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**LA THÈSE A ÉTÉ  
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Early CBC Radio Drama  
and Women's Estate

Cheryl Watt

A Thesis

in

The Department

of

Sociology and Anthropology

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Master of Arts at  
Concordia University  
Montréal, Québec, Canada

August 1987

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ISBN. 0-315-37101-3

## ABSTRACT

## Early CBC Radio Drama and Women's Estate

Cheryl Watt

Cultural products can be analyzed from many points of view. This study looks at seven English language CBC radio dramas produced between 1940 and 1952, with a view to explaining their genesis. To accomplish the goal of explanation, the dramas are examined from a structural viewpoint, that is, the researcher looked at the arrangement of the content, which required an examination of the value sets which shaped the work. Because the interest was in examining women's depicted position, the research was geared toward revealing the dramas' underlying value sets about women. To expand on this knowledge, the thesis includes a schema generated from theoretical work of Juliet Mitchell which classified women's position as deriving from a combination of stances in four areas: production, reproduction, socialization of children and sexuality. To explain beliefs and attitudes about women which lay at the base of the dramas, a dialectical framework was used. The dramas' value sets were fitted into the available cultural-historical evidence of Canadian women of the forties and fifties. This procedure established the links between cultural and social practice, explained women's depicted position in the CBC radio dramas and provided the researcher with an expanded view of women's social direction during the period under inquiry.

Acknowledgements

Many people deserve thanks for contributing in some way to this effort. My advisor, Professor Jackson, showed considerable patience and understanding despite the length of time involved. I appreciate the fact that he never lost faith. I also want to thank him for responding to all my questions and for helping in the editing process. Susan Russell's openness and concern despite my long absence were greatly appreciated. Finally, I thank Howard Fink for his talent of saying the right thing at all the right times.

In addition to my committee members, there are several friends who helped during the writing process. Ken Jimenez was a valuable ally, lending a sympathetic ear, sound practical advice and a scholarly assessment of a part of the work. I am saddened that his untimely death prevented him from seeing the finished product. My family was a strong source of support, providing some long, restful vacations which always helped to renew my spirit so that I could resume work once again. Finally, a special thanks to Herb Clute who meticulously laboured at his computer to create a truly professional result.

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Introduction

This thesis analyzes a set of English language CBC radio drama. The overall goal of the thesis was to go beyond the dramas establishing their links with particular Canadian social, economic and political practices. The underlying premise is of an interdependent relationship between social and cultural processes such that the two constitute and reconstitute each other. Cultural or creative practices can then be said to recreate social practices while the latter can be said to affect the form and internal structures of cultural activities. The relationship is much more complex than the formula which creates a dichotomy between base (economic practices) and superstructure (forms of consciousness) and where cultural creations are analyzed as reflections of economic practices. Rather, the view held is of indissoluble connections between material, social and cultural activity which reflect a belief in the totality of human experience. This renders any analysis, other than one which considers the cultural product an historical practice, a limited one.

It is the latent structures of the radio dramas which are regarded as the most significant elements in establishing their links with the social milieu. On the surface level the imaginary content does not necessarily



provide a true representation of the assumptions, beliefs and values which are at the base of the product's creation. After these latent structures were uncovered, the researcher attempted to find explanations for their particular occurrences in the interplay of oppositions, pressures and resistances within the social structure. This required an historical analysis of the world views and practices pertaining to women as a social group.

The dramas were analyzed not simply as structures which address any subject; the objective of the research was the direction taken with regard to the condition of women. Do the structures have built-in assumptions which promote women in traditional positions or do they assume the possibilities of a more emancipated position for women? To help locate women's position in the dramas, the analysis also used a four-component structure of key elements which have been advanced as defining women's lives: production, reproduction, sexuality and the socialization of children (Mitchell, 1973). To arrive at a final assessment of this position, the thesis followed three analytical procedures. First the latent structure of each drama was uncovered and described. These revealed structures were then interpreted according to Mitchell's schema. A final procedure carried out the thesis' main objective. The dominant visions of the dramas were examined to reveal their final articulation of women's

position and to reveal how, when inserted into the appropriate historical epoch, they are structurally related to its social practices and world views.

### CBC Radio Drama

Evolution of the Drama Department. The question arises as to why the CBC radio dramas are important sources for the study of the interrelationship between Canadian social and cultural practices. Research which has been completed on these materials documents their valuable contribution to the cultural heritage of Canada. Concordia University has established a Centre for the exclusive collection and study of the scripts, tapes, correspondence and memorabilia which mark the CBC's entry into and development of the art of radio drama. Accumulated at the Centre are some four thousand original Canadian scripts spanning the years from 1925 to 1985. Research at the centre shows, for example, the extent to which the CBC and its Drama Department are responsible for the existence and success of English Canada's modern professional theatre. Prior to the 1940's English Canada had little professional, live theatre. The annual Dominion Drama Festival, although it provided some training for Canadian playwrights, actors and directors, was an amateur association lacking funds and the organization required to sustain and thereby develop a

Canadian artistic community. The CBC Drama Department, "as it developed in the late 1930's and early 1940's, changed this. When the CBC was inaugurated in 1936, it inherited the facilities, staff and objectives of its two predecessors, the CRBC (1932-36) and CN Railways Radio Department (1924-32), CN having had the first Trans-Canada broadcasting network (Fink, 1981). These networks had emphasized sustaining cultural programming as opposed to a commercially sponsored format, and serious drama focusing on Canadian themes and a Canadian style as opposed to popular programming of a light nature, such as was the experience of American radio. That is not to say that popular drama of the serial and variety-comedy type was not a part of CBC programming schedules. Their position was secondary, however, until 1943 when the CBC created a second network, the Dominion Network. This allowed popular programming to be the mainstay of the new network, now moving into commercial sponsorship, while the old network (Trans-Canada Network) continued to be devoted to serious cultural programming.

As has been noted, the late 1930's and early 1940's was a decisive period for CBC radio drama. The convergence of three significant factors at this time helped to push radio drama into its Golden Age. The first was the CBC's establishment in 1938 of a formal Drama Department located in Toronto and headed by Rupert Lucas

in the position of National Supervisor. Although likely unintended, this move created the basis for the coming together of a whole artistic community beginning with the writers, actors, producer-directors, followed by technicians and musicians in radio drama's Golden Age. It was the lack of this type of organized effort which had failed to establish a national live theatre. Lucas encouraged the new drama supervisors in the regional centres (Vancouver, Winnipeg, Montreal) to develop their art. However, this regional support diminished as dramatic production became more and more centralized in Toronto. A part of this centralization process was the hiring in 1941 of a National Script Editor, Alice Frick. In addition, by the late forties the major producers in the regional centres -- Andrew Allan (Vancouver), Esse Ljungh (Winnipeg) and Frank Willis (Halifax) -- having been summoned to Toronto to produce the major national series were joined with Rupert Caplan in producing the golden-age series, Stage and Wednesday Night. The writers and performers whose talents they had nourished and who had contributed to their success had accompanied them. This left the regions somewhat impoverished in terms of dramatic production, talent, a large budget (now appropriated by Toronto) and control over script selection and content. Their productions were limited to half-hour time spots and to regional exposure (Jackson, J., 1984).

One of the regional producers, Andrew Allan (Vancouver), was instrumental in forming a coterie of

writers and a unique style of production which placed him in the vanguard of drama's Golden Age and led to his promotion as National Supervisor. Allan chose to advance Canadian radio drama by focusing on Canadian content and a unique production style. Apparently he was concerned about the network's ability to compete for an audience with the big-budget productions and star performers on American radio. Borderline American stations had powerful transmitting signals and with their employment of a popular entertainment format had gained a large Canadian audience:

I really began to work intensively in the beginning of the '40s and I worked right through until September 1943 in Vancouver. We did a variety of things. We tried to make the show professional sounding in all kinds of ways, using music and the style of acting which I insisted on. I had my ideas of a style of acting that would work. In Vancouver, we had some performers who had very little, if any experience, but did have promise, and we evolved a style of performance which was very clear. Oddly enough, the speech was very fast, dynamic, spare and not over-emotionalized. We hit the ideas rather than the emotion, letting music do the exciting for us (Jackson, R.L., 1966:52).

In addition to Allan's innovative stylistic technique, he was responsible for bringing together some of the exceptional Canadian writing talent. Fletcher Markle describes the beginnings of Allan's talent pool:

There weren't very many of us. There was (John) Bethune from the East, and from the Midwest came Tommy Tweed who was collaborating with a marvelous Arab-faced chum of his from Winnipeg named Ben Lepkin, ... We did, I'd say, ten or a dozen shows a year written by Tommy Tweed and Ben Lepkin. I think both

Tweed and Ben would protest if you called them satires, but there was a satirical twang to it... Then in late '41, early '42, came the first two or three scripts by Len Peterson. I was reading a lot for Andrew at that time and I'll never forget as long as I draw breath how marvelous it was to see this completely fresh, underivative writing talent come out of all that dreg. I'm not sure about this but I think we did the bulk of Len's early writing from Vancouver (Jackson, R.L., 1964: 53).

It would be inconceivable to disregard Markle's own contribution to Allan's productions in those years. Allan recalls Markle's widely-acclaimed Baker's Dozen series:

He wrote this most extraordinary series. Sometimes the scripts came out one by one, and it was very hard. All night sessions sitting in the cellar or his house where he worked, making sure that we were ready for the typists in the morning to stencil it. It got that close sometimes. But it had a vitality and an awareness and a kind of new feeling that we hadn't had before. Although it stemmed from what we had been doing, it was a summation of the kind of thing that we had been doing. We had an atmosphere and a style of performance, and now we had material that showed this at its best... It was a culmination... I don't think that Fletcher would have thought of doing the series if the atmosphere or climate had not been there, and this atmosphere or climate, or whatever you like to call it, came because in that place there was a number of people, all different, but somehow young and keen, and wanting to go (Jackson, R.L., 1964: 53,54).

When they moved to Toronto in 1943, these writers, plus others -- Lister Sinclair, Bernard Braden, Barbara Kelly and Alan King -- accompanied Allan, becoming a part of the community of professional artists who surrounded him there and assisted in the international success of his Stage series.

The War provided the final impetus which thrust CBC radio drama into its period of finest achievement, a

period now recognized as largely responsible for the birth of our modern professional theatre. R.L. Jackson notes that in its three years prior to the war's commencement, the CBC lacked a large, appreciative audience for many of its dramatic productions. People tuned in for special events or on-the-spot news coverage but reserved their regular listening for the private Canadian networks or for the showy broadcasts emanating from American networks. A few years into World War II, CBC officials and the Canadian government began to recognize the role the network could play in uniting a nation of vast geographical size and diverse cultural groups. The government began pouring money into CBC coffers, much of which was allocated to dramatic productions featuring war themes of a highly propagandist nature. These dramas expressed the war's objectives, clarified Canada's participation and war requirements and endeavoured to raise the listeners' morale. They were not all pieces of high quality but they did engender considerable audience response and they excited for the first time a Canadian cultural spirit among the members of the artistic formation which had assembled in Toronto.

Interspersed with war propaganda were plays of a highly critical nature directed toward business values and the war itself. As one of the major playwrights notes:

Also, as long as we, in a sense bowed in the direction of the war effort, we found that we could be very critical of our society. There was a sort of idealism throughout Canada,

along with a bitterness about the terrible social problems generated by the depression. I feel that a very important development took place at that time. For the first time, there was a sort of general criticism of our society done in an artistic manner (Jackson, R.L., 1966:60).

In short, the basic structural elements for the maturing of radio drama art had evolved: an enthusiastic audience, financial support, and a purposeful, intimate and inspired creative formation.

The CBC Stage Series. In terms of the form of dramatic production, the war and post-war years are highlighted by a number of major "anthology" series originating from Toronto and the four regional centres (Montreal, Vancouver, Halifax, Winnipeg).<sup>1</sup> These series are notable for their dedication to Canadian content, their weekly continuity and their duration: they spanned several decades extending even through the 'seventies. Those responsible for the success of the CBC Stage series accurately represent the kind of artistic circle which produced a CBC "anthology" series. Stage is particularly appropriate in this discussion since several of the dramas analyzed in this study are Stage productions and all are Andrew Allan achievements.

The Stage series, initiated in January, 1944, marks the beginning of what is commonly known as radio drama's Golden Age. This era extends over the next two decades until television replaces radio as the major entertainment medium. Stage began as a half-hour live broadcast, and in



its fourth year air time was extended to one hour. Andrew Allan produced the series until his retirement in 1955, at which time he was replaced by Esse Ljungh until he retired in 1969. The series was one which extended beyond the Golden Age and through the 1970's (Fink, 1981).

There are several reasons for the success of Stage, not the least of which is the circle of artists which Allan created, inspired and directed. The most important members of this formation for Allan were the writers. The core of this writing group was small, perhaps a dozen people, notably Fletcher Markle, Len Peterson, Lister Sinclair, Tommy Tweed, Harry Boyle, Hugh Kemp, Joseph Schull, John Bethune, Alan King, W.O. Mitchell, Gerald Noxon and Allan himself. Other writers contributed to Stage on a more irregular basis. Allan's absorbing interest in Stage was an attempt to create through it the Canadian professional theatre that the country was so clearly lacking. To this end, he subtitled the series "A Report on the State of Canadian Drama." In his opinion, the series' strength and its distinctiveness as compared to American radio drama, for example, lay in his conception of it as a writers' theatre. Given this focus, Allan set out to establish a special relationship with the writers, one which encouraged each writer to use a personal style and to write about issues which were personal concerns (Jackson, R.L., 1966:64).

Many Stage writers chose to address controversial issues in the radio dramas. This produced such audience reactions that members of Parliament sometimes felt the need to discuss the dramas' appropriateness in Parliamentary debate. Among those discussed were "Hilda Morgan," an account of an unwed mother, "White Collar," a dramatization of union breaking in a white collar work situation, and "Who Killed Cock Robin," a satire on the communist scare.

It is not surprising, given this notoriety, that the results of a research sample in which 150 of these Stage productions were analyzed to determine their position on a range of social categories (sex roles, social class, family, the economy, age, etc.), showed that a slight majority of them expressed a sharp criticism of existing social relations, particularly with regard to social class (55%) and the economy (61%). With respect to the condition of women, the sex role category showed that 40% of plays in which that category was present, expressed a criticism of social relations in that area. Further, this criticism was strengthened by the family category (35%), since it is difficult to make an assessment of women's condition without considering their links to the family (Jackson, J., 1984).

The above evidence seems to suggest that the Stage productions were created by an artistic circle which not only articulated a Canadian cultural vision, but one

which, being critical of the status-quo, was able at times to articulate emancipatory alternatives to the existing views. This happened despite the group's position within a state-controlled organization. The emergence of this tight-knit community which was able to gain the nation's attention is quite unusual, especially if one considers that a productive effort by a like creative formation has not since materialized on Canadian radio.

The quality of the CBC radio dramas as cultural products is attested to by both the awards they received in annual international competitions and the comments of Canadian and American literary reviewers. Entries from the Stage series and CBC Wednesday Night received First Awards from the Institute for Education by Radio in Columbus, Ohio, throughout the 'forties and 'fifties. The quality of the drama productions can be measured by the fact that they often eclipsed entries by the major American networks. In 1945 and in the immediate ensuing years Institute judges commended the Canadian submissions with remarks such as the following:

For their astuteness in presenting to the public, authors and producers who, through their apparently unhampered abilities, are enabled to create and project radio drama of originality, emotional appeal, and intellectual integrity. ...Exceptional artistry in performance over an extended period. Behind each program there is evidence of solid critical judgement, meticulous planning and sensitive direction... Admirable choice of subjects...excellent acting and music.  
(Jackson, R. L., 1966:74)

Canadian literary critic Vincent Tovell, who wrote the Drama reviews for the annual "Letters in Canada" report

for the University of Toronto Quarterly, recognized the international response the CBC radio drama productions were receiving and praised the work of Andrew Allan, of his scriptwriters and of the musicians and actors who contributed to the series' overall success. Tovell acknowledges Allan's "national workshop as the apex of our theatre structure in Canada, the goal and best outlet for talent... (Fink, 1976:5)." Reviewer Jack Gould of the New York Times called Allan's group "...the most distinguished repertory company on radio (Allan, 1974:116)."

Notwithstanding the CBC radio dramas' success in their time, they were not all of enduring literary quality. Rather, the emphasis here is on their cultural contribution as a major expression of a Canadian identity and as a nucleus for the training of Canadian artists.

From the late forties, radio dramatists began adapting their scripts for the theatre, in addition to writing originals expressly for that medium. Actors and producers who had developed their talents through the radio format began crossing over to both live theatre and television. Radio drama lost its primary position through this draining of talent and the loss of an audience and of subsidies to television. It seems fitting now, considering their past prominence, that radio dramas are being recognized as valuable cultural documents of a past Canadian era.

## Conclusion

The primary intention of this thesis is to explain the underlying ideas about women contained in the CBC radio dramas as originating from the categories which organized women's consciousness of the day. Culture and cultural artifacts are then not two separate domains but fuse with one another at the level of structure. In so doing, they reinforce one another as material process and are evidence that the assumptions and values which make their way into artistic works are not isolated happenings but an integral part of the social and historical consciousness.

The thesis is worked out as follows. Chapter II details the theoretical framework and offers a review of the pertinent literature. Chapter III contains an explanation of the research design, followed by the actual analyses in chapters IV, V and VI. The latter three chapters draw attention to the themes of the plays, their relations to the condition of women and their linkages to the Canadian social structure.

END NOTES - CHAPTER ONE

1. Anthology drama -- a series of programs in which each program is complete within itself, and has no relation to the program which precedes or follows it in regard to story line or characters involved.

