’s literature as being feeble and helpless devalues the part that many grandmothers play in their interaction with their grandchildren.

All of the interviewees valued their relationship with their grandchildren. This was obvious by the way their faces lit up when they talked about them. Pat babysits for her many grandchildren and believes that she gets her rewards from looking after them.

Because the relationship between grandmothers and grandchildren is varied and there is little research on the subject, it is difficult to generalise about this relationship. Age, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic level and personality can affect the relationship. But according to Perlmutter and Hall (1985), grandparents have no prescribed function and can relate to a grandchild anyway they please. Pam states that she doesn’t have as much to do with her grandchildren now as she could but is there for them when they are sick.

*Absolutely adore them .....For a while I was picking the older ones up from school and bringing them around here*

She admits that “*they get away with murder*”.

Some of the grandmothers in this sample are more inclined to play with their grandchildren rather than discipline them and this could be typical amongst grandmothers in general. Pam often played cricket with them on the back lawn.

*and then weekends we’d even have the smaller ones so that when I had my bi-pass and they found that I was going to get my heart fixed up little M.....said “Oh now grandma will be able to play cricket properly” because they had to chase all the balls while I did the hitting. ....I did a lot with them but as they are older they don’t really want to know us so much. The computer’s more interest.*

Jill believes that it is unique for her to have all of her ten grandchildren living in the same town as she does. She plays a big part in child minding and taking them to various functions.

*I do lots of baby sitting and child minding, take them to gym and take them to kindy and watch them at concerts at school. ...., and so I'm pretty involved with them. Yes, I help with the homework. They ring me up for this and ring me up for that.*

Being a grandmother allows them to care for their grandchildren but they do not have the overall responsibility for them that naturally falls on the parents. It allows for a more relaxed interaction between the grandmothers and the grandchildren. Many grandchildren value their relationship with their grandparents and this can be shown in how they express themselves. For example Jill takes her grandchildren to the gym and joins them on the “parallel bars” and trampoline. Her grandson remarked that

*I didn't seem like their grandmother because I wasn't as old as I should be.*

The transcripts of the interviewees reveal that these grandmothers are more inclined to relate to their grandchildren on an equal and supportive basis rather than as an authority. Because of this relationship they value their role of grandparent and their grandchildren value their support and understanding for the most part.

Betty is very involved with her two little granddaughters and admits that she doesn't know what a “real grandmother” is. When her son and daughter-in-law informed her that they were moving to another town so that her son could undertake tertiary education, she was hopeful that they would leave the two little girls with her.

*I see us as fit grandparents to bring them up. I know I'd be happy to do that. I'm, not sure that my husband is 100% supportive of that idea. He might think it's a good idea for a short time..... I go into withdrawal symptoms if I haven't seen them after three days.*

Te Ahumi admits that when her grandchildren are with her she “just wastes time”, but she admits that being a grandmother is “wonderful”. Te Ahumi states that she had five grandchildren and “two bonus” ones as her son's partner has two other children whom she includes as her own grandchildren.

*.....I just let everything go. I forget about it.*

In many Maori families the grandmothers play a bigger part in the care of their mokapuna. Pere (1988:7) relates how she was transferred from her natural mother to her maternal grandparents soon after her birth and she regarded her maternal grandmother as a mother. She indicates that the word 'mother' has a wide range of meaning for the Maori and that in Maori kinship terminologies, no distinction is made among the related women of one's parents' generation. In Betty's case she wished to have her grandchildren living with her, therefore having more control over them and I concluded that this would be in keeping with her cultural background as related by Pere. The Pakeha interviewees were more inclined to play a supporting role rather than a controlling role.

Both Maori and Pakeha grandparents are valued but in different contexts. Through sharing responsibilities for the grandchildren with their mothers, as in the case of the Maori grandmothers, this work may be seen to be of more value than that of the more defined role of the Pakeha grandmothers. It could be concluded that when children are in conflict with the authoritarian role of their parents they may not value the role of their grandparents if they were also authoritarian. The grandparents in this research, both Maori and Pakeha, all appeared to be more supportive than controlling, but this does not mean that this would apply to all grandparents, therefore these conclusions are generalisations only.

Yvonne's eldest daughter died when her child was three month's old and Yvonne acted as mother to the child for three to four months. She ran into difficulties when her son-in-law remarried and she had to get legal help to get access to her grandson. She overcame these difficulties and now not only has her grandson to stay with her but his two half brothers as well.

*.....but I feel I've lost a little bit of his youth. He's sixteen this June.*

The problem of loss of contact with a grandchild can also arise when the parents of the child divorce, especially if the grandparent is the parent of the non-custodial parent. Like Yvonne, the grandparent can lose contact and therefore restrict the opportunity to be actively involved in the grandchildren's lives (Perlmutter & Hall, 1985). In my case, my second son divorced, but I managed to keep close contact with his two children and

continued to have a good relationship with my ex daughter-in-law and my two grandchildren. This was of particular value to my granddaughter who had been in an accident, which left her disabled. I became her contact with her father, whom she loved dearly, but for various reasons did not see often.

Florence not only loves her own grandchildren, she loves everyone else's too and her house is open to the neighbourhood children. She admits to being very fond of children.

*Anybody who wants to can come in and play. Yes, I just love my grandchildren. They are very precious. But I feel sad now because they've all grown up and I never see much of them. I saw them such a lot when they were younger....I still babysit. Not for my grandchildren. Other children.*

Catherine believes that being a grandmother is a very important role and that it gives the grandchildren values. She argues that grandmothers don't scream at their grandchildren as their parents do because they don't have them for long periods.

*I think, it's important for their state of mind to have a nanna because with their parents, well, I mean they don't need to but they scream at them a bit, because it's all part of living and I was probably like it with my kids, you know, because you've got them around you all the time and you get sick of them and you say "shut up".....Nanna's don't do that so much, because they don't have them long enough.*

As pointed out by Catherine, a grandmother doesn't have the grandchildren for long periods, therefore the interaction between the grandmothers and the grandchildren is more relaxed. Grandparents can act as a stable "port in a storm" for grandchildren in the day to day conflict within families.

Like the grandmothers interviewed, I also enjoy my grandchildren, but I was involved in full-time work when my grandchildren were younger so I didn't get very involved with baby-sitting. Like most of the grandmothers in the sample, I have more contact with the younger grandchildren, and the older ones, as they get involved in other interests, move away from close contact. As stated by Pat, it can be rewarding being a grandmother and the relationship can often be closer than that between parents and children. The transcripts of the interviewees have revealed that unlike the grandmothers of the children's story books who have been de-valued by being depicted

as fragile, old and feeble, these grandmothers are active, supportive and a valued part in the lives of their grandchildren.

#### iv. *Emotional Work*

Else (1996:39) has pointed out that one of the reasons why women do unpaid emotional work for other people is because they love them. In many cases mothers do not expect to get anything back in return from their children. However, it could be expected that they receive reciprocal care-taking from their male partners.

The transcripts of the interviewees reveal that they, like most mothers and wives, have undertaken a considerable amount of emotional work which involves sympathising and supporting members of their families. Pat relates a time when they were facing an increasing financial burden in raising a large family.

*There were just heaps and heaps of problems really, just trying to cope.*

Later when Pat's husband took early retirement because of ill health she stated that he was always willing to help out with housework but she admitted that he was actually

*stressed out of his mind at that time....and you had to just get on with it really.*

Similarly when Catherine's marriage broke up

*Yes it was hard, but I didn't ever really get at that stage very depressed or upset about it I just kept carrying on going and we worked as a team.*

Pam and Betty were combining their unpaid work with their paid work and both thought they had to be "*superwomen*".

*Pam - there was no way my children were going to suffer.*

*Betty - The children needed to look like they had a stress-free mother.*

Betty later relates how she had to keep the house quiet while her husband was on the phone because it was prospective business and with three young boys this was impossible at times. Jill, who gave moral support to her husband while he was studying for his examinations, believed there was a time when he wanted to give up half way through

*....and I had to talk him past the point of no return*

Florence admitted that her husband needed a lot of

*"mothering and support all the time".*

These examples all indicate that the moral and emotional support given by the interviewees to their partners and children was valued by them because of their love and not because of monetary reward. Jill, Pat and Betty's contributions in emotional work were valued by their partners, but this is not always the case in other partnerships. Catherine believes that she has always been independent but has lost confidence in the last few years because of lack of support from her husband.

*If you are with someone that thinks about power a lot they really try to sort of put you down in every way they can.....I think if a person continually puts you down and whatever you do you never get appreciated for..... or they never make a comment about it and you do something and you think it's pretty good and they put you down..... you get inclined to lose that confidence. Then it comes to the time when you sort of assess yourself and think, well, I can do this. I did it before and I can do it again, you know, and I think that's what happened to me. I got to the stage where I felt, well, it doesn't matter any more what he thinks, I know I can do it. I think you look at what you've done and then you think well I can do this because if you don't think that way then I think you can end up a wreck.*

In Catherine's case, although she has supported her husband in his work and in the household, her work has been belittled and de-valued. There is no mutual support and, whereas Catherine has provided emotional support out of her love for her husband the lack of reciprocation from her husband may be perceived as his lack of love for her. Catherine admits that she has reached the stage where she feels that it does not matter any more and this stance is supported by Else (1996:39) where she states that a wife may decide "that it is pointless to go on physically and emotionally 'taking care' of him".

Yvonne related that her husband was schizophrenic and had spent some time in a psychiatric hospital. She agreed that there were times when they did get on extremely well but admits that she

*lived under emotional blackmail the whole of my married life.....so it had to come to an end.....everything he did was fanatical.....No it was very sad really because I felt I had a lot of loving to give.....I just held back a lot of the time in my love relationship because I felt all that screaming and yelling all day. I felt how could I help him at night.....I mean I think that a woman will go so far and then you can't relax with them because you have this stress factor and I think this is where a lot of marriages fail.*

Yvonne's story highlights the lack of reciprocation in her marriage which could be echoed by many women in similar situations. The other interviewees did not discuss their sexual relationship with their partners, but Yvonne states that love is a two way thing. The expectation of many male partners is that their wives will be responsive

sexual partners, but when a wife has not received love and appreciation from her partner it is difficult for her to respond to him sexually.

The conclusion I have reached is that much emotional work is expected of a woman and when the love and caring is not reciprocated by a husband or partner, the perception can arise that this work is not valued.

## **II. Household Maintenance**

### **i. Domestic Work**

May (1988) believes that the messages hitting both men and women in the 1950s-60s were confusing and contradictory. New Zealand women were exposed to the media hype from television, films, radio and magazines of immaculate wives with immaculate children and clean and shiny kitchens with all the labour saving devices and cleaning products. In my own experience girls were certainly steered into gender stereotyped courses at school, which would enable them to obtain a useful position in the paid work force, as a fill-in before marriage. They were taught “*useful*” subjects like home economics, cooking and sewing, to prepare them for their future career as “*housewife*”. At the time when the interviewees embarked on their married career they may have valued their domestic work because the media impressed on them that this was a career to be valued and many of the interviewees endorsed the value they placed on this work, but also agreed that this work was expected of them and they did not question this.

*Pat - Well that's all I did really, that was run the household.*

*Betty - No I just ran the home*

*Jill - We were only in a flat. We had two writing desks and a bed. Not a lot of housework was there? Weekends I did it.*

When many of the women interviewed were embarking on marriage and motherhood, it was expected that a good wife would sew and knit for the family, preserve fruit and vegetables and fill the tins with cakes and biscuits. It was cheaper to make your own clothes as ready-made clothes were expensive and although washing machines, refrigerators and vacuum cleaners were available, these items were expensive and many women could not afford them (Else, 1996). I didn't have a washing machine until after my third child was born and in the early days of marriage I was boiling up the copper on a Monday morning to do the washing, just like my mother did before me. By the end of

the 1950s, when these items became necessities and more women acquired them, it didn't lessen the work load, as standards of housewifery were raised (Else, 1996). More emphasis was placed on domestic labour by advertisers who looked on these women as consumers and therefore domestic labour became a consumer product of value.

It could be concluded that in the 1950s women were encouraged to stay home to reinforce the "*cult of domesticity*" and therefore encouraged by the media to believe that their unpaid domestic work in the home was to be valued. When these women competed with each other for a high standard of cleanliness and efficiency in the home they could gain status through their competition and in what they had achieved in the eyes of their friends and neighbours. Because male partners were mainly absent from the home, the unpaid domestic work would have been taken for granted by them as it was their expectation that their wives would carry out this work. They were valued as "providers", but the only value placed on the unpaid work undertaken by the women was through any status gained, in the eyes of other women, through their competition for efficiency.

## *ii. Administration*

Most of the women interviewed had taken some part in the decision-making in the household, from paying bills to making major decisions on house alterations. As can be seen in Table VII, the transcripts revealed that all of the interviewees except for Catherine, shared decision-making in their marriage. Later some of the interviewees became the major decision-makers. Florence's husband became ill, Yvonne and Catherine's marriages dissolved, and I was widowed. Both Pam and myself at some time during our marriage became the major "breadwinner".

The interviewees did not appear to play down their roles in decision-making, therefore it can be assumed that they placed value on this unpaid work. In most cases the husbands were considered to be the "breadwinners" but they were not described as "head of the house". This indicates a more egalitarian distribution of power and it is concluded that the decision-making of the women can be perceived to be of value by some male partners.

**Table VII. Primary Earner/Decision maker in the Households of the Interviewees Over Time**

Interviewee	Primary Earner	Primary Decision Maker	Reason for Change of Decision Maker
Florence	a. Husband b.	Equal Florence	Husband has Alzheimers
Pam	Pam	Equal	Husband's income insufficient
Yvonne	a. Own Business b. Yvonne	Equal Yvonne	Divorce
Jill	Husband	Equal	
Pat	Husband	Equal	
Catherine	a. Husband b. Catherine c. Husband	Husband Catherine Equal	Divorce Remarried
Te Ahumi	Husband	Equal	
Betty	Husband	Equal	
Self	a. Husband b. Equal c. Self d. Self	Equal Equal Self Equal	Insufficient income Widowed Remarried but main breadwinner

### iii. *Helpmeet*

*And the Lord God said, It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. Genesis 2:18*

This passage from Genesis has been used as an excuse to keep women in the kitchen as subordinates to their husbands. By using the word "*helpmeet*" the wife is secondary to her husband and is there basically, not as an equal, but as a "*helper*", and for his benefit. It would be expected that as a "*helper*" the wife is of value to her husband but it is debatable whether her own rights as an individual are valued. To be labelled "*helpmeet*" devalues the work that women do to support their husbands in their careers.

All of the interviewees have supported their husbands in various degrees in the furtherance of their careers. Pam admits that she only helped her husband in his career in a minor way as she went back to dental nursing when her youngest child was two years old. She did help out a little when he was farming, by cooking for shearers and haymakers, but later they got in contractors who provided their own cook. She did have to manage the telephone exchange that was installed in her house, which is described later in this chapter. When her husband went into the Ministry, Pam became

described later in this chapter. When her husband went into the Ministry, Pam became the main “*breadwinner*” so her support was more in providing financial resources so that they could survive. Later, Pam was involved in the church as a lay preacher. In Pam’s marriage there has been a two-way support, with her husband giving Pam support when she needed it. Pam’s health was not good and she later had a quadruple heart bypass and she admits that

*when I look back it was really difficult.....I was the breadwinner because he got a living out allowance which paid probably for his books and not much else and we put a deposit on a house.....I was working and he was working and I think that then we always had quality time.*

Although Pam recognises that she was the major breadwinner, her husband’s position as a minister may be perceived by the general public to be more important, as it was a position of social status, due to the respectability of his work. She may have had more social status as being the wife of a minister, than through being a dental nurse and major earner. Often when determining one’s social status a person’s standing in the community is of more importance than economic status. Respectability, morality, physical appearance, dress, etiquette, manners or a respected occupation are all factors which may add status to a person.

Betty’s husband was working for an agricultural stock firm and she believes that the family was “*absolutely controlled by the company and the telephone*”. She remembered that she played a large part in assisting him in his career because he did a lot of phone work at night. Betty admitted that she felt like “*an appendage*” when she attended social functions connected with her husband’s work, which supports Finch’s (1983) assumption that a wife’s identity can become an extension of her husband’s, and she is not recognised in her own right and therefore is devalued. She also organised the household around his timetable which again supports Finch’s (1983) suggestion that wives make a direct contribution through their own unpaid labour towards their husband’s careers.

*I felt there was a total invasion of our privacy and our weekend life by the company. The expectation was that there would be someone there to answer the phone early in the morning..... and also in the weekends - I can remember arriving home - most Sundays we’d visit family and we were considered late home at 7.30 because the phone had been ringing. Yes, absolute control by the company. Totally unreasonable.*

Previously in this Chapter I related how Betty had to keep the house quiet while her husband was on the phone because it was prospective business and with three young boys she found this impossible. Because the boys were silenced because of “prospective business”, it could be assumed that Betty was also ‘silenced’. She recalls getting “*swept up*” with it all and stretching the budget to socialise and wear the right clothes as she believed that the expectation was that they were going on “*to bigger and brighter things*”. Because Betty dressed the part, we could expect that Betty’s task as helpmeet would have been of value to the organisation that her husband worked for. She, like Pam would gain status from her role as “*helpmeet*” to her husband but this status could only be acquired through her husband’s career. Betty’s husband was in a respected occupation where physical appearance and dress were of prime importance. The conclusion arrived at is contradictory. On the one hand Betty, because her status increased she was valued as a “*helpmeet*”, but on the other hand, labelling Betty “*helpmeet*” devalues her.

*.....Also there was a dress code in his company that God if you didn't have a harris tweed on you weren't in, you know. Mole skin trousers and the harris tweed sort of jacket and the expectations that I'd be wearing a genuine suede coat. I mean, that's what I thought I would have to be wearing.....Yes, and also the company always seemed to tell me if I was out socially, that my husband was doing well and he had a very good future with the company..... And so I always went along with this expectation that we were going to bigger and brighter things and it was great having a company car when in actual fact we owned absolutely nothing. ....and I guess we looked right for the company..*

Later Betty recalled that they were offered an opportunity in a small town in the North Island.

*.....we were invited to go up and talk with the manager, or my husband was, and to bring your wife too. You know I always remember hearing “bring the wife”.....and they showed us the house that they had organised that we could rent and the pipes had all frozen up and it was an old home and I thought “my God we are going from bad to worse”. .....I felt absolutely ill because I was pregnant..... I could tell straight away it was very damp and on the way home we decided we weren't going to..... And my husband informed the manager who absolutely tore strips off him and said “don't let your wife rule you?” Well that was the beginning of the end - it was just not on.....*

Betty also tells the story of when her husband was transferred to another town and it meant selling their house. The company would not help to finance the purchase of another house, and Betty’s husband applied for another position. The company approached Betty saying that they would “*have to move quickly as they did not want to*

*lose my husband*". Betty recalls that at that time while her husband was living away from home, she got used to living on her own with the children, and her husband got used to the quietness of the home without children. She recalled it being a "*real sort of adjustment*" when he came home at the weekends. Her husband then applied for another job and when the company he was working for were informed

*.....they got nasty at me and said I was the reason that he was not going to progress. And I just said "Well tough" and we didn't move.*

Betty's work as "*helpmeet*" was thus de-valued by her husband's employer as she did not meet up to the standards expected of her. By not fulfilling her role as "*helpmeet*" Betty was seen as deviant, and deviant behaviour is therefore de-valued as it does not follow the "*norm*".

Jill supported her husband while he was studying for his examinations by giving him moral support when he needed it.

*He had to study every night. So he put himself in a sleeping bag and sat at his desk and I got into bed to keep warm during the winter. And that's how we had to spend every night of the week more or less, because he needed to get these exams. We had three children before he was qualified. A lot of study.*

Later when he opened his business, as he was the only one there, she would bring him his meals, wash towels and bottles for him, answer the phone for him and later, when they were more established she was involved in socialising and throwing dinner parties for her husband's clients.

*. ....He had to have a white coat every day. He still has a blue shirt. He has to have a clean one every day. That has to be done. There's always been that.*

Jill's husband did not really want her working in the business with him and she felt that she could have done the business accounts but he actually employed an accountant to do this work. Despite the fact that he did not want her to work with him, she recalls that it didn't stop him from getting her to pick up orders from another township, go to the warehouse or wash bottles.

*.....I hated it. It went on for absolutely yonks. And then when the children were old enough to do it he actually paid them. Then he paid the neighbour next door and this really got up my nose.....*

Jill is in fact working in the business on an unpaid basis. If she had been working in the business in the way that she would have liked to, for example looking after the accounts,

her work would be evident and valued, but by running the errands and washing the bottles, her work is therefore hidden and devalued. Ironically, when the children were older, they were paid to do these tasks, which Jill did unpaid, indicating that Jill as a wife, was expected to carry out these tasks to aid her husband in his career and as stated earlier, because her work was expected it was taken for granted, but her children were paid for doing the same work and therefore that work had a monetary value placed on it.

Catherine takes phone calls for her husband and writes some of his more private correspondence for him.

*He doesn't like answering telephones, especially at night. So if I'm here I answer the telephone to clients.....Socially, yes other partners come down from Auckland and they will come and stay here and I entertain them.....I've offered many times to work in the office and he doesn't want anyone to feel that they can hold the reins but him, you see, and I think, you know, if there was a split he doesn't want me to say I have had too much input into it actually.*

Catherine's position is similar to Jill's whereby her husband also does not want her working in his business, but still expects her to answer phone calls, write letters and entertain business clients. It could be surmised that as both of these husbands were successful businessmen, it may not be appropriate for them for their wives to be seen to be working in the business. This may be attributed to their professional status where the wives would be expected to act as hostesses on social occasions rather than be involved in the business itself. But because they are working in the background rather than up-front where their work would be recognised, the unpaid work that they are doing is de-valued.

Both Yvonne and Te Ahumi, like most wives, believed that they supported their husbands by having their meals ready and clothes washed. Yvonne also took telephone calls for her husband and attended social functions with him connected to a service club which he belonged to.

Florence enjoyed working outside on the farm and cooking for a large crowd so did not mind helping her husband when he was farming.

*I had a very big garden - a huge garden - a huge house..... I used to go out and help on the farm, scrub cutting and that sort of thing and help with the sheep work and that. That's what I loved. I loved to get out in the open.*

In summary, most wives contributed in some way as helpmeet to their partner, either through domestic labour, which both services and frees the male worker, or through just being there to give moral support. Both Jill and Pam gave considerable moral and (in the case of Pam) financial support to their partners while they were training for their careers.

