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EQUIVOCAL SOLIDARITY: GENDER AND THE POLITICS OF WORKER ASSOCIATION IN FRANCE, 1840-1851

VOLUME I

By

Lynne Bruehlman

A DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

EQUIVOCAL SOLIDARITY: GENDER AND THE POLITICS OF WORKER ASSOCIATION IN FRANCE, 1840-1851

By

Lynne Bruehlman

The decade of the 1840s in France was a crucial period in which artisanal workers in urban areas, in response to capitalist pressures and inter-trade rivalries, articulated a vision of a just society founded on the brotherhood of the trades and the collaboration of laborers in production, consumption, and mutual benefit associations. Socialist associationism has traditionally been interpreted in French labor history as democratic, emancipatory, and evidence of nascent class consciousness, without consideration of its implications for women. An analysis of the "language of labor" in the 1840s, and of associational organizations established by workers during the Revolution of 1848-1851, suggests that the rhetoric and praxis of male workers was based on gender constructs that marginalized and/or excluded *ouvrières*. Socialist women who hoped to link the emancipation of workers and the emancipation of women, and who attempted to ameliorate the condition of *prolétariennes* through the founding of female production and fraternal associations during the revolution, were unsuccessful. Their efforts were undermined not only by material obstacles, but by their willingness to embrace essentialist rhetoric that naturalized sexual difference.

This study is comprised of three parts. The first analyzes the gender constructs that supported male workers' concepts of work, skill, manliness, sexuality, the idealized household, and the role and place of the *ouvrière*. The second explores the associational

initiatives of socialist and proletarian women in Paris during the Revolution of 1848-51. It examines how male, mixed-sex, and female production and fraternal societies addressed the problems of female workers. It also investigates the attitude of state authorities towards *ouvrières*, as revealed by the policies of the National Workshops for Women and the National Assembly's Council of Encouragement, which provided loans to production associations. The final section analyzes the polemics and organizational endeavors of Jeanne Deroin, particularly her unsucessful candidacy for the Legislative Assembly and her efforts to found the Union of Associations of Workers in 1849. By exploring the contradictions of Deroin's rhetoric and the collapse of her political and associational ambitions, the legacy of the Revolution of 1848-51 for French women is illuminated.

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For Vance and Emma

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I am also very grateful for the assistance accorded me by the other three members of my dissertation committee at Michigan State University. While never flagging in their demands for excellence, they allowed me essential opportunities to work independently,

as well as in seminar. Dr. Dagmar Herzog schooled me in theoretical issues central to my research, including post-modernist thought, feminist theory, and the history of sexuality. Dr. David Loromer deepened my understanding of processes of economic development and social and cultural change in European society in the nineteenth century, particularly from a comparative perspective. Dr. Lewis Siegelbaum's expertise in Soviet labor history and his focus on class and labor in European history were essential assets in helping me sharpen my own perspectives on labor issues. I benefitted greatly from having these stimulating, demanding, and compassionate scholars on my committee, and am particularly appreciative of the flexibility they showed in accommodating my special needs. I would also like to thank the College of Arts and Letters, Michigan State University, for awarding me two generous research grants that enabled me to spend two summers in that most expensive of European capitals, Paris.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AN	Archives Nationales
AN AS	Archives Nationales, Fonds Fourier et Considérant
BHVP	Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris
BN	Bibliothèque Nationale

INTRODUCTION

In the spring of 1850, with the dream of the democratic and social republic fading, Louis Blanc chided socialist women for their failure to relieve the desperate plight of female workers by creating viable associations that would address their distress. While acknowledging that such efforts faced enormous practical obstacles, he nevertheless complained:

> Unfortunately the women who might make themselves the most useful in such an enterprise seem to be primarily attracted to the purely speculative side of social doctrines. Their ardent souls soar up to the infinite regions of space, and disdain to attend to the tedious details of material existence. If, however, one wishes to achieve serious results, one must add to devotion, to science, a practical understanding of business and the vulgar relations of life.[1]

Blanc's insinuation that socialist women had failed because of the propensities of their sex - its preference for sentiment over reason, devotion over material calculation - was ironic given his own situation. His broadside was delivered from London, where he had sought refuge in June 1848, after being attacked by the National Assembly's commission of inquiry investigating the disorders of 15 May 1848 and the June Days. It appeared just as Jeanne Deroin, to whom he had earlier lent moral support,[2] was

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[1]Misères Sociales: Le Travail des Femmes," *Le Nouveau Monde: Journal Historique et Politique*, 15 March 1850, 423-424.

[2]*Le Nouveau Monde*, 15 December 1849.

completing steps to merge over one hundred workers' associations in Paris into the largest mutualist body created during the Revolution of 1848, the Union of Associations of Workers. Blanc's condescension reveals the deep ambivalence felt by men of the left, including politically active workers, socialist intellectuals, and *démoc-soc* republicans, when faced with the public activism and fervid commitment of socialist women such as Deroin.

Blanc's cursory dismissal of women's abilities as organizers or socialist theoreticians has parallels in contemporary labor history. Women's associational efforts in the Revolution of 1848 have received perfunctory acknowledgement in modern studies, but socialist women's radical critique linking gender and class oppression, and the implications of this critique for those who wish to understand "the language of labor," have been largely ignored.[3] Because these women's voices disrupt a master narrative

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[3]Rémi Gossez and Jean Gaumont, whose studies focus specifically on workers' organizations, provide some information on Deroin's Union of Associations but little on other women's associational initiatives. See Gossez, *Les Ouvriers de Paris; Livre Premier: L'Organisation 1848-1851* (La Roche-Sur-Yon: Imprimerie Centrale de L'Ouest, 1967), 170-171, 345-51 and Gaumont, *Histoire Générale de la Coopération en France*, (subtitled revealingly "Les idées et les faits: Les hommes et les oeuvres"), v. 1 (Paris: Féderation Nationale des Coopératives de Consommation, 1924), 265-269, 275-278. Deroin receives no mention at all (nor do women's associations) in William H. Sewell, Jr., *Work and Revolution in France: The Language of Labor from the Old Regime to 1848* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); and only the briefest reference in the following works: Bernard H. Moss, *The Origins of the French Labor Movement 1830-1914: The Socialism of Skilled Workers* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 44; Maurice Agulhon, *The Republican Experiment 1848-1852*, v. 2, *The Cambridge History of Modern France*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 115; Edouard Dolléans, *Histoire du Mouvement Ouvrier 1830-1871* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1953), 245-247. A recent synthesis, Roger Magraw's *The Age of Artisan Revolution, 1815-1871* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992) ignores Deroin and provides only a cursory discussion of "women workers and the artisanal republic," 160-162.

whose central focus is the growing cohesion and solidarity of workers in all trades, their story has been relegated primarily to the history of feminism, with its ability to accommodate "odd" or "exceptional" individuals. This separation of labor and feminist history impoverishes both analytical fields, and can only be overcome, as Joan Scott, Ava Baron, Sally Alexander and others have argued, if gender is perceived as intrinsic to most processes of class construction and differentiation.[4]

In the "new labor history," which has recently emerged as a result of the cross-fertilization between social science and post-structuralist linguistic approaches, historians are attempting to integrate gender and class analyses in ways that recognize the importance of discourse as well as material factors in shaping workers' thought and their

---

[4]The literature on gender as a category of historical analysis is by now massive; for examples of studies which apply gender analysis to understanding the history of work and labor mobilization see Sally Alexander, "Women's Work in Nineteenth Century London: A Study of the Years 1820-50,"in *The Rights and Wrongs of Women* ed. J. Mitchell & A. Oakley (New York: Praeger, 1976), 59-111 and "Women, Class and Sexual Difference," *History Workshop Journal* (Spring 1984) 17: 124-49; Barbara Taylor, *Eve and the New Jerusalem: Socialism and Feminism in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Pantheon, 1983); Joan Wallach Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988); Ava Baron, ed. *Work Engendered: Towards A New History of American Labor* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991); Jutta Schwarzkopf, *Women in the Chartist Movement* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991); Sonya O. Rose, *Limited Livelihoods: Gender and Class in Nineteenth Century England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); Laura Lee Downs, "Women's Strikes and the Politics of Popular Egalitarianism in France, 1916-18," in *Rethinking Labor History: Essays on Discourse and Class Analysis*, ed. Leonard R. Berlanstein (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 114-148; Anna Clark, *The Struggle for the Breeches: Gender and the Making of the British Working Class* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); *Gender and Class in Modern Europe*, ed. Laura L. Frader and Sonya O. Rose (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996); Judith G. Coffin, *The Politics of Women's Work: The Paris Garment Trades, 1750-1915* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

politics.[5] This study is an effort inspired by such approaches. It aims to understand how concepts of work and moral community, central to the ideology and praxis of French workers in the 1830s and 1840s, were conceptualized and expressed, not only by a "language of labor," but by a "language of gender," which undergirded it.

Inspired by E. P. Thompson's pathbreaking *The Making of the English Working Class,* neo-Marxist historians, beginning in the late 1960s, created a new master narrative in which artisans rather than factory workers were the central actors in the saga of working-class awakening.[6] This narrative worked particularly well for France, where late industrialization insured that skilled and semi-skilled artisans rather than factory workers formed the activist core of the labor movement until the 1880s. In the work of labor and social historians such as Rémi Gossez, Maurice Agulhon, Alain Cottereau, Michelle Perrot, Bernard Moss, Christopher H. Johnson, William H. Sewell, Jr., Ronald Aminzade, Michael Hanagan, Robert Bezucha, and (the early) Joan Scott, the precocious political activism of workers in cities such as Paris, Lyon, and Marseilles was depicted as a response to two intersecting developments. The first was the encroachment of capitalist

---

[5]Two recent collection of essays in this vein are *Rethinking Labor History* (1993) and *Gender and Class in Modern Europe* (1996) cited above.

[6]E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: 1963; New York: Vintage, 1966). See Joan Scott's pioneering critique of Thompson's biases in "Women in *The Making of the English Working Class*", in *Gender and the Politics of History*, 68-90. The use of the term "artisan" to describe workers who were employed outside factories has aroused debate, as has the label "skilled worker." See Jacques Rancière, "The Myth of the Artisan: Critical Reflections on a Category of Social History," *International Labor and Working Class History* (Fall 1983) 24: 1-16 and responses by William H. Sewell, Jr. and Christopher H. Johnson, ibid., 17-20 and 21-25. I use the term "artisan" to denote a person who practiced a recognized craft without implying that they were necessarily highly skilled or had a strong sense of professional pride or identity.

production processes that threatened to proletarianize artisanal workers, especially the spread of subcontracting and sweating systems that utilized low-skill piece-workers. The second was France's political history, which saw workers mount the barricades in 1830 and 1848, only to experience profound disillusionment when their hopes were ultimately betrayed. France's rich heritage of revolutionary and republican discourse, together with workers' exposure during the July Monarchy to utopian socialist doctrines spread by bourgeois apostles and proselytizers, such as Saint-Simonians, Fourierists, and Icarian Communists, provided a fertile climate for artisan politicization. According to the master narrative, this took the form of a gradual movement away from a narrow trade-based sectarianism to progressively broader and more "inclusive" forms of worker organization. Working-class aspirations manifested themselves after 1830 in a new idiom of worker "association" which found expression in a variety of institutional and rhetorical forms.[7]

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[7]Peter N. Stearns, "Patterns of Industrial Strike Activity in France during the July Monarchy," *American Historical Review* (January 1965) 70: 371-94; Rémi Gossez, *Les Ouvriers de Paris* (1967); Maurice Agulhon, *Une Ville Ouvrière au temps du socialisme utopique: Toulon de 1815 à 1851* (Paris: Mouton, 1970); Robert Bezucha, *The Lyon Uprising of 1834* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974); Joan Scott, *The Glassworkers of Carmaux* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974); Charles Tilly and Lynn Lees, "Le peuple de juin 1848," *Annales ESC* (Sept.-Oct. 1974) 29: 1061-91; Christopher H. Johnson, *Utopian Communism in France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1974); C. Johnson "Economic Change and Artisan Discontent: The Tailors' History, 1800-48" in *Revolution and Reaction*, ed. Roger Price (London: Croom Helm, 1975), 87-114; C. Johnson, "Patterns of Proletarianization: Parisian Tailors and Lodève Workers," in *Consciousness and Class Experience in Nineteenth Century Europe*, ed. John Merriman (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1979); Bernard Moss, *The Origins of the French Labor Movement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976); John Merriman, *The Agony of the Republic* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1978); Eric J. Hobsbawm and Joan W. Scott, "Political Shoemakers," *Past and Present* (November 1989) 89: 86-114; William H. Sewell, Jr. "Social Change and the Rise of Working-Class Politics in Nineteenth Century Marseille, *Past and Present 65* (1974): 75-109 and *Work and Revolution in France* (1980); Ronald Aminzade, *Class, Politics, and Early Industrial Capitalism: A Study of Nineteenth-Century Toulouse,*

"Association" in the first half of the nineteenth century was a flexible and continually evolving concept which was employed in several different senses depending on the time and context. It was variously used: (1) to describe a process by which workers in the same trade banded together to seek concessions from employers; (2) to signify an ethic of cooperation and mutual support, as opposed to bourgeois "egotism" and laissez-faire capitalism; (3) to describe a future society structured around producers and consumers' cooperatives, where workers would pool labor and resources, buying and selling from each other and eliminating the capitalist middleman; and (4) to express the idea of fraternal union of workers in all trades, a union that would secure the fundamental right of laborers to work and ultimately establish a "democratic and social republic" in which they would enjoy the full fruits of their labor. This fourth meaning, according to William H. Sewell, Jr., evolved during the Revolution of 1848-1851, and represented the emergence of a genuine "class consciousness".[8]

Sewell's award-winning (1980) *Work and Revolution in France: The Language of Labor from the Old Regime to 1848,* described this process of political maturation in a tightly reasoned brief that rendered it suspiciously coherent and logical. In his "*essai*

France (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1981); William H. Sewell, Jr. "Artisans, Factory Workers, and the Formation of the French Working Class, 1789-1848," in *Working Class Formation: Nineteenth Century Patterns in Western Europe and the United States*, ed. Ira Katznelson and Aristide R. Zolberg (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 45-70; Michelle Perrot, "On the Formation of the French Working Class," in ibid., 71-110; Alain Cottereau, "The Distinctiveness of Working-Class Cultures in France, 1848-1900" in ibid., 111-154; Gérard Noiriel, *Workers in French Society in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (New York: Berg, 1990); Ronald Aminzade, *Ballots and Barricades: Class Formation and Republican Politics in France, 1830-1871* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

[8]*Work and Revolution in France*, 277-284.

de synthèse," Sewell sought to combine the cultural anthropology of Clifford Geertz with a post-structuralist emphasis on language to reconstruct the world-view of French artisans in the first half of the nineteenth century. He argued that workers combined the collectivism of the pre-1789 corporate guild system with the egalitarianism of the revolutionary and Jacobin tradition to produce a distinctly "artisanal" brand of socialism and class consciousness by 1848. This new associational ethic was universal and inclusive, celebrating the unity of the trades and the brotherhood of labor.[9]

Unfortunately Sewell failed to interrogate how this allegedly "universal" and "inclusive" ethic was gendered, and therefore missed the extent to which it functioned to exclude working women from its androcentric cult of equality, fraternity and solidarity. A similar oversight, according to Michèle Riot-Sarcey, is found in the analyses of liberal political historians such as François Furet, who equate the victory of the republican ideal in the nineteenth century with the triumph of democracy, ignoring the dogged resistance of most republicans to enfranchising women.[10] A large body of recent work by feminist scholars has addressed this distortion in French political history, demonstrating how republican ideology's dependence on "fraternity," coded as a masculine concept, rendered

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[9]Ibid., esp. Chapters 9 and 12.

[10]Michèle Riot-Sarcey, *La démocratie à l'épreuve des femmes: Trois figures critiques du pouvoir 1830-1848* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1994), 11-18. Her reference is to François Furet, *La Révolution 1770-1880, Histoire de France* (Paris: Hachette, 1988).

man "universal" and woman "other" in constructing the rights of man and of the citizen.[11]

This dissertation represents a similar effort to challenge a conventional narrative in labor history, by pointing out some of its omissions and contradictions. The story of the "making" of the working-class, whether situated in the atelier or on the factory floor, typically takes the male worker as its universal subject, and generalizes from masculine discourse and experience to the working-class as a whole. From this perspective, the evolution of the associationist ethic among French workers in the first half of the nineteenth century can be read as a progressive development, in which workers abandoned outmoded corporate rivalries and hostilities to embrace the more enlightened and inclusive concept of the brotherhood of labor. What this interpretation ignores, however, is that artisanal fraternity and solidarity were predicated upon gendered concepts of work, skill, dignity, social order, equality, property and citizenship that validated the public activity

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[11]See in addition to Riot-Sarcey, ibid.: Joan Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988); William H. Sewell, Jr. "Le Citoyen/La Citoyenne: Activity, Passivity and the Revolutionary Concept of Citizenship," in *The Political Culture of the French Revolution*, ed. Colin Lucas (New York, 1988); Carole Pateman, "The Fraternal Social Contract," in *The Disorder of Women: Democracy, Feminism and Political Theory* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989), 33-57; Geneviève Fraisse, *Muse de la raison: La démocratie exclusive et la différence des sexes* (Aix-en-Provence: Editions Alinéa, 1989); Dorinda Outram, *The Body and the French Revolution: Sex, Class and Political Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989); Lynn Hunt, ed. *Eroticism and the Body Politic* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991); Lynn Hunt, *The Family Romance of the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); Judith Stone, "The Republican Brotherhood: Gender and Ideology," in *Gender and the Politics of Social Reform in France, 1870-1914*, ed. Elinor Accampo et al. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 28-58; Judith Stone, "Republican Ideology, Gender and Class: France, 1960s-1914," in *Gender and Class in Modern Europe* (Ithaca: 1996), 238-259.

of men while denigrating that of women. By defining men's labor as more skilled and more productive than that of women, the atelier as a masculine social space, and the tribune as a male preserve, the "language of labor" operated to exclude *ouvrières* from the majority of associational institutions created during the Revolution of 1848-1851.

Part One of this study examines the discourse of male artisans who edited and published working-class newspapers, wrote reformist tracts and associational proposals, drafted manifestos, and recorded their lives in autobiographies and memoires. It focuses on analyzing how such workers articulated their visions of work, family, and moral community in the crucial years from 1840 to 1851. It takes seriously the contention of post-structuralist historians that discourse is an essential factor in shaping peoples' consciousness and activity, and that the historian who wishes to make sense of workers' political behavior must attend to their language of political struggle. The term "discourse" is employed in the sense popularized by Joan Scott, derived from theorists such as Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, to mean linguistic processes that construct and establish meanings, processes which involve conflict and contestation and express relationships of hierarchy and power.[12]

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[12]Joan Wallach Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," and "On Language, Gender and Working-Class History," in *Gender and the Politics of History*, 42-45, 53-67; Gareth Stedman Jones, *Languages of Class: Studies in English Working Class History, 1832-1982* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Michel Foucault, *POWER/KNOWLEDGE: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980). On Foucault and Derrida see Jonathon Culler, *On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982) and Allan Megill *Prophets of Extremity: Nietzsche, Heidegger, Foucault, Derrida* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985). For historical and feminist debates on Foucault and post-modernism see Biddy Martin, "Feminism, Criticism and Foucault," *New German Critique* (Fall 1982) 27: 3-30; Jeffrey Weeks, "Foucault for Historians," *History*

As Jacques Rancière has demonstrated so eloquently, workers' discourses are not homogeneous or collective, but are multiple, conflicting, ambiguous and full of contradictions.[13] It is possible to discern, however, running like warp threads through a complex woven pattern, some fairly consistent gender codings that provide a framework for male workers' associational rhetoric and behavior. By isolating and scrutinizing these strands, I hope to better explain a set of related problems: (1) why proletarian women were unable to secure recognition of the right to work and adequate representation in the institutions claiming to speak for workers during the Revolution of 1848; (2) why women's production and fraternal associations proved so marginal and ephemeral during that same period, and (3) why socialist-feminist associational organizers such as Jeanne Deroin met such resistance in their efforts to link the emancipation of workers and the emancipation of women.

