Chapter 3: Feminist Debates about Accounting for Women's Work

After outlining the feminist critique of national accounting - that it ignores much of the work women do - the previous chapter considered various attempts to extend national accounting to include non-market production. The Australian estimates produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Duncan Ironmonger and Graeme Snooks fitted a broad feminist agenda of making women's work visible, but they were at heart market based measures. These measures simply imposed a market logic onto the non-market production which they considered.

This chapter draws from a range of feminist critiques which suggest that importing market frameworks into an analysis of non-market production hides as much as it reveals about that production and about women's work in particular. From the basic unit of analysis (the household), to the neoclassical 'rationality' and time use categories assumed in the measurement, feminists have challenged the appropriateness of almost all aspects of the project of giving a dollar value to women's household work. These critiques argue that household work should be considered on its own terms and not squeezed into market frameworks. This chapter considers these feminist critiques in order to begin what is a much larger argument about the use of market frameworks to define and measure the economy.

Problems with the Extended Accounts

The problem with using market based measures to value household production begins with the choice of the household as the unit of analysis. As was noted Chapter 1, the choice of the household as a unit of analysis is crucial in setting the production boundary - and therefore in defining (final) GDP production, and thus "the economy". *Final* demand is defined in the national accounts by the purchase (from the market) of goods and services *by the household*.

However, if we accept the logic that non-market production is production (and therefore that the market is not the production boundary line[1]), then there is no reason to view the household

---

1 Of course, as we saw in Chapter 2, the imputations which exist in the national accounts make problematic the claim that the market is the delimiter of production. Again, see Australian Bureau of Statistics (1990) *Australian National Accounts: Concepts, Sources and Methods*, Cat No. 5216.0.

as a unit. Goods and services are clearly produced and exchanged/transferred within the household. Thus, the logic of the extended accounts should posit the individual, not the household, as the final consumer. Yet in the extended accounts discussed in the previous chapter, the analysis is still in terms of the household as the unit of measurement.[2] In this sense, they posit the household as a unit of final production *and* consumption.

While this analysis may be adequate for single person households, feminists have long questioned the assumed altruism and equality which underlies the notion of the family household as a unit. Often the analysis of the household as a unit is based on a notion of different but equal adult partners making consensual decisions for the collective household good. Such assumptions have been prevalent in different schools of household studies literature from Parsons' functionalist analysis of the 1960s to more recent liberal analyses,[3] including most notably Gary Becker's work and the "New Household Economics" based in neoclassical theory.[4] But the assumption of harmonious households cuts across an understanding of relations within the household. Indeed, far from domestic harmony (and joint utility functions), radical and dual systems feminists have posited fundamentally antagonistic relations within households,[5] while 'French' and postmodern feminists have pointed to the hierarchical nature of gender difference more generally.[6]

The decision to use the household rather than the individual as the unit of measurement implies that the commonalities between members of a household are of more importance than the differences - including gender differences. Almost by definition then, focusing on the household as a unit hides the gender and work relations within households of more than one person, and is particularly problematic for any feminist-informed analysis seeking to

---

Canberra: ABS.; and Marilyn Waring (1988) *Counting for Nothing: What Men Value and What Women Are Worth*, Wellington: Allen & Unwin. ch 4.

2 Ironmonger makes the explicit in the opening paragraph of his book: Duncan Ironmonger, ed (1989) *Households Work: Productive Activities, Women and Income in the Household Economy*, Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1989. p 1.

3 See J. Baxter (1990) "Domestic Labour: Issues and Studies" *Labour and Industry*, Vol 3, No. 1.

4 Lourdes Benería (1995) "Toward a Greater Integration of Gender in Economics" *World Development*, Vol 23, No. 11, p 1840. See also, Paula England (1993) "The Separative Self: Androcentric Bias in Neoclassical Assumptions" in Marianne A Ferber and Julie A Nelson (ed), *Beyond Economic Man: Feminist Theory and Economics*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press. pp 47 - 48.

5 Christine Delphy and Diana Leonard (1992) *Familiar Exploitation: A New Analysis of Marriage in Contemporary Societies*, Cambridge: Polity Press; Sylvia Walby (1989) "Theorising Patriarchy" *Sociology*, Vol 23, No. 2, pp 213 - 234.

6 Chris Beasley (1999) *What is Feminism, Anyway? Understanding Contemporary Feminist Thought*, Sydney: Allen & Unwin. ch 6 & 7.

illuminate the nature of women's work.[7] Once we look into the gender and work relations within the household we see more problems in applying market frameworks, the first of which is in the imputation of market wages as a measure of the value of household labour.

I have already referred several times to the problems caused by the gender inequality in the (paid) labour market and the market's devaluation of women's work. Using the market as a yardstick with which to estimate household labour therefore results in a devaluation of women's non-market production. The dilemma for feminist economists is that they can either value women's labour as equal to men's work, and thereby seemingly sacrifice the accuracy of some of their economic tools (and possibly their professional credibility) by not imputing appropriate market values; or they can impute values closer to the market values, and thereby compromise their feminist political objectives by devaluing women's work.

However, this is only the beginning of the problems with imputing a market wage value for household labour. Such imputations assume - and perhaps more importantly *suggest* - that work in non-market production follows the same logic as market production. Time use and work value decisions are constructed as reflecting the same economic rationality posited by neoclassical economic theory: individual preference, opportunity cost, and utility maximisation by autonomous individuals. But there is a well established feminist critique of the 'rational' basis of neoclassical economics.[8] Not only can the application of such neoclassical rationality legitimise the status quo (if men earn on average more in the labour market than women, then it is rational to specialise with men working in the market and women in the home), but the whole subject of the neoclassical theory, the "rational economic man" is precisely that: a man. The autonomy and calculation based on material gain relate to men's participation in the public/market sphere rather than the 'encumbrances' of emotional

---

7 In a sense this is a parallel argument to Resnick and Wolff's analysis that, because of its starting point, neoclassical economics can not identify antagonistic class relations. Stephen Resnick and Richard Wolff (1987) *Economics: Marxian Versus Neoclassical*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press. ch 1.