With Betty there was an expectation from her partner's employers that she would "*play her part*" and in fact was blamed by the employers when her partner turned down a job in another town. Betty also believed there was an expectation that they had to dress the part. This could have been how Betty perceived the situation rather than what the employers expected of her. Finch (1983) points out that when a wife does not perform the function of '*helpmeet*', she is seen as a deviant and it could be said that Betty's rebellion may have been seen as deviant behaviour by her husband's employers. This also supports Finch's (1983) statement of "*two for the price of one*". If an employer is getting two workers for the price of one the contradiction arises whereby the work of the unpaid partner must be of economical value to the employer but because it is unpaid and expected it is also de-valued.

As can be seen by this study, some wives contribute more than others to their husband's work. Finch (1983:151) suggests that one means why women opt into marriage and then into vicarious incorporation into their husband's work is because of the lack of viable alternatives. She believes marriage is the lifestyle which is structurally and culturally sustained and socially approved for women and that there is no comparable alternative pattern. Also marriage is the most economically viable option for most women because women can achieve a higher standard of living or social class in marriage than they can achieve in their own right.

This suggestion by Finch is debatable and would not be the case for some of the women interviewed, but it could be deduced that Betty, Jill and Catherine could fall into this category. In the case of Catherine and Jill, whose husbands are self-employed, the husbands act indirectly as their employer. Where the husbands are engaged in producing goods and services for wages, their employers benefit from the wife's participation as in the case of Betty. Adkins (1995), in her research on spouses working in the tourist

industry, suggested that both husbands and employers benefitted from the work undertaken by the wives.

*Wives' labour is efficient and reliable, it is on call 24 hours a day and it cuts the wages bill (Adkins, (1995:89)*

The fact that Catherine struggled for survival after her first marriage ended and later entered another marriage which offered her security would also support Finch's theory. Catherine's second marriage is now on "*shaky ground*" and if this marriage breaks up, she will again have to support herself, but without the extra burden of dependent children.

In contradistinction to Betty, Jill, and Catherine, Pam, throughout her marriage, earned more money than her husband. However she did gain social prestige through her husband's vocation as a minister of religion. Status therefore is of value to many women, and often this can only be achieved through marriage, through their father's occupation, and only occasionally by their own efforts.

Florence married a farm labourer and Te Ahumi a truck driver but they were both nursing before their marriages which would have been considered to be of a higher status than their husbands. In my own marriages I neither gained social status or financial security as my first husband was a tradesman and I contributed to the family finances with my paid work and with my present husband I have been the main breadwinner. Thus, for three of the women in this study, marriage did not increase status.

#### *iv. Gender Division of Domestic Labour*

It is important to include the gender division of domestic labour in the section on household maintenance, as the expectation has been that women, whether full time in the home, or combining paid work with unpaid work, will carry out the major proportion of this work. The interviewees generally displayed defined gender roles within the household. Apart from Pam, the partners were considered to be "breadwinners" and the wives "homemakers" and in no way could these households be described as entirely "egalitarian". According to Doucet (1995) an "egalitarian" household is one where both partners within the household share housework equally, but she believes that the overall

consensus by researchers is that there are very few egalitarian households and that gender equality in the household work has not been achieved. Most of the women in this research would have been responsible for the major part of housework and childcare, whether they were in paid work either part time or full time, or were full time in the home.

Many of the women whom I interviewed suggested that their husbands were quite helpful in the household, but by no means was the division of unpaid labour equal. Pat and Betty made excuses for their husbands' lack of cooperation which supports the research of Brannen and Moss (1991) where they found that women often present their husbands in a favourable light and make excuses for their non-participation in household tasks. In most cases it could be assumed that this work was taken for granted by the husbands.

Pat believed that her partner was always willing to help out with housework, but she stated that he was stressed out much of the time. She said she ran the home in as much as she would be the one who did the unpaid work in the home. Her partner would do the dishes but she said that it would never have occurred to him to do any washing, cooking or vacuuming.

When Betty first got married she was working as a kindergarten teacher. She does not think that she received any help from her partner and she *just ran the home*. Later when she was involved in an evening paid job, because she was employed from 11.00 at night until 7.00 in the morning, she would try to stay awake until the children were having a sleep or the eldest one was at school and the other one at kindergarten. She said that it didn't work very well. Her partner was helpful when he was home but he didn't come home during the day unless he was in the area. Betty, at that time, didn't want anyone to think that they couldn't cope, but she believed that her husband was very good, in that he helped when he could.

*I needed to have a house that was presentable. ....in actual fact I believe it was some of the most stressful years of my life. My health packed in several times with terrible migraines. So on reflection it wasn't easy.*

Te Ahumi stated that her husband didn't do any housework at all except "*feeding the babies*". Later, she went back to nursing and like Betty, was also working in the evenings.

*It nearly killed me.*

Night work was a way women could balance the home, family and work and research reported by May (1992) on night cleaners, showed that 90% of women were working at night to avoid childcare problems. The women felt strongly that they should be looking after their own children, even though there was a high cost in tiredness and stress.

Pat, Betty and Te Ahumi all recall being stressed at having to shoulder the burden of domestic labour unaided by their male partners, and in the case of Betty and Te Ahumi, undertake paid work in the evenings, but still made excuses for their partners for not participating. The reason why women do make excuses for their husbands lack of participation in domestic work is because the expectation is that women will carry out this work. Pat's husband was "*stressed out of his mind*" and Betty's husband "*helped when he could*" but Pat was also stressed at times and Betty was working in the evenings so as to be with her children during the day. Another point which needs to be stressed here is that because the husbands were excused from helping with this work, this work is not only de-valued but less importance is placed on the stress which is experienced by the wives than on that experienced by their partners. In this case both Betty and Te Ahumi were working in the evenings to earn extra money and caring for their children throughout the day. Pat was coping with rearing a family of seven children, as well as undertaking voluntary work and later counselling work. The main reason why wives thought their partners needed to be shielded from their stress is that they were the "breadwinners" and their paid work was thought to be of more value than the unpaid work and the paid work which was undertaken by these women.

Pam believed that she and her partner worked as a team. When he was working on the farm, he would put the meat in the oven and when she came home from her paid job she admitted that it wasn't too much trouble preparing the vegetables.

*We'd be flat out and like the weather man and woman with one going in and one coming out.*

She agreed that her partner was a great help in the home which she felt didn't seem right, as he had to get up at three o'clock in the morning to muster and he would be back in the yards before the sun got up. But she said that if she had to go out to a Fellowship meeting in the evening, it was never a problem for him to baby sit and when she came home he would have done the ironing. He would say

*I shouldn't be punished because I'd gone out for the evening..... and I mean, he's still the same....*

But contrary to this, as stated earlier, Pam became the breadwinner and she admitted to being highly organised and that she did all the housework before she went to work in the morning and did the washing and ironing when she came home at night. Pam excuses her husband because she believes he is working hard whilst she could have a sleep in the afternoon but she was also suffering from a serious heart condition and got very tired. But nevertheless, Pam and her husband's household was more egalitarian than the households of the other interviewees and because of this he placed more value on the unpaid work which Pam undertook and the more egalitarian a household was the more value placed on unpaid domestic work by the male partners.

When Jill first got married and was still in paid work, she did not get a lot of help from her partner, because he worked all week and did relieving work in the weekend, as well as playing hockey.

*He was missing in the weekends when the work had to be done. Aren't they all?*

When she was asked whether she played any sport back then, she replied that she had given up sport when she got married.

*I gave up everything when I got married.*

Jill stated that they were only living in a flat and did not have a lot of furniture, so didn't believe there was very much housework. Later when she was pregnant she admits to feeling tired coping with both paid work and housework. When they were in their own home and had acquired more labour saving equipment, Jill believed that her partner was "always fairly good, I think". She stated that he would cook breakfast while she breastfed the baby.

*But breakfast was our one meal when everybody sat down together, it was delightful. A happy time.*

This situation with Jill's partner participating in sport in the weekends while Jill had to give up her leisure activities on marriage was a typical situation in many marriages. In my own marriage my husband was able to undertake his leisure activities while I was expected to look after the house and children. The general attitude was that because the male partner was the "breadwinner" he was entitled to his leisure time. On the other hand the wives who worked full time in the home, both looking after their children and the domestic work, or the wives that combined their domestic work with paid work, either full time or part time, did not have time for leisure. The breadwinner's paid work was of economic value and therefore valued over the unpaid work which the wives undertook, which also had an economic value. But her work was not valued as highly as that of their husbands. In most cases their paid work was a secondary income and therefore not seen to be of as much value as their partner's income.

Florence's partner was "*out most of the time*", so was not much help in the home. Catherine's first husband was away five weeks out of six, so did not take much part in housework. She said that he used to do the dishes sometimes when he was home.

Catherine's present partner does not take much part in the housework.

*Oh no. He only knows where the fridge is because his beer's in it.*

It is apparent that many of the male partners spent a great deal of their time away from home undertaking paid work, but this does not excuse them from helping their wives in the week-ends. As stated earlier they still found time for their leisure activities.

Apart from Florence, the interviewees had undertaken paid work outside the home for short or longer periods at some time after marriage. Pam was the "breadwinner" for the major part of her married life, while Catherine and Yvonne went through broken marriages and had to undertake paid work out of financial necessity. In my own case my income from full time paid work was a life line as my partner's income was erratic. When I was widowed at the age of forty five, my paid work gave me independence and security and in my second marriage I was the "breadwinner" in the partnership. I entered the paid workforce full time in 1970 because we needed the money. My youngest child was seven and my three older children were at high school and I recall

that my partner did little in the way of household tasks, even though my income benefitted the family considerably. In the early years of my "double burden" of combining paid work with household responsibilities, like Betty, I experienced considerable guilt and fatigue when I could not achieve the "superwoman" role which I believed was expected of me. Sekaran (1986) suggests that many mothers experience excessive fatigue, emotional depletion, and feelings of guilt, and that it is particularly the wives with young children who get trapped in the time and energy consuming activities of the house and paid work. The dilemma which arises with women believing they must be superwomen and not being able to attain this status, results in these women believing they are failures both in the home and in the paid work place, therefore their ability to do this work is de-valued.

One of the interesting things that came out of the interviews was that when male partners retired, housework became more visible to them. They took more part in the running of the household, especially the kitchen. Retired partners were particularly interested in kitchen "gadgets", the breadmaker being a much desired piece of equipment. Many partners believed that they were more efficient in the kitchen than their wives and reorganised things.

As Pat has got older, she agrees that her partner has taken over a major part in the running of the household. She said that he had gone through a major illness when he retired.

*when he realised that he would live - there was life after not working, he decided to do all of the things I do.*

He now does the washing and loves to do the ironing and has become interested in cooking. She admits that he never vacuums or dusts. Pat said

*Yes. A bit "pain in the but" really.*

She agreed that it is like a take over which she found a bit irritating at times.

*But you know - I mean, I just think that that's all right. If that's going to fill in his day*

Now that Pam and her partner are semi-retired, she says that her partner is more involved in the kitchen. He likes to stack the dish washer and believes that he stacks it better than she does. He makes bread in the breadmaker and he annoys Pam by putting

everything away in the evening before they go to bed. Pam resents this because she remembers that this was what annoyed her so much with her own mother and she admits to being quite rebellious at times. Pam doesn't think that the fact that her partner is taking over the kitchen is a threat as such but she admits to liking things to be within her reach as she has difficulty in getting up on steps to reach things, because of her "*arthritic knees*". She likes to have everything she needs down low in the cupboards, but her partner changes things around and she becomes annoyed but admits that it is not worth worrying about. Pam's partner also enjoys gadgets. Apart from the breadmaker, he has provided her with a cappuccino maker, and a gadget which pulverises soup. It does annoy Pam at times because she does not always believe that the gadgets are necessary and he will purchase them without any consultation.

In Betty's household, now as they are older and the children have left home, she states that their role in the household has changed.

*he [Betty's husband] is a great one for washing. He is always washing clothes. It's a wonder our washing machine hasn't rocked and rolled out the door..... He's got a thing about the weather. "Oh it's going to rain. I'd better get the washing in."*

She stated that her partner helped her sometimes with the vacuuming and cleaning the bathroom and admits that there was a time when she thought that he didn't do it well enough

*but now I don't even look - I don't even worry.*

Jill's partner does more work in the household now as they have got older. He often gets meals, does the vacuuming and Jill admits that in some ways he has taken over the kitchen. When asked how she felt about this she replied

*Well I don't like it a lot but I let him do it because it saves me doing it, but I feel as if I've cooked for him for years and I feel that the things I've done weren't right.*

Like many of the partner's of the interviewees, Jill's partner believed that he did things in the kitchen better than she did.

*He'll wash the bench down and wipe the things up and that sort of thing while the meal's getting cold on the table. Whereas I serve it and leave that till afterwards, because what's the sense in having a cold meal?*

She admits to feeling "*a little bit threatened*" by this and it worries her that when her partner retires she will "*have this all the time*".

*I didn't think he'd ever sort of get under my feet, because we work fairly well, but I do find I am uptight a little bit. About certain things. But I never say anything because I'd rather he did it than didn't.*

Rather than feeling threatened by their husbands' interest in the domestic work in the home, these women experience annoyance that their husbands have now discovered this work and believe they are doing it more efficiently than their wives. They appear to be placing a value on this work which they hadn't done previously. On the other hand, while the women are happy to have the help from their husbands which they did not have before, their feelings of irritation and annoyance towards their husband's efforts indicate that they may de-value the work that they are doing.

Catherine stated that her partner is not at all interested in taking over the kitchen, but did show some interest in getting a breadmaker.

*.....Well I think T..... wants to play with it. ....an electrical toy. ....a sophisticated toy.....Yes, but then he took five years to learn how to heat up the microwave.*

My own husband has taken over stacking the dishwasher and doing the vacuuming and has become interested in the acquisition of a breadmaker. He believes he is more efficient at housework than I am and is always changing things around. According to Mason (1987) after retirement husbands make it known that if they were in control of domestic organisation they would have different priorities. In fact rather than taking over all the labour involved, husbands' interests in domesticity tend to take the form of monitoring or overseeing the work of wives: helpfully suggesting "more efficient" ways of doing things. Many wives perceived that their husbands were encroaching, criticising or taking over.

*Women were beginning to have to be accountable to their husbands in a way that they had not been in the past, and this was partly because the women's sphere at this time was becoming observable to the men in a way that men's public spheres never becomes fully observable to women (Mason, 1987:103).*

Men's public sphere which revolved around their paid work and their position as "breadwinner" and "provider" was seen to be of more value than women's sphere as unpaid workers in the home. When men retire from that sphere they move into women's sphere and the value once placed on the former is then placed on the domestic work in the home. Women were not expected to become involved in the unpaid work

of their husbands, unless they were acting as “helpmeet”, but men believe that they can enter women’s sphere and transfer the authority they previously wielded, while in paid employment, to the kitchen which was once their wives’ domain.

Mason (1987) believes that women, through their subservience, have become managers in their households and having been delegated responsibility for day to day domestic matters, have seized a form of circumscribed autonomy, in an arena from which she can legitimately exclude her husband. The home is her domain, and she is in charge. Mason states that through the payment of lip service to women’s domestic power, the ultimate ‘orchestration’ power of husbands over their wives, stemming from their socially advantaged position, can be conceded whilst also being reinforced. Domestic power appears to be more immediate and vital (Mason, 1987:102). By husbands moving into the kitchen and taking over the domestic work which has always been undertaken by their wives, the husbands can gain some of the power that they wielded when they were in paid employment. Power is seen as the ability for a person to have control over something or some other person so that a person can exact his/her own will. Therefore by the husbands taking the power away from their wives they are devaluing their wives’ expertise in this domestic work and they themselves by gaining power in their sphere also gain value by their work.

The fact that the husbands of the interviewees become more interested in the domestic work in the home after they retire indicates that these men are now valuing the work that they took for granted when they were in the paid work force. Because they believe they are more efficient than their wives, they put value on their work but are still devaluing the domestic work that these women have undertaken for most of their married lives. It is interesting to note that these men are more interested in the domestic work which involves gadgets such as breadmakers, dishwashers and vacuum cleaners. None of these women state that their husbands clean the toilet, do the dusting, or wash the kitchen floor. Technology has aided in the efficiency in some domestic tasks, while some tasks still demand manual labour, and because the male partners are undertaking the tasks which use this technology they see themselves as being more efficient than their wives and therefore value their work. On the other hand the wives are most probably

efficient in the manual tasks but are not seen as such by their husbands, and therefore their work is de-valued. The conclusion which I arrive at from this research is that some domestic work is becoming masculinised and as this occurs this work will be valued over the work which is still feminised.

### **III. Informal and Formal Voluntary Work**

All of the interviewees were involved in informal voluntary work of some form either for organisations or churches. Many of the women interviewed did not believe that the government policy makers valued the unpaid voluntary work that they were doing. Pat and Pam believed that they relied on women to carry out voluntary work but Pat suggested that they were probably not aware of this fact.

*It's probably valued by the people you are doing it for. It's valued by the community. But I don't think government-wise it's valued. Yes I mean it's really hard to get any money out of the government to do it.*

It is my belief that the government policy makers do rely on women's contribution to unpaid voluntary work and they certainly are aware of this reliance, but they do not give recognition to it in any positive way. By passing responsibility on to voluntary agencies who rely on the help of women who are available to assist, the government absolves itself from the responsibility and does not see the need to expend capital on these services. Pat believed that without voluntary workers she didn't know how social services would ever be done.

*For example every second Wednesday, we have a roast dinner and we would have more than likely fifteen volunteers. I mean we serve up to eighty people. We would have fifteen volunteers doing that - we couldn't do it without the volunteers. It gets lonely people together. Good value. Good stuff for the community. It's all women. Occasionally you can rope in a guy. ....Well I think there would be more people out on the streets in the gutters if it wasn't - and it is really the whole system.*

Pat, Pam, Florence and Te Ahumi have all undertaken voluntary work for their churches. Pat has a strong Christian background and has been very heavily involved in church work such as raising money to build a new church and serving on church committees.

*..... We do quite a lot of work with the elderly and so forth, I think that that's really valuable, you know. It helps make their life more full. I do counselling at the church. People come to the church who are on the bottom of the heap. They have no money. The church has no money. I get no money.*

Pam's partner is in the ministry and she has been involved with church groups such as the Women's Fellowship and is considerably involved in the Opportunity Shop which is run by the church which she is affiliated to. As mentioned earlier in this Chapter, Pam does lay preaching in her partner's church and often takes devotions. She also served on the church National Executive for two years. Twice a week she spends the morning in the church office and counts the money for the opportunity shop and attends to the banking. She attends meetings involving the shop and is on one of the work groups in the church which meets once a month. She admits that she would like to do more pastoral work but does not have the time.

*There's a lot of computer work which I like. I type up minutes and I distribute them.*

Te Ahumi worked at her local church with young wives and has helped with fundraising activities such as baking for church stalls. Florence's church involvement, like Pam's has been involved in the church-run opportunity shop.

*When it first started here, I was there and still am, making patchwork rugs. They started off by just selling second hand clothes and people came in and bought clothes for children, families, adults and that, and it's grown now. It's just about a business really more than anything else.*

Florence has worked in the opportunity shop for twenty three years and she said that when it started it was just a place for people to go and meet other people and they would help people in need. She doesn't go down to help in the shop now but brings material home and remakes it into articles that they can sell. Florence has helped her local church at gala days by baking and giving plants out of her garden fund raising and she also taught Sunday school for ten years.

It is difficult to separate Pat's need to fulfil her Christian obligations from her feelings of compassion for the people she cares for. She believed that men were valuable for voluntary work, but that not many men were coming forward to do this work. She attributed this to the women's movement in that women had gone a way ahead of men when it came to counselling work. She did not agree that it was because women were more available than men. She did say that men were all out there doing the "real work" though, but believed that they were in a difficult place at this time "trying to find their way forward"

*I mean in the counselling world, men are like gold because they are so needed but there are so few of them prepared to walk the road really..... I think it's more that men don't do that sort of thing. Men do more of the real jobs. I mean the guys that are coming through now and are doing this work are really great. It's going to be good when we get more and more guys, who in turn will be there for other men. I think men are starting to become aware of these issues.*

Pam's voluntary work for church-run organisations is on an administrative level. As a minister's wife, she admits that she did not always play the normal role expected of a wife in her position because she was working full time as a dental nurse and was in fact the breadwinner of the family. Pam showed her compassion towards people in need in a very practical, down to earth manner.

Pat sees the expectation of the churches today as being unrealistic - expecting people to put in so much work effort without being rewarded. She believes that the church relies greatly on their lay people.

*Well I think the church needs to wake up to the difference between expectation and facing the reality of what people are doing. But I don't think they fully realise that they couldn't run the church, without the lay leadership which is voluntary. I mean the enormous amount of work that people are doing..... they couldn't run these things without volunteers. They give hundred's of hours of time. When I first started, I didn't have the sense of it costing me to be a volunteer.*

Like much of women's unpaid work there is this expectancy that this church work will be carried out unpaid by the parishioners. Pat's perception is that because of the expectation by the church hierarchy that lay people will undertake this work, it is not always valued.

Pam is also treasurer of the Women's Resource Centre which involves doing spread sheets, keeping everything up to date, collecting the mail and re-doing investments every three months. Pam is very compassionate towards people who have to use the foodbanks and admits that at one time her own daughter had to use this facility. In her earlier years of marriage, Pam was involved with the Women's Division of Federated Farmers. She recalled that this organisation had been responsible for the formation of the school dental service in 1921. She indicated that in the early days of the Women's Division they had been quite political and took many petitions to parliament. Parker (1992) suggested that in the 1950s institutions such as the Country Women's Institute (CWI) and the Women's Division of Federated Farmers (WDFP) played an important

part in the lives of farm women not only as a social network for the women but also as support agencies. She argues that despite their lowly status in a male-dominated society, they achieved notable success in promoting social betterment and lobbied politicians to maintain community standards to improve rural health and education (Parker, 1992).

*Pam - Those country women worked very hard to get things better for country women. I think now days it is more of a social thing but back then it was more of a working thing.*

Both Betty and Catherine are active in service clubs and the work that they undertake is mainly committee and organisation work. Betty's work is involved in community and vocational issues and she recently put on a careers evening where she had to do a lot of preparation.

*I suppose I'm a person that doesn't go for the ride. I'm in there boots and all.*

Catherine is president of a service organisation which involves organising speakers, committees and making sure newsletters go out. She spends time liaising with the secretary to make sure the minutes are out on time and writing letters to speakers.

*. ....I find, there's not just the meetings of the committee, there is organising the outings in between, and fund raising of course.*

Catherine is also involved in an English Language group (ESOL) which is a conversation group teaching English as a second language on a one to one basis. She meets up with a mixture of cultures and finds that some of them understand more English than others. Catherine enjoys her voluntary involvement with this group and they meet regularly every week and share their traditional cultural activities with one another.

Jill was involved in the local Trade Aid shop and in the Salvation Army shop for a while. Yvonne was interested in doing speech therapy with stroke victims and helped a woman for a while until the woman was put into a retirement village and didn't want to carry on with it. Yvonne was also involved in a help line organisation and at times had to give help to people who were suicidal.