This study, therefore, takes the issue of discourse seriously, not only because it has historically had a preponderant place in feminist struggles, but also because of the crucial

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Workshop Journal (Autumn 1982) 14: 106-119; Jane Flax, "Postmodernism and Gender Relations in Feminist Theory," *SIGNS*, (Summer 1987) 4: 621-643 and "Postmodernism and Gender Relations in Feminist Theory," in *Postmodernism/Feminism*, ed. Linda J. Nicholson (New York & London: Routledge, 1990), 39-57; Nancy Hartsock, "Foucault on Power: A Theory for Women?" in ibid. 157-175; Judith Butler, "Contingent Foundations: Feminism and the Question of 'Postmodernism'," *Feminists Theorize the Political*, ed. Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott (New York: Routledge, 1992), 2-21; Stephen L. Collins, review essay, biographies of Michel Foucault, *American Historical Review 99* (April 1994), 507-510.

[13]"The Myth of the Artisan," *International Labor and Working Class History* (Fall 1983): 1-16 and *The Nights of Labor: The Workers' Dream in Nineteenth Century France*, trans. John Drury (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989).

role it has played in working-class radicalization during the nineteenth century. I agree, however, with those who question the tendency of some post-modernist historians, notably Joan Scott, to privilege discourse over all other social practices, and to dismiss experience and material factors as simply artifacts of discourse.[14] I am more comfortable with Stuart Hall's insistence that experience matters, that new experiences can give rise to new discourses, and that both are influenced by material conditions of existence - in other words, that experience, the constraints of the material environment and discourse operate dialectically.[15] I agree, too, with Dorinda Outram, who argues that language must be broadened out to include behavior, not just verbal statements: "culture must be thought of in terms of behavior expressed concurrently, both physically and verbally."[16]

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[14]For Scott's position see "On Language, Gender and Working Class History," first published in *International Labor and Working Class History,* 31 (1987): 1-13 and critiques by Bryan Palmer, Anson Rabinbach and Christine Stansell which follow. The revised version appeared in *Gender and the Politics of History* (1988), 53-67. See also Scott's "Experience" in *Feminists Theorize the Political*, ed. Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott (New York: Routledge, 1992), 22-41. For criticisms of the limitations of discourse analysis see Mariana Valverde's "Poststructuralist Gender Historians: Are We Those Names?" *Labour/Le Travail*, 25 (Spring 1990): 227-236; Leora Auslander, "Feminist Theory and Social History: Exploration in the Politics of Identity," *Radical History Review* 52 (Winter 1992): 158-176; Sonya Rose, Kathleen Canning, Anna Clark, Marianne Valverde, Marcia W. Sawyer, "Dialogue: Gender History/Women's History: Is Feminist Scholarship Losing its Critical Edge?" *Journal of Women's History* v. 5 (1994) 1: 89-125.

[15]Stuart Hall, "Signification, Representation, Ideology: Althusser and Post-Structuralist Debates," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, v. 2 (June 1985) 2: 91-114.

[16]*The Body and the French Revolution: Sex, Class and Political Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 22.

Part Two of this study therefore explores the efforts of socialist and proletarian women to organize women's production and fraternal associations in Paris during the Revolution of 1848-1851. It examines the obstacles that they faced, and offers explanations for women's almost universal failure to establish viable associational organizations. It surveys the statutes and policies developed by all-male and mixed-sex production and fraternal associations during the Revolution of 1848 in Paris to govern relationships with female workers, whether the women in question were admitted to membership, hired as non-associated auxiliary workers, or excluded from participation outright. Finally, it examines how the concept of the "right to work," reluctantly endorsed by the Provisional Government in the opening days of the Revolution of 1848, was interpreted and implemented by government authorities when *ouvrières* insisted that it applied to them as well. This includes a look at how proletarian women fared in the national workshops established for women by the Provisional Government between April and June 1848, and how the Council of Encouragement, established in July 1848 by the National Assembly to provide low-cost loans to worker and worker-employer associations, handled requests for loans from women's production associations. Clearly women's "experience" in all of these contexts was strongly influenced by socially constructed definitions of women's "nature" and proper roles. Just as clearly, material conditions, including a severe shortage of credit, a glut of unskilled labor, and a sharp business recession, affected their fate.

Part Three of this study examines the rhetoric and praxis of a remarkable socialist-feminist theoretician and organizer, Jeanne Deroin, whose public career was confined to a brief four years between 1848 and 1851. More relentlessly than any other theorist of

the period, she probed and exposed the contradictions and instabilities of republican and associational discourse in an effort to combat the gendered exclusions that lay at their core. She was the first French woman to propose her candidacy for national political office (in 1849), and the guiding spirit behind the Union of Associations of Workers (August 1849- May 1850), the most ambitious mutualist initiative of the period. Deroin's associational activities have received only cursory attention from contemporary historians, perhaps because the union quickly succumbed to governmental repression. But the relevance of her life and thought transcends this brief experiment. It resides in the way she articulated the link between gender and class exploitation, between the subordination of workers and the subordination of women. Her efforts antedated by more than a century a project resumed only recently by labor and feminist historians: to explore the complex ways in which gender and class intersect to create networks of power and resistance.

Although attempts by socialist and proletarian women to form associations and to participate in labor struggles during the Revolution of 1848-1851 have received some attention from labor historians and historians of French feminism, analysis of such endeavors has been superficial. Rémi Gossez, in his *Ouvriers de Paris*, mentions a variety of initiatives undertaken by proletarian women in 1848, including petitions to the Provisional Government and the formation of "corporations" and associations.[17] However Gossez does not trace the fate of such initiatives, or employ gender analysis to explain their demise. Historians of French feminism have documented the activities of

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[17]*Les Ouvriers de Paris; Livre Premier: L'Organisation 1848-1851*, 170-171, 345-51 and *passim.*

socialist-feminist women in 1848, including their efforts to set up production and fraternal associations on behalf of working women, but have not paid sufficient attention to the broader context of working-class culture, discourse and political activity in which such endeavors unfolded.

In general, recent studies of feminism in the 1830s and 1840s have had one of two agendas: either to trace the roots of feminism's essentialist ideation in the utopian socialist movements of the age, or to explore the political implications of that essentialism. Claire Goldberg Moses, for example, has examined the differential ways in which men and women in the Saint-Simonian movement responded to the core doctrines of the Saint-Simonian faith and to the patriarchal character of the leadership. She is primarily concerned with exploring how women appropriated and altered these doctrines as they struggled to find individual dignity and purpose in life, both within the movement and after its collapse.[18] Michèle Riot-Sarcey has studied the conflict between three prominent socialist-feminists, Eugénie Niboyet, Jeanne Deroin, and Désirée Gay, and their male opponents on the left, republicans and *démoc-socs*, over the extension of legal and political rights to women under the Second Republic. Riot-Sarcey's project is largely to explain the resistance of ostensibly "democratic" elements to women's political and legal emancipation.[19] Joan W. Scott, in her recent *Only Paradoxes to Offer*, interrogates

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[18]"Saint-Simonian Men/Saint-Simonian Women: The Transformation of Feminist Thought in 1830's France," *Journal of Modern History* (1982) 2: 240-67; *French Feminism in the 19th Century*, (Albany: State University of New York, 1984); and Leslie W. Rabine, *Feminism, Socialism and French Romanticism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993).

[19]*La démocratie à l'épreuve des femmes: Trois figures critiques du pouvoir 1830-1848*, (Paris: Albin Michel, 1994).

the political failure of feminism in France by analyzing the contradictions and instabilities in the rhetoric of four prominent French feminists who fought to expand women's *droits de la cité*, including Jeanne Deroin.[20]

It is revealing, however, that Scott devotes very little attention to Deroin's associational activities and projects in 1848-1851, which were a defining focus of her life and certainly of much of her discourse. By neglecting Deroin's role as a labor organizer, Scott loses sight of the centrality of class issues to her feminist discourse, particularly the degree to which her fervid rhetoric of maternalism was a response to pervasive fears of class conflict. Scott also slights the influence with Deroin's male working-class audience had on her rhetorical strategies. As Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick has pointed out, the less powerful party in any dialogue must utilize the terms of the more powerful in order to be understood, or be faced with a wall of real or feigned incomprehension.[21] Socialist women such as Deroin were compelled to employ concepts already familiar and acceptable to the audiences they were addressing, while attempting to turn these terms to their own purposes. This inevitably enmeshed them in contradictions which undercut the cogency of their own arguments. It is essential therefore to read Deroin's rhetoric not only in the context of feminist thought, but as a product of her commitment to working-class emancipation through associational organization.

While recent studies have focused on the political implications of feminism at mid-century, less attention has been devoted to analyzing its economic dimensions.

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[20]*Only Paradoxes to Offer: French Feminists and the Rights of Man,* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1996).

[21]*Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 8.

Feminists wished to make it possible for women to become self-supporting, and thus less vulnerable to male predation and abuse of authority. This goal had greater appeal and a broader constituency than demands for the franchise, and also had the potential to unite women across class lines. For socialist-feminist women, both proletarian and bourgeois, the parallels between the economic subordination of women and that of workers were striking, and led them to hypothesize a natural community of interest between the two. The theories of distributive justice that they articulated, and the associational plans that they developed and implemented during the Revolution of 1848, must be understood not only as outgrowths of the utopian legacy, but as a direct response to the eruption of labor activism in French cities in 1848, and to the decade of debate and polemics on the "organization of labor" that preceded it, when the associationist vision captured the imagination of many artisanal workers. Efforts by socialist-feminist to appropriate the "associationist myth" to advance the economic emancipation of women were coterminous with efforts by male artisans to validate their own concepts of masculine skill and labor dignity. These projects were at best inconsistent, and at worst, directly contradictory in their purposes.

During the Revolution of 1848-1851, socialist-feminist activists such as Jeanne Deroin redefined the concept of "association" in ways that were more egalitarian and gender inclusive. They met with failure not only because of material obstacles, but because the "language of labor" as articulated by male artisans in the 1840s had no way to accommodate constructions of labor fraternity and solidarity that acknowledged the equality of women as producers. The emancipatory themes sounded in the associational rhetoric of French workers at mid-century seem much less attractive and progressive when

deconstructed to reveal their exclusionary gender codings, and when examined in term of their consequences of working women. The Revolution of 1848 may have marked the springtime of artisanal class-consciousness, but it produced few flowers for *ouvrières*.

Part One: Women, work and family in the discourse of male workers, 1840-1851

Introduction

Joan Scott has suggested that in the discourse of mid-nineteenth century political economists, the *ouvrière*, particularly the young single woman living and working alone, became synonymous with the threat of social disorder and moral decay. For the bourgeois moralist, the *femme isolée* was identified with the corrupting power of the factory, of the atelier, of the city - of all of those dubious environments where young women came into promiscuous contact with men and with the seductions of urban life. Through a process of osmosis, which Scott connects to the spread of mechanization and the factory system, the social anxieties that attached to the *femme isolée* wicked outward to stain the *ouvrière* in general, inspiring Michelet's famous outburst: *"L'ouvrière! mot impie, sordide...".* Liberal economists attempted to reduce the dissonance caused by the large numbers of working women in French society by denying that women's productive and reproductive work had economic value, and by centering women's contribution entirely in the (allegedly) non-economic sphere of the household. Their discourse, Scott contends, marginalized women workers throughout the nineteenth century.[1] Similarly, Judith Stone has argued that the ideal of republican motherhood, promoted by Radical politicians from the 1860s on, was a response to their pervasive fears of class conflict and

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[1]*"L'ouvrière! Mot impie, sordide..."*: Women Workers in the Discourse of French Political Economy, 1840-1860," in *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 139-163.

social upheaval. Michelet's enthusiasm for the *femme simple*, the virtuous woman of the people, stemmed from his hope that she would serve as a force for moral regeneration and class reconciliation. However, this was a function she could only perform within the context of marriage and the household, ideally that of a bourgeois man.[2] Thus in both liberal and radical discourses, the restoration of gender boundaries that stigmatized "public" women and validated *la femme au foyer* were a response to deep-seated anxieties about social disorder, but reduced the *ouvrière* to a symbol of social pathology.

These analyses provoke the question: did the exceptional male workers whom Jacques Rancière situates at the borders of bourgeois culture, who spent their white nights refashioning themselves in their journals, poetry, and polemics, participate in this marginalization and denigration of the *ouvrière*?[3] Or did they defend her role and dignity with the same passion as they did their own? Does she appear to them as a producer in her own right, or simply as a family member, living under their tutelage? What anxieties did the *femme isolée* and the prevalence of prostitution in French cities arouse in proletarian men? Finally, did male workers, either in response to wage competition or bourgeois fantasies of fulfillment, construct a family romance in which society would be regenerated by proletarian women who abandoned the atelier in favor of republican motherhood, creating surplus value only in love and sentiment?

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[2]"Republican Ideology, Gender, and Class: France, 1860s-1914," in *Gender and Class in Modern Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 238-259.

[3]*The Nights of Labor: The Workers' Dream in Nineteenth Century France*, trans. John Drury, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989; first published Paris: Fayard, 1981).

Workers' answers to these questions, recorded in the pages of their journals, polemics and tracts, are both varied and in many cases, internally conflicted. Their discourse exhibits what Mary Poovey, in another context, calls "unevenness" and "internal instability", a lack of consistency arising from the fact that gender ideology is always evolving and being contested.[4] What they suggest is that in France in the 1840s, gender boundaries were less rigid and over-determined in working-class culture than they were in bourgeois culture. *"La femme au foyer"* notions were surfacing among some workers, but had not hardened into an ideological matrix upon which the entire social and political order was thought to hang. Proletarian women were acknowledged both as producers and reproducers, although with considerable ambivalence stemming from the threat that they posed to male wages and the knowledge that women were being worked to death, to the detriment of their children and domestic happiness.

In examining workers' discourses on the *ouvrière*, it is important to keep in mind Jacques Rancière's insistence that workers who wrote were unusual people, dreamers who had bitten the apple of learning and utopian expectation and been forever transformed.[5] To a greater or lesser extent, all were in dialogue with bourgeois "others," and appropriated, or played off, their themes and obsessions. To generalize from the views of such worker-idealists to those of workers in general is very risky. Nevertheless, their

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[4]Mary Poovey, *Uneven Developments: The Ideological Work of Gender in Mid-Victorian England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 2-12. Poovey argues that a model of binary opposition between the sexes, socially realized in a system of separate spheres, underwrote the entire system of institutional practices and conventions in England at mid-century, ranging from a sexual division of labor to a sexual division of economic and political rights.

[5]*The Nights of Labor: The Workers' Dream in Nineteenth Century France.*

polemics allow us to glimpse, in embryo, the shadowy contours of a debate that would take a more definite form as it evolved during the remainder of the century.

The articulate proletarians whose views are analyzed below are not easy to categorize either politically or ideologically. Largely self-educated, exposed in varying degrees to both republican and utopian socialist doctrines, they pieced together their ideas from a variety of sources. Martin Nadaud, for example, was a mason from the Creuse and an important political activist in Paris in 1848. He joined several republican secret societies in the 1830s and was won over in the same decade to the Icarian communism of Étienne Cabet.[6] He also read and esteemed the journal *L'Atelier*, published between 1840-1851 by artisans who identified with the social Catholicism of Philippe Buchez, and who were staunch critics of communist ideals.[7] He expresses admiration in his memoirs for theorists as disparate as the liberal economists Blanqui the elder and Louis Villermé, whom he credits with dramatizing the misery of workers, historians Michelet, Edgar Quinet and Louis Blanc, whose works helped to discredit the July Monarchy, and utopian thinkers ranging the spectrum from the mystical Pierre Leroux to Fourierist François Cantagrel.[8] Nadaud's testimony indicates the dangers of attempting to pigeonhole literate workers too narrowly by assigning them to a particular socialist camp or political faction.

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[6]*Mémoires de Léonard ancien garçon maçon*, ed. Maurice Agulhon (Paris: Hachette, 1976). In 1848 he was well known to Creusois masons after 15 years in the workyards. He was elected president of the Creusois of Paris and the association of masons, and was for a short time, a member of the Luxembourg Commission. In May 1849 he was elected representative from the Creuse to the National Assembly.

[7]Ibid., 310.

[8]Ibid., 306, 317, 328.

There are, however, some identifiable ideological currents within associational socialism in the 1840s that pulled workers in different directions on issues of gender, work and family. The right wing was represented by the journal *L'Atelier*, published between 1840 and 1850.[9] The editorial board was entirely made up of workers, with a substantial representation of artisans from the printing and precious metals trades. Those attracted to the Atelierist perspective were influenced by the social Catholicism of Philippe Buchez, and tended to be traditional and moralistic on familial and sexual issues. They regarded work as the penalty for original sin, and advocated voluntary small-scale worker association and free-market competition. More radical on gender issues were workers who had participated in the Saint-Simonian movement in the early 1830s, or were influenced by Fourierism. Former Saint-Simonians dominated the editorial board of the workerist newspapers *La Ruche Populaire* and its successor journal, *L'Union*, published between 1840 and 1846. They were critics of the hypocrisy of conventional sexual mores and espoused a gender dualism which celebrated women's alleged superiority in the realms of sentiment and morality. Their vision of the future was one in which manual work would be valorized and rendered attractive, although social distinctions based on talent and intelligence would not disappear. Working-class Icarians linked to Étienne Cabet and his journal *Le Populaire* were more puritanical and conventional on sexual and familial issues than the Saint-Simonians, but advocated an egalitarian and communistic social order. Many Icarians, as Christopher H. Johnson has shown, were tailors and shoemakers, whose trades were menaced in the 1840s by capitalist production processes.

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[9]For an analysis of this journal, see Armand Cuvillier, *Un Journal d'Ouvriers: L'Atelier (1840-1850)*, (Paris: Alcan, 1914).

Some workers were influenced by Louis Blanc's étatist call for a centralized network of worker associations funded and supported by the state; others, however, rejected state involvement in favor of the small-scale voluntaristic associations championed by the anarchist Pierre-Joseph Proudhon. Proudhon in particular was a patriarchal misogynist with a traditional Catholic fear of women's sexuality and potential for disorder. A number of left-republicans who opposed Proudhon's anarchism and his radical critique of property nevertheless shared his gender prejudices. That male workers are difficult to categorize along ideological lines is a function both of their own eclecticism and the diversity of theories which surrounded and inspired them.

The discourse of articulate workers must be viewed in the context of a prolonged controversy that evolved during the July Monarchy about the causes and consequences of working-class poverty. The rapid growth of textile centers such as Lille, Roubaix and Rouen, and the massive influx of immigrants into Paris, which doubled the population of that city to one million inhabitants between 1801 and 1851, created intractable social problems and aroused great anxiety among the propertied classes. To the bourgeoisie, the flood of barely assimilated proletarians living in wretched conditions and perpetually roving in search of jobs conjured up frightening images of social pathology and disorder.[10] The militancy exhibited by workers in the Revolution of 1830, the revolt of the Lyonnais canuts in 1831 and 1834, and the Paris workers' uprising of 1832 added to

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[10]Louis Chevalier, *Laboring Classes and Dangerous Classes in Paris During the First Half of the Nineteenth Century*, trans. Frank Jellinek (New York: Howard Fertig, 1973; first published Paris: Plon, 1958), 175-185.

those anxieties. As the *enquêteur* Eugène Buret put it, "We must either find an effective remedy for the plague of pauperism or be prepared for a worldwide upheaval."[11]

In this context, as Louis Chevalier has emphasized, the propertied classes applied a rhetoric of differentiation to proletarians, who were literally portrayed as a race apart - as "barbarians", "savages" and "nomads" who threatened to overwhelm civilization.[12] This was particularly true of the migrants and seasonal laborers who crowded into the cheap rooming houses of central Paris around Les Halles.[13] In Eugène Sue's immensely popular melodrama, *Les Mystères de Paris*, they appear as a kind of picaresque human flotsam harboring criminals and deviants of all sorts.[14] Such discourses, and the

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[11]*De la misère des classes laborieuses en Angleterre et en France avec l'indication des moyens propres en franchir les sociétés* (Paris: Paulin, 1840), 1: 74. Flora Tristan placed this quotation in the frontispiece of her *Promenades dans Londres* (Paris: 1842).