8 See Marianne A Ferber and Julie A Nelson, ed (1993) *Beyond Economic Man: Feminist Theory and Economics*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993. Prue Hyman (1992) "The Use of Economic Orthodoxy to Justify Inequality: A Feminist Critique" in Rosemary Du Plessis and Phillida Bunkle (ed), *Feminist Voices: Women's Studies Texts for Aotearoa/New Zealand*, Auckland: Oxford University Press. A good summary of the argument is also contained in the first chapter of Nancy Folbre (1993) *Who Pays for the Kids? Gender and the Structures of Constraint*, London: Routledge.

ties, attachments and responsibilities in the private sphere.[9] As such, neoclassical economics fails to take account of gender, culture, institutions and power - what Folbre calls structures of constraint.[10]

However, even if neoclassical economic 'rationality' was not gendered, there would still be a question concerning valuing women's household work by the market measure, precisely because it *is non-market* production. The product of the household is not sold on the market and there is no competition or profit motive to enforce market behaviours. Similarly, household labour is not bought and sold in a labour market and market 'wage' values do not apply. As Delphy notes, unlike the fixed wage contract in capitalist production,

> [t]he services which a married woman provides ... are not paid according to a fixed scale. Her keep does not depend on her work, but on the wealth and goodwill of her husband. For the same work (for example, the rearing of three children) the wife of a business executive receives as much as ten times the benefits received by the wife of a manual worker. On the other hand, for the same benefits, a wife may furnish very different quantities and kinds of services, depending on the needs of her husband.[11]

In short, the benefits which wives receive have no relation to the services which they provide, and so any valuation which is derived from a national accounts style (imputed) income is bound to be both inaccurate (as to the 'value') and misleading as to the labour processes which it purports to reflect.

Similar arguments can also be made in relation to the extended accounts imputations for household capital. The idea of imputing a value for a flow of services for household capital may balance the comparison between market and non-market sectors in some senses. However, such imputations are based on the assumption that durable "capital" goods in other sectors generate a flow of profits analogous to that in the market sector. Market capital is invested precisely because it will produce that value flow. Yet it is not at all clear that decisions about household capital are made on the same basis, or that there is an analogous flow of profit. "Institutionalist" economists going back to Thorstein Veblen have noted the importance of social/cultural considerations and conspicuous consumption in determining the

---

9 On this point, see England, *op.cit.*; and Nancy Fraser (1989) *Unruly Practices: Power, Discourse and Gender in Contemporary Social Theory*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

10 Folbre, *op.cit.*

11 Delphy, "The Main Enemy" reprinted in Christine Delphy (1984) *Close to Home: A Materialist Analysis of Women's Oppression*, London: Hutchinson. p 70.

purchases of household goods.[12] Purchases might be made to flaunt wealth rather than to increase household production. This would suggest that at least some of the expenditure which Ironmonger and Snooks count as household capital investment should be regarded as consumption rather than investment.

However, even if such expenditure is regarded unproblematically as 'investment' in 'household capital', there is a further question over the basis of costing any imputed flow of 'profits'. There are crucial differences in the processes of capital formation in the household and market sectors. Hugh Stretton and Lionel Orchard argue that, in theory, the market provides for competitive bidding for capital funds. Those who can make the most productive (profitable) use of capital can therefore pay the highest price it. In the long term, this competition ensures an equilibrium market rate for capital returns.[13]

Stretton and Orchard acknowledge that there are many real life market failures and inefficiencies, but the more important point is that this market process and rationality *cannot* be true of household capital. It cannot be true because the productive use which a household can make of its capital (house, garden, car etc) is *not* linked to the ability to pay for the capital. The household's ability to save up or to borrow capital funds depends on what its members inherit or earn from paid employment, *not* on their potential productivity using the domestic capital. The market discipline which theoretically ensures the equilibrium return on capital is absent.[14] Again, the household economy is seen to have different dynamics to the market and any valuation which rests on assumptions of market behaviour is questionable.

Time Based Alternatives

These problems with market valuation of the household economy have led some authors to argue that labour time, not money, should be the basis of comparison between market and household sectors. Lois Bryson argues that time, like money, is a scarce resource with an opportunity cost. But time is a more useful medium for general evaluation because,

> in contemporary western societies, time is measured in a standardised manner (24 hours

---

12 Robert Heilbroner (1972) *The Worldly Philosophers*, New York: Touchstone. pp 220 - 226.

13 Hugh Stretton and Lionel Orchard (1994) *Public Goods, Public Enterprise, Public Choice: Theoretical Foundations of the Contemporary Attack on Government*, New York: St Martin's Press. p 191.

14 *ibid.*

per day) that can be applied equally and simultaneously to paid and unpaid effort.[15]

Bryson goes on to note that the 1992 ABS Time Use statistics show that Australians spend almost 18 billion hours a year doing unpaid work, by comparison with the 16 billion hours in paid labour. This statistic reverses the relationship of the value of paid work to unpaid work. When based on monetary valuations the contribution (as opposed to the actual hours) of paid/market labour is the greater. Of course, such time-use analyses could be criticised because they measure only time use and ignore the contribution of capital; they measure labour not production.

However, in an exercise not dissimilar to the extended accounts discussed earlier, Jonathon Gershuny has constructed economic accounts for the United Kingdom which include "capital", but which are based on time rather than money.[16] Gershuny's accounts are input-output accounts based on the notion of chains of provision. To supply any good or service, Gershuny argues, a number of different production processes are possible utilising different amounts of paid and unpaid labour occurring in the formal or informal (household, community sector, and illegal) economy. Most final consumption then rests on a combination of paid and unpaid labour, which Gershuny accounts for in terms of time spent in each stage in the production process. Thus shelter/clothing is produced with:

- time use in housework;
- goods including rent, rates, power, fuel, furniture, cleaning materials, etc;
- marketed services including repairs, insurance, decoration;
- and non-market services like sewerage, refuse disposal, fire and welfare services.

Rather than giving a market money value for each of these categories of goods, Gershuny translates the money expenditure statistics into time units based on the employment time spent producing those goods and services in the economy. The result is a time-based system of accounts which he has calculated for the United Kingdom in 1961 and 1983. An abridged version of his summary table is produced in Table 3.1 below.[17]

---

15 Lois Bryson (1996) "Revaluing the Household Economy" *Women's Studies International Forum*, Vol 19, No. 3, p 212.

16 Jonathon Gershuny (1989) "Time, Technology and the Informal Economy" in R. E. Pahl (ed), *On Work: Historical, Comparative and Theoretical Approaches*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

From Gershuny's figures, we can see, for instance, that the production of shelter in 1983 accounted for almost a quarter of total economic time and required 73 minutes per average day of time outside employment, 46 minutes of paid work within Britain, and 16 minutes of work imported from foreign countries. This was a substantial decrease from the amount of time required both outside the market (93 minutes) and in paid work (61 minutes) to produce shelter in 1961.

