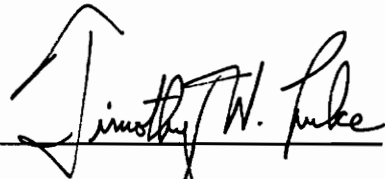Discursive Strategies within Thatcherism:

Family and Market Representations in its

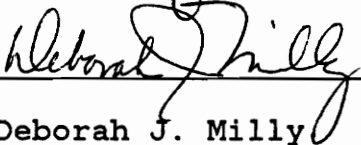Rhetoric and Community Care Documents

By

Janice Mclaughlin

Thesis submitted to the faculty of the

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

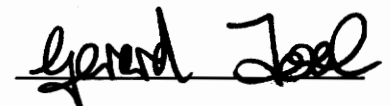degree of Masters of Arts

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Discursive Strategies within Thatcherism:

Family and Market Representations within its

Rhetoric and Community Care Documents

by

Janice Mclaughlin

Timothy W. Luke

(<u>ABSTRACT</u>)

My thesis examines the discursive similarities between the
public political voice of Thatcherism and the "bureacratic"
policy voice of Community Care Documents. The similarities I
am searching for between the rhetoric and the documents
involve mythical representations of the family, the free
market and the community. The argument of the thesis is that
the construction of meaning in the policy documents is at
least partially supported by discursive representations
present in the public discourse. These representations
mythologize: first, the role and form of the family; second,
the role of women in caring within the family; and third,
the role or capabilities of the market; and fourth; the
"failings" and "breakdown" of the welfare system. I also
argue that these representations exist within certain key
social and economic conditions relating to "late capitalism"
or more, exactly, the model of flexible accumulation and
market regulation prevalent in Britain during the eighties.

I conclude by arguing that if language does have a role in power relations, then it can be useful for policy analysts to learn some of the models of linguistic or discursive analysis. Such an inclusion would especially be useful in understanding the difficulties that women and other "minorities" have in finding a voice in the policy arena.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The structure and aim of this thesis flow from particular theoretical understandings of how language and identity function in present Western society. I am using a form of discourse analysis which explores issues such as identity, subjectivity, power and resistance from a perspective which focuses on language. It begins from the argument that individual identity and our position as subjects and objects in social discourse are formed within linguistic boundaries which demarcate meaning. One of the best points to study the formation of meaning is at its point of construction or destruction. Therefore my analysis centers on the period of Thatcherism and its attempts to construct certain mythical meanings about family and consumer/citizenship. The aim is to see if these meanings are politically important beyond their function as political rhetoric and whether they are relevant to the production of policies. To investigate this I use discourse analysis to search for the influence of discursive practices in policy documents relating to one area of policy namely community care.

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DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

I begin from the position that language has the ability to naturalize and universalize areas of shared meaning, which are particular social constructions, to the benefit of certain social groups and forces within society. The construction of a particular "myth" can position subjects within power relations either as empowered (part of the social norm) or disempowered (the other). Discourse analysis is a methodology which analyses the ability of discursive practices within language to be a part of the construction of such myths. Discourse analysis, therefore, looks for the use of imagery and representations within texts. It also looks at social relations, behavior and actions textually, that is as things which we understand or interpret through discursive meanings and assumptions.

Discourse analysis comes from the belief that texts can produce certain meanings which are embedded in the choice of language and which are linked to broader social and political meanings existing in society at a particular time and in a particular space. Examining discourse therefore means examining the linguistic practices which establish meaning in language. When I look at discursive practices in politics, my aim is to examine the role of language in inscribing meaning and identity. It is important to understand that discourse theory views language as something

more than speech or the written word. Instead, it is forms of signification that produce, as Michel Foucault sees it, "regimes of truth." Regimes of truth which are capable of dictating social norms through shared symbolic understanding. The subject is constructed within regimes of truth and is positioned through signification.

Michael J. Shapiro defines discourse as:

> a linguistic practice that puts into play sets of rules and procedures for the formation of objects, speakers, and thematics. This "putting into play" is an important part of the identification of "discourse" as contrasted with the more general interest of linguists in the rules that govern utterances, for the concept of discourse involves concrete, temporarily and spatially located instances of language practices... (1992: 108).

The meaning or intelligibility a text contains is linked to particular social and political practices which are therefore limited in spatial and temporal scope. Examining a discourse is therefore to examine a text within the context of social and political relations. It is also to question the assumed meanings and imagery held within the text as bound to certain political practices. Therefore, the understanding of text I am using is broader than seeing a text as being made up of only the written word. Within this discursive approach human action, everyday speech, all forms of electronic media become texts interacting on discursive levels producing multiple meanings and interpretations on the part of the differently situated receivers or readers.

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What then produces stability are the rules which govern discursive practices. A discourse maintains or authorizes what is the correct form of speech or action or word within the boundaries of that discourse:

> Discursive relations are those responsible for producing the rules that constitute the objects and events we speak about. To analyze such relations is to politicize a far broader aspect of human relations than is characteristic of the kinds of analysis directed toward relationships that a society explicitly recognizes as political. It is to analyze not simply what we talk about but also why and how we talk about it (Shapiro 1992: 154).

Therefore, for example, within the medical discourse there is a particular pattern of language and meaning which is understood by those within the discipline. The rules which govern acceptable language help maintain the medical discipline's position in social relations and exclude meanings and perspectives which could change the pattern of communication both within the medical discipline and without.

I am working within Foucault's notion of subjectivity as something which is a social construction. The construction of subjectivity in modern society, argues Foucault, occurs within disciplines and technologies of power. Therefore, involved in this discursive approach is a different understanding of power and resistance. It is important to note that Foucault's aim in discussing power is not to pursue power itself (in essence he denies power has

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an itself), but instead the role of power relations in the
processes whereby, "human beings are made subjects" (1982:
208). It is necessary to move away from a notion of power as
a grand universalistic device owned and controlled by the
State. Instead, looking from a discursive perspective
involves examining the specific instances of power relations
impacting on subjectivity. Foucault´s concern is the
construction of the individual within the modern State.
Individuality is part and parcel of modern society but it is
an individuality which is inscribed. This inscription of
individuality occurs within various institutions: the
family, medicine, psychiatry and education. One of
Foucault´s aims is therefore, to establish that who we are
is, in fact, who we are constructed to be.

Certain contemporary feminist theorists have adopted a
discursive approach influenced by Foucault. Biddy Martin
argues discursive analysis can help feminism break away from
notions of essential woman and unity which negate different
experiences among women of different classes, cultures, race
and sexuality. She also argues that feminists must move away
from a position that holds there exists a subject called
woman that is beyond representation. Feminists instead need
to deal with the discursive practices in society which
construct women as both subject and object. Martin warns:

The search for a more perfect self, for a truer, more

natural sexuality, a more authentic "I" too often
represents a refusal to account for the position from
which we speak, to ground ourselves materially and
historically, to acknowledge and be vigilant of our
own limitations and our own differences (1988: 15).

Martin argues that a Foucauldian discursive methodology is

one that feminist analysis can practice, principally the

practice of treating cultural discourse as sites of

constructed identity:

A materialist cultural interpretative practice insists
that we read not only individual texts but literary
histories and critical discourses as well, not as
reflections of a truth or lie with respect to a pre-
given real, but as instruments for the exercise of
power, as paradigmatic enactments of those struggles
over meaning (1988: 18).

I want to integrate within my discursive approach a

theoretical notion of myth first established by Roland

Barthes. In 1957 Barthes published Mythologies. In it

Barthes argued that society represents reality through myth,

through symbolism, which essentially distorts reality. Myth

operates through language and the semiotic codification of

symbolism (basically a second order of meaning). The power

of myth is that it does not hide reality; instead it uses

symbolism to transform meaning; "Myth hides nothing and

flaunts nothing: it distorts; myth is neither lie nor a

confession; it is an inflexion" (1972: 129). The power of

myth is its ability to naturalize history, to portray that

which is constructed as that which is natural, universal,

evident. Barthes argues that the principal myth makers in

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society are the bourgeois. Myth is one of their tools in justifying their privileged position. They manipulate meaning and symbolism to portray their lifestyle, their behavior as universalistic and natural:

> bourgeois norms are experienced as the evident laws of natural order -the further the bourgeois class propagates its representations, the more naturalized they become. The fact of the bourgeois becomes absorbed into an amorphous universe, whose sole inhabitant is Eternal Man....(1972: 140).

One of the key bourgeois myths is how the nuclear private family is portrayed as the natural form of family, rather than a historically specific representation of a constructed social form.

Timothy W. Luke has followed up on Barthes' understanding of myth in the semiotic-based mode of analysis used in his book <u>Screens Of Power</u>. Luke examines how messages are sent and interpreted in late capitalist society, a place and time which he argues can be defined as an "informational society."[1] Within an "informational society," society is defined by the technologies and practices used for the transference of information and knowledge. The myths of this new age are established through commodification and mediation in the electronic media. Within Luke's semiotic analysis he makes the crucial argument that the communication of meaning in society is a

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[1]Which for the purposes of the analysis is an ´ideal type´.

plural experience, involving multiple texts, multiple signs and multiple interpretations. The end result is a fluid system of communication which is constantly re-interpreting meaning, leaving the sign's meaning never stable.

Luke wants to adapt Barthes' notion of myth to the technologies of power in the new informational society: "Myths are the vital new political alloys, fusing culture, advertising, and publicity into new technologies of power" (pg 23). In similar fashion to both Barthes and Foucault, Luke argues for micro-analysis of social myths. Instead of looking for grand universalistic myths, this approach calls for the examination of specific instances of myth construction within society. As Barthes examined different myths in society, so also Luke examines different areas of signification in society.

There is an explicit move away from some of the standard practices of political science in the perspectives of the above theorists. The given neutrality of objective, rational quasi-scientific investigation, is replaced by politically explicit subjective contention on how we live and think. The denial of traditional notions of rationality and objectivity as well as the notion of proof leaves the end result more fluid to the reader and more contentious to the discipline. Using these theorists and engaging in their project is a deliberate move to question and explore my own

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subjectivity and the role this has in my own practice.

What I want to take out of the above discussion is the importance of discourse in the construction of subjectivity within power relations. Discourse manipulates meaning and symbolism to normalize human subjects within society. Myth is one form of linguistic signification that enables those in particular power positions to represent their experience as universal and natural. It is an explicit act of power on other human subjects, who are defined as ´other´ and ´deviant´ in order to construct the norm. Discursive analysis can be a particularly useful form of analysis for feminism since it highlights the importance of language and representation in the process of subjugation of the individual. I would argue that women are a pluralistic group with multiple experiences of subjugation and mythical representation.

WHY COMMUNITY CARE AND POLICY?

The policy process from a discursive perspective becomes one particular technology of power and social text which interacts and connects with the network of technologies of power and social texts existing in society. Therefore, how power and language operate and function within the policy process is important to understanding the construction of subjects within the policy discourse. My aim

is to highlight how textual analysis can make visible the discursive techniques used to construct meaning within one part of the policy process, policy documents themselves.

Most importantly, is the ability of the formal policy process to shut out alternative voices through structural impediments assisted by linguistic impediments? Do these practices deny voice to those deemed to lack knowledge in the process? Is it possible to view the use of particular linguistic definitions of knowledge and expertise as boundary keepers to the oppositional discourse? If so, the choice for oppositional discourses then becomes simple: do you adapt to these practices, dress your arguments in the linguistically acceptable discourse of scientific knowledge or professional expertise and thus gain entry? Or do you stay outside and fight elsewhere?

I hope to examine one particular policy debate about the issue of **community care** in the UK to trace the discursive assumptions and myths about the family's and women's role in caring contained within the policy documents. I would argue that the discursive assumptions about women and family served to frame how women were perceived and also led to changes in the assumptions the policy contained about women's role in caring. One supplementary argument is that this practice can only be examined by breaking out of the dominant practices of policy

analysis in Britain and including alternative approaches coming out of feminism and critical social theory.

The manipulation of meanings and identity given to gender, race, class and sexuality are closely connected within the discourses of politics and the policy process. One of the key questions is whether I can identify within an area of the policy process the involvement of language in the construction of myth and exclusion. I view exclusion as the denial of access through the denial of voice. While the full extent of exclusion cannot be thoroughly determined by only looking at policy documents, the documents are a key site of discursive exclusion and thus merit examination. Raising the question of exclusion involves raising critical theorists' and feminists' concerns with issues involving expertise, knowledge, performativity and experience. I will suggest that language is implicated in the hierarchy around these issues and the denial of other experience and knowledge.

The policy which I am focusing on in this study is **community care**. In the British context this is the replacement of institutional care of the mentally ill, mentally and physically handicapped and elderly with "community care." The main emphasis will be on the term itself. The argument is that the meaning of community care was changed discursively to mean a commercial commodity and

a family activity, rather than a publicly supported activity in the local community. Key questions are:

1. What does the term mean for the policy´s authors and for politicians?

2. How is it used within the debate by politicians and the policy´s authors to control and manipulate the debate?

3. Who is best situated within the power relations within the policy process to dictate what the term means?

I will examine the policy documents with the aim of tracing the discursive use of community care to mean private care supplied by the private for profit sector and the voluntary sector made up mostly of families and within families, women. The assumptions include the belief that the family is the best site of care based on a discourse of "natural" family obligations. I will attempt to see where the link between public rhetoric and the policy language happens. I will also examine what is missing in the policy documents, the oppositional voices, women´s perspectives, situated knowledge and experience. Instead I will show the influence of notions of universalism (ignoring ethnic and cultural differences), expertise (scientific and professional) and efficiency (cost benefit analysis).

THATCHERISM

The Thatcher period was marked by a period of contestation over the role of the welfare state and the role

of the family. It is therefore a useful point to study the construction of social meaning, in this case social meaning over the role of the welfare system and the role and function of the family. By examining the struggle that took place over these issues one can witness some of the various power relations within British society. The myths around the family which were part of Thatcherism´s discourse are viewed here as one reaction to the "crisis" in the welfare state in late capitalism.

I will place Thatcherism within certain crucial social and economic conditions which influence and are influenced by the discursive practices of Thatcherism. First, there are the ideas around the late capitalism debate. This is the debate, coming partly from the left and critical theorists, which suggests we now live in a new stage of capitalism which affects the culture and politics of Western industrial societies. Second, Thatcherism can be seen as part of the broader rise of the new right. There has been much debate about the supposed rise of the new right. For my purposes the new right is a loose term that covers different (sometimes contradictory) ideological positions within conservative thought that have arisen since the seventies and exploded in the eighties in the United States and Britain. Third, during the era of Thatcherism we have seen the rise of the consumer as the citizen of flexible

accumulation. For example, within the welfare system the client became, in the discourse of Thatcherism, **the consumer**. Fourth, the "crisis" of the welfare state within late capitalism became an important issue during the Thatcher era.

I will look at the myths about the family within the "crisis" of the welfare state and the falling away of such concepts as private and public as useful terms. The myth of the family is an area that feminists such as Bea Campbell, Janet Finch, Mary McIntosh and Michele Barrett have focused on. The central argument is that an idealized notion of the nineteenth century bourgeois family has been imposed on a pluralistic reality of various different forms of family relationships. The myth also contains the assumption that the family is a private institution existing in its natural form based on biological relations. It is also the family supported by the Old Testament according to the myth makers.

For the purposes of this study I rather loosely use the eighties as the time period of Thatcherism. Her removal from power in November 1990 signaled the end of Thatcherism as the ideological center of the Conservative party and Government. While powerful in the eighties within the party and as a guiding force within the Conservative government agenda, it would be a mistake to present it as universally dominant throughout. It was always incoherent in parts and

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challenged even my Conservative members of the Cabinet (most notably in the early days of the first administration).

CHAPTER FORMAT

The overall format of my thesis is to begin by detailing some of the theoretical understandings I base my perspective and analysis on, before then discursively examining some of Thatcherism's political rhetoric and the Community Care documents. I conclude by discussing the theoretical implications and possibilities of this approach in the context of policy analysis and feminism. Chapter Two (Situating Thatcherism) discusses theoretical approaches which examine the family as a discursive object. The main purpose of this is to show how the family can be used as a discursive object within ideological and political boundaries. The chapter also introduces the work of Nancy Frazer, who discusses the various discourses present in the welfare arena during the phase of late capitalism. Lastly the chapter introduces the place of the market and consumerism within new right and Thatcherist ideology. Chapter Three (Thatcherism's Family) focuses on various Thatcherist texts which discuss or in some way associate the family with certain discursive meanings. I look mostly at the statements and words of certain Conservative politicians (including Mrs Thatcher), the Conservative party manifestos

and leaked policy discussion documents relating to family policy. I complete the Chapter by raising some of the feminist objections to Thatcherism´s notion of family. Chapter Four (<u>Community Care Documents</u>) deals with two policy documents relating specifically to the issue of community care. I discuss the documents with the main aim of seeing what discursive similarities they share with the types of discursive meanings found in the Thatcherism rhetoric cited in the previous Chapter. Chapter Five (<u>Alternative Questions And Perspectives</u>) discusses some of the critical and feminist theoretical issues which are raised by politicizing the discursive practices of the policy arena. Implications that also suggest alternatives in the way we study the policy arena and also how we situate policy within the broader context of other social texts and public arenas.

CHAPTER TWO

SITUATING THATCHERISM

INTRODUCTION

Social understandings of what the family represents are influenced by commonly held assumptions about social behavior as well as cultural assumptions about women´s social behavior. Feminists have examined notions of family, since from different feminist perspectives we argue constructed notions of family are key tools to justifying placing women in negative positions within power relations in society. This, however, is not to say that there is one over-powering myth of family that is constant and affects all women in the same way. Instead, different representations of family and women are used at different historical periods to justify different social norms and practices.

This chapter introduces the various perspectives from which I examine Thatcherism and its discourse on family. My particular analytical perspective on Thatcherism is to view it as a political discourse, a discourse capable of sustaining various representations of social relations. The Thatcherist discourse is sustained, at least in part, by imagery and representation grounded in language and myth. Since I am looking in particular at Thatcherism´s family

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discourse I feel it necessary and helpful at this point to situate my discussion in previous investigations of family discourse. Since discursive representations are never stable, but instead mutate with the times I feel it is also necessary and helpful to situate Thatcherism within its particular historical period.

The chapter is split into three sections. In the first section I introduce alternative perspectives on the family which deal with the family as a social construction. In the second section I discuss Nancy Frazer's work on discursive practices within the welfare arena (a key site for family discourses). In the third section I situate Thatcherism within recent trends in capitalism.

FAMILY REPRESENTATIONS

This section looks at the work of Michel Foucault, Timothy W. Luke, Michéle Barrett and Mary McIntosh. I begin examining Foucault's analysis of the family as a social practice and a technology of power which helps construct normality and social relations. Next I discuss Luke's analysis of the family, as a symbolic signifier in late capitalism. Finally I focus on the writing of Michéle Barrett and Mary McIntosh who analyze the family in Britain in terms of an ideology. The work represented here is useful because it breaks away from the notion of family as a

natural biological unit. Instead the authors produce
interpretations of the family based on social practice
(Foucault), symbolism (Luke) and ideological uses (Barrett
and McIntosh) of the family.

Michel Foucault´s concern is the construction of the
individual within the modern state. Foucault´s focus, within
his genealogy approach, are the social practices, which are
given meaning through discourse and define culture(s) and
individuality. Through discourse, exclusion is maintained to
structure normality in (as well as to allow for efficient
surveillance of) the individual (see Foucault´s ´The
discourse on language´). Exclusion functions through the
´prohibition´ of certain subjects and rituals; through
´division and rejection´ by the privileging of reason and
sanity and through the ´will to truth´. Discourse therefore
functions in Foucault´s analysis to universalize experience
and to deny chance and limitation. The final result of
discursive practice is as Frazer argues, constraint;
"Foucault claims that the functioning of discursive regimes
essentially involves forms of social constraint" (1989a:
20).

Foucault argues that a power/knowledge regime is
constructed out of multiple social practices, created
through a network of discourses and technologies of power.
Social practices are never stable or natural, instead they

are historically relative. The aim of discourse is to produce order (often constructed as natural order) and the illusion of stability. Family is represented as a natural phenomenon. However, if instead we view society as a series of social practices, then the family becomes just one particular social practice created by the various discourses and representations about it. Viewing 'family' from Foucault's perspective produces an understanding of family discourse as a constraining practice which forms one link in the network of practices constraining individuality and meaning.

Foucault looked at the family most closely in <u>The History of Sexuality: An Introduction Volume One</u>. His aim here is to identify the role of family discourse in the construction and maintenance of sexuality. This position is opposed to viewing the family as the denial of sexuality, as it is often portrayed. Foucault argues:

> The family, in its contemporary form, must not be understood as a social, economic and political structure of alliance that excludes or at least restrains sexuality.....On the contrary, its role is to anchor sexuality and provide it permanent support (1980: 108).

For Foucault the family is one of the social practices that helped define sexuality in modern society. The family has helped to define sexuality in a way that cloaks construction in repression. Sexuality is not repressed in society in the

sense that it was never free and to presume so is a dangerous myth that misrepresents the construction of the modern individual. For Foucault the family is the focal point in the development of sexuality. It allows sexuality to be constructed in a way that specifies what is and is not sexuality. The family also allows for the construction of correct sexual behavior as well as the deviant. The family discourse´s greatest success is defining legitimate and illegitimate behavior and enabling exclusion. Illegitimate sexual behavior or want becomes that which breaks out of the family norm. Together with doctors, psychiatrists and educators the abnormal became that which denied the legitimacy of the family:

> Then these new personages made their appearance: the
> nervous women, the frigid wife, the indifferent mother
> -or worse, the mother beset by murderous obsessions-
> ....the young homosexual who rejects marriage or
> neglects his wife. These were the combined figures of
> an alliance gone bad and an abnormal sexuality; they
> were the means by which the disturbing factors of the
> latter were brought into the former, and yet they also
> provided an opportunity for the alliance system to
> assert its prerogatives in the order of sexuality
> (1990: 110).

The family thus helped the modern state´s aims to control birthrates and produce technologies of power that controlled the population through a bio-politics that was and is aimed at the body. The family form that began this regulation of sexuality through the introduction of

psychiatry and education was the "bourgeois family." The social practices of the bourgeois family have thus come to dominate family form and discourse. The points of exclusion and prohibition flow from the accepted practices of the bourgeois family. Therefore family discourse serves to obscure the limited and relative nature of the social practices that make up modern society's form of social relations around the family unit.