[12]Chevalier, *Laboring Classes and Dangerous Classes*, 360-361. Jacques Rancière makes the same point in his introduction to *La Parole Ouvrière: Textes rassemblés et présentés par Alain Faure et Jacques Rancière* (Paris: Union Générale d'Éditions, 1976), 15-16.

[13]Michel Frey analyzes the composition of the population of Paris by arrondissement in 1847-48; he cites the IVe, VIIe, VIIIe and XIe as those with large numbers of rooming houses. "Du Mariage et du Concubinage dans les Classes Populaires à Paris," *Annales ESC*, 33, no. 4 (July-August 1978): 803-823.

[14]Chevalier in his *Laboring Classes* (398-99) claims many working-class readers identified with the characters and wrote Sue letters of advice on how to deal with them. Although a reviewer in *L'Atelier* (Nov. 1843: 25-27) objected to the bloody crime in the book, and to "scenes of debauchery and luxury" which they feared would corrupt women and children, most workers' journals gave it rave reviews, including François Hurel, watchmaker, in *La Ruche Populaire*, Oct. 1843: 23-26, and Cabet's *Le Populaire*, 12 Jan. 1843. Martin Nadaud in his memoirs praised Sue as "among those who held up mirrors for the people"; *Mémoires de Léonard ancien garçon maçon*, ed. Maurice Agulhon (Paris: Hachette, 1976), 307. Cabet's paper joined V. Considèrant's *La Démocratie pacifique* in opening a subscription for a medal of honor for Sue early in 1845 for the services he had rendered to socialism. Sue subscribed to Tristan's *Union Ouvrière*, and sponsored worker-poets such as Savien Lapointe. Jeanne

attitudes they embodied, ascribed to even settled artisans, those who inhabited the outer faubourgs such as Saint-Antoine, Saint-Jacques, and Saint-Marcel, an acute sense of marginality. Chevalier argues that their poetry and prose exhibits "a consciousness ... of living on the edge of the city and its civilization, in a different, alien and hostile society."[15]

The perception of workers as a race apart was reinforced by Christian philanthropists and bourgeois social investigators who focused public attention on the "social question" - the problem of "pauperism" and its remedies.[16] By far the most influential of these investigators, at least in shaping liberal and bourgeois opinion in the 1840s, was Dr. Louis Villermé, who was charged with investigating the physical and moral state of workers in the cotton, woolen and silk factories of France and England by the *Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques*.[17] Although this study focused exclusively on textile workers in manufacturing areas, its conclusions tended to be

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Deroin's associate, femme Nicaud, had a portrait of Sue in her home when arrested for her participation in the Union of Associations.

[15]*Laboring Classes*, 398-399.

[16]For an analysis of these efforts, see Hilde Rigaudias-Weiss, *Les Enquêtes Ouvrières en France entre 1830 et 1848* (New York: Arno Press, 1975; reprint, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1936). Rigaudias-Weiss notes (21-24) that the first studies done in the early 1830s were by Christian economists and philanthropists such as De Gérando, Bigot de Morogues, and Villeneuve-Bargemont, who opposed workers' efforts to organize producers cooperatives in favor of savings banks, moral education and charity. A more recent study which largely deals with factory labor is Katherine A. Lynch, *Family, Class and Ideology in Early Industrial France: Social Policy and the Working-Class Family 1825-1848* (Madison WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988).

[17]For a discussion of Villermé's moralism see Rigaudias-Weiss, *Les enquêtes*, 26-32, 37-62 and William H. Sewell, Jr., *Work and Revolution in France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980): 223-232.

generalized to other workers as well. Villermé blandly insisted that "[their] situation is better today than it has ever been" and blamed workers' poverty on their own vices, such as drunkenness, prostitution, libertinage, and an inability to postpone gratification.[18]

Villermé's views did not go uncontested. Eugène Buret, who also published under the aegis of the Academy, argued that poverty was not due to workers' improvidence but had structural causes, such as the periodic crises of capitalism that wiped out workers' savings. Immorality was a consequence and not a cause of misery, he insisted. The remedy he proposed was a kind of corporate syndicalism in which workers and employers, assisted by the state, would band together to regulate conditions of employment in each trade.[19] Not surprisingly, Buret was a favorite of workers and socialists, who frequently cited his findings in support of their own arguments for the reform of work.[20] However Villermé's conflation of poverty with immorality, particularly his obsessive anxiety about the mixing of the sexes in textile mills, left a more powerful imprint on educated public opinion. Even workers who fiercely defended their own propriety borrowed Villermé's hyperbolic imagery to depict the dangers of the

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[18] Dr. L. R. Villermé, *Etat physique et moral des ouvrières des manufactures de coton, laine...* (Paris: J. Renouard, 1840), 2: 351.

[19]Buret, 1: 74 cited in Weiss, *Les Enquêtes Ouvrières*, 87.

[20]See for example Louis Blanc, *Organisation du Travail*, 5th ed. (Paris: Société de l'Industrie Fraternelle, 1848), 43-47; Adolphe Boyer, *De l'État des Ouvriers et de son Amélioration par L'Organisation du Travail* (Paris: Dubois, 1841), 30-32, 143-146; Pierre Moreau, *De la Réforme des abus du compagnonage {sic}* (Auxerre: Maillefer, 1843), 126-27; Flora Tristan, *The London Journal of Flora Tristan 1842*, trans. Jean Hawkes of *Promenades dans Londres*, 2nd ed. (London: Virago Press, 1982), 68 and passim. Tristan lists Buret's *De la Misère* as a study workers should read in "Conseil aux Ouvriers", *Union Ouvrière*, 3rd ed. (Paris: Editions d'Histoire Sociale, 1967; reprint Paris: 1844), 111-12.

urban atelier for women. In fact Villermé's portrayal of proletarians living outside of bourgeois norms of respectability and legality was so potent that it resonated well into the twentieth century. Louis Chevalier's (1958) social history of the Parisian working class in the first half of the nineteenth century depicts criminality, concubinage, and illegitimacy as integral parts of working-class culture. Such illicit unions "placed a whole population on the margin of the law; often, too it drove them outside it," Chevalier charges, citing a high positive correlation between illegitimacy and criminality.[21] His Durkheimian view of Parisian workers as anomic and poorly integrated into the larger culture is eerily reminiscent of the perspectives of mid-nineteenth century social investigators.

Continually confronted with discourses that portrayed workers as dangerous, debauched, drunken, lazy, and promiscuous, elite artisans responded with a hyper-moralism that emphasized the dignity, probity, and fraternity of those who did manual work. There is a kind of rhetorical "overbidding" in workerist discourses which not only refuses the negative definitions of others, but which depicts wealth rather than poverty as the source of all immorality and corruption in society.[22] Thus workers not only defended themselves against charges of libertinage by professing their devotion to

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[21]Chevalier, *Laboring Classes and Dangerous Classes*, 313-316; quotation, 315. Chevalier's contentions about Parisian workers propensity for concubinage have been refuted by Michel Frey, "Du Mariage et du Concubinage dans les Classes Populaires à Paris," 803-823. Frey's findings will be discussed later in this chapter.

[22]As Judith Coffin points out, the phrase was originally François Furet's, in *Interpreting the French Revolution*, but has been picked up by other authors, including Michael Sonescher, *Work and Wages* (Cambridge: 1989) and Sarah Maza, *Private Lives and Public Affairs* (Los Angeles: 1993). See Coffin "Gender and the Guild Order", *Journal of Economic History* 54, no. 4 (December 1944), Note 59: 783.

marriage and the family, they argued that the bourgeoisie had polluted and undermined both institutions by their venality. Another consequence of this "overbidding", discussed in more detail below, was to construct prostitution and sexual harassment almost entirely as a problem of class exploitation, ignoring the degree to which proletarian men contributed to the problem.

On the controversial issue of the *ouvrière*, elite workers exhibited considerable ambivalence. They tended to resist definitions that painted her as inherently immoral, as they did similar labels when applied to themselves. But they nevertheless acquiesced in the tendency, so marked in bourgeois rhetoric, to frame the "problem" of the *ouvrière* primarily in moral rather than economic terms. This shifted the dynamic of the debate from woman's active role and rights as producer to her passive function as an object of male desire. To the extent that the polemic about the *ouvrière* was fought on these grounds, the pragmatic issues of pay, working conditions, and access to training and better paid trades were subordinated to a debate in which male workers and their bourgeois opponents argued about who were the real debauchers or defenders of proletarian women, and what environments would best protect them from such predation. In this sense, the *ouvrière*, like her counterparts across the class spectrum, became "the Sex", a being subsumed and defined by her body and her sexuality.[23]

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[23]Geneviève Fraisse emphasizes that by the 19th century, woman was "the Sex" because her sexual organs were in fact determinative of her entire social role - which was to ensure the reproduction of the breed (*espèce*). Fraisse emphasizes how often the term *espèce* was used in connection with women's social functions - to reproduce was her "natural destiny". *Muse de la raison: La démocratie exclusive et la différence des sexes* (Aix-en-Provence: Editions Alinéa, 1989), 89. See also Denise Riley, *"Am I that name? Feminism and the Category of "Women" in History"* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988); L. J. Jordanova, "Natural facts: an historical

The consequences of these discourses can be seen in the fate of women in the associational movement during the July Monarchy and particularly in the Revolution of 1848-1851. The needs of *ouvrières* were generally ignored by their male counterparts, who were accustomed to defining female workers in ways that discounted their labor and their productivity. Their reluctance to view women as genuine workers, particularly in the context of associational organization, was a consequence of the way in which the "problem" of the *ouvrière* had been discursively constructed in previous decades. This chapter examines these constructions from various angles, focusing largely on the period from 1840 to 1851, when associational projects and rhetoric captured the attention of large numbers of French artisans. It considers male workers' images of the *ouvrière* and her place in working-class culture and the larger society in the following contexts: (1) misery, morality and the problem of prostitution, (2) gendered definitions of work and the atelier, (3) the issue of women's wages, (4) the family wage polemic, and (5) the "family romance" of elite workers.

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perspective on science and sexuality" in *Nature, Culture and Gender*, ed. C. P. MacCormack (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 42-69; Thomas Laqueur, "Organism, Generation and the Politics of Reproductive Biology" in *The Making of the Modern Body: Sexuality and Society in the 19th Century*, ed. Catherine Gallagher and Thomas Laqueur (Berkeley: Univ. of Calif. Press, 1987), 1-41; Londa Schiebinger, "Skeletons in the Closet: The First Illustrations of the Female Skeleton in Eighteenth-Century Anatomy," ibid., 42-84.

1: "Yes, we are sad....": Misery, Morality and the Problem of Prostitution

Male workers' perspectives on the alleged "problem" of the *ouvrière* range the ideological spectrum from the right-wing misogyny of the Proudhonists and the neo-Catholicism of the *Atelier* camp, to the more radical perspectives of workers infected with the virus of Saint-Simonianism or Fourierism. However it is difficult to find, except in purely Proudhonist discourses, a blatant equation of the female worker with social disorder and immorality. Male workers were too sensitive to the disparagement of their own morality and alleged propensity for "disorder" to embrace such analogies; besides, it was their wives, daughters and sisters that were being defamed. Although they admitted that proletarian women could be corrupted, and that some environments were morally dangerous for them, they placed the blame for their "fall" on those who cynically exploited their destitution. If the *ouvrière* represented "anomie" for the bourgeoisie, she personified "misery" for the worker, a trope that is invoked with monotonous regularity in every reference to her situation. She served as a constant and disquieting symbol of the extreme vulnerability that afflicted her entire class. With the hyperbole of the depressive, the typographer Adolphe Boyer, aspiring reformer of work, and soon-to-be suicide, expressed a typical sympathy for her plight:

> The lot of workers is doubtless very sad and has much to complain of, nevertheless it is nothing compared to that of *ouvrières*. Here the miseries are so great, the troubles so deplorable and so horrible, that the pen refuses to reproduce them. There is no expression possible to describe their sufferings and their sorrows. The life of an honest working woman is a life of total abnegation, of

> devotion and affection.... however, these women who are so good and so devoted are generally defamed.[24]

Thus the *ouvrière* was more likely to evoke pity from her male comrades than condemnation, even when she succumbed to temptation and fell from grace, for the shame of her degradation was visited not on her, but on those who cynically exploited her need. Her violation was emblematic of an exploitation that weighed on all proletarians and filled their lives with melancholy:

> Yes, we are sad, because we continually see young and beautiful creatures, sometimes our daughters, sometimes our sisters, exchange their charms, their caresses, their love, finally all the treasures of their bodies and souls, for a bit of bread, mixed with imprecations and anathemas.[25]

Since misery was a constant in life, afflicting proletarians of both sexes and all conditions, the *femme isolée* was not the deviant "other", singled out for particular condemnation. Workers were quite aware that neither virtue nor marriage protected women against the hunger that impelled them into streets. As the cabinet-maker Lenoir pointed out:

> one does not prostitute oneself just to have [finery], one prostitutes oneself also in order to eat, when work is lacking or insufficient. I know those who have prostituted themselves in order to feed mothers and fathers, and it is not rare for mothers to prostitute themselves in order to feed their children.[26]

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[24]*De l'État des Ouvriers et de son Amélioration par L'Organisation du Travail*, (Paris: Dubois, 1841), 83.

[25]Pierre Vinçard, "Encore une plainte," *La Ruche Populaire* February 1841, 12.

[26]*La Ruche Populaire*, March 1840, 3. Lenoir was a Saint-Simonian worker who participated in ceremonies at Ménilmontant in 1832. Jean Maitron, *Dictionnaire biographique de mouvement ouvrier français 1789-1864*, (Paris: Editions ouvrières, 1964-66) v. 3. [hereafter, Maitron]

The *prolétarienne*'s vulnerability was problematic, however, because it mirrored male workers own "shocking dependency."[27] As Charles Noiret bitterly complained: "we are under the absolute sway of those whom fortune has favored, no matter how...."[28] There was a prostitution to work as well as sexual prostitution; as franker workers acknowledged, both involved selling one's body in order to live. However, passivity and dependency were stereotypical female traits. Acknowledging them as conditions of life for male workers threatened to "feminize" the entire proletariat.[29] This provoked feelings of outrage and shame, summarized by the locksmith Pierre Moreau's rhetorical plaint: "Isn't our masculine dignity humiliated by this passive role to which we are condemned?"[30] Wounded dignity in turn set up a dynamic where workers' genuine sympathy for the *ouvrière* and identification with her plight alternated with a need to assert masculine difference - that particular dignity, probity and strength of character and body which were the apanage of men.

The restoration of masculine dignity, a theme stressed obsessively in the works of compagnonnage reformers and literate artisans, required male moralization, education and solidarity. It entailed recognition that "we are all men, all brothers and children of the

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[27]Adolphe Boyer, *De l'État des Ouvriers*, 51.

[28]*Aux Travailleurs* (Rouen: Bloquel, 1840): 1.

[29]Christiane Dufrancatel argues that proletarian women represented symbolically the degradation and exploitation characteristic of the class as a whole. Thus any violence done to their bodies was seen as harm done to males as well. "La femme imaginaire des hommes: politique, idéologies et imaginaire dans le mouvement ouvrier," in *L'histoire sans qualités* (Paris: Editions Galilée, 1979): 159-186.

[30]*De la Reforme des abus du compagnonage* (Auxerre: Maillefer, 1843), 59.

great human family."[31] In this great family, masculine honor demanded that women be protected from the rigors of the workshop and the sexual predation of the powerful. Sympathy for the plight of the *ouvrière*, therefore, did not translate into a desire to address her misery by rendering her more economically or politically self-sufficient. It paradoxically reinforced notions of her dependency and her need for masculine guardianship.

Prostitution was an extremely visible and much-debated social issue during the July Monarchy. The parameters of the debate had been established in 1836 by Parent-Duchâtelet's massive investigation of public prostitution.[32] A physician whose early research focused on the drains, cesspools and sewers of Paris, Parent-Duchâtelet viewed prostitution as a kind of unavoidable "seminal drain" which must be closely channeled in order to prevent the contamination of society. While arguing that prostitutes had innate propensities towards laziness and libertinage, he was enough of an empiricist to conclude that poverty and low wages drove many women into the life.[33] By studying police

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[31]Pierre Moreau, *Un Mot aux Ouvriers de Toutes les Professions...* (Auxerre: Guillaume-Maillefer, 1841), 21.

[32]Dr. Alex. J. B. Parent-Duchâtelet, *De la prostitution dans la ville de Paris* (Paris: J. B. Baillière, 1836), 2 vols.

[33]For a discussion of Parent's work, see Jill Harsin, *Policing Prostitution in Nineteenth-Century Paris* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 96-130. Alain Corbin notes that while Parent emphasized the prostitute's alleged differences in temperament, he avoided popular phrenological and physiological arguments. *Women for Hire: Prostitution and Sexuality in France after 1850*, trans. Alan Sheridan (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990), 3-17. Corbin cites (53) one Dr. Fiaux as coining the expression "seminal drain." For examples of 19th century physiological arguments, see Sander L. Gilman, "Black Bodies, White Bodies: Toward an Iconography of Female Sexuality in Late Nineteenth-Century Art, Medicine, and Literature," in *"Race," Writing and Difference*, ed. H. L. Gates (New York: 1988): 223-261.

statistics on the inscription of prostitutes in Paris for the years 1812-32, Parent-Duchâtelet discovered that the majority were daughters of artisans from Paris and the departments surrounding the Seine, thus challenging the conventional view that prostitutes were rural girls ruined by migration to the big city. While registered prostitutes showed a wide variety of former occupations, about fifty per cent, he noted, were unskilled or semi-skilled needleworkers, and many were driven into the life by the death of parents or the disappearance of other support systems.[34]

Parent-Duchâtelet's conclusion that economic distress and family breakdwon were the root causes of prostitution lent support to the claim of many socialists and workers that its prevalence was a symptom of class exploitation and the bad organization of labor. From the standpoint of male workers, proletarian women were the victims of two dynamics: first, sexual predation by bosses, foremen and *marchandeurs* in the workplace, who took advantage of women's poverty to hold out work in return for sexual favors, and second, corruption occasioned by the prevailing materialism and immorality of the surrounding bourgeois culture. Although many Parisian artisans were dependent on the luxury trades for their subsistence, these very trades were ironically viewed as particularly dangerous for young women, who would thereby be exposed to tastes and to a clientele that would arouse unhealthy desires. Their vulnerability to temptation was assumed to

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[34]Harsin, *Policing Prostitution*, 113-115. Judith Walkowitz similarly found that in England in the 1860s and 1870s, prostitutes generally shared the same characteristics as other working-class women, except that a significant number were orphans or had lost one parent, or were runaway victims of family conflict. *Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women, Class and the State* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 15-20.

be acute not only because of the low salaries that they received and the bad influences that surrounded them in the urban atelier, but because of the natural proclivities of their sex, with its weakness for beauty and glitter.

More puritanical workers, particularly the Buchezian neo-Catholics associated with the journal *L'Atelier*, infused their commentaries on prostitution with moralistic themes borrowed from social investigators such as Louis Villermé and Auguste Blanqui. Villermé depicted factories and their associated urban slums as hotbeds of sexual promiscuity. His subtext, as Joan Scott and others have noted, was the nefarious consequences of the indiscriminate mixing of the sexes, a kind of sexual "pell-mell" that carried over from factory floors to family beds.[35] Villermé's obsessions find direct echoes in workers' anxieties about the material seductions of the big city and its constant display of unattainable opulence. The cabinet-maker Lenoir, writing in *La Ruche Populaire*, echoed the prevalent stereotype about the susceptibility of country women, deprived of the supervision of "the paternal home". What will be the consequences, he asked, of exposing naive country girls to the spectacle of smartly dressed urban women, whose cachet will arouse their envy and their longing? How can young *ouvrières* be expected to work daily at producing beautiful things which they themselves cannot afford, and be surrounded by shopkeepers who openly entice them with this forbidden fruit, and not fall prey to rakes who promise them luxuries in return for sexual favors?