Florence's compassion is centred around children and elderly people. Her house is always open to children and she visits the elderly people in the neighbourhood and as stated earlier in this Chapter, she cared for sixty foster children. Jill and Catherine were

involved in “meals on wheels” for service clubs they belonged to. Catherine is a very gregarious and friendly person and enjoys socialising. She admits that when she delivers meals to elderly people in her area, she spends a lot of time with them talking.

*I've sort of got to know the regular ones, you know. And I think it's supposed to be done in about an hour and a half to two hours but it takes me twice as long because I sit and talk to them because they can't get out of the house so I really enjoy it.*

Catherine stated that her husband did not consider the work she was undertaking was “real work” because she was not being paid for this work. Often unpaid voluntary work is not recognised as being ‘proper work’ and many people, including those who are undertaking this work still consider work for payment as being a ‘proper job’ and by so doing they de-value this work.

*Pat - Yes I think so, definitely. I do have a clear sense of the value of what I do but a proper job is a paid job.....We would say to teams of people that I'm in with that this is really valuable - and try and assure people. But then people will say, I'm resigning from this because I've got a proper job.*

Pat's voluntary work eventually became a paid position but she admits to often being out of pocket when she considers the amount of money used for petrol and training.

*I supervise some of their counselling trainees now. And that's voluntary, because nobody's got any money to pay me to do that work. You know, I mean I've trained to do this work. It cost me greatly to become skilled enough to do it, and I could have an expectation I would be paid, but there is no money.....*

Pat is on the Church Council and when she goes away for three day meetings she gets paid for her travel but not for accommodation. She argues that the minister involved gets paid as it is part of his job but she as a lay person and a volunteer gets nothing. She admits that the churches do not have a lot of money but believes that they have an ethos that lay people give their time for nothing. I conclude that the work undertaken by the minister, because it is paid is valued more than the work undertaken by the lay people in the church, which is undertaken unpaid.

*Pat - This is changing. My daughter, says “If I am going to use my skills and my training to assist with this I will need payment.” [Pat's daughter is an ordained minister] And there's a struggle going on now because many people still don't have that concept.*

The different attitude between Pat and her daughter towards payment for this work, which will be discussed further in Chapter V, is interesting and the conclusion is made

that Pat's daughter values her work and expects to be paid for it. On the other hand the Church expects their lay people to undertake this work, not only without payment but as stated earlier by Pat, at a cost to the workers, and when there is an expectation that certain people will carry out certain types of work this de-values this work.

At the time of the interview, Pat admitted that she had a feeling of satisfaction when she was paid for the work she does and that the money makes life easier, indicating that when payment is received for work it is valued more than when it is unpaid. She is still undergoing training for gaining qualifications in counselling. When it is taken into consideration the amount of time spent and the costs of training as well as the petrol used, Pat is considerably out of pocket. She said that some of her clientele are getting paid good money for the jobs that they do, but that she chose to do the work that she does.

*Because I've sort of got a passion for it, you know. For the world to be a bit different, I suppose and of course I've been brought up that way.*

Because Pat feels satisfaction when she is paid for her counselling work it can be concluded that this work is valued as it receives monetary reward. On the other hand Pat declares that she wants to make the world different and therefore she also places value on her unpaid voluntary work. Pat's perception is that some of her clients are receiving good money for the work that they do, while she is "out of pocket". Because of this perception, she may assume that these people do not value the work that she is doing.

Often when there is not much feed-back or there appears to be lack of appreciation, voluntary workers may feel their work is not valued. Pat questions why she does voluntary work and believes that it is because she does get a lot of satisfaction from it but she does not think that the voluntary work is greatly valued by many people who are not involved in this work.

*I mean, I suppose the group you are working with values it but society doesn't.*

Pat contributes many hours of commitment both to her voluntary unpaid work and her paid work for the community.

*I mean that commitment would be four hours a week more than likely which is no mean commitment. Some weeks it was more.*

This situation creates a contradiction, whereby if monetary reward is valued over gratitude and appreciation, Pat's work is devalued. On the other hand when Pat does receive gratitude and appreciation she believes this work is valued.

Both Betty and Te Ahumi have done work on maraes. Betty's involvement has been mainly on a consultancy level which she was paid for, while Te Ahumi's involvement was voluntary and comprised mainly Maori health. Te Ahumi believes that because she did not recognise her Maori side when she was younger, she looks at this work as an apprenticeship.

*Because I'm just new at it. It's exciting because I feel that I've got no ties and I can take my time and I really enjoy and appreciate the culture that we have.*

Te Ahumi valued the work she was doing but did not think that people outside the marae put much value on it.

*No, well particularly going on the Maori side. .... I was also in the Maori Women's Welfare League. With the League it was supporting our Maori kids. Now we're doing immunisation. We were always promoting health and wellbeing for our Maori women. Pregnancy help.....I'm more involved on the health sector with the town and districts community health council and with the local marae with the team. ....And also we monitor services with them and at the end of the day whatever they are doing they are accountable.*

Her work involves attending meetings and looking at what is happening in the region both rural and in town. This work takes a lot of time and Te Ahumi states that she is "the only one left on the Maori side." Te Ahumi is still involved with the Maori Women's Welfare League which is interested in promoting Maori health. With two of her relatives, who are also nurses, they are attempting to change the way of eating on the marae to promote better health for the Maori people.

Te Ahumi pointed out that Maori males did work on the marae but it was sometimes difficult getting male help because they were in paid employment. She said that at present they only had one retired male who helped them out.

*.....because everybody is out you know, the young people are working - and the males - and you just can't drop - at the drop of a hat if somebody dies I mean because now jobs are so desperate and far between. But you see we've only got one male down there who's retired.....*

The work undertaken on the marae is shared work and it is concluded that when work is shared it is valued more than when this work is undertaken solely by one person.

In the earlier years, both Jill and Betty indicate different experiences of being involved with cubs. Jill enjoyed her involvement in being a cub mistress which she had to give up when she got married. Betty felt that she was not cut out to be a cub mistress, and unlike Jill became involved because her two boys were in the cub movement. Both felt that there was little appreciation of the work they were doing.

*Betty - Bloody cubs. And I say that because I had two sons there and I seemed to be the one with the most kids coming. Gentle cubs, I wish I'd never got involved with it. I hate to say I found it was an organisation which was so controlling. Well it involved leadership training. I was outfitted with a uniform and you know I should have thought before I stepped into it. It just was not me.*

*Jill - Yes I did that for about five or six years. It entailed biking to a hall across town, quite a way from where I lived. And you had to visit all the parents. I threw my heart and soul into all this. I ran a good cub thing. No thanks either.*

These two transcripts from Betty and Jill indicate that Betty didn't really enjoy her work as a cub mistress while Jill although valuing the effort she put into her work with the cubs because she did not get thanks for it, her perception was that this work was de-valued. It is difficult to ascertain whether her cub work was de-valued by the cubs themselves, by their parents, or by those who organised the cub movement. Betty became involved because her boys were members of the cub pack and therefore there may have been an expectation that she would become involved, thereby de-valuing her work. Jill on the other hand volunteered her services because it was something that she enjoyed doing which would have been of more value to her than if she had been expected to do this work, but because of her perception that she did not get thanked for this work, it was de-valued.

Many of these women doing voluntary work in the community are not recognised for the valuable work that they are undertaking. As stated earlier, sometimes this work is undertaken at a cost both in time and money for the people doing it. If it was not for women such as those interviewed, the Government policy makers would have to invest more money into these social services to ensure the vulnerable people in society have a reasonable standard of living. The people who are being paid for undertaking this work

often receive very little in remuneration and as in the case of Pat can be out of pocket in the long run. When you consider this work on a monetary basis it could be concluded that the work is not valued. On the other hand when you consider this work on an altruistic basis, this work is valued by the women undertaking it, especially when they gain satisfaction from it. When these women do not receive feed back for their work their efforts are perceived as not being valued by the recipients. When the work is not considered "real work" such as in the case of Catherine's husband and with some of the voluntary workers which Pat worked with, these people are de-valuing the work.

### *III Paid Work vs Unpaid Work*

The interviewees were questioned as to the nature of their employment when they left school and five interviewees went into office work on leaving school while the remaining four were in service occupations (dental nursing, kindergarten teaching and nursing), (Table VIII). The interviewees choices of career were typically gender stereotyped. Most of the interviewees gave up their paid employment when they got married or when they had their first child.

**Table VIII Occupations of Interviewees before marriage**

Name of Interviewee	Work undertaken before marriage
Pat	Office work - typing
Pam	Dental Nursing
Betty*	Office work/ kindergarten teaching
Jill	Office work - shorthand typing
Te Ahumi	Office work/nursing
Yvonne	Office work
Florence*	Nursing
Catherine	Office work - shorthand typing
Self	Office work - shorthand typing

\*Betty was born in 1946 and therefore did not enter the paid work force until the 1960s and Florence was born in 1922 and entered the paid work force in the 1940s.

Pat stated that she really wanted to be a Plunket Nurse,

*It didn't happen because that would cost money.*

She decided that if she couldn't be a Plunket nurse she would be "a damn good typist" and she believed that she worked very hard at being a good typist. When asked whether she believed that the conditioning she had regarding marriage and motherhood, was typical for most girls at that time

*Oh I think that that was usual. And I don't remember thinking that I would get married and work. I mean, I thought that I would get married and stay home and start having children. And I did.*

Jill states she was brainwashed into the belief that she would not "work" after marriage.

*I worked as an invoice typist and worked my way up to a secretary to the Managing Director. No shorthand to start with. That came in later.....No I think I wanted to get married. I knew when I got married I wouldn't be doing it. [paid work] I did work ten months after I was married, but I didn't think I would. I thought I'd leave as soon as I got married.*

Jill had to leave her first job when she became engaged to be married.

*The minute you got engaged, the bonuses stopped you never got any more rises.*

She believed that there was the attitude with the firm that she worked for that women were only temporary staff and would leave when they were married or had children. She then went to work in an insurance office and left there three weeks before the birth of her first child.

Pam also had to resign from her position as a dental nurse<sup>1</sup> when she got married. It was a regulation for women working in the Public Service at that time that on marriage they had to resign and re-apply for the position. She was married to a farmer and living in a rural area so did not re-apply for her position at that time. As with Jill's employer, the Public Service assumption was that a woman should give up paid work on marriage and become full-time housewives and mothers. It is difficult to comprehend the reasons for the practice by these organisations at that time. Possibly the reason was that once married these women would start a family, therefore bringing about loss of production for the organisation. There were no provisions for parental leave and limited child care

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<sup>1</sup> A school dental service began in 1919 and in 1920 a Chief Dental Officer was appointed and he proposed that his staff should consist mainly of selected young women trained as school dental nurses. The first draft of women to undergo training was appointed in 1921. (Sutch, 1969:176)

services available, so married women were not encouraged to join or stay in the paid workforce.

It is also interesting to note that both Jill and Pat stated that they did not believe that they would “work” after marriage. Throughout the interviews the interviewees repeatedly referred to their unpaid work as not “real work” thereby de-valuing this work. The conclusion reached was that while there is this assumption, paid work, or “proper work” will be valued over unpaid work.

Yvonne went into office work when she left school but admits that she really wanted to go hairdressing.

*My mother and the head of the high school thought it was very undignified that I was going to swallow hair of all things and I think my mother sort of emphasised that she didn't want me to be a hairdresser*

Both Yvonne and Pat were dissuaded from pursuing their intended occupation by their parents who made decisions for them. This was a common occurrence with parents making decisions for their children, often without even discussing these decisions with them (Toynbee, 1995). I wanted to be a school teacher but my father steered me into taking a commercial course at school, believing it was a useful occupation for a girl. Because the parents of these women steered them into “useful” occupations which were considered to be only for the interval between leaving school and getting married, indicates that this paid work was only valued as a useful fill-in and that their future unpaid work as housewives and mothers was considered to be of more value. One reason for this could be that these women were a drain on the family finances and needed to earn a living until such time as they had a husband to support them.

Yvonne was married at twenty four and carried on working part time for two years until she had her first child while Florence left school at sixteen and went nurse aiding. When she turned seventeen she trained for a nursing career. As Florence was nursing during World War II this work was considered to be essential work. In my historical overview (Chapter II) I have indicated how single women during World War II were manpowered into essential industry (Middleton, 1988).

Catherine worked in London as a typist and admits that she didn't think too much about marriage and wanted to travel.

*No a lot of my friends were very marriage-orientated, but I wanted to do other things. I wanted to travel and marriage wasn't the top priority.....I got engaged three times.*

She set out on a world trip, calling in to New Zealand to visit a boyfriend and ended up staying there and getting married to him.

*I didn't want to settle down and get married..... So I got on a plane and he [Catherine's future husband] said to me come and stay with his family in New Zealand, you know and I was going to go right round but I came over via Canada and the States and then I came here and I only had a small suitcase and I was only going to stay for a couple of months and go on but I didn't go on..... and I married him six months later.*

Te Ahumi left school at fourteen and worked as a punch card operator

*I don't think I could have been very good at it because I didn't last long. Then the next minute I was on the mail desk. Sorting out all the mail and then I hit the typing pool. And I absolutely loved it. I had this machine called a teleprint operator and I just loved it.*

In 1959 she decided to pursue a nursing career.

*I went through to my State finals. When I got married that was paid to my nursing career. Then I started off having a family and of course my husband was of the old school. You know wife stays home and does the housework.*

Like Florence she gave up her nursing career after marriage, but unlike Florence she returned to nursing later in life.

Betty who was born in 1946 was just leaving school and starting out in the paid work force over this period. She left school after gaining School Certificate and went to Wellington to work. She was encouraged by her mother to leave home as it was "*one less mouth to feed*". She first worked in the office of a fruit and produce company and later trained to be a kindergarten teacher. She admits that she didn't know whether this was what she really wanted to do and "*reality was to come two months later.*" This was when Betty realised that the reason for going into kindergarten teaching was really a way for her to leave home, rather than an aptitude for her chosen vocation.

*Oh, I just did a job - I didn't want to go back to the sixth form and I applied for a kindergarten training college in Wellington and I was told I would get in there if I got my School Certificate. I got my School Certificate and I was off.*

At the time when Betty was training for kindergarten teaching, she did not have any thoughts about marriage, but stated that there were lots of things that she wanted to do, such as travelling.

*I had a boyfriend at that time - who eventually became my husband.*

Two of the interviewees, Pat and Jill undertook casual paid work within their own homes to supplement the family income. Pat was married when she was nineteen

*..... and I did get a part time, job because I thought it was fitting for a married woman to only be working part time, and I hated it. I never really settled to it. I promptly got pregnant.*

When she was home with her children she thought of things that she could do at home to make money. She recalled on one occasion making soft toys and another winding elastic as these were part time jobs that she could do at home.

*Trying to produce some extra money, really. I remember I worked in a shop on Saturday afternoons for a period of time. Yes - but no sense of wanting to negate you know being at home.*

When her children were young, Jill did do some typing of invoices at home for the firm she worked for before she was married.

As stated earlier Pam gave up dental nursing when she got married as her husband was farming, but she recalls operating a telephone exchange<sup>2</sup> which was installed in the farm house where they lived.

*It was like a little porch in the house. It was the old manual and you had to link up. Well for local calls you just linked up..... but most of it was toll calls and it was open from 9.00 to 12.00 and 6.00 - 7.00 but it would start at 6.00 in the morning and go till 10.00 or 11.00 at night. And it was a dreadful time.....I got - 15/- that would be \$1.50 a week for that. But I had to provide the stamps that went on all the cards and then try and get the money off the people who were very itinerant .....Well we carried that cost ourselves and we got a shilling opening fee out of hours but then you had to work through evening.....You had to work until all those calls had been put through before it closed at seven and of course those would go at nine or ten at night.*

As the wife of the farmer, there was the expectation that Pam would undertake this "paid" work but Pam admits that she often had to carry the costs incurred. Pam was paid very little for her hard work and at times she was out of pocket and it is concluded that this work was not valued. When her daughter was two, Pam went back to dental nursing until she retired in 1989. Pam believed that she has always been the "breadwinner" as there was little profit in the farming enterprise. She declared that her

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<sup>2</sup> At the turn of the century connection of private lines or party lines to a telephone office were set up and telephonists were paid annual emoluments. These telephonist could be postmasters, school teachers, shop keepers or in country areas the facility could be operated from a local homestead (Wilson, 1987:69-70).

husband turned a rundown farm into “*a beautiful place*” but because the terms of the lease were so hard there was very little profit.

*Or even - not even making a living really.....And all my money was going down the cow's necks.*

Catherine's husband worked as a salesman who was frequently away from home and travelled to other parts of the country. He was asked by a friend to put money into a sandwich bar, and Catherine and her mother-in-law worked there unpaid for a year until Catherine became pregnant. They didn't draw wages and the income just covered the rental and the cost of provisions. They would start work about five o'clock in the morning and make sandwiches and would clean up about three o'clock in the afternoon. Like Pam, Catherine and her mother-in-law were presumed to be in “paid work”, but they didn't receive wages and the profits went on provisions therefore this work was not valued, in a monetary sense. However because Catherine did enjoy doing this work she, herself, valued it.

As can be seen, many of the interviewees did undertake some form of paid work after their marriage mainly to supplement the household income. In the early years of my marriage I also undertook part time office work which could be fitted in during the hours my children were at school or kindergarten. Pam was the “*breadwinner*” and her input to the family finances was essential. Jill, Pat and Pam undertook paid work in their own homes which they could combine with their childcare. Apart from Pam's paid work, much of this work undertaken by these women would be secondary income and would not be valued as highly as the income which their husbands earned.

For those interviewees that combined paid work with motherhood, the main problem expressed was fatigue at combining the two roles. Betty and Te Ahumi worked in the evenings and therefore had to sleep during the day when their children were either at school, kindergarten or asleep. Apart from Catherine, child minding did not appear to be a problem, most probably due to the fact that they worked hours to suit their children's activities. Pat did admit that in her employment there was a feeling that her job had to take first place with her family coming second. My own experience of full time paid work was that school holidays always posed a problem for me, as there were not many

suitable child care facilities in operation at that time and those that did exist were costly. There was always a strong feeling of guilt that the children were not being properly cared for and this was also the experience of Catherine. Most of the interviewees that undertook paid work, stressed that they did so for financial reasons, indicating that the “breadwinner’s” income is not always sufficient to raise a family.

Pat undertook part time work when her children were teenagers to overcome the increasing financial burden of raising a large family.

*.....I remember it being really hard.....I worked part time for seven years and then..... When I was in my early forties..... I had a sense that I wanted to do more in the world than just work in an office. So I decided to have a year out whilst God would tell me what to do. And God didn't say anything at all. It was quite interesting really.....*

Pat then became involved with voluntary work and admits that she became “fascinated” with the centre she was working at. She was there for a year on a voluntary basis, going in for two or three mornings for two to four hours during the day, and then she was asked whether she would like to take a paid position there for twenty five to thirty hours a week.

As stated earlier Pam went back to dental nursing when her daughter was two years of age. Pam’s husband eventually gave up farming and went into the Ministry and while he was training, Pam supported him and the two children.

*I was the breadwinner because he got a living out allowance which paid probably for his books and not much else.*

Betty married and had three boys and when her third son was eighteen months old she worked in a rest home to get finance to buy drapes and carpet.

*Oh it was, it was just awful. I hated it. It was to try and get some carpet on the floor. I didn't last very long but it did pay for the carpet.*

Later when Betty had two boys at school she worked for a service organisation for three days a week. She believed that she could work and look after the children at the same time.

*.....it worked for a while, but I had to travel to another town and yes it was a bit much.*

She then went to work at a specialist school and admits that she only meant to work there for a month just to help out but stayed there for eleven years.

*We bought another house .....so another mortgage came along and then the offer of this job with the school came up.*

Jill described how she got involved in designing kitchens for a local joinery firm, which proved to be a very lucrative occupation..

*I had this thing about all the houses in the street were mainly two bedrooms and I drew on the third one .....I pushed the walls out in my own ..... my neighbour wanted another bedroom and her living rooms tidied up so I did that and I did the kitchen. And the kitchen went to a firm in town and he wanted to know who had done it and he came down and saw me and offered me this job..... To draw kitchens and that was the start of modular kitchens.*

Jill related how she went into the factory to learn how the kitchens were built and she would spend hours there discussing the design of a module so that they could find the most economical way to buy the material to make it up. After she had learned the basics she then became the kitchen consultant and started to work from home. She now designs kitchens for the friends of her children because she said that most of the kitchen manufacturers employ their own consultants. But she said that when she was designing, she was the only one doing this work.

*I'm doing kitchens all the time. But I don't get paid. No I get a box of chocolates or a book or something. These are for my kid's friends who are volunteering my service, but I like doing it*

The fact that Jill does not get paid for this work now but does it free for the friends of her own children, suggests that what was paid work has become unpaid voluntary work. While she was getting paid for doing this work the work would have been valued by her employers but now that it is unpaid it is concluded that although appreciated by the recipients, loses value in that the only recompense that she receives is “a box of chocolates” or “a book or something”.

Yvonne and her husband bought a footwear business and she helped out there on a part time basis at first and later full time. Because she shared this occupation with her husband she could stay home for certain periods in the school holidays. Yvonne and her husband were separated in 1976 and the shop was sold and she then worked as a salesperson in a local footwear shop. While Yvonne was working with her husband in their own business, the work she was doing would have been valued as she and her husband were working on an equal basis. As a proprietor of the business her status

would have been higher than when she later separated and worked as a salesperson. Yvonne lost status as part-proprietor of their business and also lost marital status when her marriage ended and this loss of status would have de-valued the work she was doing.

Te Ahumi went back nursing for two nights a week, which suited her as her husband was home with the children. When the children were older she took on a day time nursing position.

Te Ahumi was very humble about receiving her first wages from nursing and could not believe that she had "*all this money*" and did not feel that she deserved it. This is an indication of the lack of self worth that many women feel even though the work they are doing is valuable, they de-value their ability to undertake this paid work. I recall that when I received my first pay cheque and opened my own cheque account after returning to the paid work force full time, I had this feeling of dis-belief, after years of being dependent on the breadwinner. Although I felt unworthy, and like Te Ahumi de-valued my ability, I also gained independence by having control over my own finances for the first time in my married life.

Catherine had four children and when her marriage broke up it was necessary that she went out into the paid work force. Her youngest child was only two and she had difficulty finding adequate child care for her. She first obtained a job as a secretary and she had to get up at six o'clock in the morning to take her two year old daughter over to her mother-in-law's home and be at work in town by eight o'clock. She would then finish at five and have to go and pick her daughter up again. This became stressful, so she obtained a part time job, and when her mother-in-law moved away, she left her daughter in day care. Catherine described the difficulties which arose at the day care and how unhappy her daughter was, and she declared it did not work out. Catherine then managed to get a position where she could also take her daughter, doing housework, preparing the evening meal and looking after the child, of two doctors.