## II

Literature Review and Theoretical Orientation

The study of culture has remained outside of mainstream sociology in North America, our sociologists preferring to investigate topics which fitted more easily into a positivist framework; education, sex roles, deviance, population, social stratification; or those which fitted the historicist mode; Canadian social development, changes in landowning patterns, economic trends or the growth of political parties. Cultural inquiries can of course be accommodated by either of the above traditions, but they have the additional difficulty of overlapping with concerns of philosophy, aesthetics, critical analysis and in the case of a sociology of literature, with concerns of literary studies, linguistics, and semiotics. Still, European sociologists divide the field into two approaches: an observational sociology which searches for causal connections and has a scientific, descriptive tendency and an alternative or critical sociology which draws on historical and philosophical thought to search for the social genesis of art (Laurenson and Swingewood, 1971; Routh and Wolff, 1977; Williams, 1982).

A sociology of culture which is observational has three areas of concern: production, product and audience reception. Within the first category are studies of

cultural institutions -- the press, cinema and broadcasting -- ranging from a micro focus on the occupational roles of individuals within these institutions, to a macro focus on institutional organization, function, development (role of technology), and the interrelations between cultural institutions or industries and broader societal organizations (regulatory bodies, advertising agencies, etc.) (Lewis, 1978; Williams, 1981). The category involving studies of the products of cultural institutions focuses on quantitative descriptions of their manifest content (types of content, portrayal of "typical" social figures as the policeman, the criminal, etc.). Such analyses regard the cultural product as a data source for sociological types of information or for sociologically aware studies (Routh and Wolff, 1977). The audience reception category includes studies which analyze audience response, audience composition, and social effects of cultural productions which might, for example, show violence. The above categories of observational sociology contain the subject matter of mass communications research which dominates orthodox sociology of culture.

#### The Sociology of Literature

A critical sociology of culture which addresses the question of the social genesis of art basically focuses on



the relations between art and social structure. There is some overlapping here with the former positivist approach since relational links can encompass any kind of connection ranging from the simplistic proposition that social structure determines art (reflection theory) to a more complex, reciprocal, and mediated relationship between the two in which art both determines and is determined by social structure. In the latter case, art is mediated through other elements of the superstructure such as religion or politics rather than having a direct relationship with the material base. Since dramatic art is the focus of this thesis rather than any of the other creative arts, I will briefly trace the major historical figures and important theories which have contributed to a critical approach in the sociology of literature. The first writings to indicate that literature was probably socially generated occurred in the seventeenth century. The emphasis was on climate and geography as generators of a "national temper" which influenced the social and political institutions responsible for either favouring or impeding literary creation. If their attachment were to peace, literary creation flourished. If it were to war, it quickly declined. The emphasis on literature as socially conditioned continued into the eighteenth century when writers such as Vico, Herder, and Madame de Staël wrote in broad generalities of a direct one-to-one relationship between literature and society. They too

affirmed the importance of climate, geography, and social institutions which produced a melancholic or cheerful national character reflected in the tone, themes, and settings of literary works. Madame de Stael was the first to point out the importance of women and the middle class to the novel form, arguing of the latter that only with a strong interest in the private sphere and a prosperous merchant class could the novel form flourish (Laurenson and Swingewood, 1971: 23-38).

Hippolyte Taine, French philosopher, historian, politician, and essayist of the nineteenth century, is recognized as the founder of the sociology of literature. His work divides into two distinct approaches. The earlier theoretical stance is significant in that it precisely defines the connections between a literary work and society. It is the social variables of race, moment, and milieu which he lists as the causal factors determining the mental structures of an age which are subsequently expressed in its art. Taine does not succeed in applying his theory since his variable definitions are confusing. The result is a mechanical explanation of literary texts as a response to external material conditions. His later theoretical approach introduces a problem sociologists face today regarding the priority assigned to the artist's creative genius. Taine abandoned his earlier stress on material causes and explained literary works psychologically since, "...the great

artist's superior "moral state" enables him to grasp the essence, the truth of reality" (Laurenson and Swingewood, 1971: 31-39). This element underlining the gifted artist's special insight prevails to this day in theories of literary sociology.

Marx and Engels were other nineteenth century figures who theorized about the relationship between literature and society. Both left various writings which convey very contradictory ideas about literature's influence. On the one hand they emphasize a relationship in which economic forces determine social thought and where art either reproduces typical figures which mirror realistically the details and characters of an era, or art, being ideology, reflects the false consciousness of a social class. They offered a more independent role for art in their conception that artists are able to transcend their class position to depict society truthfully. Literature then has a dialectical, contradictory relationship with its author, ideology, and social structure. Its reduction to one single contradiction (the author's class interest) is mediated by a number of dialectical oppositions or contradictions (Swingewood in Routh and Wolff, 1977 : 131-133).

After the death of Marx (1883), international Marxists tended to adopt a cultural theory which explained art as the passive reflection of economic processes. They attributed the alienation and general pessimism in the

modern novel as reducible to the crisis and breakdown of capitalism. It was only after World War I that Marxist theorists began to emphasize a dialectical approach to the analysis of cultural products. Figures like Lukács, Goldmann, and members of the Frankfurt School (Adorno, Horkheimer, Benjamin) began to use concepts of totality and praxis in their work, thereby recognizing the determinate role of creative practices in their own production. Thus, for example, a faction of the Frankfurt School perceives the artist as creating new literary forms through new kinds of relations to the aesthetic forces of production. That is, modern technology creates the possibility, for example, of a genuine collectivist literary enterprise since newspapers and magazines, having reduced the distinction between author and public, have made all men artistic producers (Swingewood in Routh and Wolff, 1977:134-147).

Goldmann emphasized the structuralist component of literary works and the social, political, and economic environments which produced them. By focusing on a work's structural connections with the social structure, Goldmann is able to explain its genesis from a particular arrangement of social elements at a particular historical moment. In a study he makes of French works written by Racine during the seventeenth century, Goldmann discovers a tragic vision expressed. The hero rejects the world as a result of two contradictory claims that the world

prevents him or her from reconciling. For example, in the drama Britannicus one finds Junie, who loves Britannicus and who yet captured by their enemy, Neron, is forced to abide by the rules of his court; and in Bérénice one finds Titus who wishes to remain Emperor and yet not separate himself from Bérénice, the woman he loves. Racine's tragedies show a hero or heroine with absolute needs which cannot be satisfied in the world. Their solution is withdrawal from the world or suicide so that they can conform to the dictates of a hidden God who judges them and demands from them yet never appears. In worldly rejection lies their only possibility for greatness.

These categories of a hidden God, an amoral world, and a rejecting, conscious individual are direct transpositions by Racine of the world view of the Jansenist group to which he belonged. Jansenism was a seventeenth century religious expression by the descendants of the former "noblesse de robe". They had rejected the political and social lives of their forefathers whose power as magistrates and administrators had been deliberately curtailed by the royal monarchy. Being "noblesse de robe" in name only, this group lived an ambiguous and unhappy existence, having the possibility of claiming attachment to the monarchy, yet with none of the former control over the daily lives and affairs of the commoners (Third Estate), the group from which they originally had been selected. Goldmann was thus able to

show a structural relationship between Racine's tragedies and the Jansenist social milieu within which he lived (1972).

### The Genetic Structuralist Model

Goldmann's genetic structuralist model is the one being used for this study; not that it is without problems, but it does offer definite possibilities for an understanding of cultural creations. First, Goldmann's model, being dialectically based, generates a particular view of the production of knowledge. The social scientist is not interested in simply amassing a large quantity of facts. Rather, for a dialectical science, facts acquire meaning only when they are inserted within a larger whole of which they are a part and within which they have a function. For Goldmann the two-part process consists of what he calls comprehension and explanation. His studies of Pascal and Racine, formerly cited, are good examples of the process.

...to elucidate the tragic structure of Pascal's *Pensées* and Racine's tragedies is a process of comprehension; to insert them into extremist Jansenism by uncovering the structure of this school of thought is a process of comprehension in relation to the latter but a process of explanation in relation to the writings of Pascal and Racine; to insert extremist Jansenism into the overall history of Jansenism is to explain the first and understand the second. To insert Jansenism as a movement of ideological expression into the history of the seventeenth century noblesse de robe is to explain

Jansenism and to understand noblesse de robe. To insert the history of the noblesse de robe into the overall history of French society is to explain it by understanding the latter, and so on. (Goldmann, 1975a:163).

The above example demonstrates that this process provides knowledge of both the genesis and function (meaning) of a social fact; moreover, that the investigating process can carry on indefinitely. Secondly, a dialectical science recognizes the social and historical character of all things human. Goldmann translates this premise into his work by recognizing that an artist's creation is not the invention of an individual mind. Rather, at the base of an artistic work are categories or structures that have been elaborated by the group with which the artist identifies. For Goldmann the most important such group is the artist's social class. What the artist has the ability to do is to transpose the mental categories of the social group into the creative work. Finally, a collective subject is by its very nature historical since any individual member is born into structures of thought and action that have been formed by those who came before. Thirdly, a dialectical science assumes a total or partial unity of subject and object. Goldmann, in recognizing a partial identity, allows for praxis to enter into the theoretical gap between a subject and his/her object of thought. The researcher, therefore, although conditioned by the intellectual currents of the time, has the possibility of shifting to new structures of

thought coinciding with shifts in socio-historical elements. Similarly, the creative artist, in spite of siding with the conservative elements of the period, can write of the revolutionary forces which are gathering strength. Goldmann cites Balzac, Dante, Goethe as writers, who, in spite of their conscious intentions (political, social, philosophical ideas) and bias, depicted the universe accurately because of their visionary, intuitive qualities (1975b:44).

Goldmann's theoretical model consists of six elements: significant structure, transindividual subject, totality, world vision, possible consciousness, and homology. The concept of significant structure became an important focus for Goldmann after he studied with Piaget following World War II. Structure and function are inseparable in his opinion: a structure exists because it serves a function for a human group and when it no longer does this, they will replace it with another structure. A group's creation, maintenance and transformation of structures Goldmann subsumes under the term praxis which embodies both the mental and physical skills of the group's members as they go about transforming the world to meet their needs. Basically this approach understands all human activity as an attempt to make a significant response to an objective situation. The significant response is an organizing view, a set of mental structures which governs group activity until, as previously stated,



they no longer satisfy group needs. Whether the group is creating, maintaining, or transforming structures, it is necessary that the members feel a sense of coherence or balance. It is when this equilibrium is upset that they set about to create new structures to satisfy this need. Regardless of what stage of activity the group is at, whether creating, maintaining, destroying, or transforming structures, Goldmann emphasizes its dynamism. Structure for him is never static but always in process. Goldmann found that there was a relationship between the mental structures, the categories that organize the empirical consciousness of a group, and the organizing structures at the base of the imaginary world created by the writer. He believed that this relationship is most apparent when the society is in a transition period, when old values have collapsed and new ones are in the process of being born. The writer is able to embody the problems created by this crisis period in a very human form, including the values of the past but articulating them in new forms. Goldmann believed that periods of social crisis stimulated the artist in that they provided a greater number of problems to which the imagination could respond (1975b).

Transindividual subject is one of Goldmann's more controversial elements because it accounts for the existence of a work not in terms of the individual artist but in terms of the social group to which he or she belongs. Goldmann argues that the artist draws upon mental

categories already elaborated by others to create the work's basic structure. This structure possesses its own inner logic, an internal coherence to a conceptual system which belongs to a past or present social group, a conceptual system which the group members themselves are not aware of because the demands of daily living prevent them from having a totalizing vision. The content of a work, on the other hand, can be related to a group's actual consciousness. The concept of a transindividual subject accomplishes two things for a sociology of culture: it explains the cultural fact dialectically by maintaining the subject (the social group)/object (the literary fact) unity, and it allows abstract knowledge of historical groups to become concrete, since through an analysis of cultural facts a researcher can tell people what they were and are and what they are becoming.

Totality strives to understand social facts not by isolating them but by inserting them into the socio-historical context in which they were born and developed. This is accomplished by searching for the relations between the parts (the literary structures) and the whole (socio-historical reality). The actual process requires a continuous movement by the researcher between historical reality and a work's structures. One implication of the method is that the researcher must have a theory of history. Also, in terms of present history, this totality is never complete. Zimmerman notes that

Goldmann's later views on totality direct the researcher to:

attempt to grasp the implicit totality of history projected by the ideology of the dominant class; and (to) try to plot out the new totality on the basis of social and ideological elements that seem to be gathering strength in opposition to the hegemonic class and its conceptual totality (Zimmerman, 1979:157).

World vision describes:

the whole complex of ideas, aspirations and feelings which links together the members of a social group (a group which, in most cases, assumes the existence of a social class) and which opposes them to other social groups (Goldmann, 1964:17).

Goldmann conceives a social class to have formulated a most complete vision of its present social circumstances and of its possibilities for the future. It is the artists who, because of their exceptional vision, are able to articulate the real conditions and interests of their social group, thus concretizing its world view in a literary work. The pertinent social group is not necessarily the one in which the artist grew up or even spent a significant part of life. More likely, it is the group with which he has been most recently in immediate contact. The influence of this social group can cause the artist to adapt, rebel against, or synthesize its ideas with ideas found elsewhere. How he or she transposes the mental categories is a matter of individual creativity (1975b).

The concept of possible consciousness describes a world view raised to its most coherent level. It is the

awareness a group might have if it were able to assess its overall situation with respect to the whole structure of society. The concept is grounded in the dynamic character of human activity which presupposes that group members can make a number of different possible responses to the social problems they encounter provided that the response serves a function or maintains the group's equilibrium. A group's possible consciousness is to be distinguished from its real consciousness, which actually consists of many kinds of misunderstandings and illusions. Examples of such are plentiful and measurable in surveys, opinion polls, interviews, and certain types of art. They may reveal little awareness of the group's relationship to other social groups or of its historical position. Any social group is limited by its possible consciousness, since, if it goes beyond its conceptual basis it becomes changed to or replaced by another group.

The moment when the new conceptual basis seems to have been approximated by a fairly large number of the leading thinkers of a period, the ideological dominance of a ruling class would seem to be at an end, a new period about to begin, and with it, a new conception of history and historical periods (Zimmerman, 1979:157).

The artist must consider this limitation when he or she is expressing a vision of the group's possibilities in a literary text. Again, artists are able to express a group's structural tendencies in a coherent fashion because of their creative genius, a talent which enables

them to transcend their own subjectivity (personal interests, prejudices, emotions) to construct a possible vision inherent in the mental categories of the social group with which they identify. Since a creative work contains a group's structural tendencies pushed to their conclusion, the researcher is able to discern the group's future direction, a valuable knowledge for an understanding of social life.

Homology is the term Goldman uses to express the basic hypothesis of the genetic structuralist model -- that the structures of the world of the work are homologous with the mental structures of certain social groups. The term conveys a sense of corresponding forms, of links between the two levels that encompass a resemblance in framework. It follows that the content of a work becomes of little interest to a researcher. William Boelhower defines homology as, "a dialectical, constructivist principle involving a functional necessity" (Boelhower, 1980:32). This points to the actual va-et-vient process, the procedure which the researcher uses to construct the relationship between the two levels. This procedure requires that the researcher continuously oscillate between the social world and the text, necessitating that he or she have a broad, general knowledge of a group's social history in order to fit the structures of the work into the available cultural

evidence. The homology, then, becomes delineated and further clarified as the methodology proceeds. It is a principle which falls within the dialectical framework because it does not reveal any absolute truth about the relationship between the text and society. Rather, a number of interpretations are possible, since the researcher in outlining only the limits of the relationship, does not study the englobing structure in detail but only enough to make possible an explanation for the genesis of the object.

#### Critique of the Genetic Structuralist Model

Goldmann has had many criticisms made against his model. Critics are quick to point out the considerable disparity between his early work on Pascal and Racine and his later work on the modern novel, many agreeing that the earlier work is by far the superior. Another problem critics note is Goldmann's vagueness in methodological procedures. His lack of clarity at this level will require that other sources be used to carry out the analyses of the CBC radio dramas. These sources will be discussed in chapter 3. The discussion immediately following examines the merits and limitations of Goldmann's theoretical model.

Goldmann has been both commended and criticized for recognizing the collective character of literary

creations. Critics ask why individual authors have not been given a prominent position in the model, considering that their work is undeniable proof of a personal effort and talent. Why, for example, does Goldmann not consider biography as an important element for analysis? Is it not possible that the artist's psychology might be responsible for the composition of a work? Goldmann argues that a literary creation has its own logic, an internal coherence which adheres to a conceptual system belonging to members of a social group and forming a totality (1975b:45). He agrees that a psychoanalytic approach will explain parts of a work, but that involves cutting it into pieces and will never explain a work's total structure. To understand a whole work it must be situated historically in an englobing structure since it is at the historical level that men create function and meaning. Psychology can also explain why a particular writer created a certain work, why it was precisely Pascal and Racine among all the Jansenists who were able to express the tragic vision. However, it cannot explain the importance of their works, that is, their cultural significance. Inserting a work into individual biography will reveal its relations with a writer's life experience and personal problems. This can only be of secondary importance, in Goldmann's opinion, since we are primarily interested in a work's cultural significance (1975a:165). Finally, once we give the individual precedence at the theoretical and

methodological levels, we cannot generalize to the social or even speculate about future social directions.

The elitist character of Goldmann's work does not go unnoticed by its critics. He analyzed either the classics of literature (works by Racine) or modern works which he considered to be above the ordinary -- those by Malraux, Robbe-Grillet, Genet. He believed that the creative genius is more likely to express the potential consciousness of the group than the mediocre artist, who, having less vision, is confined to personal experience and expresses real consciousness, the actual content of a group's consciousness rather than the categories which organize it. The mediocre artist, then, tends to reflect the social world, to present a partial view of it while the genius recovers the totality of a group's spiritual life, those problems and transformations which are most essential to its existence. Although Goldmann's definition of genius is reasonable, it presents some problems. Genius status can be conferred only after research has been done. Also, while an artist may be labelled a "creative genius", it is not likely that all of his/her works will fit the required criteria for excellence. In terms of the CBC radio dramas analyzed for this study, their high quality has already been documented in chapter 1. Although it is not probable they are all "works of genius", Goldmann's proposition allows the researcher to determine which of the radio dramas fit the



model. If a much larger sample were to be considered, the "genius" proposition would provide a deeper appreciation of both the dramas' merits and their limitations. Finally, since the dramas were carefully selected from an original sample which overall is recognized as a major expression of a Canadian identity, my working assumption was that they contained coherent expressions of a Canadian world view. For this research the social and political significance of CBC radio drama took precedence over aesthetic judgments which might be applied to any given piece.