These time statistics can show not only increases in productivity over time, (as in the housing example above), they can also show changes in the way goods and services are produced in terms of the links and inter-relatedness between various sectors, including between market and non-market sectors. For instance, in 1961 paid work contributed 42.4% of the production of food (etc) in the household, whereas by 1983 it contributed only 25.8%. This resulted from time in food related non-market work remaining fairly steady over the period, while the market time required declined.

Table 3.1 A Time-Based System of Accounts (UK)

	Time Employ	**Outside ment**	**Time Employ**	**in ment**	**All Paid**	**Foreign Work**
	Non-work	Work	White Collar	Manual	**Work in UK**	**from Imports**
	Minutes per average day					
1961						
Shelter, house maintenance	0	93	25	36	61	14
Food, sleep etc	659	68	16	24	40	10
Home leisure, child care	268	12	7	10	16	4
Shopping, travel	0	41	6	7	13	1
Out of home leisure	45	0	8	3	11	2
Medicine, education	16	0	20	7	27	2
Background services[18]	0	0	15	14	29	1
Exports	0	0	13	25	38	6
All time use	**989**	**215**	**110**	**126**	**236**	**40**
1983						
Shelter, house maintenance	0	73	25	21	46	16
Food, sleep etc	647	63	8	8	16	6
Home leisure, child care	284	17	7	5	12	3
Shopping, travel	0	70	5	4	9	2
Out of home leisure	70	0	9	2	11	2
Medicine, education	22	0	30	5	36	3
Background services	0	0	17	7	24	1
Exports	0	0	19	21	39	10
All time use	**1023**	**224**	**120**	**73**	**193**	**43**

17 Adapted from Table 26.2, *ibid.*

18 Background services here refers to activities which support the chain of provisioning indirectly: eg, law and order, public administration, defence. *ibid*., p 591.

Gershuny's results may provide the basis for important empirical observations about the total economy. But in terms of the project of defining and measuring the economy, the more general point is that, because the basis is time rather than market values, the figures do not import the market's devaluation of women's work. Nor do the figures immediately suggest the neoclassical 'rationality' implicit in the monetary imputations in the extended accounts. As an innovative approach to the definition and measure of the economy, this time-based measure avoids many of the problems discussed above and thus has a number of advantages over traditional market measures.

However, despite this, there are a number of problems with such time based measures. I noted above the dilemma for a feminist economics that feminist concerns compromise market analysis and market valuations compromise feminist analysis. This dilemma arises because discipline/subject matter of 'economics' is so closely linked to the market. To be seen to be "doing economics" (ie. understanding economic/market behaviour - as opposed to making political/sociological estimates of women's importance or place in society) means to some extent compromising the feminist perspective which would question the market's valuation of women's work. The same argument applies to Gershuny's time based statistics: they may be less politically compromised than market valuations, but they will be seen as marginal to mainstream economics which will continue to be built around market measures and analysis. In this sense the dilemmas for a feminist economics are postponed rather than solved by the time based measures.

I will return to the problem of marginalisation in a later chapter, but even apart from the marginalisation problem there are a range of other problems. Like the market value measures, Gershuny's accounting does not focus on gender relations and is built around the problematic "household as unit". While it may be possible to avoid some of these problems by re-jigging the time-based approach, the real problem is that the production/time nexus itself tends to hide rather than illuminate the nature of women's work in the home. This can be seen when we consider a number of (related) issues about women's time-usage in the home.

Household Time Use and the Politics of Measurement

The first problem of the production/time nexus is that housework does not divide easily into individual tasks which are performed sequentially. More likely, particularly where childcare

is involved, two or more tasks will be done at the same time. In a standard sort of example, a mother may be childminding while engaged in other household chores, but she may also be ironing or sweeping while dinner is cooking or clothes are churning in the washing machine. Similarly, household work may be combined with distinctly leisure activities (having a drink while dinner cooks) or time spent childminding may consist of watching television or playing cards. Clearly any time use surveys which classified activities according to one activity (as the early ABS surveys did) both disguise the nature of much household work and risks either under or overestimating time spent.

Asking questions about simultaneous activities ("main" and "other" activities, as the ABS 1997 Time Use survey did), and weighting hours spent in household labour to discount non-productive time, begins to address this problem.[19] Similarly, output based measures like Ironmonger's approach, might be preferable because the outputs - both child minding and meal preparation for instance - are valued independently of the value of any imputed labour input (simultaneous or otherwise).[20] But these are technical solutions to data collection problems. They do not address the more fundamental question of the appropriateness of the time/task model in analysing household work. This problem is particularly apparent when we expand the focus on women's household work to ask about *responsibility* for this work.

Doing the work, whether at home or in market work, is different from taking responsibility for seeing that it is done. By focussing largely on the physical work done in the household, time use surveys ignore firstly the managerial and secondly the timeless nature of the work. While specific management functions like budgeting and paying bills can be captured in time use surveys, the surveys do not include the decision making concerning what needs to be done, what is to be bought, cooked etc. This planning and decision making function may not take time as a separate activity, but it is important.

Jacqueline Goodnow cites studies which suggest that what women wish for is that someone else takes over a complete task - noticing that it needs to be done and doing it or seeing that it

---

19 A method for weighting simultaneous activities is outlined in Ross Williams and Susan Donath (1993) *Simultaneous Uses of Time in Household Production*, Department of Economics, University of Melbourne. Research Paper 370.

20 Duncan Ironmonger (1996) "Counting Outputs, Capital Inputs and Caring Labour: Estimating Gross Household Product" *Feminist Economics*, Vol 2, No. 3, p 51.

is done, rather than simply helping when asked and working to instruction.[21] Noticing that something needs to be done is not an activity which will appear in a time use survey, but it is still part of household management. Both the noticing and the responsibility for much of this work falls to women, as evidenced by the fact that where children's self-care tasks were not done, they usually reverted back to the mother.[22] This responsibility for household work means that time shares don't fully measure household equality, as time spent on tasks may be equivalent without the workload being equivalent.