In examining social understandings of what the family represents in modern America, Luke looks at different roles the family is given in different phases of capitalism. Luke does not establish a natural form of family destroyed by capitalism (the traditional marxist functionalist argument about the impact of capitalism on the family), instead Luke views advanced capitalism as integral in the move from the bourgeois family to what he calls permissive individualism. Both the bourgeois family and the permissive individual are constructed identities that are established norms which serve capitalist objectives. In advanced capitalism permissive individualism enables the buying of more commodities. Rather than see the family as something that has been destroyed by excessive individualism, Luke sees a construction of individualism whose identity is marked by the possession of commodities that signal our individuality. The myth of individuality screens a process of normalizing

identity to serve the needs of capitalism:

> These means of cultivating passive consumption, social dependence, and cultural submission through the controlled emancipation of personal self-seeking and sensual fulfillment serve, in part at least, as the regulatory apparatus for managing personal and family life under corporate capitalism (1989: 122).

Yet Luke notes, and something I will return to later, we (in the advanced societies of America and Western Europe) live in a new conservative age that wants to reclaim some central role for the family. Luke sees nothing contradictory here. Instead, he argues, we are seeing a new representation being given to the family to allow it to serve a new role in monopoly capitalism. The new representation of the family roots itself in the past, but it is a mythical past, a "retro past." The bourgeois family is being reborn as the salvation to all social problems, deviance, prostitution, drug abuse, truancy, child neglect, falling educational standards, and crucially the care of the sick and elderly of society. The family is being resurrected as the perfect vehicle to take responsibility for those tasks advanced capitalism is straining to deal with. A myth of individuality is being replaced by a myth of family security and care that can rebuild the moral character of America and allow advanced capitalism to flourish:

> Collective capital wants disciplined, educated, self-sacrificing, motivated, but good looking workers for its race in the global market place, and it is now every family's duty to produce them at lower social

cost and higher efficiencies (1989: 125).

The most important element of Luke´s analysis is the pattern of multiple meanings given to the family and the individual that never represent any kind of reality. Instead they symbolize a simulation of family and the individual, which within power relations construct social norms which are useful to the needs of different stages of capitalism.

Writing mostly in the British context Barrett and McIntosh published The Anti-Social Family in 1982. Barrett and McIntosh examine the family as an ideology, as a belief system that structures social behavior. They argue that the ideology of family is so pervasive in society that opposition discourse maintains family rhetoric. The left and some feminists work within the assumption that the family should be the primary site of care. That family, whatever that happens to be, is a good thing. The family is given the primary role in emotional well being, providing a site for support and vulnerability. They argue it is a given in modern society that the nuclear family is the best environment to raise children. This is so ingrained in society that any alternative arrangement is punished. Socially and economically the deviant is made to see the error of their ways.

The family as an institution is privileged to the degree that in society it influences all other social

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relations, which are in turn judged against the values and abilities of the family. Values and abilities that are assumed to be inherent in the structure of the family but are constructs, or an ideology. Barrett and McIntosh argue that "The major significance of the family in Britain today is ideological" (1982: 34). The family is used as a discursive tool to construct the social norms of behavior, especially for women. The family, they argue, is successful as a representation because it is a key site for the maintenance of social order.

This echoes Foucault's argument concerning the social institutions that make up the technologies of power. The family is part of the forces in modern society which produce the normalized subject. The modern family and how we perceive it has little to do with nature or biology. Such an understanding screens the function of the family as mediator in the construction of proper social identity: "the family remains a vigorous agency of class placement and an efficient mechanism for the creation and transmission of gender inequality" (1982: 29). When the left and feminists play with the symbolism of family they maintain this privileged position for the family in modern society. The family maintains social order by creating the social divisions which allow the preservation of order. The transmission of class and gender divisions are major

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elements in the construction of subjectivity in modern
society. Barrett and McIntosh argue that the family is
central in this process. The family is therefore constructed
as a divisive rather than a cohesive structure:

> In reality, far being a social leveller, forging bonds
> that cut across the barriers of class and sex, the
> family creates the very divisions it is often thought
> to ameliorate (1982: 43).

Both Barrett and McIntosh are socialist feminists, and
while in this book they are using discursive techniques to
understand the family, they still cement their analysis
within issues of class and modes of production. However,
they acknowledge that the family is more than a function of
capitalism, and that issues of subjectivity and identity go
beyond notions of class identity. Moving away from a
traditional socialist position, they argue gender
identification is more important to subjectivity than class
identity. They acknowledge that theorists need to be
explicit about how they analyze the family. Barrett and
McIntosh also discuss the key concept of "private" and
"public" within analysis of the family. Too often the
separation between private and public is represented as a
given or a natural phenomenon. However, Barrett and McIntosh
disagree with such a formulation:

> The construction of 'the family' as a privatized zone
> with rigid barriers to prevent the intrusion of the
> social is an ideological process rather than a given
> of capitalism (1982: 89).

In an argument similar to Luke´s, this representation of the family is based on its usefulness to the needs of capitalism (the family produces the social order most useful to capitalism). Barrett and McIntosh are careful to avoid a functionalist position on the relationship between capitalism and the family. They do not see a direct correlation between capitalism and family structure, instead Barrett and McIntosh strongly reject the argument that the advent of capitalism created the nuclear family.

However, Barrett and McIntosh do not differentiate different stages within capitalism, as Luke does in order to identify the multiple meanings given to the family. Their notion of capitalism is strictly marxist. The changes that have taken place in forms of production and accumulation since the decline of Fordism in Western Europe and the United States are not included in their analysis, but would have been a valuable addition. Their argument that family structure is not a functional component of capitalism could be further supported by an analysis of the changing nature of capitalism. This gap leads to a somewhat static nature to their understanding of the representations of the family.

It is crucial to unpack the meanings given to the family in order to see the lack of universality and naturalness about the representations given to it. What the above authors are examining (most strongly Foucault and

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Luke) is not the family itself as a real entity, instead
they all from different perspectives look at representations
of family. Foucault, Luke and Barrett and McIntosh are all
examining the discourses constructed about the family, not
the family itself. All three approaches suggest that the
family itself cannot be separated from the discourses that
surround it and which construct it. The construction of the
mythical family is fundamental to societal understanding of
what the family is. The family is, using Foucault's term, a
"regime of truth." This discursive basis makes what is
constructed appear as common sense. The mythical projection
has, as the above authors suggest, implications for those
positioned as subjects within the family as well as those
positioned as subjects outside the family. Who are dis-
empowered through their construction as ´other´ and deviant.
My interest in representations of the family lies within the
welfare arena during Thatcherism. The next section discusses
Frazer's examination of discursive practice within the
welfare arena.

WELFARE DISCOURSES

One of the key features within the late capitalism
debate is the perceived "crisis" in the welfare system.
Nancy Frazer has examined the positioning of women within
the welfare system and the effect of this perceived crisis

on thinking about welfare issues. Frazer examines the United States welfare system but I would argue the discursive qualities of both systems are similar enough; while they have different patterns of power relations and administrative mechanisms, we can find similar abuses of domination through language. I think when looking at Britain system the least useful element of her analysis is her assumption that the male client within the welfare system is a rights bearing beneficiary while the female client is the dependent client of charity. It is difficult to perceive the male client as non victim within the British welfare system, it may even be difficult to perceive it this way in the U.S. I would suggest that her construction of the female dependent client should be extended to the male client, who may have broader civil rights in society, but loses most of them when he enters the welfare system.[2]

While she uses the term 'late capitalism', I would argue the definition she uses fits within the specific mode of capitalist accumulation I am positioning Thatcherism within (see the next section). Frazer uses a gender perspective within a discursive analysis which allows her to detail the particular subordination of women within the

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[2]For an evaluation of the negative consequences for men as well as women in any bureaucracy see Kathy Ferguson's <u>Feminist Case Against Bureaucracy</u>.

welfare discourse. Frazer argues women are subordinated through the construction of their needs by the system. The welfare system is based on the assumption that the family wage exists. The welfare system, therefore, interprets women's needs within their roles as mothers and dependents on male wages. The married woman is consistently treated differently within the system. Many benefits are simply not given to them since it is assumed the husband provides for his wife.[3] The needs of women within the welfare system are therefore mediated through their position as mothers and dependents on men. The system only steps in when the man is 'missing'.

How the needs of women are interpreted and mediated through the system determines the outcomes for women. Borrowing from Althusser, Frazer labels the system as a; "juridical-administrative-therapeutic state apparatus (1989: 154)" (from now on JAT). By JAT, Frazer means "the welfare system works by linking together a series of juridical, administrative, and therapeutic procedures" (1989: 154). The practice of JAT within the welfare arena leads to a

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[3]Supplementary benefit, until recently the main benefit given to those who have not paid enough national insurance to receive unemployment benefit, (i.e part time workers, the majority of whom are women) was not available to married women. This was the case between 1945 and 1990, since then the regulations have changed to allow some married women access to this benefit.

practice which views contestable needs within legal, bureaucratic, and clinical frameworks which depoliticize the contested nature of needs. Women´s needs are the subject of this apparatus but the women are not the political actors within it. Contested needs become de-politicized through the mechanisms that transform the needs into problems of law or bureaucracy and which labels them as social ills. The discourse maintains ´deviant´ needs as problems to be cured. The focus of concern moves from societal inadequacies to individual inadequacies that can be cured. The system is also able to maintain its power position through maintaining itself as the guarantor of all knowledge claims in this area. Her notion of JAT is useful, it is however important to note that it most likely overrates the ability of the welfare system to operate in such a unified functional capacity.

The realm of welfare provision is presently contested. Frazer bases her analysis on examining the politics of need interpretation. That is, how the JAT constructs what needs it is serving. Generally, argues Frazer, this interpretation occurs within a gender demarcation which determines the need of male beneficiaries and female clients as qualitatively and quantitively different. The JAT discourse is under threat simply because the nature of the needs it serves are now contested. The main reason for the new concern is the

nature of "need" that is being produced by "late
capitalism." A growing number of needs are becoming
politicized in the public sphere as the dichotomy between
the private and public weakens. While groups and protest
have some role in the politicization of these needs, the
main actor is late capitalism itself in Frazer's analysis. I
would argue, to be specific to Thatcherism, that the main
actors are the position given to the market as regulatory
mechanism and to the fictional consumer. The newly
discovered needs are by-products of the consequences of late
capitalism. The ability of late capitalism to be part of the
private domain through the welfare system and
commodification produces the very politicization that
threatens its interpretation:

> The politicized needs at issue in late capitalist
> societies, then, are "leaky" or "runaway" needs:
> they are needs that have broken out of the discursive
> enclaves constructed in and around domestic and
> official economic institutions (1989: 169).

The more the institution become part of the social
"needs" it is serving, the more its own assumptions of what
those needs are and how to deal with them are questioned.
However, the mere politicization of needs is not enough to
insure the system adopts a policy making process that allows
women a role in interpreting the newly politicized needs.
Women are not the only actors battling for a role in
redefining those needs.

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Frazer sees three separate discourses battling over the contested terrain. The contestation focuses on the relationship between the private and the public. How close or distant should this bond be. Each discourse carries with it its own assumptions and language. Each discourse bases its interpretation of need on cultural experience and knowledge claims. The three discourses are:

1. Oppositional Discourse
2. Reprivatization Discourse
3. Expert Discourse

The oppositional discourse comes from those previously left out of the public discourse, those who gain the most from the politicization of the needs in question. In the case of women, it comes from those groups politicizing women's so-called private role and their lack of public voice. They see the intervention of the welfare apparatus into the private sphere as a chance to question the naturalness of this sphere. Their aim is to bring in the realities of women's lives to give witness to the lack of knowledge within the discourse of "need." They are the anti-authority struggles Foucault argues are the resisters of power.

The reprivatization discourse is based around the idea that the welfare system is intruding into the private sphere and destroying the family. The family this discourse argues, is the basis of society, and the welfare system, by taking

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over some of its role in need provision, threatens society. Values are corrupted and family relations are undermined by welfare's unwarranted intrusion. The solution is to remove the welfare system from areas previously served by the family.

The third discourse can be used by either of the first two to gain legitimacy in the public debate. The expert discourse is assumed to contain objective knowledge and solutions, based on professional integrity. However, the ability of both opposition and reprivatization interests to use the expert discourse suggests that objectivity is the last thing contained within this discourse. The influence of an expert discourse is a troubling factor for the oppositional discourse. To gain legitimacy in the public domain they often have to dress their arguments in the discourse of expertise. Their leaders become those who can claim to be "experts" in the field. This can undermine the radical nature of the opposition's goals, when their desire to open up the public domain is denied by their own use of expertise as legitimacy. The next section aims to establish the social and economic circumstances surrounding the competing discourses about "family" evident within the welfare arena.

THE MARKET AND THE INDIVIDUAL: "I CONSUME THEREFORE I AM"[*]

This section touches on the connection between Thatcherism and its fiscal practice and the economic situation in Britain in the eighties. One of the key issues I discuss is the role of the market and the consumer. In particular, how has the relationship between consumer and market been expanded to cover areas like democracy and welfare? Writers supportive of free market economics argue that the welfare system is in "crisis," unable to carry out its own goals and taking up too many public resources. The free market discourse argues that this problem can only be solved by the introduction of market practices into the welfare arena.

To understand the relationship between Thatcherism and family myths, one needs to be aware of the particular historical framework within which both have existed. It is important to be aware of the particular form of capitalism that Thatcherism was situated within. While broadly referred to as "late capitalism", this term is problematic. The meaning of the term "late capitalism" is heavily loaded. It has been used loosely by theorists from several different perspectives for several different ends. It has therefore lost much of its analytical usefulness due to the multiple

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[*] John Patten, Cabinet Minister, 1988 (The Guardian, October 11th 1988).

meanings it possesses. That 'late capitalism' has multiple meanings is not necessarily problematic. However, the vagueness of the term means it does not adequately suggest the economic and political situation I am trying to establish. Therefore I prefer to use the terms regime of accumulation and mode of regulation (terms associated with the regulation school). This allows me to be specific about the form of capitalism operating and stresses the importance of accumulation and the form that accumulation takes.

Within the era of Thatcherism flexible accumulation (the fluid exchange of credit and money across international money markets without government intervention and without the creation of industrial labor or product) and the declining role of government have become dominant trends within capitalism. Thatcherism was supportive of this form of accumulation and helped produce an environment in which it could flourish. My principal interest, here, lies in the emphasis this has given to the abilities and role of the market place.

The economic conditions of the eighties form an important backdrop to the rise of Thatcherism as an ideology. The debt crisis of the seventies led to the extreme recession of the eighties which hit the industrial sectors of the British economy particularly hard. The balance of trade was destroyed by the competitiveness of the

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newly industrialized countries and high interest rates in
Britain during the late seventies and early eighties. The
whole of Western Europe and the U.S was caught in the
aftermath of the oil crisis, the breakdown of Bretton Woods
and the devaluation of the dollar. The combination of this
fiscal crisis (Britain, for example, was forced in 1976 to
go to the International Monetary Fund for emergency
credit[5]) and the declining international competitiveness of
British heavy industry (the traditional backbone of the
British economy) led to the creation, under the Thatcher
Government, of new economic and production practices which
have come to dominate Western (perhaps Global) capitalist
accumulation.

The declining industrial sector and the production
practices of Fordism have been replaced by new forms of
industrial organization and output and a much greater focus
on the financial sector and forms of financial investment.
Heavy industry (for example, British Steel, the ship yards
and the coal mines) have been replaced by high tech
industries, the majority of whom are subsidiaries of large
international conglomerates and produce high tech

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[5]The use of emergency IMF funds by the Labor Government in
1976 signal for some the actual beginning of monetarism in
Britain. This is due to the freezing of government spending and
removal of credit controls the IMF demanded the Government
implement to receive the credit.

commodities such as computer software, miniature Television
sets and CD players. The production practices of these new
industries are vastly different from the those of the older
declining industries. A stable, large, highly specialized
and unionized work force has been replaced by a small, full
time staff who are trained in multiple skills and are
supported by a secondary labor pool of part time, temporary
workers with few workers benefits and little trade union
organization.

At the same time forms of capital accumulation through
increasingly diversified financial investment have grown in
importance. The lifting of credit controls which the Labor
Government put in place in 1976, were quickly augmented by
the Conservative government. Less restraint was put on the
ability of British financiers to invest outside the country.
The Big Bang in 1986, which saw the computerization of the
stock exchange and a further reduction in the government
regulation of financial transactions, furthered the growing
importance of invisible capital (paper capital with no link
to the production of anything except more paper capital) to
the British economy[6] . New technologies have allowed for the

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[6] The big bang was followed by the big October 20th
crash only a year later, indicating the fragile nature of
these forms of financial speculation. The crash also
indicated the down side of the computer networks which
connect the stock markets across the globe. The severity of
the crash was partially blamed on the speed in which the

electronic transfer of finance capital around the globe at the speed of light twenty four hours a day. Insurance and pension houses were the first to begin investing heavily in different companies and stocks. However, it is not just the invisible international conglomerates who practiced the take over game and the leveraged buy out, diversification was the dominant financial practice of most companies in the eighties. This saw car and steel companies investing in other stocks and shares rather than reinvesting in their own research and development and their own workers. In most companies a growing number of staff had little or nothing to do with production, but instead were involved in monitoring the company's stock folio.

It is important to note that the financiers of the Conservative party are the new entrepreneurs of flexible accumulation. They include the insurance houses and the international conglomerates whose income comes primarily from these financial games in the stock market[7]. As well as the service industries supplying low paid part time jobs (the only growth sector in employment) and producing consumer goods (the only products now valued in the new

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computers reacted to the decline of stock prices in the Tokyo market.

[7] Companies such as Lohnro and Prudential Insurance.

system)[8]. Many of the new style Conservative MPs (who the old guard of landed accumulation never could quite accept) are also products of this new era. Their background is not the law but the business sector represented above.

At the same time the introduction of the monetarist polices which produced the financial environment for the stock wheeling and dealing of the eighties also brought with it tight controls on Government spending in Britain. The financial squeeze which was first felt by the Labour Government in 1976 continued throughout most of the eighties. This led to spending reductions, in real terms, in several Government departments[9]. Where actual cut backs did not occur, Government spending failed to keep pace with increased demand and need. The inability of Government finance (due partially to the budgetary controls of the Conservative Government) to keep pace with Government requirements (the drop in taxation rates exacerbated this trend) led the Conservative Government to search for alternatives to publicly supplied provision. The Conservative Government focused on the welfare system as a target for spending reductions and restructuring. The

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[8] Companies such as Marks and Spencers and Tescos.

[9] Although notably not in defence spending, one of the few growth areas in government spending under the Conservative Government.

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restructuring of community care was thus part of the broader aim of reducing Government public spending requirements. Additionally, the new economic conditions existing in Britain and the ideological perspective which came with these conditions meant that the restructuring would be influenced by the greater focus put on market regulation and the desire to integrate private for profit organizations into government provision.

The particular form of market capitalism favored by Thatcherism privileges the role of the market as the principle regulatory mechanism in society. The market-led regulation of finance, credit, industry (notably the decline of industry) and privatization of government bodies (such as telecom, the water companies, BP) was extended to the provision of social welfare and social relations. The commodification of welfare provision was a central tenet to Thatcherist discourses on welfare. The client of the welfare system became the consumer who would benefit through maximum choice as simply as they would in the local supermarket (further discussed in Chapter Three).

The place of "the market" in all this is important. The importance placed on the production of commodities (commodities which helped identify the consumer/citizen of "late capitalism") and financial speculation led to a greater reverence and emphasis on the market.

Competitiveness in the market had become more important due to the greater competition caused by the cheap imports of the newly industrialized countries and the removal of government subsidies in many industrial sectors. The mentality of competition and competitiveness spread from the competitiveness of commodities to the desire for competitiveness in the public sector. Therefore, the "market" mentality did not require the participation of for profit organizations to be expected. The "market" became a discourse through which Government spending and provision was to be understood. The notion of supply and demand in the market place as the regulators of a product´s success spread to cover the welfare system discursively.

We can see the use of the market discourse in the writings of economic advisors close to Mrs. Thatcher. Ralph Harris and Arthur Seldon and their think tank, the Institute of Economic Affairs (of which more later), provides one of the best examples of this market discourse. Harris and Seldon place Thatcherism within market conditions, rather than arguing that Thatcherism produced the market conditions: "But what its critics call ´Thatcherism´ did not create the market. It is the market that created ´Thatcherism´" (1987: 77). Their argument raises the market to the level of primary regulatory mechanism in society: "For a free society the ´best use´ can be discovered only by

individual ´voting´ with money in the competitive market"
(1987: 14). The market, Harris and Seldon argue, can best
serve the needs of the people; without the choice available
in the market we are not free. Our freedom is guaranteed by
our ability to manipulate the market. It is "personal
purchasing power" (1987: 66) which enables citizens to have
a say on what is available and at what price in the market
place. This "power" can and should regulate government
decision making. Only under the conditions of market
regulation (a condition the politicians cannot stop
occurring due to the power of the market) will government
and politicians be influenced by public opinion:

> it is not within the power of government or politicians
> forever to ignore the market forces of supply and
> demand, and it is becoming more difficult for
> politicians to dictate or even influence the rate at
> which they will adapt the political process or the
> economic system to reflect individual preferences or
> public opinion (1987: 68).

 Harris and Seldon´s argument is that in this time of
technological advancement and "embourgeoisment" of the world
only one mechanism maintains individual liberty, the market.
Without it democracy is a sham; "the market is potentially
more democratic than the State" (1987: 65). Therefore the
state is not a proper mechanism for providing the needs of
society. Needs such as education, medicine, housing and
community care can be supplied better if market logic is
involved. The subject´s identity therefore in Harris and

Seldon's late capitalist society is not as a citizen of the state with the power to vote, but as a consumer with "purchasing power" in the market.

Harris and Seldon's vision of the abilities of the market is simplistic and ahistorical, a slap-dash homage to the market, which raises the market to the status of cure all for society. It is dependent on the existence of "pure" or "perfect" market conditions (for the consumer citizen to have their much vaunted "personal purchasing power") which only exist in the texts and equations of new right neo classical economists. It is also a discourse based on a belief in the rational autonomous actor. This actor moves from a to b consciously making rational choices and decisions, a rational actor who is viewed from a deconstructive position as fictious. Andrew Gamble places this new reverence for the market and finance capital within a broader historical canvas[10]. The rise of flexible accumulation comes out of the decline of both Fordism and the position of the United States (symbolized by the dollar) as the stabilizer of the world market. However, the rise of flexible accumulation is debt ridden, underwritten by the U.S and supply side economics. Fordism encapsulated notions of collectivity and some notion of collective good (although

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[10] See The Politics Of Thatcherism.

this collective good targeted a remarkably white, male, breadwinner, family man, worker citizenry). The collapse of Fordism led to a collapse in the belief in collectivity within society. Collectivity has been replaced by the new individual. An individual, as Luke noted, who is signified by the ownership of capital and certain signifying commodities.[11]

The accumulation strategies of monetarism bred the politics of the new right. They cannot be separated. The accumulation strategy needs a new form of regulation and the political practices of both the Reagan and Thatcher governments enabled this. Replacing the state with the market is likely to be the legacy of both administrations. What Gamble argues is unique about the new right is this new role for the market, and the belief, witnessed in Harris and Seldon´s views, that democracy is seen not in the practice of government, but in the operation of the market:

> The New Right attacks on the grounds of cost and efficiency were predictable, but what was less expected was the New Right claim that they had a superior moral vision of what a free society should be like. Their concept of citizenship saw freedom and equality being achieved through the daily plebiscite in the market, not through the infrequent plebiscite in the political system (1988: 50).