Several accuse Goldman of losing the most valid part of his work in his shift from world vision and totality to meaningful structure (Mellor, 1973; Laurenson and Swingewood, 1972; Glucksmann, 1969). The de-emphasis of world vision is evident in his analysis of the novel and its relationship to capitalist society (1975). Here Goldman posits a homology between the themes of the novel and the three developmental phases of capitalism. Problematical to his theory is the non-dialectical nature of this relationship. The economy in capitalist society pervades all consciousness; therefore, Goldman concludes that it is directly responsible for structural elements found in the novel. The implication for his model is that significant structure becomes more useful than world vision for cultural analysis because it stresses the possibility of a group's movement toward a world vision.

In Goldman's opinion, the groups of advanced capitalist societies have lost the ability to "totalize" themselves and therefore have fragmented visions of their social relationships. Rodriguez and Zimmerman (1976) point out Goldman's new direction in the collection of essays in Cultural Creation (Goldman, 1971).

Another of the criticisms directed at Goldman is that his concept of world view can become an abstraction (Williams, 1977). First, the researcher can extract a system of beliefs and principles which organizes a social group and neglect the various responses which it is still in the process of articulating but which are not yet fully formed (1982:26). Secondly, this approach ignores the tensions and contradictions inherent in any society, specifically those relations characterized by domination/subordination (1977:108-114). Finally, Williams charges that a world view orientation can make it appear as if cultural products result only from beliefs, attitudes, values, feelings when in reality their creation is a very physical process involving, for example, in the case of a drama, both its publication and its production (1982:28). Goldman addresses the first critique through his concept of possible consciousness which allows him to discern a new direction for the group even though it has not been fully articulated. The difference between Williams and Goldman is that the latter addresses the issue on a macro level, considering that the group's new direction involves

changing its whole conceptual framework. Although, of course, changes have to be evident first in smaller degrees before they can completely encompass a group, Goldmann leaves no clear idea about discerning the degree of support for change which is present. He does acknowledge, however, the potential for new, possibly contradictory structures to be revealed as the relations between the text and social reality are disclosed. It is, after all, the artist with his or her exceptional vision who is able to push structural tendencies to their logical conclusion while at the societal level a group's response may be still in process and therefore, not yet fully articulated. In the case of neglecting dominant/subordinate relationships, Goldmann, it is true, does not specifically search out that particular type of relationship. However, since he does address the possibility of tensions, contradictions within the group, it is left to the researcher to state whether those tensions are of the nature of dominant/subordinate relations. Regarding the critique of Goldmann's neglect of material process, that kind of analysis uses more of a micro orientation focusing on institutions, social formations, and means of production. The macro type of analysis which Goldmann requires does not lend itself to this kind of emphasis.

Most crucial of all criticisms has been a question posed by Zimmerman-(1979:175). Does Goldmann really have

a science of the genetic, given the inadequacies of his methodology for applying the principles of his theory? Goldmann instructs the researcher to uncover the relations between the text and the group from which it has emerged, by a procedure of *découpage*, a cutting up of the object. The procedure lacks precision since it relies on what Goldmann calls a series of successive approximations whereby the analyst, using personal criteria, develops categories for the data while moving between the text and social reality. Goldmann intends that the researcher rely on personal knowledge both to create the analytical categories and to uncover their relations with social reality. Proceeding in such an indefinite manner makes it very difficult for another researcher to duplicate the results. The one response that can be made to this criticism is that Goldmann acts within the principles set by dialectical thought. He does not try to reduce the text's meaning to one single interpretation since dialectical thought accepts no absolute truth. Instead, he outlines the limits within which a number of meanings could be functionally significant.

Finally, it must be acknowledged that Goldmann ignores literary tradition while stressing the genesis of a work. Such components as literary style and narrative structure are legacies that a writer receives from previous generations. What he or she chooses to accept, reject, develop, modify, or leave unchanged from that

legacy surely reflects changes in the social structure. Any analysis of literary forms, therefore, requires that attention be paid to changes in the forms of literary organization.

Since Goldmann died in 1970 before he could refine genetic structural theory and methodology, there are many criticisms that can be made regarding his work. However, his original conception that the mental structures of a social group are at the base of a creative work is both stimulating and deserving of further research. This study contributes to that end.

Goldmann's reference to social groups leaves some flexibility for a selection of particular groups appropriate to time and place. His work explicitly refers to social classes as the significant social groupings. However, this does not prevent a researcher from selecting other significant groupings in particular societies. The objectives of this research point toward gender rather than class and the selection of women as the significant social grouping.

#### On the Condition of Women

As previously stated, the objective of the study is not only to uncover the structures of the CBC radio dramas and to explain their genesis out of the mental organizing categories that govern the activities of a particular

Canadian social group, but in so doing to reveal the dramas' vision of the position of women. Juliet Mitchell's theory of women's social position provided a useful means for locating the position of women as depicted in the plays (1973). She regards women's position historically as having been determined by a four-component unity: production, reproduction, socialization of children and sexuality. Within the unity, each domain progresses at its own rate so that women may have made substantial gains, for example, within the domain of sexuality, considering their present freedom from pregnancy due to the contraceptive pill, while within the domain of production they lag behind in terms of, for example, equivalent pay for equal work. Mitchell suggests that any attempt to determine where women stand at any given time must first examine their concrete condition within each domain and afterwards assess their overall social position based upon both the developments and constraints which have been found to operate in each domain. Since contradictions abound both within and between the four spheres of women's activities, an accurate assessment must show how it is possible for strength in one area to be counteracted by weakness in another; for example, while women have become sexually liberated, they find themselves increasingly exploited as sexual objects both in the media and in meaningless personal relationships (1973:147,148). Within the unity,

then, each domain develops autonomously but women's social position cannot be assessed without fully considering how all four determine that position at any given time. Mitchell emphasizes that women's social position is inextricably tied to family ideology under capitalism which presents their roles as women's natural destiny. She sees neither the family nor women's present social roles as permanent structures and sees real social change occurring when women extricate themselves from the present inevitability of these domains of activity.

Mitchell's theory was important for the present work because the four spheres of women's activity -- production, reproduction, socialization of children, and sexuality -- provided focal points within the dramas' structures by which to examine the values and assumptions about women that lie at the base of the literary creation. Justification for the use of these four categories is that they are, as Mitchell states, the spheres of activity which under capitalism have always governed women's lives. Furthermore, it was by uncovering the plays' underlying values about women that an assessment could be made about women's social position as built into the structures. The overall orientation continues to be Goldman's. Mitchell provides a conceptual framework for locating the inquiry within the domain of women.

In conclusion, it can be seen that the concepts of Goldman and Mitchell form a strong, complementary unit

for the purpose of studying women's position in literature. Goldmann enables the researcher to discern women's changing direction through uncovering the changes in the mental structures at the base of the artistic works. Mitchell allows the researcher to capture the essence of women's depicted position as delimited by their four spheres of influence.



### III

#### Research Design

Seven CBC radio dramas were selected for analysis in this study. The dramas, as explained in chapter one, are Andrew Allan productions, written and broadcast between 1940 and 1952, the war and post-war eras. They are Canadian originals, not adaptations of previous works. The seven were chosen for the following reasons. First, they were included in a stratified random sample of 150 dramas selected for a content analysis. The sample was drawn from a universe of 451 plays produced by Andrew Allen between 1936 and 1961. The findings of the content analysis indicated that these seven dramas were among the 40% which included a critical response to social relations structured around sex roles. The critical position was further defined as active or passive depending upon whether the drama offered a proposal for change in the area of sex roles. Secondly, the dramas were among a selection of seventy-five extracted from the original stratified random sample for the purpose of a structural analysis. The criterion for this selection was the reputation of the playwrights, all renowned for the quality of their work. Finally, the seven merited inclusion on the basis of having been selected for a literary analysis. In this case, the determining factor

was aesthetic quality including both dramatic presentation and dramatic form: dialogue, dramatic situation, distinct characters, dramatic tension and resolution, and communication techniques.

Goldmann's adherence to the principles of dialectical science has implications for the method of genetic structuralism. First, it demands attention to the relations between the parts and the whole insofar as social facts acquire meaning only when inserted within a larger whole. Goldmann writes of the artistic work as "one of the most important constituent elements of the collective consciousness (1975:160)," rather than a reflection of it, thus underscoring its role as an active participant in the social process. Secondly, his dialectical premises motivate him to choose structure as his level of analysis, since at the level of content an artist has absolute freedom, while at the level of structure, his or her creative patterns are determined by the conceptual system of the social group with which he or she identifies. Thus, Goldmann hypothesizes, "...that the collective character of literary creation derives from the fact that the structures of the world of the work are homologous with the mental structures of certain social groups... (1975:159)." Likewise, for the purposes of this research, it is hypothesized that the structures of CBC radio dramas are homologous with the mental structures of women as a social group.

The question becomes the following: how are these structures revealed to the researcher? Goldmann comments on the nature of the problem:

... one can, in effect, study structures only if one has defined in a more or less rigorous way the set of immediate empirical data that make it up and, conversely, one can define these empirical data only in so far as one already possesses a more or less elaborate hypothesis about the structure that gives them unity (1975:161).

He concludes that the way to solve this problem is by using the technique of "successive approximations". This technique requires that the data -- in this case a CBC radio drama -- be the starting point of analysis. Here the researcher examines the surface level of the work, at the same time abstracting categories which allow him or her to shift to the social level -- in this case the social group of women -- all the while coming closer to a homology of structures. The process is broadly delineated by Goldmann:

One sets out with the hypothesis that one may gather a number of facts into a structural unity, one tries to establish between these facts the maximum number of comprehensive and explanatory relations by trying also to include in them other facts that seem alien to the structure one is uncovering; in this way, one ends up by eliminating some of the facts with which one set out, adding others...one repeats this operation by successive approximations until one arrives...at a structural hypothesis that can account for a perfectly coherent set of facts (1975:161-162).

Through this process the researcher not only comes to understand the work but also to explain its genesis with

respect to the conceptual system of a particular social group.

Goldmann's methodology is somewhat vague yet unfortunately these are the only guidelines the researcher has. It was, therefore, necessary to create a set of analytical procedures which would conform to Goldmann's overall framework. First, since the drama is the starting point of analysis, the researcher examines its manifest content, the words and sentences spoken by the characters who make up the world of the play. However, this observed content is not the desired level of analysis since the hypothesis directs the researcher to the structures of the work. Therefore the objective becomes to discover the relations between the observed units of content, or the ways in which they are combined (Jackson J., 1981: 232-249).

To this end the researcher begins with a découpage or "cutting-up" of the object of analysis. He or she reads through the play's content identifying units of dialogue. A unit of dialogue is defined as a combination of statements made either in an interaction situation between two or more characters, or in an interior monologue by one character, or in an exposition of the narrator. The unit is complete when the idea which initiated the exchange or thought or piece of exposition is complete, and another idea has entered the dialogue. An excerpt of consecutive units 025 and 026 from The Hungry Spirit will illustrate the process.

Marian ...How's that cute red-headed girl of yours?

Rob That's what I want to talk to you about.

Marian Oh?

Rob Marian!-- I want to get married.

Marian (Amused) What!

Rob You heard me. I said, I want to get married.

Marian Why, Robbie, you're crazy. You're too young.

Rob I'm twenty-two.

Marian And Ruby's how old -- eighteen?

Rob Nearly nineteen.

Marian Anyway, you can't. Mother depends on you.

Rob She'll have to get along.

Marian But Rob, how can she? You'll have to help her next year.

Rob I can't do it.

Marian Oh, talk sense. Where are you going to live?

Rob I could get the little Larson house cheap.

Marian And what would you use for money?

Rob Well, I thought I'd borrow it.\*025 (Pause). Aw, come on, kid, be a sport. Lend me enough to get started on.

Marian Nothing doing.

Rob I'll pay you back.

Marian Yes, on sixty-five a month, with a wife to keep? That's my money. I got just enough to get me through if I'm careful.

Rob Heck, what do you want to go to Varsity for? You got a good enough job now.

Marian Oh! Robbie, I've been planning this for years. I've saved every nickel...I didn't give mother. Don't spoil everything for me. Wait a few years. Peg will be grown up and...

Rob I won't wait. Gosh, I never thought you'd be selfish like this...

Marian Now, look. I'm through supporting this family for a while. You can take on the job.\*026

\* Unit of dialogue ends.

Following the identification of the several units of dialogue which together and in sequence compose the play as heard or read, the units are resorted or classified according to theme.

The researcher's second task is to make initial judgments as to which units belong together based on the values they express. A bundle of units which expresses one particular set of values with some coherence is designated as a theme. It should be clear that when units of dialogue are combined as a theme, they are no longer in the same sequence as they appear when the play is read or heard. The thematic judgments are also based on a knowledge of the social world in which the play is rooted. In this case, the researcher kept in mind the social world of women in the 1940's and 50's.

The previously illustrated units of dialogue from The Hungry Spirit can serve to clarify the process of thematic grouping. Unit 025 is found to be one of a combination of units expressing a minor theme of family which is present in the play. This judgment was based on the appearance of family scenes interspersed throughout the play. The emphasis on traditional family values was the overwhelming element in these scenes. Here brother announces privately to sister his plans to marry hoping for her support which is not forthcoming. Unit 026 is one of a combination of units expressing a major theme of support for the female protagonist's plans for education

and self-growth and the values implied by that support. Unit 027 might belong to another theme, either major or minor and so on. The researcher continues to sort through the units of dialogue until all are classified according to theme.

In the third step an attempt is made to show how the themes are related, thus uncovering the structure which holds the play together. An understanding of the values, beliefs and attitudes which hold each theme together is required. All three elements are so closely related they are sometimes interchangeable; however, some differences do exist. Values imply a sense of ranking the importance of matters within a theme. A belief is a mental conviction, a way of looking at the world which is accepted as true and valid. Finally, an attitude is a predisposition to act toward the environment in a certain way. Attitudes are learned responses to previous experiences. The Hungry Spirit may again be used as an illustration. There is a major division in this drama built around the protagonist's goals. Within the supportive theme a high priority is placed on the following: individual spiritual and mental growth, equal opportunity based on ability rather than gender, emancipation through education and knowledge, contribution to the world community. The traditional values such as marriage, family, small town ways and materialism are ranked as low priorities. The theme contains the following convictions about the world:

the route to happiness and satisfaction for a woman with ability is not marriage and family but education and career; women must not sacrifice themselves for others but use their potential. The theme, contains an attitude toward women, then, which is very positive.

The opposing theme gives a high priority to traditional values: marriage, family ties, materialism. It contains the following vision of the world: women are secondary in importance to men, daughters to sons; women should hold only traditional jobs and only if they are single; women must sacrifice personal goals for their families. The attitude toward women here is negative. It is clear from this brief overview that the two themes offer two totally different and contradictory value sets. One is emancipatory, lifting women out of traditional molds and accepting a position of equality as their basic right. The other theme contains a desire to restrain women, to keep them in traditional molds regardless of their personal desires and abilities. The minor themes can be subsumed under one or other major theme depending upon whether they support emancipatory values or traditional ones. During this third step, the researcher may often change previous judgments of thematic groupings based on the uncovering of new facts.

The final step requires that the structure at the base of the dramas be explained. This is accomplished by a process of insertion, all the while keeping in mind the



central hypothesis -- that the structures of the world of the work are homologous to the mental structures of the social group of women. It follows that the insertion cannot be done unless the researcher has historical information which allows him or her to ascertain the mental categories which organized economic and social practices of women during the 1940's and 50's. Each play is then related to the social structure to note whether the categories (composed of values, attitudes, beliefs) which organize the imaginary content correspond to those organizing women's consciousness at that time. For example, relating The Hungry Spirit to the social structure, we find the emancipatory value set cannot be explained by correspondence or homology. Rather, it is in opposition to the traditional vision that "women's place is in the home," emphasizing instead education and career as the way to emancipation. These values presage those which allowed women's entry into the labour market as the war progressed, at which time women were offered novel kinds of jobs and unlimited opportunity to work. The artist carried structural tendencies further by envisioning women participating fully and equally to men in production (for full explanation see chapter 6). On the other hand, the categories which organize the other value set are structurally homologous to the traditional vision women held at that time. They emphasize that women need marriage, not career, and should always be ready to

sacrifice personal growth for family. Each drama is related thus to social reality in an effort to determine what order of structural relations exists between the two levels -- homology or opposition.

Once the latent structures of the dramas are uncovered, it is not difficult to apply Mitchell's categories. The researcher takes each theme of each drama and interprets the information (both content and underlying values and beliefs) according to the schema (production, reproduction, socialization of children, sexuality). These four categories are defined in chapter 5. After this analysis the overall position of women in CBC radio dramas is summarized, noting the contradictions within and between categories.

The methodology for this thesis as outlined above has certain weaknesses. Most important, there is no certainty that the procedures used follow those of Goldmann although an attempt was made to adhere to his principles. The course of the structural analysis involved a certain subjectivity in the process of thematic grouping since it relied heavily on the researcher's historical knowledge. However, the historical material about women in the 1940's and 50's was not all that plentiful and required that the researcher use supplementary American material for a broad perspective of Canadian women's vision as a social group. This information tended to be confirmed by Canadian

sociologists S.D. Clark (Suburban Society, 1966) and Seely  
et al (Crestwood Heights, 1956).