> Will you object that they ought to resist? If one makes a law mandating resistance for poor girls, why not make a law requiring merchants only to show their merchandise to persons who can buy it? Why not seek occupations for poor

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[35]"Ouvrière, mot impie...", 149-52.

girls that are completely divorced from luxury, and a position which protects them from the attentions of seducers?[36]

The editors of *L'Atelier* lamented not only the vulgar ostentation of the wealthy, so demoralizing for the poor, but the coarsening effect on young women of popular urban amusements. These included drinking at the *barrières* and lewd cabaret songs, whose lyrics, like the blue wine of the *guinguettes*, poisoned and enervated the mind: *"Il paie si bien/ Qu'on ne peut lui refuser rien!"*[37] However, the real agents of corruption in their view were the *gants jaunes* of the propertied classes, whose voluptuous lives set such a bad example for the "foolish virgins" of the people. Combining the traditional Catholic theme of woman's susceptibility to temptation with an indictment of upper class debauchery, the editors argued that young *ouvrières* were easy prey for wealthy seducers. Given woman's "instincts for coquetry, her love of finery, her desire to please and be loved", is it any wonder that, exposed to the "blinding spectacle of elegance, to the richness and joys which her parvenu companions offer her, the incredible glorification with which the gilded youth surrounds great courtesans" that she succumbs?[38]

The omnipresent theme of seduction from above provided considerable cover for proletarian men. Louis Chevalier argues that much of the demand for prostitution in the period 1817-1848 stemmed from the influx of proletarian immigrants into Paris, including

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[36]*La Ruche Populaire*, March 1840, 1-2.

[37] "Variétés: Les chansons des rues," *L'Atelier*, 31 Aug. 1842: 108. *Guinguettes* were taverns outside the customs walls (*barrières*) where wine was cheaper. The lyrics of this song, which describe a woman with both a favored young lover and tolerated old one, ironically echo Alain Corbin's observation that a bourgeois bachelor might support not only a proletarian mistress, but her husband as well, with his consent. *Women for Hire*, 137.

[38]Ibid.

seasonal construction workers such as masons from the Creuse. This created a marked imbalance between the sexes which, together with high levels of poverty, promoted prostitution, concubinage, and illegitimate births. Similarly Alain Corbin asserts that it was not until the 1860s, when the rate of migration slowed and migrants were more likely to bring their wives to Paris and settle permanently, that the proletarian demand for prostitution eased and the market became more bourgeois.[39]

Michel Frey has shown, however, that the imbalance between men and women was most pronounced in the central districts of Paris where there were large numbers of lodging houses catering to male migrants; it was much less prominent in the predominantly working-class faubourgs on the periphery of Paris, where workers had a high propensity to marry.[40] This split between the "familial" orientation of more settled artisans in the faubourgs and the aleatory lives of unmarried migrants and journeymen may account in part for the remarkable circumspection in artisan memoirs on the seamier aspects of proletarian sexuality. Certainly focusing on such issues would have undermined the aura of masculine dignity and probity such workers were trying to project, and fed into bourgeois stereotypes.

Elite workers in the 1840s occasionally alluded to the gamier amusements favored by their compatriots, but with obvious condemnation and distaste. Martin Nadaud, whose autobiography describes the migratory lives of masons from the Creuse, mentions the

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[39]Chevalier notes that in 1836, there were 97 women to every 108 men in the sexually-active 30-40 age group. *Laboring Classes and Dangerous Classes*, 244-247; Corbin, *Women for Hire*, 186-189.

[40]Predominantly workerist faubourgs were in the fifth, sixth and twelfth arrondisssements. "Du Mariage et du Concubinage," 808.

Sunday outings to the *guinguettes*, such as the infamous *la Courtille*, at the outer edge of the *faubourg du Temple*, where "shameless and often filthy balls" took place on Sunday. On Monday after these debauches "thousands of disheveled lewd women descended into Paris on the arms of their cavaliers in a state of drunkenness, tumbling into one another, flouting the public, addressing them with filthy propositions." These spectacles attracted crowds of curious onlookers, a situation which the police ignored. Nadaud attributes their indifference to the government's desire to degrade and lower the spirit of the people, in order to perpetuate official dominance.[41] He also mentions going to dance halls in Paris where women would disdain to dance with masons if more polished clientele showed up.[42] An assiduous reader of *L'Atelier*, he obviously shared the journal's conclusion that "the most sure method of oppressing a people is to enervate them by 'corruption'."[43]

Nadaud's friend and political ally in 1848-52, the joiner and compagnonnage reformer, Agricol Perdiguier, whose *nom-de-compagnon* was appropriately *Avignonnaise-la-Vertu*, is even more reticent on matters of sexuality. In his *Livre de Compagnonnage*, written to regenerate what was fast becoming an obsolete way of life, Perdiguier alludes to the hit-and-run propensities of journeymen compagnons on the *tour de France*. He

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[41]*Mémoires de Léonard ancien garçon maçon*, ed. Maurice Agulhon (Paris: Hachette, 1976), 142-143.

[42]Ibid., 146.

[43]"Variétés: Les chansons des rues," *L'Atelier*, 31 August 1842, 108. For Nadaud's praise of *L'Atelier*, see *Mémoires*, 310, 356. Christiane Dufrancatel notes that in working-class analyses in the later 19th C., the state was portrayed as an ally in prostituting women, thereby reducing men to cynical debaucheries which permitted the government to control them more easily. "La femme imaginaire des hommes...", 167-68.

also condemns their hard-drinking rituals, such as the payment of fines in liters of wine and the notorious *conduits* that ushered departing journeymen out of town.[44] These undoubtedly led not only to the infamous *rixes*, or brawls between rival sects (*rites*), but to whoring as well. Cynthia Truant, in her recent study of compagnonnage, emphasizes how the fraternal bonding forged by such rituals spilled over into the "spoilation of women" through gang-rapes and shared prostitution.[45] However, Perdiguier pulls the veil over journeyman escapades so completely in his moralistic stories and cautionary tales that the only incident of sexual misconduct he specifically describes is that of a young man who promises marriage to a woman, borrows money from his prospective in-laws to travel home and get his papers in order, and then skips town.[46]

However, as labor historians such as Alain Faure have observed, Parisian compagnons went to the *barrières* to drink more often than just on Sunday. Faure cites the blacksmiths of the capital who customarily had a debauch that lasted an entire week.[47] Daniel Roche speaks of the "economy of seduction and dissipation" that characterized the journeyman's code of sociability. Roche cites the memoires of the eighteenth-century journeyman glazier Jacques-Louis Ménétra. Far less reticent than his nineteenth-century counterparts, Ménétra describes a life full of ostentatious spending,

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[44]Agricol Perdiguier, *Le Livre de Compagnonnage*, 2nd. ed. (Paris: Pagnerre, 1841), 1: 61-63.

[45]*The Rites of Labor: Brotherhoods of Compagnonnage in Old and New Regime France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 175-178.

[46]"L'Inconstant," *Le Livre de Compagnonage*, 1: 149-151.

[47]Alain Faure, "Introduction," to Agricol Perdiguier, *Mémoires d'un compagnon* (Paris: Maspero, 1977): 12-13.

waste and conviviality. His account reveals what Roche calls "virtual potlaches": the journeymen's propensity to spend all of their wages on feasts, celebrations of saints' days, drinking, festivities and loans to others.[48] By contrast, the moralistic strictures of compagnonnage reformers such as Agricol Perdiguier and his rival, the locksmith Pierre Moreau, seem to issue from another world, one in which the picaresque elements of journeyman culture have given way to something more self-conscious and constrained. The livrets of *L'Union*, the reformed compagnonnage association which Moreau championed, with their carefully inscribed moral code and space for recording workers' compliance with it, testify to a desire to shed the raucous public image of journeymen which so embarrassed better educated artisans.[49]

While the effort to project an image of dignity and probity required such moralizing projects directed at workers themselves, an equally important tactic was to turn accusations of immorality back upon the propertied classes, and to trace the roots of

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[48]Daniel Roche, "Work, Fellowship and some Economic Realities of Eighteenth-Century France," in *Work in France*, ed. Steven L. Kaplan and Cynthia Koepp (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1986), 54-76. See also Roche's introduction to *Journal de ma vie: Jacques-Louis Ménétra, compagnon vitrier au 18e siècle* (Paris, 1982). Ménétra's autobiography was written between 1762 and 1800.

[49]*Un Mot aux Ouvriers de Toutes les Professions, A Tous les Amis du Peuple et du Progrès sur le compagnonnage...* (Auxerre: Guillaume-Maillefer, 1841), 24-25. *L'Union* was a schismatic compagnonnage society founded in Toulon in 1830. It rejected the internal hierarchy of older *devoirs* and stressed the republican ideal of fraternity and complete equality between members; Moreau became secretary in the early 1840s. He engaged in an impassioned polemic with Agricol Perdiguier on the best way to reform compagnonnage, and lent support to Flora Tristan's project for a workers' union in 1843. For a discussion of *l'Union* see Jacques Marillier, "Communication: Pierre Moreau et l'Union," in *L'Actualité de l'Histoire*, no. 5 (October 1953), 5-13; Cynthia M. Truant, *The Rites of Labor*, 267-272; Maurice Agulhon, *Une ville ouvrière au temps du socialisme uptopique: Toulon 1815-1851* (Paris: Mouton, 1970), 131-136.

moral corruption to bourgeois idleness, acquisitiveness, and display. Conscious workers were therefore inclined to attribute sexual "debauchery", whether by working-class men or by women, to the demoralizing effects of "misery" and to the bad example set by the propertied classes. While deploring carnavalesque or bawdy popular amusements, which lowered workers' dignity in the eyes of the bourgeoisie, most seem to have shared Proudhon's curt judgment that the true libertine was not the drunken mason or cruising compagnon, but "the capitalist, the rentier, the stockbroker, the man of great salary, the parasite, the intriguer, the idler" who by his "greedy egotism, by his disordered loves, corrupts public morals and dissolves the family."[50] By contrast workers had an innate propensity for good:

> It is misery which makes the worker a libertine and a fornicator; he has a natural horror of vice and an attraction to virtue. It is luxury which makes the rich incestuous and adulterous; satiety and idleness are in them the indomitable agents of disorder.[51]

The notion that workers were in fact defenders of marriage and the family, a theme endlessly reiterated in workerist and socialist publications, has been lent empirical support by Michel Frey, who challenges Chevalier's contention that concubinage was deeply ingrained in Parisian working class culture in the 1830s and 1840s. Using a variety of quantitative data from the period, including Chamber of Commerce *enquêtes*, census surveys, and the records of the Society of Saint-Francis Régis, a religious confraternity created in 1826 to encourage couples living in concubinage to marry, Frey concludes that Parisian workers married at a higher rate and earlier in life than any other

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[50]"Manifeste du Peuple", *Le Peuple*, November 1848, 1-2.

[51]Ibid.

social class in the city. Concubinage was not a preferred option, but simply a *pis aller* for those whose poverty made marriage impossible, particularly women whose low wages made it essential to secure masculine support on whatever terms possible. Workers had a different matrimonial strategy than the bourgeoisie, for whom marriage "had acquisition as its object, the maintenance and transmission of a patrimony."[52] Ironically, Frey's interpretation dovetails rather well with mid-nineteenth century socialist and workerist critiques, which portrayed bourgeois unions as cold business arrangements, where young virgins were shopped around to the highest bidder, the notary was the most important figure at the nuptials, and the family was nothing more than a commercial society with the husband as director.[53] Frey believes that the Parisian Chamber of Commerce was correct when it observed in its 1847-1848 survey of Parisian industries that: "In general, the majority of workers are steady, industrious, of average instruction, and not lacking in morality."[54] It was an image that conscious male workers were eager to promote and to burnish.

While socialist-feminist women were avid proponents of the idea that the emancipation of working women would release them to increase their moral force within proletarian society, helping men to resist the tyranny of debauchery which a dissolute state and society foisted upon them, literate male workers were more likely to see

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[52]"Du Mariage et du Concubinage dans les Classes Populaires à Paris," 803-823; quotation, 812.

[53]Louis Blanc, for example, portrayed bourgeois marriage as *"une association à peu près semblable à une société commerciale en nom collectif... dont le mari est le gérant." Le Nouveau Monde*, 15 July 1849, 7.

[54]*Enquête de la Chambre de commerce*, 61 cited in "Du Mariage et du Concubinage," 810.

themselves as the guardians of female morality, a morality which could best be preserved by removing women from dangerous and corrupting environments. Both sides could embrace a rhetoric of moral uplift and deplore the vulnerability of proletarian women at the hands of the market and its defenders. However, socialist women's rhetoric associated feminine morality with economic self-sufficiency and liberty of person, working-class men's discourse with masculine tutelage and protection. Consequently it was difficult for socialist women to secure masculine support for associational projects designed to increase feminine self-sufficiency. Such autonomy implied the power to resist not only the blandishments of bourgeois society, but the dominance of men as well.

2: "The jobs to which we have relegated them are so few in number...": Gendering work and the atelier

At the root of the pervasive misery of *ouvrières*, according to male artisans, was neither their character nor their culture. It was the "bad organization of work", the rapacity of middlemen (and in women's trades, middlewomen),[55] and the bourgeois ethic of *chacun pour soi* that turned labor into an exploitable commodity and pitted workers against each other and against machines. In such a system, neither virtue nor industry could protect women against the parasites who took advantage of their numbers and their need to suck them dry. As *L'Atelier* observed:

> One of the most powerful causes of the demoralization of working women is the insufficiency of salaries and the rapacity of the masters who, speculating on their misery and on the facility with which it is possible to procure them, have them work at all prices, because women are isolated and without regard to anything but the extreme misery that drives them, always end up consenting to the lowering of their salaries, which they have to endure.[56]

The tension in this passage between women "consenting to" and having "to endure" low salaries hints at the mixture of pity and resentment that male workers felt when contemplating the glut of female labor. Women who had no choice but to accept the lowest possible price for their work threatened to depress wage rates in all trades that they entered. Yet as the wage data and budgets of working-class families discussed in the following chapter reveal, few families could survive without female income. The miserable twenty to thirty sous brought in daily by a married woman might make the

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[55]Janoma speaks angrily of the *marchandeuse, "vrai parasite de la société"*, who exploits *ouvrières*. "Les Confectionneuses," *La Ruche Populaire*, March 1844, 73.

[56]"Enquête: De la condition des femmes," 30 December 1842, 31-32.

difference between a plate of beans for supper or simply bread, or in more fortunate situations, between a little schooling for sons and daughters and none. Male workers generally acknowledged that women of the people worked incessantly and selflessly to support their families. Stressing the "painful" and "exhausting" character of women's work was a way for them to indict the hypocrisy of a society which brutally exploited poor women while making a public fetish of women's delicacy and dependency. To question the importance of women's economic contribution would undermine this critique, as well as damage the claim that women were grossly underpaid. But to represent them as producers on a par with men would erode the rationale for gendered wage rates and employment structures that insured masculine dominance in society and in the family. The editors of *L'Atelier* tried to bridge these contradictions by declaring that "the work of women is less productive for society than that of men," while simultaneously arguing that women were essential to the performance of many trades: "there are professions which can only be exercised by them; they are indispensable in them, such as in all the needle trades... and many others which it would be useless to enumerate."[57]

As recent studies of work have shown, the division of labor in many societies tends to be based on gendered definitions of skill and competence which are historically constructed and constantly evolving, but which often function to maintain male dominance.[58] At mid-century, women made up about forty per cent of the work force

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[57]Ibid., 31.

[58]There is an enormous literature on gendered definitions of skill and competence in the work place. Among the most valuable recent studies for the 19th-early 20th Century are: Marilyn J. Boxer, "Foyer or Factory: Working Class Women in Nineteenth Century France," *Proceedings of the Western Society for French History* 2 (1974): 192-203; Sally Alexander, "Women's Work in Nineteenth Century London: A

in the handicraft trades in Paris. Some occupational categories, particularly the production of ready-made clothing, had become heavily feminized because of capitalist production processes that encouraged the sub-contracting of relatively low-skilled piece work to cheap, sweated labor. By 1847, Parisian women employed in the garment trades outnumbered men by about two to one. They comprised about 70% of all garment workers, just under 60% of workers in textile mills, and about 44% of workers who made

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Study of the Years 1820-50," in *The Rights and Wrongs of Women*, ed. Juliet Mitchell and Ann Oakley (New York: Penguin Books, 1976): 59-111; Barbara Taylor, "'The Men are as Bad as Their Masters': Socialism, Feminism and Sexual Antagonism in the London Tailoring Trade in the Early 1830's," *Feminist Studies* 5, no. 1 (Spring 1979): 7-40; Laura Strumingher, *Women and the Making of the Working Class: Lyon 1830-1850* (St. Albens, VT: Eden Press, 1979); Angela Johns, *By the Sweat of Their Brow: Women Workers at Victorian Coal Mines* (London: Croom Helm, 1980); Jane Lewis, *Women in England 1870-1950: Sexual Divisions and Social Change* (Sussex: Wheatsheaf Books, 1984); Rose Glickman, *Russian Factory Women: Workplace and Society, 1880-1914* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984); Sonya O. Rose, "Gender Segregation in the Transition to the Factory: The English Hosiery Industry, 1850-1910," *Feminist Studies* 13 (Spring 1987) and Rose, *Limited Livelihoods* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992 (esp. intro. and chap. 2); Michelle Perrot, "Qu'est-ce qu'un métier de femme?", special issue, "Métiers de Femmes," *Le Mouvement Social*, No. 140 (July-Sept. 1987); Joan W. Scott, "Work Identities for Men and Women: The Politics of Work and Family in the Parisian Garment Trades in 1848," in *Gender and Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988); Chris Ward, *Russia's Cotton Workers and the New Economic Policy: Shop-floor culture and state policy 1921-29* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), esp. ch. 4; Ava Baron, "An 'Other' Side of Gender Antagonism at Work: Men, Boys and The Remasculinization of Printers' Work, 1830-1920," in *Work Engendered*, ed. Baron (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991); Tessie P. Liu, *The Weaver's Knot: The Contradictions of Class Struggle and Family Solidarity in Western France, 1750-1914* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), esp. chap. 9; Anna Clark, *The Struggle for the Breeches: Gender and the Making of the British Working Class* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Helen Harden Chenut, "The Gendering of Skill as Historical Process: The Case of French Knitters in Industrial Troyes, 1880-1939," in *Gender and Class in Modern Europe*, ed. Laura L. Frader and Sonya O. Rose (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996); Judith G. Coffin, *The Politics of Women's Work: The Parisian Garment Trades, 1750-1915* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

luxury and novelty items known generically as *articles de Paris*. They also represented about a quarter of those employed in the chemical, printing, and precious metals industries, and about ten percent of those in furniture and woodworking. Only small numbers were employed in the building trades, metals and hardware, and leather and hides, and in the production of bulky consumer durables, such as pianos and carriages. Over half of all *ouvrières* (56.4%) worked in workshops, while the remainder were employed in home work.[59] In many male-dominated trades that used female labor, women were consigned to gender-specific parts of the production process, usually less well-paid finishing operations, such as polishing metals, varnishing or gilding chairs, sewing pages of books, or tweezing hairs that obtruded from the smooth nap of hats. Significantly, sixty-five percent of employed Parisian women were paid on a piece-work basis, as opposed to only thirty-five per cent who were paid by the day.[60] Piece-work was likely to be paid at lower prevailing rates and was generally connected with lower job security than day labor.

Female competition did not menace male workers whose jobs required great physical strength and seasonal mobility, such as construction workers, or those for whom long and costly apprenticeships were required, such as artisans in precious metals.

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[59]Judith A. DeGroat, "The Working Lives of Women in the Parisian Manufacturing Trades, 1830-48" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Rochester, 1991). Chapter One analyzes the employment data collected by Chambre de commerce de Paris, *Statistique de l'industrie à Paris résultant de l'enquête faite par la Chambre de commerce pour les années 1847-48* (Paris: Guillamin et Cie, 1851). Useful tables summarizing the data on female workers appear in Degroat, 326-328. A. Audiganne, *Les Populations Ouvrières et Les Industries de la France* (Paris: Capelle, 1860) covers some of the same ground, also using the Chamber's *Enquête*.