*So I was there from about quarter to eight to about half past five, five days a week.*

When her daughter started school she obtained a full time secretarial position and also took in boarders.

*I became very independent. I think it was hard financially.*

One of the difficulties which often arose for women with children entering the paid workforce was in the area of childcare. It could be concluded that childcare for these women was not valued by employers and by the government policy makers at a time when women were expected to stay at home with their children. In Catherine's case she had to undertake paid work as she was separated from her husband and she was the "breadwinner".

Despite the fact that many of these women believed that they would not undertake work after marriage, all but Florence did undertake paid work either casual work at home or part time or full time outside the home. Pat worked at home doing casual work, worked in an office and later undertook counselling work; Jill did typing at home and later undertook designing kitchens; Pam went back to dental nursing and became the major breadwinner; Betty did care work both in a nursing home and for a service organisation for children, later she did specialised teaching and now does health consultancy work; Te Ahumi went back to nursing part time and later full time; Yvonne helped in the family business and later when her marriage was dissolved worked as a shop assistant; Catherine worked in businesses run by her first husband and when her marriage was dissolved did housekeeping work and later secretarial work. In my case I did secretarial work first on a part time basis and later full time.

The interviewees stress the fact that they went into paid work after marriage for financial reasons. The money they earned could not be described as "*pin money*" as it went back into the household expenses for such things as paying mortgages, buying drapes and carpet, feeding and clothing growing children. The husbands were envisaged as "*breadwinners*" and would be recognised by the general public as such because of the perceived belief of the husband being the provider, but their wages were not sufficient to adequately support a family. The contribution of wives as secondary earners, would not be as obvious, even though it can be seen that their contributions were necessary. Childcare needs for women in the paid workforce would have been ignored by employers, and the government policy makers which indicates that there were often double standards, on the one hand prioritising motherhood and childcare and on the

other denying adequate, affordable childcare for working mothers. This indicates the preference for keeping mothers in the home and out of the paid work force.

Jill was the only interviewee who didn't state that she undertook paid work for financial reasons. She may have done so earlier in her marriage, as her husband was training, but when she went into designing kitchens, her husband was running a successful business and her hobby of kitchen designing became a profitable enterprise. Jill now does this work free for the friends of her children, so this can be seen as a voluntary unpaid service. Jill, Betty and Pat went into quite different fields of employment later in their life than what they were trained for (Jill and Pat did secretarial work and Betty was trained as a kindergarten teacher). Jill designed kitchen modules, Pat went into counselling work and Betty became a health consultant.

Like many women in the 1950s I entered marriage with the belief that my partner would be the "breadwinner" and support myself and the family throughout our married life. This dependence on a partner creates a hierarchal position in the relationship where the wife has no control over her own security. This can affect decision making in that the husband who controls the finances also makes all the important decisions and this reinforces the patriarchal state where the husband is the "head of the household" and holds the power. A wife may therefore lack self worth and confidence in her own abilities. By gaining her financial independence she can subsequently gain in confidence and self worth and overcome her powerlessness.

### **Conclusions**

When analysing the discussions with the interviewees four major findings emerged which affected the value of women's unpaid work. All of the interviewees believed that there was an expectation for women to carry out certain unpaid work and because of this the work was de-valued. Most of the interviewees believed that when people received payment for work it was valued more than when this work was unpaid. It was apparent that when unpaid work is shared it is valued more than when unpaid work is undertaken solely by one person. When women gain status through their unpaid work this work was valued.

The interviews revealed that there was an expectation that women would care for their children, care for sick and elderly relatives, undertake emotional labour in comforting and supporting their partners and their family, undertake domestic labour within the home, act as helpmeet in their partners careers, do voluntary work for schools, kindergartens, Plunket Society, play centre and also within church groups and in many cases for voluntary organisations. When there is an expectation that a woman will carry out certain tasks this work is not valued as highly as when there is no expectation. It is not expected that a man will undertake domestic work or caring and nurturing and therefore when he does this work it is considered to be special and of more value. Despite the fact that the interviewees all agreed that there was an expectation that they carry out certain unpaid work, in many cases the women themselves accepted this situation. Often they were resentful that these tasks were expected of them and in many cases they themselves under-valued this work.

In some areas such as in child rearing, a woman was expected to show the "innate" qualities such as patience and self-sacrifice and some women felt inadequate when they could not attain these qualities. When women feel that they cannot reach the expectations which have been put on them, they perceive their ability to do this work to be de-valued and believe that they have failed in mothering.

Because the care of sick and elderly parents usually fell on daughters rather than sons, there was the expectation from the family that this work should be undertaken by the daughter who either lived closest to the parents or was not in paid work. Often resentment was felt by the women who were left to carry out this work, and, like Jill, they perceived that the family does not value the work that they are doing.

Many contradictions arise in the case of the work undertaken by women, for churches and voluntary organisations. Pat believed that there was an expectation from the churches that the lay people would undertake unpaid voluntary work within the church community. When church work is undertaken because of Christian ethical principles, this work can sometimes appear as a duty and as in the case of Pat, may cause the

workers to feel resentment, especially when they feel that this work is being taken for granted. On the other hand when a worker undertakes this work out of altruism, they may feel satisfaction from their work and therefore this work may appear to be of more value. But as pointed out by Pat, sometimes they do not receive any feed back for the work that they do and they could perceive this work to be under-valued.

When motherhood is rewarded by government policy makers by payment of a child allowance, the perception is that government policy makers do value this work. On the other hand when government policy makers and employers do not offer assistance in affordable childcare, parental leave or family friendly workplaces, the perception is that they do not value this childcare. Therefore childcare was seen to be of more value when women stayed home full time with their children than when they combined paid work with childcare.

Both Te Ahumi and Florence cared for foster children and they were reimbursed for expenses, but because it was considered that this work was an extension of women's 'natural' role of mother, and this work was not considered to be skilled work, I conclude that the government policy makers did not value this work .

There was the perception that people in paid work did not value the unpaid work undertaken by women who are at home full time. But on the other hand many women combine both paid work with unpaid work, so therefore undertake a double burden. Many of the interviewees who combined paid work with unpaid work, at first believed they had to be superwomen, but later when they found they could not maintain these high standards, they lowered their "standards" and did not place the same priorities on their unpaid work as they had previously.

The conception that women's unpaid work is not "real work" is one which is often accepted and perpetuated by the myth that women who are at home full time do not "work". Many of the interviewees did not consider their work to be "proper work" but the work undertaken by the "breadwinners" they did consider to be "real work". Because

they labelled their unpaid work as not “real work” they were actually de-valuing this work.

It could not be said that there was true egalitarianism in any of the homes of the interviewees. The conclusion reached from the interviews is that where egalitarianism exists in a household the unpaid work in that household is valued more. When this work becomes more masculinised, as more male partners become involved, there is a possibility that this work will become more valued.

When any work is shared, such as voluntary work, both in the community or on the marae, caring for the sick and elderly, domestic work, child rearing, this work appears to be valued more than when this work is carried out by just one person who may be doing it out of expectation, duty or altruism.

Both Betty and Pam gained status through their partners’ paid employment. Betty worked unpaid as helpmeet to her husband to support him in his career. She was not valued in her own right but she did gain status through her husband’s possible promotion in the firm. Pam who was the breadwinner, gained status as the wife of a minister of religion and this would have been valued higher than her paid work as a dental nurse. The conclusion that I reached is that when women gain status through their unpaid work this work is valued.

The above conclusions have been arrived at through analysis of the transcripts of the interviewees. As can be seen the question of whether the unpaid work of the interviewees was valued or devalued depends on the context and who is valuing this work. There are many contradictions and perceptions can differ in different situations therefore it is difficult to come to specific conclusions and I can only generalise as to the results. In Chapter IV I will compare these experiences of the interviewees with their perceptions of the experiences of their own mothers and their understanding of the experiences of their daughters with regard to their unpaid work. As will be seen in the next Chapter the valuing and de-valuing of the unpaid work carried out by the interviewees, their mothers and their daughters, changes over time due to changing

attitudes towards education and gender division of domestic labour and periods of economic stability and instability.

## Chapter Four

### *Reflections on Our Mothers' And Daughters' Experiences of Unpaid Work*

#### Introduction

Chapter III presented the experiences of unpaid work which the interviewees had undertaken both within the home and in the community to determine how this work is valued, by whom, in what context is it valued or devalued. I pointed out that six of the women interviewed were children or growing up during the Great Depression (1929-1935) and World War II (1939-1945), one was born during World War II and the other immediately after World War II. When these women left school it was a time of full employment, free or subsidised health care and educational services and there was provision for guaranteed retirement income for all. In the 1950s and 1960s when these women were entering marriage a 'cult of domesticity' emerged (Olssen and Levesque, 1978) which encouraged women to make a career of marriage and domesticity.

It was also pointed out that the daughters of the older women, Florence, Pam, Yvonne, Jill, Pat, Catherine and myself could all be classified as "baby boomers". Because Te Ahumi was born during World War II and Betty was born immediately after World War II their daughters would not be classified as "baby boomers". Betty herself could be classified as a "baby boomer".

The major conclusions reached in the previous Chapter were that because much of women's unpaid work is expected of them, this work is therefore under-valued. Because, when men do carry out domestic work, child care or care for sick and elderly relatives, there is no expectation that they will do so, their work is therefore considered to be special, and valued more highly.

Another conclusion was that when money is received for work undertaken, this work was valued higher than when there was no monetary reward. It was also found that when work is shared, this work is sometimes valued more than when work is carried out

alone. Often status is valued by many women more than their paid or unpaid work and this is usually attained through a father or male partner. Occasionally a women can gain status in her own right through her paid work or voluntary work.

In this Chapter I will discuss the experiences of unpaid work of the mothers and daughters of the interviewees as perceived by the interviewees. I will also compare these experiences with those of the interviewees in order to ascertain whether over time, this work has been valued more, at some times than at other times. It must be pointed out that the experiences of the mothers and the daughters are only as perceived by the interviewees and as the mothers and daughters were not interviewed they cannot be verified. When analysing the perceived experiences of the mothers and the daughters it has been necessary to take into account the changes which have occurred over their lifetimes which have affected the way women's unpaid has been valued. As with the previous Chapter it has been necessary to take into account historical, economic, attitudinal and educational changes that occurred over the lifetimes of these women.

Some of the mothers would have experienced World War I (1914-18), some were mothers during the Great Depression (1929-35) and World War II (1939-45) and some of the younger ones were unmarried at the time of World War II. The Great Depression and the two World Wars were times of great hardship and deprivation. It was a time when housework was drudgery with few labour-saving devices, and the lack of automobiles would have restricted the amount of freedom these women had.

In contrast, the daughters of the interviewees left school during a period of economic uncertainty (1980s and 1990s). Wide-scale unemployment, high mortgage rates, tertiary education fees and health costs existed and there was no guaranteed prospect of retirement income. Women in the daughters' age group more frequently used labour saving devices in their homes and had access to automobiles. Many of these women are in the paid workforce. There have been changing attitudes towards domestic labour where these women do not always place the same priority on this work that their mothers and grandmothers did. Although there is still an expectation that women will carry out much of this unpaid work, this is also not as marked as with the mothers and

grandmothers as more women enter the paid workforce and more male partners are sharing in this work. Attitudes towards women's education are changing and more females are entering the seventh form and going on to tertiary education, which also has meant that more priority is placed on careers in the paid work force than unpaid domestic work in the home.

The following discussion and analysis has emerged from the interviewees' reflections on their perceptions of the unpaid work undertaken by both their mothers and their daughters. From these reflections I will present my conclusions on how the evaluation of women's unpaid work has changed over time.

### **How Has the Evaluation of women's Work Changed Over Time?**

#### ***I. Caring and Nurturing***

##### ***i Motherhood***

###### ***(a) The Labour of Childbirth***

Although not discussed, it is assumed that most of the mothers would have been married when their children were born. If children were conceived out of wedlock, this would usually have precipitated an early marriage or the children would have been put up for adoption. This was not the case with Betty's mother. Betty relates the story about her own mother. Her father was in the Maori Battalion

*I believe that they met where the Battalion were training and directly after the war I was born. They were not married at that stage.*

Betty indicates that there were "social issues" at that time which were "difficult to handle"

*I didn't know that of course but they were not married. He was away and came back and I was born and then he went away again to Japan<sup>1</sup>*

The "social issues" which Betty refers to could be because Betty was born out of wedlock, but more importantly, that her mother gave birth to another child which was not her husband's while he was away serving with the Jayforce. She was given the ultimatum by her future mother-in-law (who was Pakeha) that she would have to choose between the baby and Betty's father, so the baby was brought up by members of the

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<sup>1</sup> At the end of war, New Zealand contributed to the British Commonwealth Occupation Force in Japan. This force was named "Jayforce" and was made up of the 2nd NZEF (New Zealand Expeditionary Force) and the operation took place in 1946 (Trotter, 1990:29).

whanau. This was a secret that Betty's mother had to carry throughout her life and was hidden from the family until her death. It was a terrible decision for a mother to be forced to make and the right to rear her own child was taken away from Betty's mother. Her labour of childbirth, was not valued. Betty's mother would not talk about it and therefore was forced to de-value her labour and when the family discovered their mother's "secret" they could not value their mothers' labour of childbirth.

Betty's story is similar to that of my grandmother who was born in 1875 in Glasgow, Scotland. Her mother was an unmarried seventeen-year old girl from a strict Presbyterian family. My great-grandmother died at the age of twenty of tuberculosis and my grandmother was cared for by her paternal grandfather until she was seven years old and then placed in foster care. My grandmother carried the stigma of "illegitimacy" all of her life and concealed the fact from her family and it was only uncovered after she had died. She placed no value on the labour of the childbirth which my great-grandmother endured as she carried the "shame" with her, and she very rarely discussed her mother, due to the fact that she was born "out of wedlock". Her paternal grandfather cared for her when her mother died, and provided for her education, so it could be concluded that he did value her birth. She was ill-treated when in foster care because she was "illegitimate" which indicates that her birth was not valued by her foster parents. These attitudes towards "illegitimacy" have carried on until late in the twentieth century, where childbirth and motherhood was only valued inside of marriage.

Naming one birth "legitimate" and another "illegitimate" places value on the labour of childbirth. Most mothers anticipate the birth of their children with the expectation that the new life they are bringing into the world will be full of potential and value. On the other hand some mothers may experience apprehension at the approaching birth of a child especially if the mother is unmarried. The attitudes of the time distinguish between the two situations by valuing a "legitimate" birth and de-valuing an "illegitimate" birth.

Betty discussed the situation of her older son (B....) and his girlfriend (M..... - now his wife) who had their first child when they were almost eighteen and just out of school. At first (M.....) went to live with her parents and (B....) stayed home with his parents.

*It became very obvious - only a matter of months they didn't want to live like that they actually wanted to be together ..... We had no guarantee for the future. So we had a little house that we were about to do up and we said if you can pay the rent you can live in it and they did and they've never looked back and so they've gone from strength and strength.*

This story told by Betty emphasises the changes in the way of thinking with regard to “moral” issues such as having a baby out of “wedlock”. It is a reversal of the situation of Betty’s mother both giving birth to a child out of “wedlock” and also a son who was not the child of Betty’s father. When we compare Betty’s daughter-in-law’s position with her mother’s we can assume that where Betty’s mother’s “illegitimate” birth was de-valued, M.....’s motherhood was valued. May (1988) suggests that by the 1960s attitudes towards birth control, unmarried pregnancy, and pre-marital sex were slowly relaxing. By the 1980s pregnancy was becoming a less important reason for marriage and many women chose to rear their children in a de facto relationship or alone. This was the case with both of my daughters for certain periods of their lives.

Nevertheless, despite May’s (1988) suggestion that attitudes towards pre-nuptial birth is slowly relaxing, there is still a certain amount of stigma placed on these births, especially if the mothers are in receipt of the Domestic Purposes Benefit. Personal communication with beneficiaries has revealed that often they feel de-valued when dealing with Income Support, when their benefits are cut, when government programmes encourage people to “dob in a beneficiary”, and when people in paid employment begrudge their tax money being spent on these women.

Unlike the partners of the interviewees and their fathers, the trend now is for fathers to be present at the birth of their children. In the past fathers were not expected to take part in the birth process and their wives experienced the labour of childbirth alone. The interviewees valued their experiences of childbirth, as can be seen in their transcripts but because the expectation was that the labour of childbirth was solely the mother’s work it could be perceived that it was not valued by their partners. Now that fathers are included both at ante natal and birth they share parenthood in a more positive way and the labour of childbirth is valued by both mother and father

(b) *Child Rearing*

The interviews revealed that the rearing of children was primarily the task of the mothers of the interviewees. Their fathers were mainly absent except for occasionally administering discipline. As with the interviewees, the expectation was that these women would undertake this work and their male partners were excluded from this expectation. Some fathers did help out with tasks though, as revealed by Pam and Te Ahumi. Their help was minor in comparison to the increased workload of the mothers, brought about by additions to the family, but nevertheless because these fathers did undertake this work it was perceived to be special and therefore of value.

*Pam - I think my father was born years before his time and after we twins were born mum never washed another nappy.....*

*Te Ahumi -You see mum was having all these kids. Some of them were only eleven months apart. And I can remember we ran out of bread and he made us some bread.*

It could be concluded that Pam's and Te Ahumi's fathers did appreciate the extra work involved in having children and that they did place some value on this work, but it could not be said that the fathers carried out an equal share of this work.

When we compare the interviewees with their mothers, it becomes apparent that attitudes towards the expectation that women should take prime responsibility for raising their children are similar. In Chapter III Jill related how her husband would cook breakfast while she breast-fed the babies while Te Ahumi stated how her husband did help out a little when the babies were born. But generally the husbands took little part in the raising of the children mainly because it was not expected of them to do so. If these women neglected the task of child raising they would be criticised because they were acting in an unnatural way, but a father was excused of this task as it was natural for him to do so. It must be concluded therefore that the task of raising children, even though it was valued by the women themselves, was valued more by the general public when carried out by men.

In comparison with the interviewees and their mothers, many of the interviewees remarked that their sons/sons-in-law changed babies napkins and got up to their babies in

the night. Although the daughters took the major responsibility for the raising of their children, there is an indication from these results that fathers are now sharing the parenting responsibilities more. By sharing the responsibility of raising children the work involved is perceived to be of more value, but not until there is an equal share of this work will it be completely egalitarian.

The mothers of the interviewees were mainly full time in the home caring for their children. If they undertook paid work when their children were young, it was done within the home. The exception to this, as stated earlier, was Pat's mother who worked in a factory when her husband was serving overseas during World War II. Similarly, the interviewees all gave up paid work either at the time of marriage or when their first child was born, but unlike the mothers, some of them returned to the paid work force full time (Catherine and Pam when their youngest children were two years of age and myself when my youngest daughter was seven). Many of the interviewees did undertake part-time work for different periods while their children were young or carried out casual paid work at home.

In contrast, the interviews disclosed that many of the daughters were in paid work or interested in returning to paid work as soon as they were able or when their children were older. But Pat found it interesting that her own daughters found it hard to "*tear themselves away from their babies*" to get back to paid work despite the fact that they needed to pay the mortgage.

*They all say and I remember saying that nobody can do this job for these children as well as I can. And these girls say the same thing. "But I don't want to leave them with anyone else".*

Pat often looked after her grandchildren, but she stated that if her daughters were going out to undertake paid labour they were more inclined to leave the children at Barnardo's and pay for their care rather than expecting her to care for them unpaid while they were earning money. Pat added that it wouldn't have occurred to her to do the same when her children were young, but agreed that there weren't the same facilities available. Pat stated that the Barnardo's childcare was subsidised by the government, making it affordable for the daughters to undertake paid work and still know their children were

being cared for and indicating that motherhood and childcare may be valued more by Government policy makers.

*So I guess if the government's doing anything, it's enabling some of that to happen. Because Barnardo's carers have got a good quality of child care you know that's their aim.*

Betty describes her other daughter-in-law as being strong and intelligent.

*She's Ngati Porou and has a good vision of where she's going. Interestingly enough, they've only been married a couple of years although they lived together for a couple of years before that, but she said she didn't have a maternal bone in her body. She's now pregnant and I think it's going to be the pregnancy of the year.*

Betty's daughter-in-law is working in the banking area and is taking seven month's leave of absence and intends going back to her job after the birth of the baby.

*interestingly she and our second son have been off to a day-care centre to check it out and decide where they're sending their child and that's how focussed she is.*

Florence's three older daughters returned to the paid workforce when their children were older but her youngest daughter, whose marriage broke up, has combined paid work with raising a family.

*Well she's coping very well. She's a kindergarten teacher. She had to work to get money to pay for things.*

One of Catherine's daughters and her son are married with children. Catherine's daughter T..... is not in paid work and is a full time mother while her daughter in law P..... is teaching. Catherine believed that T..... may get back into paid work when her children were older and was doing a two year interior decorating course at the Polytechnic.

In my case my eldest son and daughter-in-law work together in their own business, my eldest daughter is an artist, and on the Domestic Purposes Benefit, but undergoing training so that she can return to the paid work force when her youngest child begins school. My ex daughter-in-law and mother of my other son's two children is in full time paid employment as well as caring for a disabled daughter and my youngest daughter is working full time in the paid work force as well as caring for two children.

Parental leave was not an option for the interviewees or their mothers. Economic and attitudinal changes towards mothers joining the paid workforce have paved the way for such entitlements as parental leave and subsidised childcare and a move towards “family friendly” work places. It is with changes such as these that the unpaid responsibilities of families where both partners are in the paid workforce are being valued by some employees.

The present economic pressures such as high mortgage rates, tertiary fees, health costs and pressures and provision for retirement income, which the daughters face, make it necessary for many of these women to return to the paid workforce. Nevertheless it is still difficult for many solo mothers to afford good quality child care so that they can undertake paid work outside the home. The conclusion I have arrived at with regard to day care for children of mothers in the paid workforce is that for those who are in the higher socio-economic level there is adequate provision of high quality childcare but this may not always be the case for those on a lower socio-economic level, as they may not be able to afford this care.

On the 16th May, 1998 the Government passed the Social Welfare Amendment Bill (Number 5) (Venter, Dominion, 18/5/98). From February 1, 1999 the New Zealand Government will require domestic purposes and widows beneficiaries to search for and undertake paid work. Beneficiaries whose youngest child is aged between six and thirteen will be required to look for part-time work and those whose youngest child is over fourteen will be required to look for full-time paid work (Frean, Dominion 2/6/98).

Frean states

*As a carrot, the Government is offering a subsidy to those who need to pay for childcare to work or meet other work-test obligations (Frean, Dominion 2/6/98).*

While acknowledging the childcare undertaken by solo mothers by offering a subsidy, they are on the other hand forcing these women back into the paid workforce which de-values the childcare work that these women do unpaid in the home. When these women undertake childcare full time in the home it is not valued by the government policy makers. The childcare work which was once done unpaid by these women will then be done by another person for payment. By offering a subsidy for childcare,

the government policy makers appear to value this work, but if these women, because of lack of finance, cannot place their children in high quality childcare, this work is de-valued.