## IV .

The Analysis: Plot Lines and Themes

In this chapter the analyses of the seven selected plays are described. First, a brief summary of the progression of the narrative is provided. This is followed by a description of themes or value sets at the base of each drama.

The Hungry Spirit

This play was written by Elsie Park Gowan and produced on August 26, 1940. In the opening scene the listener is introduced to the narrator, a doctor living in a small prairie town. He briefly describes the town of Blaketon, "I've seen more than one good mind go to seed here...more than one eager spirit beat its wings against our narrow understanding (p.1)." He then begins to retrace his activities of earlier that evening. Since he had dropped by the Gale home, the listener is immediately transported backward in time to the events that occurred there.

Dr. Frank learns that Rob Gale, a young man of twenty-one, wants to get married but does not have any money and therefore expects Marian, his sister, to lend him her savings. Knowing that Marian intends the savings for a college education in science, Dr. Frank is somewhat

upset. Meanwhile Mrs. Gale indicates her sympathy for her son Rob by trying to enlist Dr. Frank's help in persuading Marian to come to her brother's aid. Recognizing Marian's potential and her intrinsic worth, Dr. Frank refuses to help sacrifice her dreams for the "second rate ambitions" of Rob. That scene fades into another where Marian is conversing in a car with a male friend, Douglas. The topic is marriage. Douglas wants Marian to marry him. She gently refuses, explaining that she wants more out of life, that she wants to test her capabilities and find out what they are worth.

The final scenes take place in the Gale household. Marian arrives home and is confronted first by Rob who explains his situation is urgent since his girlfriend is pregnant. Nevertheless, Marian holds to her conviction that her goals are just as important as his. When her mother enters, however, and starts increasing the pressure, Marian finds a decision more difficult. It is Dr. Frank who helps her make a choice.

At the level of structure, the drama contains two basic value sets directly opposing each other. One value system is expressed by Marian and Dr. Frank. It contains the belief that women are the mental and spiritual equals of men and thus deserve equal opportunity to develop their innate potential. This belief is embodied in the fight put up by both Marian and Dr. Frank so that she can realize her dream of becoming a scientist. The values of

the theme reveal an opposition to unenlightened parental authority and a concern for truth, knowledge and a broader understanding, qualities more valuable than any compliance with the status quo. Within this context marriage cannot be allowed to interfere with a woman's higher aspirations, for her increased life satisfaction and knowledge will result in a much greater contribution to the human community. Dr. Frank explains that the human race "...must live in the realm of the mind and the spirit (p.5)." It must do more than the basics of surviving daily and propagating. Marian explains her ambitions as a desire "...to be something better than I am now. It's -- it's not all for myself. Maybe -- if I try very hard -- I could give the world back something to make it a little better for having me in it (p.12)." This value system contains an emphasis on and a criticism of the narrow-mindedness and sterility of small town life. It also contains the belief that Marian must leave in order to fulfill a greater destiny.

The opposition theme is contained in the values as expressed through Mother and Rob. Women take second place in this value system: a daughter must be sacrificed in order that the family son be given his opportunity to establish an independent existence. The independence is acceptable since it is justified by impending marriage and family. The irresponsibility of young men is accepted within this value set as evidenced in the lenient way

Emily Gale treats her son as compared to the dutiful behavior she expects from her two daughters. Also, the higher aspirations of women are not taken seriously. Marian's traditional job as an elementary school teacher is championed by the widowed Mrs. Gale since it means Marian can help her financially, providing small luxuries for both her and Peggy, a daughter still in high school. On the other hand, a career in science is regarded as unnecessary for a woman who can simply marry one of the town's young men. The theme opposing Marian's ambitions is tradition bound. It is eclipsed at play's end, however, by the alternate value structure. Marian will pursue her own choices in spite of the pressure and manipulations of the opposition theme's powerful Mother figure.

### The Godsend

Written by a Canadian, Earle Grey, and produced October 4, 1940, this play is not set in Canada but in the English countryside. In the opening scene, the listener hears a conversation between Martha, a fifty-nine year old woman, and Clara, the local parson's daughter, who is welcoming Martha to her new home in Fen country. Clara admires Martha's ability to arrive in a strange place alone and to live by herself. Martha makes it clear that she has always lived alone and enjoys doing things for herself. References are made to the fact that Martha's

nearest neighbour is one mile away, and to the "strange melancholy charm" of the area. The sound of a motor approaching indicates the arrival of Ted Seaton. Clara explains he is the local peddler and rather a character of whom the community is proud since he travels to even the most inaccessible places. Ted inquires whether Martha needs any goods. She wants oiled silk which he is unable to supply immediately but promises to deliver the following morning. Shortly after Clara and Ted leave separately, a man appears at Martha's door. His identity is hidden by a handkerchief. He forces his way inside and threatens Martha with a razor, to hand over all her cash. Before leaving, he ties her to a chair.

The following morning Detective Sergeant Gillespie and Clara are both at Martha's discussing the robbery. Martha thinks she knows the robber's identity because he made a slip in conversation -- that she would get help when Ted Seaton came by in the morning. Only Ted could have this knowledge. Gillespie is doubtful of Ted's guilt because he has known him for years and because they were "in the war together (p.10)." Martha advances the investigation by announcing she would recognize one of the stolen notes on which her teller had pencilled the number 59 -- Martha's present age -- in the top left-hand corner.

Ted arrives, and is confronted with the crime. He refuses to admit his guilt. Finally, Martha searches his wallet and finds a receipt dated that day for a van



payment. Again, Seaton lies, explaining the money as gambling earnings. Martha advises the Sergeant to check the wallet notes. When he discovers the marked one, Seaton confesses. He and the Sergeant drive off to the police station while Clara admonishes Martha for deliberately marking the note right "under their noses (p.15)."

At the level of structure the drama contains three value sets. One value set contains Martha's vision. Although Martha is victimized by a thief, she does not have a victim mentality. Her strength and courage through a life-threatening situation and afterwards in demanding that justice be done, dominate the theme. The belief at the base of this theme is that women need to be in charge of their lives in order to meet life's challenges. Being in charge means women must be willing to use various practices, including the unorthodox, to make certain their rights are respected. Martha's theme is very dynamic in that it contains values of courage, strength and independence of thought and action. These are the values which contribute to the achievement of a just and moral social order. Martha is a single woman who likes doing things for herself. Her qualities of toughness, shrewdness, confidence, determination, and rationality are what help her determine a just outcome to the course of events. The underlying attitude of the theme is that women must use these qualities to have control over their lives and to outwit the male patriarchy.

The Ted Seaton theme expresses the value system of the swindler and criminal. On the one hand, Ted is the glib, friendly salesman providing a valuable service to the members of this isolated community. On the other hand, he is the cunning thief, ready to inflict violence in order to satisfy his greed. The theme contains a negative view of the salesman, suggesting that he has two faces and that his desire for quick, easy money may be his destruction. The attitude toward older, single women is hostile and insulting. While robbing Martha, Ted tells her, "You ain't got a husband -- you're a skinny old maid" and "Old maid' allus are like bleeding magpies (p.5)." Like the Martha theme, this one also includes an emphasis on dynamic action, determination and personal power, but it is a power which is corrupt and loses dominance to the morally superior power of the Martha structure.

In the final value set we are presented with the beliefs and attitudes of the law. Detective Sergeant Gillespie is ineffective in dealing with criminal, Ted Seaton, for several reasons. One is his narrow vision of police procedure which makes him an unequal match for the cunning Seaton. He is also restricted by his polite formality which does not allow him to interrogate Seaton with any kind of forcefulness. Finally, Gillespie's objectivity has been lost through past personal dealings with Ted. Within this theme, then, are found tradition, authority, the old, "tried and true" methods of the law.

This approach is found to be impotent against the more dynamic and creative approaches found within the other value sets. Furthermore, this theme contains a condescending attitude toward women as exemplified in the sergeant's "let me handle this" attitude with Martha concerning the confrontation with Ted. It is also shown in his unwillingness to admit, at first, that her ideas about Ted might have merit.

In conclusion, two of the value sets focus on a strong individualism. The kind of individualism which is conceived as establishing a just social order is one created by a woman. The kind which is seen as establishing an unjust order is one created by a man. The third and traditional value set reveals an inability to cope with the creative practices of either type of individualism.

#### To Where I Live

P.E. Helliwell was the Canadian writer of this play, broadcast from Vancouver, on March 12, 1943. In the opening scene Eric Stuart, the protagonist, engages in an interior monologue in which he vaguely hints at an ominous event that will occur in his coastal city that night. Non-particularized voices and the voices of a soldier, an officer and some ordinary people hint at an enemy invasion. Following this are three flashback sequences, important scenes from Eric's past: his girlfriend, Chal,

rejects his marriage proposal; at ages nine and then fourteen, Eric exchanges good-byes with his mother. In present time, Eric reflects that this was the last time he had seen his mother, who died while he was away on that weekend trip. Various voices again interject to herald the pattern of events which will unfold on Eric's last night to live.

The scenes which follow are of family and friends. Eric converses with his step-mother, thanking her for the support she has given the family since his mother died. He convinces his young brother Tony of the importance of using their train pass to reach a relative's farm before the enemy arrives. Chuck, an old friend of Eric's presently on military duty, arrives and wants Eric to help him carry out orders to clear a downtown night club. There, Eric meets ex-girlfriend Chal and they discuss their past. In the following scene, he visits his father at his downtown office. The two speak somewhat openly of the differences which have always undermined their relationship. Finally Eric returns home, sends his brother away and sets about burning the family property. He is joined by friend, Chuck, following which the two, armed with rifles, wait close to the shoreline for the enemies' arrival.

At the level of structure the analysis reveals two major themes: the invasion theme, expressed by various community voices; and Eric's theme, expressed via his

inner thoughts of past and present and via minor themes of family relations and friendships.

Contained by the invasion theme is the belief that the community will soon be attacked. Voices from past time discuss this probability and reveal attitudes ranging from "What a riot!" to "I don't suppose we shall like it much (p.2)." People in present time try to escape their awareness of immediate danger by discussing the commonplace -- a movie, the weather. The theme, then, emphasizes the threat of an amorphous enemy. It contains the belief that people refuse to confront the implications of such an event and protect themselves from real awareness with routines and with the commonplace. Finally, it contains the belief that the ordinary person has a passive, fatalistic attitude toward invasion.

The theme containing Eric's vision is expressed at a very personal level through interior monologue and flashback conversations with loved ones. It is also expressed more socially through Eric's interactions with family members and friends. On the personal level, Eric makes a very factual and brief review of his life -- a mediocre career in newspapers, no marriage, few friends, residence in the same community -- and concludes that it has not been a resounding success. He remarks upon his numbness and emptiness of feeling, considering that on one's last day of life one would normally expect a greater intensity and depth of emotion. This thought triggers

Eric's memories of conversations with loved ones no longer present in his life -- an ex-girlfriend and his deceased mother. It is at the end of the play that these flashbacks become significant for then Eric admits that he consciously had to forget his mother or he would have died years before. Also, he is aware that he never really did forget because she was "always the only thing there ever was (p.17)." Eric has finally come to an understanding of his depth of feeling for certain people and of his repression of that feeling. His willingness to confront his past pain, dependencies and guilt provides him with a freedom so that he can say at the end, "I've had a happy life, I've had a very happy life" (p.20)!" The numbness, the emptiness is gone. The belief at the base of this theme is that feeling and close relationships play a major role in people's lives.

A refusal to confront distressing feelings creates a deadness and a sense of dissatisfaction with life. This belief complements the belief at the base of the invasion theme that people escape their awareness of disaster by burying themselves in routine and trivia. In addition, the introspective section of Eric's theme contains a criticism of the mother/child bond, taking a negative view of the created dependency and yet recognizing that intimacy and depth of commitment are what give meaning to our lives. It is Eric's imagined conversation with a loving mother that gives him comfort as death approaches.

Nevertheless, the theme contains an ambivalence about the role of mothers.

The part of Eric's theme which is expressed through his social relationships consists of five minor themes. First is the theme of Eric's relationship to ex-girlfriend, Chal. Chal had refused to marry Eric and explains her decision in a chance meeting with Eric on his last night. He finds her drinking in a nightclub, trying to forget her pain. Chal is portrayed as cynical, hard, bitter, yet these qualities are discovered by Eric to be defenses to hide her true vulnerability. She explains her refusal to marry Eric as a self-sacrifice since she loved him but felt she was not good enough for him, that she would have shocked him. The underlying idea is of a failed life due to a lack of self-understanding and to a feeling of impotence. The theme contains a belief that to have a successful life it is necessary to keep one's ideals and to confront one's fears rather than to hide behind defenses. There is then generally a complementarity with Eric's vision in that introspection is advised as the route to self-understanding, yet there is also criticism of men's romantic illusions about marriage and a general position of discontent regarding marriage.

In the minor theme of Eric's relationship to Chuck is deep friendship. The friendship is so strong that at the end the two await the enemy invasion together, both armed.

Presumably they will die together. Within the theme is an emphasis on male comradeship and on the honour of "going down fighting" for one's country and one's way of life.

The minor theme expressing Eric's relationship to his father indicates opposition in terms of beliefs and basic approach to life. Eric's father is a businessman who places a value on the material and on his work. He is an authoritarian parent, expecting Eric to agree with his precepts and way of living. Eric, on the other hand, would have liked a closer, more emotional type of relationship between the two and one where his ideas were treated with equal respect. Of his father's work, he is especially accusatory, "You always kept it apart from us -- kept us out (p.15)." At the base of this theme is parent-child disharmony due to different approaches to life (business versus humanistic). There is also a sense that the two viewpoints will never exist in harmony.

The minor theme expressing Eric's relationship to his step-mother complements the values of the overall theme. Mrs. Stuart has successfully made a home for Eric. She is responsible and caring, having made the best of a difficult family situation. There is a value here placed on having a mother figure create a home for the family. This mother, however, does not create dependency in the children.

With respect to the minor theme of his younger brother, Eric relates by providing direction, reassurance,



and affection. It is noteworthy that young Tony will escape the invasion by travelling to the country. The expectation is that he will have a future, even under an enemy regime. The underlying belief is in the resiliency of youth as compared to the rigidity of the adult whose attachment to a particular way of life dictates that the only honour is in dying to defend it.

The two major themes are complementary. They stress the importance of self-examination, of confrontation with repressed fear and of intimacy within the family and within friendship. These beliefs and attitudes surface within the context of an approaching enemy invasion. One of the drama's major objectives, then, is to shock people out of their illusions of security and to warn them against complacency. In this respect it is propaganda oriented, attempting to prepare the minds of Canadians for the possibility of a war fought on Canadian soil.

#### Tears Idle Tears

This radio drama by playwright Fletcher Markle was broadcast on March 25, 1945. It is set in a railway station where protagonist, Stephanie, awaits the return of her soldier husband whom she has not seen in three and one-half years. During her thirty-minute wait, Stephanie sits quietly on a bench and wonders how their reunion will be: "Will you look the same Frank?... "What will you say

(p.3)?" Her thoughts remind her of her three girlfriends and their stories of their recent reunions with soldier husbands. First, Stephanie recalls a conversation with friend Cathie, whose voice is filtered through as a prelude to flashback scenes of her reunion with husband Peter. Most of these scenes occur at Peter's mother's place where the couple lives. Relations between the three are clearly not harmonious. Peter gets angry with his mother for constantly worrying whether he is feeling alright. Cathie notices him getting increasingly short-tempered, yet she cannot get him to confide what is really bothering him. A short musical interlude leads the listener back to present time where Stephanie, still introspective, makes an assessment of her friend's marital problems. Shortly thereafter, a thought of how happy the faces of the woman around her appear, makes Stephanie remember friend, Margaret, who had the same glow before her reunion with husband, Nelson. Margaret's voice is heard through a filter, followed by flashback scenes of that reunion and of later interactions at home. Margaret appears unhappy with Nelson's reserve and unromantic behaviour, his self-centredness and self-importance. Again Stephanie assesses the situation, suggesting that the couple lighten up and laugh at one another's foibles. Finally, Stephanie thinks about friend Carol's reunion with husband, Stan. Flashback scenes show it as equally unhappy as the other two reunions. These thoughts leave

Stephanie very anxious at play's end as she walks to the train platform to welcome Frank home.

At the level of structure, the drama contains two major themes related by opposition. Within the dominant theme, Stephanie, the protagonist, tries to work out a solution for the problems wives face in renewing relationships with veteran husbands they have not seen in years. Her male-supporting value set is opposed by the other major theme which is directed toward the needs of women. The opposition theme is composed of three minor themes which present three married couples' experiences of reunion after war-time separations.

Within the first minor theme, we are shown Cathie and Peter who are trying to renew their relationship in an atmosphere made more difficult by the presence of Peter's mother with whom they live. Mrs. Harman is very possessive of her only son and constantly worries and nags about his health. This upsets Peter who does not want to be constantly reminded of the emotional and mental shock war veterans are experiencing. Meanwhile, Cathie notices that he is losing his temper more frequently and becoming upset by trivial things. She pleads with him to confide in her but gets only half answers: he does not like their living with his mother, he is worried about a job, their future, the future of the world, etc. Cathie confides to Stephanie that Peter's refusal to honestly reveal his thoughts and feelings is hurting their marriage. The

value here is placed on the importance of marital communication. Husbands are criticized for their refusal to create marital intimacy by revealing themselves. Women are unsatisfied with male evasions of questions directed at their emotional life.

The Margaret-Nelson theme contains a similar pattern. Margaret is portrayed as very outspoken and critical of Nelson's behavior. At a dinner party, she publicly rebukes him for not telling his university colleagues how genuinely terrified he had been during the London bombings. Nelson appears emotionally reserved and overly concerned with social obligations and social formalities. Unfortunately, Margaret wants a romantic partner whose desire is to spend time together. Nelson is also thoughtless and pompous to the degree of appearing foolish. On the other hand, his letter from overseas had been romantic and had indicated to Margaret a desire to change. Again, husbands and wives are shown to have differing views of how to conduct a marital partnership. The wife wants to emphasize the emotional, sharing part of the union while her husband tries to hide behind various social masks.