The problem of lack of recording of household management is a particular problem for the money based extended accounts. In the replacement cost valuations, the household functions for which money values are imputed have no managerial components and there are no managerial wages included in the imputations. The opportunity cost approach similarly underestimates women's work. While women perform management functions in most homes, they are less likely to do so in the paid work force. Thus the wages deemed to be forgone (the opportunity cost) are less than the value of the unpaid labour which does include managerial responsibility.

The problem is not simply that women's household labour *is not* shown in time use surveys. The problem is that it *cannot* be shown. Women's household management cannot be shown because, on the one hand, management activities (noticing and/or knowing what needs to be done and asking someone to do it, or seeing that it has been done) take no discernible time. On the other hand, the responsibility is always there - there is no clock-off time.

This permanent responsibility is only one aspect of the never-ending nature of housework. Childcare is another major area. Specific tasks of childcare (cooking, bathing etc) can be captured in time use surveys, and many tasks (minding, entertaining) can be done in conjunction with other household tasks. However the more general task of child care involves things which can not be effectively captured by simple time use: being there, being responsible, being available or knowing where children are and where they need to be got to (and how).

---

21 Goodnow in Ironmonger, *op.cit*., p 40.

22 *ibid*., p 50.

This never-endingness of the household work day, coupled with the fact that two or more household tasks may be done at the same time, or household tasks may be mixed with leisure tasks, make the measuring of household work by time use problematic. Again, this critique applies to both time-based and money value measures. But it should also be recognised that these issues are not simply problems of data collection. These issues are a fundamental epistemological/political challenge to the principle that household labour should be measured in the way other labour is measured. Household labour is not like labour in the market where there is a clear start and finish point. Applying measures such as time spent on work hides the nature of the work women do in the home, while using market valuations heightens the problem by distorting the value of that work.

These problems can also be seen in relations to women's "emotional labour" in the household, but the issue of emotional labour raises a number of other questions about the difference of women's work and will be dealt with at length in Chapters 4 and 5. Nevertheless, enough has been said about the problems of time-use measurement of household labour to suggest serious dilemmas for a definition and measure of the economy based on labour time.

There is also a further argument which raises somewhat different, but important critiques of both time based measures and market value imputations for household labour. This argument relates to the difference in rewards between paid and unpaid work. Again this has a gender dimension. Even if men and women spend about the same amount of total time in work, which Bryson argues they do, men spend the greatest proportion of their work time in paid work, while women spend most work time in unpaid work. This makes for a considerable difference in outcome.[23]

Bryson argues that women's primary responsibility for childcare, the subsequent broken career paths, lost superannuation and other occupational welfare benefits, as well as the lesser status of unpaid work, amount to a considerable loss for women in relation to men. She quotes an Australian study by Beggs and Chapman which suggests that women with an average level of education and two children earn only 44% of their potential lifetime earnings in paid

---

23 Bryson, *op.cit.*, pp 215 - 216.

work.[24] Thus Bryson concludes that:

> the issue is, therefore, *not just a matter of equitable distribution of total time* spent on paid and unpaid work, but *also* of the rewards and satisfaction that are afforded. Effectively, these are issues of equal citizenship.[25]

In terms of the definition and measurement of the economy, Anne Jennings goes further. Jennings argues that the money form of market production is vital to accounting for/understanding production. Equally importantly, she draws on arguments like those above to suggest that money is a male prerogative. Money is important and men have greater access to it. The idea that money is simply a veil for production and barter values, Jennings argues, comes from Adam Smith and has been incorporated into neoclassical economics. By contrast Marx's classic formulation of production process as M-C-M' (capitalists start with money, buy commodities and produce new commodities which will return more money) suggests that the money form (and the increase in its quantity) is the purpose of production. Jennings goes on to argue that the undervaluing of women's work in the market and the "male breadwinner"/family wage nexus makes women's access to money not symmetrical with work/production. Thus she concludes that,

> barter models that banish money (because it is a veil) can recognise women's economic contributions, but the absence of money in such models obscures familial power relationships linked to the asymmetry of money, cultural dissociations of women/domestic labour from money, and women's lesser access to money.[26]

For a feminist informed economics, the recognition of the importance of money as an asymmetrical and deeply gendered form of exchange, raises important questions about the appropriateness of imputing money equivalents for non-market production. Again, the market valuations are seen to hide as much as they reveal about the economy. But this critique of barter models also applies to time-based measures which similarly ignore the importance of the money form of production. Thus, even if technical solutions could be found which overcame the problems of time measurement of household labour and the market (under)valuation of women's work, the idea of estimating a market equivalent value for non-market production would still be problematic.

---

24 Quoted in Bryson, *ibid.*

25 Emphasis added. *ibid.*, p 216.

26 A L Jennings (1994) "Toward a Feminist Expansion of Macroeconomics: Money Matters" *Journal of Economic Issues*, Vol 28, No. 2, p 560.

What I am criticising here is the application of market principles to non-market production - an approach which Marilyn Waring describes as "conservatively reformist".[27] This is in contrast to the more radical demand that non-market production should be considered on its own terms. This "reformist" label is useful here because, carrying as it does reminders of older debates within socialism of reform vs revolution and wider debates within feminism over the usefulness of "the master's tools", the term highlights what is at stake in the arguments. What is at issue is more than just a political demand (to change the SNA production boundary); it is the whole understanding of society and the political program to change it. The 'reformist' critique is an appeal for women's labour to be included within the capitalist value system, the other is an appeal for a political economy separate to or beyond the existing system (capitalism and/or patriarchy - however defined).

Although I will refer again to these fundamental revolution/reform strategy debates, I do not intend to trace the debates within either socialism or feminism, other than to note that the longevity of the debate, and the fact that the questions are constantly reposited in new ways suggests to me that the issues are not easily resolved with reference to historical fact or theoretical authority. Indeed, I think they are unresolvable in any generalised, final sense. However, more than simply being "reformist" (or perhaps linked to it), it should also be clear that the extension of market definitions and measures is a particularly liberal reform. It is a liberal reform both because it centres the market, and because it is ultimately an appeal for inclusion in the existing structure, rather than an argument for structural change or "difference". In other fields such "equal opportunity" approaches are clearly identified with liberal feminism and so I think the label appropriate.[28]

Labelling the types of definitions and measures discussed in the previous chapter as liberal/reformist does not amount to a total rejection of such approaches and I will return to them in later chapters. It does, however, suggest that the extended accounts approaches do not exhaust the feminist possibilities and critiques of the definition and measurement of the economy. Indeed, similar debates have arisen in other political economies, and I will trace briefly the feminist debates about Marxian definitions of the economy. These socialist

---

27 Waring, *op.cit.*, p 231.

28 Of course socialist feminist approaches have also been branded "equality feminism" by those seeking to focus and celebrate gender difference. Socialist feminism will be discussed separately here. For equality

feminist debates are important in their own right as feminist debates about the definition and measure of the economy. But in the context of this thesis which is focused on critiques of more mainstream measures, the socialist feminist debates are also important because they parallel the liberal feminist debates in their history and structure. These debates therefore shed further light on feminist approaches to defining and measuring the economy.