The acceptance of market involvement, in areas

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[11]For the Thatcherist individual the key commodities are BMW´s, mobile phones, CD players and winter ski holidays.

previously supplied by the state, is wide and growing. It is
possible to see the economic fallacy of monetarism, but
flexible accumulation is now the dominant economic practice.
Britain lives with the economic nightmare left by
monetarism, but the mode of regulation heralded by it is as
strong. The rise of Thatcherism cannot thus be seen as
separate from this stage of accumulation. Nor can
Thatcherism be removed from the ascending rise of a new
class of materially successful service industry/financial
industry professionals. Thatcherism´s link to this peculiar
little class means, according to Gamble, that it is nothing
more than; "the latest religion of little England" (1988:
172). As we witness the financial decline of this debt
ridden class, we also see the decline of the ardent Thatcher
ideology. The Conservatism of Major is a faded copy of the
original. Major and his government are not the real thing.
His rhetoric of popular capitalism rings of collectivity,
leaving Thatcher publicly mumbling about betrayal and loss.

Thatcherism was a period of contestation over the
results and crisis within a transforming phase of
capitalism. As Stuart Hall argues, the Thatcherism discourse
comes out of the changing nature of Western capitalism,
particularly the dominance of the market as primary social

regulatory mechanism[12]. Thatcherism is a new ideological representation of what social norms are needed to exist within this new capitalist environment. This period of contestation allows us to examine certain assumptions about social norms and identity that were being contested. While the discursive spin that Thatcherism maintains about social identity is the dominant social representation to come out of this period, alternative representations are visible in the anti-authority struggles around Thatcherism.

CONCLUSION

As I go on now to look at Thatcherism's discourse on family and its particular implications for welfare provision (and even more particularly community care), I aim to highlight practices suggested by the authors discussed in this chapter. Foucault, Luke, Barrett and McIntosh produce understandings of 'family' that I hope to find within Thatcherism. The discursive practices Frazer identifies, I argue, are the arena within which the community care policy documents came to exist. The economic circumstances identified above helped frame the debate within the language of consumerism and individualism. The next chapter focuses on establishing the particular representation given to

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[12]The original source of the term Thatcherism.

family within Thatcherism, situated within the perspective and circumstances established in this chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

THATCHERISM´S FAMILY

INTRODUCTION

I look at the Thatcher period as one particular historical instance when the family was represented as one particular social practice by a powerful political group. The key question I will raise later is: what are the consequences of this form of representation? I am interested particularly in the status of women who were often the hidden objects of this mythical project, but seldom the active subjects. For now, however, I want to trace the dominant themes within the family discourse in Thatcherism.

This chapter focuses on Thatcherism´s use of a reprivatization discourse as its primary representation of the family. The analysis concentrates on the various sites of Thatcherist discourse. The first section looks at brief sections from the writings and speeches of key economic advisors, senior politicians and Mrs Thatcher. The second section deals with specific Conservative party and Government texts; the Conservative party manifestos and a leaked policy document from 1983. My main argument, which links both sections, is that the ´family´ resurrected in these speeches and texts is intended to look after the individual of Thatcherism´s version of market capitalism as

discussed in the previous chapter.

The advisors, politicians and texts were mainly chosen because of their centrality to Thatcherist ideology. I looked for examples, coming from within the network of new right advisors and politicians, of writing and speeches which dealt with the family, the welfare state, the market and citizenship. This was in order to see how those central to the development of Thatcherism as an ideology constructed the discourses I am focusing on. The manifestos are examined since they provide a valuable site to study the textual integration of explicit ideological rhetoric and promises of government action.

The free market economics of Thatcherism are but one element of a sometimes contradictory ideology. It is important to note and remember the contradictory elements within Thatcherism (which played a role in the eventual downfall of Thatcher herself). The merging of the new right economic ideology with traditional Conservative themes of authority, law and order and family was not always a happy one. Within the ideology itself the free market doctrine and the family mythology were often in contradiction, leaving discursive gaps and failed coherency. Dissent was raised within the party over some of the ideas expressed by the following advisors and politicians. Some Conservative women found the pronouncements on the role of family and women

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made by male members troubling and out of touch with the realities of family organizations. The poll tax (mentioned in this chapter) was highly divisive within the party and was one of the casualties of Thatcher's downfall. While the aim of a discourse is to produce an illusion of unity and stability, the discursive meanings detailed in this chapter are in fact fragmentary, unstable and volatile. This does not take away their importance, for while unstable, the meanings detailed here helped forge the boundaries and terms of the debate about issues such as welfare provision and the role of women and families during the eighties.

The moral high ground the new right gives itself allows it to see the market as uniquely the salvation for all social ills. It also allows those who adopt a position within the new right, to see exactly what those social ills are, the blame for their existence and the way forward. From the very beginning of Thatcherism, the family has stood beside the market as the cure, the moral background to market regulation. As we shall see the dominant family discourse heard in the political arena is the reprivatization discourse. The family has been resurrected to deal with the 'leaky' troublesome needs which the free market economy or the consumer/individual has found difficult or inconvient. The final section briefly notes some feminist discussion of Thatcherism's family discourse.

I also note the key ability of Thatcherism's discourse to assimilate feminist arguments into its own discourse, twisting the argument to suit Thatcherism's political agenda. This practice was used against a variety of opposition actors, but has been particularly successful when used against feminist opposition. This chapter allows me to highlight the social practices and representations within which the term community care has been used and manipulated.

REPRIVATIZATION DISCOURSE IN THATCHERISM

This section looks to see how the new right ideology of Thatcherism has viewed the family and the welfare system within a reprivatization discourse. Thatcherism's argument (and one it shares with other new right political actors) is that the family is an institution under threat from the intrusion of social workers and left wing meddlers. The social welfare system has taken over what should be left to the family, who know best. Also present within Thatcherism's discourse is a link between family and the market. The reprivatization discourse begins in the writings of Thatcherism's polemic advisors and intellectual gurus, but carries on through the public statements and writings of various Conservative ministers and Mrs Thatcher herself.

Within the political arena the position of think tanks is contentious. Think tanks are often symbolized as the

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"expert discourse." They present an image of knowledge and academic thoroughness, describing themselves as independent research institutes. Think tanks perform as the knowledgeable background or legimating form to public debate. As exponents of the expert discourse they often provide the "knowledge" gloss to the arguments of the various competing pressure groups. Their supposed objectivity and expertise are meant to guarantee impartiality. However, as Frazer suggests (see Chapter Two), the expert discourse is far from objective, and successful discursive players are generally those who make best use of an expert discourse. Think tanks associated with Thatcherism have only a thin veil of objectivity, however, they still dress their arguments in the discourse of expertise to validate their argument. The Policy Unit is a right wing think tank set up by Thatcher supporters and closely tied to the cabinet. While most of its members are economists by profession, this has not stopped them bringing forth their views on the family and women. Patrick Minford, a monetarist, is a leading reprivatization discourse exponent:

> The provision of direct social services is regarded by many as something that the family should undertake. When the state provides these services, there is serious concern that families feel morally justified in abandoning their responsibilities....Society rightly feels that elderly parents and relatives, for example ....are the responsibility of next of kin to help (Loney 1986: 30).

Society is represented as a singular entity, which Minford presumes to speak for: "society rightly feels that." He does not qualify who feels "serious concern" over state provision, he assumes it is the only "natural" reaction.

The IEA (The Institute For Economic Affairs) has also found space within its research on economics and the welfare state to discuss the family. The IEA was formed in 1955 and is the birth-place of many of the economic theories of the new right in Britain. It also published many of the writings of U.S free trade economists such as Milton Friedman. It is the IEA and its chairman Ralph Harris which has championed the use of market mechanisms in broader areas of society (see Chapter Two).[13] The provision of social services has been one area which the IEA has been pushing for greater use of market regulation. The new right combination of free market economics and pseudo moralism on "family matters" is also witnessed in the IEA. The reprivatization discourse is visible in the writings of Ralph Harris.[14] He published a paper mourning the destruction of the family caused by the

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[13]One idea to come from the IEA was the suggestion that market mechanisms could be introduced to the supply of human organs for transplant. While the idea was never taken up by the government since they believed it was too politically dangerous, it is only a logical extension of the new right belief in market regulation.

[14]Who along with other members of IEA was knighted by Mrs Thatcher.

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welfare system. The aberrations from the natural form of
nuclear family, he argues, can be tied to the influence of
the welfare system:

> the dramatic increase in unmarried mothers owes a
> good deal to the special payments and subsidised
> housing priority won by the pressure groups for that
> biological curiosity of ´single-parent´ families
> (1988: 23).

Harris introduces a medical-scientific discourse to
suggest that single motherhood is in some way either
unnatural or a medical freak caused by the welfare system.
The welfare system appears, for the new right, to be
weakening the privileged position of the nuclear family. The
new right discourse judges all other social practices via
its nuclear family ideology (something discussed by Barrett
and McIntosh, see Chapter Two). If other forms of family
organization are possible or seem to exist, they have to be
transformed into something that is "wrong" or explainable as
a "biological curiosity." It is also important for the new
right to find a cause, a blame for this "curiosity."

Harris and the other new right thinkers have quickly
turned to the welfare state as the villain, since blaming
the welfare system for destroying the ´family´ gives an
illusion of moral cause to their aim of dissolving the
welfare system. Harris and Minford represent the proper
family as a biological, natural form. Their discourse
positions the nuclear family as inherently morally superior

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and all else deviant, ´unnatural´ and therefore excluded from acceptable society.

Before Margaret Thatcher became leader of the Conservative party, Sir Keith Joseph had been thought a likely future leader of the party. He is widely regarded as one of the intellectual gurus of Thatcherism and operated as a close advisor to Thatcher even after he left government. The outcry over the following statement is one of the main reasons he never became leader of the Conservative Party. In 1974 during a speech he made this observation about working class single mothers:

> They are producing problem children, the future
> unmarried mothers, delinquent denizens of our borstals,
> subnormal educational establishments, prisons and
> hostels for drifters (Campbell: 159/60).

This prompted him to suggest that mandatory birth control would perhaps be a good tool for social engineering amongst the lower classes. "Problem families" (i.e. those not conforming to the nuclear family image) are easy scapegoats for the politician to blame (politicians of other parties use this same technique) for current day social problems. Rhodes Boyson saw crime and disorder as linked to a failure in parenting. He "laid the responsibility for rioting youths, football hooligans and murderous muggings on the sins committed by the parents of today´s disillusioned youth" (David 1981: 40). When the family "fails" so does

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society.

Patrick Jenkin, a Minister for Social Services in the
early Thatcher days (he later moved to the Ministry of
Industry), was a crucial user of a reprivatization
discourse, who glorified the place of the family and women
within the family as providers of care. In 1980 in a speech
at the party conference he argued that social services
should rely more on the voluntary sector to provide care and
that the family was the "biggest voluntary body of the lot"
(The Guardian Oct 9th 1980). He also stressed the position
of the family as the basic natural unit which society builds
from:

> The family....has been the foundation for virtually
> every free society known to history. It possesses
> strength and resilience, not least in adversity.
> Loyalty to the family ranks highest of all, higher
> even than loyalty to the state (Coussins and Coote
> 1981: 5).

The statement positions the family as capable of dealing
with times of "adversity." It is the family which can and
should protect and look after us when in need.

His most infamous comment, however, came in 1979:

> Quite frankly I don't think mothers have the same right
> to work as fathers. If the good lord had intended us
> to have equal rights to go out to work he wouldn't have
> created man and woman. These are biological facts
> (Campbell: 199).

What is being lost, according to Jenkin, in the call for
equal rights is the greater need for women to look after the

family:

> I am told there is now a word for ´latchkey kid´
> in every European language....There is now an
> elaborate machinery to ensure [that women have]
> equal opportunity, equal pay and equal rights; but I
> think we ought to stop and ask -where does this leave
> the family?.....The pressure on young wives to go to
> work devalues motherhood itself....Parenthood is a very
> skilled task indeed and it must be our aim to restore
> it to the place of honour it deserves (Coussins and
> Coote: 7).

Perhaps we need to stop and ask why is it that equal rights

for women, within his narrative, need to be framed within

the implications for the ´family´ and whether this was

really what God intended. The views of Jenkin may appear

absurd and are, I am sure, not held by all Conservative

politicians. However, they become important in the context

of his Ministerial position. As Minster of Social Services

in Mrs Thatcher´s first cabinet, he headed the Ministry with

most impact on women (especially women in vulnerable

positions reliant on welfare provision).

Chris Patten, who was another politician closely allied

to Mrs Thatcher, but less well known as a social

philosopher, has written on the Conservative belief in

family and Church. While Patten argues he is not suggesting

Conservatives are morally superior to other political

groups, close analysis of his text uncovers the practice of

exclusion through the implicit construction of the deviant

and anti-social. Patten´s contention is that society is

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suffering from moral chaos caused by a decline in religious

belief and the nuclear family. Alternative explanations as

to why society would be disintegrating (as well as asking

whether society is actually disintegrating) are excluded via

a discourse which assumes that no other explanation is

possible:

> But it is difficult to argue that **our society is as**
> **firmly rooted in the Christian tradition** as it ever
> was, and just as difficult to **deny** the relationship
> between Christian belief on the one side and
> **individual responsibility** and **healthy family life**
> on the other (1983: 24 emphasis mine).

Patten equates British society with being traditionally

Christian. He also equates "healthy family life" with a

"Christian belief." Patten´s Christianity is the acceptable,

authorized belief of the Anglican protestant Church, with

its hierarchial structure of Royalty and Bishops

guaranteeing salvation and the correct faith in God and

family. Healthy family life is achieved through adherence to

the surveillance and policing authority of the hierarchy of

the Anglican Church. This narrative defines those not

supportive of this Christian "tradition" as somehow against

the moral framework of society and against "healthy family

life." The Christian tradition, in Patten´s view, stresses

the need to love God to avoid the destruction of

civilization: "The love of God is part of the fabric of our

civilization, the most important part, and once it is lost,

no civilization of value can survive" (1983: 32). Patten's privileging of his particular notion of Christianity (and a Christian God) and civilization enables the exclusion of alternative living and religious practices, in a format that does not question the contentious nature of its argument or the dictatorial content of its vision of society.

The need for religion in society is unquestionable in Patten's mind, but again this religion has to be Western and a particular brand of Christian: "The world is a worse place, not a better one, because fewer men believe in God, though even this remark needs to be qualified as Ayatollah Khomeini's career attests" (1983: 32 emphasis mine). The infusion of a new right discourse into the Conservative discourse has led to an expansion in religious imagery and symbolism in Conservative statements. Part of the appeal to the "retro past" so common in the Thatcherist discourse is an appeal to a religious past when everyone worshiped a Christian God and went to Church every Sunday. It is irrelevant whether such a time actually existed; the power of the argument is its ability to posit blame and propose a simple remedy that only seems feasible if the argument sustains an exclusionary tactic. The privileging of this particular religious discourse also forms the moral background to the Thatcherist reprivatization discourse, placing the mythologised caring nuclear family within good

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Christian tradition and the Bible.

Patten promises that Conservatives are open to other cultural traditions. However, he feels the Conservative tradition, which for him embodies the essence of Christian belief[15], is the best suited to a "happy life":

> we are not trying to establish an old-fashioned, repressive social order in the interests of one class of the community, but to apply an **old culture, tradition and morality** to a new and often nasty world in order that everyone can lead a more **civilised** and **ultimately happy life** (1983: 34 emphasis mine).

The language here is reminiscent of colonial rhetoric which contended that part of the goal of colonialism was to introduce the "natives" to the civilizing potential of Christianity and English civilization.[16] In the present discourse the "natives" are "amongst us" only waiting to be shown the light.

In case the reader is still confused why they need to be civilised, Patten emphasizes again the danger inherent in the destruction of the nuclear family. He argues Western Society faces two important threats. First is the decline in

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[15]This is an argument several Christian Church leaders have found questionable. A panel of Church of England Bishops published a report (<u>Faith in the Cities</u>) highly critical of what they saw as the lack of morality in Thatcherism and the Conservative Government. Mrs Thatcher's response to the report was to label it "Marxist" (<u>The Independent</u> November 23rd 1990: 5).

[16]Patten argues that Britain should not feel "guilty about our imperial past (pg 54)."

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the nuclear family "which is a main cause of many of the social problems -violent crimes, juvenile delinquency, drug addiction..."(1983: 34). The second danger is the threat of nuclear war. By including both these threats in the one sentence Patten is paralleling the threat to society created by the supposed family's disintegration with the threat of nuclear war. Implicitly this means that to support any other form of social practice other than the nuclear family is to take a position as deviant and anti-social as to support all-out nuclear war. The quote also highlights one of the favorite discursive practices within Thatcherism of using war imagery when discussing domestic matters. The Conservative government is at war with those elements inside society which break out of their representation of what British society should and needs to be.

Patten finishes by suggesting that schools should "prepare" children for marriage for the same reasons it would protect them from child pornography and child abuse. His exclusionary discourse has now reached the point where it has implicitly and explicitly constructed the other and deviant to be those non-Christian (or non Church of England), non-"traditional" and not inside a nuclear family form. This deviant community is as dangerous to society's health as nuclear war and as immoral as child abuse.

The final Conservative speaker I want to examine is

Mrs. Thatcher herself. So far I have highlighted the family representations supplied by her advisors and some of the politicians who were are closest supporters. What kind of representation is seen in the words of Mrs. Thatcher herself? Below are two quotes from speeches by Mrs. Thatcher. The first was given at the annual Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1988, the second just after her reelection in 1983:

> The basic ties of the family lies at the heart of our society are the very nursery of civic virtue. It is on the family that we in the government build our own policies for welfare, education, and care. You recall that Timothy was warned by St Paul that everyone who neglects to provide for his own house (meaning his own family) has disowned the faith and is ´worse than an infidel´ (Finch 1989: 3).

> Where there is discord, may we bring harmony.
> Where there is error, may we bring truth.
> Where there is doubt, may we bring faith.
> Where there is despair, may we bring hope.

I want to highlight the language Mrs. Thatcher uses in both these speeches. Especially the use of universalistic terms like "basic ties", "our own", "may we." She is symbolically representing a particular understanding of the nation and society as a universal, homogenous, natural organization. I think what we see here is what Barthes argued is the naturalization of history, as well as the practice of one group representing their behavior and their history as universal. The religious imagery is worth comment too. Mrs. Thatcher´s appropriation of religious imagery on

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both occasions forges her narrative and again provides universal imagery and symbolism. It also highlights that the 'we' she talks of is a Christian believing we. She is speaking of and to the Church of England (C of E) congregation, who went to Sunday School and know their Bible. Her use of religious imagery also mirrors that of Chris Patten's. They both assume a higher discursive ground via their contention that their political argument is one found in the teachings of Christianity (the Old Testament of the Bible in particular). It is an appeal to the ultimate higher authority.

Her use of "we" seems contradictory to her view that society does not exist. Mrs. Thatcher in 1987 was quoted as saying: "There is no such thing as society." By this she meant she saw no social bond or any obligation on the part of citizens to care about their "outside environment" or any obligation on the part of the state to be a vehicle for societal support. A society of some sort exists for her but one that only includes those who she views as 'we'; white, English, middle class, self sufficient, Christian (Church of England) stockholders.

The nation imagery is employed when useful (for example during the Falklands war, when fighting against European integration, when dealing with Greenham Common protestors) but it does not necessitate society or social obligation.

The one nation mythology of the traditional Conservative discourse is being replaced by a more openly exclusionary discourse that uses Victorian and Empire symbolism. The Victorian mythology being symbolized in Mrs. Thatcher's personal vision suggests society does not exist as a social body, but instead as a natural organism made up of individuals who gain their sense of self from individual responsibility channelled within the family. A family which is private, natural and based on heterosexual relations, and is also the mythical family of the reprivatization discourse. This is clear in the following speech extract where she describes a "good" society as one where people:

> Are **self-reliant**, self-respecting, if they always lend
> a hand to others, if they reckon that they have got to
> be very good members of the community, not because
> anyone tells them to, but because that's the way they
> live. If they are prepared to **take responsibility** for
> their own actions, and responsibility for their **own**
> **families**, and respect other people's rights...
> (my emphasis Junor 1983: 2)

This notion of self-reliance and family responsibility returns often in Thatcher's rhetoric, and often it is framed within a religious narrative, a particularly Biblical, Old Testament Protestant narrative:

> Our religion teaches us that every human being is
> unique and must play his part in working out his own
> salvation....(Junor 1983: 192)

> **Man** is a social **creature**, born into **family**, **clan**,
> **community**, **nation**, brought up in mutual dependence.
> The founders of **our** religion made this a corner stone
> of morality. The admonitions ´**love thy neighbour as**

> thyself' and 'do as you would be done by' express this.
> They **do not denigrate self**, or elevate love of others
> above it.....This embodies the **great truth that self
> regard is the root of regard for one's fellows**. The
> child learns to understand others through its own
> feeling initially towards its **immediate family**. In
> course of time **the circle grows** (Junor 1983: 192 my
> emphasis).

The narrative imagines a society growing naturally out of
natural individual human behavior and characteristics.
Religion is the surveillance mechanism constructing and
policing individual identity and subjectivity within family
and "self-regard." The Garden of Eden is still present
within individual families, teaching us how to be correct
citizens and subjects (of Crown and God). At the cornerstone
of the family is the male (again Victorian mythology), and
at the cornerstone of society is the individual family man:

> What is the real driving force in our society? It is
> the desire for the individual to do the best for
> **himself or his family**. There is no substitute for this
> **elemental human instinct** (Campbell: 168 my emphasis).

There is no space within this story of redemption and
salvation for other notions of 'self', for notions of
identity that don't come from within a nuclear and
heterosexual family. The social is almost invisible or
absent. Collective or social identity is secondary or non
existent. They are things which take away from "man" their
true identity as self-reliant individuals. The Victorian
notions of self-reliance and individuality within bourgeois
families are again dominant.

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Again like Patten, Mrs. Thatcher has not shied away
from supporting the benefits of British imperialism and
embracing the old colonial rhetoric of civilizing the
"natives" and the white man´s burden. In answer to a
parliamentary question attacking her use of Victorian
imagery and in particular colonial imagery, she replied that
she believed in the British Empire "which took freedom and
the rule of law to countries which would never have known it
otherwise" (The Times February 18th 1983). Thatcherism´s
nation is made up of individuals, individuals who live
within families. Obligation is channeled, not through
society or the welfare system, but through the private
sphere of the family. One of the main contentions of the
reprivatization discourse.