The problem in the Carol-Stan theme is presented as a difference in needs. Carol wants Stan to find a job, thereby relieving her of that responsibility and enabling her to look after their son. Stan, on the other hand, wants to drink and party because he has "...a lot of

pressure to blow off (p.23)." The action clearly indicates the belief that women want the security of having husbands take on any job responsibilities. At the same time, they want husbands to take an interest in establishing an intimate home base. Their husbands, in contrast, are likely to place a high value on partying and maintaining bonds with former army buddies.

The above minor themes reveal the unhappiness and sense of hopelessness experienced by the wives of war veterans who were not responsive to women's emotional needs. They do not, however, offer a solution to this problem. As a whole, they simply present an opposition to the other major theme by holding men responsible for the current problems in marriage. A solution to the problem is proposed within the introspective sections of the Stephanie theme. Stephanie vocalizes beliefs and attitudes which downplay women's rights. Her advice to Cathie concerning her problems with Peter clearly ascribes the blame to women.

...Seems to me Cathie's made up something about Peter's attitude that doesn't exist at all. He's bound to appear different from the way he was before he went overseas, he's bound to have changed. I've talked to him and he's a little nervous and embarrassed and kind of dazed with everything, but there's nothing in the world wrong with him.

...suddenly Peter is home, and everything isn't all shining and beautiful in one day or a few days...and Peter begins to feel inadequate without Cathie's confidence. That's the only thing the matter with him. And Cathie, living her dream, should be realistic and do something to help him. Tears

won't help even as relief. Every tear makes Peter feel more helpless and useless (p.11).

The attitude taken is that women need to be realistic and supportive of men's emotional needs. Further, it is women's responsibility to promote cheerfulness in the relationship. They are responsible for the emotional climate of the marriage. Stephanie's advice to Margaret follows the same pattern. At base is the belief that women's expectations of men are too high and that satisfaction with what they have would make everyone happier. A little humour would help them cope better with their husbands' shortcomings. The last piece of advice, addressed to Carol, deals with children. Women are advised to stay in their marriages for their children. Since men need time to wipe out bad memories, women's role should be one of patience, understanding and support. In summary, the basic approach of the major theme is to couch the belief in women's submission within a rational, analytical framework, thereby attempting to conceal a very traditional vision of women.

#### The Seed That Won the Plains

Written by Gerald Noxon and produced April 6, 1945, this play contains a narrator who directs the flow of the performance, making comments on completed scenes and drawing the listener, through pieces of historical

information, into other scenes. The play opens in an office where two women secretaries complain about work and muse about the benefits of life on the prairie versus life in the city. One woman definitely prefers city life, while Lena is just waiting until her soldier boyfriend returns, at which time they will buy a farm on the prairie. In the next scene, Lena and Dick are inspecting a very large wheat farm which they decide to buy despite Lena's misgivings at its vast size and at Dick's intent not to diversify but to plant only wheat. The narrator comments on the couple's good fortune to have the Marquis wheat seed which matures early, in contrast to the first Red River settlers, circa 1817, who had no quality seed. These comments are a prelude to a number of historical scenes which return to the past, dramatizing the struggles of the western settlers to eke a living growing wheat and the gains they make through science and technology.

First, Governor MacDonell of the Red River settlement interacts with a character named John. They discuss the freezing temperature outside and the fact that the colony crops will be ruined overnight. MacDonell is not discouraged, however, and insists that they cannot give up, as the land is good, and new strains of seed that mature quickly can be found to beat the frost. The next scene, dated forty years later, reveals a brief inquiry in the London Parliament as to the self-sufficiency of the Red River settlers. It is reported that due to the

uncertainty of crop harvests, wheat has been imported from the United States for the past ten years to feed the colonists. The scene then shifts to Ontario, 1842. It captures the ingenuity of a Mr. and Mrs. Fife who save the last three heads of a new wheat strain they had planted, the seeds of which had been sent from Scotland. The narrator recounts that the saved seeds are replanted in succeeding years and produce a better grain yield and better milling quality than any other seed. This Fife brand does not reach the Canadian West, however, until the eighteen seventies. A brief scene dramatized by two farm characters, Jack and Elliot, portrays this event. The last major historical scene introduces the characters responsible for the discovery of summer fallowing and of new experimental methods which succeeded in producing the Marquis brand, the seed that won the plains. The drama concludes in present time in the office setting where two women again complain about work and exclaim over Lena's willingness to abandon city life for farm life on the prairie.

On the structural level, The Seed That Won the Plains is composed of three themes. One theme chronicles the struggle of western wheat farmers to conquer pestilence and the Canadian climate to build a successful farming economy. A second reveals the success of the modern wheat farm, and a third shows some concerns of the modern woman at work in a city office. The value set of the office



workers is in opposition to the values of the other themes since it expresses a preference for an urban as opposed to a rural lifestyle.

The struggle theme contains the belief that unimaginable accomplishments are possible when a people is persistent, courageous and innovative. The Canadian settlers are a hardy lot who persist with wheat farming through years of early frost, hail, grasshoppers and drought. Finally, the Canadian government helps by establishing an experimental farm on the prairie and a scientist in Ottawa to oversee the project. Through cross breeding various strains of seed, the scientist discovers the hardy Marquis type. The value here is placed on systematization, science, technology and government aid. Ultimately what is valued is work, patience and hope, the qualities which built the western wheat kingdom. Women are conspicuously absent from this theme which otherwise has eleven male characters and one male narrator. The one woman figure present is the wife of the discoverer of the Fife seed strain. She helps save the Fife plants from pillaging cows, thus rescuing the seed for future use. However, it is men who are given the dynamic roles in the developing fortunes of the agricultural west.

The belief which dominates the success theme is that the wheat farmers have a responsibility to feed the hungry of the world. Dick, one of the characters in the theme, has just returned from war-torn Europe where he has witnessed people begging in the streets for bits of bread.

His decision to buy a wheat farm with wife, Lena, is fuelled by an idealism about feeding those who suffer from hunger. Dick has total confidence in the farm's good fortune despite climatic conditions and other possible obstacles. Lena, on the other hand, worries about the possibility of defeat considering the past failures of other farmers such as her father. She is shown to feel helpless against possible disaster. These differing attitudes reveal the belief at the base of the theme that women deal with living from a narrow framework, limiting future possibilities by negative thinking. Men, on the contrary, are able to transcend a narrow vision by dealing with present day facts -- that modern technology has won the plains -- instead of allowing emotional factors to affect their goals. Dick clearly makes the decisions in the marriage: first, convincing Lena that they should buy the farm; secondly, persuading her that they should plant only wheat. Since his decisions are shown to be correct -- their farm is successful -- the theme contains the belief that the bold decisions of men often result in valuable contributions to the world.

The office theme considers two issues: women and office work plus city versus country living. The theme reveals contradictory opinions on both issues. The character, Margie, defends office work. She comments, "This isn't a bad place to work, Lena. You should see some of the dumps I've slaved in. At least we've got some

daylight here (p.3)." Co-workers, Lena and Jane, are openly critical. They dislike typing the boss' long reports, of which Lena comments, "If you ask me, he could say everything he's got to say in ten lines at the outside (p.3)." The revealed attitude is of the tediousness of office work. This contradicts the other attitude present in which office routines are defended and in which the salary and lifestyle offered women by white collar work is valued. On the issue of city living, the theme contains the belief that it is superior to rural living. In fact, the character of Margie is frequently and strongly critical of prairie life. She makes comments like, "You're crazy, Lena" or "When your soldier boy gets back, Lena, maybe he won't want to bury himself out there, maybe he'll have other ideas (p.4)" and "...if you ask me any girl that picks that kind of life is just plain nuts (p.18)." The character of Lena, however, applauds the "sunlight on the prairie" and asserts "...since I've been working here in the city, I don't seem to be more than half alive (p.4)." In the latter part of the theme, it is Margie's view which dominates -- prairie living is infinitely inferior to city living.

The drama as a whole clearly applauds the successes of the western wheat farmers, but, by including a set of values opposed to rural living, it points to the increasing importance of city living as a rival attraction to western inhabitants.

Flow Gently Sweet Limbo

This play was written by Claire and John Drainie and produced on February 29, 1948. Except for the first and last scenes, the narrative is unfolded through a series of flashbacks. These scenes present events from the lives of two women characters, Violet Blandick and Ellen Dalgliesh. They focus on one or the other character and the figures surrounding them. One of these, Hawkie, bridges the two plot lines by introducing the two main characters.

Violet Blandick's story is very distressing. Circa 1910, at twenty years old, she is in training to be a nurse at a local hospital. She visits her ailing mother every week on her day off, ministering to the woman's demands. When her brother elopes, she is forced to quit training to pay her mother's bills. She takes a salesclerk position with very low salary, at a local dry goods store. Friends introduce her to Ralph Armstrong who has been transferred from Toronto for the summer months. The two become romantically linked but Violet stalls on the marriage proposal because she is concerned about how her mother will cope without her. Ralph becomes angry, realizing Mrs. Blandick's possessiveness, and breaks off their relationship. When Violet reveals her sadness to her mother, Mrs. Blandick casually mentions that Mrs. Hawks and she have discussed living together. Violet reacts enthusiastically and upsets her mother who begins

to accuse her of selfishness and of forgetting her daughterly duty. The reproaches cause Violet to reverse her decision about marrying. She rushes to her brother to ask that he share some caretaking responsibilities regarding their mother. During their discussion she is informed her mother has had a stroke. Feeling guilty, Violet takes on heavy funeral debts with which she feels she cannot burden Ralph. She spends the succeeding years in the dry goods store working to pay this debt.

Ellen's story, also harrowing, is dramatized alongside Violet's. Ellen is born to a wealthy family, yet her father ignores her because her beautiful mother died while giving birth to her. Mr. Dalgleish refuses to have anything to do with Ellen's upbringing, instead hiring a baby nurse in addition to a housekeeper, Mrs. Hawks, to raise her. He leaves on a round-the-world trip when Ellen is six months old and returns five years later. He departs once again, within a year, sending instructions that Ellen is to attend boarding school in Toronto. In the meantime, Hawkie (Mrs. Hawks) buys Ellen's clothes and performs the other duties that a mother might. At eighteen, Ellen graduates and returns home. In the same year, Mr. Dalgleish decides to take a rest from travelling and also arrives home. He and his daughter have an awkward reunion, followed by a number of incidents in which he criticizes Ellen's various attempts to impress him. Finally, Ellen takes an interest in singing lessons

and at the same time begins hosting social soirées at the Dalglish mansion. During one of these, a guest invites her to show off her singing talents. When her father discovers she is not talented, he feels embarrassed and tells her so. Ellen confronts him with his lack of love for her, at which point he decides to sever relations although he provides her with the house, its furnishings and complete financial independence.

Violet and Ellen's lives merge after Mrs. Hawks dies. Ellen, feeling lonely in the big house and having met Violet through Mrs. Hawks, invites Violet to live with her. During the 1931-39 period, they have social soirées and make frequent trips to Toronto. In 1939, Ellen decides to take Violet to Europe but cancels her plans when war is declared. Years later after peace has been restored, the two sit around drinking tea and making feeble attempts to revive their old plans for a European vacation. By this time they are both middle-aged and complaining about arthritis (Violet) and far-sightedness (Ellen). Obviously, the chance that they will travel is very remote.

At the structural level, the drama consists of three value sets. The first one reveals the beliefs, attitudes and values of the members of a low income family living in a small Ontario city. The lives of women dominate the theme. Similarly, the second value set contains the same kind of knowledge but focuses on a high income family.

The last value set exposes the mind-set of two middle-aged, single women who are live-in companions. All three themes are related by a traditional vision of women.

The Violet theme exposes the extent to which young women will sacrifice their lives out of a sense of duty to family. Violet relinquishes what her superiors describe as the potential for a "brilliant" career in nursing to support a financially dependent, widowed mother. In contrast, her brother George is independent enough of family ties to seek his own happiness. He elopes, freeing himself from his mother's control, and establishing his own family. The belief is shown that men are able to take decisive steps to uphold their rights as individuals, to put loyalty to themselves first. George is also able to see through his mother's possessiveness, demands, feigned sicknesses and other manipulations. Violet is naive about that side of her mother until she decides she wants to marry Ralph and move to Toronto. Mrs. Blandick's unkind accusations shock her.

"So you are trying to get rid of me! You really don't care what happens to your mother! ...Well if he means more to you than I do -- go ahead and marry him. It's plain you don't care what happens to me -- why should you! ...He's made you forget your duty (p.22)!"

The theme reveals a belief that young women are so blinded by their loyalty to family members and particularly to mothers, that they do not discern others' motivations. Mrs. Blandick dominates Violet even in death. Violet feels so guilty over her mother's stroke which occurred

while she was trying to arrange her own escape plan, that she puts herself heavily in debt on the funeral arrangements. Then she feels unable to ask Ralph to accept the financial burden, thus denies herself an opportunity for happiness. The theme shows a belief that women have no clear perception of themselves as separate entities with needs and rights distinct from what the family may want for them. When they do act contrary to family dictates, they are consumed by guilt. Besides being victims, women are also victimizers in this drama. Mrs. Blandick willfully interferes with her daughter's choices. She is both financially and emotionally dependent on her children. The underlying belief is that mothers in impoverished circumstances and with few outside interests are likely to be overly involved in the lives of their children. The theme contains a strong criticism of the domination of young women by mothers. From the heights of a promising career in nursing and the possibility of marriage to a man she loves, Violet is reduced to working in a dry goods store and renting out rooms in a home which she does not own. Working-class women are burdened by familial and financial problems.

Within the Ellen theme one is exposed to how the child of a wealthy family can be victimized by a lack of love and support. Mr. Dalgleish refuses to be personally involved in Ellen's upbringing. Instead, he hires a housekeeper to take care of her needs while he travels the



world. When she is old enough, he has her sent to boarding school. When Ellen returns at eighteen, she tries to win her father's approval in many ways but receives only criticism from him. The theme reveals a belief that fathers are reserved, aloof and insensitive to their children's emotional needs. Also, the dialogue contains several references to Ellen's plain appearance and lack of charm, implying that her father might have liked her better if she had these attributes. The theme reveals the high value placed on good looks and feminine charm. As a young woman, Ellen takes singing lessons and hosts cultural soirées. The underlying belief is that women who are rich, even single ones, do not work but spend their time dabbling in the arts. Ultimately, the theme contains the belief that the rich provide their offspring with all the possible material advantages but withhold what they need most -- love and support.

The Violet/Ellen theme provides a belief that the lives of single, adult women living together are characterized by aimlessness and boredom. Violet and Ellen spend their time attending social events and making short trips to Toronto. Although they plan a trip to Europe, the war intervenes. At play's end, they sit around aimlessly drinking tea. Ellen does wield some power because of her money. She decides she wants to sing at the wedding of Violet's niece. Since she is the largest contributor to the church, the choirmaster warns

his choir that anyone caught laughing during her performance will be forced to resign. Women with money can exert some control over others. Despite the clout that her money provides, Ellen is emotionally dependent on Violet. Translated on a thematic level, this dependency points to the value of good supportive parenting in creating emotionally secure people. Violet depends on Ellen financially, as her mother (Mrs. Blandick) depended on her. Thematically, this upholds a belief that young, single women of low income often cannot substantially provide for themselves in old age. Ultimately, the theme reveals that women's lives are aimless and unhappy when they fail to establish themselves in marriage and family.

All three themes are related through their affirmation of marriage and the nuclear family. The play makes a statement that Violet and Ellen cannot be happy in an unconventional living arrangement. Similarly, neither of their parents is happy living without his/her marital partner. In fact, the absence of each parent's spouse has greatly contributed to the tragedy of both daughters' lives. The drama suggests that children raised within the traditional nuclear family, in which both parents are present, have the best chance for emotional health and success.

### Mother is Watching

Written by Patricia Joudry and broadcast November 23, 1952, the narrative of this play revolves around three sisters and their respective families. The setting is predominantly located either in Virginia or Mary's home or in the office where Harriet works.

Harriet is the eldest of the sisters. She is single and works as a secretary for Mr. Haskins. She is very dedicated both to her work and to Mr. Haskins, formerly her fiancé. The tragedy of Harriet is that years before she had allowed her mother to interfere in her wedding plans, with the result that Mr. Haskins married someone else. Harriet gets her revenge by murdering her invalid mother on Mr. Haskins' wedding day. Her dark secret is not revealed until the last scene. Harriet's sisters clearly pity her as a single woman and as a woman with a weak sense of her own identity. Accordingly, they do not respect her as their equal.

Virginia is the middle sister. She is married to Henry, an advertising salesman, and they have two children. Her family is upper-middle class and consumer-oriented. Virginia dominates her family and tries to dominate her sisters too. In this respect she has taken on the role of her deceased mother. It is this quality that causes her descent, as Henry decides to leave her claiming:

...pushing each other around. It happens, slowly -- so gradually you don't realize it's happening. And then one day you're a stranger. You've been pushed into somebody -- entirely different. It doesn't do any good to push back. The kids get pushed all out of shape too. All you can do is go away and hunt and dig...for the live individual that was there before the stranger (p.43).

Much of the narrative focuses on Virginia's arrangements for a baby shower for Mary and the issues that develop from this event: her attempt to get Calvin, Mary's husband, to take on a more lucrative, responsible job now that they are having a family; her efforts to enlist Mary's support since, "it's a wife's duty to help her husband (p.49)." Virginia's behaviour is characteristic of the traditional woman motivated by a strong sense of duty and by what is conventionally correct.

Mary is the youngest sister. She is married to an archaeologist who works in a museum. The two have an unconventional marriage in that they place a higher priority on the world of ideas and on their life satisfaction than on making money or doing what society considers as right. Their dilemma arises out of Mary's pregnancy. Soon after, Calvin is finally offered a career opportunity which he has dreamed about for years. It involves an archaeological expedition to a foreign country which would take him away from Mary and their child for a whole year. In spite of Mary's protestations, he opts for refusing the career proposal, assuring Mary that their child needs a solid family unit for optimum growth.