Socialist Feminist Parallels

We saw in Chapter 1 that Marxism and neoclassical approaches to "the economy" more or less parted company last century. But in the 1970s feminists mounted the same challenges to Marxian definitions and measures as they did to the official measures. These challenges to the absence of non-market production in the Marxian paradigm initiated what came to be known as the domestic labour debate.

Domestic Labour Debate

The domestic labour debate is perhaps best described as a cluster of different arguments which aimed to understand the material basis of women's oppression as arising from women's contribution to capital accumulation. By showing that capitalism benefited from women's unpaid work in the home, these feminists hoped to show that women had a fundamental role within the socialist struggle. It is not necessary to retrace all the arguments of the domestic labour debate here, but some of the central propositions are relevant.

The crux of the debate was the value of labour power. Marx had argued that the value of labour power was determined by the labour time necessary for its production, and consequently reproduction. Women's domestic labour was part of the labour which reproduced male labour power. Wives provided the domestic services which enabled men to front up at the factory gates each day, and they raised the children who ensured the reproduction of labour power over generations. But in order to prove that women's domestic labour was exploited by capital, it was necessary to show that the cost to capital was less than the value actually produced by domestic labour: that is, that domestic labour created more value than that portion of the male (family) wage which went to maintaining the domestic

---

and difference feminisms, see for instance Ariel Salleh (1997) *Ecofeminism as Politics: Nature, Marx and the Postmodern*, London: Zed Books.

labourer.[29] The result was that the debate got bogged down in complex mathematical models in which,

> surplus value is transferred from one sector of the economy to another, figures about what would be most cost effective for capital are pulled out of the air and incomparable things are compared.[30]

These concerns over the arbitrary nature of the costings, and particularly the incomparability of things, clearly paralleled the debates I have reviewed over the official definition and measures. But the attempts to measure the (Marxian) value of household labour also led to long debates about whether household labour was productive in the Marxian sense, and whether it *could* produce value and/or contribute to capitalist surplus value.[31] Molyneux also pointed out that the formulation only applied to family households, whereas the cheapest labour (casual migrant and single workers) was often reproduced without the benefit of female domestic labour.[32] The actual arguments here are not as important as the fact that the debate happened at all. At heart it was a debate about whether and how to extend traditional (in this case, Marxian) definitions and measures to non-market production - again paralleling the impulse to extend the SNA definitions.

By the early 1980s the domestic labour debate was largely exhausted. The Marxian labour value model proved too difficult to apply to domestic labour,[33] and the attempt to show capitalism's exploitation of women's unpaid labour was largely deemed unworkable. Similarly the attempt to reduce patriarchy to capitalism was shown (not just in the domestic labour debate) to be problematic. Not only was it unproven that domestic labour and gender inequality benefited capital or was a product of capitalism, but the questions being asked were suspect from a feminist perspective. The domestic labour debate generally did not examine

---

29 Carol Johnson (1984) "Some Problems and Developments in Marxist Feminist Theory" (ed), *All Her Labours 1: Working It Out*, Sydney: Hale & Ironmonger. p 127.

30 Delphy, 1992, *op.cit.*, p 51.

31 M. Coulson, B. Maga, and H. Wainwright (1975) "The Housewife and Her Labour Under Capitalism - A Critique" *New Left Review*, Vol 89, No. January-February; J. Gardiner (1975) "Women's Domestic Labour" *New Left Review*, Vol 89, No. January-February; W. Seccombe (1974) "Housework Under Capitalism" *New Left Review*, Vol 83, No. January-February.

32 M. Molyneux (1979) "Beyond the Domestic Labour Debate" *New Left Review*, Vol 116, July-August, p 11.

33 I can't resist quoting Delphy and Leonard again on the complexity of the debate: "the remarkable, contradictory and paradoxical thing about the whole interchange was that while it was going on (and still today) everyone knew it was of great importance and that passions surrounded it, but equally, almost no one understood what the heck it was actually about. Most of the literature is unreadably abstruse." Delphy, 1992, *op.cit.*, p 51.

the specific nature and extent of domestic work - only being interested in those aspects relevant to the reproduction of labour power. Similarly the debate never questioned the basis of the sexual division of labour - why it was that it was almost always women who were responsible for domestic labour. When feminists began asking these questions they generally abandoned the domestic labour debate, looking instead for patriarchy's material basis in the sexual division of labour, the segmentation and discrimination in the paid work force, and/or in women's reproductive role.[34]

Thus what we have in the domestic labour debate is a parallel to the debates over the official definition and measure: a critique of the absence of the work that women (primarily) do, and an attempt to extend the existing framework to incorporate that work. Yet, like the national accounts based critiques, there were problems with the "add women and stir" extension. Much of the domestic labour debate attempted to define household production in terms of capitalism rather than on its own terms. However, there were some exceptions. In parts of the domestic labour debate and in some scholarship coming out of it there was an attempt to treat household work, if not on its own terms, then at least with recognition of the specific and different dynamics involved. This was most notable in the work of Christine Delphy and later "dual systems" theorists, and later again in the post-modern Marxist accounts of Harriet Fraad, Stephen Resnick and Richard Wolff.