Jill and Pam voiced some criticism towards the mothers of to-day and Jill did not think that they followed the same high standards that she had when her children were young.

*Jill - ..... I would never take my children out the door without them being beautifully rigged out. To-day they go anywhere anyhow.*

*Pam - there's this huge pile of washing from the middle of the girl's floor and then they growl because they've got nothing to wear because it hasn't been put out in the wash. But they seem to somehow muddle along.*

The daughters do not place the same priorities on their child rearing as their mothers and grandmothers. Even though the interviewees were inclined to de-value their daughter's unpaid work, the research does not indicate that the daughters themselves did so. On the other hand Jill also believed that the whole way of rearing children had changed in that her daughters net-worked with one another so that they would have two days a week completely on their own.

*Two afternoons or mornings the other minds the children. It works out a complete day a week, and so if it's a morning they are dropped off at nine and they're not picked up until twelve. So you'll get three hours to do your own thing. Now I would have loved that years ago but I never thought of organising anything like that with a friend..*

This arrangement ensures that childcare is not de-valued as the children are being cared for but also places more value on the leisure time of the mothers. The expectation is not there, as was the case in the lives of the interviewees and their mothers that motherhood was a full-time occupation and that there was no time for leisure.

Pat thought that her daughters and daughters-in-law would most probably return to paid labour when their children were older. She believed that this was a general assumption with regard to the young women to-day but she stated that there would always be women who loved their home

*.....that's an expression of who they are and enjoy doing that. But I think primarily people are driven more and more to get money and to buy this and buy that. Also take the kids - to Disney Land. ....I mean such a thing would be beyond my comprehension when I was younger, you know. But I think people want to do that and it's not unusual now, you know. So whatever level that's on they want to give their kids computers, or da de da and that costs.*

The assumption made by Pat that people are primarily driven to make more money for material possessions could be an over-generalisation. In to-day's economic climate, with high mortgages and less government subsidies, more women are compelled to undertake paid work in order to have a reasonable standard of living, and many solo mothers would most probably only earn sufficient for survival. According to Else (1996), for all but a narrow band of families with high earning men, the family wage is nothing of the kind, and women's earnings are essential (Else, 1996:57). Else suggests that women whose partners earn less than \$20,000 a year are likely to be in paid work. She also believes that women not only want to earn money, they want to be with other adults, use their skills and be a part of the world beyond their own family circle (Else, 1996:57). Because these women are in paid work does not necessarily mean that motherhood is de-valued. The fact that most of these women are earning money to provide for their children's welfare, including their education, can only be of benefit to the children.

Larner (1996) quotes Goodger *et al*, (1993), who found that by 1991, forty six percent of married women in New Zealand were in full time paid employment. This they put down to the feminist pressures of the second wave of feminism of the 1960s and 70s; single earner families and the rise of the service sector of the economy (Ehrenreich, 1990 cited in Larner, 1996). But it also emphasises the fact that many of these women are living close to the poverty line. Pam's son-in-law was unemployed and her daughter G..... worked as a shop coordinator. Pam stated that there were times when G..... was quite desperate and had to rely on the food bank for food to feed the family. This would dispel Pat's generalisation that women work to gain material possessions. In G.....'s case, as with her mother (Pam) there is a reversal of roles and G.....has become the breadwinner. One of my daughters, as stated above, is on the Domestic Purposes Benefit (DPB) and just manages to survive by careful budgeting and making do with as little as possible. For these women, money is spent on essentials - clothing, educating and feeding children, and there is little left for "luxuries".

In summary, for the interviewees, their mothers and their daughters, the expectation was that child rearing was their responsibility. In the case of the interviewees and their

mothers, when husbands did help out, because it was not expected that they did so, their help was something special and therefore valued. The daughters' partners would share many of the tasks involved in child rearing. There appeared to be more cooperation from the male partners and therefore, because these tasks were shared, they were valued.

In contrast to the interviewees and their mothers, many of the daughters either combined their motherhood with paid work or were considering returning to the paid work force. While there was provision for child care for mothers in paid work, it differed according to their socio-economic level. For those who could afford it there was high quality childcare and therefore childcare was valued. For those on a lower economic level including beneficiaries, even though their childcare was subsidised, they were not able to afford the same high quality childcare of those in the higher socio-economic level and therefore their ability to carry out this work was de-valued.

The daughters did not place the same priorities on their child-rearing as their mothers and grandmothers, according to Jill and Pam. The criticisms which they raised indicate that they did not value their daughters' work of mothering as highly as their own. On the other hand Jill's daughters who were networking amongst friends and relatives were assured that their children were well cared for and therefore valued their ability as mothers and at the same time were able to take leisure time, which they also valued.

*(c) Children's Sporting, Cultural and School Activities.*

The mothers of the interviewees did take some part in their children's sporting, cultural and school activities. They did not appear to be as involved in this work as the interviewees, but as pointed out this may have been due to the fact that these women did not have access to automobiles, and also because of their lack of labour saving devices, they may not have had the time to become involved. Another factor could have been that their children did not become as involved in after school activities at that time.

Betty and Te Ahumi related contrasting stories with regard to their mothers' participation in work connected to their children's activities. Te Ahumi recalled her mother being involved in Plunket, school projects and the children's activities.

*She supported all the things that us kids were involved in which was scouts, and guides and marching, dancing and you know how on earth they could afford it beats me. Mum did a lot of work with her hands. And sewing. I can remember her raffles at school. She'd do the most beautiful crocheting and embroidery and it was nothing to come home and see twenty four dozen cream puffs or something. You know baking and cooking.*

Te Ahumi believed that her mother was an “*exceptional person*” indicating that she did value the unpaid work that her mother did in support of her own and her brother's and sister's activities. On the other hand, Betty's mother did not take part in the school activities

*Because the school that I went to there weren't a lot of Maori students in the school and I don't remember seeing a lot of Maori parents there either. The movers and shakers in the school, like the school committee, always looked to be people who were well heeled in that they always dressed up - business kind of people. Not women - mainly men.*

Betty's mother's shyness may have stemmed from a feeling of inferiority or fears of being discriminated against due to her socio-economic status and being Maori in an environment which was mainly dominated by Pakeha men.

Te Ahumi on the other hand was brought up in a rural environment, where there would have been more Maori children, and parent involvement. The issue of socio-economic status would not be as pronounced as in the case of Betty's mother who lived in an urban area, where Maori involvement was not evident, and it appeared to Betty that the parents that did become involved in school activities, such as school committees, were those from a higher socio-economic level. In this situation Betty's mother did not place any value on any contribution that she could make due to the fact that she was Maori in a Pakeha environment, while Te Ahumi's mother valued her contribution which was made in an environment where there were more Maori contributing.

Although I recall my own mother being involved in various activities connected with her children, such as school concerts and attending school gala days, she did not take part on school committees. Although it was not discussed with the older interviewees (Florence, Pam, Yvonne, Jill, Pat and Catherine), it would most probably have been unlikely that their mothers were involved on these committees either. From my recollection, in the 1930s and 1940s, these school committees were comprised mainly of men. Two possible assumptions for this could be that these women did not value any

contribution that they could make to these committees, probably through their perceived lack of education. Perhaps it was expected that this work would be carried out by men.

Florence did not think that her daughters would get involved in the work that she had undertaken in connection with their children's activities.

*No. I don't think any of them have been involved with schools and things like I've been.*

She believed that children to-day "*did their thing*" and parents "*did their thing*" and that parents were spending less time with their children and not getting involved with school activities .

Mothers who are in paid employment have less time to be involved in Play Centres or providing mother help duties at school and pre school organisations but despite Florence's generalisation, many women today, even if they are in paid labour, do get involved in school and pre-school education. Both of my daughters have been involved in play centres. They attend parent teacher evenings, and drive their children to sporting and recreational activities. One of my daughters has helped to teach art on a voluntary basis to children at the primary school where her children attended, but this work was undertaken while she was not in paid employment.

Bell and Carpenter (1994) discussed how with the arrival of "Tomorrow's Schools", there was far more possibility for parents to become involved with schools, such as serving on Boards of Trustees but pointed out that often working class parents were less likely to be involved as they felt inadequate. "Tomorrow's Schools" was a policy which was instigated by the fourth Labour Government which effectively contains, or limits, the funding schools receive from the state, and passes the responsibility for making the money 'go round' on to the school Boards of Trustees which comprise parents and members of the community (Bell and Carpenter, 1994). Pam relates how her daughter has become involved with the PTA at the primary school that her children attend but she states that she doesn't feel confident enough

*to be with all these intelligent mothers, she calls them, on the Board at High School*

The work which Pam's daughter carries out on the PTA is of equal value to that undertaken by those on the School Boards of Trustees, but because G..... feels inadequate amongst the "*intelligent*" people on the Board of Trustees, she is de-valuing her ability to contribute.

In summary the conclusions reached are that most of the mothers of the interviewees would have been involved in their children's sporting and cultural activities but not to the same extent as the interviewees were mainly because of their lack of automobiles. They were not as involved on school committees as the interviewees, most probably because the expectation was that these committees were mainly comprised of men, therefore devaluing any possible contribution they may give. On the other hand the daughters would have been more likely to have belonged to School Boards of Trustees, play centres, mother help or on Plunket committees, but this would depend on several factors. Those daughters who were in paid employment may be less likely to take part in these activities. Daughters such as Pam's daughter, may have the perception that they lacked intelligence may feel inadequate, and would not become involved. Most of the daughters would have had access to automobiles and would have been able to transport their children to and from various activities, but again for those who were in paid employment, much of this transporting would have to be undertaken outside their paid working hours.

The contrast between the two Maori mothers' involvement in school-related activities indicates that both socio-economic and cultural factors are major reasons for valuing the work that they carried out. When Maori were working amongst other Maori, such as the case with Te Ahumi's mother the work was valued but when Maori was in the minority and working with predominantly Pakeha men, there was a feeling of inadequacy and perceived inferiority and the ability to do this work was de-valued.

## *II Household Maintenance*

### *i. Domestic Labour*

The interviewees recognised their mothers as being good housewives and many saw them as being fastidious which indicated that they did value the unpaid work that their mothers did.

*Pam - Yes that was the days before washing machines, so she did hand washing with the old scrubbing board, and all the coloureds on a Sunday and Monday. She would boil up the sheets and all the white stuff whent in the copper and then all be ironed on Monday. Everything was highly organised. Starched and blued then ironed and that afternoon and she probably did the flower garden as well.....*

*Yvonne - Oh yes, she was a marvellous housekeeper. A beautiful cook. Very, very, spotlessly clean. Oh yes, she believed in washing her clothes thoroughly you know. They were boiled and her washing was spotless.*

The interviewees often spoke of their mothers with pride and admiration when they recalled the domestic labour that they had undertaken without the aid of labour saving domestic appliances. On the other hand Pam and Yvonne described their mothers as being highly organised and house proud, which at times created a restriction of freedom and resentment from the interviewees towards their mothers.

*Pam - If we had a drink of water we had to wash and dry our glass and put it away and, we would put on an apron at lunch time and we were supposed to put it in our wardrobe and we would put it behind the door and when we came home we would go straight to the wardrobe, we wouldn't even look behind the door.*

*Yvonne - In fact you were frightened to put anything down you know. I wasn't a child that was very tidy apparently, but she would pick up and do things, you know, instead of letting me do them a lot of the time.....*

Although Pam and Yvonne admired the high standards that their mothers held towards this work, at times they resented their restriction of freedom which indicates that when this work affected their own life style, they actually de-valued it. Their perception was that too much effort was put into attaining a high standard of efficiency, to the detriment of the amount of love they lavished on their daughters. These women may have wished for a more even balance between domestic work and motherhood, where their mothers would put less effort into the former while increasing their effort in the latter. Although they do not actually de-value the domestic work undertaken by their mothers their

resentment indicates that they may have considered that their mothers fell short on the affection that they believed they should have received as children.

As with the interviewees, the domestic work which was carried out by the mothers was taken for granted, as fathers expected that the women would carry out this work but little thought was given to the effort which had gone into the work. It is interesting to note that when the interviewees were questioned on the place of women in the household in their mothers' time they all declared that their mother's place was in the home.

*Pat - There wasn't an attitude it was plain fact that women had their place - .....Ridiculous really .....Yes. A very defined role.*

*Pam - I think that was what everyone did, mostly.....they took such pride.*

*Betty - Absolutely I'm sure that's the role the women took. Most of the women in the street were like that.*

*Yvonne - Oh they were there to do it. My father admired my mother for what she did. There was no question about that.....Oh no, there was never any argument about what she did in the house.*

*Te Ahumi - I would think that a lot was expected. I mean that was her role, totally.....It was the tradition, laid down.*

*Florence - Well I really think we were expected to do it and that was all there was to it.*

*Catherine - Well, women's place was in the home.*

*Jill - Oh, a woman's place was in the home, I think.*

The interviews reveal that these women looked back at the work that their mothers did with pride but on the other hand they accept that there was an expectation that these women would carry out this work. Because of this expectation, this work is de-valued.

Toynbee (1995) discovered in her interviews with New Zealand urban men and women born early in the twentieth century that there was a high degree of house pride among the women who were totally dependent on their husband's wage packets. Values were of "spotless cleanliness" and "impeccable order" within the house. She found that urban housewives were concerned with appearances and were scrupulous about their washday activities. She believes there was concern for public affirmation as to their housewifely abilities, and that their work was 'on show' to neighbours. Housework therefore appeared to be an important basis for their evaluation by others and a source of self-esteem for most urban housewives. It could be assumed that housework was valued at this time, at least to other women, as these women took such pride in what they were doing and their status as a housewife was judged on how well they performed the job. Status was important to many women of this generation and was often obtained through their husbands but these women were also judged by their peers especially when it came to their standard of housework.

Jill did not think her mother did any unpaid work, until it was pointed out that household maintenance was indeed unpaid work.

*Jill - .....No, I don't think she - she did all the mothering of us.....Yes, unpaid work, well I don't think Mum did any of that..... she was busy, she wouldn't have time to do any unpaid work, clothing the four of us.*

*June - Well that is unpaid work? That is what we forget.*

*Jill - This was her job.*

*June - Well not really. I mean it's the way you look at it. It's a job but she's not being paid for it.*

*Jill - She's getting her keep though. Which is what used to happen. A man took a wife and kept her. But he in his turn did the work to keep her.*

*June - It's sort of the attitude toward it.*

*Jill - It is.*

*June - A lot of people say that was not a proper job.*

*Jill - Yes, that's right. That attitude was always there.*

*June - Your father was doing a proper job because he was getting paid. She wasn't.*

*Jill - I'd go along with that. This still happens.*

*June - Do you think that was a general feeling at that time?*

*Jill - Yes I would.*

The conception of the women interviewed that women's unpaid work is not "real work" is emphasised by Luxton, *et al.* (1990) who believe that women have all too often accepted and perpetuated the myth that women who are at home full time do not "work". When they are asked what they do during the day, many say "Oh nothing - I'm just a housewife". The authors go on to say that feminists have claimed that what

women do in the home - managing their households, caring for family, raising children - is not “*just nothing*” but is vitally important and socially necessary work. It entails great effort, long hours and important responsibilities.

This conception that housework is not “real work” is also reiterated by Waring (1996) where she suggests that the way we normally use words is not necessarily the concept applied in law. McKinlay (1992) suggests that a wife will be keeping her husband in clean shirts and sheets, cleaning his home, providing his meals and caring for his children while he is out earning money, but often a husband will state:

*‘My wife doesn’t work’ is something we still hear said from time to time .....According to that definition, work is what is done to earn money and the rest is non-work or ‘leisure’ (McKinlay, 1992:69).*

Words are an important means of valuing or de-valuing something. By labelling unpaid work as “not proper work” and paid work as “real work” one gains more value over the other. Many of these women did not consider their work to be “proper work” but the work undertaken by the “breadwinners” they did consider to be “real work” and by so doing they, themselves, de-valued their unpaid work.

Florence was critical of her mother and believed that “*their home was not always as clean as it could have been*”. She believed that her mother was always busy pottering with her cooking and she didn’t see what she really did do. Florence’s mother’s “pottering” was not recognised as work by Florence in that she couldn’t see what her mother actually did, and she did not give credit to the fact that she was cooking and baking. But later Florence contradicts this statement by saying that she was always

*Polishing and scrubbing floors. And my Mum had a mania for scrubbing saucepans and all her saucepans when we had a meal they had to be really scrubbed with sand soap and I think she just about wore the bench out before we left.*

Florence’s mother came from the city and it was difficult for her to adjust to farm life. Her mother came from a home where there were maids and for her, farming life must have come as a culture shock.

*Didn’t know the first thing about cooking or anything else and Dad often used to say how he’d kill a sheep, cut it in half you know, bring it in and Mum tried to get this half of sheep into the oven and it wouldn’t fit. She couldn’t make out how she could cut it up or what she should do with it. I can just imagine, you know, having been brought up to do that sort of thing. I often look back and think, I can just imagine poor Mum coming from a city job not knowing. It must have been awful that,*

*mustn't it? I sort of think that we grew up knowing that - it's what we did. But of course they weren't in those days. They had maids you know, they had somebody to care for them at home.*

The adjustments Florence's mother had to make would have been great, coming from an affluent city life to a rural environment. It was only farmers on larger land holdings that could employ servants, so Florence's mother would have had to undertake household chores that she was inexperienced in. Florence's father's telling of the story of the "half of sheep" indicates, that in some ways he actually ridiculed her mother, and therefore devalued her attempts at domestic labour.

As stated earlier, three of the interviewees were born just prior to the Great Depression of 1929-1935 and three interviewees and myself, were born during the depression. Pat remembers her parents hardships

*He [Pat's father] found it particularly hard not having a job but it was my mother who clothed the children from cutting down old clothes and making food go as far as possible. ....that took some years to mainly recover from. They did a lot of work helping each other survive.*

Pam's father, on the other hand was not unemployed but he worked as a technician for a dentist who couldn't afford to keep him on, so they moved to another town and he managed to get a position with her uncle who was also a dentist.

*He had a steady wage. Not much, but it was better than what most people had - my mother was a very great budgeter and was very careful. Did all our sewing and knitting.*

My father worked in the Public Service and was not unemployed during the Depression years, but I do remember that nothing was wasted, and our clothes were cut down from adult's clothing which belonged to our parents, or had been given us. Jerseys were unravelled and re-knitted and food was nourishing and filling.

When Jill was asked to recall the depression years, she believed that that was a levelling time, where everyone was the same.

*.....And you would buy soup bones and you made a stew first and then the soup and put vinegar in to get the goodness out of the bones and that sort of thing. People would give you clothes. A man's coat would make coats for us little girls and pants for my brother. Nothing was wasted.*

The Depression affected the interviewee's families in varying ways, but for all it was a time for making do, wasting nothing, budgeting carefully, and generally hard work to make ends meet and it was the women of that time who carried the heaviest burden, to make sure their families were clothed and fed. Their ingenuity in providing clothes for the family and providing nourishing food, which would be filling but inexpensive, is typical of women throughout history who place the welfare of their family above all else. The transcripts of the interviewees indicate that they looked back on their mother's ingenuity in "making do" with great pride, and there was no doubt that they now valued this work. But it is difficult to conclude that this work was appreciated when the interviewees were children as Pam has stated that "*they hardly knew the Depression was on*".

In New Zealand during World War II, while many women did paid work in essential areas, Montgomerie (1986) points out that war service had to be integrated into a continual emphasis on domesticity and motherhood in order that it did not divert women from their proper role. The attitude was that motherhood and home making were war work and

*that the ability of the country to return to normal after the war depended on the women successfully performing their duties* (Montgomerie, 1986:153).

The mothers of the interviewees were affected by the war years and Pat's and Catherine's mothers had to cope on their own while their husbands were serving overseas. Because of rationing and shortages of basic commodities, women's work, of "*mend and make do*" and "*thrifty housekeeping*" were exalted as a patriotic task with a virtue and a necessity and was regarded as "*real work*" and therefore valued. This was considered as women's contribution to the war effort, but after the war women's work, both paid or unpaid, again became "*non-work*" (May, 1988:63). May believes that the war encouraged a double standard of femininity by bolstering the imagery of the independent patriotic woman. She states

*women were to demonstrate strength and initiative during the day but there was a concern that traditional femininity and family responsibility not be undermined, and women assumed their traditional roles out of "work" hours, and the focus shifted to the "returned men" as breadwinners and women's work in the home was seen as a "leisure activity"* (May, 1988:63).

Therefore the work which was seen as of value during the war years lost its perceived value when the war was over and was considered to be leisure time.

When the interviewees discussed their understanding of the unpaid domestic work undertaken by their daughters, many of them perceived that the daughters did not place the same emphasis on this work as they had done or as their mothers had done. Most of the daughters would have labour saving devices; access to automobiles; and they were able to buy convenience food and easy care clothing which could be washed in the washing machine and in many cases did not need ironing.

Jill agreed that it was necessary for the younger women to return to the paid workforce, due to the higher cost of living, higher mortgages and the decline in State subsidies, but she believed that it became a vicious circle as living costs became higher when women went out to paid work.

*I think there is a lot more convenient food. Anything that's fast and quick is much easier than starting like we used to do.*

As more women return to the paid workforce, they necessarily spend less time on their domestic chores. This has brought about the acceptance of convenience foods and labour saving devices. As Jill states, the cost of living becomes greater, but when this is balanced with the time saved in domestic chores, they must still come out on the credit side. Else (1996) suggests that

*When time is shorter than money, those who can afford it are cutting down the time they spend on cooking and cleaning up by turning to fast or at any rate faster food."*  
(Else:1996:22).

According to Else (1996) in a 1995 report on the New Zealand food service market it was found that restaurant and fast food sector sales rose by nearly 30% between 1991 and 1994. She found this trend has been directly linked to the growth in working couples. The conclusion I reached was that the daughters placed different priorities on their unpaid work than the interviewees or their mothers.

This trend is emphasised by Jill who believed that their daughters' attitudes to housekeeping are different to how it was when she was a young housewife.

.....when I was young having clean floors and shiny windows and cake tins full and that was almost an obsession. .... The washing is always a priority, the ironing is not. They iron as little as possible. They don't care if the floors aren't shiny. They vacuum clean often. Keep the place reasonably tidy and - you know - obviously fairly clean. But they're not fanatics like we were, and it's the right way to be.

Jill acknowledges that her daughters do “keep the place reasonably tidy and obviously fairly clean” but the adjectives she uses de-value this work. On the other hand when she admits to the way she had an “obsession” and how she was “a fanatic” she is looking back on her work and de-valuing it. She assumed that because her daughters did not spend as much time on domestic labour they were not as busy or harassed as she had been.