At the level of structure, Mother is Watching is composed of three major themes which reveal the different value sets of the three main women characters. Since each woman is also attached to a family either by marriage or career, there exist three minor themes conveying the beliefs, attitudes and values underlying the behavior of each family. The themes are related through opposition and through their stress on power.

Virginia is the domineering sister, keen about carrying on the traditions of their deceased mother. Within this mode she tries to foster dependence in the people around her; for example, she constantly gives her children orders and behaves toward her sisters as if she knows best. In addition, she has a strong sense of duty, believing that the ultimate act of unselfishness is doing your duty as a mother, wife or sister by sacrificing for others. Finally, Virginia has incorporated her mother's many irrational fears, revealing how much her life revolves around tradition rather than around her own carefully formulated perceptions of reality and truth. Being very concerned with appearances and the superficial, it is not surprising that Virginia has little time to really listen to others. She is either too busy trying to push her own viewpoint or running away to engage in some "dutiful" activity. It is because of her attachment to duty that Virginia loses her husband's love, but she retains some of her power in the end because she still has

her children. The Virginia theme incorporates the following values: power, tradition, duty, and sacrifice. Within her family by marriage, emphasis is placed on buying the latest consumer items and giving the children the security of a big house and lots of money. Considering how much it costs to raise children, the male head of this family must have a respectable, well-paying job. Years before Virginia discouraged Henry from painting pictures because it was neither lucrative nor respectable. As an advertising salesman, he is a more acceptable family man. For this family, convention and consumerism are highly valued.

Mary is the opposition or resistance to Virginia. In her belief system, the only duty we have is to ourselves. Self-satisfaction and personal happiness run higher than self-sacrifice or doing one's duty. Mary reminds Virginia that their mother wanted their lives in return for her sacrifices. She dislikes her sisters and the unquestioning way in which they have accepted the customs and values of their mother. She is the intellectual, the non-conformist of the three and maintains an independence from their ideas and practices. This is most apparent within her family by marriage. Mary and Calvin are anti-consumer. They live in a small apartment, ride buses and have few material possessions. They believe that more important to a child than financial security is the security of love, affection, understanding and freedom.

Within this framework, children should not be pushed by authoritarian parents but guided by loving, enlightened ones. Likewise, the spirit of the partnership itself does not allow for the pushing or domination of one spouse by the other. Respect for each other's rights is an integral part of their union. Mary respects Calvin's desire and right to work as an archaeologist in spite of its unconventionality and low pay. Mary and Calvin live a counter lifestyle with few material possessions but strong intellectual and emotional bonds. They really listen to one another and make decisions together up until they expect their first child. At that time Calvin singularly decides to reject an important career opportunity. His decision signals a change in their marriage for the individual will now be subordinated for the collective good. Mary and Calvin articulate the values of a productive family unit: intellectual, anti-consumer, loving and egalitarian.

Harriet's theme relates to the other two by its inequality in terms of power and influence. Harriet is the single, working woman subordinated in her family of origin and at work. She is the classic victim who sought but lost the conventional life due to a misguided sense of duty to an invalid mother. Because she is so easily dominated and manipulated out of her desires, her sisters do not treat her with respect. It is only at play's end that Harriet takes a stand against Virginia by refusing to

stay with her when Henry leaves. However, her decision is motivated by a negative belief that if again forced into a dependency situation, she will commit murder a second time. Harriet's attitudes and beliefs are negative and destructive. For this reason, they are outside of the conventional values of the Virginia theme, yet they offer no solutions to the problems posed by that theme.

At work Harriet is the ever-efficient and loyal employee, dutifully organizing the professional and personal life of Mr. Haskins. Here, also, she is exploited because she does more than her share and because she is still in love with her boss, now married to someone else. In spite of her affection for Mr. Haskins, Harriet keeps tight control over her emotions, always addressing him formally and refusing to ever allude to their past. Hers is the theme of the lonely, sacrificing single woman whose behavior and choices are shaped by the negative and therefore can offer no real solutions to life's dilemmas.

The thematic analyses of this chapter have revealed the general vision of the world contained by each play. In certain instances that vision focussed less on women since they played only minor roles. Nevertheless, the analysis was still oriented to the facts uncovered about women, however minor their presence. These facts provided valuable information as to which areas women were allowed a presence, for example, as wives and mothers in To Where I Live or as helpmates of farmer husbands or as office



workers in The Seed That Won the Plains. The remaining plays focused mainly on women characters and therefore contained valuable information for the eventual linking of the dramas to the social base of women.

V.

The Analysis: CBC Drama and the Condition of Women

A principal objective of this research was to determine the social position allocated to women in CBC radio dramas. Overall did these radio dramas frame women in a position of confinement, or did they establish a more composite portrayal showing women as emancipated in some categories, disenfranchised in others? The analysis will proceed as follows: each drama will be critically evaluated from the perspective of Juliet Mitchell's schema, a set of four categories used to evaluate women's condition. A summary of women's overall position will be made based on discernible patterns in all categories and contradictions within and between categories.

Before proceeding, definitions of the categories are required. Production refers to any surface or latent content in the creative work which addresses the subject of women at work in the public sphere. Reproduction similarly addresses the subject of women as procreators, and the socialization of children, the subject of mother/daughter or mother/son relations. Finally, the term sexuality refers to any surface or latent content addressing the subject of male/female relations. Although I am aware that Mitchell uses the term to signify sexual relations between men and women, I am extending the meaning to include social relations between men and women whether of a sexual nature or not.

The Hungry Spirit

Because of the polarization of themes within this play, we find similarly dissenting ideas for each of the Mitchell categories. In terms of production we have one value-system stressing female participation in the world of work outside of the home, work which would contribute not only to personal satisfaction but also to the betterment of the community. The emphasis on science serves to present women as spiritual and mental equals of men. Though the theme of the play is not geared specifically to the collective liberation of women, it would appear that individual freedom follows as a consequence. Women's position in production focuses on a resistance to traditional values and to a life devoid of real meaning. Finally, this value-system includes an acknowledgement of the role of higher education in improving the quality of women's labour-force participation.

The opposite value-system also includes a place for women in production but one that is conditionally granted. Working women are single and engaged in traditionally female occupations (Marian teaches elementary school, a minor female character works for the telephone company). Their work-force participation is tolerated because they contribute some of their earnings to their families of origin. In this case Marian's mother is widowed and

financially insecure. Marian's earnings offer her the power to purchase small luxuries. Finally, women's participation is temporary since their ultimate purpose should be to marry and raise a family.

Within the reproduction category, again the two value-systems reveal different attitudes. The prevailing value-system prohibits procreation outside of marriage and counsels going to great lengths to avoid the scandal associated with it. Instead of embarrassment, the protagonist's value system emphasizes the responsibility that must accompany personal action and the steps the individual can take to both satisfy his or her needs and at the same time to provide accountability for his or her actions.

Socialization is expressed in the mother/daughter relationship. Emily Gale, the representative of traditional values, is the obstacle to her daughter's plans for higher achievement. Toward her own ends, she manipulates and uses emotional blackmail on her daughter. The patriarchal ideology underlying her conduct places a higher priority on sons than daughters, for in her view, Marian's ambitions must be sacrificed for her brother's desire to start a family. Within this framework the importance of marriage and family is highlighted as is a daughter's duty to family. The opposition is highlighted through a contentious mother/daughter relationship in contrast with a supportive father/daughter relationship.

Dr. Frank is not Marian's real father but he assumes a fatherly role, encouraging Marian in her goals and battling her mother for her right to pursue them. Here differences based on sex are disregarded while talent is rewarded regardless of gender. The use of a male and a physician to defend Marian's right to liberation is an interesting rhetorical device employed by the playwright. The male role prevents a male/female dichotomy in the quest for liberation, thereby encouraging the audience to consider the possibility. The physician's role legitimates the quest within a traditional value system.

With respect to sexuality, on the side of traditional values is Marian's suitor who wants her to settle for his romantic fantasy--marriage and a family. On the other side is Marian's quest for challenge, independence and a lifestyle which is an alternative to traditional marriage, one which tests personal capabilities and broadens experience.

### The Godsend

In this play, sexuality is the principal category which is addressed. There is a minor reference to production insofar as Clara, a minor character and the local parson's daughter, does volunteer work, welcoming newcomers and visiting parishioners. Despite the fact she is not paid for her services, she considers them her duty

as a clergyman's daughter. An assumption of the drama is that young women perform volunteer community work to help the male figures in their lives.

With respect to sexuality two views of women are presented. In one, middle-aged women are assigned an active and enterprising role and one in which they are very much in charge of their destiny. Contrary to traditional views, the middle-aged woman protagonist of this drama is financially and spiritually independent. In addition, she is determined to uphold her civil rights, outwitting both the criminal and lawful members of the male establishment. She brings about this triumph in collusion with a young woman. Clearly, women must be willing to use deception to uphold their rights, otherwise they will suffer from the discrimination that blatantly operates in male/female relations. Martha is underestimated by both male figures in this drama. They have stereotyped views of her as the "old maid", "defenceless old lady" and flustered woman. The sergeant is quick to judge Martha as incapable of handling a tough situation. In fact, he is the one who is not tough enough in the investigation of Seaton. Men have discriminatory views of women and attempt to render them powerless in daily situations. Enterprising women of courage and conviction can triumph over their subordinate social position.

To Where I Live

Women have minor roles in this drama even though their influence is strongly felt through the relationship they have with the male protagonist. This accounts for an absence of material in two categories: production and reproduction. That is, women are not presented as workers nor are they presented in a reproductive capacity. The socialization and sexuality categories are presented within a value system which is simple and traditional--home, family, friends, courage to die for one's country.

In socialization, the focus is on the role of mothers and the mother/son relationship. The protagonist has had the experience of two mothers. His real mother has been deceased for years when the play begins. Through Eric's thoughts, we receive an image of the "perfect" mother, loving, beautiful and of a strong emotional bond between mother and son. There is a criticism of that bond, however, since her loss causes Eric a great deal of pain. The criticism is not of the nuclear family set-up which fosters this kind of dependency but of mothers themselves who are emotionally dependent on and possessive of their children. With Eric's step-mother the deep emotional bonding is absent. Their relationship is amicable but dutiful. In this instance it is the responsibility of a mother to "create a home" by servicing others' needs and

by managing family harmony. It is a position which denies a mother's identity other than in her role of self-sacrifice.

The relationship between Eric and ex-girlfriend Chal forms the substance of the sexuality category. There is a gap between the way Chal understands her refusal of Eric's marriage proposal, and the way he understands it. She believes her shocking behavior would not have fit well with his overly romanticized image of her. She also believes she is not good enough for him. Eric, on the other hand, assesses her rejection of him as a self-protective strategy. She simply did not want anyone to reach her deep feelings and therefore settled for someone who could not. Eric is convinced, had they married, her life would have been happier and she would have come closer to his fantasy. The value system incorporates a view of women as ensconced in marriage. It is a marriage in which they are expected to fulfill the male's romantic fantasy of a wife. Chal is aware of having to conform to or meet the male ideal. This makes her unable to accept Eric's proposal. Since she isn't good enough, she is unable to meet his standards. Consequently, she places herself in a marriage in which she is not expected to behave in a certain way. She is accepted for what she is. Yet, that does not provide happiness either, since what she is, she does not much like. Women are in a position in which they do not like



themselves, their lives, yet marriage is not the answer: if they love their husbands, they cannot be themselves; if they do not, they live a degrading existence. Nevertheless, they must marry, with the result that they feel resigned to boredom, a sense of aimlessness. Women have a lack of choices.

### Tears Idle Tears

The play as a whole addresses the question of returning soldiers and the effects of their long absence and of the trauma of their war experience on marriages. It ultimately places the responsibility for coping with the difficulties of the situation on women. The themes, however, reveal two orientations to the problem. The question of women in production is not an issue here. The assumption that women are working only until affairs revert to normal is clear. A woman's place is at home catering to the needs of her family.

The mother/son relationship is present in the socialization category. It is a negative one characterized by a hostile son and a domineering, anxious and possessive mother. The widowed mother is a classic stereotype of the over-protective and nagging mother.

Regarding sexuality, marital relations are the special focus of this play. The problem is the unhappiness of wives in their marriages after their

husbands return from the war. There are two orientations to the problem. In one, the blame for women's marital unhappiness is directed at men. Men's lack of honesty, sincerity, emotional openness and financial and emotional support are criticized. The value set is traditional in that the positions of family head and breadwinner are still considered men's responsibilities. It is in opposition, however, to the traditional notion of men as emotionally aloof and incapable of establishing real intimacy. To communicate these values, the drama draws upon sexual stereotypes: woman as child, as mother and as shrew; man as juvenile, as father and as incompetent. Within the other value set the blame for women's unhappiness is directed at themselves. They are advised to be understanding, patient, realistic, strong. They are also told to accept their husbands' faults, to not demand too much from those who have suffered through a war. It is further suggested that they keep a sense of humour and stay married for their children. Such ideas aim to preserve the existing male hegemony and make women responsible for the success of marriages.

#### The Seed That Won the Plains

Women play minor roles in this drama about western wheat farming. However, they do dominate two office scenes which depict them at work in a white-collar capacity. In terms of production, women are not shown

actively struggling on the wheat farms with their husbands. It is clear that their roles there are secondary. However, they are very evident in the office, typing long, boring reports and complaining about the demands of their male boss. There is an ambiguity about the experience of office work, one of the female characters disliking it, while the other two, although they may not enjoy some of the tedious tasks, still appreciating the salary and lifestyle it affords. All of these working women appear to be single, and the one who least likes the work quits whenever she gets married. All the women are subordinate at the office. They report to a male boss for whom they show little respect, yet they obviously are powerless to effect change. These characters represent women's growing role in production as lower-echelon white collar workers.

The relationship between Lena and Dick, modern wheat farmers, forms the substance for the sexuality category. Their exchanges revolve around their largely speculative venture, the purchase of a wheat farm. Dick is clearly the decision-maker in the marriage. Furthermore, he has utmost confidence in his decisions, all the while advancing toward his objective of feeding the starving of the world. Lena goes along with Dick's decisions and his vision. She does not, however, have a vision of her own. She simply prefers life on the prairie to city living, and marrying Dick, a farmer, provides her

with that lifestyle. Lena has a narrow and self-oriented vision while Dick is conscious of a responsibility to humanity. Also, her thoughts are negative and self-defeating, while his are concentrated on the success of his project. Women are shown as helpmates, aiding their husbands in pursuing their dreams but having no broad visions of their own.

#### Flow Gently Sweet Limbo

One is not struck by the uncovering of blatant oppositions in this play's structure. Rather, one is affected by the complementarity of themes, all revealing that life satisfaction and mental health can be found only within traditional marriage and family.

There is a distinguishing turn of events within the production category since one of the female protagonists is presented as independently wealthy. This enables her to engage in various philanthropic activities: contributions to church and financial aid to her live-in companion. Nonetheless, the underlying assumption is still conservative. Women do not "do" in the public sphere. There is no sense of action, of creativity, but merely a sense of presence through giving. The other woman figure has a low-paying, low-status job as a salesclerk. Her other option, a career in nursing, has been closed by a manipulative, possessive mother. In

- whatever public capacity they serve, women's lives are portrayed as limited, meaningless, aimless. However, the blame is not situated in the lack of options for women in the public sphere. Rather, it is located in the failure of the women to establish themselves in marriage and family.

There is a strong emphasis on socialization here, since the limitations in both women's lives are shown to be directly attributable to parental influences. In one instance the mother is dominating, demanding, possessive and manipulative. She stresses a daughter's "duty" to family. The image of the daughter emphasizes her naivety, generosity, loyalty and honour, traits which do not allow her to see her mother's malevolent qualities until it is too late. In the other instance, it is a father's emotional and physical distance which contributes to the daughter's limited life. Worth noting is the suggestion that because the daughter has no endearing female characteristics--she is not pretty, nor is she charming of personality--the father cannot develop an affection for her. Considering the underlying values of these themes, we find that it is not specifically mothers or fathers that are being blamed for the limited course of their daughter's lives. Rather, it is the potential for destruction in the parental role for either sex, when his/her qualities are not balanced by a mate and parent of the opposite sex. That is, both parents in this play are

single parents. That is what allows the mother's emotional dependency and the father's insensitivity and coldness to warp their daughters' lives. Given families with parents of both sexes providing a balance of human qualities, the suggestion is that the daughters' lives would have been more successful. The drama reveals a segregation of human qualities along sex lines. Mothers are emotional, dependent, possessive; fathers are strong, silent, independent. Finally, the drama upholds the necessity for the socialization of children within the traditional nuclear family pattern, that is one which includes parental figures of both sexes.

In terms of sexuality the focus is on the absence of male love in women's lives. Within one theme the woman is not pretty or charming enough to attract a suitor. In the other, the opportunity is lost through the girl's naivety and sense of honour. The two women's shared middle-age is shown to be unsatisfying, aimless and shallow. The assumption is that within traditional marriage they would have found meaning and happiness. A shared companionship by members of the same sex cannot provide that kind of fulfillment.

#### Mother is Watching

The themes reveal an overwhelming emphasis on family and marital relations, no doubt caused by the presence of

three leading figures who are sisters, and themselves members of families by marriage.

In production the themes reveal the value-set of the single working woman. The job is secretarial and is a second choice after possibilities for marriage are destroyed. Within the public sphere this woman is subordinate. Her working person is dutiful and self-sacrificing, qualities typical of the female personality. Not only is she subordinate in the public sphere, but because she is working and single, she is also subordinate in the private sphere. The value-set is one that discredits the single working woman because she has missed the opportunity for a much more satisfying experience in marriage.