Post Domestic Labour Debate Formulations

I have already quoted Delphy on the inappropriateness of valuing women's household labour by reference to a capitalist wage, but she also challenged the Marxian argument that domestic labour was not productive. In analysing French farming families Delphy showed that women's work was unpaid regardless of whether it was applied to market production or to use in the home. For women there was a continuum of labour rather than a logical break between domestic production and market production. Thus she concluded that "the domestic services provided by wives are no different from other so-called productive goods and services produced and consumed in the family."[35] Similarly, Sylvia Walby argued that the categorisation of domestic labour as "reproduction" was flawed because all the tasks typically designated as reproduction - from food production to childcare or sexual and emotional

---

34 A good summary of this post-domestic labour debate literature is in J. Baxter (1990) "Domestic Labour: Issues and Studies" *Labour and Industry*, Vol 3, No. 1.

servicing - could be performed in a way conventionally recognised as production.[36]

While these may appear to be arguments about the 'sameness' of women's work (and therefore against not treating domestic labour on its own terms), in fact they both argue against a capitalist centred definition of work/production. Delphy's continuum of women's work breaks with the traditional paid/unpaid dichotomy which posits the market as the defining feature of work. Similarly, the dismissal of the notion of 'reproduction' is a dismissal of an assumption that the system which is 'reproduced' is capitalism. Instead of capitalist centred definitions, these dual systems theorists posited a separate mode of production where gender was central and men, rather than capital, exploited women.[37]

In Delphy's early formulations this domestic mode of production was built around the marriage 'contract' which constituted women as a class in a production relation where men owned the household.[38] In later works the domestic mode of production included the production, consumption, and circulation of goods, and the transmission of (male) property from generation to generation.[39] However, Delphy's arguments were severely criticised by many writers, and Marxist feminists in particular, for the sloppy use of Marxist terms and the generalisation of marriage practices across cultures.[40] Even Stevi Jackson's sympathetic reading suggests that there is an ambivalence in Delphy's work as to whether it is women or simply wives who constitute a class.[41] Similarly, Delphy's use of the term "mode of production" was criticised as being inconsistent with the Marxian notion of a material base of oppression giving rise to definite historical epochs (eg. feudalism) and particular laws of

---

35 Delphy, "The Main Enemy" *op.cit.* Quote from p 63.

36 Sylvia Walby (1990) *Theorising Patriarchy*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell. p 62.

37 This formulation of a dual system is different from other dual systems analysis which equates class/capitalism with "the economy" and gender/patriarchy with something else, for example, psychology. I have also chosen to discuss Delphy and Walby's work here rather than the work of Heidi Hartmann whose name is synonymous with dual systems analysis because Hartmann's foundational work, "The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism" does not analyse production in the home in any detail. Nonetheless, the overall dual systems approach of Delphy and Hartmann is similar and the controversy over the "Unhappy Marriage" will be discussed below. See Heidi Hartmann (1981) "The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism" in Lydia Sargent (ed), *Women and Revolution: A Discussion of The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism*, London: Pluto Press.

38 See "The Main Enemy" *op.cit.* The concept of women as a class was well established with the French radical feminism to which Delphy belonged, and is quite different from the sex-class category of Shulamith Firestone or other British or American radical feminists who linked class to biology or reproduction. Stevi Jackson (1996) *Christine Delphy*, London: Sage. p 92.

39 See Delphy's "Introduction to the Collection" in Delphy, 1984, *op.cit.*, p 18.

40 Molyneux, *op.cit.*, p 7.

41 Jackson, *op.cit.*, pp 111-114.

motion of society. In this schema there could be only one mode of production, and it was capitalism.[42]

The concept of the mode of production is important because in some senses it defines the realm of the "economic". However, the concept itself is contested within Marxism,[43] and in her most recent formulation, Delphy (with Diana Leonard) relegate the term "domestic mode of production".[44] Instead Delphy and Leonard focus on family relations and argue that in male-headed households, men are exempt from some domestic labour, have priority in household consumption and have advantages in the labour market. Perhaps more importantly, Delphy and Leonard argue that men's position as head of the family constitutes ownership of the labour which takes place within the household. As will be discussed later in the next chapter, the definition of this labour has been expanded to include emotional and cultural labour, but the result remains a "direct personal system of individual men's appropriation of individual women's labour in marriage".[45]

Delphy and Leonard's 'new' model is still based on the existence and universality of the male headed household and on a *system* where appropriation takes place beyond and regardless of the particular household - where women help neighbours, or where divorced women raise children. As the conclusion of *Familiar Exploitation* makes clear, there is no voluntaristic escape from exploitation:

> Marriage is a relationship between a man and woman who because they are men and women ... are unequal ... Individual heterosexual couples can not get out of this. But nor can single mothers escape patriarchy: they are often poor and their situation is always difficult. Nor can lesbians escape heterosexuality: their day-to-day lives and their sexual practice are at least partially structured by it.[46]

While the universalism of this system and its erasure of differences within and between households is politically problematic, later dual systems approaches have paid more attention to such difference. In contrast to an overarching domestic mode of production (the base of patriarchy), Walby posits exploitative relations within the household as one of six related, but

---

42 Molyneux, *op.cit.*, p 17.

43 Cohen has noted a variety of meanings of "mode of production" in Marx's own work, only one of which was the grand historical epoch/material base of production. G.A. Cohen (1978) *Karl Marx's Theory of History: A Defence*, London: Oxford Univeristy Press. p 82.

44 Delphy, 1992, *op.cit.*

45 *ibid*., p 67.

46 *ibid*., p 266.

relatively autonomous, structures which define patriarchy. The other five structures are: patriarchal relations in paid work, in the state, in sexuality, in cultural institutions, and patriarchal coercion/male violence. Within each of these structures there are sets of patriarchal practices and any concrete situation will embody the effects of these as well as of capitalism and racism.[47]

The focus on production relations has an important advantage in terms of defining "the economy" because it constitutes a much narrower definition of the *economic* than a conception of an overarching mode of production. In Delphy and Leonard's model, factors like compulsory heterosexuality, segregation of waged work, and state policies and actions all form part of the mode of production. These factors are therefore seen as a part of "the economy". While it is important to recognise the relationship of these and other factors to "the economy", the category of "economy" soon becomes merged with everything else and impossible to define. By contrast, Walby recognises that these factors help reproduce patriarchal exploitation in domestic labour, but they are different from that labour. The domestic economy (like the market economy) can be defined (and measured) separately while still recognising the social construction of the category and the extra-economic relations implicit in it.