[60]DeGroat, (1991): 43.

However, it did affect those whose work was more sedentary and easily learned, and which required primarily manual dexterity, concentration, and attention to detail. These included print-workers, tailors, shoemakers and others specializing in the production of clothing, accessories, and *articles de Paris*.[61] In these trades, masculine monopolies could no longer be defended on the basis of traditional guild privileges. However, it was difficult to shift ground to more contemporary arguments based on enlightenment or medical discourses that emphasized "natural" differences between the sexes.[62] As Judith Coffin has pointed out, enlightenment discourses emphasized women's alleged "eye for detail", "dexterity", taste, and sensitivity to beauty, defining certain kinds of work, such as sewing, as women's natural preserve. Although pre-revolutionary corporate ideology had never treated sewing as gendered work, and most women did not learn or perfect it in the home, by the late eighteenth century, the needle was increasingly represented as a woman's tool.[63] In 1790 Louis Sébastien Mercier, for example, declared it "grotesque to see male hairdressers, men pushing a needle, handling a shuttle, and usurping the sedentary life of women... It is immoral... for strong and robust persons to invade areas

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[61]"Articles de Paris" included such items as brushes and combs, fans, buttons, artificial flowers and playing cards. In Paris in 1847, 15,540 women plied these trades, comprising 43.6% of the total. Chambre de Commerce de Paris, *Statistique de l'industrie à Paris*, (Paris, 1851); cited in DeGroat, Table 1, p. 326.

[62]For a discussion of such discourses, see Geneviève Fraisse, *Muse de la raison*; Londa Schiebinger, *The Mind Has No Sex? Women in the Origins of Modern Science* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1989).

[63]Judith G. Coffin, *The Politics of Women's Work: The Paris Garment Trades 1750-1915* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 19-45. Much the same ground is covered in Coffin, "Gender and the Guild Order: The Garment Trades in Eighteenth Century Paris," *Journal of Economic History*, 54, no. 4 (Dec. 1994): 768-793.

which nature has particularly designated for persons of the opposite sex."[64] Similarly, Charles Fourier in 1808 argued that it was "scandalous" for men to take work that naturally belonged to women. His accusation that this encroachment pushed women into prostitution was repeated by Parent-Duchâtelet in his 1836 study. As Fourier put it:

> What is [woman's] existence at the present day? Her life is a life of privations, even in the world of Industry, in which man has usurped everything even to the minute occupations of the needle, while we see women devoting themselves to the arduous labors of the field. Is it not scandalous to see stalwart men of thirty years dancing behind a counter, and running about with their brawny arms serving coffee at table, as if there lacked women and children to perform the light duties of the shop and the household? What then are the means of subsistence left for women without fortune? The loom, the needle, or, if they happen to possess charms, their persons.[65]

The danger with such arguments is that they could cut both ways. Male workers who felt threatened by female usurpation were not loath to construct their own arguments based on "natural" sexual difference. These too emphasized the "scandalous" and "immoral" consequences of allowing women into masculine spheres and physical spaces.[66] A common theme was the masculinizing effects of hard labor, which, in the

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[64]*Les tableaux de Paris*, 9: 178-179; cited in Coffin, "Gender and the Guild Order", 787.

[65]*The Social Destiny of Man, or Theory of the Four Movements*, trans. Henry Clapp, Jr. (New York: Gordon Press, 1973), 133.

[66]For arguments about the moralizing and gendering of spaces after 1860 see Jacques Rancière and Patrick Vauday, "Going to the Expo: the worker, his wife and machines," in *Voices of the People: The Social Life of 'La Sociale' at the End of the Second Empire*, ed. Adrian Rifkin and Roger Thomas (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1988), 23-44; Michelle Perrot, "L'éloge de la ménagère dans le discours des ouvriers français au XIXe siècle," in *Mythes et représentations de la Femme au dix-neuvième siècle* (Paris: Champion, 1976), 105-121. Ellen Ross has emphasized the rigid sexual segregation of social spaces in Cockney London, "Fierce Questions and Taunts: Married Life in Working-Class London, 1870-1914," *Feminist Studies*, 8, no. 3 (Fall 1982): 59-80.

words of one alarmist, threatened to turn French women into "hermaphrodites."[67] The "deplorable" or "frightful" spectacle of women bent under great loads, pulling heavy carts, or doing "filthy" work such as sweeping roads or picking through garbage, was frequently evoked by workers and socialists to indict the heartlessness of society.[68] While the manifest intent of such polemics was to provoke sympathy for women's plight, the latent function was to stigmatize women who violated gender boundaries by depicting them as asexual or repulsive. The typographer Adolphe Boyer, for example, contrasted the ugliness of many proletarian women in France with their "Anglo-American" counterparts, who were allegedly freed from hard labor by adequate male salaries. Boyer was much impressed with Michael Chevalier's *Lettres sur l'Amérique*, particularly his reflections on American women:

> You will look in vain among the Anglo-Americans... for one of these repugnant beings who are not feminine except to the physiologists and which abound in all of our cities, or one of those disgraceful viragos who people our markets and three-quarters of our countryside. It is one of the glories of the English race to have everywhere, as much as possible and increasingly, interpreted the superiority of man over women by reserving to man the monopoly of all hard labor.[69]

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[67]Gautier, "De l'affranchisement des femmes," *Le Peuple*, 15 January 1849, 6. Gautier was a fabric designer who contributed to a number of socialist and republican papers between 1830-1848 and was a member of the Society of the Seasons. He was a delegate of the fabric designers for furniture to the Luxembourg Commission in 1848. Member of the "General Association for Socialist Propaganda", he collaborated on Proudhon's journal, *Le Peuple* and its *Almanach pour 1852*. J. Maitron, *Dictionnaire biographique*, v. 2.

[68]Gautier, ibid.; *L'Atelier*, "Du Travail des Femmes", June 1841, 76-77 and "Enquête: De la Condition des femmes", 30 Dec. 1842, 31-32; Emile Varin, "Du Salaire des Femmes", *La Ruche Populaire*, July 1841, 25.

[69]Quoted in Boyer, *De l'État des Ouvriers*, 84-85.

Ironically, the "women carrying heavy burdens, pulling carts like beasts of burden, doing a hundred tasks to which they are not suited"[70] were more likely to be rural women or those employed in proletarian street labor than in artisanal production. Agricol Perdiguier, who grew up in a rural village near Avignon, describes laboring in the fields as a boy with his two older sisters, Madeleine and Babet, who he says "worked like men".[71] Martin Nadaud, from the Creuse, noted that his wife "like all the other country women, had been raised to work hard from morning until night in the fields, and she did not work less, perhaps more, after my marriage."[72] In fact, the rough tasks deplored in workers' critiques were more akin to the lifting and cleaning associated with household work, such as heavy scrubbing, carrying buckets of water up flights of stairs for household use and slops down to the gutter, than to typesetting, dressmaking, polishing, or other occupations which brought women into competition with men. Hard physical work viewed as typically feminine because of its associations with domesticity rarely evoked any masculine concern. As Flora Tristan noted with justifiable outrage during her visit to Nîmes, the extremely onerous and unhealthy work of the laundresses, forced by the construction of the local *lavoir* to work half-submerged in heavily polluted water, was literally invisible to the inhabitants, for whom it had a taken-for-granted quality.[73] These included worker-visitors such as Agricol Perdiguier, whose description of Nîmes in his

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[70]Emile Varin, "Du Salaire des Femmes," 25.

[71]*Mémoires d'un compagnon*, intro. Alain Faure (Paris: Maspero, 1977), 46-47.

[72]*Mémoires de Léonard ancien garçon maçon*, 216.

[73]*Le Tour de France: Etat actuel de la classe ouvrière sous l'aspect moral, intellectuel et matériel. Journal 1843-1844*, préface de Michel Collinet (Paris, Maspero: 1973), v. 2, (Nîmes, 20 Aug. 1848), 126-32.

memoires includes a glowing account of the beauty of the fountain and the natural basin that surrounds it, but no mention of the infamous laundresses.[74]

Since not all artisanal labor could be characterized as "rude" or requiring great physical exertion, other objections had to be erected to women's presence. Where physical coarsening was not a plausible concern, moral coarsening could be substituted in its place. Borrowing Villermé's theme of the factory as a place of moral danger, the editors of *L'Atelier* conjured up images of innocent young girls being corrupted by the indiscriminate mixing of ages and sexes in the urban workshop. By a curious inversion, the agents of their seduction are not proletarian men, but hardened older women - the same deplorable viragos found everywhere in France:

> how can one demand, from a good number of *ouvrières*, habits of order and morality, of virtue and the courage to resist misery, when, by the weakness of their organs, by the absence of all moral education, of all idea of duty and respect for themselves, they find themselves thrown at the most tender age in the atelier, in contact with people of all ages, exposed to bad company, hearing conversations that would make grown men blush? The good propensities that they might have had are extinguished by the railleries, the mockeries of other women, especially by certain aged *ouvrières*, who instead of preaching and displaying a good example, avenge themselves at not being able to do worse by inciting them to debauch.[75]

Workers borrowed Villermé's imagery of dankness and physical contagion and transferred it from the weavers' caves of Rouen to the urban workshop in general. "Save for a few exceptions," Boyer lamented, "what are our ateliers? Black and humid holes, infected cesspools in which workers cannot move or breathe freely; where hellish vapors add to the corruption of a heavy and poisoned atmosphere; or attics closed only by a few

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[74]*Mémoires d'un compagnon*, 132 ff.

[75]"Enquête: De la condition des femmes", 30 Dec. 1842, 31.

badly joined planks, letting currents of air pass through their large windows which cause all sorts of maladies and infirmities..."[76] The dangers of the physical environment also extended to machinery in spinning and weaving mills, which snagged hapless women by latching onto the very symbols of their femininity - long skirts, long hair. There are sado-masochistic overtones in *L'Atelier*'s nightmarish vision of women "surrounded by wheels, by gears, by enormous belts of leather that always threaten to seize and crush [them]."[77]

Depictions like these carried a clear, if implicit subtext. Women were better off in the home, where they would not be menaced by noxious fumes, salacious company or sexually predatory foremen. There they could work as need required to supplement their husband's wages, while caring for their children and their household. The editors of *L'Atelier* were particularly fond of such sanitized domestic scenarios, with their overtones of safety and order:

> If the salary of the worker was generally sufficient for the maintenance of his family, as it ought to be, his wife would not be obligated to run to the ateliers; she could, by working a bit at home, raise her children, send them to school, take care of them, prevent them in this way from becoming bad subjects; and then the mother of the family would be elevated in her own eyes; she would understand her dignity and her duties, she would raise her daughters with the same sentiments, so that they might be some day good mothers of families.[78]

However, this quasi-bourgeois image of the domestic foyer as a sanctuary from the rigors of the marketplace was not consonant with the reality of proletarian women's sweated work in dirty and overcrowded lodgings, performed for starvation wages. Nor

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[76] *De l'État des Ouvriers*, 66.

[77] "Enquête: De la condition des femmes", 31.

[78] Ibid.

was it feasible given average male income. Some workers admitted as much, challenging the image of home work as benign. Norbert Truquin, a proletarian who had drifted for years from one unskilled job to another before becoming a silk weaver in Lyons, depicted working in a mill as pleasant compared to sweated labor:

> Nothing is more brutalizing than work in confined quarters, even though it seems to be freer. All day long, the home worker breathes the unhealthy fumes given off by the coal and by the nauseating oil that it heats. In this manner, an entire family is half-suffocated in a space just a few meters square. To escape this isolation, which weighs heavily upon him, the worker goes looking for fellowship at the cabaret.[79]

His unfortunate wife, needless to say, would be stuck at home with the children in their fetid lodgings, contemplating the prospect that her mate would drink up the family bread. For Truquin, the mills were oases of relative order and cleanliness compared to workers' homes. He describes cotton textile factories that were fairly well heated, ventilated and lighted, and which provided workers with welcome opportunities for fellowship and socialization. Girls who worked as warpers earned over one franc per day, and could afford bonnets with red ribbons; even the less fortunate earned between 80 c.

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[79] "Norbert Truquin: Memoirs and Adventures of a Proletarian in Times of Revolution" trans. and annotated by Mark Traugott in *The French Worker: Autobiographies from the Early Industrial Era*, (Berkeley & Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1993), 275. See also Michelle Perrot, "A Nineteenth-Century Work Experience as Related in a Workers' Autobiography: Norbert Truquin" in *Work in France* (1986), 297-316.

and 1 fr. 10 per day.[80] This was well above the average 30 to 50 centimes reported for Parisian seamstresses and embroiderers who did home work in the 1840s.[81]

The mechanic Janoma, writing in *La Ruche Populaire*, admitted candidly that even though the factory might be harmful for women, "shut up as they are in unhealthy workshops, deprived of air in the midst of machines, and breathing only harmful miasmas," work at home could be just as deadly, because it paid so little. How, he asked, could a woman feed herself and her children on fifty centimes per day? Even a young single girl with very modest tastes, spending very little, would have to work thirteen to fourteen hours per day to make fourteen dozen pairs of suspenders, for a princely sum of 3 fr. 50 weekly. And while some might claim that a married woman would benefit from such work, because it was compatible with child care and would supplement her husband's income, she would be lucky, Janoma calculated, to achieve fifteen to twenty per cent of the single woman's productivity because of the press of other duties. After describing the mind and finger-numbing tedium necessary to complete a dozen pairs of suspenders, at 25 c. a dozen, he exclaims ironically, "What a shame for the *fabricant* that the *ouvrière* does not agree to a thirteenth!"[82]

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[80]Ibid., 274-275. Peter Stearns similarly argues, based on the social investigations of Charles Booth's researchers in England in the early 1890s, that young women found factory work rewarding in contrast to domestic labor, repeatedly citing the conviviality they found on the job. "Working Class Women in Britain, 1890-1914," in *Suffer and Be Still: Women in the Victorian Age*, ed. Martha Vicinus (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972), 112.

[81]Louis Blanc, "Misères Sociales: Le Travail des Femmes," *Le Nouveau Monde*, 15 March 1850, 420. Blanc claims that if one factors in periods of unemployment, two-thirds of the female population of Paris were working for 30-50 c. per day.

[82]Janoma, Ouvrier mécanicien, "Les confectionneuses: Une industrie Parisienne," *La Ruche Populaire*, March 1844: 72-76.

A crucial omission in most of this hand-wringing about the miseries of the *ouvrière* was any acknowledgement of male workers' complicity in the gendered arrangements which restricted wages and employment options for women. The larger problem, as a few male workers recognized, was not that women were doing "masculine" or physically inappropriate work, but that the work that they were doing paid so little. "Among those who have the least painful *états*," Emile Varin asked, "how many are there who lack everything?" What can we say about the lot of the bobbin-winders, embroiderers, polishers, vermicelli-benders, of a hundred other *corps d'état*?" "Why is it," he inquired, that "pauperism affects women still more than men"?[83] An unusually perceptive answer was provided by Gabriel Gauny, an ex-Saint-Simonian, peripatetic floor-layer, and collaborator with Désirée Gay on the 1848 socialist journal, *Le Tocsin des Travailleurs*. Generous in his attitudes towards women and intolerant of hypocrisy in all of its guises, Gauny observed:

> The jobs to which we have relegated them are so few in number that competition creates the most terrible ravages among them. Despite the feebleness of their limbs, they are condemned to the hardest work; they work, always work, in sickness, in pregnancy, without peace or respite or distraction, and the more that they work the more they see the price of their work lowered; so much so that few, very few, are able to live from their labor.[84]

Gauny's "we" hints at a masculine conspiracy that crosses class lines. However, few proletarian men were prepared to indict themselves for conditions that seemed beyond

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[83] "Du Salaire des Femmes," *La Ruche Populaire*, April 1841, 21-27. Varin was the son of an artist who was a former pupil of David. He was employed as a book-setter in 1847. He appears to have been the founder, in 1848, of the club des Quinze-Vingts, was an insurrectionist during the June Days, and was among those transported. J. Maitron, *Dictionnaire biographique du mouvement ouvrier français*, 3: 487.

[84] "Misère des femmes", *Le Tocsin des Travailleurs*, 23 June 1848.

their control. The rich "gave" work, and gave it to the lowest competent bidder.[85] This was the fault of a system of unrestrained egoism. It could only be changed in the long run by some form of worker association, by a more rational and moral organization of work. Until association triumphed, the immediate challenge was to ensure women "attractive work that is appropriate to their strength" without jeopardizing the already shaky position of proletarian men.[86]

Literate artisans did not agree on how this goal could be accomplished. Their rhetoric reveals a good deal of anxiety about female competition and the loss of masculine authority, but also a genuine sympathy with the plight of the *ouvrière*, their companion in misery. Everyone acknowledged the misfortune of women, their suffering. But how this suffering could best be addressed, given the nature of women and society, provoked controversy. Solutions proposed ranged the spectrum from the family wage for men, to modest improvements in women's education and skills to make women more employable, to more adequate wages in women's trades. Rarely, but significantly, an isolated male voice was raised calling for complete sexual equality as the only comprehensive solution to woman's abject condition.

What most of these proposals assumed, however, was that women were auxiliary wage earners whose "natural" talents predisposed them to certain gender-specific niches

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[85]Jacques Rancière emphasizes that for the proletarian, work is "something that comes to him from outside; the bourgeois people are the ones who *give* work." *The Nights of Labor*, 211.

[86]Gautier, "De l'affranchissement des femmes," 6. Michelle Perrot emphasizes that in the period after 1870, the greatest demand was for work appropriate to the presumed strengths and qualities of women - particularly needlework, done on "soft and yielding materials" in the home. "L'éloge de la ménagère," 111.

in the labor market. Work was recognized as necessary and inevitable for most poor women in the 1840s. There was as yet little emphasis on the domestic foyer as a privatized refuge from market pressures and almost none of the pro-natalist anxiety that served as a rationale later in the nineteenth century for channeling women into domesticity. However, the gendering of physical spaces - both social spaces and work spaces - was an integral element of workerist culture in the 1840s. This was partially a defense against female wage competition, but it was also provoked by a need to publicly validate work, to render it *digne* and *probe* in the eyes of society. If acquired skill represented the "property" of the artisan, and constituted his claim to active citizenship, as socialists and republicans insisted, then women's work had to be differentiated from men's. Segregating women workers spatially and discursively by placing them in "safe" environments and defining their labor as "unskilled" or "auxiliary" to men's was a necessary tactic if productive work was to be the criterion of citizen station and entitlement. To admit the *ouvrière* into the fraternity of skilled workers was also to admit her, at least rhetorically, into the fraternity of *citoyens* who deserved political rights. This threatened not only male workers' struggle for full membership in the polity, but their own fragile sense of *amour propre* as well. In an age when capitalism and sweating processes threatened to render many craft skills irrelevant or obsolete, and to substitute female for male labor, it was inevitable that male workers would stress the differences that separated their trades from those practiced by women. If this required denigrating the value of work done by wives, mothers, sisters and daughters, it could be rationalized by promising proletarian women greater protection and support in a future democratic and social republic. In all likelihood such assurances seemed more attractive and less

chimerical to many proletarian women than the prospect of political rights or economic self-sufficiency championed by socialist-feminist activists such as Jeanne Deroin during the Revolution of 1848-1851.[87]

[87] Anna Clark has found the same pattern in the discourse of British artisans associated with the radical and Chartist movements in the 1830s and 1840s. Skill was equated with property, and both were rhetorically restricted to males in order to press for extension of the franchise. *The Struggle for the Breeches*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), esp. 220-247.