Her image of society and citizenship in Britain also
sees a society inclusive of those participating in Harris
and Seldon´s commodity and share market:

> Come with us then towards the next decade. Let us
> together set our sights on a Britain where three out
> four families own their home, where owning shares is
> as common as having a car, and where families have a
> degree of independence their forefathers could only
> dream about (The Times 12th October 1985).

Productive good citizens are those who participate in the
commodity market either as the good family consumers
described above or as suppliers of the commodities. During
the height of the inner city riots in 1981 when asked for

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her reaction to the turmoil she replied: "Oh those poor shopkeepers." Amongst the various victims of the riots Mrs. Thatcher singled out shopkeepers for concern.

Mrs. Thatcher has also adopted war symbolism in her speeches and statements. There was a marked increase in the use of war imagery after the ´victory´ in the Falklands Islands in 1982[17]. In 1984 during the Miners strike Mrs. Thatcher described the National Miners Union as the "enemy within":

> We always have to be aware of the enemy within,
> which is more difficult to fight, and more
> dangerous to liberty
> (The Independent November 23rd 1990).

A phrase which is reminiscent of the cold war symbolism used to fuel US paranoia during the McCarthy era in the fifties. The phrase stuck and has been consequently used to refer to nuclear protestors (especially Greenham Common women activists), welfare "scroungers" and striking nurses and teachers. Again we see Thatcherism using war imagery to exclude (narrative violence and terrorism perhaps?) those elements contradictory to its nation and family discourse. Indeed these elements are the enemy, since their voice and existence contradicts the illusions and myths operating in the Thatcherism discourse. They are one of the troubling

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[17]1983, the following year, the platform at the Conservative Conference was designed to look like the outline of a navy air craft carrier.

factors which break down Thatcherism, stalling its internal coherence and its desire for hegemonic control of public discourse.

Beatrice Campbell has also talked about other ways Mrs. Thatcher has played with family meanings in her carefully stage managed symbolism[18]. Mrs. Thatcher portrayed balancing the budget as equivalent to balancing the family budget. She used the metaphor of the clever housewife cutting costs and balancing resources as what was needed to cure Britain of its economic woes; "Perhaps it takes a housewife to see that Britain´s national housekeeping is appalling" (Campbell: 234) and "Any woman who understands the problems of running a home will be nearer to understanding the problems of running the country" (The Independent November 23rd 1990). Campbell argues that this not only does nothing to explain the economic problems Britain was in at the time, but more importantly, it is a mythical symbolic representation of some constructed

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[18]The construction of Mrs Thatcher´s public identity was also part of Thatcherism´s public discourse. Through the years Mrs Thatcher´s voice was lowered, her hair dyed and her clothing changed. The greatest emphasis, though, was on reconstructing her image as a mother. Her arguments that any housewife could balance the government´s budget was supported by her memories of her own housewife experiences. The remolding of Mrs Thatcher into the caring mother and housewife is witnessed in the title of one of her biographies; **Margaret Thatcher: Wife, Mother, Politician.** Politician is listed last although it has been the major point of her adult life.

identity labelled ´housewife´. It only functions as a metaphor because it universalizes multiple, diverse experiences to mirror not reality but an image of reality. The housewife Mrs. Thatcher is presenting herself as is the petty bourgeois, penny-pinching, policing housewife. The housewife is given an economic role (as controller of family finance and buyer of commodities for the family not herself) to produce a mythical domestication of capitalism. The supposed "irrational sphere" of the lifeworld of the family is reconceptualized as an area of capital exchange represented through the penny pinching "housewife" in order to mythologise the workings of state capitalism and the financing of government.

What all the above Thatcherist thinkers represent is a discourse which assumes a previous golden age of family purity; where the nuclear family provided the values and care needs of society. However, the particular family we are seeing represented is a mythical portrayal of a mythical past, a representation of a representation. The Conservative privileging of this mythical family denies legitimacy to other social practices. Other forms of social behavior are named as deviant to emphasize the normalcy and naturalness of this form. This reintroduction of mythologized "Victorian" values and the nineteenth century bourgeois family, as Luke suggests, is conditioned to serve the needs

of late capitalism. Or more specifically the market needs of
the new consumerist society and welfare system. This final
point will become more clear when I now look at key
Thatcherist texts which explicitly link the ´family´ to
consumerism and accumulation.

THATCHERIST TEXTS

These texts are official documents of the Conservative
party and Government that both outline the Thatcherist
philosophy and begin to sketch the policy implications of
that philosophy. Both sets of texts link representations of
the past to the new right ideology of economic liberalism
and the conditions created by their economic project. I
begin with the party manifestos and finish with leaked
family policy discussion documents.

The Conservative party manifestos are a key site of
Thatcherist discourse produced before all the General
Elections. The manifestos produced in 1979, 1983 and 1987
all construct mythical family symbolism around
representations of Victorian imagery and property ownership.
In 1979 the manifesto promised to rebuild "our country"
through "common sense" and "reason" (Craig 1990: 267).
Rebuilding the country would begin by rebuilding the family
as the corner stone of morality and well being. What is at
risk, argues the 1983 Manifesto, is what makes Britain

unique:

> How to defend Britain´s traditional liberties and
> distinctive way of life is the most vital decision
> that faces the people at this election (Craig 1990:
> 321).

Saving "our" past (which made Britain "a great country") is
viewed as a legitimate government goal. The past is
immediately represented as the ideal which Britain must
return to. Britain is "a great country which seems to have
lost its way" (Craig 1990: 267). The past is never
concretely visualized but stands as an illusion of stability
and order amongst the supposed moral chaos of Britain today,
which is "on the brink of disintegration" (Craig 1990: 267).

One of the key tasks the Conservatives set themselves
in 1979 was:

> To support family life, by helping people become
> homeowners, raising the standards of their children´s
> education, and concentrating welfare services on the
> effective support of the old, the sick, the disabled
> and those who are in real need (Craig 1990: 268).

What is immediately interesting in the above statement is
the connection made between "family life" and being a
"homeowner." The section on family in the 1979 manifesto is
sub-headed **HOMES OF OUR OWN**. This narrative link echoes the
Victorian ethos of the bourgeois patriarchal property owning
family. The Victorian era saw the rise of the bourgeois
class, which symbolized its stratified position in society
by its home, its private property. It is the signification

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of identity as something signalled by the owned ´family´ home (preferably with servants too) which this element of Thatcherism is tapping into. Of course, this has gender implications because the Victorian narrative of property ownership is tied to a patriarchal pattern of ownership.

The family is represented here not by its kinship patterns but by its property ownership. This implicitly suggests that "family life" not based around property ownership is somehow at fault. The Victorian sentiment is continued in the belief that greater property ownership will stimulate greater individual responsibility and self-reliance. The following encapsulates the use of a "retro-past" within the Conservative manifestos:

> Our history is the story of a free people - a great chain of people stretching back into the past and forward into the future.
>
> All are linked by a common belief in freedom, and in Britain´s greatness. All are aware of their own responsibility to contribute to both.
>
> Our past is witness to their enduring courage, honesty and flair, and to their ability to change and create. Our future will be shaped by those same qualities (Craig 1990: 321).

The Victorian ideals of self-efficiency, self-reliance, individual responsibility that I highlighted in the speeches of Mrs Thatcher and the texts of her senior politicians find new voice here in the manifestos. The past which Thatcherism would like to see Britain return to is a past of property

owning bourgeois families who believed in and followed the teachings of a Christian God (represented here on earth by the Monarch). It is the Britain which "built" the Empire (broadening the narrative of past to encapsulate and include the Edwardian era along with the Victorian) and "invented" capitalism and individual enterprise. That this was also the Britain of work houses, slavery, child labor and mass disease and poverty does not enter the narrative. The Thatcherism memory of the great British past is highly selective and it needs to be to keep the illusion of coherence and universalism in its call to Britain's Victorian past.

The use of Victorian imagery involves mythologizing the past in a way that reproduces the past without need for the original. This narrative views history as one story that encompasses "all" citizens and is experienced by "all" the same. The past is viewed as something ´we´ can see unproblematically and use to build a better future for "everyone." The structure of the narrative means that the possibility that this "past" may be nothing more than empty symbolism is ignored. It means that alternative stories which can be told are denied.

Alternative perspectives which are possible are scorned[19].

Each manifesto, via its narrative, links home ownership to family stability and happiness. The bourgeois individual mythology signals individuality via ownership of property. The basic commodity to be owned in this discourse is the family home. This discourse thus roots the family as the basic unit in society and implicitly the property owner within that family as the most important element. Due to greater economic power that element is most often the man. Freedom is therefore equated with integration into capitalism through private ownership: "A **free** and **independent** society is one in which the **ownership of property is spread as widely as possible**" (Craig 1990: 331 my emphasis). The need for people to own property in order to signal participation in society helps keep the market supplied with capital (often borrowed capital) busily searching for new types of property and commodities to exchange with.

The signalling of individuality through ownership of property is not just tailored to a Victorian symbolism. It

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[19]With such a high degree of empty imagery and symbolism evident in these manifestos it seems at least ironic that the 1979 Manifesto begins with the following two statements:
"Britain has to come to terms with reality."
"The years of make-believe and false optimism are over (pg 283 Craig)." It would seem that make-believe had only just begun.

is remolded (as Luke suggests, see Chapter Two) to the new historical conditions within flexible accumulation. The individual represented in the manifestos, who is positioned within the nuclear family, is the economic individual constructed by the discourse of flexible accumulation and free market economics established by the new right. As I showed Ralph Harris and Arthur Seldon do in Chapter Two, democracy is linked to the market through the ability to consume and own property: "Under this Government, the **property-owning democracy** is growing fast. And the basic foundation of it is the **family home**" (Craig 1990: 331). A "property-owning democracy" is presented as somehow "more" British than socialism or collectivism:

> The British instinct is for choice and independence.
> Given the opportunities provided by Conservative
> policies, many more families now enjoy the pride of
> ownership of homes, shares and of pensions (Craig 1990:
> 417).

It is not surprising then that Thatcherism would bring in a new form of taxation represented as the **community charge** but always known as the **poll tax**. This form of local government finance based its records on the voting register. For those in financial difficulties a common method of avoiding paying the tax was removal from the voting register. Voting in Thatcherism´s **"property owning democracy"** had thus became a right dependent on the ability to consume and be an active consumer-citizen.

Commodities and the ability to consume those commodities are heralded as the social glue to bring society together: "Our goal is a capital-owning democracy of people and families.."(Craig 1990: 420). Owning shares (principally in what were once state owned companies) is the new symbol for active citizenship and individuality. Shares are represented as the newest commodity, the latest "must have" to be a "permissive individual"; "Just as with cars, television sets, washing machines and foreign holidays, it would no longer be a privilege of the few, it would become the expectation of the many" (Craig 1990: 423).

The phrase "community" is one that pops up often in the Conservative manifestos, but it is again used as an empty signifier to universalize different social experience and to exclude those social practices not fitting within the narrow mould of a "property owning democracy." It is used in the singular, thereby suggesting that society is one community. This represents society as encompassing one way of life, one way of life which flows from the natural organization of relationships within the nuclear family. The manifesto also raises the link between the community and the site of primary "care" for "family members": "In the community, we must do more to help people to help themselves, and families to look after their own" (Craig 1990: 280). The much vaunted private home is assumed to be the site where sick or

dependent people wish to remain: "Most people who are ill or frail would prefer to stay in or near their own homes, rather than live in a hospital or institution" (Craig 1990: 134). The following chapter will look to see if these electoral promises are visible in the community care documents.

The manifesto paints a picture of British society which mixes the past with the economic dreams of the present and future. The past shows for the "British people" their "tradition" of "fairness and tolerance", their "British qualities" which include "a genius for invention" and "a spirit of enterprise" (Craig 1990: 344). This tradition is molded to a vision of property ownership represented in the family home and material satisfaction represented in possession of cars and shares. Together this will create "One nation of free, prosperous and responsible families and people. A Conservative dream is at least becoming a reality" (Craig 1990: 417).

The manifestos promised to protect the "family" and help rebuild individuality. The first concrete policy signs of this electoral promise came in February 1983. Several policy discussion documents relating to family policy were leaked to The Guardian newspaper. The documents were a product of a request made by the Prime Minister for her cabinet members to think about ways to "help the family."

Together with a few close advisors to Mrs Thatcher seven
Government Ministers (including Keith Joseph and Patrick
Jenkin now at the Ministry of Industry) listed a series of
proposals which would restructure the welfare state.[20] The
restructuring was aimed at protecting the private nuclear
family and restoring individual responsibility. The
suggestions highlight the influence of the discourse on
family we have seen in Thatcherism.

The discussion documents do not just deal with the
family. They cover areas such as pension provision, general
public morality, religious schooling, voluntary bodies,
crime and unemployment. However, the underlining theme is
clearly the centrality of the family to all these issues.
The family is represented as the basic unit of society, a
basic unit which is in severe difficulty. The remit of
possible government involvement in the construction of
"healthy" citizens is extremely broad for a government
pledged to reducing government involvement in the "private
sphere." A key desire is the education of children in the
proper social values needed in Thatcher´s Britain. The

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[20]The other participants were: Geoffrey Howe
(Chancellor), Michael Heseltine (Minister of Environment),
David Howell (Minister of Transport), Norman Fowler
(Minister of Health and Social Security), Norman Tebbit
(Minister of Employment), Timothy Raison (junior Minister
Home Office), John Sparrow (senior advisor) and Ferdinand
Mount (senior advisor).

report argues that the government should be looking for:

> ways of encouraging the development of children, the
> country's major resource of the future, into self-
> reliant, responsible, capable, enterprising and
> fulfilled adults (The Guardian February 18th 1983: 4).

For children to grow up and be useful to society and be a
"resource" in the future, they must accept the enterprise
culture. The quote is eerily similar to Luke's description
of the social body desired by collective capitalism (see
Chapter Two). I quote it again here:

> Collective capital wants disciplined, educated, self-
> sacrificing, motivated, but good looking workers for
> its race in the global market place, and it is now
> every family's duty to produce them at lower social
> cost and higher efficiencies (Luke 1989: 125).

The merging of capitalism's needs with the family discourse
leaves the private/public distinction repeatedly maintained
by the discourse unsustainable. Part of the distinction
maintained by the reprivatization discourse is that the
private sphere is a natural irrational sphere which
functions differently than the public sphere. The logic
seems to be that families have to be protected from the
intrusion of the welfare state, while children are to be
taught in schools how to manage pocket money as a first step
in their integration into "late capitalism's" enterprise
culture. Thatcherism is intruding into its own discursive
myth of the irrational life world of the family with its
economic discourse of capital exchange and rational economic

behavior.

The family is specifically examined when the report suggests that a way needs to be found to encourage mothers to stay at home. The nuclear family can best be saved and children are raised most "successfully" when mothers stay at home. The argument also assumes that mothers want to be at home and only leave due to financial needs. The report also suggests that more work needs to be done to find out:

> what more can be done to encourage families-in the widest sense-to reassume responsibilities taken on by the state, for example, responsibility for the disabled, elderly, unemployed 16 year-olds (The Guardian February 18th 1983: 4).[21]

This statement again uses the past to justify their policy position. The family once did these things ("reassume") so surely it can do them once again. The statement also shows the government´s intention to involve the family explicitly in the care of the elderly and disabled. Self reliance, the paper argues, is seen in the ability of the family to look after its own, with the help not of the state but voluntary bodies: "one of the clearest signs of a society in which individuals are prepared and able to take care of themselves and their families is the existence of a vigorous voluntary sector" (The Guardian February 18th 1983: 4). This document

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[21]Subsequently the government withdrew social security payments to sixteen year olds. The immediate effect was a huge rise in the number of homeless sixteen year olds.

is clearly premised in the representations of family outlined in the first section. The discourse the papers construct allows the authors the space to then suggest that policies can be created to help what is only a fictional representation. Thatcherism´s family is a construct, a model around which these documents build a policy discourse, further adding to the illusion of reality.

The molding of policy to the representations of family established by the Thatcherist discourse has implications for those groups the policies are aimed at. Feminist opposition to both the discursive representation and the suggested policies worry about the possible repercussions for women, the idealized objects of much of the discourse. This final section raises briefly some feminist concerns and also highlights one of the discursive practices used by Thatcherism to incorporate feminist concerns.

FEMINIST CRITIQUES OF THATCHERISM´S FAMILY

Feminists have been critical of the reprivatization discourse on the grounds that it does not understand modern family structures. While the reprivatization discourse argues the family is private and is being invaded by the public, some feminists argue that the idea that the family structure is in a state of nature is a myth. The removal of the welfare state will not return the family to the Garden

of Eden. Like sexuality in the Foucault analysis, the family is constructed within the power relations of capitalism and modern society and cannot thus be seen as something separate. To pretend the family is or can be a garden of tranquility, a haven from the horrors of civil society, is to suggest inherent properties within a correct family form that individuals can all obtain. It assumes the family can be and is separate from the public sphere while I suggest like Foucault and the other theorists in Chapter Two that the family is a social practice, a product of the power relations in the public as much as in the private sphere.

Feminists are also concerned with using the family as a unit of analysis or suggesting the family is the basic unit in society. Such a discourse presumes the family is a unified singular unit, while instead it is a site of contested power relations:

> Separating out the members of the family in this way runs counter to the whole idea of the family as a solidary unit.....But it is only separating out the members of families, and noticing how many people are not in families, that enables us to consider whose interests are served by the family as a privileged institution (McIntosh 1984: 237).

Presuming the traditional nuclear family is the basic unit of society, as the Thatcherist discourse does, excludes other forms of social practice (see Foucault and Barrett and McIntosh in Chapter Two). It also privileges those practices associated with the nuclear family and disregards those

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associated with other forms of "family" organization.

Feminist criticisms have also focused on the link between the economic project and the family discourse. Feminists such as Barrett and McIntosh, Beatrice Campbell and Ruth Levitas see the family's glorification as part of the individualistic ideology of the new right. Family, they argue, is being used to support the new individual of flexible accumulation and consumer choice. The idea that economically we must provide for ourselves is simply continued to the care of those unable to care for themselves. The market is our regulator, not society. If society does not exist, it cannot be expected to care, therefore the weight falls on the family, and due to cultural norms on the woman:

> Family rhetoric in Conservative thought is not about improving how we are all loved and cared for. Quite the opposite, because it is essentially an appeal to individualism. It is about confirming that we must look after ourselves and be self sufficient (Gardiner 1983: 208).

The individual formed by the Thatcherist economic project is an individual who cannot (or should not) rely on state support instead they should rely on a private care base. A private care base conviently provided by the newly resurrected loving (woman/wife/mother) family. Barrett and McIntosh argue that new right Conservative individualism is based on removing social concerns and placing them on the

family:

> Conservative thought is often said to focus on the idea
> of individualism; self-help, self-support, self-
> sufficiency, self-respect. It rejects dependence,
> 'scrounging', collectivism, the belief that 'the world
> owes you a living'. Yet in practice the unit of self-
> support is not the individual but the family (1982:
> 47).

Thatcherism in the eighties tried to mobilize the family as an "informal support." Finch argues that such a project was based on an assumption that a family existed prepared and ready to fulfill these obligations. Finch questions the assumption that families maintain natural obligations which can be depended upon to be fulfilled. Instead, Finch argues that the result of representing this image in policy, as Thatcherism has done, will only serve to remove people from the family to avoid relationships that now entail new obligations.

Campbell notes too the combination between the economic discourse and the family discourse, arguing in similar fashion to Barrett and McIntosh that the family is being used as an ideological tool:

> the family is the anchor of the new right anti-statism
> and economic liberalism. Citizens were to realize
> themselves not in their social being, not through
> politics, but through consumerism. In itself this was
> not new, but was new was Thatcherism's deployment of
> the family.....(1987: 159).

Women are allowed to be consumers too, but their consumption is assumed to be as mothers and wives, buying things for

their family, not themselves. Within this family rhetoric and consumer ideology there is a fixation on the idyllic notion of family and women's place within it: "What works for women in the Conservatives' family ideology is the sense that women are important to society because they are important to the family: they take care of it, after all, and the family is important to society" (Campbell: 159).

One of the key discursive successes of Thatcherism has been its ability to twist and turn arguments the left and feminists have used against them. Stuart Hall has talked about this in relation to arguments about education. The left has long argued that education is fundamental in the socializing of individuals to accept racism, sexism, homophobia and inequality. The new right has taken this argument and altered the premise to be, that yes, education socializes individuals, but it has socialized them to be delinquents, drug addicts and prostitutes. Schools are now run by sixties left-overs teaching courses on sex education that lead to decadence and alternative cultural perspectives that discredit the value of English Culture.[22] In 1982 Rhodes Boyson then junior education minister, made this comment on the influence of the sixties on education:

[22]Colin Welch, a prominent new right voice, wrote that "The revolting students of the 1960's are the revolting teachers of today... (quoted in Edgar pg 73)".

> The permissive age, which blossomed in the late 1960´s
> bringing in its wake such intense suffering, has
> created a pathless desert for many of our young
> people...Tradition-the cement which helps to hold
> society together- has been scorned as restricted and
> replaced in most cases by naive arrogance....We have
> created our own plagues by the break up of stable-
> families, with a malignant effect on many of our
> children, while many of our city streets and
> entertainments flaunt debased morals and false values
> (Edgar 1986: 55).

The question remains whose values, whose traditions, whose

morals he wants to hold as the cure for this plague. Here we

also see Thatcherism playing with the medical discourse.

Social problems are a "plague" to be cured, with Thatcherism

as the therapeutic mechanism. "Our nation" is a natural

organism, a body to be treated, with a cancer to be removed.

However, the greatest discursive twist has taken place

over feminist arguments. Miriam E. David notes this when she

comments:

> The new right has seized a political place opened up
> originally by feminists and transformed the agenda to
> its own interests. ´The personal is political´ was,
> and is a central tenet of the contemporary women´s
> movement. Personal matters such as sexual and social
> relationships are now centrally on the political
> agenda, but the aim of the New Right is to ensure that
> responsibility for such issues is returned to the so-
> called private family from the public sphere (1986:
> 136).

David may be wrong when she argues that sexual relationships

are to be made the responsibility of the family. One

"private matter" the Thatcher government has had no qualms

about using government as a regulatory mechanism for has

been homosexuality, symbolized in Clause 28, an attempt to regulate local authorities ability to "promote" homosexuality. It is worth bringing back in Foucault´s argument here. His position, as I described in Chapter Two, is that family discourse operates as a way to channel sexuality and define the abnormal. I would argue Thatcherism´s family discourse maintains this practice. Homosexuality is defined as wrong because it splits from the nuclear family model. It is dangerous because it would, in the minds of the new right, threaten the purity of the family. Raising the family on a moral pedestal, as the new right has done, heightens the deviance of those who refuse to accept the model of the nuclear family as the correct way to live. High on the list of the "enemy within" for Thatcherism is homosexuality since it cannot conform to its chosen representation of society. Therefore Conservatism has been happy to very publicly exclude homosexuality from the norm through discourse and through law, as Foucault argued was possible in modern society.