However, while Walby's focus on relations of production provides a more useful starting point in defining the household economy, her analysis is limited by positing the product of household production as being labour power. A wife's domestic labour produces the husband's labour power which he sells to an employer as if it were his own.[48] This takes a step away from considering household production on its own terms. While in Delphy's post-domestic labour debate formulation, domestic production, ownership and exploitation relate to the production of final goods and services in the household, for Walby the ownership and value of household production revolves around the sale of labour power. This makes capitalism the source of value, and therefore suffers the same problems of the domestic labour debate in measuring Marxian *value,* and in analysing household production where the husband's labour does not exchange in the capitalist market.

---

47 Walby, 1989, *op.cit.*

48 Sylvia Walby (1986) *Patriarchy at Work: Patriarchal and Capitalist Relations in Employment,*

Chris Kynaston, who seeks to support and popularise Walby's formulation, avoids the problems highlighted above by arguing that there is more to patriarchal exploitation than just the sale of labour power. Kynaston's "patriarchal mode of production" is seen as,

> a set of social relations in which men systematically appropriate the labour of women and, in so doing, are able to secure for themselves an overall standard of living which is significantly higher than that of women.[49]

The "social relations" here are wider than simply production relations, but the conception of a patriarchal mode of production is narrower than the historical epoch mode of production.[50] Kynaston also explicitly sees the sharing of housework and the alleviation of women's double work load as having potential to shatter patriarchal exploitation. Although sceptical of the extent of changes in many non-traditional households and acknowledging the limitations of the existing alternatives to patriarchal exploitation, she nevertheless concludes that in single parent or single person households "women stand defiantly outside of the patriarchal mode of production".[51] Thus, there is an acknowledgment that patriarchal production is not the totality of non-market production - an important point to which I will return later.

Overall then, there are clearly differences in the dual systems formulations of Delphy, Walby and Kynaston. I have highlighted the differences over the scope of the patriarchal mode of production (and therefore the "economic"), and differences over the nature and base of patriarchal exploitation. However, these differences should not disguise a number of similarities which have important implications for a feminist critique of the definition and measurement of the economy. As noted above, all these dual systems theories see the fundamental dynamic of household production as a gender dynamic. Unlike the domestic labour debate from which they evolved, they identify men (either individually or as a group), not capital, as the exploiters. Implicit in this claim is that valuing women's household labour according to a capitalist market obscures, rather than highlights, the different social relations and dynamics involved.

Moreover, the analysis that household production is *not* capitalist or market production, nor reducible to it, and the explicit theorisation of dual systems, both suggest the impossibility of

---

Cambridge: Polity Press. p 53.

49 Chris Kynaston (1996) "The Everyday Exploitation of Women: Housework and the Patriarchal Mode of Production" *Women's Studies International Forum*, Vol 19, No. 3, p 225.

50 *ibid*., p 225.

any attempt to define "the economy" as a singular unit. This applies equally to the attempt of the domestic labour debate and the extended accounts noted in the last chapter. "The economy" is two distinct entities, and if it were to be measured, then it would require two separate measures, one relating to capitalist production, the other to patriarchal production within the household.

While such a conclusion is important in terms of defining and measuring the economy, it should be noted that such dual systems theories were controversial when first proposed within feminism in the 1980s and have generally fallen from favour. Partly this is a result of the more general critique of "patriarchy as system",[52] itself informed by the wider postmodern theoretical turn. In particular, Foucault's theory of power as being local and plural, rather than the structural "power over" posited by systemic analysis, has been influential. Of course Foucault has not gone unchallenged within feminism, [53] but the dual systems approaches were also seen as problematic by those committed to a systemic analysis - ironically because the analysis was not universal enough!

Iris Young argued that capitalism and patriarchy could not be considered as separate systems because women's marginalisation and secondary position in the labour market was an essential and fundamental characteristic of capitalism. If patriarchy and capitalism were manifest in identical social and economic structures they belong to one system, not two.[54] Gloria Joseph also challenged the dual systems' notion of the unity of women under patriarchy by pointing out that racism means that Black women in America have more in common with Black men than with white women, and that Black men do not have dominance over white women as the notion of a universal patriarchy would suggest.[55]

These arguments were enormously important in the decline of the dual systems approach, and

---

51 *ibid*., p 232.

52 Ann Curthoys, "A Short History of Feminism, 1970 - 1984" reprinted in Ann Curthoys (1988) *For and Against Feminism*, Sydney: Allen & Unwin. pp 90 - 92.

53 See for instance, Caroline Ramazanoglu, ed (1993) *Up Against Foucault: Explorations of Some Tensions Between Foucault and Feminism*, London: Routledge, 1993.

54 Iris Young (1981) "Beyond the Unhappy Marriage: A Critique of the Dual Systems Theory" in Lydia Sargent (ed), *Women and Revolution: A Discussion of the Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism*, London: Pluto Press. p 47.

55 Gloria Joseph (1981) "The Incompatible Menage a Trois: Marxism, Feminism and Racism" in Lydia Sargent (ed), *Women and Revolution: A Discussion of The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism*, London: Pluto Press.

(given the epistemological framework outlined in Chapter 1) I do not particularly want to defend the dual systems formulation here. Rather, I want to draw from dual systems theory, what I see as important implications for the definition and measurement of the economy. I have already noted the implicit critique of any attempt to get a singular analysis and summary measure of the economy. This critique is important, as is the attempt to focus on gender as a category of analysis, even if the latter was limited in that it was only ever a focus in one of the dual systems.

While these arguments have their parallels in mainstream debates, what is particularly important in these Marxian theories is the notion that social relations - whether gender or production relations - define work, in the sense of distinguishing one type of work from another. As noted earlier, Delphy argues that it is these social relations (not the market) which defines women's work as unpaid. In fact, as will be seen in the next chapter, it is the social relations which define women's work *as work*. These insights remain important even if the specific dual systems formulation is abandoned. Indeed, such insights also inform the post-modern Marxist attempts to consider women's domestic work in the economy. This approach was first articulated by Fraad, Resnick and Wolff and, although controversial, has been influential particularly among the scholars grouped around the *Rethinking Marxism* journal.[56]

Like the dual systems approaches, Fraad, Resnick and Wolff recognise that production in traditional male headed households is characterised by antagonistic production relations. However, they theorise these as class rather than gender relations. Fraad, Resnick and Wolff argue that the fundamentals of any class process are the production and appropriation of surplus labour. In traditional households, women perform surplus labour beyond their own consumption needs and this surplus is appropriated by the husband in the form of use-values. More specifically, they argue that the traditional household relationship in America is a feudal form of relationship.