3: "They can never eat meat or drink wine...": Wages and Budgets

The brutal calculus of feminine poverty and dependency was outlined in a number of surveys of workers' salaries and budgets published in the socialist and workerist press in the years between 1840 and 1851. Although manufacturers and bourgeois investigators had their own salary and cost-of-living figures, workers and their socialist allies tended to reject them as unrealistic, exaggerated on the salary side and overly frugal on expenditure.[88] While workers might be suspected of the opposite bias, their findings are generally consistent with one another, and have a ring of authenticity. What these figures dramatize is the precariousness and penury of proletarian women's lives, existences even more marginal than those of proletarian men. Female dependency was in the first instance, economic: few women's salaries were sufficient to support a single woman without supplementary male income. As Joan Scott emphasizes, women's wages, no matter what their circumstances, were always set as if they were auxiliary to the earnings

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[88]Léon Leroy, for example, protests against the practice of economists and statisticians of taking a mean salary and extrapolating it to all workers. "De l'insuffisance des Salaires," *La Ruche Populaire*, July 1844, 198. Louis Blanc charges "official philanthropists" with collecting and presenting figures only for the best paid workers in selected industries. "Misères Sociales: Le Travail des Femmes," *Le Nouveau Monde*, 15 March 1850, 420. Several modern historians have attacked the *Statistique de l'Industrie à Paris,* published by the Paris Chamber of Commerce in 1851, for painting too rosy a picture of the pay, status and education of Parisian workers. See Jacques Rancière, "The Myth of the Artisan," 8-9 and Joan W. Scott, "A Statistical Representation of Work: *La Statistique de l'industrie à Paris, 1847-1848*" in *Gender and the Politics of History*, 113-138. William Reddy criticizes the "imaginary" budgets that failed to account for Sundays and seasonal unemployment; *The Rise of Market Culture: The Textile Trade and French Society, 1750-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 147 ff.

of other members of a family.[89] Need thus forced many women into casual prostitution, concubinage, marriage, or some combination of these options. Consequently socialist-feminist women employed prostitution as trope for all forms of feminine dependence, from bourgeois wives in loveless marriages to *prolétariennes* facing the stark choice between virtue and eating.[90]

The public association of the single seamstress or shopgirl with casual prostitution was so pervasive that the term *grisette* carried lascivious overtones suggestive of both professions.[91] Eugène Sue's effort to rehabilitate the soiled image of the *ouvrière-grisette* in his popular feuilleton melodrama, *Les Mystères de Paris*, produced a highly improbable portrait of the self-sufficient single woman. Sue's cheerful Miss Dimpleton, a perky eighteen-year-old seamstress, is an orphan who learned her trade in an asylum. She lives in a spare but immaculately clean room (with a fireplace!), subsisting on a spartan diet of bread, milk and greens. This is apparently adequate nourishment, for it takes Sue two pages to describe all of her physical charms. These, he assures us, she shares with no gentleman callers. She keeps the door to the adjoining room carefully

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[89]"The Woman Worker" in *A History of Women in the West*, v. 4 *Emerging Feminism from Revolution to World War*, ed. Geneviève Fraisse and Michelle Perrot (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 399-426. Characteristically, Scott attributes this to discursive processes that emphasized "natural" functional difference between men and women and defined women's work as less productive than men's.

[90]See for example Jeanne Deroin's reply to Proudhon. She equates his advocacy of "The right of the husband and prohibition on women working" with "The right to exclusive and legal prostitution." "Appel aux Femmes", *L'Opinion des Femmes*, no. 5, June 1849, 2.

[91]For the evolution of such associations see Jennifer Jones, "*Coquettes* and *Grisettes*: Women Buying and Selling in Ancien Régime Paris," in *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective*, ed. Victoria de Grazia with Ellen Furlough (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996): 25-53.

locked, although she socializes with her male "friend" next door on Sunday, when they take the fresh air about Paris. She owes her smart appearance and domestic comforts, including two cheerful canaries, to her six-day weeks of dawn-to-dusk sewing and her ability to bargain with second-hand dealers. Alluring but virtuous, hard-working but spirited, aware of but unfazed by the general reputation of the *grisette*, she is the very model of the street-smart Parisienne, and as far removed from the harsh reality of *ouvrières*' lives as literary license permits.[92]

Sue's patronizing effort to tone up the *grisette*, complete with Miss Dimpleton's marriage at the end of the novel to that signal rarity, the virtuous student, combined themes of class and gender reconciliation dear to the hearts of upwardly mobile workers and their sympathetic bourgeois allies. However, to plumb the gulf that separated the fictional seamstress from her real-world counterparts, one need only examine the wage and expense data published in the worker and socialist press between 1840 and 1851. Although there is some modest variation in this data from one report to another, the larger pattern that emerges is clear and unequivocal. The sturdy independence exhibited by Miss Dimpleton is either an inexplicable anomaly or she was turning tricks.

The calculations of Léon Leroy in the July 1844 issue of *La Ruche Populaire* are instructive.[93] Leroy estimates the minimum salary it would take for a worker to survive,

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[92]Eugène Sue, *The Mysteries of Paris* (New York: A. L. Burt, s.d.), 461 ff. Louis Blanc took a dig at "novelists", undoubtedly Sue, "where the attic apartment appears invariably shining and tidy, enough to make bourgeois girls dream, and forms the obligatory setting for some fresh visage full of health and good humor." "Misères sociales: Le travail des Femmes," *Le Nouveau Monde*, 15 March 1850, 420.

[93]"De l'Insuffisance des Salaires", 198-209.

using various units of computation, including "single man" and "single woman."[94] The single male worker earns 20 fr. per week, or 1,040 fr. per year. His female counterpart earns 1 fr. per day, or 312 per year - less than a third of his wages. Leroy assumes that both are employed full-time, year-round, avoiding the dead-seasons characteristic of most trades, which he admits is unlikely. And yet neither worker, in his judgment, would escape poverty (*misère*). To do so would require 1,500 fr. per year for a single male, and 600 fr. per year for a single female, both living in Paris.

Comparison of Leroy's suggested expenditures for food and clothing for both individuals suggests that definitions of *misère* are indexed to sex. Single women, by his calculations, can spend approximately one-third what single men spend weekly for meals: 3 fr. 85 for women versus 10 f. 85 for men, (or 57 c. daily). *L'Atelier* cites a similar figure of 50 c. per day for an *ouvrière* in Bordeaux, to cover the cost of bread, legumes, morning coffee, salt and fat.[95] The budget drawn up by the mechanic Janoma allows a single women a weekly food expenditure of only 1 fr. 91, of which 84 c. go for six pounds of bread, 40 c. for a quarter-pound of lard, 20 c. for water for soup, 7 c. for salt and 30 c. for a liter of beans. Janoma projects a weekly income of 3 fr. 50 for a hypothetical single woman working thirteen to fourteen hours per day making suspenders, at 25 c. per dozen. Subtracting the cost of food, candles and thread leaves her 65 c. a week for all other expenses, including rent, heat, laundry, and clothing.[96]

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[94]See **Table A**, pages 70-74.

[95]"Budget de l'ouvrière à Bordeaux," 30 April 1850, 521-22.

[96]"Les Confectionneuses: Une Industrie Parisienne," *La Ruche Populaire*, March 1844, 72-76.

How are such economies possible, when the male diet is itself so meager, and men are on average only twenty percent larger than women? Leroy provides a succinct answer - women ordinarily spend nothing on meat, wine or wood: "They can never eat meat or drink wine; they can never warm themselves."[97] So much for Dimpleton's fireplace, or even a charcoal stove. However, there is a financial penalty for this lack of amenities: women without the ability to heat water must pay a laundress to do their linen.

Louis Blanc confirms this grim picture in a lengthy examination of the plight of working women in *Le Nouveau Monde* in 1850.[98] *Ouvrières*, he confirms, can't afford heat. Too many other needs have priority. Light is necessary to work in the winter, and needlewomen must buy their own candles. They must also supply their own needles and thread. To be closer to work in the center of the city requires renting a *chambrette*, a tiny room which costs 80 fr. per year. Those without furniture must live in a "filthy lodging-house" for 7 to 8 fr. per month.[99] Only after these necessities are taken care of can they begin to think about food. Consequently, he writes:

> fasting becomes a normal state for them; their shrunken stomachs become accustomed to insufficient nourishment, indigestible, devoid of nutrition, and statisticians are correct when they assert that five or six sous suffice for the daily sustenance of women of the people.[100]

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[97]"De l"Insuffisance des Salaires", *La Ruche Populaire*, July 1844, 521. Laura Oren argues that in most working-class British homes before 1914, protein foods such as meat, eggs and cheese were reserved almost exclusively for men; women subsisted largely on a diet of bread with fat or jam, sops made with leftover crusts, and tea. "The Welfare of Women in Labouring Families: England 1860-1950," *Feminist Studies*, v. 1, no. 3-4 (Winter-Spring 1973), 107-113.

[98]"Misères Sociales: Le Travail des Femmes," 15 March 1850, 419-426.

[99]Ibid., 425.

[100]Ibid.

Clothing was an obvious candidate for feminine economies. Schacherer aîné's proposed budget for a married working-class couple in *La Ruche Populaire* allows a generous 60 fr. per year for the wife's clothes, about half the expenditure allotted to the husband.[101] Léon Leroy's budget provides the single woman with a paltry 33 fr. annually, compared to 146 fr. for a single man. The married woman in his budget, obviously the beneficiary of dual incomes, expends 72 fr. per year. This will allegedly cover two dresses, two chemises, two bonnets, two kerchiefs, two pairs of stockings, one pair of shoes, two pairs of sabots and hose, one wool skirt (for three years), one calico skirt (for two), one shawl, one scarf, one apron, mending supplies, and laundry once a month.[102] If the single woman has less than half the disposable income of the married women, does she then make do with only one change of clothes? And where does she find the 1 fr. 50 that the married woman spends on her monthly laundry?

Even allowing for greater wear and tear on men's clothes, which might account for some of the differential in expenditure, it is obvious that men enjoyed warmer and sturdier apparel than women. There is no equivalent in women's budgets of the obligatory frock-coat and 16 fr. boots allotted to men. How well did women's shawls and sabots ward off the winter cold in unheated *chambrettes* and on the winter streets of Paris?[103] How, reduced to such grimness, could they control their desire for the luxury

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[101]"Un Coup-d'Oeil sur le Budget des Travailleurs," *La Ruche Populaire*, October 1841, 1-5; expenditures, p. 3.

[102]"De l'Insuffisance des Salaires," July 1844, 198-209.

[103]Clothing deprivation for married proletarian women seems to have been a cross-cultural pattern. Jane Lewis notes that for English working-class women, such simple obstacles as the lack of dependable boots made it difficult for them to venture too far from home. *Women in England, 1870-1950: Sexual Divisions and Social Change*

items they sweated to produce daily? It was the latter question that most troubled the moralists at *L'Atelier.*

If one compares the bare-bones budgets published in the working-class press with the piece-work rates women received in a variety of occupations, one thing stands out clearly. It is the impossibility, for the majority, of surviving without supplementary male income. The most optimistic estimate in a workers' journal puts the average female salary in Paris in the range of 75 c. to 1 fr. daily throughout the 1840s.[104] This is of course when work was available, and does not take into account the four to five months dead-season in many occupations, especially the garment trades. The most pessimistic surveys, such as that of Louis Vinçard aîné in *La Ruche Populaire* in 1842 and of Louis Blanc in *Le Nouveau Monde* in 1850, put the wages of the majority of the female population of Paris in the range of 30 to 50 centimes per day, compared to a male average of about three francs.[105] Ironically, *La Voix des Femmes* reported in 1848 that

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(Sussex: Wheatsheaf Books, 1984), 31. Rose Glickman reports that while single factory women in Russia spent a fair amount on clothes, after marriage, women had only second-hand clothing, rarely bought or wore underwear, and an overcoat had to last 20-30 years. *Russian Factory Women: Workplace and Society, 1880-1914* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1984), 119.

[104]*L'Union*, Nov.-Dec. 1845: 2.

[105]Vinçard, aîné, "Accord édifiant, du *Courrier Français*, du *Siècle* et du *Journal des Débats*, contre les classes laborieuses et pauvres" *La Ruche Populaire*, October 1842, 42. Louis Blanc, "Misères Sociales: Le Travail des Femmes," 420. Blanc claims that if one factors in periods of unemployment, two-thirds of the female population of Paris were working for 30-50 c. per day.

female convicts were paid thirty centimes daily for their needlework, of which ten were applied to their expenses.[106]

Married women without children were probably in the best financial position, since as Janoma explains, they could take advantage of certain economies in lodging and food. Pooling a full-time male and female income might even leave a couple with a slight residual that could be used to purchase furniture, clothing and linens. However, the arrival of a child would darken the picture considerably. An uncomplicated pregnancy cost 115 fr. in lost wages, lying-in and wet-nurse expenses, pushing the family budget into a 90 fr. deficit for the year. If the mother decided to nurse the child herself, she lost valuable income, but wet nurses cost at least 12 fr. per month. Child care centers (*salles d'asile*), Janoma noted, did not take children early enough in the morning or late enough at night that a mother could put in a full work day.[107] Costs of schooling for children, even in free schools, were high; parents had to buy paper, ink, pens, books and expenses for fetes. Fees for first communion and apprenticeship were also high. Workers were unable to save on their meager salaries for such eventualities. "There are a lot of MOREL families in Paris," Janoma concluded.[108]

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[106]"Travail dans les prisons," no. 1, 20 March 1848, 3.

[107]An article on a Parisian day care center, in the same issue of *La Ruche* (212-214) indicates that women have to pay someone to take their children to the salle, which opens at 7 AM (they start work at 5 or 6 in the morning), and to pick them up at 6 PM. They have to give monetary gifts to the master and mistress on fete days. An investigation of the center reveals dirty conditions, and "All the children are sitting on hard wooden benches; their sad expression and plaintive looks indicate suffering."

[108]An allusion to the impoverished jeweler's family in Eugène Sue's *Les Mystères de Paris*, who froze and starved in an attic garret while the virtuous father slaved to make luxury items for the rich. Statistics on expenses of child care from Leroy, "De l'Insuffisance des Salaires," 205-207.

The most comprehensive and useful data on workers' wage rates was compiled by Pierre Vinçard for the Department of the Seine and published in a series of articles that appeared in Emile de Girardin's *Le Bien-Être Universel* from March through November 1851.[109] Vinçard reports average wage rates and dead-seasons for many male and female occupations that were supplied to him by people in the trades concerned. Salary and unemployment data for women workers is summarized in *Table B* (pages 72-75). Obviously female real wages could be affected by a number of variables: the length of seasonal unemployment, the cost of materials such as thread, needles, and candles required to do the work, the time necessary to pick up and deliver work if it was done outside the atelier for sub-contractors, and fines or deductions imposed by employers. Because many women did piecework, the income they earned would vary considerably depending on their skill, speed and dexterity, and the amount of time they could spare from other tasks, such as housekeeping and child care. In some trades, such as furniture-making and upholstering, employed women tended to be wives who worked with their husbands, specializing in finishing tasks such as varnishing, caning and gilding.[110] Pooling spousal incomes would help to compensate for women's lower wages, although the fact that both shared the same dead-seasons would be disadvantageous.

In occupations like the garment trades, the spread of *confection* (the sub-contracting of specific processes in the construction of ready-made apparel to piece-

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[109]Leather trades, shoemaking: 30 March 1851, 6-9; hatmaking, tailoring: 13 April 1851, 7-9; comb-making, female needlework, laundresses: 20 April 1851, 9-11; cotton textiles, novelties: 27 April 1851, 9-11; food, bakery, candy: 11 May 1851, 11-14; furniture: 22 June 1851, 11-12 and 30 November 1851, 8-9.

[110]Pierre Vinçard, "Ameublement," *Le Bien-Etre Universel*, 22 June 1851, 11-12; 30 November 1851, 8-9.

workers) depressed wages further and made periods of unemployment even more unpredictable. There were few female occupations, other than laundress and bread porter, that did not have a dead-season of at least three months.[111] Many women, particularly single women, must have adopted the same "aleatory" patterns as Rancière's male artisans, scrounging up jobs wherever they could, relying on prostitution, housecleaning or laundry work to tide them over, starving when it did not. It was this desperate vulnerability to the vagaries of the streets and the market that made the associational dream so enticing to socialist *prolétariennes*, who imagined that feminine community, buttressed by proletarian solidarity, could give them the safe haven that the improbable Miss Dimpleton found in solitary enterprise. Unfortunately, for women even more than for men, this proved to be an impossible ambition.

[111]See **Table B**, 75-78.

Table A: Sample Workers' Budgets, 1840s

Source: Léon Leroy, "De l'Insuffisance des Salaires," *La Ruche Populaire*, July 1844, 198-209.

The author's budgets are based on 20 fr. per week for a single man and 6 fr. for a single women. No allowance is made for unemployment or shifting wage rates. No trades are specified.

Single Man [no trade specified]

Expenses (food)

breakfast:	15 c.
lunch:	
soup	15 c.
1 dish	30 c.
wine	20 c.
supper:	
1 dish	30 c.
wine	10 c.
kilo of bread	35 c.
per day	1 fr. 55 c.
per week	10 fr. 85 c.
per year	564 fr.

Clothing (purchased)

1 60 fr. coat or frock-coat for 3 yrs., per yr.	20 fr.
1 pr. woolen trousers for 2 yrs. 20 fr. per yr.	10
1 pr. work trousers	8
1 pr. summer pants for Sunday and 2 for work	18
2 vests (1 Sunday, 1 work)	15
1 hat (old one for the week)	12
stockings, per year	3
2 pairs of shoes	14
1 pair of boots for 16 fr, for 2 yrs., per yr.	8
2 shirts per year	8

2 cravates	3
2 handkerchief	2
2 smocks	10
Mending, 30 c. per week	15
Total clothing yearly	146 fr.

Rent, laundry and various expenses

Lodgings, per mo. 8 fr., per yr.	96 fr.
Total laundry, per year	75
Beard and hair, per mo. 3 fr, per year	36
Total income per year	1040 fr.
Total expenses per year	917
Remainder	123 fr. per yr., or 2 fr. 21 wk.

The remainder must cover all other expenses, including light, baths, medical. Leroy notes that the price of hot baths is above the means of most workers, although their health and tired limbs would benefit greatly from them.

Single woman [no trade specified]

Food: {No details are presented on diet}

Breakfast	10 c.
Lunch	30
Diner	15
Bread, daily	55
Total food per week:	3 fr. 85 c.
Total food per year:	200 fr.

Clothing: {No details presented on wardrobe}

per year	33 fr.

Rent:	
per year	72 fr.
Laundry:	
per year	15 fr.
Total expenditures per yr.	320 fr.
deficit for the year	8 fr.

Married couple: no children [no trades specified]

If the two single workers get married, the man's surplus of 123 fr. together with the woman's deficit of 8 fr. per year will leave them with a residual of 115 fr. Married couples can make certain economies, but also incur some additional expenses. These are factored by the author as follows:

Economies

38 fr. on lodging
18 fr. on food (he doesn't explain why this is possible)

56. fr. total economies, added to 115 fr. surplus = 171 fr. residual

Surcharges

2 cords coal (1 sack of heating wood)	32 fr.	
per week, 40 c., per year	20	80
light, per week 35 c., per yr.	18	20
water, per week, 30 c., per yr.	15	60
laundry: table & bed linen, dishcloths, curtains, per mo. 85 c.	44	20
total surcharges	130 fr.	80
left over	40 fr.	20 c.

(This last must cover buying furniture, clothing and linen nec. for married life)

Married workers having one child

Expenses incurred by childbearing:

Laying-in and lost time	50 fr.
Layette	20
nurse: trip, first mo.	30
in advance	
sugar, soup and unexpected	15
total	115 fr.

The figure above assumes an uncomplicated pregnancy with no extraordinary expenses. Using the family budget previously outlined, the author computes a **family deficit** following the birth of a child of **90 fr.** Continued employment of a wet-nurse costs 12 fr. per month.

Married Couple: Two Children [no trades specified]

Source: Schacherer, aîné, "Un Coup-d'Oeil sur le Budget des Travailleurs," *La Ruche Populaire*, Oct. 1841, 3.