David is correct, though, to suggest that Conservatives use the feminist notion of "the personal is political[23]" to twist feminist positions and support their own position. Within most feminism, feminists´ concern for women´s

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[23]A phrase ripe for manipulation.

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position in the welfare arena and in society in general is channelled into political action and the creation of alternative resources designed by women, for women. Conservatives vocally share feminist concern with the dangers women face daily in the streets from male violence (it is less easy for many Thatcherite Conservatives to deal with the more prevalent danger in the home since it is the haven from the heartless world). However, within Thatcherism concern about male violence is dominated by the law and order discourse. The issue is therefore narrowed to punishment and retribution.[24] For many strands of feminism the issue is not just about securing fitting punishment, but also involves questions about social education and importantly how to help women who have suffered from male violence. This is a step Thatcherism cannot take:

> The most important difference between the mainstream
> Conservative women's response and the feminist response
> is that feminism has taken action to transform the
> conditions in which women experience their fear: it has
> built battered women's refuges to enable women to run
> for it and make a new life; it has built a network of
> rape crisis centers to wrap around the survivors, it
> does something, it is practical rather than rhetorical,
> and it is about empowering the survivor rather than
> simply avenging her (Campbell 1987: 149).

Feminists such as Frazer have long argued that the welfare system subjugates women. Women are positioned as the

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[24]Several Conservative politicians have supported castration or the death penalty as possible punishments for rape.

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objects of welfare, abused by the system. The new right twists this argument. It agree the welfare system abuses women, but for the new right the welfare system abuses women because it robs them of their role as carer and mother. It de-personalizes the woman because it robs her of her feminine role and challenges her maternal "natural" role in the family.

The new right also shares feminist concern over the role of expertise and experts within the welfare arena. However, the new right blames experts for robbing individuals of their ability to look after themselves. Decision making has been taken over by welfare bureaucrats, leaving the "great British public" unable to make up their own minds and unable to do anything for themselves. The concerns raised here by the new right echo Frazer's conception of the welfare state as a Juridical Administrative Therapeutic Apparatus (JAT). The new right like Frazer are unhappy with the welfare system's ability to dictate need and cure, but unlike Frazer they argue the JAT apparatus of the welfare system is robbing people of natural self sufficiency and individual responsibility. Kenneth Minogue, a political scientist associated with the new right, described the British population as:

> a collection of noisy corporate children crying "it's not fair" as they roll up their sleeves, not to do something for themselves but to display their sores

and scars - encouraged, naturally, by a sizeable army
of bureaucrats, counsellors and managers of the lives
of the needy...... (Edgar 1987: 75).

David Edgar argues that this concern with removing welfare

system support and the continual focus on greater individual

responsibility mean that the free market economics of

Thatcherism is not about greater freedom, but greater

discipline: "From this perspective, the crucial role of the

free market is not to emancipate the entrepreneur but to

chastise the feckless, an instrument not of liberation but

of discipline" (1987: 75). This understanding allows us to

view the coming together of the free market discourse and

the Victorian family discourse as one that constructs

individuality and the citizen as someone who can survive the

rigors of a society regulated by the market. A

consumer/citizen finds their identity within what they own,

whether it is shares or a family home. A consumer/citizen

who when in "need" knows not to turn to the state but to

their "family" ready and waiting in the private shell of

their owned home surrounded by the commodities which prove

they are a "family," a family with a portfolio of shares

ready to be sold when the need arises.

Both the left and feminists have found their criticisms

of the workings of the welfare state voiced within the

Thatcherist discourse. However, the criticisms when raised

within Thatcherism are used to justify a different political

agenda. Ruth Levitas argues the anti-welfarism apparent in speeches like those of Patrick Jenkin and in the documents which attempt to rewrite the role of welfare, like the leaked family policy documents, highlight a discourse that is not based on constructing a system fair and responsive to real needs. Instead, the ideology of Thatcherism constructs a vision of family voluntarism and thwarted individual responsibility destroyed by welfare meddling:

> In so far as the anti-welfarism of the New right has a popular appeal, it emphatically does not have this appeal because it provides solutions which meet people´s needs or speak directly to their experiences.. ..Rather, experiences and needs are constructed through the interpretation of events so that they are always mediated by ideology (Levitas 1986: 15).

Alternatively for feminists such as Frazer the concern is to understand the welfare arena (operating as a JAT apparatus) as an arena where women are given certain identities and needs which the welfare system then attempts to solve. The new right discourse sees the welfare system as an arena where the "real" needs of women are ignored. When Minford argues that "the provision of direct social services is regarded by many as something that the family should undertake" and Jenkin talks about the need for mothers to stay at home as "the good lord" intended, they are basing this on an assumption that women want to be at home looking after family responsibilities. By doing this women will fulfill their "real" needs as mothers and as carers. When

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this argument is made the discourse moves away from trying to establish a way to construct a welfare system which serves the multiple interests of different women. Instead the focus of the discourse becomes finding a way to remove the welfare system from those areas women "naturally" want to serve others in. Serve others, for example, by caring for children, the sick and the elderly. This belief helps explain why the Conservative Government resisted attempts to make the invalid care allowance (given to care-providers looking after sick dependents at home) to unmarried women. One justification for this policy was that unmarried women looking after sick dependents were only doing what comes naturally. Additionally under the Conservative Government home helps still do not visit elderly people who live with female relatives and often don't come to elderly with female relatives in the local area.

While certain feminist academics have criticized the use of family discourse by Thatcherism, feminism has found itself discursively out-maneuvered by the co-option of some of its own arguments by Thatcherism. Feminist opposition to Thatcherism's welfare policies have been particularly hampered by the co-option of particular feminist arguments against the welfare system. Feminist concern over the control of women's bodies by the technologies of power within the welfare system becomes, within the new right

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discourse, a justification for putting women back in a dependent position within a mythical nuclear family.

CONCLUSION

The Thatcher period in Britain has been marked by contestation over the meaning of family and the meaning of welfare. While the Conservative discourse has presented itself as protecting the needs of society and the family, it has been the needs of the market economy and one particular social group that have been protected. The assumption represented is one of a universal ideal of family that Britain can return to. The Thatcher agenda has been aided by the use of symbolic language that has naturalized history and distorted diverse human experiences. The family the Conservatives would have us be a part of is one that cannot be understood outside the conditions of flexible accumulation and the supposed "crisis" in the welfare state.

This confrontation has been dominated by a reprivatization discourse which assumes the return to a completely private nuclear family will solve all social ills. Most of the expert discourse has been deployed to support this cause. By using analysis which uncovers discursive practice and symbolism in language, I have highlighted how the family is constructed and re-constructed to aid the particular needs of particular social groups

within power relations in society. What discourse analysis allows me to do is go beyond the obvious structural understandings of power and highlight the ability of language to construct the subject within power relations. So in the case of the family, we are subjects within the context of "family" and the social norms that the family represents at any given historical moment. To step out of the norm of family behavior is to step out of the identity inscribed by social language and to become the other, the deviant. Within Thatcherism we can see an attempt to reinscribe meaning by one particular group through symbolism and representation of a "retro past." Without examining language this process remains, to a degree, invisible and its implications unexamined. The next step is to see if the discursive representations I have detailed within Thatcherism are present in community care documents.

CHAPTER FOUR

COMMUNITY CARE DOCUMENTS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on examining possible links
between the discourses established in the previous chapter
and the definition of community care policy within certain
policy documents. The key question is this: how does the
Thatcherist language of free market and nuclear family
affect, influence, gain articulation in the policy documents
themselves? This issue entails examining the documents from
a perspective which looks for similar terminology, similar
assumptions and similar arguments. Are the points of
exclusion and inclusion the same? What assumptions about
community and care do the documents imply? My focus will be
to examine and pinpoint the dominant discursive strategies
within the texts, making explicit not only what is expressed
(the content), but also how it is articulated (the narrative
or form). Through examining the discursive strategies
present in the texts an alternative narrative can be told of
what is missing, what is privileged and what is denied a
place within the policy space. This alternative narrative
comes from a perspective concerned with the impact of these
discursive strategies on certain actors within community
care. Partially those in need of care, but also importantly

my concern is for the place denied for the experience and knowledge of women, the dominant care-providers within community care.

One clear concern is thus the implications of the discursive constructions within the documents for women. Are their needs being adequately addressed within the documents? By needs I do not necessarily mean their needs as carers, this position would maintain the bond between women and care giving. Rather I mean a broader notion of contested need, which accepts that the policy documents cannot infinitely know the needs of women. This acceptance would entail a requirement that the policy process include a space for women and other informal carers to define their "needs" and defend their "interests" as independent subjects not just care-providers. Since my thesis only looks at the documents, the full implications for women and others cannot be fully determined. The impact of the whole policy process and the actual implementation of community care will obviously also impact women. Since this is beyond the scope of this study, my conclusions on the implications for women are tentative.

The chapter begins with a brief outlining of the consensus and issues surrounding community care as the Conservatives came to power. The other two sections each examine one crucial community care document which helped reformulate community care within a Thatcherist vision.

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COMMUNITY CARE

The term community care first appeared in the public
arena in 1957 when concern was raised over the large number
of people in mental institutions constructed in the
Victorian era. Since 1957 community care has been broadly
accepted as the best alternative to long stay hospital or
residential care of the mentally ill, mentally handicapped,
physically handicapped, elderly and terminally ill.
Community care has remained a popular option due to two main
assumptions. First, there is the assumption that the
community is a more comfortable site for the care of the
sick and elderly. Second, it is believed that the community
is also cheaper than residential care. The traditional
position of the community within community care policy
(until its reevaluation within Thatcherism) was as the site
where care of such people should, if possible, occur. The
argument was that care provided by the welfare system should
be channelled in such a way that it occurred in a community
setting. The community was loosely defined by what it was
not. The community was viewed as not being hospitals or
large residential institutions. The term encompassed instead
small residential units, old people´s homes, and people
living in private or rented accommodation.

However, this does not mean that community care´s
meaning or its discursive use has remained stable. Indeed

one of the problems with the term, acknowledged by "professionals" working within community care, is the vagueness which has surrounded it. As a policy, community care has evolved within the requirements of other policies and the priorities of the different ministries. While the goal of the maintaining the above listed "dependent" people within a community setting has been accepted since the late fifties, the actual planning and implementation of community care has been fragmentary. The lack of a clear policy agenda on community care has increased in importance since the seventies, primarily due to certain demographic and economic factors. Census information suggests that by 1990 there were three million and five hundred thousand people over seventy five in Britain.[25] A large percentage of this population requires some level of assistance. Many of the mental institutions and hospitals built in the Victorian era are in poor condition and the general consensus is that they are not acceptable places for the long term care of the mentally ill or handicapped. Therefore, by the time the Conservatives were elected in 1979, the need for a reevaluation of community care had become a part of the political agenda.

It is useful, I think, to understand this contestation from the perspective suggested by Nancy Frazer. As mentioned

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[25]Alan Walker 1982 pg 5.

in Chapter Two Frazer argues that "late capitalism" produces or leads to the discovery of certain needs, which are contestable and fought over within the political arena. These "new" needs are new in the sense that they are accepted as political and included in the public discourse. This process results from the wavering boundary between public and private, economic and social, political and non political. The discursive boundaries which maintain the separation are shifting under the conditions of increased market regulation and flexible accumulation. Frazer also argues that the newly contested needs are previously private needs which have leaked out into the public arena under the influence of "late capitalism." Opposition discourses are key actors in the politicization of these "new" needs. Reprivatization and expert discourses are then used to limit this contestation.

This final point, seeing "new needs" moving from the private to the public spheres I think cannot be used for community care and its relationship to "late capitalism." What we are seeing in the community care debate is almost the direct opposite of the process outlined by Frazer. Community care (since the late fifties defined as a loose notion of caring for dependent people in community settings rather than large residential homes or hospitals) was already established as a publicly supplied good in various

sub-sections of mental health care and social service legislation. The contestation surrounded an attempt to move it from the public to the private via reprivatization and expert discourses. From the beginning this thus puts the opposition discourse in the defensive position, re-acting against a move to depoliticize (an extremely **political** act) community care rather than initiating the debate. This process is clearly linked to the discourse of market regulation which aims to withdraw state regulation and provision. A position which is implicitly reliant on a family discourse which situates the family as a social actor capable of supplying the needs being removed from the state.

I think it is still possible to see the contestation over community care, due in part at least, to "late capitalism" or the economic and regulatory factors established previously in Chapter Two. The technologies of "late capitalism" are one reason why society is faced with an increase in the numbers of elderly and ill people. While technology has produced the scientific capability to ensure people live longer, this technology is not capable of answering the more troubling question of how society copes with such people (often still sick or dependent) and what kind of "lives" these people will live. The new technologies also lead to increased overhead costs, since much of the new life sustaining machinery is extremely capital intensive.

The debate is further complicated by the position of welfare provision within flexible accumulation and market regulation. The emphasis on market regulation as opposed to state regulation leads to a move away (for those supporting this position) from expecting or involving the welfare system in the resolution of contested needs.

If market regulation is influencing the debate about community care I would expect to find, within the documents, evidence of this influence within the discursive resolution. Also if the influence of market regulation means that the welfare system is, at least in part, removed from the proposed practice of community care it becomes important what the welfare system is replaced by. Based on Chapter Three it is possible to suggest that "the family" in the guise here of "the community" is a likely candidate for replacing state welfare provision.

What we therefore have is the term community care open to interpretation and open to redefinition within the political arena. Community care has become a contested term, which the disciplinary requirements of the dominant political group wants to contain within the policy space. At any point when a term becomes contested within the political arena various actors and discourses offer alternative perspectives on how this term should be stabilized. By examining the community care documents I hope to see one

element of how the contested term was channelled and confined to fit the requirements of policy structure and Thatcherism. My argument is that the language used to define community care is a key factor in confining the possible meanings of community care. What I hope to see is the intrusion of the discourses of Thatcherism into the meaning of community care in the documents. While the documents allude to a discourse of objectivity and a rational examination of the planning and implementation of community care, a discursive analysis of the documents highlights the inclusion of a free market and a family discourse.

Until the late 1980´s community care as a policy concern continued to be integrated into broader policy concerns. It was usually found in the subsections of policy documents dealing with mental health issues or social security issues. However, as seen in Chapter Three, the Conservatives had promised from their first manifesto onwards to actively do something about the care of the sick and elderly in the community: "In the community, we must do more to help people to help themselves and families to look after their own" (Craig 1990: 280). This promise comes from the 1979 manifesto and it is already possible to see the way community care is being discursively positioned. It is a place where people can look after themselves, and families can "look after their own."

While the closure of long stay hospitals and old,
rundown mental institutions occurred throughout the
eighties, it was not till the end of the decade that the
Government produced its Community Care Act.[26] The
intervening years were filled by discussion documents,
committee hearings, committee findings, government
projections, government suggestions, parliamentary debates
(few and far between), commissioned reports, responses to
Commission reports and various other Government activities.
The Government was not, however, the only actor attempting
to define the parameters of community care. The high level
of contestation over community care present in the eighties
led to the breakdown of the old consensus and alternative
perspectives on community care were raised. Neil Evans
outlines some of the alternative perspectives on community
care visible in the public arena in the eighties:

> Professionals in both the health service and social
> services have challenged the notion that community care
> is cheaper than residential care....Small but vocal
> professional groups argued that hospitals provided
> ´asylum´ for vulnerable, dependent people who would
> be at risk in what appeared to be a hostile rather
> than a caring community.... (Evans 1990: 149/50).

It was therefore far from certain what type of
community care would remain after reevaluation, especially
if the government took into account the above perspectives.

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[26]National Health Service and Community Care Act 1990
Chapter 19. London: HMSO.

Including the perspectives of women's groups who were raising concern over the position of women as unpaid carers within community care. Two crucial documents led up to the final Community Care Act itself. The first document is a report Commissioned by the Secretary Of State for Social Services (Norman Fowler, one of the members of the family policy group discussed in Chapter Two) in 1986, which reported in 1988. The second document is a Government White paper intended as the policy guide to the Act itself. Both these documents encapsulate the Government's perspective on community care. Within them we can find the discursive meaning given to community care by the Government. It is important to stress, though, that the documents cannot provide definitive or stable meanings for community care (partially due to the role of the reader or receiver in decoding the discursive meaning in the texts, something discussed more fully in Chapter Five). They do, however, provide one site for me to examine the potential discursive meanings intended by the Government. I will examine the two documents separately to analyze the meaning and use given to the term through how both documents envisage community care existing as a practice.

COMMUNITY CARE: AGENDA FOR ACTION

The desired Government slant on community care is
visible in this document from the beginning when one
considers the choice of author for the report. Norman
Fowler´s choice was Sir Roy Griffiths. Griffiths has no
medical, social services, psychiatry, policy planning or
academic background. Instead he is a business-man and
Chairman of Tescos, a large supermarket chain[27]. This
signals the Government attempt, overtly, to see community
care within the discourse of consumerism and the market. His
remit was to provide the following information to the
Secretary of State:

> To review the way in which public funds are used to
> support community care policy and to advise me on the
> options for action that would improve the use of funds
> as a contribution to more effective community care
> (1988: iii).

The review is thus aimed at the "effective" and cost
effective management of community care. As I go through the
document it is clear that one of the principal goals of
Griffiths´ report is to encapsulate community care within a
free market discourse.

Understandably then the common theme throughout the
report is the need to involve market mechanisms in the

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[27]Tescos is one of the service industry successes of
flexible accumulation and a large financial contributor to
the Conservative party. Griffith´s knighthood came from Mrs
Thatcher.

delivery of services. The denial of a state welfare
component in this delivery is initially signalled by the
replacement of the category "client," (the traditional
welfare term for the individual receiving the service) with
the category "**consumer**." The aim of community care,
Griffiths argues, is to provide "**consumer satisfaction**"
(1988: iv). The report thus catalogues how **consumer**
satisfaction is achieved. Satisfaction for the **consumer** will
be achieved when the consumer can choose from competing low
cost privately supplied partially publicly paid for
services, a "multiplicity of provision" (1988: 5).
Satisfaction becomes simply a product of choice, a choice
subscribed within "available resources" (1988: iv) and
"appropriate budgets" (1988: vii). Griffiths believes the
public sector is failing to provide adequate care because it
is not operating under market conditions. If community care
was operating in the market-place it would have plunged long
ago into "quick and merciful liquidation" (1988: vii). The
radical shake up he demands is signalled by the demand for
greater focus on ´responsibilities," "**performance**,"
"**accountability**" and "**appropriate resources**" (1988: vi).
Responsibilities, performance, accountability, are within a
bureaucratic and technocratic discourse which confines their
meaning to being responsible for, performing within and
being accountable to cost efficiency. The logic is that a

market-oriented service is one that provides maximum choice,
maximum choice then provides maximum satisfaction. The same
logic which is presented by Harris and Seldon. Local
services thus need to design "packages of care" under the
supervision of a "care manager" (1988: vi). The greater
involvement of market forces is best obtained by the
inclusion of the private for profit sector into the
provision of community care. Griffiths argues that the
priority of the local social services is therefore to
maximize the involvement of the private for profit sector.

> The onus in all cases should be on the social services
> authorities to show that the private sector is being
> fully stimulated and encouraged and that competitive
> tenders or other means of testing the market, are
> being taken (1988: vii).

The hierarchy of priorities being created by Griffiths and
his discourse places the inclusion of market conditions and
actors in a high position. His claim that the **consumer** will
be better off under these conditions is very much reliant on
the market providing the services he or she needs. The
position he gives the public sector leaves it with little of
its traditional role:

> The role of the public sector is essentially to ensure
> that care is provided. How it is provided is an
> important, but secondary consideration and local
> authorities must show that they are getting and
> providing real value (1988: vii).

Since the public sector is not to be concerned with the form
of care support, "real value" becomes a question of real

monetary value. Can the public sector prove it is providing
care "efficiently"? Are the local social services making
most use of their "available resources"? How well are the
local services "performing?" The "how" of what type of care
support is provided is presented as something which the
private for profit sector can deal with. This has the added
bonus that the private sector can achieve the "how" more
efficiently, at greater "value." The private sector in
Griffiths´ narrative can in essence perform better.

His ability to view community care in similar terms to
any product available in the market-place is part of the
free market discourse seen previously in the work of Harris
and Arthur in Chapter Two. It is explicit in their argument
that anything is capable of being supplied within the
market. Indeed, to be supplied well it is a requirement that
the market supply it. The market is the best possible
primary regulator of anything´s supply. Such a discourse is
universalistic, situating the market as an omnipotent
godhead, non-discriminatory in its practice and egalitarian
in its goals.

Griffiths feels that what is required from community
care has been exaggerated, the key focus of community care
should be practical matters such as helping shopping and
cleaning:

There may in fact be a tendency to over elaborate, both

as to the professional input and the training required. Many of the needs of elderly and disabled people are help of a practical nature (getting dressed, shopping, cleaning) (1988: ix).

Such tasks could be completed (cheaply) by a "multi-purpose auxiliary force" (1988: ix). This force could, he suggests, include school leavers and those on youth training schemes. Community care is thus being situated within a care-taker discourse, as something "unskilled" and capable of being fulfilled by anyone. Once in the community the only requirement that the public sector needs to fulfill is to see that simple practical matters such as shopping are attended to. This is enforced by suggesting the service build on the example of the existing day care service provided by the "home help" (1988: ix) service which is limited to these forms of practical assistance. This situates outside the remit of community care, as provided by the public sector, the need for therapeutic or medical care.

Griffiths argues that the individual being served by community care is one who exists within a "family context" (1988: x), a family context which allows for the possible experimentation with "social/health maintenance organizations, insurance/tax incentives, not simply for the individual, but for the individual in a family context" (1988: x). It is this positioning of community carewithin a "family context" which allows him to view it as nothing more

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than practical assistance. Care, he assumes, is that which

assists the already present and willing family; "Families,

friends, neighbours and other local people provide the

majority of care" (1988: 5). Hilary Graham has noted the

discursive separation which marks such a positioning. A

separation which is marked by gender, since care is

explicitly or implicitly associated with some natural,

essentialist category of women. This is a particular

construction of the caring relationship and the identity and

subjectivity of the carer via their gender. This

understanding leads to naturalistic and universalistic

assumptions about both the caring relationship and the

carer:

> In general, caring relationships are those involving
> women: it is the presence of a woman - as wife, mother,
> daughter, neighbour, friend - which marks out a
> relationship as, potentially at least, a caring one
> (Graham 1983: 15).