Reproduction is addressed through the play's emancipatory theme. Procreation is not, however, seen as a liberating function. When one sister finds herself to be pregnant, it becomes the stimulus for a questioning of the couple's value system. Formerly, the stress in their marriage had been on love through independence and a kind of mutual sharing. The expected child changes the couple's perspective. Now their desire is to form a secure family unit in the child's best interest. It is through the functioning of her reproductive capacities that the woman in this instance loses power to the male. Mary finally submits to her husband's view that in future they must pursue like paths for the child's security. The

emphasis is on the constraining nature of reproduction and on the importance of a secure nuclear family unit for the maximization of a child's potential for growth.

In socialization the focus is on a mother who is absent (through death) but whose child-rearing practices have created the three sisters who dominate the play. The implication is that a mother who is emotionally dependent, possessive, domineering and manipulative creates three possibilities through her mothering. First, she can recreate herself, and this happens in the figure of the middle sister, Virginia. Second, she can victimize and destroy, creating a misfit like Harriet. Finally, her mothering can produce a child who rebels against the values for which she, the mother, stands, thereby, escaping her dominance. This is witnessed in the younger sister, Mary. The viewpoint is a judgment on mother as overpowering and destructive.

The relationship between the themes can be exposed within the sexuality category. The Virginia/Henry marital pair are upper-middle class, consumer-oriented and conventional. They place duty and responsibility to family before personal desires. Virginia has the power in this family but ultimately it costs her a husband, for Henry abandons her and the children as a result of her need to control and manipulate. The opposition to conventional marital relations is found in the Mary/Calvin pairing. Their family unit is anti-consumer, intellectual



and production-oriented. It emphasizes a loving intimacy through independence and equality. It is the solution offered to the problems created in conventional, middle-class family relationships. Within the sexuality category, a male hegemony is maintained. If women insist on having exclusive power, they will lose love. Any power they do acquire must ultimately submit, in situations of conflict, to the male dominance.

### Conclusions

The seven dramas indicate a fairly homogenous pattern for the condition of women in production. This pattern is confined within an ideological framework which insists that woman's place is outside of production and in the home, servicing family needs. Within this context, then, work is neither a source of happiness nor a source of satisfaction for women. Another factor contributing to its unimportance is the demeaning nature of those jobs which are available. Office work, sales and elementary school teaching are characterized in the plays as low status, low paying and unchallenging. Most indications are that those women who work would rather be married and stay at home. Marriage then is the factor which determines whether a woman works or not. There is only one instance of a married woman who does work and this instance is found during the specific conditions of the

war period. Otherwise, married women, even those without children, remain outside of production.

Of those who work, there is a further justification for their participation besides their non-marital status. That is the financial help that they provide to their families where father is absent and mother has few financial resources. In this respect these young women are very dutiful, more dutiful than their brothers who opt out of those family responsibilities to create families of their own. This situation underlines a contradiction in the condition of middle-aged women. Although the vision places them outside of production, circumstances (either death or abandonment by a mate) have left them unprovided for financially. Their children are almost their sole means of support. Another contradiction lies in the condition of women who remain outside of marriage, yet must spend their lives in unproductive jobs. The dramas indicate that this is the condition of several women. A vision which places them at home leaves no provisions in production that they might nonetheless lead fulfilling lives.

In spite of the small sampling of plays, the element of reproduction, referring to the practice of maternity, is addressed. It is a maternity which must take place within traditional marriage and it is one which has a different meaning for men than it does for women. For men, women's power of procreation is represented as a

positive influence, even as a liberating one. In the case of single men, the anticipation of a child means they can liberate themselves from their families of origin, through marriage, and create independent families of their own. In the case of married men, it means they can establish a more secure family unit for the good of the child. Women, however, experience negative consequences as a result of their maternity. Those unmarried suffer the moral judgments of society. Those married experience a sense of confinement as the focus of their marital partnership shifts from a healthy individualism to a submission to what is in the family's best interest. Of those dramas where the subject of reproduction is addressed, women are depicted as losing power through their procreative function.

The pattern of women's position for the socialization of children category is riddled with contradictions. While on the one hand the ideology situates the rearing of children as women's "natural" vocation, the actual relationship between mothers and children is laden with conflict and outright hostility. Peter in Tears Idle Tears can hardly speak to his mother without showing anger, while Harriet in Mother is Watching has murdered hers. Marian from The Hungry Spirit openly struggles with her mother for the right to lead her own life as does Violet in Flow Gently Sweet Limbo. The image of mother is definitely negative with a marked emphasis on

domination, possessiveness, manipulation and emotional dependence. There are several instances of mothers feigning sickness to prevent their children, particularly daughters, from leading independent lives. Although the plays view socialization of children as one of women's primary roles, they are not favourably disposed to women as mothers.


Within the sexuality category the pattern of the plays indicates a marked concern with women's marriages or lack of them. That is, the dominant ideology places women of all ages within marriage and family. Generally, three categories of women are represented: young and single (but expecting marriage), young and married, middle-aged and widowed. The depiction of the young and single is very idealistic. They are described as naive, generous, dutiful, loyal and self-sacrificing. These qualities, as previously stated, are a liability when the women begin to assert themselves independently of family. In fact, it is these qualities which place them in victimized positions in relationship to the family for they prevent them from establishing families of their own.

The pattern which emerges for young married women is one of great unhappiness. This unhappiness is attributed in several instances to relationships with husbands who are emotionally distant. The women want emotional support from men who are either unable or unwilling to give it. The men are the family heads and

make the final decisions in any family controversies. Although women allow them this privilege, they are not happy about it. There are a number of instances in which women go along with the decisions of men yet reveal negative feelings about doing so. Furthermore, women show a marked hopelessness about the possibility of change for the future. There is a great contradiction between the ideology, stating that women need marriage for happiness and fulfillment, and women's depicted condition, showing that the marital state is not the happy, satisfying condition it is supposed to be.

The position of middle-aged women is equally unsatisfying. They are found living aimless and bored lives but exerting some measure of power over adult children. They are all single women, either widowed or never married, and most are financially and emotionally dependent on their children. Far from being elderly figures of wisdom and dignity, they are shown to use their life experience to manipulate those who love them. The suggestion is that if these women had husbands, they would exert less control over younger family members.

Women's position as a combination of the above four elements is not depicted as a powerful one. They are restricted in the area of production by an ideology which places them in marriage, thus undermining their efforts to achieve anything substantial in the public sphere. Once married, their position is again secondary to men who act



as the family heads. The only power women do assume is over children, and that power they abuse. Their procreative powers are also depicted as placing them in a repressive position in which their individuality will be sacrificed to preserve family unity. As per Juliet Mitchell, women's position as portrayed in the radio dramas is inextricable from their relationship to family. It is also, overall, a position of confinement.

## VI

CBC Radio Drama and its Structural Links to Canadian SocietyGender Relations During the 1940's and 1950's

Canadian society underwent considerable change during the 1940's and '50s. The Second World War was responsible for many of the changes. A massive war industry stimulated an unprecedented economic growth in Canada with an increasingly industrialized base. People took advantage of the increasing employment opportunities in the cities to move from rural to urban areas. European immigrants joined their fellow Canadians in the expanding cities. Canada rapidly shifted from a rural to an urban society. When Canadian soldiers returned from overseas and with Canadians generally experiencing a new sense of prosperity and peace, the birth rate rose. The resulting urban overcrowding, in addition to an expanding construction industry, drew thousands of Canadians out to the suburbs in search of a home. A variety of appliances and goods were needed to fill these homes. The changes during these two decades were, then, not just in scope but in quality of life, for the new focus of Canadians became oriented toward a growing consumerism.

Despite the changing social context, gender relations remained structurally equivalent to those of

earlier decades. Women, that is, were considered as the "second sex" in terms of power and privilege. This is no more in evidence than in women's recruitment into the labour force during World War II and their subsequent dismissal when the soldiers returned from overseas (Pierson, 1977; Connelly, 1978; Wilson, 1982). The war period was an unusual one for women, in that the Canadian government actively sought their skills and services for the dwindling labour force. Women engaged for the first time in the following economic practices: they joined the labour force in unprecedented numbers (in 1941, 22.3% of the labour force was female, by 1945, 31.4%); married women formed an increasing percentage of female participation (10% in 1939, 35% in 1944); and women took on jobs that were traditionally male (farm work, munitions, heavy industry) (Wilson: 70, 84-86). Despite the fact that these jobs paid more than the traditional service occupations in restaurants, hotels and laundry shops, they still emphasized women's femininity and low status, for women filled the lower rungs within the munitions factories, not the managerial positions. Come 1945 when the war industry was slackening its pace, companies established a pattern of releasing women workers before men. As a group, women were either steered back into "female" types of occupations (teaching, nursing, domestic service) or out of the labour force completely. During the late forties and fifties, an expansion occurred



in the white collar sector. Women were called upon again, this time to fill routine sales and clerical jobs. Although this somewhat improved the unemployment situation for women, by 1951 they were participating in the labour force at a rate of ten percent less than in 1945 (Wilson: 70). In addition, the percentage of married women working had dropped by 1947 and remained depressed until 1954, reaching the high of the war period only in the late sixties (Wilson: 85). In terms of the types of jobs done, three quarters of women professionals were either in teaching or nursing (Wilson: 82). In addition they were divided along class lines, lower class women filling domestic service and factory positions, middle class women doing office and sales jobs, teaching and nursing.

These economic practices were tied to beliefs and values which confined women within a narrow vision. At the basis of this vision was a division of labour, stemming from a belief that women's place was in the home while men's first responsibility as the family breadwinners was to sell their labour power. This belief structure was clearly evident during women's expanded entry into the labour market during World War II. Pierson demonstrates that the issue at that time was not women's right to work but their patriotic duty to sacrifice personal wants in the best interest of the nation (1977:126). The deep entrenchment of the belief is shown by the way women were called into the labour force: first,

the young, single women; then, married women without children; followed by married women with children to work part-time; finally married women with children to work full-time. In addition, the belief is shown by the numerous kinds of government aid extended to women during the war period and almost immediately rescinded at war's end. Such aid included hotels and housing arrangements, transportation costs to work, day care, training programs and tax breaks (Wilson, 1982:85). Finally, the steering of women, particularly married women, back home after the war and their encouragement to stay there throughout the fifties are all manifestations of the "women's place is in the home" belief structure.

Related to this division of roles is the belief that women's nature fits them only for certain kinds of work. Thus, even during the war, many of the munitions jobs they performed emphasized their manual dexterity or patience and meticulousness. Otherwise, their duties seemed to be an extension of many household tasks, emphasizing service, nurturing of others and aptitude for routine, monotonous tasks. It was also believed that women were not suited for positions of power and that when they did hold equivalent positions to men that they be paid less, for men, after all, were the breadwinners while women's labour force participation was temporary. Besides lower wages, the belief system contained support for additional discriminatory labour practices toward

women. Women had fewer opportunities than men for advancement, and experienced horizontal rather than vertical career patterns. Women did not get the chance for the really challenging jobs which would increase their abilities to be major, independent decision-makers.

The belief that women's labour participation was temporary was related to a young woman's aspirations to marry. Once married, her first duty was to husband and family, which precluded any kind of permanent commitment to a long-term career. The germinating belief was that women's greatest fulfillment was in marriage and family. Until marriage and after, if they worked, it was to provide themselves and possibly family members with luxuries.

After marriage, the vision specified that each spouse of the marital pair was responsible for separate functions:

The woman was supposed to create a home that cherished the essential human values that could be felt and understood and never analyzed. The man was to provide the economic base for this life, to protect the woman, to save her from any contact with the harsh realities he dealt with, and his reward was to experience what he could never create (Griffiths, 1976:202).

It was women's responsibility, then, to create the emotional climate in the home: to express tenderness and concern for others, to create joy and happiness and an atmosphere of warmth and security for their growing children. This division of family tasks is further

confirmed in Seeley's study, Crestwood Heights (1956: 176-183).

Overall the narrow vision for women in the forties and fifties confined them to what Betty Friedan coined as the "feminine mystique."

The feminine mystique says that the highest value and the only commitment for women is the fulfillment of their own femininity. It says that the great mistake of Western culture, through most of its history, has been the undervaluation of this femininity. It says that femininity is so mysterious and intuitive and close to the creation and origin of life that man-made science may never be able to understand it. But however special and different, it is in no way inferior to the nature of man; it may even in certain respects be superior. The mistake, says the mystique, the root of women's troubles in the past is that women envied men, women tried to be like men, instead of accepting their own nature, which can find fulfillment only in sexual passivity, male domination, and nurturing maternal love (1974: 43)

The error of this vision, as Friedan stipulates, was that it encouraged women to deny their potential for human growth. Women were recognized as having needs for love and sexuality, but were not recognized as having a need to discover an identity, a private image of who they are, can be or want to be. Within the vision, women were seen as not having to plan what to do with their lives for they were only marking time until a husband and children would decide what the rest of their lives would be (1974).

Motherhood was the goal of women, for this was how within the vision, it was specified they could be creative. In fact, at the height of the post-war baby

boom, Canadian fertility rates were nearly four births per woman (Royal Bank Reporter, 1986:6). Child-rearing by women became raised to almost cult status. Women spent their days devoting themselves to filling a child's needs. Seeley et al note the conflict this engendered in the women of Crestwood Heights whose education and previous life experience had not prepared them for the daily frustrations of rearing children (1956: 179). Friedan examines how mothers' total absorption with their children can create neurotic young men and women with little independence of thought or action (1974: 182-205).

The dominant vision of women in the forties and fifties was in keeping with the generally conservative spirit of the times. Much of this period consisted of the post-war years when people searched for some kind of stability and security. Unfortunately within the vision women were impelled to be the keepers of the new havens. Since they did not have a political base like the one that mushroomed in the sixties, women did not publicly rebel against the status-quo.

#### CBC Radio Drama Explained

In the following section the dramas will be framed within the world vision and social practices of women of the 1940's and 1950's as described above. The purpose is to search for structural links between the two levels.

Ultimately the links will explain the dramas' genesis by showing that the structures at their base are relatable to the categories or structures which organized the consciousness of women as a social group.

The Hungry Spirit (August 1940) is distinguished by the contradictory themes at its imaginary base. The distinction is underscored by the completely different possibilities which are envisioned for women. On the one hand, within the Marian theme it is proposed that women take an alternative route to happiness and satisfaction. This route is not marriage and family but career. Additionally, the suggested career is non-traditional (scientific research) and requires several years of college. In the above aspects women are seen as the intellectual and spiritual equals of men, willing to welcome challenge and change as the prerequisites to a fuller humanity. Within this dramatic vision there is a denial that women must sacrifice themselves for others. Rather, women are encouraged to use all their potential. The rationale is that some time in the future they will be able to make valuable contributions to society. This vision of an independent career woman cannot be explained by the traditional vision of the forties' woman. However, it was noted previously that a few years into the war, women were desperately needed in the labour force to replace the men who had enlisted. They began to be summoned in 1942 and by 1943 their participation had

reached its peak (Pierson, 1977: 125-145). This drama's theme, then, with its emphasis on career as the way to emancipation, can be explained by the changing rôle of women in production during the war effort. The rôle of women and their perception of their needs changed as a result of the war. At that time they needed to enter the labour force to fill the positions of the men who had enlisted. Goldmann states that when a structure no longer meets a group's needs, the group will either create a new one or transform the old. The position taken here is that the original structure which believed women's place was in the home was transformed to accommodate women's new needs. Transformation was not total -- consider the post-war re-emphasis on homemaking -- but it did allow some new possibilities for women, novel kinds of jobs and unlimited opportunity to work. In holding further to Goldmann's theory of possible consciousness, it can be concluded that the writer was able to discern women's future direction through the new social elements that were gathering strength (to foresee that women would be needed in unconventional ways in the work force) and to push these structural tendencies to a logical conclusion -- women participating fully and equally to men in production and, in the process, finding a healthy and mature identity. In accordance with Goldmann's theory, the writer has proposed only one possibility, given the new social forces that were accumulating.

On the other hand, the traditional forties' world vision held by women is structurally duplicated in the mother theme. Emily Gale is the manipulative mother trying to control her daughter's life, to absorb her personality as Friedan observes (1974: 182-205). She attempts to convince Marian to remain in her traditional female role as a teacher and to sacrifice her personal goals for the family. These values and beliefs in women's sacrifice and in their participation in traditional kinds of occupations are structurally homologous to the organizing categories of women's consciousness of the period. The dominant vision at play's end, however, is not the traditional one but the alternative one offering women the possibility for selfhood through education and career.

The Godsend (1940) poses a difficulty in terms of explaining its dominant vision. Martha Skinner defies all aspects of the traditional vision held by women of the forties and fifties. Furthermore, since she is past employment age, the structure's genesis cannot be attributed, as in The Hungry Spirit, to women's changing role in production during the war effort. In this drama we are presented with a woman who confidently and shrewdly advances from victim of crime to one who outsmarts the male social order. Her moves are carefully calculated and determinedly taken. This is a woman with spirit and convictions, solidly strong in her identity and sense of



worth. She is not the typical female heroine, not only because of her strength, but also because she openly challenges the male authority on either side of the law. Her behavior and pronouncements are criticisms of the law and criminals, both strongholds of male power. For these reasons she cannot be explained by the structures of women's consciousness during the forties. For the same reasons she and her theme must be viewed as relating to the existing social structure by opposition. Another issue worthy of note is the playwright's choice to make Martha a single woman and, furthermore, one who has never married. This factor is contrary to the revealed pattern for middle-aged women within the traditional dramatic vision, who are usually widowed. This choice allowed the playwright to create a more independent woman and a more positive one. Older women of the traditional dramatic vision, it was revealed in chapter 5, are very negative figures.