Figures shown are workers' estimates of a minimum budget for a working-class family of four. The budget is predicated upon a worker who earns 5 fr per day, his wife who earns 1 fr; for a 365 day year less 52 Sundays and four festival days. The author notes that this is very optimistic, as many workers make far less (2 fr. 50 to 3 fr. rather than the 5 fr. on which calculations are based.

nourishment of family:

2. fr. 65 c. per da., or per yr.	954 fr.	
food, on fete days	50	
rent	180	
heat	72	
laundry	50	for one man's shirt, one women's, 2 children's per week; sheets washed mo.

clothing for man:	118	for one hat, one cap, 1 frock-coat, 2 pr. overalls, 2 trousers, 1 vest, 2 pr. shoes, 1 pair boots
clothing for woman:	60	for two dresses, one summer & one winter, 2 bonnets, 2 pr. shoes, also laundry, stockings, sewing supplies
children:	50	per month for food, shoes, clothes, caps, and books for class
linen	26	for sheets, blankets, neckerchiefs, shirts and dish-cloths
household main./repair	30	for repair of furniture, replacement of dishes
medications/illness	40	
books, plays, societies, drinks	24	
out of work	150	for 25 days without work
Subtotal	1853	
	336	minus 52 sundays and 4 holidays
Total Income Needed	2189	

To make this kind of money, a worker would have to make 5 fr per day and his wife 1 fr. which multiplied by 365 days a year would yield 2, 190 fr., not allowing for any Sundays, holidays or rest days.

Table B: Women's Wage Rates, 1850-51

Women's Occupations: Bordeaux, 1850

Source: *L'Atelier*, 30 April 1850, 521-22.

Trade	Work day	Salary	Unemploy.
stitchers,			
half-boots	10 hr	1.25	5 mos.
embroiderers	10	1.25	idem
vest-makers	10	1.25	3 mos.
lingères	10	1.25	
ironers	10	1.25	
milliners (skilled)	10	2.25	
same (average)	10	1.25	
dressmakers	10	1.25	
shirtmakers	10	1.60	
fruit sorters	10	1.25	7 mos.

Note: The article concludes that average daily wages for women in all trades are one franc, from which must be deducted unemployment (an estimated 35 days per year) and dead seasons. Unpaid days include fifty-two Sundays and eight holidays, for a total of eighty-six days without pay. This leaves the *ouvrière* with 74 c. per day for all expenses.

Women's Occupations: Paris, 1851

Source: Pierre Vinçard, "Enquête Industrielle, Départment de la Seine", *Le Bien-Etre Universel*, March through July 1851.

Trade	Salary (day)	Unemploy.
shoemaking:		
shoe-edgers	75 c.	3 mo.
slipper-makers	1 fr.	+ 4 mo.
stitchers-button boots	1 fr. 25 c.	4 mo.
sole joiners	1 fr.	
hatmaking:		
pelt-cutters	1 fr. 50-75 c.	4-5 mo.
pelt trimmers *jarreuses*	3 fr. adj. for unemploy.: 1 fr. 25 c.	long and irreg.
hat trimmer	1 fr. 25 to 2 fr. aver: 1 fr. 25-50 c.	4-6 mo.
stitchers of hides	75-80 c.	long and irreg.
dresser, straw hats	4 fr.	6 mo.
cutter, straw hats	1 fr. 75 c.	6 mo.
cap makers: estab. houses	1 fr. 25 c.	4 mo.
cap makers: confection	40-50 c.	indeterm.

tailoring:		
trouser-makers	1 fr. 50 - 2 fr.	6 mo.
vest-makers	1 fr. 50	5 mo.
combs:		
polishing, shell	3 fr.	2 mo.
polishing, horn for employers	1 fr. 50-75 c.	+ 3 mo.
for sub-contractors	75-90 c.	
seamstresses:		
fancy goods: *nouveauté*	1 fr. 75 - 1 fr.	+ 3 mo.
ready-made clothes:	45 c.	long, indeterm.
custom dressmakers: *confection*	2 fr.	6 mo.
sewing buttons on suspenders:	60-70 c.	indeterm.
elastic garter sewers	30-60 c.	indeterm.
laundresses:		
de gros: wash body linen in large laundries	1 fr. 80 c.	none
de fin: ironing, wash small items *en boutique*	2 fr. 25 - 2 fr.	irreg.: up to 4 mo.
laveuses: basic washing in homes	2 fr.	idem

cotton textile factories:		
cotton combers	no data	3 mo.
finishers	no data	idem
piecers	90 c. - 1 fr. 20 c.	idem
winders	90 c. - 1 fr.	idem
miscellaneous:		
corset-makers	1 fr. 50 - 2 fr.	3 mo.
silk stocking darning	1 fr. - 1 fr. 25 c.	no data
collar-makers	50-75 c.	indeterm.
button-makers	1 fr. - 1 fr. 25 c.	3 mo.
button-carders	1 fr.	5 mo.
bread porters	1 fr. 50 - 2 fr.	none
confection trades:		
rolling barley sugar	1 fr. 50 - 2 fr.	6 mo.
decorating candy	3 fr.	6 mo.
varnishers (furniture)		
paid by day	1 fr. 50-75 c.	2-3 mo.
paid by piece	2 fr. 25-50 c.	2-3 mo.
upholsterers	1 fr. 50	5-6 mo.

4: "Woman is not made for manufacturing your products..." The family wage and *la femme au foyer*

In January 1841, in response to the passage of a law by the Chamber of Deputies regulating child labor in industry, the editors of *L'Atelier* fired a shot over the bow of the men of order. If children needed some palliative against misery, why not women as well?

> It is man who is charged with nourishing his wife and his children. Woman is not made for manufacturing your products, for inhabiting your factories, she owes herself to the early education of her children, to the cares of her household. It is thus the salary of the man *alone*, think well on it, which ought, by reason and justice, to satisfy the needs of the family. As long as a worker does not gain a sufficient salary to take care of his needs and those of his family, one of your economists has said somewhere, the volcano of revolutions will always be active. We read these words in the *Journal des Débats*, not long ago....[112]

This early demand for the family subsistence wage carried overtones of *épater le bourgeois*, but also raised themes, such as the role of the proletarian woman as mother-educator, which were to increase in importance in following decades. Since the Atelierists also proposed, in subsequent articles, a number of more limited measures to aid working women, including the setting of higher *tarifs*[113] so that *ouvrières* would have enough income to live on, it raises the question of what purposes the family wage demand served in workers' discourses in the 1840s. Was it primarily a rhetorical strategy

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[112]"Réforme Industrielle: Enquête: De la condition Misérable des hommes, femmes et enfans dans les manufactures," *L'Atelier*, Jan. 1841, 36.

[113]*Tarifs* were fixed payment schedules for different kinds and qualities of work done by the piece. They were particularly important to workers who worked by the piece rather than the day, and to those who moved from one atelier to another and wanted to secure the rates paid by the best workshops. For a discussion of their role in worker militancy, see Alain Faure, "Mouvements populaires et Mouvement ouvrier à Paris (1830-1834)", *Le mouvement social*, 88 (July-Sept. 1974): 51-92.

designed to embarrass the bourgeoisie, by dramatizing the hypocrisy of its cult of feminine domesticity and family-mindedness? Did it reflect a genuine longing for a more ordered and comfortable existence, symbolized by a sphere of family life free from the pressures of the work place and the constraints of employers?[114] Or was it a thinly veiled attack on the *ouvrière*, provoked by feminine wage competition and the related fear of proletarianization? Finally, how widespread was this demand in the 1840s? Did it represent the view of an embattled minority in a few trades, or had it become the mantra of male workers more generally?

To date, historians who have studied family wage demands by French workers have emphasized the role that material factors played in their generation, particularly the threat of proletarianization caused by mechanization and low-wage female competition. Laura L. Frader, who concentrates largely on the period from the Third Republic through the interwar era, contends that "Demands for the family wage were specific to workers in trades that were especially threatened by women's competition or were undergoing technological change."[115] Her thesis appears similar to Heidi Hartmann's contention that the primary purpose of the family wage demand was to maintain gender boundaries in the work force that privileged men.[116]

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[114]Michelle Perrot makes this argument about workers' attitudes in the 1870s in "L'éloge de la ménagère," 110-111 as do Jacques Rancière and Patrick Vauday, "Going to the Expo," p. 42.

[115]"Engendering Work and Wages: The French Labor Movement and the Family Wage," *Gender and Class in Modern Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1996), 146.

[116]Heidi Hartmann, "Capitalism, Patriarchy and Job Segregation by Sex," *Signs,* 1 (1976): 137-69.

Frader acknowledges, however, that the evidence in support of this thesis is uneven. She notes that in the 1840s, "when skilled workingmen were fighting to support their status in trades undergoing reorganization, male workers did not universally invoke the ideal of the unwaged housewife to valorize their position as wage earners."[117] Tailors, for example, did not typically voice family wage demands in this period, despite stiff competition from female needleworkers in the *confection* trades. But printers, who faced less direct threat from low-waged women, did. Similarly, metalworkers supported the family wage before 1900, although metalworking was a solidly male bastion.[118]

To explain these discrepancies, Frader appeals both to "structural" differences among the trades and to ways in which workers conceptualized manliness and the "idealized household." From a structural perspective, tailoring was a trade in which female family members were often employed in *confection* work. Printing, by contrast, showed the opposite pattern. Printers, Frader argues, were "skilled" workers and thus were drawn to the Proudhonist idealization of the self-sufficient artisan and the patriarchal family.[119] It is not always clear in Frader's analysis, however, which variables are operating as cause and which as effect. Did printers' idealizations of manliness and the patriarchal household inspire family wage demands, or were such idealizations, along with family wage rhetoric, defensive responses to the threat of job loss or status? Were family wage demands a reaction to increasing numbers of women entering a trade, or did they tend to arise in those trades whose identity was traditionally most masculinist? Although

[117]"Engendering work and wages," 146.

[118]Ibid., 151-152.

[119]Ibid., 146-148.

Frader's analysis does not answer all of the questions it raises, it does demonstrate the importance of historicizing family wage discourses, of attending to their use as tactical weapons in specific struggles.

Michael Hanagan argues that the demand for a family subsistence wage "really begins in industry; artisan workers typically did not generate this type of demand."[120] His thesis rests on a debatable distinction between "artisans" and "proletarians". He defines the latter as those who have lost control over wage rates and entry into their trades, and associates this loss of control with the increasing mechanization of production. His argument is reminiscent of Jane Humphries's contention that one of the few feasible ways for the working-class to control the labor market and resist "universal proletarianization" was to demand the family wage, and women as well as men stood to benefit from this tactic.[121] However, Hanagan's use of coal miners in south-eastern France to support his thesis nullifies any possibility of assessing Frader's contention that female competition contributed to the evolution of family wage discourses. The wives of the miners Hanagan studied did not work because of lack of local opportunities, making it imperative for men to earn a family subsistence wage.

Hanagan's argument seems debatable on two counts. There were in fact artisans who voiced family wage claims before their trades were substantially mechanized. Second, erecting a clear distinction between artisans and proletarians may not be

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[120]"Proletarian Families and Social Protest: Production and Reproduction as Issues of Social Conflict in Nineteenth-Century France," in *Work in France: Representations, Meaning, Organization and Practice*, ed. Steven L. Kaplan and Cynthia J. Koepp (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), 421.

[121]"Class Struggle and the Persistence of the Working-Class Family," *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, v. 1 (1977): 241-58.

particularly useful, as Jacques Rancière has persuasively argued.[122] Typographers represent a group that straddled the boundaries between these two categories, as did an increasing number of artisans during the July Monarchy. Their membership was particularly hostile to women in the trade and typographers often voiced family wage demands in working-class journals.[123] While experiencing some degree of proletarianization, they still represented an elite group among artisans in terms of their educational level, political awareness and organizational effectiveness. They offer an example of how the interaction of economic, political and discursive variables might stimulate demands for the family wage and attempts at banning women from a trade.

Print-workers, like shoemakers and tailors, were experiencing the effects of subcontracting practices that reduced ordinary typographers to insecure piece-workers. In many print shops, there was an internal hierarchy that favored an elite minority of compositors, known as *metteurs en page*. They were in effect *marchandeurs* who contracted out work to others and supervised its completion. They might handle several commissions for printed works at the same time. Beneath them were workers paid by the day, the *hommes de conscience*, who controlled the layout of pages and set up printed tables. A third category of workers was known as *journalistes*. They possessed superior speed and dexterity and monopolized the typesetting of newspapers, where time was of

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[122]"The Myth of the Artisan: Critical Reflections on a Category of Social History," *International Labor and Working Class History*, No. 24 (Fall 1983): 1-16.

[123] Art. 116 of the statutes of the Typographical Society, approved on 2 Sept. 1849, stated that "The employment of women as compositors is against morality as well as good work practice" and declared that workers would refuse to work in shops where women were admitted. Paul Chauvet, *Les Ouvriers du livre en France de 1789 à la constitution de la fédération du livre* (Paris: Marcel Rivière, 1964), 213-14.

the essence. Two-thirds of all compositors, however, fell into the category of *paquetiers* - "the pariahs of the profession" as one print-worker called them, who were hired when a job needed to be done quickly and let go as soon as it was completed. They were essentially piece-workers who suffered from considerable down-time caused by an oversupply of labor in their profession. According to a study published in *La Ruche Populaire*, they typically worked only three days out of six, and spent hours roaming from shop to shop, or standing idle waiting for a new assignment. Although compositors could earn three to four francs per day when fully employed, down-time reduced that sum by one-third to one-half for many *paquetiers.*[124]

In this context, rumors that prestigious firms such as M. M. Firmin Didot, frères, planned to open compositing positions to women at the daily rate of 1 fr. 25, evoked bitter protests.[125] Women who worked in typography might make one-third to one-half the male wage, but this was still good money compared to needlework.[126] Responding to the announcement in the *Revue de Paris* that a female printshop would be founded at Saint-Germay outside of Paris, paying compositors a rate of three francs daily, the compositor J.-B. Coutant predicted that this would lead to a "heated conflict, a war to the death between unfortunates." How did so-called reformers propose to introduce women

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[124]Vannostal, "De l'Imprimerie Typographique", *La Ruche Populaire*, April 1842, 20-26.

[125]*L'Atelier*, March 1844, 87.

[126]In Paris the majority of male print-shop workers made between 3 and 5 fr. per day, compared to 1 fr. 25 to 3 fr. for women; these figures did not include down-time or dead seasons (655). Chambre de Commerce de Paris, *Statistique de l'industrie à Paris*, (Paris, 1851): "*Personnel employé dans l'industrie du Livre en 1847*", reprinted in Chauvet, 654.

into the ateliers "without depriving those that have it of work, and rendering hopeless those that lack it?"[127] Drawing once again on the theme of the workshop as a malign environment for women, he conjured up sexualized images of young village women "embracing with their feeble arms this monster [the "great typographical machine"] which vomits thousands of copies." While admitting that women "did not have a place set for them at the banquet of our society," allowing them to do men's work would not address their poverty. It would simply undercut the ability of their guardians to protect and support them:

> Philanthropist! it is not in throwing women into places that are unhealthy, infected, which shorten life, that you will ameliorate their lot; extend your solicitude to men, and women, for whom you have only a hypocritical tenderness, will be happy; because woman is continually under the tutelage of the masculine sex: young girl, she is under the protection of her father; woman, that of her husband; moreover, she owes herself to her household, to her children, to those whom she carries in her womb.[128]

How real an economic threat women posed to male print-workers by the late 1840s is difficult to determine. Their presence may simply have served as a lightning rod for diffuse anxieties about loss of control over conditions of work rather than representing a genuine competitive problem. By 1847, according to the survey conducted by the

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[127]Coutant, ouvrier compositeur, "Question Industrielle et Sociale", *La Ruche Populaire*, Sept. 1840: 7-15; quotation, 13-14. Coutant was a typographer and journalist who contributed to *La Ruche* in the early 1840s; in 1849 he contributed articles to *Le Travail Affranchi*. He was associated with the Proudhonists Vasbenter and Georges Duchêne in 1846 in a cultural group that tried to publish a journal, and like them, was a staunch opponent of women's work. In 1864 he signed the manifesto of the Sixty. Chauvet, *Les Ouvriers du Livre*, 141, 142, 169, 202, 277-82 and passim; J. Maitron, *Dictionnaire biographique*, 3: 474-475. He corresponded with Flora Tristan and praised her *Union Ouvrière*, saying that it "contains new ideas expressed with a great frankness and a male energy." Unpub. letter, 30 May 1843, in Jules-L. Puech, *La Vie et l'Oeuvre de Flora Tristan* (Paris: Rivière, 1925), 468-469.

[128]Coutant, "Question Industrielle", 14.

Parisian Chamber of Commerce, women made up approximately 31 per cent of workers in the combined book and print industries in Paris, but only 7.5 per cent were employed directly in print-shops (*imprimeries*). Over half of the total female work force were employed in book-stitching and book-binding, trades that were traditionally heavily female.[129] Paul Chauvet, author of the leading study of the printing and book trades in France, contends that female compositors did not become a major preoccupation of the Typographical Society until 1861.[130] As Judith DeGroat has pointed out, however, it is impossible to tell from the Chamber's data exactly what types of jobs those in print-shops held. Rather untypically, the Chamber's report provides no breakdown by sex either for occupational categories or wage rates. DeGroat believes this was a deliberate obfuscation motivated by a desire to hide or minimize women's presence in printing, in response to the strong anti-female biases of the Typographical Society, which had gone on record against women in printshops on grounds of morality.[131] Morality, of course, was often a smoke-screen for other less admissible objections. The genealogy of print-workers misogyny remains to be written; however, certain hypotheses are suggested

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[129]Chambre de Commerce de Paris, *Statistique de l'industrie à Paris*, (Paris, 1851): *Personnel employé dans l'industrie du Livre en 1847*, reprinted in Chauvet, 654.

[130]Chauvet, *Les Ouvriers du Livre*, 214. He suggests (note 1, 654) that the majority of women in 1847 were employed as *margeuses* (fed sheets of paper into mechanical presses), *régleuses* (ruled paper), *compasseuses* (prepared pages for trimming), *plieuses* (folders), and *brocheuses* (stitchers).

[131]*The Working Lives of Women in the Parisian Manufacturing Trades*, 1830-1848, unpub. Ph.D. dissertation, Univ. of Rochester, 1991: 59-63.

by the history of the trade under the July Monarchy.[132] Like those other unstable and "open" métiers, shoemaking and tailoring, print-workers had a reputation for political militancy.[133] They were among the first into the streets in July 1830, incited by masters who claimed that the new press laws would cause widespread unemployment. Revolutionary fervor spilled over into attacks on, and protests against, the mechanical presses introduced into the Royal Print Workshops and some private establishments. Although print-workers failed to have such presses banned, their mobilization in 1830 stimulated a new spirit of trade activism. Workers in Paris, Nantes, Bordeaux and Lyons organized mutual assistance societies in the early 1830s, which also functioned as clandestine resistance organizations. In 1833, during the great wave of worker unrest that swept over Paris in the wake of the 1832 cholera epidemic, print-shop workers emulated the newly-formed tailors' association organized by Grignon. In November they met to consider a proposal by Jules Leroux calling for establishment of an immense associational printshop that he believed would force private establishments to set higher *tarifs* or lose

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[132]While a number of print-workers who published in artisan journals appear to have been misogynists, it is important to remember that some, like Pierre Leroux and Vannostal, had Saint-Simonian backgrounds and were more generous in their attitudes towards women.