*They car pool, to save going out from the house, all the time. Mind you, all this lovely fresh stuff, what do you call it, rugby knits and things, they don't iron all that. They just fold it in nice piles in the hot water cupboard and this is it. So that's cut down all that. The convenience meals have cut down all that. Push button washing machines, and today's vacuum cleaners. They don't polish floors any more with lino shiners. They've got a lot more time.*

Again, Jill's assumptions indicate that some of the unpaid work undertaken by her daughters may not be valued by her. These assumptions could be challenged by Else (1996) quoting Schwartz (1986) who found that the improvements in household technology has in some ways created more work for housewives and mothers. She suggests that the notion that technology is wiping out housework can be blamed on advertisements.

*Today's ads are more insidious, because they're much more sophisticated. Not only is housework linked in with words like POWER, or done for fun in places where real dirt - baby poohs, cat vomit, oven sludge, stained underpants - never happens. Today's machines and cleaners are so advanced they can do the housework all by themselves.....There's no need for any human, male or female, to lift a finger (Else 1996:16).*

Not all of the daughters were in paid employment, but were involved in activities which meant they had closer contact with their children, such as play centres and mother helping. Jill commented that her daughters were not spending as much time on domestic labour. Because of this these women may place more value on spending quality time with their children or on leisure than on unpaid domestic work. It appears that convenience foods and fabrics, labour saving devices and easier access to transport have taken away a lot of the drudgery of housework that was experienced by the

mothers and to a certain extent the interviewees, but this does not mean that these women are less busy than their mothers and grandmothers but that they have different priorities.

Because less emphasis is spent on domestic labour for many of these women it is not valued as much as working in paid employment. To meet the demands of their families, educational, health, mortgage and retirement needs, it has become necessary for these women to return to the paid workforce. The trend has swung from the value placed on the high standards of domestic efficiency of the interviewees and their mothers towards the value of the benefits gained by their family by these women undertaking paid work.

### *ii. Administration*

Many of the interviewees saw their mothers as strong-minded women who wielded some power in the household, but they still referred to their fathers as head of the house. Although contradictory, this does indicate, if not total egalitarianism then a more equal share in decision making.

When Pat was asked what part her father played in the household she replied:

*A very silent role really. ....He was head of the house. He was a very hard worker.....in fact when push came to shove he was the one to have the final say. Yes, mother was a strong, domineering character, but important decisions were always made by Dad.....He was head of the house.*

Te Ahumi admitted her father was the head of the household.

*Te Ahumi - Oh, he was. Very much so.....Oh I would say that mum would say, but he would fire the shots.....and so when it came to being involved I think, yes, they would have made decisions together.*

Pam believed her mother was actually head of the house.

*Pam - No she was - he [Pam's father] was never head of the house.....we know that Mum would pay the bills and do the saving and was really able to save to buy the house that we went in to. .... She was a wonderful manager. Very practical.*

These women described their mothers as being good managers and budgeters and this is in keeping with May's (1988) definition of women of this time as "creative managers". This could be an indication of the experience of the lean years of the depression and the

restrictions of the war years. In some cases (Pat, Pam and Florence) the fathers handed over their whole pay packets.

*Pat - Dad would hand over his pay packet to her.*

*Pam - Dad handed over most of his pay - he'd keep a bit back for tobacco - that's probably about all that he kept back.*

*Florence - Well, Dad had to hand over his money as soon as it came in and Mum took it.*

While accepting the ideology of their subordinate roles, it appears that in reality these women actually wielded more power in the household than what was expected of them at a time when patriarchal attitudes were accepted by most people. As with the paid work undertaken by these women, the dominant roles that many of these women played in the household may have been under-valued by these women so as not to undermine the expected role of the male partner as “head of the household” and therefore lose status in the eyes of the public. Status to many of these women was important as it was how their friends and neighbours judged them. In the hierarchical framework of the family at that time, the expectation was that the husband was the head of the household and the wife and children were subordinate to him. Because many women gained status through their husbands, if these women were seen to be wielding power within the home, their husbands would lose status and consequently they would lose status also.

On the other hand, as argued by Habgood (1992), the distinction between control and management is a significant one. Wives managing the wages in poorer households is often erroneously equated with female control and female power. She believes that men usually retain the overall control of the money, even when women manage the finances, and this could explain why the men were considered the “head of the household”.

Because of the attitude that the man was the “head of the household” or the “breadwinner” the mothers’ talents as good managers and budgeters may be de-valued and these talents may not be recognised to people outside the household. The interviewees, by recalling the managing abilities of their mothers, indicate that although they may have taken for granted these abilities when they were children because they

were unaware of the effort which their mothers had put into this work, when they reflected on this work they did actually value it.

Some of the interviewees believed that their fathers did make the decisions early in their marriage but later in life their mothers gained control. Florence stated that later in life her mother

*wanted things done her way*

and Catherine also believed that after the war her father didn't want too much responsibility.

*He spoilt her. He totally spoilt her. .... He left everything to her. He was a very sensitive man and she was a very strong-minded woman and so he sort of, I suppose where bills were concerned, he made decisions about bills but if she wanted something done it was always done.*

Where women take a greater responsibility for material support of the family, distribution of power becomes more egalitarian (Novitz, 1978), but where women accept the traditional view that their responsibilities as child rearers preclude significant involvement in processes of material support for families and public decision making, this contributes to the dominance of men both inside and outside the home. The conclusion reached here is that where there is a more egalitarian distribution of unpaid labour within the home, this work will be valued more by male partners. On the other hand in a relationship where the wife does not command a position of power true egalitarianism does not exist, and therefore her decisions are devalued. For instance, Betty believed her father was head of the house and in fact he would overturn any decisions made by her mother and was almost confrontational.

*Yes I think - that's fair to say - that's the impression I got.....There were times when she'd make a decision and he'd overturn it. Yes, and be very straight up and almost confrontational. No that's not going to happen.....*

Betty's father may have been asserting his power as head of the house by overturning any decisions made by her mother and therefore devaluing them. This could be caused through his lack of security, in that if her mother made the decisions, he would lose his power as head of the household. Because of this, Betty indicated the family may not have valued her mother's decisions. However, because Betty recollected them clearly she now placed some value on them. Often children take for granted the status quo in

the family when they are young and only by looking back at the situation later in life do they realise the injustices that really occurred.

The interviewees mainly described their fathers as the “breadwinner” and in most cases as the “head of the house” but many of the mothers were making decisions on the budgeting and running of the household. When the interviewees describe their own experiences, they do not label their male partners as “head of the house” but in most cases they were described as “breadwinners”. Most of the interviewees stated that they shared decision making with their partners. The position of the daughters of the interviewees is different in that many of these women are in paid employment, some may be earning as much or more than their male partners, and as in the case of Pam’s daughter are the sole earners. Some of the daughters are solo mothers and the responsibility for budgeting and decision making is entirely their task. Apart from Catherine’s daughter, whose partner is “*domineering*”, most of these women seem to share decision making with their partners or to be making these decisions on their own. Because there is no expectation that the male partner will be the “head of the house” or the “breadwinner” the decision making and budgeting work undertaken by these women would be valued.

### *iii. Gender Division of Labour*

Some of the interviewees suggested that their fathers did value the unpaid work that their mothers did, but there was very little sharing of this work. Fathers would mainly be occupied outside the house tending vegetable gardens, or doing the “heavier” jobs around the home, as in the case of Jill’s father. Yvonne declared that her mother would not have allowed her father to help in the house, indicating that many mothers did not expect their husbands to help out in this way.

Jill’s father displayed a certain gallantry towards her mother. This could indicate his patriarchal attitude of “masculism” in his over-protection of, in his perception, a weak or delicate female (Toynbee, 1995).

*Jill - Dad boiled the copper on a Saturday. He always helped with the washing. And then the same water went on boiling and was carried on through for baths. ...Well he always got all the breakfast. Mum had breakfast in bed every morning, and he did the vegetable garden, and as I say, the washing and the baths. Because*

*you only had a bath once a week. ....Other than that, I think Mum did all the rest. Oh he used to cook the roast on Sunday in the coal range. He would have to chop the wood. What did my mother do? Well she sewed. She sewed every bit of clothing we wore and she'd have to cook the tea every night, I suppose. Yes, and kept the house clean.*

It is evident in Jill's father's concern for cutting the wood, carting the water and helping with the washing, which was an arduous task that he did put some value on this work. But this does not account for him giving her mother breakfast in bed every morning and cooking the roast dinner on Sunday and is contrary to Phillips (1987) suggestion that there was a need for men to preserve their male identity. Phillips states that when at home which was "*the woman's world*" he would cordon off from the domestic environment certain exclusively male territories. According to Phillips (1987) acceptable jobs were those that involved heavy physical work. Jill states that her mother "*sewed*", indicating that this was a primary occupation for her. She mentioned earlier in the interview that her mother did dressmaking for money. The fact that she was supplementing the income with her sewing work, could be a contributory factor for Jill's father taking such a large part in the unpaid housework and it could be assumed that he did value the contribution that her mother was making to the family income with her sewing. In a later conversation that I had with both Jill and her sister, I learned that they perceived their father to be "*a gentleman*" who put their mother "*on a pedestal*". This could also reinforce Toynbee's theory of masculism, where the concept of some men was "*the delicacy of women and the strength of men*" (Toynbee, 1995:104).

Any paid work that the mothers did undertake was usually to supplement the income of the breadwinner. The role of the breadwinner was paramount and the importance placed on the money earned by the mothers was not stressed. As stated earlier this was probably so as not to undermine the position of the breadwinner as the expectation was that the male partner would provide for them. By taking this stance the women themselves caused this work to be de-valued.

Toynbee (1995) points out that women's earnings have been patronisingly referred to as 'pin' money for over a century. However most women's earnings were spent on necessities in the home, garden and on their children, whereas men often regarded part of

their earnings as theirs. By labelling the money earned by these women “pin money” this work is being de-valued.

**Table IX. Summary of paid work undertaken by mothers both outside and within the home after the birth of their children.**

Name	Paid work undertaken outside the home	Paid work undertaken within the home	Part time/Full time	Period when work was undertaken.	Father's Occupation
Pat	Factory making sleeping bags and clothing		Full time	During the war years when Pat's father was overseas.	Not stated
Pam	Office work		Full time	When Pam was training for dental nursing. In order to get money to buy her uniform.	Dental Technic
Betty	Sack factory		Full time	When Betty was at school to supplement the income	Auctioneer
Jill		Dressmaking	Part time	On a casual basis throughout Jill's childhood.	Public Servant
	Fabric Factory		Part time	When Jill was at High School	
Catherine	Tea maker		Part time	After her husband's retirement	Not stated
	Shorthand Typist		Full time		
Self		Needlework	Part time	When children young	Public Servant
	Commercial cleaner		Part time	When children left home	
	Shop assistant		Full time		
	Music teacher				

As can be seen in Table IX, some of the mothers of the interviewees did undertake paid work after marriage.

Jill's mother did dressmaking at home for money, and later went to work in a textile factory.

*because they were short of money. That was paid work.....I don't know how she even got there. She must have taken a bus there. We never had a car. She walked every where.*

Pam's mother went into paid work in order to outfit Pam when she went into training as a dental nurse. As Pam's father's income was not sufficient to pay for Pam's training. Pam valued the paid work that her mother did as without it she may not have been able to undertake her career.

Betty's mother astounded the family by going and getting herself a job. Betty had the impression that her father was the "one who would provide" and there was some concern as to her father's reaction. Betty also felt that her mother's perceived role was that she had to provide the food for the family. In this case Betty's father's perceived role as "provider" is undermined by the necessity for her mother having to go out to paid work so that she could provide food for the family.

*.....It was in a local sack factory and she seemed really excited about getting a job  
.....I always felt that Dad didn't ever want Mum to go to work..... I can't  
actually explain that, but you know he was the one who would provide. But also she  
said there were so many of us at home that ..... perhaps her perceived role, was to  
always be there to provide the food and I thought that this was just a side issue.*

The conclusion that I reached was that by Betty's thinking that her mother's job "was just a side issue" the family did not take the work seriously, and therefore did not value this work. Betty stated, her mother's perceived role was to provide food and if the "breadwinner's" income was not sufficient to do this, the work her mother was doing was of value for the well-being of the family but it was only on reflection that Betty valued the paid work that her mother did.

Catherine's mother decided to go back to the paid workforce when she was in her sixties for quite a different reason

*.....And then she went back and she worked in an office sort of part time, but she  
started off by doing teas. And later she went back and she did shorthand typing and  
then stopped for a number of years and then I think she started again - she was in her  
sixties when she went back again. She decided she didn't want to stay home with my  
father. I mean he was very nice, and very kind, but she wanted to do something a bit  
more stimulating, in fact, than staying home, I would say.*

Catherine's mother gained independence by returning to paid work. Because she found this work "stimulating" it was of value to her.

It is apparent from this study that while the "ideal" was that married women should not go into "paid work", many of them felt it was necessary to earn extra money to support their families, buy extra essentials for their children or as in the case of Catherine's mother, to do something more stimulating than staying at home. The "family wage" was not sufficient to support a family, as many of the women interviewed admitted that their mothers needed to earn extra money to make ends meet. While some husbands "handed

over their pay packet” this was not always the case. My own father always had money for cigarettes and beer and never went short of personal spending money, but I remember my own mother searching the house for a shilling so that my brother and I could go to the local picture theatre. Betty stated that her father drank and gambled so her mother was always short of money to feed and clothe the family.

In summary, the interviews reveal that whereas much of women’s unpaid work was expected of them, this was not the case with their paid work. Because their unpaid work was expected of them it was not always valued by family and husbands. On the other hand their paid work which was not expected of them was trivialised in many cases by labelling it “pin money”. As stated earlier in this section, the mothers did not always indicate that they valued their paid work so as not to undermine the “breadwinner” role of their husbands or to lose status, but in many instances they may have valued this work ahead of their unpaid work when it brought them financial independence.

Evidence from this study indicates that the male partners of the daughters of the interviewees were playing a larger part in the division of unpaid domestic work than the fathers or grandfathers of these women. Pam and Yvonne believed that their sons-in-law did a larger share of the unpaid domestic work, Betty, Jill, Te Ahumi, Florence and Catherine all believed that their sons or sons-in-law played an equal part. However, Yvonne and Catherine both believed that at least one of their sons/sons-in-law didn’t play a very large part in the unpaid domestic work at all. The conclusion could be made that this work is now being valued by many male partners as it becomes masculinised, but there is still some way to go before it is completely egalitarian.

One area where the male partners seem to be involved is cooking. This is an interesting finding and could be because a great deal of unpaid domestic work such as cleaning and washing is not as obvious (unless it is not done) and less satisfying, while cooking can be a satisfying occupation as the end result is more evident and may be more pleasurable. It has been said that the way to a man’s heart is through his stomach. This could be a possible reason why the male partners are more inclined to undertake this work as they may have a sense of achievement at the end result. This fact was also revealed when

the interviewees discussed their male partners after retirement. These men also were involved in cooking as well as using kitchen gadgets. The conclusion that I reached is that because of the satisfaction gained by using these gadgets and the end result of cooking, these men would value this work more than the more menial tasks that may be undertaken by their wives.

Betty's son B.....was working as an apprentice when he went to live with his partner and baby daughter. They are now married and B.... is working towards a Fine Arts Degree and M.... is supporting him with her earnings from teaching. They both take an equal share of household chores and child rearing. M..... and B..... are working together in an equal partnership each supporting the other in their careers which is a markedly different situation to that of the interviewees who were in paid work. The gender division of domestic labour between M..... and B..... could be assumed to be egalitarian and because B..... takes an equal share in this work it is not taken for granted as in the previous generations.

I have reached the conclusion that the interviewees and their mothers received very little assistance from their male partners with the domestic labour in the home whether they were full time in the home or combining their unpaid domestic labour with paid work, indicating that the male partners put little value on the work their wives were undertaking. The daughters' male partners are taking a larger part in the division of domestic labour in the home. If not completely egalitarian, it does indicate that many of these men are valuing this work more than the partners of the interviewees and their mothers.

### ***III. Informal and Formal Voluntary Work***

Many of the interviewees did not recognise the informal voluntary work which was undertaken by their mothers, indicating that informal voluntary work may not be valued as much as formal voluntary work. If their mothers had been involved in informal voluntary work such as helping for the war effort or helping neighbours and friends, it was not considered as voluntary work and therefore not valued enough for them to mention it.

Some interviewees did describe informal voluntary work which had been carried out by their mothers. Pat's mother did get involved in informal community work during the depression such as sharing vegetables and making clothes. Pat's parents held ethical values influenced by the Christian Church and believed

*we are not just here for ourselves - we're here for other people as well.*

Whether they performed this work out of altruism or because of their expected Christian duty is difficult to judge, but this charitable work was valued by them and by the recipients. Pat herself admired her parents because of their work and therefore it could be surmised that she valued the work they did.

Te Ahumi said that her mother was "a front row" person on the marae, and also travelled

*the length and breadth of New Zealand because mum was very involved. And so they were both [mother and father] hard workers. They both loved the community that they lived in, and the community has given us so much. It was their way of saying thank you for us to give them something back.*

Te Ahumi's work was valued by the community she lived in. Pere (1988), talking of the marae, suggests that

*the most senior men and women in my immediate kinship groups set the example of contemplating, respecting and supporting each other (Pere, 1988:9).*

She experienced men, women, adults and children working alongside each other and together. This situation was hard to retain and quite often impossible in an urban situation. In contrast, Betty's mother, although coming from a marae situation came to live in an urban area and may have found it difficult adjusting to it. Betty recalled her mother being asked by a neighbour to take part in the Women's Auxiliary at the local primary school, but she believed that her mother never initiated this move. Betty believed that her mother was extremely lonely. She had come from a marae background so probably was involved in marae work before she was married but did not take part on the marae after her marriage.

*.....and she always had some good ideas about where she saw us kids go but I don't believe that she really networked or got around the neighbourhood. She always downed women who gossiped in the street. I think basically she was quite a shy sort of person.*

Pere (1988) writes that Whanaungatanga is based on the principal of both sexes and all generations supporting and working alongside each other. There is an expectation that families interact with other families in the community and help strengthen the whole (Pere, 1988). The support which Betty's mother would have received on the marae from the whanau was not available in an urban environment. Betty's mother, being a shy person, would retreat more within herself and she may have felt uncomfortable being a Maori in a Pakeha environment. By her withdrawal, Betty's mother was de-valuing the contribution that she could have given. When Maori share their unpaid labour among the whanau on the marae, this work is valued and the conclusion that I have reached is that when work is shared, whether on the marae or in voluntary community or church based organisations it is often valued more than when one works alone.

Despite this Betty's mother was always there to give a helping hand to friends and neighbours in need. I recall when my first husband died, that Betty's mother was the first one on the scene, and quietly took over my kitchen and made sandwiches and cups of tea. Because she worked quietly at times of need, she was appreciated by those who were receiving the help, but her efforts may not have been apparent to other people. As stated earlier, those who benefit from unpaid labour value it but often when people work quietly behind the scenes their efforts are not always appreciated by members of the public.

Catherine was brought up in Kent during the war, and while her father was serving overseas, she recalls her mother helping in the air raid shelters and providing meals for the people in the shelters.

*they used to take turns at looking after children, in the air raids, taking the children to the shelters..... people used to work together, very much, a comradeship thing, you know and they'd then serve up meals and all that sort of thing.*

Conditions in wartime Britain were much harder than in New Zealand during the war. Most women had to work hard, combining domestic responsibilities with some form of war work, either voluntary or paid (Sheridan, 1990).

The other interviewees could not recall whether their mothers did take part in any voluntary work during the war years but Jill thought that her mother may have done so.

I recall my grandmother knitting scarves and gloves for the servicemen which was a service which many women did at that time.

At this time many New Zealand women, like the British women, were quietly coping on their own, but unlike the British women who were actively involved in air raid conditions and their work was more prominent and therefore valued, the work undertaken by the New Zealand women may not have been valued as much. But women such as Catherine's mother who carried a double load of running a home and carrying out war work may have found that whereas their war work would have been valued, the unpaid work in the household may not have been. This is contrary to the situation in New Zealand where women were encouraged to put their homes and family before war work. This leads to the conclusion that at certain times and situations some work can increase in perceived value while other work decreases in perceived value.

I cannot be sure that the mothers were not as involved in voluntary work as their daughters. If the daughters did undertake voluntary work, and it has been shown that some of the women did on an informal basis, it appears that the interviewees did not value it as highly as the formal voluntary work that they themselves are involved in. One reason why women of the mothers' generation may not have been as involved in formal voluntary work could be their pre-occupation with their unpaid work in the household, as well as the lack of mobility. This may have prevented them from working in the community. Any voluntary work that the mothers were involved in appeared to be oriented towards their children. They may have been involved in Plunket, school fundraising, scouts and guides, all activities that they probably wouldn't have been involved in if they did not have children. Even Catherine's mother's war time activities, helping children in the air raid shelters, would probably be of importance to her as Catherine herself was one of those children requiring help.

Real concern was expressed by many of the interviewees that their daughters were not becoming involved in much of the voluntary work that they had undertaken. These concerns pose questions as to the future of voluntary organisations if women are not

concerns pose questions as to the future of voluntary organisations if women are not available to undertake this work. Women have been the major supporters of formal voluntary work in the past. Pat could not see her own daughters doing the voluntary work that she has done as they don't have the "sense" that she is driven with. She believes that her daughters are much more independent than she has been and they know that they can make their own way on their own. She stated that her daughters and daughters-in-law were "right into paid work"

*I mean S..... will do some voluntary work. But the others - doesn't cross into their world really.*

Jill like Pat, also did not think that her daughters or her daughter-in-law would get involved in the voluntary work that she has done.

*Because they don't think it's necessary - a lot of these things, and they'll just die out with us. In fact I think a lot of things we do are just going to die. I would like to know how many young people are actually delivering meals on wheels. I don't think there's many. It's our age group that run the hospices and do the cleaning, do the flowers, do all those kind of things. And I just think that when our age group move on I don't think the young people are moving in to these positions. To start with they don't join service groups..... but these are the places where all this started from.*

Because the daughters are not becoming as involved as the interviewees in formal voluntary work in the community indicates that these women do not value this work in the same way that their mothers did. Florence did not think that her daughters would get involved in the fostering work that she had.

*They used to tell me I was mad.*

There were mixed reactions from Yvonne, Te Ahumi and Catherine, who were not sure whether their daughters or daughters-in-law would get involved in voluntary work in the future.

*Yvonne - Oh it's very hard to say. I don't really think you know that they are that way inclined. I don't know what they would do. You know their interests are so different.*

*Te Ahumi -I think may be they would. I don't know. I can only say from the stock the girls have come from - yes I do.*

*Catherine - I mean, I wouldn't have thought ten years ago, that I would have.*

daughter-in-law, M..... works on her own marae which is Tu Wharetoa and often goes back there and networks with her family. Te Ahumi's daughters were not involved in marae work at all at present but as stated above may become involved as she did, when they are older.