Therefore, according to Griffiths, local authorities

need to (within the resources available):

> arrange the delivery of packages of care to
> individuals, building first on the **available**
> contribution of informal carers and neighborhood
> support, then the provision of domiciliary and day
> services or, if appropriate, residential care
> (1988: x my emphasis).

This positions the family (euphemistically called "the

informal carers") as the basic unit upon which community

care builds. This is, I would argue, an ideological use of

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the family as suggested by Barrett and McIntosh. As they argue the family is being represented here as the basic unit in society (here in regards to the supply of "care") to construct a social norm of behavior, a social norm of family responsibility in the realm of care. The onus is then on the **consumer** to prove that the community, either neighbor or family, is not available. The community is moving from being the site of care to being an active provider and agent of community care, a distinct shift from the previous orthodoxy on the role of the community. Basing provision on this assumption is dependent on the notions of society and family I discussed in Chapter Three: The singular unified community filled with caring families ready and able to look after their own.

This representation of families within a caring community is, as Luke argued, a discursive strategy based on the economic conditions under monopoly capital (or flexible accumulation). If the state cannot supply certain "needs" and the corporate sector can only profitably supply practical assistance, then the family and the community become useful (and cheap) mythical actors to present as the true and only moral suppliers of these needs. In the process this narrative integrates into the lifeworld of the family the rationale of market regulation. It is a conscious effort to remove obligation from the public provision of levels of

care. The community (singular always) is mythologised to allow for the retraction of any requirement of the state to provide more than a care-taker function:

> Publically provided services constitute only a small part of the total care provided to people in need. Families, friends, neighbours and other local people provide the majority of care in response to needs which they are **uniquely well placed** to identify and respond to. This will continue to be the primary means by which people are enabled to live **normal** lives in community settings (1988: 5 my emphasis).

Griffiths' does not justify why he thinks the family or other local people are "uniquely well placed," other than that they exist. If the family is there, then it must care and will best enable people to live "normal" lives. Again "normal" remains vague and unsubstantial. The little meaning it has is clearly as something the family provides.

I want to pause here to mention an important dilemma I have. I feel I am walking a thin line here. The danger is that I am eulogizing state welfare provision by criticizing its loss. As mentioned in Chapter Three, feminists such as Frazer as well as others such as Elizabeth Wilson (in the British context) and Helga Maria Hernes (in the Scandinavian context), are critical of the position of women in the welfare arena. Relying on the welfare system for support (as many women have to due to the number of women in poverty and looking after children on their own) is not a positive situation for many women. They are defined as clients and

face a demeaning hierarchy of centralized authoritative power. This hierarchy defines women's needs without any input from women themselves. As Frazer argues, women are clients without citizenship rights within the welfare arena.

Therefore, I do not want to white-wash the problems within the welfare arena by criticizing its loss. Nor do I want to deny the need for radical reform of welfare provision. However the immediate issue is that the reform occurring in welfare provision within the Thatcher era was not achieved through the inclusion of multiple voices and actors coming together to negotiate change. Instead it occurred through the actions of one powerful political group, one political group which is used the discourses of the free market and the family to help mould its reform.

Reform presented within the discourse of free market economics is unlikely to produce an environment any better able to listen to the concerns of those in need of care. Griffiths' proposed reforms offer little due to their framing within the free market discourse. What he calls for is a "mixed economy of care" (1988: 5). Within this **mixed economy** "the social services authorities should see themselves as the arrangers and purchasers of care services - not as monopolistic providers" (1988: 5). The role of the social services is limited to being a go-between between the private sector and **consumer**. The local social

services become negotiating agents (like real estate agents), between the seller (the private sector) and the buyer (the consumer). Community care is situated therefore as a negotiable property or commodity, for which the agent (the local social services) negotiates a "fair" price. Community care has discursively moved from being a public entitlement to a commodity within the realm of capital exchange.

The free market discourse sees the issue of community care as how to supply practical assistance via "the most cost-effective package of services" (1988: 6). The biggest concern is therefore not the quality of care, but the bottom line price. Working within a free market discourse allows for a logic of cost control and efficiency which separates concern for the quality of care reaching the person in need. The labelling of those involved as consumers and the care they are given as "packages" both excludes issues over the quality of the service and contestation over the meaning of care and community. It thus allows for the narrowing of the policy issue to concerns over cost, supply, efficiency and financial accountability. The policy issue has become one of functional performativity within a discourse which sees community care as a sellable, negotiable "product."

The moral element of community care is placed firmly within the community. The removal of ethical responsibility

via focusing on issues such as cost and efficiency is reliant on the use of the community and family as the natural "best placed" providers of this element. The public provision, mediated through the private sector, is aimed therefore at helping those already providing care: "to give support and relief to informal carers (family, friends and neighbours) coping with the stress of caring for a dependent person" (1988: 5). While Griffiths acknowledges the need to "take account of the views and wishes of the person to be cared for, and any informal carers" (1988: 6), it is a concern subordinated to the broader issue of involving the private for profit sector and market dynamics. The wishes of **consumers**, Griffiths argues, have to be seen within the parameters of existing resources: "to provide the most cost-effective package of services to meet the needs and wishes of those being helped" (1988: 6) and "determine the priority to be given to the case, given the total resources available and competing needs of others" (1988: 6), existing resources designed not by the **consumer** but by government policies and the private sector. The policy process thus excludes the **consumer** from the design and funding decisions about the resources within which the concerns of the **consumer** are confined. Like any commodity in the market place competition (supply and demand) will ultimately decide the provision and form (and price) which community care will take. As

"consumers" the recipients of community care have little independent voice over the supply of the service.

Griffiths acknowledges that the "needs of the individual" need to be continually assessed and reassessed while taking "account of the individual´s wider circumstances" (1988: 14). He also accepts that "Both policy and action need to respond to the multi-racial nature of British society" (1988: 26). But this is all worth little within the report´s discursive framework. Assessment is meaningless if it is continually framed within the discourse of the free market which privileges the market above all else and sees the market as the principal resolver of contested need.

The market will supply "maximum choice" via "competition." What is missing is any doubt or concern over the ability of maximum choice to supply maximum benefit or quality of care to the recipient. Supermarket choice within the arena of community care may fit well within the market discourse, but when it is viewed outside this discourse its logic begins to crumble. The assumptions it maintains seem fraudulent. It is even possible to question the logic of maximum choice within the market discourse. Any trip to the supermarkets promising maximum choice (including Griffiths´ Tescos) will highlight the illusion of choice, which is nothing more than a choice of labels on similarly cheap

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bland goods, made different by packaging and advertising. Within this context calling the care available within Griffiths' model "packages" seems to fit and be ironic in a way unintended by the author. It is only the packaging which will offer difference. The mixed economy of care will consist of a choice between poorly funded public care, poorly funded and regulated private care or poorly supported family "informal" care.

The rational expertise language of policy discourse also impacts the channelling of the community care issue. Griffiths thanks the nameless civil servant experts who helped his research. Their titles as experts within the policy arena is enough to guarantee their knowledge. He was additionally supported by a group of "outside Advisors." The capital A gives the advisors an aura of knowledge and professional expertise while leaving final authority with Griffiths himself. The advisors themselves are an enlightening mix of people.

Dorothy Blenkinsop, Regional Nursing Officer.
Dr Peter Horrocks, Formerly Director of the Health Advisory Service.
Geoffrey Hulme, Director of the Public Expenditure Policy Unit.
Ken Judge, Director of King's Fund Institute.
John Kay, Director of the Center for Business Strategy.
Jill Pitkeathley, Director of the National Council for Carers and their elderly Dependents (NCCED).
Sir James Swaffield, former Director General of the GLC.

The medical profession is represented by two people

(although both their titles focus on their administrative experience not their medical qualifications). The business profession is represented by one person (John Kay), allowing the market discourse in from the very beginning. The public sector is represented by three people (Geoffrey Hulme, Ken Judge, James Swaffield). The "consumers" are represented by one person. The range of opinion and knowledge represented by the advisors privileges the medical discourse, and the professional discourse. The one "consumer" voice ties the interests of the carer to the one needing care as if their interests could never be contradictory. The consumer representative also only represents the elderly, leaving issues specific to the mentally ill, mentally and physically handicapped unheard. There are no real alternative voices present within the advisors. Any conflict the NCCED would have with the advice given by the others is likely to be drowned out by the reinforcing nature of the others present. The concerns listed by Neil Evans are not represented within the advisors. Alternative perspectives are therefore excluded from the beginning.

The language of the report privileges particular kinds of rational discourse and the dominant forms of policy language. The issues of community care are confined and narrowed through a focus on "objective" concerns of managerial implementation and cost-effective planning. This

focus on cost-effective planning privileges the necessity of
designing goals for community care which will allow for
forward budgeting and strict cost control. The emphasis is
not on the type of care but on the most cost effective way
of planning and dividing up community care. Griffiths argues
that the most important concern for local social services is
to formulate and maintain cost effective procedures. The
payment of funds from central government for the
administration of community care is dependent on the local
authorities proving they are supplying community care
efficiently, not that its supply serves the diverse needs
and interests of people in need in their communities:

> As a condition for the payment of a specific grant I
> recommend that social services authorities should
> prepare plans with costed objectives and timetables for
> implementation which demonstrate their approach to the
> delivery of community care in their area.....and that
> what is planned represents value for money (1988: 18).

Further, social service workers should focus on the
management of community care; therefore, argues Griffiths,
training and recruitment should reflect this: "Recruitment
and in-service training systems for professional social
services staff at both the national and local level will
need to give greater emphasis to management skills to
reflect the proposed change in emphasis of social services
authorities´ role" (1988: 25).

Overall Griffiths´ report indicates the subservience of

the community care issue to the discourse of the free market ideology of Thatcherism. The way community care is raised within the document is dependent on how it fits within the language and logic of the free market discourse. Community care becomes another commodity in the market-place of late capitalism. Griffiths´ is not just designing a new policy, he is selling (a job he is "uniquely well placed" to do) a new product or form of property. Community care is a sellable good rather than a publicly supplied entitlement.

This discourse channels the contested nature of community care into questions of cost effective supply and supposed maximum choice through the involvement of the private sector. This discursive shift is also reliant on two other factors: first, the narrowing of the definition of community care to being one of practical assistance of a limited nature; second, representing the community as an agent of care upon which state provided care is built. This community is an active agent because it is made up of "informal carers." Informal carers who are primarily women within families and are constructed as the "front line" providers of care. This representation of family and community is an echo of the public discourse of Thatcherism which I outlined in Chapter Three which represents society as a community of families, families with responsibilities to look after their members.

COMMUNITY CARE IN THE NEXT DECADE AND BEYOND

This document was designed as a policy guide to the Community Care Act of 1990 and to be used as such by the local social services departments, the main implementers of the Act. The document outlines the goals and underlying assumptions behind the Government's vision of Community Care. The design and focus of the Act follows from the arguments and conclusions of the Griffiths report. While it contains more detail about the local implementation and organization of community care than included in the Griffiths' report, discursively it maintains similar patterns of privileging, exclusion and inclusion. Primarily, as I will show, through once again the dominance of the free market discourse of Thatcherism.

The document begins with a foreword by Virginia Bottomly, Minister of State for Health, the department responsible for the Act. She outlines the Government's vision of community care:

> Community care is about providing the services and support which will enable people effected by aging or disability to live as **independently as possible**. The aim is to support people **in their homes** or in **"homely" surroundings** wherever this can be done. These objectives form the basis of the Government's community care policy and **enjoy wide support** (my emphasis).

The statement defines community care as maintaining people within their homes when possible. Again this focuses community care on practical assistance which will keep

people out of hospitals and residential homes. Sustaining

people within the community is a supportable goal, but it is

a narrow definition of the possibilities of community care

and the possibilities raised by alternative perspectives on

the issue. It is a minimal provision of care which channels

community care to being nothing more than domiciliary care.

Community is also narrowed to the home, and the imperative

has become not really sustaining people in the community,

but sustaining them in their home. This echoes the

Thatcherism discourse outlined in Chapter Two which

privileges the home as the basic goal of all citizens and

the symbol of independence. The statement also does not

justify or explain where in society its policy enjoys "wide

support."

The policy objectives of the Act are cited as:

* To promote the development of domiciliary, day and respite
  services to enable people to live in their own homes
  wherever feasible and sensible;

* to ensure that service providers make practical support
  for carers a high priority;

* to make proper assessment of need and good care management
  the cornerstone of high quality care;

* to promote the development of a flourishing independent
  sector alongside good quality public services (1990: 3).

Again keeping people in their homes is regarded as the most

important priority. Support for carers is also given a high

priority, which is important and at least theoretically a

beneficial element of the Act. The problem remains that the other objectives of the Act are possibly contradictory to this stated aim. The explicit objectives of the Act are undercut by the implicit assumptions visible in the document when one considers the influence of the free market discourse and less obviously the family discourse on the document. The intrusion of the free market discourse is signalled by the objective of including the "flourishing independent sector" (1990: 3). It is interesting that the private sector here is given the name "independent." The term "independent" has already been used to define the goal of community care in relation to the clients, now it is being used to label the private sector in a way which sanitizes its meaning. The independent sector refers to voluntary and non profit organizations, as well as the for profit sector. Including these different groups under the one heading suggests they operate under similar principles. To separate out the commercial sector or the profit sector suggests it has motives other than providing care (make money?). Treating it as the same as non profit organizations suggests its objectives are impeachable.

The document supports Griffiths' call for a "mixed economy" of community care. A mixed economy of care allows for "a wider range of options leading to greater choice for service users" (1990: 6). Mixed economy is an interesting

choice as a metaphor. Appealing to market logic to justify social care is only understandable within a framework which privileges the market as a just regulator within society. The change in focus towards domiciliary care is linked to the increased involvement of the independent sector. As the services to provide domiciliary care are introduced the document argues that the public sector should focus on obtaining these services from the independent sector rather than providing them themselves. Again this is part of the agenda to narrow the role of the public sector. Free market logic argues that competition inherently leads to a "better" service. The document embraces this discursive bond:

> Increased competition between service providers should lead to improved quality and reduced costs. An increased range of services should enable packages of care to be devised which are more closely matched to the needs and preferences of service users (1990: 39).

This echoes the super-market logic of Griffiths in the previous document. Community care is still being seen as a commodity or as a new sellable product. The super-market logic has problems. The logic only seems coherent within the discourse of the free market. Its coherency is dependent on the exclusion of arguments and perspectives which make the linear link between greater competition and greater quality seem less sustainable. It is dependent on a narrow definition of better "quality" and a privileging of the cost factor. Higher quality is forever linked to the cost issue.

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Greater efficiency, cheaper cost, better value for money are therefore the dominant legitimating terms within the text.

The document also shares Griffiths´ vision of the type of training required for this "service:"

> Training **strategies** should address the needs for new skills and attitudes in assessment and care management, **planning, purchasing** and **contract specification,** service management and delivery, **inspection** and **quality assurance, budgeting** and **financial management,** monitoring and evaluation and the use of **information technology** (1990: 7 my emphasis).

This description of the training requirements utilizes a technical discourse to limit the requirement of training to providing certain technical skills, most importantly management skills. Business management terminology is useful to exclude investigating the multiple skills which would be necessary to provide a broader conception of community care. Limiting community care to practical assistance allows for limiting training to such matters as "contract specification," "budgeting" and "information technology." The policy language of technical terminology dominates the narrative. Information becomes a question of obtaining "hard data" to manage "specific targets." Data must highlight "the broad spread and cost of services"; "the nature, timing and size of changes;" "current and planned outputs, and outcomes as well as inputs" (1990: 20). It is easy to forget, and this perhaps is the point, that the outputs and outcomes relate to the supply of care to vulnerable groups in

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society. This form of technical discourse denies that the supply of certain needs is contestable and a broader issue than a question of efficiency and planned output. The universal concern becomes, within a discourse of technical concern, a question of the efficient performance and functioning of the policy, any policy. It denies the particular issues and dilemmas which surround different types of policy issues. Using the same terminology to outline the regulation of community care as one would use to outline the regulation of business matters, for example, excludes the particular dilemmas of community care. The policy space thus functions to limit what is even discussed as the policy dilemma and the range of possible policy options available.

The document outlines how "**care management systems**" (1990: 23) will be the focal point of the implementation of community care by the local social services departments. The objectives of care management systems are as follows:

* Ensuring that the resources available....are used in the most effective way to meet individual care needs;

* restoring and maintaining independence by enabling people to live in the community wherever possible;

* working to prevent or to minimize the effects of disability and illness in people of all ages;

* treating those who need services with respect and providing equal opportunities for all;

* promoting individual choice and self-determination and

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building on existing strengths and care resources;

* promoting partnership between users, carers and service providers in all sectors, together with organizations of and for each group (1980: 23).

These objectives do promise to make care needs the center of the care management system. The rhetoric of "equal opportunities for all" suggests a prominent concern to integrate the multiple diverse needs of those in the community. Independence is equated with living in the community, and individual choice and self-determination are equated with equality. The objectives also call for a "partnership" to be developed among the different groups involved. Some attempt is being made, within the framework, to acknowledge the needs of the individuals involved and some concern is being raised to involve all parties in the planning of the "care package", "The individual service user and normally, with his or her agreement, any carers should be involved throughout the assessment and care management process" (1980: 25). However, are these initial objectives carried through? Are they in any way contradictory or not served well within the dominant discursive framework of the document?

Several problems with how these objectives are then supposed to be implemented suggest that the valid and reasonable goals raised by the objectives are un-achievable within the internal logic and reasoning of the dominant

discourse. The document states that the care management system should "concentrate on those with the greatest needs" and "intervene no more than is necessary to foster independence" (1980: 23/4). Focusing on those with "the greatest need" involves a high level of judgement and authority being kept within the statutory authorities. The local social service departments therefore maintain the power to define who is in most need and what constitutes the greatest need, an authority it shares with the private sector, which is being relied on to supply the services to serve those defined needs. This seems far from any genuine notion of partnership, especially when one considers that community care is being designed here to augment informal care, necessitating a need to prove that informal care is missing for the public sector to provide community care in the first place. The partnership from this perspective is an unequal requirement. The assumption on "informal care" leads to an implicit requirement for the "community" or the "informal carer" to be involved, involved with only nominal say in the type and level of care provided via the public service purchasing of private sector care.

The other requirement of care management listed above was that it "intervene no more than is necessary to foster independence" (1990: 24). Here I think we see the intrusion of the Conservative/Thatcherist discourse of individual

responsibility and independence. It represents the moral privileging of a notion of "independence" divorced from the circumstances under consideration. A consideration that would involve accepting that what the policy is dealing with is the care and support of vulnerable groups in sometimes difficult, often cold social settings. "Fostering independence" suggests some present level of unnecessary dependence on state provided care, a dependence the new formation of limited practical assistance mediated through private sector involvement and "informal" sector involvement is geared to wean the **consumers** out of. The fostering of independence and focus on those in the greatest need, which allows for a further reduction in the level of care the state needs to provide, is thus I would suggest privileged above ensuring that the majority of individuals in need receive adequate care.

While the care management system is intended as a "needs-led approach" (1990: 24) this goal is necessarily undermined by being linked explicitly to the introduction of market techniques to the system. While the document says the system is geared to the needs of the clients or "consumer" the consumer's needs exist here within the market discourse and the authority of the local services to define what those needs are. The "needs-led approach" involves "a shift of influence from those providing to those purchasing services"

(1990: 24). It is never explained how the purchasing of services from the private sector in someway leads to a "needs-led approach." The discursive positioning of the local social service providers as agents negotiating the buying and selling of the commodity or property community care, which we first saw in Griffiths' report, is maintained in the care management system, since within the system, the care managers in the system are described as "brokers for services" (1990: 24). Capital accumulation requires stock brokers, property brokers, and community care needs care brokers.

The care management system leads to the "design of a care package in agreement with users, carers, and relevant agencies, to meet the identified needs within the care resources available, including help from willing and able carers" (1990: 24). However, resources are predetermined and outside the negotiable "partnership." Available resources are also again linked to informal care, which while labelled as "willing and able" is depended on so much within the document that the notion of willingness seems illusory.

The document states that the aim of the care package:

> should be to secure the most cost-effective package services that meet the user's care needs, taking account of the user's and carers' own preferences. Where supporting the user in a home of their own would provide a better a quality of life, this is to be preferred to admission to residential or nursing homecare. However, local authorities also have a

responsibility to meet needs within the resources
available and this will sometimes involve difficult
decisions where it will be necessary to strike a
balance between meeting the needs identified within
available resources and meeting the care preferences of
the individual (1990: 27).

Several hierarchies are present in the above passage. First,

the first thing mentioned is the requirement that whatever

be provided is provided "cost effectively." The supremacy of

the economic and rational universal discourse is

consistently maintained throughout by such explicit

foregrounding in the narrative of this concern.

Second, is the privileging again of maintaining the

"users" in their own home. The representation of the ideal

of staying in one's own home is linked to the obsession in

the Conservative discourse for independence at all costs. It

may indeed be the case that some "users" are happier in

their home, but excluded by the discursive privileging of

the home are any alternative living arrangements that could

provide beneficial life styles for people requiring levels

of care. Residential care is explicitly represented as less

beneficial than living at home, but this distinction is an

assumption within the text not adequately justified or

tested, primarily I would suggest because maintaining

"users" in their own home is more "cost effective." A third

hierarchy is the "responsibility" mandated to the local

authorities to decide on the side of what they have

identified as the care needs of the "user" over the preferences of the individual within "available resources" when these are in conflict. Power and authority are again maintained even when partnership has been promised. The proper balance is one when care is supplied efficiently, cost-effectively above all other considerations.

The grounding of community care within an assumption of informal care is made explicit in the following passage:

> Most support for vulnerable people is provided by families, friends and neighbours. The assessment will need to take account of the support that is available from such carers. They should feel that the overall provision of care is a **shared responsibility** between them and the statutory authorities and that the relationship between them is one of **mutual support** (1990: 28).

It is legitimate to claim that most care is provided by people in the community. However, there are multiple perspectives possible to take from this observation which means it is not necessary that care be provided by the community. It does not naturally or necessarily follow that care by the family is a positive situation for either the carer or the individual being cared for. It does not necessarily follow that this is a natural phenomenon based on family responsibility and obligation. It does not necessarily follow that this is based on community ties and a permanent pattern of social relations which are unchanging and constantly dependable. None of these things is natural

or necessary, even if such patterns of family and social relations are presently visible. Yet the discourse within the document represents and assumes them as such.