One possibility that might explain the Martha theme is the playwright's identification with a particular circle of artists which had more radical views as to the proper role it assigned to women. It is difficult to plot these oppositions of smaller groups within the larger group of women because there is a lack of historical information on women of the forties. However, it is clear that the playwright has delegated to women the responsibility of being the world's moral conscience. It

is Martha who brings justice to the dramatic situation while the male characters are either corrupt or ineffective. In this respect we can say the drama is indeed an opposition to the traditional vision of women as passive and men as the originators and upholders of law and order. Moreover, this vision is more acceptable considering that the playwright is writing during the crisis period of a war initiated by men.

In terms of the ideas it contains about women, the — dominant theme in To Where I Live (1943) is homologous to traditional values regarding women. Eric's value set emphasizes a romantic vision of women which has them satisfying the male ideal. Within his vision Chal would have been happy married to him because he understood her real needs. Her marriage to someone else was a way of preventing her deepest feelings from being reached. This is how Eric rationalizes his own sense of loss and still retains the romantic fantasy of himself as a would-be saviour. Also, within this vision the female partner is expected to satisfy the male ideal. This belief fits into the structures organizing women's consciousness at that time -- for women to lack an identity is perfectly justified since their role is to support other people's needs, particularly a husband's emotional needs. Linked to the homology is Eric's romantic vision of a beautiful, loving and supportive mother. Although the value set contains a criticism of the dependency created by the

mother/son bond, it still fits the traditional vision by suggesting that true masculinity requires emotional distance.

The value set of Eric's girlfriend cannot be totally explained by the categories which organized women's consciousness of the day. The female figure feels inferior to Eric and unable to marry him because she realizes the impossibility of fulfilling his romantic fantasies. Yet she still follows the convention of marrying and feels bored, unhappy with her circumstances. There is a knowledge of the social environment here, yet a feeling of impotence to effect change. The result is a criticism of women's position as dictated by the traditional vision with its lack of options for women and its romantic illusions about women's needs being satisfied through emotional attachment to a husband. Like Marian of The Hungry Spirit and Martha of The Godsend, Chal eschews any kind of romantic cover-up of her condition. Unlike them, however, she cannot seem to find a positive solution to the problem. The more positive outlook of the earlier dramas (both 1940) can be explained by the greater sense of possibility women had at that time. Betty Freidan's study of the heroines of women's magazine stories of 1939 compared to those of the late forties and the fifties points out that greater sense of possibility.

... they were New Women, creating with a gay determined spirit a new identity for women--a life of their own. There was an aura about them

of becoming, of moving into a future that was going to be different from the past. The majority of heroines in the four major women's magazines (then Ladies' Home Journal, McCall's, Good Housekeeping, Women's Home Companion) were career women--happily, proudly, adventurously, attractively career women--who loved and were loved by men. And the spirit, courage, independence, determination -- the strength of character they showed in their work as nurses, teachers, artists, actresses, copywriters, saleswomen--were part of their charm...The stories were conventional: girl-meets-boy or girl-gets-boy. But very often this was not the major theme of the story. These heroines were usually marching toward some goal or vision of their own, struggling with some problem of work or the world when they found their man. (1974: 38-42)

Freidan attributes these positive heroines to the more positive climate which existed for women then, before the feminine mystique spread through America. Taking the plays in chronological order, the hypothesis could be advanced that the plays of the early forties reveal women in an intermediary period, exhibiting some of the more independent qualities of earlier periods while at the same time retreating toward the more passive stance which they took in the fifties. The element of criticism which exists in this play regarding women's position does not fit in homologous relationship to the Canadian social structure. However, it is explainable as an expression of discontent with the general direction women's structures of consciousness were taking during the period.

Tears Idle, Tears (1945) is structured by two major themes related through opposition. In one theme the unhappiness of women within their marital relationships is

blamed on themselves; in the other, men are held responsible. The former takes a rational-analytic approach, attempting to persuade women to accept their submissive, supportive role by appealing to their reasonableness. In this dramatic vision women are held responsible for the emotional climate of a marriage, and this position is justified by men's traumatic war experience. The view is that the war veterans are in need of additional support, and it is women's moral obligation to show the compassionate understanding the situation requires. This vision is the one that dominates the play since through it is provided the "solution" to the problem of marital discord and unhappiness. This vision is also homologous to the traditional world view women held in the forties and fifties: by the division of roles, women are made responsible for the emotional arena of the marriage.

The opposing theme contains a criticism of the way men are dealing with the affective aspects of their marital relationships by focusing on male reserve and lack of sincerity. Male immaturity is further emphasized through the men's lack of concern about finding jobs to provide the family's financial support. Herein lies a contradiction. Although the value set contains a criticism of men's interpersonal skills, it nevertheless contains the expectation that men continue to act as breadwinners and family heads. The theme then is in

contradictory relationship to the Canadian social structure insofar as it accentuates women's legitimate claim to emotional support from husbands as opposed to their traditionally tacit acceptance of male silence and remoteness. However, unlike earlier dramas which offered women a positive solution to problems in male/female relations--Marian in Hungry Spirit (1940) and Martha in The Godsend (1940) -- the critical element in this play does not transcend the pattern of reproach. The women resign themselves to hopelessness. They have knowledge of the injustice of their situation but are so entrapped by convention they feel impotent to effect change. This value set corresponds with the spirit of the contradictory element in To Where I Live (1943). In that play Chal is also aware of the unfairness of women's experience in marriage and also resigns herself but by way of cynicism. What is emerging in the radio dramas is a shift in structural tendencies from the envisioning of possibility for women in the earlier dramas, to the envisioning of a more limited sense of their future as we progress further into the war and post-war periods. As Goldman has pointed out, the researcher is able to plot out the new ideological and social elements which are gathering force by analyzing the latent content of cultural creations. However, the dramas reveal a transition toward a more conservative vision for women rather than one which shows them acting out a fuller humanity. The artists have

transposed in their art women's gradual movement toward the spirit of the feminine mystique.

The Seed That Won the Plains (1945) is structured by three major themes, two of which complement each other in expressing the value set of the western wheat farmer while the third poses an opposition by expressing a vision of the urban dweller. The drama has an episodic plot line with women playing small roles in two of the three themes. In spite of their minor presence in the play as a whole, women are the connecting link between the themes since it is they who engage in the rural/urban debate. More specifically, it is one of the female characters who chooses life on a wheat farm as the solution to women's problems of living and working in the city. Hers is not the dominant vision of the drama, however. The playwright leaves an ambiguity at the play's end as to whether a return to the farm can accommodate the needs of all women. The suggestion is that women's new direction lies in the city and in work.

Women are virtually absent in the struggle theme except for one who appears briefly as a helpmate to her farmer husband. Ideas about women at the base of the other two themes fit into the traditional vision held by women of the day. The distinction between the two is that the ideas of one express the value set of the urban woman, while those of the other focus on the farmer's wife. The urban woman appears to be single, works in an office and

likes some aspects of the lifestyle offered by city work. However, she is subordinate at work and disrespects the procedures practiced by male bosses. Furthermore, she is resigned to her powerlessness given the vulnerability of her working position. This urban working woman can be explained by the structures organizing women's consciousness from the mid-forties onward. As described previously, the later war and post-war periods were marked by the increasing entry of women into the lower echelon, white collar sector which was expanding at an unprecedented rate. In these jobs women suffered many discriminatory labour practices, for they were no more than cogs in a large bureaucratic machine. Therefore, despite their stronger presence in the labour force, women still conformed to the traditional vision of women as the "second sex." Within the rural value set, the female character conforms to the traditional vision of woman as a helpmate who goes along with her husband's personal vision. She clearly demonstrates qualities of passivity, fearfulness and dependency. It is only a question of where the dependency is directed -- toward a husband and not toward a boss. A rural/urban distinction, then, does not demonstrate real differences in the latent content of the drama in terms of its ideas about women. Both value sets recreate the mental categories held by women of the time. —



The ideas about women in this play also conform to a pattern noted in two previous dramas of the mid-1940's: women have a knowledge of their powerlessness but are resigned to their position. In addition, they rationalize their dissatisfaction with the status-quo -- either seeing themselves as the problem or minimizing the importance of their lower position -- as a way of coping with injustices.

The structure of this drama is rather unusual since its fragmented story line allows for a division around the rural/urban question yet its value sets on the question of women are not at base dissimilar. What the playwright does articulate is an ambiguity on the part of women about their new role in city offices and yet he implies at play's end that their new work role is here to stay. It is not a work role, however, which presages new possibilities for women but one which perpetuates the injustices women already suffer, simply moving them to a different environment.

Flow Gently Sweet Limbo (1948) contains three value sets related structurally through complementarity. One value set exposes the problems of a young woman of low socio-economic status. It shows how difficult it is for a woman of the lower-middle class to improve her financial circumstances and to rise above her social conditioning. In fact, the conclusion reached within the theme is that it is impossible. The feelings of denial, self-sacrifice

and guilt are so deep-rooted in Violet that she is unable to extricate herself from family responsibilities to pursue her dream of becoming a nurse. Instead, she settles for a dead-end job as a sales clerk, putting herself further and further into debt until escape is impossible. In the process, misguided by a strong sense of honour, she denies herself an opportunity to marry. This vision of woman as victim fits Freidan's description of the woman engulfed in the fifties' feminine mystique. This state of consciousness viewed women as existing only for and through others and as lacking a clear and separate identity. It accounts for the sense of confinement experienced by the young woman of this value set and for her inability to transcend her victim position.

A second value set expresses the concerns of a young woman of high social status. However, the vision is the same. Limitation is a key element of women's lives no matter what their social class. It is just the content of their lives which changes. Ellen, unlike Violet, does not have to work, but her activities are equally meaningless. Endless rounds of social soirées and amateurish forays into the arts consume her time. They do not, however, provide the love and support she is searching for, qualities not provided by her upper class father. Again, woman is revealed as victimized by family and society. This value set is also explained by the categories

organizing the consciousness of the fifties' woman who was trained to be sociable, pleasing and passive.

The third value set is the culmination of the other two, the solution to the problems encountered in these value sets. The lower-class woman and upper-class woman decide to live together, each providing the other with what she lacks. Thus, Ellen provides Violet with financial aid while Violet gives her the emotional support she needs. However, this solution is shown to have negative consequences, for a sense of aimlessness and boredom permeates the women's lives. The structure of the drama shows no sense of possibility for women unless they marry. That is their only satisfying option in a society divided along class and sex lines. Female solidarity and money notwithstanding, the truly meaningful life can only be had within marriage. This vision is very unlike the one which predominates the earlier drama The Hungry Spirit (1940). Here, the female protagonist eschews marriage to pursue an exciting career in scientific research. By 1948, the playwright has sensed that the structural tendencies of women as a social group have changed, and envisions the tight limitations of the upcoming fifties' woman, bound by the feminine mystique.

Mother is Watching (1952) contains three major value sets and their subsets, all related structurally through opposition and through their emphasis on power. Two of the value sets can be explained by the traditional vision

held by women of the fifties. The third is in opposition to that vision, thus revealing values which present a challenge to the social relations, ideals and objectives of the more conservative position.

One of the traditional value sets echoes the living patterns of the fifties' suburbanite. Like their real counterparts, Virginia and Henry have spent their married years trying to pay off their debts and find their toil takes a heavy psychological toll on their marriage, in fact, ending it. S.D. Clark in Suburban Society comments on how the young married couples of the fifties, in their eagerness to establish a home, took on too much responsibility and gave up many pleasures for which they paid heavy psychological and physical costs, the most important being intellectual and spiritual deprivation. (1966:121). In Crestwood Heights, Seeley et al confirm this analysis:

Even with a moderately high income, the Crestwooder is severely taxed to keep up a four-bedroom house and, at the same time, clothe, feed and rear several children in an appropriate way (1956:59).

Henry clearly realizes he has lost contact with his inner self by compromising his values for the sake of tradition. Virginia, on the other hand, is so entrenched in tradition that she never comes to realize her blindness. Instead, at play's end, she gathers her children about her, mollified that she at least still controls their lives. This mind set repeats the mental patterns of the fifties'

woman uncovered by Friedan, whereby the mother makes a cult of child rearing because allowing her "babies" to grow up will mean she has no life at all (1974:200-205). Virginia is now husbandless, and as the second traditional value set indicates, the single life for a woman is very grim. Harriet, a single working woman, is pitied by those in her environment. Firstly she does not have love and marriage, considered in this value set as vital to a woman's happiness, so vital in fact that Harriet kills for lack of it. Her desperation is explainable by the aspirations of all fifties' women who, as confirmed by Wilson, desired marriage (1982). Secondly, Harriet must work to earn a living. This automatically confers lower status on her since the feminine mystique denies women careers or any commitment outside the home. Thus, Harriet's lack of power in this value set is attributable to the feminine mystique, a narrow vision held by women of the fifties which confined them to home, family and domination by men.

Many of the values of the emancipatory theme contradict those of the traditional themes. Mary and Calvin are non-conformists, living a counter lifestyle which includes working at a job because it is liked, not because it pays well, having an egalitarian marriage, being more interested in accumulating ideas rather than possessions. However, there is a definite shift in their values as Mary's pregnancy progresses. Calvin opts for

denying the fulfillment of a personal dream to create a stable family unit for the baby. In accommodating his new perspective, in spite of her disagreement, Mary compromises herself. Thus, even within an emancipatory theme we find that certain values are not sacrificed. What is interesting in this value set is the source of the stasis. The artist could construct a vision which contained any number of alternative ideas but not one which would compromise the sanctity of the family. This is understandable, given the general stress on the nuclear family in the fifties.

As with the above dramas, the women characters of the traditional vision do not recognize their victimization (Virginia), or if they do, they deal with it in a negative fashion (Harriet). It is only through independence of tradition (Mary) that women can see clearly enough the ties that bind them. However, even here, a woman will submit to her partner on serious issues over which the two cannot agree.

In most of its beliefs and values, then, the emancipatory theme lies in opposition to the mental structures of women in the fifties. Yet, when it comes to breaking with tradition on the question of power between men and women, the artist cannot envision the possibility of women feeling free enough to take the control. Given the fifties woman's deep entrenchment in the feminine mystique, this is an explainable resolution to that particular dilemma.

Conclusion

Within those dramas where themes related homologously to Canadian society, mental categories were found which framed women as persons lacking clear identities, this being visible in their lack of personal vision and passive acceptance of a husband's personal goals and those of society. The problem of gender was compounded by that of social class. Working class women, even those with a personal vision, could not transcend both learned gender roles and social environment. Regardless of class, all women were bound to marry, for a life without a husband meant performing boring, meaningless work and having a powerless status vis-à-vis family and friends. Women of the traditional vision were framed within mental categories which made them appear less than real, more romantic fantasies than women of depth and substance. Finally, these women were revealed as victims of families, society and themselves. More importantly, young women were often revealed as the victims of older ones.

The above mental categories were in no way fixed structures as evidenced in the oppositional relationships which surfaced both within the plays and between the plays and Canadian social structure. This relationship was strongest in the earlier plays (1940) where the women were revealed as most fiercely independent and most

determinedly possessed of a personal vision. Within these emancipatory visions women both demanded and fought for their rights to be respected. Those plays of the middle and later war years contained an oppositional element but one which was either minor or, although major, lost out to a more dominant traditional vision. The women framed within these relations revealed knowledge that their rights were being violated but had decided to adopt a passive position. Finally, the plays of the post-war period were in the main homologous to the social structure. One emancipatory vision did surface but the emphasis here was on an equal partnership within marriage, one which became undermined upon the arrival of children. This presented a less radical opposition than the earliest dramas where women chose to remain single. For the most part, the mental categories or structures of the post-war plays revealed women who did not even recognize the injustices they endured. These structures articulated the consciousness of those bound by the feminine mystique. Thus those CBC dramas which were in the main homologous to the Canadian social structure were found to have been written and produced during the later war and post-war periods. Those of an oppositional nature were created closer to the war's onset.



### General Conclusions

Reviewing the hypothesis for this thesis -- that the mental structures of CBC radio drama are homologous to the mental structures of women as a social group -- the conclusion is that the findings of the analysis support this relationship. Categories that organized women's consciousness in the forties and fifties were uncovered in the plays, thus explaining the appearance of certain value sets in all plays and explaining the complete structure of one play which focussed exclusively on women who were tradition-bound (Flow Gently Sweet Limbo). These traditional value sets contained an emphasis on a division of labour, on women's femininity -- passivity, dependence, nurturance of others -- and on their strong commitment to marriage.

Those value sets which related to the social structure by opposition were more difficult to explain. Here the women were not victims but active participants in their lives. They showed an independence, a lack of concern about marriage, an ability to articulate their needs and a strong, fighting spirit. This vision of those early plays can be explained by the greater sense of possibility women had at the war's onset. The war was both a boon and a catastrophe for women, for as a crisis situation it forced certain positive changes in their view of themselves -- that they were capable of performing the

country's labour while the men were absent -- yet as a world-wide destabilizing factor it ultimately forced them in the direction of a more conservative position since everyone, men and women, became focused on a greater stability and security. The artists of these CBC radio dramas captured that transition in the latent structure of the plays. Those plays of this middle interval (1943 and 1945) revealed women's transition to a position where they continued to show an awareness of their lower social status and yet displayed an inability to take the required action. This transition was important as it underlined women's position of possibility in the earlier plays and their eventual arrival at the victim position, a stasis characterized by unawareness and passivity which dominated the plays of the late forties and early fifties. These revelations of the latent structure were important as they did lend support to Goldmann's position that a researcher has the possibility of discovering the future direction of social groups by analyzing the latent content of cultural creations.

In summary, women's position in the CBC radio dramas analyzed for this thesis stood as follows: strongly emancipatory at the war's onset, inactive yet critical of the status quo toward the mid-forties and fully conforming by the end of the decade.

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Gowan, Elsie Park 26/08/40	<u>The Hungry Spirit</u>
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Joudry, Patricia 23/11/52	<u>Mother is Watching</u>
Helliwell, Peter 12/03/43	<u>To Where I Live</u>
Markle, Fletcher 25/03/45	<u>Tears, Idle Tears</u>
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