> The producer of surplus on the medieval European manor often delivered his/her surplus labor (or its products) directly to the lord of the manor, much as the wife delivers her surplus to her husband. Ties of religion, fealty, loyalty, obligation, tradition, and force bound serf and lord much as the parallel marital oaths, ideology, tradition, religion, and power binds husbands and wives in the sort of household we are analysing

---

56 The analysis and critique is set out in Harriet Fraad, Stephen Resnick, and Richard Wolff (1994) "For Every Knight in Shining Armor, There's a Castle Waiting to be Cleaned" in Harriet Fraad, Stephen Resnick, and Richard Wolff (ed), *Bringing It All Back Home: Class, Gender and Power in the Modern Household*, London: Pluto Press.

here.[57]

While the terminology of feudalism may be confusing and has been criticised,[58] these "ties" sound very much like the factors constituting the patriarchal production relations in the dual system models. However the theoretical formulation is quite different. Rather than coming together to form a 'system' (a construction of a metanarrative), Fraad, Resnick and Wolff insist that the social relations in the household (as elsewhere) are overdetermined. Thus,

> one aspect of a women's life in a household may be her participation in the feudal kind of class process and/or other class processes. Another aspect will likely be her participation in power processes: having various kinds of power or control exerted over her behaviour by father and/or husband and exerting other kinds of control over children and others. Still another aspect will be her participation in ... gender processes ... None of these processes or aspects dominates, outranks or is secondary to the other.[59]

Gender here refers to *ideological* processes involving "the creation and dissemination of particular concepts of what male and female mean".[60] This is a radical departure from the dual systems analyses which saw gender as being an economic category. In Fraad, Resnick and Wolff it appears that "the economy" is about class processes while gender is about something else (ideology). This analysis has been criticised for creating a hierarchy where the material exploitation (class) is ultimately more important than gender, and also for ignoring other important power relations.[61] Fraad, Resnick and Wolff's formulation is also problematic because it repeats the problems noted earlier, that of seeing class (and capitalism) as being theoretically or potentially gender/race blind. Relatedly, Jenny Cameron notes that their analysis sees the "sexed body" as neutral, that is, that gender exists outside of the household, rather than being 'produced' by the performance of domestic labour under particular household relations - a theme I will return to in Chapters 4 and 5.[62]

However, while the narrowness of Fraad, Resnick and Wolff's articulation of production relations may be problematic, its importance is the focus on production relations which

---

57 *ibid*., p 7.

58 See for instance, the comments from Stephanie Coontz and Julie Matthaei in Harriet Fraad, Stephen Resnick, and Richard Wolff (1994) *Bringing It All Back Home: Class, Gender and Power in the Modern Household*, London: Pluto Press.

59 *ibid*., p 81.

60 *ibid*.

61 This is explicit in Matthaei's, and implicit in Nancy Folbre and Heidi Hartmann's comments in Fraad, *ibid*.

62 Jenny Cameron (1999) "Throwing a Dishcloth into the Works: Troubling Theories of Domestic Labour" *Rethinking Marxism*, Vol 9, No. 2, pp 33 - 35.

highlights different types of household production, as well as the differences between market and non-market production. Alongside traditional/feudal households, there are single adult households, and egalitarian "communist" households. According to Fraad, Resnick and Wolff, single adult households exhibit ancient class processes because the labourers appropriate their own surplus, while the latter is referred to as a communist class process because all adult members collectively produce, control and distribute their own surplus.[63]

This focus on the different production and accumulation processes in feudal, communist and ancient households, and the differences from capitalist class processes, provides another critique of attempts to define the economy by imposing a singular logic across the total economy. Of course, it also provides a critique of the dual systems approaches which seek just two logics - capitalist and patriarchal. But for both postmodern Marxist and dual systems approaches, domestic production is not capitalist market production and should not be analysed and measured as such.

However, both dual systems and post-modern Marxist approaches can themselves be criticised for importing market based definitions and measures/methodologies into the analysis of non-market production - albeit at a more generalised, abstract level. All the Marxian models discussed above are production based definitions of the economy. Some of these models stretch the market based definition of production, but production, and the ownership/accumulation of product, is the basis of their definition of "the economic". While the dual systems approaches argue that there are two economic systems in operation - capitalism and patriarchy - with their own separate dynamics, both systems are defined in the same way. The same processes (production, alienation, ownership, appropriation etc) are seen to operate in each economy even if the dynamics and outcomes of those processes are quite different. Similarly, Fraad, Resnick and Wolff's class processes are about production, ownership and appropriation defined in relatively orthodox Marxist terms (although they are not applied to capitalist production). Even the choice of names of the various types of households seems to concede that households cannot contain different class processes from those which have been analysed in the historic market economics.

---

63 This is not to say that such communist households are egalitarian or free of tension as other processes may make the household very inequitable, but the narrowly defined class process remains communist.

Conclusion

Beyond simply being parallel debates then, in this use of market-based definitions the postmodern Marxist and dual systems approaches also share important assumptions and goals with the attempts (discussed in the previous chapter) to apply market measures to non-market production. They all use production based definitions of "the economy", where "production" means the creation of goods or services which can be separated (alienated) from the producer and exchanged in some fashion. In short, production defined by the "third person" criteria. They all assume extended, but basically unchanged, definitions of work and economy. Their focus is on the activities of women which fit the standard (market) definition and therefore should be included in the measure of production. These approaches assume and legitimise a male/market-centricity, and we have seen that feminists have raised a variety of problems with such market definitions and measures. Not surprisingly then, for feminist economists there is not an accepted, unproblematic definition and measure of the economy in either socialist or mainstream economic traditions.

However, in analysing the problems of these definition and measures, we can see, not just the problems in simply extended existing approaches, but how an alternative approach might begin. Whereas the liberal and socialist feminist critiques discussed above began with the absence of non-market production from the established framework and attempted to fit women's work into that framework, an alternative approach might begin not from an established definition, but by asking what women do - either for money or unpaid - and building a definition and measure of the economy from that work. As we will see in the next chapter, when we ask what (in all its variety and similarity) it is that women do, we get a very different picture of "the economy".

But first, a word from our sponsor.[64]

See Fraad, *For Every Knight, op.cit.*, p 38.

64 Sponsor - in an ecological sense of the term.