This presentation of care in the community is constructed in similar fashion to how the documents represent staying within one's own home. It is represented as inherently positive and beneficial rather than one particular way of viewing or understanding family and social relations. The specific inclusion of an element of care provided by the family and the community increases the level of responsibility and obligation put on the shoulders of family members. Finch, as discussed in Chapter Three, argues that assuming family responsibility and obligation in this way is attempting to separate out moral responsibility from the state and place it firmly within the family. It is symptomatic of an approach to social relations that would like to maintain clear boundaries between the private and public, a boundary increasingly demarcated by Thatcherism via a reprivatization discourse which sees the "private" sphere as the site of moral responsibility for care. The inclusion of this discourse is an attempt to naturalize and universalize complex, diverse, and transient patterns of family and social relations.

The document does follow a similar discursive pattern to Griffiths' report. The dominant similarity is the

privileging of free market terminology and goals to mould the goals and boundaries of community care. The dominant concern has become cost-efficiency and competition, which magically also provides choice and high quality care. This discourse is again dependent on both the narrowing of community care to solely being an issue of domiciliary care and the assumption that informal care exists, centered in the family. Community care has been narrowed from being situated in the community to being situated in the "users" home, while the community as a construction within the text has been expanded from being a site to also being an active actor.

CONCLUSION

The above documents allowed for the depoliticization of community care. The discourse functioned to exclude the contested nature of the policy issue and ground it instead in questions of rational implementation and universal understanding. The heightened contestation over community care which arose was successfully solved for the ruling political group by the incorporation of their political discursive patterns of engagement. Alternative perspectives on community care remain silent through the presumption of universality. The universality is signalled and forced on the very first page of the second document with the

unsubstantiated claim that the Government's vision of community care enjoys "wide support." Criticism or argument is immediately therefore silenced and separated from a mythical general consensus.

I think we can see a clear bond between the public rhetoric of Thatcherism established in Chapter Three and the policy language outlined in this chapter. Most strongly, I would say with the free market discourse which is privileged at every stage. Family discourse is also present, but more through the family's assumed existence rather than, for the most part, in an explicit use of natural nuclear family representations. Although there are several glimpses of this representation in the celebrated, willing and able informal carers explicitly integrated into the implementation of community care. Community care, within both documents, is designed within the logic and rational of the market and capital exchange. The community and the informal carer are also being integrated into the expectations of rational performance, not through the traditional force and surveillance of central state regulation, but through the decentralized manipulation and surveillance of market regulation.

CHAPTER FIVE

ALTERNATIVE QUESTIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter has shown that the language which
policy is written in is an important factor in the
formulation of that policy. Community care was
reconceptualized within discursive boundaries which
constructed the limits of the debate and the political
aspects of the problem. The impact of the discursive world
view of Thatcherism on community care is impossible to
quantify or to separate from the other important elements
which impact the development and implementation of the
policy. However, it is important to begin to acknowledge
that discursive practices do have an impact on policy. This
involves including the discursive practices of the policy
arena itself (something I have only touched on here) as well
as the discursive practices of political groups.

This chapter begins from the assumption that I have
indeed shown that there is a link between the political
discourses of Thatcherism and the discursive presentation of
community care within the policy documents. The subsequent
question I want to raise is whether this should suggest
possible changes in the way academics study the whole policy
process. If so, what other perspectives can we use to

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examine policies and policy making? These two concerns are the core of this chapter. First I will focus on why I think it is important that policy analysis introduce an explicit concern for the language used within the policy arena and the other arenas which impact it. In this section I will focus most on the work of Michael Shapiro and reemphasize the possibilities and usefulness of a discursive approach to language, as suggested by Michel Foucault. Second, bearing in mind this focus and understanding of language and discursive practices I will suggest feminist perspectives which allow for alternative understandings of the policy arena and its position within society. These perspectives give me a space in which to be critical and politicize more thoroughly my understanding of power relations and resistance within the policy arena.

DISCOURSE AND POLICY ANALYSIS

Policy analysis within the British political science academic discipline enjoys a fairly dominant position. While the work done within this sub-discipline has provided valuable insight into the structural dimensions of power relations in the policy process, it has have consistently avoided more radical approaches to the study of policy and power. What is missing, I believe is the understanding of power relations which one can identify through a linguistic

approach to policy making. A common assumption within much of policy analysis is that the policy making process in Britain, while centralized and highly structured, does allow for interest group involvement through the committee and report stages of any policy[28]. This position concludes that the process therefore does allow for the access and accommodation of alternative perspectives in an efficient and objective manner.

What is missing in this approach is questioning how these different perspectives are positioned and controlled within the policy arena. I would argue that a more accurate understanding of the different power games and relations going on within the policy arena will be better grasped if the study includes an examination of the language used within the policy arena, in particular the use of discursive strategies by key political actors. Language is an integral element in the construction of boundaries and hierarchical power positions throughout the political arena. The policy arena is as much affected by discursive practices and power relations as other political arenas. Perhaps even more so due to the influence of the normalizing and depoliticizing nature of the bureaucratic terminology of much of policy language.

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[28]See the work of Jeremy Richardson, David Marsh, Brian Hogewood, and R.A.W Rhodes for this kind of approach.

Michael Shapiro has done extensive work on policy analysis. He criticizes the dominant practices of the academic discipline and calls for the introduction of discursive analysis into the study of policy making. Shapiro's concern begins from an awareness that social science as a whole has a set of practices and assumptions which can lead it away from asking certain questions about subjectivity, identity, objectivity and power in society. This gap comes from the construction of social science's research agenda within the disciplining boundaries of false notions of objectivity, positivism and the scientific nature of "political science." The methodology this focus has traditionally entailed for social science, and in particular for policy analysis is a representation of research as being a question of technical evaluation of self-evident facts gained objectively and scientifically from a real producing a truth. The main problem for Shapiro, within this paradigm, is the understanding of language which it maintains. The process of gathering the facts and witnessing the real is not presented as being mediated or influenced by language. The key problem is the belief that the language of political science is objective:

> I found, therefore, that the prevailing self-understanding of the social sciences encourages a misleading account of political inquiry, one that obscures ideological commitments and problematic interpretations of ways of life by offering

a language of inquiry that aims at an anarchonistic
philosophical idea of objectivity (1981: 2).

The notion of objectivity dominant within research
influenced by or inscribed within positivism sees language
as a transparent passive communicator of true knowledge
claims evaluated and tested impartially by the rational
scientist/researcher. The break from objectivity is based on
reconstituting the role of language in research and
understanding. It places language as a more active mediating
actor in the process. Language becomes within Shapiro´s
argument a mediator at every point in the constitution of
both the object of study and the subjectivity of the
analyst:

> the suggestion, is that the language used by a society
> or culture contains rules which provide boundaries
> around phenomena and thereby produce the objects and
> events that are the referents of our speech
> (1981: 21).

Therefore what is needed to produce a form of writing
which more actively resists dominant codes and ideology is
"a model that regards language as constitutive of political
phenomena rather than as merely about political phenomena"
(1981: 20).

This has particular implications for how one can use
policy analysis if one wants to go further in identifying
sites of power and hierarchy. Language can thus be seen as
one of the actors in the attempts made to construct

hierarchies of knowledge, expertise, access, position, and
attempts to gain control over the process. Shapiro focuses
on the power of discourse to construct boundaries and rules
which define what policy is and further what analysis is.
What for the most part policy analysis avoids discussing or
contemplating are its own boundaries and where they come
from. From a semiotic approach, influenced primarily by
Barthes, Shapiro argues the importance of socially
constructed and understood codes and signs, which construct
the intelligibility of meaning within the discourses of
policy:

> Thus, the intelligibility that a policy discourse
> engages derives not merely from the cognitive
> orientations of individuals but from widely circulated
> "interpretative codes of connotation" (in Barthes
> language) that operate effectively to the extent that
> there is a stock of signs held by the receivers of
> statements, which activate the interpretative codes
> (1989: 73).

Therefore within the community care documents both
consumer and **community** operate as signs made meaningful by
the political discourse or code. The political discourse of
Thatcherism I outlined in Chapter Three constructs
consumerism as a beneficial social and individual practice
capable of providing benefits and identity to the individual
and signifies **the** community as a haven of care and love
structured around **the** family. The meaning and stability
which surrounds the terminology of the policy documents is

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made possible by the existence of the political discourse
(the code in this case) which is producing the mythologies
and illusions which give discursive meaning to these terms.
Without the prior existence of a free market discourse
prevalent and widely understood in the political and social
arenas the use of **the consumer** and **consumerism** within the
documents would have carried little significant political
value. However, within the context of this free market
discourse the terms become significant and powerful.
Therefore to understand the reasons why consumer is used
instead of client (the previous accepted and understood
term) we have to examine both the discursive tactics within
the documents and the broader political discursive tactics
going on simultaneously, anchoring and giving meaning to the
discourses within the policy.

There is a danger implicit in my above construction of
meaning in the community care documents. My argument does on
first sight construct the reader as a passive consumer of
the text. I seem to be suggesting that the receiving subject
simply "buys" the construction of meaning built up in the
political and policy discourses. That what we have is a one
way path of communication between the text and the reader,
with the reader powerless to take any meaning other than

that presented by the text. [29] To conclude at this point
would be a mistake and would simplify the complicated
notions of communication and meaning. Instead, I have to
include within this model of meaning the understanding that
the process of communication is interactive. The social
consumption of any text takes place on a plurality of levels
and as Umberto Eco suggests the text itself contains
pluralities of meaning. Within the Thatcherist texts and the
community care documents I highlighted meanings signified by
consumer discourse, technical discourse, natural
"biological" discourse and bureaucratic discourse, each of
them unstable and capable of multiple interpretations. The
different processes these different networks of meaning
involve means that no single, unified, stable meaning can be
taken from the text. Instead what we have are multiple signs
hitting multiple receivers when the text becomes part of the
social context: "The provisional ´text of expression´ is
situated in a larger context of social circumstances. The
receiver must receive this text and transform its codes and
subcodes" (Luke 1989: 6/7). From this understanding Luke
argues that

> Communication, then, occurs with the production of
> imperfect equivalences of partial understanding

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[29] It also suggests a degree of discursive stability
within the ideology of Thatcherism that is not likely.

from the constantly reconstructed expressions and interpretations of diverse signs grounded within evolving codes (1989: 7).

This produces a more fluid notion of communication and the interpretation of meaning, allowing for the active participation of the reader or receiver in the consumption of the sign. Therefore the construction of signifying discourses by the policy document or the political rhetoric of Thatcherism does not necessarily mean that they are decoded by society "correctly." Instead, multiple meanings will be produced, gaps will occur where "the message content, as an interpreted source of expressive meaning, is reduced by the receivers private codes, ideological filters, interpretative failures, and implicit subcoding" (1989: 7).

This leaves the success or failure of the discursive strategies of Thatcherism ultimately out of its control. The texts and discourses of Thatcherism are not controlled by their "authors":

> Texts are volatile and fragile tissues of codes, knitting together diverse signification fragments charged with mythologies, plural meanings, and many different values. The text is never fully controlled by the author; instead, it is itself finally "finished" or "produced" in its readings by others, inevitably leaving meaning surpluses behind and fulfilling meaning deficits when they arise (Luke 1989: 7).

Whether the grounding of the community care discourse in the signifying discourses of the free market ideology and the family works, depends ultimately on whether the receivers

decode the meaning within this framework. This, however, does not mean that Thatcherism and the receivers are on an equal power plane, which would mean that this interactive process is completely "democratic." What Thatcherism has on its side is its position within the power networks in society. In control of Government and its institutions they hold an immensely privileged position in the signifying process. The privileging and excluding properties and strategies of the discourses adopted by Thatcherism and used in the community care documents exist to narrow the possible field of meaning the receivers can decode from. It does not guarantee the proper or correct meaning will be taken from the documents, but it does narrow the universe of possible meaning.

It is also important to understand that the institutional setting of the policy documents entails a particular form of conversation. The principal difference is the ability of the institution (bureaucratic, educational, medical, religious, etc.) to constrain the type of speech possible:

> an institution differs from a conversation in that it always requires supplementary constraints for statements to be declared admissible within its bounds. The constraints function to filter discursive potentials, interrupting possible connections in the communication networks: there are things that should not be said (Lyotard 1991: 17).

While these constraints according to Lyotard are never

completely stable (and the fight over the constraints is as much part of the "game" as the communication itself), communication occurring within an institutional setting positions the institutional actor, or "speaker" in a privileged discursive position.

Looking at community care policy from a discursive perspective also situates the policy arena within the other discourses present in society. This understanding of discourse and language aims to build up a vision of the multiple sites of discursive construction, viewing language as an important actor in the construction of boundaries, disciplines, exclusion, hierarchy and power. The administrative networks which cross the political field are divided and sub-divided through the use of linguistic separation and difference. Specialization and expertise are signified or demarcated through language, through code.

One of the arguments involved in the informational society perspective is that this form of social organization involves increased levels of specialization and bureaucratization. Not only does this occur in the public world, but it also appears in the lifeworld (one of the reasons why the discursive split between the private and public is breaking down). Therefore in the community care documents we see the rationality of market logic and performativity being used within the context of the

"private" world of the community and the family. The
community and the family (i.e. the woman) is being demanded
to perform certain tasks to allow the output input equation
of the policy documents to work. Their performance (a
performance that fits within the rational of the free
market) is an assumption about the outside world the experts
and bureaucrats are making.

There are certain political benefits obtained for
dominant political groups in the extensive specialization
and rationalization of policy making. Specialization is
demarcated by a multiplication of discursive boundaries
erected to protect the different specialties. To gain access
to the different networks the subject must understand, must
speak the code: "what people say is therefore usually a
matter of giving voice to discursive practices that
represent a selection from a fixed set of practices
permissible in the language" (Shapiro 1981: 130). That is,
they must be subjects within the dominant political
relations supporting and being supported by the discourse.
They are inscribed within language and thus to be part of
the policy making process are, to at least some significant
degree, forced to speak its language. Again this means that
the interactive practice of communication which goes on
within the policy arena is not egalitarian. Since policy
language privileges discourses of technicality, bureaucracy,

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"scientific objective" knowledge claims, expertise and cost-benefit analysis, political actors whose own discursive voice cannot fit within these linguistic boundaries are excluded from the discussion.

Jean-Francois Lyotard argues in The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge that scientific and technocratic forms of knowledge claims are based on a narrative of performativity. He argues that in society since the advent of technology and the intrusion of money into the search and desire for knowledge, performativity has been the legitimating goal for science and for knowledge claims. A knowledge claim based on a narrative of performativity[30] legitimates its ´story´ or ´move´ not by a claim towards truth or enlightenment or greater good, but instead by a claim towards an equation of efficiency, of maximum output for minimum input. It is an outlook constructed via a technocratic narrative which privileges the functioning of the system over any other goal:

> Technology is therefore a game pertaining not to the true, the just, or the beautiful, etc., but to efficiency: a technical "move" is "good" when it does better and/or expands less energy than another (Lyotard 1991: 44).

Lyotard argues this narrative maintains a view of

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[30]He argues the performativity narrative has replaced the previous legitimating metanarratives of speculation and emancipation.

society which represents it as a functional totality whose existence as an efficient "system" is ultimately the guiding principle. The end of efficiency justifies the means of technocratic management: "The true goal of the system, the reason, it programs itself like a computer, is the optimization of the global relationship between input and output-in other words, performativity" (1991: 11). A systematic understanding of society is deterministic, carrying with it certain assumptions about reality and our ability to understand and know the world around us:

> Determinism is the hypothesis upon which legitimation by performativity is based: since performativity is defined by an input/output ratio, there is a presupposition that the system into which the input is entered is stable...(pg 53/4).

For the relationship to exist between input and output, society has to be a stable system, knowable and real.

Performativity is clearly a narrative present in the community care documents. As I outlined in Chapter Four the dominant goal is the efficient production of community care. The policy is geared towards the demands of executing and designing a process which will enable a maximum output for minimum input. The knowledge claims of the experts and the authorities are used as the justification for keeping the power to decide who receives which help (at greatest efficiency) within the local authority structure. This narrative is based on an assumption that the

(invisible/unnamed) document´s authors and designers know the world that community care will exist within, that the community which community care serves is a stable, unified system. The functioning of community care as an efficient machine is therefore the dominant goal, over questions of the quality of care. The input equation of the community care system (as envisaged in the documents) demands a certain level of performativity from the community and the family.

Calling into question the transparency of meaning in the policy arena politicizes and makes problematic not only what policy topic is being studied but also how boundaries are imposed around that policy area, defining what constitutes the scope of the policy. Therefore in the policy documents on community care the repeated use of the term domiciliary care narrows the role of community care as a policy concern of the government to one of practical assistance, while the community is constantly defined as an active actor within the policy perspective instead of as a passive site.

It also becomes important that we consider how such discursive disciplines impact on the positioning of political actors within the discursive boundaries. What already seems clear is that the more comfortable an actor is within a discourse the more able they are to participate

within an area demarcated by this discourse. This leads to a dilemma for oppositional actors whose arguments and practices do not fit well within the discursive confines of a particular policy agenda. The burden is on them to conform their argument and practices to fit within the dominant discursive boundaries. The oppositional actor then has to decide the political gains and losses of such a move. The exclusion constructed through the discursive boundaries automatically excludes perspectives unable to adapt to the confines of dominant practice.

Within the community care documents, the privileging of rational and universalistic discourse within the dominance of concerns for technical efficiency and cost-benefit analysis excludes perspectives more concerned with other issues. The assumed privileging of care situated in the home excludes perspectives which argue that care can be provided well in collective situations. Allowing such perspectives into the policy arena would necessitate the acceptance of the contested nature of the needs the arena is supposedly serving. Instead, once defined, needs are represented as self evident and singular. The contestable nature of a need ends the minute it enters the policy arena and is channelled into discussion of implementation and technical evaluation. The constitutive nature of discursive practice on the positioning of actors, on the defining of boundaries and on

the privileging of certain language practices mean that discourse can be a central factor in the development of power relations and hierarchies. These power relations exist within and across the myriad institutions and disciplines in society as a whole as well as within the policy arena:

> So the meanings of statements and of the discourses in which they are deployed create positions for persons. Because of this, the analysis of the development of various discourses is, at the same time, the analysis of the development of various social, political, economic and administrative institutions and processes in the society in which these discourses occur (Shapiro 1981: 151).

Shapiro's approach changes not only what we are examining within policy analysis, but it also suggests possible changes to how we can go about policy analysis. The position and subjectivity of the writer is radically changed. Shapiro argues that a radical form of writing and examination is necessary to highlight or uncover the power relations supported by discourse and language constructions. What in essence Shapiro calls for is "linguistic self-consciousness" on the part of the writer:

> A politicized form of writing, therefore, can show that the things we have in general and the kinds of persons and modes of agency we have in particular represent policy, not some disembodied reality. This level of policy, which is built into out representational practices, is unavailable to us unless we become linguistically self-conscious and evasive and show thereby how a form of ideological scripting masks the limitations, exclusions, and silences connected with the dominant forms of the recognized public policy discourse (1988: 5).

This allows us to see what becomes the policy problem and who become the accepted actors within the policy arena as products of a series of discursive ideological practices embedded in socially shared representations. The ideological function of language practices is to enable "naturalizing what is actually human practice" (1988: 5). The function of the writer is then to denaturalize, to make contestable that which has been hidden within myth and ideology. The writer must also be explicit and conscious of their own position within these networks of discursive ideological practice. Shapiro argues being more aware of the discursive potential of the language the analyst uses is a necessary practice to avoid being implicitly a passive supporter and legitimater of the regimes of power within society: "to the extent that it is not linguistically self-conscious, modern social science is part of society's legitimating and disciplinary mechanisms" (1988: 6).

When looking at community care from this perspective, therefore, I focus on the role of mythical or illusory representations of the family, the community and consumerism as the stabilizing, legitimating metaphors for a shift in the conception of community care within the documents. The representations worked as naturalizers of human practices within the families and the communities, especially in relation to notions of care. The community was represented,

first, in the political discourse and, then, in the policy discourse as a private site of family based care and love. This representation was embedded in allusions to a particular narrow notion of Victorian values, Christianity, morality and ethics found in the publicly consumed political discourse. "Care" and "love" are also being used discursively to frame the conversation in a way which represents "care" and "love" as noncontestable natural attributes and singular needs of human individuals which are best supplied by biologically related (female) individuals.

Consumerism also operated as an effective ideological representation within the policy documents because of its grounding in the free market discourse. It is the social consumption and knowledge of the free market discourse which gives meaning to consumer logic within the documents and legitimates its highly contestable use. Thatcherism as a dominant political ideology and as a discourse of a dominant political group, used the mythologized representations of the benefits of the free market and the care available and morally required in the home and community as the discursive definers of what community care would become within the documents. By looking at one element of the political process behind this piece of policy I am able to politicize the process in a way impossible within a framework not "linguistically self-conscious." Without this self-

consciousness, the process whereby community care became what it now is artificially removed from power relations and politically constructed social constraints. Examining from this alternative perspective is a way to understand how, from a universe of possibilities, community care was narrowed and channelled in a way which suited the ideological requirements of Thatcherism.

I want to emphasize again what I think is the invaluable contribution in the work of Michel Foucault to the form of inquiry I am situating my work within. His conception of the discursive properties of language (one shared by Shapiro whose work is for the most part a reiteration of Foucault's discursive framework and theoretical approach) and its ability to define and construct what and how we think, in fact who we are, broadens out the notion of power we are dealing with. Foucault sees power as productive and constitutive of "our very soul." Again this means that an investigation tracing meaning and power must be explicit about the language of what it is studying and its own language. Foucault's classification of the excluding properties of discourse become, therefore, an invaluable tool in my form of analysis.

I want therefore to detail what Foucault argues are the excluding powers of discourse and relate each element to the

community care debate and documents. First, he argues
discourse excludes through prohibition: "We have three types
of prohibition, covering objects, rituals with its
surrounding circumstances, the privileged or exclusive right
to speak of a particular subject" (1972: 216). These
prohibitions interrelate to construct a "complex web" (1972:
216) which Foucault argues has disarmed sexuality and
pacified politics. The pacification of politics is
witnessed, I would argue, within the community care issue
and the general discursive practices I highlighted within
Thatcherism. Possible meanings given to the object community
care were prohibited within the discourse by the narrow
singular definition given to it which limited community care
to a question of practical assistance. Similar prohibition
also occurred in the construction of the family as object
and the community as object.

Within the documents only certain people were allowed
to speak about particular subjects. The advisors used by Roy
Griffiths in his report maintain this prohibition. The
medical experts provide the medical advice, the business
community provide the business advice and the care-providers
and cared for pressure group provide the "caring" advice.
Each sector is therefore, neatly demarcated and positioned
within a hierarchy of expertise and knowledge.