Despite this many of the interviewees assumed that their daughters would not get involved in the voluntary work that they had. The main assumption is that the daughters are in paid work, or intend undertaking paid work in the future. The present economic climate is such that many of the daughters may find it necessary to return to the paid workforce after the birth of their children or when their children are at school, and this mitigates against unpaid voluntary work in the community.

Jill suggests that the young women are not getting involved in the service organisations, but her daughter and daughter-in-law are networking amongst themselves. One reason for this could be that many of the formal voluntary organisations and churches which the interviewees are involved in have ideologies which are too restricting for the present generation, and they may prefer not to be involved. For example the organisations' members may have narrow views on gay and lesbian relationships, single parent families and de facto relationships which the younger women are not prepared to accept. Although not stated, daughters may be involved in some formal voluntary work such as working for youthline, rape crisis, women's refuges or even political groups which may not be considered by the interviewees to be of as much value as their own work for Christian based organisations or service clubs such as Inner Wheel.

#### ***IV. Attitudes Towards Education for Women***

The way women's unpaid work is valued has to a large extent been influenced by the attitudes towards education for women. This becomes more obvious as the interviews reveal the experiences of the interviewees' own education compared with the educational expectations of the daughters and the grand daughters. The interviewees were silent on the educational achievements of their mothers. My own mother left school at the age of thirteen and did not go on to secondary school. This was not unusual for girls in the early part of the twentieth century. The conclusion I have reached is that not much importance was placed on the education of the interviewees by their parents because the

general expectation was that these women would obtain paid employment as an interlude between leaving school and getting married.

My own parents were eager for me to leave school half way through my fifth form year and take employment in a government department as a shorthand typist, while my two brothers were encouraged to stay on at school and attain their University Entrance examination. My parents did not consider it necessary for me to stay on at school and be an economic burden on the household and I was steered into a “useful” occupation as a fill-in before marriage. This pattern is echoed by four of the eight interviewees. Pat’s experience was similar to mine and she believes she “*fell into*” the assumption that there wasn’t any point in her having an education. Money appears to have been one of the major reasons for encouraging the girls to leave school. The lack of money even prohibited Pat from following the career she wished to take.

*Well there was no priority placed on education. I can remember mother saying, there’s no point in you having an education because you’re going to get married and there’s just no point so lets not waste our time and money and yeah - it sort of rankles a bit really because I fell into that really.*

Pam was more fortunate; her parents wanted her to leave at the end of the fourth form, but the principal of her school encouraged them to let her stay on.

*Mum took me to try and get a job and they said “go back to school” and it was because the Principal had stopped them on the street and said she would like to see me back at school and I guess that they went along without being very involved*

Pam completed five years at secondary school which was unusual for girls at that time, and left school just prior to her eighteenth birthday

Jill agrees there was not much importance placed on her education by her parents. She did stay on at school to attain School Certificate but her career was considered to be a fill-in before marriage. Catherine was brought up in England and her parents didn’t think that she should carry on to Technical School, but it was her uncle’s outlook on education (which he considered very important) that influenced her into going to technical college and getting a career.

*They couldn’t afford to send me to anything else but a state school anyway and then when I went to technical college, I must have been about twelve and my father didn’t really think that was necessary. He thought I should have just carried on and then left school and got a job in a shop somewhere. He wasn’t very interested in education.....But my uncle, that I went to live with, had a totally different*

*really think that was necessary. He thought I should have just carried on and then left school and got a job in a shop somewhere. He wasn't very interested in education.....But my uncle, that I went to live with, had a totally different outlook. And he always said that education was very, very important and you could never stop educating yourself.*

The attitude of Catherine's parents could be attributable to social class differences. Davis (1982) has defined class in contemporary New Zealand as having three main strata:

*a small ruling elite and two broad strata, the middle class (farmers, employers, most of the self-employed, and those in non-manual occupations) and the lower or working class (those in manual occupation. (Davis 1982:120).*

Expectations about the education and careers of girls were affected by the socio-economic class of their parents.

New Zealand research by Bell and Carpenter (1994) has shown that socio-economic status is a system for stratifying people according to their occupations and they argue that working class families believe their children's chances of high achievement are limited. Research undertaken by Lauder *et al* (1985:33) and cited in Bell and Carpenter (1994) found that children of upper-class parents were more likely to enter the upper class.

*While 75% of leavers from upper class background with high scholastic ability, enter their parents class, only 34% of leavers from the working class backgrounds with the same ability enter the upper class Lauder et al., 1985:33).*

Middleton (1985:84) has suggested that social class can affect the career choices of children. She refers to Bourdieu's concept of 'cultural capital' where

*each family transmits to its children, indirectly rather than directly, a certain cultural capital and a certain ethos. (Middleton, 1985:84).*

Florence and Yvonne's parents had a more positive attitude to education. Yvonne was sent to a private school for a few years.

*I went to a public school till I was about ten and then, I think my father thought it would be better if I went to a private school for a while. So I did go to a private school for a few years.*

Florence spent four years in secondary education and her mother believed that her career was for the future and not just a fill-in before marriage, but when Florence was married she gave up her nursing career.

*Florence - Mum always had ideas that we had to go out and get a job. They couldn't keep us at home you know..... It was our career for the future.*

*Florence - Mum always had ideas that we had to go out and get a job. They couldn't keep us at home you know..... It was our career for the future.*

The fact that the mothers of these two women were interested in their daughter's education could reflect the social class of the two sets of parents. Yvonne's father was a successful business man and Florence's mother had come from a more affluent background before she married and went on the farm.

My own father was a white collar worker in a government department. He did value education but it was only my two brothers who were encouraged to undertake a professional career, while I was educated sufficiently to enable me to obtain an occupation which was not considered to be a lifetime one, as the expectation was that I would get married. It appears that for many women, their status before marriage is related to their father's occupation. When a woman marries, her status can increase or decrease according to her husband's occupation. This is shown in the interviews where Jill, Betty and Catherine who came from working-class backgrounds married men who were professional or managerial therefore increasing their status.

Betty and Te Ahumi were both from Maori families and the attitudes of their parents towards their education were different from that of my parents and the parents of Pat, Pam, and Catherine. Te Ahumi's father wanted her to have a good education, but Te Ahumi left school when she was fourteen. It was Betty's mother who was "*quite visionary*" who saw the need for her to have a good education and the "*need to be like a pakeha*" to succeed. These two interviewees are younger than the other interviewees being born in the 1940s and this could account for the difference, as educational qualifications for girls were beginning to have more importance. Also by the late 60s, early 70s when Betty would be in her early twenties, there were more women entering the paid work force as a career which could be carried on after marriage, especially when the children were at school. Also being Maori and having to compete in a Pakeha world could also have influenced the parents in as much as Betty's and Te Ahumi's parents thought that to be successful in a Pakeha environment, they would need to have a good education and gain qualifications. Te Ahumi was educated in a European private school and her father stressed the importance of a good education but also encouraged her to "*hold fast to her Maoritanga*". Betty's mother insisted on Betty getting a good

education and would have liked her to take a professional course at high school. These Maori parents placed a lot of importance on their daughters having a Pakeha education but equally important was the plea from Te Ahumi's father to hold on to her Maoritanga.

*Te Ahumi - My father always said, "Hold fast to your maoritanga" you know. I didn't even know what it meant at fourteen, and I mean I didn't grasp on to that until I was forty years old and helping with remedial reading out at the Maori boy's college.....*

*Betty - For me. I always thought that my mother was quite visionary. She used to say that "You must get a good education". "You must get your School Certificate" and that's about the limit she knew. She wanted to see us get trained for something. ....she also said that we needed to be like the Pakeha to get on and be successful.*

In summary, four of the eight women interviewed agreed that their parents believed that education was not a high priority for girls and any paid work that they undertook was considered to be an interlude between school and marriage, and at the time, many of the women went along with this assumption. Yvonne and Florence were educated at private schools, but both gave up paid work on marriage. Their parents appeared to value education, but this may have been in order for them to gain status through successful marriages rather than undertake a career. Betty and Te Ahumi, whose parents valued their education and told them they needed to be like the Pakeha to succeed, did not appear to value their education themselves, as Betty took a general course rather than a professional course, as her mother wished, and Te Ahumi left school at fourteen.

When the daughters were at school, the issue of education for girls was beginning to be more publicly recognised. Historically girls have been less likely to go into the sixth or seventh form than boys, but over the past two decades there have been substantially more females entering the upper forms. Sturrock (1993) suggests that over the past twenty years the retention rate for women has doubled where that of men has increased by a third (see Table X).

**Table X. Apparent retention rates of females and males to form 6 and form 7, 1970-91. (Sturrock, 1993)**

<b>Form</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>Form 6</b>			
1970	39.7	46.6	-6.9
1975	47.0	45.0	2.0
1980	54.9	49.1	5.8
1985	57.5	50.8	6.7
1990	74.6	68.6	6.0
1991	80.3	74.6	5.7
<b>Form 7</b>			
1970	8.1	14.2	-6.1
1975	10.3	15.4	-5.1
1980	13.4	15.8	-2.4
1985	16.6	17.9	-1.3
1990	37.5	33.6	3.9
1991	42.0	37.7	4.3

As can be seen from Table X, There has been a steady growth in the number of girls entering the sixth and seventh form. The daughters of the interviewees who were born after the mid-sixties would be included in this growing trend and the grand daughters of the interviewees will most probably be at secondary school throughout the 1990s and would be more likely to enter the sixth and seventh form than their mothers or grandmothers. One of my own grand daughters did a seventh form year and is now at University and another is at present in the seventh form and considering undertaking tertiary education when she leaves school. My own daughters left school after their sixth form year, I left school half way through my fifth form year and my mother did not go to secondary school at all and left school after standard six at the age of 13.

Table XI shows the ratio of female:male employment for different age ranges from 1951 - 1991. From this table it can be seen that fewer women are starting work in the 15-19 age group from 1971 to 1991 than in 1951 when the interviewees were entering the work force. This indicates that girls are staying at school longer. It also indicates the steady rise in females in the workforce for those between 20 and 64 which indicates that many of the women of the daughters' generation are in paid employment.

**Table XI. Labour force participation rate by age and gender, 1951, 1971 and 1991. (Source: Department of Statistics, "Census of Population and Dwellings", 1951-1991 in Sturrock, 1993:95).**

Age	1951		1971		1991	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
15-19	73.6	81.7	56.9	67.2	55.9	58.2
20-24	52.7	96.1	54.9	91.0	73.6	87.5
25-29	25.3	97.6	43.8	95.4	63.8	93.2
30-34	19.5	97.8	29.5	98.2	63.0	93.4
35-39	19.9	97.6	37.9	96.2	73.6	94.8
40-44	21.4	97.4	37.4	98.7	78.6	93.8
45-49	22.3	96.8	49.7	95.3	77.3	94.2
50-54	19.4	93.6	37.7	97.2	69.5	90.5
55-59	15.1	86.4	27.3	84.3	44.3	79.6
60-64	8.9	63.7	5.3	28.6	16.7	33.2
65+	3.4	26.1	3.5	15.7	3.8	9.9
<b>Total</b>	17.8	88.5	33.8	81.2	54.5	74.1

In 1991, women made up just over half of all university enrolments and while teaching and nursing continued to attract women with a university degree there had been an increasing number of women undertaking administration, management and supervisory occupations (See Table XII, Larner, 1996). One of Pat's daughters undertook tertiary education at a theological college, one of Catherine's daughters is undertaking a polytechnic course. One of Jill's daughters undertook university papers as an adult student and one daughter obtained a university degree. Betty's daughter-in-law also obtained a university degree. One of my daughters enrolled at a university as a mature student and my other daughter is considering undertaking tertiary training in the near future. In 1986 the proportion of women students at polytechnics was 36 percent by 1991 this had increased to 45 percent (Sturrock, 1993:77).

While gender divisions of labour both in paid work and unpaid work have always existed in New Zealand and still do to-day, especially in the lower levels of the labour market, according to Larner (1996) there has been a decline in gender segregation in some of the higher levels of paid work which have traditionally been male dominant (See Table XII). As stated earlier, Pat's daughter S..... is an ordained minister of religion and as can be seen in Table XII, in 1971 the percentage of women in this profession was 3.8 while in 1991 the percentage of women was 16.7.

**Table XII. Percentage of women working twenty or more hours a week in selected male dominated professions 1971-1991, in which males represented 85 percent or more of employed persons in 1971 (Goodger *et al*, 1993:94 in Larnar, 1996:100).**

	1971	1976	1981	1986	1991
Physical scientists (excluding technicians)	5.3	6.0	7.1	11.6	14.0
Life scientists (excluding technicians)	12.3	12.2	16.9	19.4	22.3
Architects	1.1	1.8	3.9	5.8	8.1
Civil engineers		0.2	0.5	1.2	2.0
General practitioners	6.4	9.8	12.2	17.4	22.2
Hospital doctors	13.6	16.2	23.6	28.4	34.8
Dentists	1.7	1.6	6.2	7.6	16.0
Veterinarians	2.9	4.2	8.9	15.6	20.4
Pharmacists	13.7	17.2	23.3	30.1	41.2
Systems analysts	5.2	10.1	15.9	26.8	27.2
Economists	2.9	9.5	11.7	20.3	22.5
Accountants	3.6	7.2	10.5	21.3	30.2
Lawyers	1.8	4.5	9.2	15.8	23.4
University professors/ lecturers	13.1	13.3	15.7	20.7	26.1
School principals	9.3	8.2	14.6	20.3	31.7
Ministers of religion	3.8	6.7	8.9	12.5	16.7
Women as percentage of labour force	29.8	32.0	34.2	38.5	40.6

These statistics show the growing trend for more women to enter fields of paid employment which were previously undertaken by men. Because of this the gender division of labour both paid and unpaid becomes less obvious and the possibilities which arise are that in the future men may become full-time unpaid workers in the home, while their female partners become breadwinners.

Because of this emphasis on education for women, more women are undertaking lifetime careers and are either remaining in the paid workforce after marriage or returning to the paid workforce after the birth of their children. Many women are foregoing marriage and having children or they are marrying later in life and having their children later than was the case with the interviewees and their mothers. Unlike the interviewees and their mothers, paid employment is not considered as an interlude between leaving school and getting married. The conclusion I reached is that the daughters and grand daughters are in many cases, valuing their education, and their lifetime careers in the paid workforce are of more value to them than their unpaid domestic work in the home. Many of the women in higher paid positions can afford to pay for home help and therefore the

domestic work has a market value which is seen to be of more value than if they undertook this work themselves.

### Conclusions

When I compared the mothers with the interviewees I found that there was the same expectation that they would undertake unpaid domestic labour and child rearing. Similarly when men carried out these tasks their work was seen as "special", because they were acting against the "norm", and their work was valued higher than when it was done by women. On the other hand, many of the daughters of the interviewees were combining their paid work with their motherhood and unpaid domestic labour and their male partners were assisting more in the home. In many cases the expectation was not as evident, that these women would undertake this work and because their male partners were taking part, the division of labour appeared to be more egalitarian.

There were several anomalies with regard to the value of child care by government policy makers. There were few child care facilities for the interviewees or their mothers when they combined their motherhood with paid work. The conclusions I reached were that because these women were not expected to enter paid employment, when they did so, their child care responsibilities were not valued by government policy makers or employers. In the case of the daughters of the interviewees, there are government subsidised child care facilities, parental leave and the introduction of family friendly workplaces, indicating that these women, unlike their mothers and grandmothers are encouraged to undertake paid employment. Doubt was expressed however, in the case of solo mothers who were recipients of the Domestic Purposes Benefit, as to whether their child care was valued by government policy makers, or even by some of the tax payers. These women are being urged to re-enter the paid work force, and even though their child care is subsidised, many of them may not be able to afford the same quality child care as those women who are in two income families. They will also be forced to pay for someone to care for their children which they are now doing unpaid. On the one hand the government policy makers are valuing this child care when it is paid for and on the other they are devaluing it when it is undertaken unpaid. Another anomaly is that

the interviewees did receive child allowance which indicates that the government policy makers did value their child care. This child allowance was removed in the case of the daughters, and the conclusions I reached are that when the interviewees stayed home full-time and cared for their children, this was valued by the government policy makers, but this is not the case for the daughters.

Contradictions arise when the interviewees discuss their mothers' experiences of domestic labour in the home. They look back at the work their mothers did with pride and describe them as being houseproud, indicating that on recollection they valued the work that their mothers did. On the other hand they state that "*their place was in the home*" and that the expectation was that these women would undertake this work, which actually de-values the work that they did. The same contradictions arise when they describe their mothers as "*the boss*", or how they made important decisions and were good budgeters. They then state that their fathers were "*head of the house*". The conclusions I reached were that many of these women played down the actual power that they did wield in the household so as not to undermine the power of the husband. This situation also applied to any money they earned from paid work which was described as "pin money". The expectation was that the male partners were the "*breadwinners*" and therefore they would lose status if it appeared that the women were actually supplementing the income. Bart & Frankel (1981) state that the status of the husband in the hierarchy of the household gains him the role of "head of the household". This is how he is seen by the general public in an expected patriarchal household. Status to these women was probably of more value than their power in decision making.

Many of these women also gained status in the eyes of their friends and neighbours when they competed with other women for high standards of efficiency and cleanliness in their domestic labour. This indicates that these women perpetuated the belief that this work was expected of them, therefore de-valuing this work themselves, but the status they gained by achieving a high standard of efficiency was valued.

Because many of the daughters are in paid work, some are sole earners and some may be earning more money than their male partners, there is not the same expectation that the male partner will be the major decision maker, be head of the house or breadwinner.

The daughters would most probably be active in making decisions and budgeting for the household and in many cases this work would be shared with their male partners. The conclusions I reached were that when work is shared it is valued more than when it is carried out by one person.

There appeared to be conflicting values between the interviewees and their daughters concerning both informal and formal voluntary work. The interviewees did not recognise the voluntary work which was undertaken by both their mothers and their daughters, mainly because much of the work was informal voluntary work. The daughters were not thought to value the formal voluntary work carried out by the interviewees. The conclusions I reached were that much of the work carried out by the interviewees was for religious organisations or service organisations affiliated to middle-class, conservative, business people. The daughters may not have valued these organisations because of their ideologies. On the other hand, the interviewees may not have valued any formal voluntary work that their daughters may have undertaken which would have been for organisations such as Rape Crisis or Women's Refuge, because of the more liberal, lower middle class/working class status which includes people from all walks of life.

There have been some important changes over the life time of the interviewees, their mothers and their daughters which have affected the perceived value of women's unpaid work. Education was not considered important for both the mothers and the interviewees, and they were mainly educated so that they could undertake paid work as an interlude between leaving school and getting married. The daughters and grand daughters of the interviewees are staying at school longer, undertaking tertiary education, and are sometimes entering careers which are life-time careers which they can return to after the birth of their children.

Priorities have changed in regard to domestic work in the home. The daughters have moved away from the drudgery of the mothers' generation towards the labour saving devices, fast and convenient foods and easy care fabrics which do not require ironing.

This has brought about a change in the value placed on this work and much more value is now placed on paid work, quality time with children, or leisure time.

Attitudes towards the labour of childbirth have changed, where fathers are now included in the birth of their children and not excluded from the delivery room as was the case with the partners of the mothers and the interviewees. This has meant that the fathers, because they are being included now take more part in the child rearing of these children and this work is valued more by them.

For the mothers and the interviewees, children born out of wedlock were considered to be illegitimate and the labour of childbirth was not valued as much as it was for those children who were born to a married mother. Many of the daughters of the interviewees have given birth to children before marriage, are in de facto relationships or are solo mothers. In most cases the labour of childbirth for these mothers would be valued as much as it is for those women who give birth to children within marriage. As pointed out, contradictions can arise however, when a solo mother is classified as a “beneficiary”. Often there is a certain amount of stigma attached to beneficiaries by government policy makers and by tax payers which tend to devalue the work of solo mothers who are dependent on a Domestic Purposes Benefit.

In the next Chapter I will address the question raised as to whether women’s unpaid work is valued, by whom, in what context is it valued or devalued, and how over time this work has been valued more than at other times. I will present my conclusions on the value of women’s unpaid work as they have emerged from my interviews. I will then present some thoughts on the possible implications which may occur in connection with this work, in the twenty first century

## Chapter Five

### *Is Women's Unpaid Work Valued?*

#### **Introduction**

Feminist writers have claimed that women's unpaid work is not valued in a capitalist economy as it is considered unproductive and of no market value (Sassoon, 1987; Waring, 1988, 1996). But as pointed out in Chapter One, monetary value is not the only means of valuing this work. This theory is supported by work by Hyman (1994) and Else (1996). Throughout this thesis I have discussed the experiences of unpaid work both in the home and in the community as experienced by eight New Zealand women between the ages of fifty and seventy in an attempt to discover whether this work is valued, by whom, in what context is it valued or devalued, and whether over time the evaluation of this work has changed. The women interviewed believed that much of this work was not valued by male partners, children, people in paid work, or by government policy makers. At times the women themselves de-valued their own unpaid work, or their ability to undertake this work, and the work undertaken by their mothers and their daughters.

The interviewees have also discussed their perceptions of their own mothers' and their daughters'/daughters'-in-law experiences in unpaid work in the home and in the community. The experiences of these women have been analysed and compared with each other and with the research undertaken by feminist writers. The historical, attitudinal, educational, economic and demographic changes which have taken place in the lives of these women have also been taken into account. As outlined in the methodology, the data for this research was taken from the interviews with these eight women. The data was collated, coded, and sorted into categories which pertained to women's unpaid work using a grounded theory approach.

In Chapters III, the major conclusions which were reached were: (a) when there is an expectation that certain unpaid work will be carried out by women, then that work is devalued. When a man carries out this same work, because he is not expected to

undertake this work it is often considered special; (b) when monetary reward is received for work undertaken, this work is often perceived to be valued more than when this work is unpaid; (c) when unpaid work is shared it can be valued more than when work is undertaken solely by one person; and (d) status gained through both paid and unpaid work carried out by women or their male partners or through competition with other women for high standards of domestic work, often increases the value of this work.

In Chapter IV, I showed how over time the evaluation of women's unpaid work has changed. This is evident when comparing the experiences of the interviewees with their mothers' and their daughters' perceived experiences of unpaid work.

In this Chapter I will present my conclusions on the questions which were raised throughout this thesis: (1) Is women's unpaid work valued? (2) By whom is women's unpaid work valued? (3) In what context is women's unpaid work valued or de-valued? (4) Has this work been valued more at some times than at other times? I will conclude this chapter with thoughts on possible implications which may eventuate in the twenty first century pertaining to the value of women's unpaid work both within the home and in their voluntary work within the community.