Second, Foucault argues discourse excludes through "a

division and a rejection" (1972: 216). That is the division between reason and folly; the rejection of madness. The privileging of reason is the most basic implicit element of any policy document. It is the assumed foundation of the rational bureaucratic discourse which gives policy its form. Policy solutions are presented as based on objective reason, objective reason which privileges efficiency and performativity. Alternative perspectives are excluded based on their subjective lack of reason. Concerns for broader notions of care and community are subjective and cannot thus be trusted to be efficient. The community care documents´ form comes from this implicit grounding in reason. A particular understanding of reason which is presented as universal.

Third, Foucault argues discourse excludes through the "opposition between true and false" (1972: 217), which has constructed a historically specific "will to truth" (1972: 218). This will to truth is institutionally supported and gains credence through the discursive use of knowledge claims. Knowledge and institutions have thus been used to constrain discourse. Knowledge claims and this search for "truth" have been used as a moral justification both to exclude and to privilege the conclusions of certain discourses. Foucault uses the example of the Penal Code:

the Penal Code started out as a theory of Right; then

from the time of the nineteenth century, people looked
for its validation in sociological, psychological,
medical and psychiatric knowledge. It is as though the
very words of the law had no authority in our society,
except insofar as they are derived from true discourse
(1972: 219).

True discourse is universalistic and does not perceive of

its "true" character which is as a particular construction

of modern times. Society is thus confined within notions of

universal truths; "Thus only one truth appears before our

eyes: wealth, fertility, and sweet strength in all its

insidious universality" (1972: 220).

I believe we can see a will to truth, with all its

implications for discursive freedom, within Thatcherism and

community care discourses. Thatcherism presented its free

market economic discourse as if it was economic and

scientific fact. That free market logic was self-evidently

and naturally true. Individuals will act as centered

rational autonomous actors with certain natural wants and

desires which they will buy commodities to satisfy.

Competition will necessarily lead to "real" choice, which

will also produce individual satisfaction. Families have

certain self-evident, natural and "true" properties. They

are private, they consist of a mother, a father, a small

number of children and perhaps an ailing relative. Families

have certain moral responsibilities which are derived from a

biological connection. Families contain women who are the

natural carers. This is all "true." Biological knowledge claims are thus used to constrain definitions of family and who cares and how they care.

Within the community care documents the will to truth is visible in the privileging of the free market logic which presumes that competition will lead to greater choice within community care and presumes that private sector involvement will necessary improve the standard of care. These "truths" are all based in knowledge claims and are supported by the governmental and administrative institutions which preach them as if gospel, as if universal laws of nature.

Together Shapiro's and Foucault's methodologies allow me to examine the policy documents as texts within a series of other social texts, which work together in an attempt to construct meaning within a political field of reference. The inclusion of Lyotard allows me to highlight the importance of the performativity narrative within the policy discourse. The final task which remains is to consider the implications of a discursive approach from a feminist perspective.

FEMINISM, LANGUAGE AND SITUATED KNOWLEDGE

If language is a constitutive element of subjectivity and position, then it has, I would argue, particular implications for women, often the objects of discursive construction (as I argued they are in the discursive

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construction of the nuclear family and informal carer), but seldom the active subjects. Therefore, I would suggest it is valuable to engage some of the questions about the properties of language I have discussed from a feminist perspective.

Several feminists have engaged policy and politics from a discursive perspective. The work of Nancy Frazer which has been used extensively in this thesis is a good example. Feminists who have examined questions of language and related topics such as the power of knowledge claims, universality and subjectivity have often been conscious of the implications of these alternative approaches and are subsequently usefully self-conscious of their own methodology as well as the methodology of what they attack. Donna J. Haraway is one particular perspective I think potentially useful and enlightening. Her perspective allows me to continue to introduce the idea that alternative knowledge is missing in the community care documents.

The problem for feminists is that it is fairly obvious that within the discourse of standard politics there is little of a woman´s voice, never mind a plurality of women´s voices. This concern is tied to questions of citizenship and active participation. Can women really participate as citizens if the inscription of individuality and citizenship denies them a position or voice which reflects the multiple

experiences and knowledge of women? Iris Marion Young has looked at the question of citizenship. She argues, Western citizenship entails:

> The idea of the public realm of citizenship as expressing a general will, a point of view and interest that citizens have in common which transcends their differences, has operated in fact as a demand for homogeneity among citizens (1989: 252).

The public realm is assumed to be serving the public good in its policy making. However, my examination of its discourse argues that this is a myth. What is produced is policy which serves those with a voice, those with legitimate interests. Young argues for women the cost is particularly high since women have no public voice because they are assumed to belong in the private arena:

> The generality of the public thus depends on excluding women, who are responsible for tending to the private realm, and who lack the dispassionate rationality and independence required of good citizens (1989: 254).

Implicit in the public discourse and its policy making is the idea that the interest of society is served by the private sphere and women´s position there. Women´s interests can be decided for them by those (men) who know better. The suggestion of paternal control is no accident, the foundation of much of the welfare system is paternal control.

Therefore, when community care is defined within an assumption of the existence of a private community (based

discursively on the political discourse of family based morality and responsibility), it is positioning women within the private sphere. Situating women in the private family sphere was clearly visible in the Thatcherist discourse which criticized the career woman and the single mother as key factors in the destruction of the social fabric of the country. It is a construction which necessitates a mythical representation of the private sphere (based on the conception of a retro-past) and the nuclear family (based on particular Christian and biological discourses). This is politically important to understand when the social circumstances which surround "late capitalism" make the constructed separation between private and public less sustainable. As the forces of flexible accumulation and market regulation penetrate every area of society (perhaps even as a global phenomenon), maintaining a discourse which represents sites as essentially separate is based on a discursive construction which is more clearly that, a construction. But Thatcherism has clearly made much political use of a reprivatization discourse both in its public rhetoric and in its policy discourse on community care, a discourse reliant on a belief in an essentialist natural private sphere. A belief which encompasses the belief that society originates in a natural bond based around reproduction and the family. Thatcherism maintained

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this discourse, while, at the same time, maintaining the discourse and economic practice of flexible accumulation and market regulation as key factors in breaking apart the notion of private and public.

I can suggest two reasons for the simultaneous existence of these contradictory discourses. The reprivatization discourse can be seen as an attempt to restablize meaning in a way which ensures that the private sphere as a discourse maintains it ability to represent a sphere where care and love are available. Care and love which is constructed within this discourse as something which women provide and provide within the home. Therefore the home becomes a possible site for care and love through its permanent care-provider; women. This is helpful to the cause of market regulation and Thatcherism since, as I argued in Chapter Two and Three, both market regulation and Thatcherism assume or construct the private sphere as the site where care is naturally available. This echoes again Luke's argument that the regeneration of the family discourse is linked to the need of monopoly capitalism to represent agents or institutions capable of dealing with the "needs" it cannot or does not want to deal with. This construction has been used as a discursive justification for the removal of the responsibility for such care from the welfare arena, since both market regulation and Thatcherism

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would like to see the welfare arena's scope narrowed. The narrow definition of community care as practical assistance was based on this continued vision of the private sphere.

The second reason for the continued use of a reprivatization discourse in the face of flexible accumulation and market regulation is its possible use as a political discursive strategy to narrow or attempt to reinforce women's sphere of activity at a time when, for various reasons, women are finding a voice and gaining access to new "public sites" of activity. The merger of the traditional Conservative discourses on family, morality, Christian ethics and the natural basis of society with the new right free market discourse becomes visible here, with the traditional Conservative discourse maintaining its political voice in the Conservative party of the late eighties and the Thatcher era through this political strategy. This echoes Barrett and McIntosh's assertion that the "The major significance of the 'family' in Britain today is ideological" (1982: 34). It is, however, a difficult discursive strategy to maintain. The service industries of flexible accumulation depend on the ready supply of part time (cheap and easily replaceable) women workers to stay in business. The suggestion made by those in the Conservative party (the leaked policy document authors, Patrick Jenkin in particular) that mothers need to stay in the home in order

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to stop Britain´s moral decline is in direct contradiction to the requirements of the market-place. This is one place where the discursive cohesiveness breaks down. The main casualty of the breakdown in the logic is the woman who is situated in two places (neither of them particularly attractive) at once and finds herself working the "double shift" of public worker and private care-provider.

Young goes on to argue that in a society were some have more significant voice than others, what is dressed as the general interest is actually the particular interests of those closer to power. Your position in the power network defines your ability to control your place in the public domain. A citizenship that is general will therefore serve those who have the public voice. In Western society, different interests not given a public voice are thus denied full citizenship. Young sees the solution in differentiated citizenship that accepts the idea of specialized interests. Difference has to become an integral part of the policy process. The structuring of the discourse needs therefore to be open rather than closed. The legitimacy of some rather than others through language needs to cease. Young concludes that collective public action is the way to break down the imperialistic nature of the public domain:

> The primary means of defence from the use of special
> rights to exclude groups is the self-organization and
> representation of those groups. If oppressed and disa-

dvantaged groups are able to discuss among themselves
what procedures and policies they judge will best
further their social and political equality.....
then policies that attend to differences are less
likely to be used against them (1989: 273).

Knowledge claims are commodities within late
capitalism, or the informational society, which are the
public justification for the reservation of decision making
power within certain groups. Knowledge is the password or
code which allows entry into the specialized sectors and
hierarchies of bureaucracy. Information drives the system
and knowledge is the exchangeable good. The premium given to
the levels of information and knowledge now capable of being
obtained by the technologies and data bases of "late
capitalism" makes knowledge a valuable commodity sold by the
think tanks as the key to success in the bureaucratic arena.
Professionals, intellectuals, scientists, whoever maintain
and retain the knowledge claims which are used to ensure
their right to the privileged discourse. Those, who from
alternative perspectives, criticize are not privileged since
they do not understand the knowledge claim. This notion of
knowledge is tied again to universalism and, as Lyotard
argues, to a narrative of performativity which privileges
efficiency and maintains a vision of society as a totalistic
functioning system. Knowledge gained in the public domain
therefore has the answer to everyone and everything. Its
legitimation comes from being able to solve all problems and

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needs efficiently. Often public discourse has represented this form of universal scientific rational knowledge as something only men are capable of considering and understanding. That it is only men who are capable of seeing the greater universal vision which supplies the ultimate knowledge of what is good for the whole society. Again feminists unhappy with the idea that men can retain knowledge and women cannot have dismantled the idea of universal knowledge.

Haraway examining the discourses of science has done some interesting work on knowledge claims which maintains interesting parallels with the work of Lyotard. Knowledge has to be understood within the power field within which it operates. Knowledge claims, according to Haraway, are stories which empower science with metaphors of rationality and universalism. It is the narrative which gives science power, not its content. To deal with the power of universal knowledge claims is, therefore, to dismantle the claim within its historical and social context. Like Shapiro, Luke and Foucault, Haraway recognizes the practice of reading and writing texts as a process of interpretation tied to experience and subjectivity, which means that no text simply exists beyond interpretation:

> All readings are also mis-readings, re-readings, partial readings, imposed readings, and imagined readings of a text that is originally and finally

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never simply there. Just as the world is originally fallen apart, the text is always already enmeshed in contending practices and hopes (1991: 124).

Haraway's argument is that universal knowledge claims are the metanarrative which attempt to hold meaning together, the code which links the receiver to the sender. But the cost of the metanarrative is high: the exclusion of all other forms of speaking, of describing, of knowing. In similar fashion Lyotard maintains that performativity as the dominant narrative for knowledge claims produces terror in its practice. Terror since the vision of society maintained by the technocrats searching for the ultimate input-output equation denies the possibility that the technocrats' vision is particular: "they identify themselves with the social system conceived as a totality" (1991: 63). This "blindness" or "arrogance" leads the technocrat of the policy discourse to believe they have a right to exclude, or eliminate from the game those who threaten the efficiency of the "system":

> By terror I mean the efficiency gained by eliminating or threatening to eliminate, a player from the language game one shares with him. He is silenced or consents, not because he has been refuted, but because his ability to participate has been threatened (1991: 63/4).

Exclusion or terror can operate along several different dimensions; one of the key dimensions has been gender, with the constructed notions of rational, scientific, knowledge

of performativity given additional authority by being tied to symbols of white patriarchal masculinity. Science has for Haraway been a story traditionally told by the "father" and passed onto the son. For science to change it has to break out of this narrative and tell different stories. The inclusion of women and other "minorities" into the science field is not just about gaining the authority to tell the same story, but the right to tell a different story.

Haraway argues that what this entails is the celebration and inclusion of a different kind of knowledge, particular knowledge. Particular knowledge bounds the claim made to the experience and place of the speaker and makes this positioning an integral element of the claim. The practice of particular knowledge is not to be discounted, but accepted as the only knowledge that does not oppress:

> So, I think my problem and ´our´ problem is how to have <u>simultaneously</u> an account of radical historical contingency for all knowledge claims and knowing subjects, a critical practice for recognizing our own ´semiotic technologies´ for making meanings, <u>and</u> a no-nonsense commitment to faithful accounts of a ´real world´, one that can be partially shared and friendly to earth-wide projects of finite freedom, adequate material abundance, modest meaning in suffering, and limited happiness (1991: 187).

The language of knowledge claims have now to be situated within the discourse of the group that proposes the claim. Haraway´s argument that science can operate without terror but instead through inclusion and multiplicity is

shared by Lyotard. A science practiced through difference as opposed to a unifying totality of performance would practice quite differently for Lyotard:

> To the extent that science is differential, its pragmatics provides the antimodel of a stable system. A statement is deemed worth retaining the moment it marks a difference from what is already known, and after an argument and proof in support of it has been found (1991: 64).

Practice through difference as suggested by Lyotard suggests a vision of society which is quite different from a systematic totality. Lyotard sees social pragmatics as "formed by the interweaving of various networks of heteromorphous classes of utterances..."(1991: 65). Society therefore consists of multiple language games, which cannot fit within any metanarrative (whether it is a belief in performativity or consensus which Lyotard sees as a false goal); "Language games are heteromorphous, subject to heterogenous sets of pragmatic rules" (1991: 65). The lack of a metanarrative is why institutions or the "system" build ideologies to construct totality and ultimately has led to "the cynicism of its criterion of performance" (1991: 65).

A science based on difference and an acceptance of the heterogenous nature of the social bond is very similar to the vision of science seen in Haraway´s call for particular knowledge and limited happiness. The similarity can also be seen in Lyotard´s path towards this particular practice of

science:

> A recognition of the heteromorphous nature of
> language games is a first step in that direction.
> This obviously implies a renunciation of terror,
> which assumes that they are isomorphic and tries to
> make them so. The second step is the principle that any
> consensus on the rules defining a game and the
> "moves" playable within it must be local, in other
> words, agreed on by its present players and subject to
> eventual cancellation. The orientation then favors
> a multiplicity of finite meta-arguments, by which
> I mean argumentation that concerns metaprescriptives
> and is limited in space and time (1991: 66).

While Haraway and Lyotard are examining science I think it is possible to examine the consequences for policy making and analysis from this perspective; especially since the narrative of performativity is such an explicit part of the policy discourse. Haraway and Lyotard´s approaches along with the other alternative approaches discussed here allow me to make explicit the absences within the documents and suggest missing narratives. Scientific/medical knowledge is privileged within the documents. Business knowledge is also privileged in the narrative which privileges the private commercial sector and the abilities of competition. These forms of knowledge were also privileged in the choice of advisors for Griffiths´ report. Further, how the knowledge claims are presented in the documents is as important as their content. It is the universality inherent in the construction of the knowledge claims (based on self-legitimation through technical proof of maximum output for

minimum input) which give them narrative power and the power to exclude. Each knowledge claim is represented by one voice, one story. They are neither historized or particularized. The dominating economic narrative of the free market is only a story, a way of talking about economic practice. But the narrative is delivered (both in the political discourse and the policy discourse) as "Truth", as economic fact divorced from any self-awareness of its own mythology.

The narrative describing care and assistance is based on the claim, on a knowledge that community care only needs to supply practical assistance. A knowledge which is based on an assumption that someone else is supplying other types of care. This someone else is the "informal carer" whose knowledge the documents promise to heed and use, but whose knowledge is excluded in the formulation of the original policy documents and whose knowledge is also held secondary to the "broader" knowledge of the local social services departments, who maintain final authority to decide the distribution of care. This authority is based on the belief that the local social services departments can see the bigger picture and have more knowledge than the carers. In a sense the knowledge of the carers is being used as a justification to include them as cheap carers within community care without the policy makers accepting that this

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knowledge is crucial to providing care which actually meets the multiple, particular "needs" of those in need of care in communities. The rationality of performativity is being demanded from private care-providers without involving the care-providers in the design of that "performance".

Within the policy process situated knowledge or knowledge based on difference means relinquishing the idea that the empowered have the knowledge to cure society´s ills, replacing it instead with a fluid system of situated or local knowledge which comes from partial vision gained from experience. The narrative of the policy process has to be replaced by multiple narratives which serve the different voices, lives and needs within society. The right to tell the story, to presume to have knowledge has to be freed from universal rationality and performativity, to enable the contestation of the knowledge claims and break the exclusion of those the process presumes to serve.

The privileging of difference and the "other" by Young, Haraway and Lyotard is not without potential difficulties. The problem becomes how a process can be built around accepting that knowledge is situational and that each group has a valid narrative to tell. Where does the splitting of groups end and can final decisions be made? J. Donald Moon argues that while the celebration of difference and the need to bring this into the public domain is justified after the

exclusion of such voices from the dialogue, this process has
its own problems. The basic problem, is the privileging of
all other stories. Accepting the concrete other and
difference as the new center of the public discourse leaves
us with no framework to privilege any one story or any
experience that unites the social rather than separates it.
A public discourse based continuously on the concrete other
can thus lead to the disintegration of the social
environment into ghettos of different experience and
interests. Instead Moon calls for a public discourse based
on the "generalized other":

> It is in this context that we may resort to the
> perspective of the ´generalized other,´ to abstract
> from these differences to find basis on which we can
> create a relationship of mutuality in spite of our
> differences. The perspective of the generalized
> other finds its place precisely in those social world
> where the differences that have to be bridged are deep
> and pervasive (Moon 1991: 226).

Lyotard would counter Moon´s argument in similar
fashion to the way he counters Jürgen Habermas´ notion of
consensus. This generalized other is no more realizable than
a notion of consensus. Both necessitate the existence of a
metanarrative (a metanarrative based on a universally shared
notion of emancipation) which allows the whole community to
discuss and come to an agreement. Lyotard argues that there
is no "mutuality" behind difference; therefore we should
accept the existence of heterogeneity and dissent in the

social bond. Moon's position is therefore based on a belief that:

> humanity as a collective (universal) subject seeks its common emancipation through the regularization of the "moves" permitted in all language games and that the legitimacy of any statement resides in its contributing to that emancipation (1991: 66).

Haraway is also well aware of the problem of relativism. Indeed she warns against this problem. The continual multiplication of possible positions and experiences can, Haraway argues, lead to a condition she compares to "self-induced multiple personality disorder" (1991: 187). It is not enough to produce alternative interpretations and "others" to label and give another box; "Feminists have to insist on a better account of the world, it is not enough to show radical historical contingency and modes of construction for everything" (1991: 187). The potential Haraway sees in these new ways of understanding language and knowledge is not purely about simply displacing or ignoring the possibility of shared meaning. Instead what it can potentially do is allow ´us´ to "live in meanings and bodies that have a chance for a future" (1991: 187).

Haraway thus asserts that her conception of situated knowledge is not relative: "Such preferred positioning is as hostile to various forms of relativism as to the most explicitly totalizing versions of claims to scientific

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authority" (1991: 191). Her contention is that the multiple
knowledge claims and partial perspectives she calls for do
not create ghettos or sectors of separate knowledge and
perspective, but instead "webs of connections called
solidarity in politics and shared conversations in
epistemology" (1991: 191). From these webs Haraway argues
that we can construct "objective" understandings of each
other based on privileging those forms of communication and
meaning so far excluded by rational scientific discourse:

> I want to argue for a doctrine and practice of
> objectivity that privileges contestation,
> deconstruction, passionate construction, webbed
> connections, and hopes for transformation of systems
> of knowledge and ways of seeing (1991: 191/2).

The type of communication and meaning suggested by both
Lyotard and Haraway, needs to enter the policy arena, if the
narrow construction and hierarchical power structure seen in
community care is to be avoided. It is also necessary if
women are to be given significant voices as subjects within
the process. I still, though, have concerns over the
relativism question. I do not believe that Haraway fully
deals with it in her notion of "webs of communication." The
question of how to live in meanings and bodies in the late
twentieth century in ways which eliminate exclusion and
bring in alternative stories is still elusive. What Haraway
calls for (and what is probably needed) especially in the
policy arena still remain outside. Lyotard´s call for the

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acceptance of difference and dissent is inviting but
challenging in ways still not adequately understood. How to
bring them in without creating the suggested ´ghettos´ is
still an open question.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown the useful possibilities of
including discursive analysis within policy analysis. Both
the work of Shapiro and Foucault enables me to outline the
processes of exclusion and privileging existing in the
policy arena. Bringing in the semiotic approach of theorists
such as Luke and Lyotard allows me to begin to investigate
the patterns of communication and speech going on in these
social texts, patterns which establish meaning and
subjectivity. These are the patterns of communication which
can help demarcate the fluid changing social networks of
power relations existing in society.

Language and the use of knowledge claims are central
mechanisms within power relations in society. The
deconstruction of these mechanisms lays bare the embedded
nature of power relations within, in particular, the policy
arena. An arena which functions within a narrative of
knowledge claims based on performativity. One element of the
community care documents is the intrusion of the rationality
of performativity into the lifeworld of the family and the

intrusion of market capital exchange into the previously

domestic realm of care. The policy process can thus be seen

as a narrative of domination. The interests its outputs

serve only benefit those it grants a voice within the

discourse.

The problem for feminists is to discover the particular

problems women face due to their missing voice and to

contemplate what kind of policy process can integrate

women´s different experiences, while at the same time not

oppressing other voices. Such a policy process could

potentially serve women as individuals with different needs

and interests, rather than seeing women simply as

mothers/care-providers/domestic help. The work of theorists

such as Haraway with her call for situated knowledge and

Lyotard with his call for dissent and local narratives point

in possible and important directions. The production of

alternative policy processes while idealistically useful, is

not likely to produce an actual policy process capable of

dealing with both men and women´s multiple needs in ways

suggested by Haraway or Lyotard. An alternative program for

feminists and activists concerned with how policies such as

community care function, is to work and campaign at the

local community level, where these policies actually impact.

Here the ideas of difference and situated knowledge could be

involved in the design of alternative resources based on

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collective organization of the people actually involved in caring. Local collectives, designed within communities, could give those involved in caring a more powerful position to interact with the local social services implementing commnity care.

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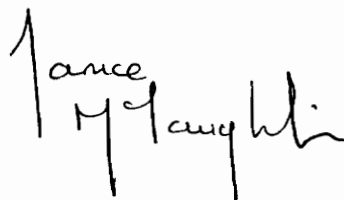
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