### *Is Women's Unpaid Work Valued?*

While there is an expectation that women will undertake the unpaid domestic labour in the home, child rearing and caring for sick and elderly relatives, this work will be devalued. As has been pointed out when men do undertake much of this work, because it is not considered the 'norm', their work is valued more highly than when it is done by women. Many women who are not in paid work, are expected to undertake much of the voluntary work for charitable organisations and churches. This does not mean that men do not undertake this work, but because of their presumed availability, women are more involved in this work than men. In the interviews, Pat has described the scarcity of men undertaking voluntary work and has suggested that "*men are like gold*". Because fewer men make themselves available to undertake this voluntary work, when they do become involved, their contribution is valued more highly than that of women's.

## ***By Whom is Women's Unpaid Work Valued?***

### ***The Interviewees***

Contradictions arose when the interviewees discussed their own mothering work. They described it as “wonderful”, “paramount”, “the most important task”, which indicates that they valued this work. On the other hand some of these women felt inadequate as mothers in the early years of child rearing, and many felt guilt when they combined their paid work with mothering. This perceived inadequacy, and the feelings of guilt experienced by these women was brought about because of the expectations which were placed on these women that mothering was some innate quality which they were expected to have. When these women combined their paid work with mothering, they felt they had to be superwomen to achieve the highest standards in both of these fields. The perception was that they were being judged by their peers and if they did not reach the standards which were expected of them, they had failed in their work. Therefore it is concluded that at times the interviewees were uncertain about the value of their own unpaid work.

The interviewees themselves devalued their domestic labour when they labelled it “not real work”. While work which is done for payment is described as “proper” work. When the interviewees looked back at their mothers domestic work, many of them recalled this work with pride indicating that they did value it, but probably when they were younger they took this work for granted. Similarly, Yvonne believed that her father admired the unpaid work that her mother did, but because he contributed little towards this work, it can be concluded that he took it for granted, therefore de-valuing it.

Most of the interviewees agreed that when they received monetary reward for work done, it was valued more by them than when they carried out this work unpaid. Pat stated that in most cases the recipients of the voluntary work that she undertook, showed appreciation for this work, indicating that this work was valued. On the other hand when she did not receive positive feed-back for the work she was doing, it was her perception that this work was not valued.

Most of the interviewees did not think their mothers or their daughters were involved as much in voluntary work as they had been. When the interviews were analysed it was discovered that both the mothers and daughters had been involved in *informal* voluntary work but there was no indication that they had been involved in the *formal* voluntary work that the interviewees had been involved in. Because the interviewees did not recognise the voluntary work their mothers and daughters had undertaken, I conclude that they did not value the informal voluntary work that they had carried out.

Much of the paid work which was undertaken by both the mothers and the interviewees was considered to be secondary income and was not valued as highly as the paid work undertaken by their male partners. In some cases this work was labelled "*pin money*" which trivialises this work and therefore devalues it. In many cases the women themselves de-valued their work as they still referred to their male partners as breadwinners and in the case of the mothers, head of the house.

### ***Male Partners***

In general, most of the male partners of the interviewees and their mothers, took the child rearing work of their wives for granted. When men did take part in child care, it was usually in changing or washing napkins and was in no way an equal share. When these men did undertake this work, because it was not the 'norm', it was considered to be special and therefore valued higher than when their wives carried out this work. A different situation has arisen with the male partners of the daughters of the interviewees. It appears that they do take more part in child birth and in child rearing than their own fathers or grandfathers did. This was not the case with all of the partners of the daughters, but does indicate that they are valuing this work more.

The interviewees described how when their husbands retired they become more involved in the domestic labour in the home. Because these men often believe that they are more efficient than their wives, they are de-valuing the work that their wives have carried out over the years and believe that their contribution is of more value. Many of these men are transferring the power which they once wielded in the paid work place, to the

kitchen. The power which many women wielded in the kitchen is then relinquished to their male partners. On the other hand, the interviewees indicate that they feel more annoyed than threatened, and in some cases “humour” their partners, indicating that they do not put too much value on the efforts of their husbands, but just go along with it. It was also apparent that much of the domestic work carried out by the men was that which involved kitchen gadgets or cooking, and the more menial tasks, such as cleaning the toilet, or washing the kitchen floor, were carried out by the women. The conclusion I reached here was that the men put more value on the tasks which appeared to be more satisfying and technical than they did on the more menial tasks which the women carried out.

### *Interviewees' Mothers*

Many of the mothers de-valued the power that they wielded in the home so as not to undermine the status of their husbands, who were considered to be the “breadwinner” and “head of the house”. I have concluded that these women put more value on their status than on any position of power they may have had in the home. The value of status gained by these women, is also indicated when women compete with one another for high standards of efficiency in their domestic work as this gains them prestige among their friends and neighbours.

### *Interviewees' Daughters and Their Partners*

The daughters of the interviewees did not place the same priority on their unpaid domestic work in the home and as many of them were in paid employment they probably valued their paid work more than their unpaid work. Because the male partners of the daughters were sharing more in the unpaid domestic work in the home, the perception is that they valued this work more. In not every case did this sharing appear to be equal, as the women did the major share. The only indications where male partners did an equal, or greater share, of this work was Betty's son, Pam's son-in-law, and Catherine's son. It is concluded that when this work is shared on an equal basis the division of labour in the home becomes more egalitarian and therefore is valued more. Thus, the daughters' partners valued it more than the interviewees' partners.

Although it was not stated, it is possible that the daughters were involved in *formal* voluntary work such as Women's Refuges, Rape Crisis or Help Lines. Much of the *formal* voluntary work carried out by the interviewees was for churches or for service organisations such as Rotary and Inner Wheel. I concluded that the daughters may not value the voluntary work undertaken by their mothers because of the perception that these organisations are based on ideologies and conservatism, and the organisations are run by middle-class business people. It is possible that these women would be more inclined to work for organisations which were more liberal in their approach and encompass people of different races, cultures or sexual orientation and therefore would value this work more than that undertaken by their mothers. On the other hand, because some of the mothers did not recognise any of the voluntary work that the daughters may be undertaking, it is perceived that they not place very much value on it.

### ***Government Policy Makers***

The payment of family benefit was a recognition by the government of the value of motherhood. However in 1990 Family Benefit was abolished by the National Government. By abolishing this payment motherhood, appears to be de-valued by the government policy makers. The daughters of the interviewees do not receive any family benefit, but are entitled to parental leave, child care subsidies and moves are being made to provide family friendly workplaces for people with family responsibilities, who wish to enter the paid workforce. These facilities were not available for the interviewees or their mothers, if they wished to combine paid work with mothering work. This indicates that the government policy makers now value child care more when these women are in paid work than when they are at home full time. This is also the case when government policy makers reduce the amount paid out to solo mothers on Domestic Purposes Benefits and force these women back into the paid workforce. They offer subsidised childcare for these beneficiaries, but the work which these women once did unpaid, will now be done by another person for payment.

Many of the women interviewed believed that there was not very much help for them when they cared for their sick and elderly relatives. There was the perception that government policy makers were not aware of the work that these women were doing

because of the lack of financial support and back-up services. The conclusion that I reached was that the government policy makers were aware of this work but it served their purposes to ignore this work. When women are available to undertake the caring work it relieves the financial obligation of government policy makers to finance institutional care or health services. A similar situation arises with voluntary agencies and churches who rely on the unpaid work of women who undertake voluntary work. While these organisations carry out voluntary work for those in need, they relieve the government policy makers of this responsibility. These organisations are not fully funded, and therefore could not carry out this work without the help from these women. I therefore conclude that because of the withdrawal of support by government policy makers, this work is de-valued.

***In What Context is Women's Unpaid Work Valued or Devalued?***

As stated earlier it is often difficult to generalise as to the value of women's unpaid work as it depends on the context of this work and often the conclusions are contradictory. When women state that "*motherhood is the most valuable work that a woman can do for the nation*" they obviously value this work highly. On the other hand when they agree that there is an expectation that they will carry out this work, this work is perceived to be under-valued. When the interviewees discussed their mothers' domestic work in the home they all agreed that the expectation was that "*women's place was in the home*". But many of these women looked back at the work that their mothers did without the aid of labour saving devices and recalled with pride their standards of efficiency in this work. When the interviewees were growing up they accepted the work that their mothers did, believing that there was an expectation that they would carry out this work. It is only when they looked back at it that they really valued this work. I conclude that in most cases these women valued this work. Families took for granted that these women would undertake this work. Because of the expectation that these women would undertake this work it is perceived that the families did not value the work.

Women who work as helpmeet to support their husbands in their careers: valued the status they received from their husband's career; they were valued by their husband's employer as he was getting "two for the price of one"; and they were valued by their

husbands, as they assisted him in his career. On the other hand, because this work was expected of them, it was de-valued, and because they were labelled helpmeet they were not valued in their own right.

*How Over Time the Evaluation of Women's Unpaid Work Has Changed?*

As can be seen in the brief historical overview in Chapter II, there have been many social and economic changes which have occurred over the twentieth century that have influenced these women, their mothers and their daughters/daughters-in-law, and the paid and unpaid work that they have undertaken. Attitudes have changed greatly over this period towards education for girls, women's paid labour, unpaid labour both within the home and the community and the gender division of household labour. The major historical events such as two world wars, the Great Depression, the rise of the feminist and union movements, periods of economic stability and instability, have all helped shape the changes for women's work both paid and unpaid within the home and the community.

As stated earlier the mothers of the interviewees were described as having great pride in their housework. They competed with one another for the whitest wash and the best kept homes. Through this competition a "good wife" would attain status and therefore would be held in esteem by her friends and neighbours. Husbands and families appeared to take the work done by the women in the 1920s and 1930s for granted and most husbands did not take part in unpaid domestic labour, their main contribution was that of "breadwinner". But despite this the interviewees, who were children at this time, did remember with some pride the accomplishments of their mothers indicating that although they may have taken this work for granted as children, when they looked back on it they saw it as valuable.

I have described some of the valuable work undertaken by women at times of crisis such as during the Depression where women have been described by May (1988) as "creative managers", and World War II when women were encouraged to do their bit to help with the war effort. We can assume that this work at that time which was carried out by women was valued by the government policy makers and the general public. During

World War II, young unmarried women were conscripted into “essential” work and many filled the places of the men overseas. Married women were encouraged to “keep the home fires burning” until their menfolk came home. The work both paid and unpaid that these women undertook was very important to the country, but when the war was over and the men came home these women were encouraged to return to their homes and their routine domesticity and subsequent obscurity. While there was a war on their paid work was valued, but not to the detriment of their unpaid work in the home which was also valued. After the war, their paid work was de-valued and they returned to the expectation that they would be full time in the home undertaking unpaid domestic labour and child rearing.

In the 1950s when many of the interviewees were entering marriage and raising families, the “cult of domesticity” emerged. Again these women competed with one another for the cleanest homes, the whitest wash and the best dressed children. Unlike their mothers, they acquired labour saving devices, which rather than lessening their workload, raised their standards of housewifery. These women were encouraged by the media to excel in their positions as housewives. The general image which was being portrayed to these women by the media was that the unpaid domestic work in the home was to be valued. But most of these women agreed that when they were young housewives they went along with this belief, but when they reflected on it they realised that this was the expectation that they grew up with and therefore de-valued this work.

Later when many of these women entered the paid work force, they were expected to be “superwomen” and carry the double burden of their unpaid domestic work with their paid work. Male partners contributed little to the unpaid domestic work undertaken by their wives and took their work for granted. Many women entering the paid work force after years of managing and budgeting within their homes, were not given any credit for this work by the organisations which employ them. The fact that many of these women were skilled in the art of management and accounting in the day to day running of their homes may well have been under-valued by prospective employers.

The interviewees believed that their daughters/daughters-in-law's male partners played a greater part in the division of unpaid domestic labour than did their partners or their fathers. Many of the male partners cooked meals, did the vacuuming or the washing and the conclusion is that in many cases this work is being valued more by male partners even if their share is not an equal share. Another point which was raised was that the daughters were not as obsessed with housework as their mothers and grandmothers. The incidence of easy care fabrics and fast food has led to a more casual approach to domestic labour and the fact that many of this generation are combining their unpaid work with paid work indicates there is less importance placed on their unpaid work. This leads to the conclusion that the status which the mothers and grandmothers achieved by their high standards of housewifery is now superseded by the status that many of these women achieve in their paid work outside the home.

The male partners of the interviewees and their mothers played very little part in the caring for their children but as can be seen in Chapter IV, the male partners of the daughters were playing a more equal role in child care. As pointed out in Chapter IV, fathers are now taking part in the ante natal and birth process. Until recently fathers have been banished from the delivery room and their part in the birth of the child has been unrecognised. With their inclusion in the birth process we could assume that this could lead to their more equal involvement in the care of their children. They become an active parent and their involvement begins after conception and carries through to adolescence and beyond and therefore I conclude that the labour of childbirth is becoming more egalitarian and therefore valued more.

As can be seen by this research the question of the value/de-valuation of women's unpaid work both within the home and in the community is a matter of by whom, when, and in what context this work is valued. Because of recent research on women's unpaid work and the positive moves by the government to undertake a Time-use Survey which will be completed in 1999 (The Ministry of Women's Affairs, 1997) the unpaid work undertaken by women in the home and the community may be recognised and therefore valued. We can assume that masculinisation of unpaid domestic work will occur as more women join the paid workforce. With the anticipated projected drop in the male

average working life (NZ Department of Statistics, 1991) this may bring about a more perceived value to this work. I conclude that feminisation/masculinisation of any work brings about the consequent undervaluing/overvaluing of this work. An example of this is the invention of the typewriter which was a male invention. When it was discovered that women, who had more dexterity than men, and accepted routine work more than men, the role of secretary became a woman's domain (Matthews, 1991). Consequently this skill has remained amongst the lower-paid occupations in comparison with a male-dominated skill, such as carpentry. Therefore, it is expected that with the masculinisation of unpaid domestic work in the home, this work will subsequently be valued higher.

### **Possible Future Implications**

Toynbee suggests that there are early indications of a new 'social problem' which is "*who is to care for the frail elderly when the baby boomers reach old age*". Young adults are being urged to provide for their old age, as there may be no state-provided pension for them when they reach that stage. Who is to provide for the present day baby boomers when they move into their eighties? The decline of the Welfare State over the past few years has seen a movement in policy-making towards solving problems by returning them to the community. This practice will have to be met by individuals, usually women. As it was at the beginning of the century where many people could not provide food, clothing and shelter for themselves, this is becoming the case today as many families reel under the effects of economic crises (Toynbee, 1995:203).

There is no guarantee that there will be state funded superannuation when this generation retires, so it is necessary for the baby boomers to put money aside for retirement. Jenny Shipley in 1991 suggested that the overall aim of policy is that the state role in retirement income should move towards a safety net approach (Shipley, 1991). The present Government is urging everyone to save for their own retirement starting at an early age. Hyman (1994) believes that this policy fails to recognise the difficulties which will face most lower-income families and in particular women. Extended families are more likely to be wide spread, as the shortage of employment has meant that this generation may have to travel to other centres in order to obtain work.

The conclusion is that these trends will have dire consequences for the voluntary organisations in the future. In a Report undertaken by the Palmerston North Community Services Council in 1996 Swanston (1996) and Ritchie (1996) both stress that there was an increasing difficulty in attracting volunteers, as many of the potential volunteers were themselves constrained by socio-economic factors. There has been a change from volunteers to paid staff, and government has withdrawn provision for what were once basic public services. Because of this there were growing signs of “donor fatigue” and there was competition from voluntary organisations for the “charity dollar”. Both of these writers believe that the world of the voluntary sector and the role for the Community Service Council will be very different in the near future.

What may emerge in the future is a more egalitarian sharing of unpaid work within the home and the community as more women join the paid workforce and more men are full time or part time in the home. If women are not available to undertake voluntary work in the community because of their paid work commitments, their contribution may be replaced by men who are spending more time out of the paid work force. The defined gender roles which have operated in the past may disappear and the patriarchal hierarchy which has operated throughout the ages may fall away. When unpaid work is considered to be “real work” it will be valued by the government policy makers and the general public and when male partners share this work on an equal basis with their wives the division of unpaid labour will be really “egalitarian”.

### **Summary**

Because I did not interview the mothers or the daughters of the interviewees, the material used was based on how the interviewees themselves perceived the experiences of their mothers and daughters. If the mothers and daughters had been interviewed, a different perspective may have been obtained. There are many contradictions in the results of this thesis, and as presented in Chapter One, there is no universal truth as to the value of women’s unpaid work, but a multiplicity of truths. Whether this work is valued or not depends on the context of who is valuing this work and when this work is being valued. Because of this, the method of grounded theory used, proved to be a

satisfactory method of research. The thesis is based on the experiences of the women interviewed, and although many of their experiences were similar, there were also many differences.

The value of this work is that it is based on the experiences of these women and the interviewees are telling their stories in their own words. I, as the researcher, have related and compared these stories. My interpretation and analysis has shown by whom, when and in what context this work has been valued.

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## APPENDIX I

**Women's Unpaid Work. Is it Invisible?****INFORMATION SHEET**

I am June Cave and I am a MPhil Student in Women's Studies and my supervisor is Dr Catherine Bray, Senior Lecturer in Women's Studies. My contact phone/fax number is (06) 324 8142 EMail:jcave@clear.net.nz and Dr Bray's contact number is (06) 356 9099 ext 7861.

I am undertaking a research project towards the attainment of my Master in Philosophy in Women's Studies. The object of my research is to record the experiences of women who undertake unpaid work, in an endeavour to discover whether this work is unrecognised, under-valued and seen as being less deserving than paid work.

You are invited to take part in this study and have been chosen because I feel that your experiences are both individual and at the same time similar to other women chosen for this study, who undertake unpaid work. All the women chosen will be in the fifty plus age group. Unpaid work can involve motherhood, household tasks, supporting a partner in his/her career, caring for elderly, sick or disabled relatives, or undertaking unpaid voluntary work outside the home. It is anticipated that the results of this study will highlight the individual experiences of all participants and also the common threads which link them together. Comparisons will be made among the participants and the endeavour is to discover whether women's unpaid work is indeed unrecognised, under-valued and less deserving than paid work, or whether those in paid work or those who implement economic policies under-value this unpaid work. My intention also is to highlight the valuable contribution that women make which is unpaid.

If you decide to take part in this study, the questions asked will not be structured but will be informal, allowing you to relate your experiences in your own words. It is anticipated that the information required will be gathered in approximately a 1½-2 hour interviews. All interviews will be recorded on tape, unless you have an objection to this, in which case notes will be taken. You will also have the right to have the tape recorder turned off at any point during the interview. Transcriptions of the tapes will be done by myself and can be reviewed by you during and at the completion of the study. During, this research the tapes will be stored so as to ensure confidentiality and anonymity and you have the option to have the tapes returned to you, destroyed or archived on completion of this research. If the audio tapes are archived, they will be stored in a safe area so as to preserve your confidentiality.

If you agree to take part in this study, your first name only will be used in the research and if you wish anonymity, you are free to use another name, chosen by yourself. You have the right to decline answering any questions asked, and you have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. You will also have the right to ask any questions about the study during your participation. Any information given will be confidential to the research and any publications resulting from it. Any identifying information, apart from the name you choose to use will be removed or obscured so as to preserve the

anonymity of yourself. At the conclusion of the study you will have access to a summary of the findings if you so wish.

If you wish to take part in this research you could either telephone me on 06 324 8143 (collect for distance calls) or I could contact you. I look forward to our further communication.

Yours sincerely,

June Cave  
C/- Dr Catherine Bray  
Department of Women's Studies  
MASSEY UNIVERSITY.  
PALMERSTON NORTH

**APPENDIX II****Women's Unpaid Work. Is it Invisible?****CONSENT FORM**

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I understand I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time and to decline to answer any particular questions.

I agree to provide information to the researchers on the understanding that my name will not be used without my permission. *(The information will be used only for this research and publications arising from this research project).*

I agree/do not agree to the interview being audio taped.

I understand that I have the right to ask for the audio tape to be turned off at any time during the interview.

I also understand that I have the option to have the audio tapes returned to me, destroyed or archived on completion of this research.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

I wish the audio tapes returned (  ), destroyed (  ) or archived (  ) on completion of this research. **(please tick your preference)**

Signed: .....

Name: .....

Date: .....

Contact Phone Number:.....

## APPENDIX III

C/- 8 Kina Street  
Tangimoana

5 August, 1997

Mrs

Dear

Thank you for taking part in my research on Women's Unpaid work. I have completed the transcripts and am in the process of writing up. I have obtained some very interesting results and the result of research women over three generations has produced a century of women's unpaid work.

Thanks again. When the thesis is completed you are welcome to have access to the results.

Yours sincerely,

June

Encl

## APPENDIX IV

**Community Groups in the Palmerston North Area 1995/1996 and the number of volunteers.**

<b>Name of Group</b>	<b>No of Volunteers</b>
Salvation Army Community and Family Services	10
Speld (Manawatu)	8
Te Aroha Noa Family Services	158
Parent to Parent	35
Manawatu Home Budgeting Service	30
Palmerston North Citizens Advice Bureau Inc	49
Epilepsy Association New Zealand Inc.	12
Birthright (Palmerston North) Inc.	45
Alzheimers Society (Inc.) Manawatu	8
Youthline (Palmerston North) Inc.	25-30
ESOL (English as a Second Language)	60
Schizophrenia Fellowship Manawatu Inc.	10
Community Health Group	6-10
Pacific Island Community Health Group	All Volunteers
Manawatu Toy Library Association Inc.	65
Pregnancy Counselling Services Inc.	All volunteers
The Hearing Association - Manawatu Branch	9
National Council of women	All volunteers
Palmerston North Women's Refuge	27
CCS Manawatu/Horowhenua Inc.	12
Palmerston North Women's Health Collective Inc.	13
The Samaritans (Manawatu Inc.)	100
Creative Sounds Society Inc.	2-5
Barnardos New Zealand	23
Disabled Persons Assembly (NZ) Inc.	9
Manawatu Age concern Council (Inc.)	100
YWCA Palmerston North	50
Drug Arm	44
The IV Union Trust	4
Palmerston North Adult Reading and Learning Assistance	90
Methodist Social Service Centre	180
Open Learning Centre - Te Whare Akonga	30
Anglican Social Work Trust	60-70
Manawatu Multiple Sclerosis Society	12
Audrey Green Disability Information Centre	30
Manline/Manawatu Men Against Violence	25
Community Development Forum (Manawatu Inc.)	7-10
Manawatu Workers Educational Association (WEA)	6-8
Parentline CAPS Manawatu Inc.	12-18
Phoenix Inc.	20
Open Home Foundation	75
Youth One Stop Shop	6
Advocacy Manawatu Inc.	25
Milson Community Centre	5
Pacific Island Community Health Group	15

*Figures obtained from "Sharing our Stories" Palmerston North Community Services Council 1971-1996.*