[133]The best account of print-workers political activism during the July Monarchy is Paul Chauvet, *Les Ouvriers du Livre en France*, 90-170. See also Edouard Dolléans, *Histoire du Mouvement Ouvrier 1830-1871* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1953), 39-40, 51-55, 83-85, 92-93; Octave Festy, *Le Mouvement Ouvrier au Début de la Monarchie de Juillet (1830-1834)* (Paris: Edouard Cornély, 1908), 30-40, 51-55, 63-66; F. Isambert, "Aux Origines de l'Associationisme Buchézien," *Archives Internationales de Sociologie de la Co-operation*, no. 6 (1959): 29-66, esp. 60-66.

workers. Leroux urged workers not to resist mechanization but to associate for the welfare of all.[134]

Although Leroux's proposal and a parallel attempt to organize a Free Typographic Association in 1833 were aborted by police repression, associational efforts continued. In 1839, a Typographical Society was founded, and in 1843, after much hard negotiation under the *prud'homme* system, master-printers and workers reached agreement on a *tarif.* An arbitration board of six masters and six workers was appointed to regulate its application.[135] This agreement remained in force for five years and was renewed in 1850. The annual banquet of masters and workers was touted by *L'Atelier* as a model of pacific and fraternal labor-management relations.[136]

Thus by the mid-1840s, typographers had acquired many of the advantages other trades still sought in 1848: a strong corporate organization, a uniform *tarif* with a reformed arbitration board to enforce it, and reasonably good relations with employers. These assets would appear to qualify them as "artisans" rather than "proletarians" by Hanagan's definition. Yet the fact that more than half of all typographers were consigned to part-time piece-work gave them a proletarian insecurity. Because of their literacy and political consciousness, typographers were over-represented in the generation of *la parole ouvrière.* Two of the three workers' newspapers born in 1830 were published by

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[134]*Aux Ouvriers Typographes: De la nécessité de fonder une association ayant pour but de rendre les ouvriers propriétaires des instruments du travail* (Paris: Imprimerie de L.-E. Herhan, 1833).

[135]For the text of the 1843 *tarif*, see Chauvet, 648-53. For a discussion of its negotiation, see ibid., 129-134.

[136]"Le gouvernement et les typographes de Paris", Oct. 1847: 12-13.

compositors - *Le Peuple*, and *L'Artisan*.[137] They were also very influential on the editorial boards of the two leading workers' journals of the 1840s, *L'Atelier* and *La Ruche Populaire*. Of the seventy-five workers who served as identified editors of *L'Atelier*, twenty-six were typographers.[138] A number of them were well-known activists and commanded particular respect. Leneveux, the first president of the Typographical Society in 1839, became the manager of *L'Atelier*. The Atelierist Devaux tried to associate typographers in defense of their salaries in 1834; he was active in negotiating the *tarif* of 1843. Adolphe Boyer, author of an ambitious plan for the mutualist association of artisan trades in France, was a collaborator of Devaux's and a contributor to the journal.[139] Among the typographers who served on the editorial board of *La Ruche Populaire* and contributed articles to it were Saint-Simonians Jules Vinçard (who earlier worked as a precision instrument maker) and Vannostal, who authored a study of the printing trades for the paper. In 1848, the Atelierist Antoine Viez was one of the three typographers sent as a delegate to the Luxembourg Commission. Corbon, an editor of *L'Atelier*, who had worked fifteen years in typography before becoming a wood sculptor, was one of three typographers elected to the National Assembly in April 1848, and became Vice-President of that body. He also served as Vice-President of the Council of Encouragement

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[137]F. Isambert, "Aux Origins de l'Associationisme Buchézien," 63-65.

[138]A. Cuvillier, *Un Journal d'Ouvriers: L'Atelier (1840-1850)* (Paris: Alcan, 1914), 51. Chauvet notes (228) that of the journal's 17 permanent collaborators, 8 were typographers, and of 28 occasional collaborators, 12 were typographers.

[139]Cuvillier, *L'Atelier*, 236-37.

established by the National Assembly on July 5, 1848, to distribute three million francs to worker and worker-patron associations.[140]

Male print-workers were thus well positioned to transmit their views to a wider working-class audience. Their trade predisposed them to political awareness, and they had the masculine *amour propre* associated with the production of public discourses. Their tradition of revolutionary activism in 1830 together with their highly visible profile in the associational movement in the 1840s gave them prestige as role-models. The sheer volume of rhetoric produced by print-workers may in fact skew our perceptions of how male workers thought and felt. Their anxieties about female wage competition and their *femme au foyer* longings may have been unusually intense. This could be explained not only as a consequence of the sedentary nature of their trade and its apparent suitability to women's alleged manual dexterity, but also as a consequence of print-workers greater contact, through print literature, with bourgeois culture and its standards of respectability, and of printers' political aspirations.

The example of the print-workers suggests that while economic pressures played a role in generating family wage demands, so too did the need to assert masculine dignity and honor. Workers who published newspapers and reformist tracts felt constantly obligated to defend themselves against charges that socialists were destroyers of property and the family, or that male workers lived in concubinage and deserted their families for the cabarets. Demands for the family wage were, in part, a rhetorical strategy aimed at rebutting these allegations. They turned the tables on workers' accusers, by suggesting

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[140]Cuvillier, *L'Atelier*, 255. Another typographer and editor of *L'Atelier*, Danguy, also served on the Council.

that the real destroyers of the family were those who made women work thirteen to fourteen hours per day, to the detriment of their children and their households. Workers who employed such rhetoric probably did so as much out of a desire to skewer their critics and to assert their own "family-mindedness", as out of genuine fear of female competition. Thus in response to the remarks of an unnamed economist in the *Journal des Débats* who claimed that socialism would result in the destruction of order and of the family, *L'Atelier* rejoined:

> ... we wish to return the worker's own property to him, the "most sacred property", as M. Thiers calls it, which misery has stripped from him to the profit of the great barons of industry; we wish to return wives and children of workers to the domestic foyer, "which the Fatality of the factory system," M. Blanqui says, "makes the chiefs of industry prefer them, because their salary is lower"; we wish, in a word, to consolidate and extend property, regenerate and sanctify the family, us, whom you accuse of wishing to destroy them.[141]

Similarly, the editorial committee of *La Ruche Populaire*, rebutting a journal which accused it of being "enraged destroyers, working for the complete abolition of property, the emancipation of women, and other monstrosities", replied:

> And only to speak of the actual state of woman, above all of woman of the people, do you find it sufficiently moral and in the interests of humanity that inadequate salary renders her entire life unhappy, if not vicious or criminal? Certainly, there alone, there is already an urgent, imperious reform to accomplish. And we do not wish that woman thus serve like man in work of all kinds, in order to diminish the price of labor still more by multiplying the number of arms... leaving the children of the poor dying, deprived of all education and care. It is already too much that we are obliged to send our children into the workshops, thereby losing their future strength and intelligence, without taking from them the cares of a mother.[142]

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[141]"Les destructeurs de la famille," July 1849, 369.

[142]"Response au *Journal du Peuple*, Faite par Le Comité de la *Ruche Populaire*," Feb. 1840, 4-5.

Using the ideology of domesticity to expose the contradictions in bourgeois culture was a clever tactic, particularly as promised to win sympathy from conservative and Catholic critics of liberalism. It seems no accident that family wage rhetoric was most often voiced by print-workers associated with the neo-Catholic workers' journal, *L'Atelier,* who understood how to appeal to the sensibilities of their wealthier co-religionists.

The suspicion that the family wage was a rhetorical strategy designed to shame the bourgeoisie and defend male workers' honor is reinforced by its textual juxtaposition, in workers' journals, with more modest proposals for ameliorating the lot of the *ouvrière*, as if the family wage were too chimerical to be taken seriously. These proposals exhibit contradictions inherent in trying to address women's poverty while keeping intact a gendered system of work and familial relations that privileged men. Emile Varin, for example, extols the virtues of teaching girls how to "sew, design, embroider, count" as well as speak and write French fluently. He never addresses, however, the question of how flooding an already-saturated market with more needlewomen will raise women's incomes.[143] The editors of *L'Atelier* also recommend better education for women, although they are vague about what "better" means, other than raising the standard of mothering and teaching girls to sew - ironically anticipating the educational program of the Third Republic.[144] Increasing the pay in women's trades is a frequent

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[143]Emile Varin, Chef d'atelier (prod. chimiques), "Du Salaire des Femmes", *La Ruche Populaire*, July 1841, 24-25.

[144]"Enquête: De la condition des femmes", *L'Atelier*, 30 December 1842, 32. On girls education in the 3rd Republic see Françoise Mayeur, "The Secular Model of Girls' Education," in *Emerging Feminism from Revolution to World War*, v. 4, *A History of Women in the West*, ed. Geneviève Fraisse and Michelle Perrot, 228-245; Judith F. Stone, "Republican Ideology, Gender and Class: France," in *Gender and Class in Modern Europe*,255-56.

recommendation; although Varin's claim that "a few sous more for work done would alleviate a lot of problems" seems wildly optimistic.[145] *L'Atelier* suggests augmenting female salaries "in a manner that would not offend anyone" (that is, very modestly) by utilizing reformed *prud'hommmes* (arbitration boards) made up of equal numbers of workers and masters who would set higher *tarifs*.[146] The idea of restructuring the *prud'hommes* to put workers as well as employers in voting positions was popular with a number of male reformers in the skilled trades, including the typographer Adolphe Boyer and the locksmith Pierre Moreau. Women, however, never sat on such bodies. They did not exist in predominantly female trades, nor did men suggest the creation of such institutions to regulate them.[147]

The same lack of realism characterized *L'Atelier*'s suggestion that women workers would benefit from their recommended model of association, based on the ideas of Philippe Buchez. This type of production association, discussed in Part Two, was designed for small groups of skilled artisans possessing considerable start-up capital, who were willing to pool it for long periods of time. It was completely unsuited to the circumstances of proletarian women. With equal obliviousness the editors also recommend making marriage "easier", although it was common knowledge that marriage

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[145]"Du Salaire des Femmes", 25.

[146]"Enquête: De la condition des femmes," 32.

[147]See Adolphe Boyer, "General Reflections: Conseils de prud'hommes" in *De l'État des Ouvriers et de son Améloriation par l'Organisation du Travail* (Paris: Dubois, 1841), 121-140; Pierre Moreau, *De la Réforme des abus du compagnonnage*, (Auxerre: Maillefer, 1843), 152. For an historical overview of the role of the prud'hommes in the 19th and 20th centuries see the special issue of *Le Mouvement social*, 141 (October-December 1987), ed. by Alain Cottereau.

and children imposed particularly harsh burdens on proletarian women.[148] Even patriarchal apologists like the compositor J.-B. Coutant admitted that given the nature of working-class marriage, "where [women] too often find misery and slavery in incessant work," prostitution might seem like a better option.[149]

A minority of worker-journalists, typically those influenced by Saint-Simonian or Fourierist doctrine, proposed more radical solutions for women's poverty. Although their voices seem isolated and are largely drowned out by the chorus of male shibboleths, they testify to the diversity of views which existed among elite workers. Not all were inclined to fetishize the domestic foyer, and a few even advocated a complete restructuring of work based on gender equality. The cabinet-maker Lenoir, echoing Fourier, argued for a separation of "family" - an affective unit, from "household" - the interior work of families. Communal cooking, shopping, and meals organized by associations of one hundred families, he believed, would not only rationalize household work, but would provide more lively get-togethers than nuclear family gatherings, "which are for the most part very boring."[150] The typographer L. J. Vannostal, in an unusually radical polemic, argued that the only true solution to the problem of women's poverty was to make sexual equality the basis of social mores and institutions:

> Conscientious writers, instead of encouraging industrial entrepreneurs to render the condition of workers as harsh as possible and to exploit the unjust prejudice which rewards the work of the women less well than that of men, ought to devote themselves to reminding the rich of humanitarian sentiments, and making workers understand that as long as woman is considered inferior to man, she will be

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[148]For both recommendations see "Enquête: De la condition des femmes," 32.

[149]"Question Industrielle et Sociale," *La Ruche Populaire*, September 1840, 9.

[150]*La Ruche Populaire*, March 1840, 6-7.

> obliged to work at a better bargain than him, and thus present a deadly competition for him; that the way to end such a disastrous state of things is to establish the equality of man and woman in opinion, in customs and in laws.[151]

Vannostal, a former Saint-Simonian, helped to found both *La Ruche Populaire* and its successor journal, *l'Union*. He and Pierre Leroux, another ex-Saint-Simonian who advocated greater rights for women, complicate the stereotype of the trade as misogynistic. Leroux, however, was an intellectual and a journalist rather than a simple print-worker, and both men came out of an utopian socialist tradition that advocated elevating the status of women.[152]

Acknowledging the equality of women as producers was problematic for the majority of their cohorts, however. Not only did it threaten masculine preeminence in the world of work, but it also had political ramifications, although these remained latent until 1848. Inspired by both liberal political theory and republican rhetoric, politically-conscious workers in the 1840s were attempting to define labor as a form of property, in order to claim active citizenship in the state.[153] But if labor was equivalent to bourgeois "property" in its capacity to dignify and enfranchise the citizen, did this mean that proletarian women were entitled to vote? And if, as married women, their property in labor legally belonged to their husbands, should at least adult single women and widows

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[151]L. J. Vannostal, "Etat de la Société", *La Ruche Populaire*, May 1840, 7.

[152]For an excellent analysis of Leroux's thought, see Armelle Le Bras-Chopard, *De L'Égalité Dans La Différence: Le Socialisme de Pierre Leroux* (Paris: Presses de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, 1986).

[153]This is the thesis of William H. Sewell, Jr., *Work and Revolution in France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), esp. 114-138.

be enfranchised?[154] This was in fact the position taken by the socialist-feminist editors of *La Voix des Femmes* in the spring of 1848.[155] Jules Viard, editor of the short-lived socialist journal *Le Représentant du Peuple*, tried to finesse this issue by separating woman's economic from her political rights. In April, 1848 he urged "citizen delegates of industry" elected to represent their *corps d'état* at the Luxembourg Commission to:

> Call then into your midst the delegates of all the industries of WOMAN; the political representation of women is ridiculous; the representation of her interests - as PRODUCER - is sacred. This first emancipation is the most urgent; it will lead to civil and moral emancipation.[156]

But Viard's call for the "economic emancipation of women, considered as producer, and not as woman dependent on man, as worker only" did not resonate with most male workers. For them, the *ouvrière* was not a "worker only", but a mother, sister, wife or daughter, bound to them by ties of reciprocal obligation and loyalty. The ideal of the atomized, self-aggrandizing subject, so beloved of liberals, was anathema to male

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[154]According to Geneviève Fraisse, the unmarried woman was an anomaly that threatened the division between public and private. *Muse de la raison: La démocratie exclusive et la différence des sexes* (Aix-en-Province: Edition Alinéa, 1989), 71. See also Cécile Dauphin, "Single Women," in *A History of Women in the West*, v. 4 *Emerging Feminism from Revolution to World War*, (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 427-442.

[155]"Pétition des Femmes", *La Voix des Femmes*, no. 35, 28 April 1848. This petition, addressed to the Provisional Government, calls for the grant of absolute civil rights to women, and asks that single adult women and widows who have attained majority be allowed to vote. It is signed by "the editorial committee of *La Voix des Femmes*".

[156]"Lettres Addresseés aux citoyens délégués d'industrie", *Le Représentant du Peuple*, 15 April 1848. Viard was a republican publicist who migrated from Saint-Simonianism to Fourierism before joining forces with C. Fauverty, another republican to found this paper in Oct. 1847. He supported Proudhon's project for an Exchange Bank and was involved with Pauline Roland's effort to set up an association of socialist instructors in 1849. He was condemned and sent into exile after 2 Dec. Maitron, 3: 499.

workers, the more so when applied to women. The majority seem to have agreed with the editors of *L'Atelier*, that "woman is so connected to man that the position of one cannot be ameliorated except by the position of the other."[157] This was in part a recognition of the interdependence of the sexes in working-class families, but it was also born of a desire to exercise power over women.

In conclusion, the argument that family wage demands were provoked by changing technology or female competition has some validity, but does not explain the uneven generation of such demands in the artisanal trades of the 1840s. There were other ways to resist female competition that were more in harmony with the traditional assumption that women would contribute to their own support and that of their children. Like the Parisian tailors whom Joan Scott describes in 1848, many artisans preferred a policy of rigid gender segregation of work processes and spaces that prevented women from encroaching directly on male preserves.[158] As Anna Clark notes in her study of English artisans in the same period, an artisan's status rested on his place in the fraternity of skilled men rather than on his ability to keep a wife at home. When English artisans began to voice family wage demands using the rhetoric of domesticity, it was a tactical move designed not only to protest sweating systems, but to reinforce the notion of the

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[157]"Enquête: De la condition des femmes", 30 Dec. 1842, 32.

[158]"Work Identities for Men and Women: The Politics of Work and Family in the Parisian Garment Trades in 1848," in *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 93-112. Scott is too sanguine about the "resolution" offered by Icarian communism. For a British version of this struggle see Barbara Taylor, "The Men are as Bad as Their Masters: Socialism, Feminism and Sexual Antagonism in the London Tailoring Trades in the Early 1830's," *Feminist Studies*, v. 5, no. 1 (Spring 1979): 7-40.

skilled and dignified patriarchal breadwinner that was linked to artisans' demands for political rights.[159]

Print-workers in Paris were precocious generators of family wage demands in the 1840s primarily because of their high level of political activism, their propensity for press polemics with bourgeois interlocutors, and their familiarity with bourgeois norms of respectability. They responded to perceived attacks on their role performance as heads of household by borrowing rhetorical ammunition from their critics. They were waging a symbolic crusade to validate their manliness, not a literal campaign to eliminate women from the work force - hardly a feasible option in the context of a subsistence economy that depended heavily on women's waged labor. Most working-class associationists of the period assumed that women would continue to work for wages, ideally at "attractive" work that was suited to their natures. Whether this work took place in the home or in the workshop was not as important as that it be defined as different from, and less skilled, than men's.

A major premise of associational ideology was the ability of associational principles and institutions to reconcile ostensibly divergent and conflicting interests: those of producers and consumers, French workers and immigrants, men and women. The archetype for the social harmony sought by associationists was the family, in which the strong would protect the weak, individual selfishness would be subordinated to the common good, and a natural hierarchy of sex and age would be compatible with an ethic of mutual care and concern. Since in many ways the family served as a model for the

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[159]*The Struggle for the Breeches* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 198-203.

kind of non-egotistical collaboration associationists sought, it is relevant to ask what kind of family male workers envisaged as a foundation for a more just social order. The following discussion takes up this issue.

5: "The family is the first form of association": The "family romance" of male workers

Lynn Hunt has suggested that societies construct "family romances" to justify either the existing socio-political system or to rationalize its overthrow. She defines family romances as those "collective, unconscious images of the familial order that underlie revolutionary politics", or which, alternatively, are used to defend the status quo.[160] Hunt's theory provokes the question: did French workers in the 1840s, and particularly in 1848, share a "family romance" that inspired their associational praxis or underpinned their concept of a just society? What was their image of familial order, and how might it have predisposed them to regard associational and political efforts by socialist and/or working-class women in the Revolution of 1848?

Most socialists and workers who theorized about worker association regarded the family as the nucleus of all association, the primary nexus from which all human social bonds derived. As the *Program of the Central Council of Democratic-Socialist Republicans* succinctly put it, "the family is the first form of association".[161] Louis Blanc more floridly called the family "a primordial association, elementary unit of every nation.... a truly sacred and indestructible institution because one does not destroy nature!"[162] Utopian socialists, most of them bourgeois males, devoted great attention

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[160]Lynn Hunt, *The Family Romance of the French Revolution*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), xiii.

[161]Reproduced in *Le Peuple*, 27 November 1848, 1.

[162]"Aux Femmes. La Famille," *Le Nouveau Monde*, 15 October 1849, 2.

to the issue of familial relations, sometimes to attack them searingly, as did Fourier, more often to prophesy their transformation and moralization in a regenerated socialist society, as did Louis Blanc, Etienne Cabet and Pierre Leroux.[163] It is difficult to determine exactly what influence utopian idealizations had on the thinking of better educated workers. While workers' discourse sometimes reflected concepts borrowed from socialist intellectuals, the constraints of working-class life created a large gap between prescriptive ideals and what workers viewed as feasible and acceptable arrangements.

Certainly, to the extent that workers were republican in political orientation, they absorbed the enormous emphasis on fraternity that was integral to republican ideology.[164] Lynn Hunt has argued that the trope of republican brotherhood derived

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[163]The views of socialist intellectuals such as Etienne Cabet, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, Louis Blanc, and Pierre Leroux are explored in Part 3 of this dissertation, in conjunction with their influence on Jeanne Deroin. For a brief overview see Louis Devance, "Femme, famille, travail et morale sexuelle dans l'idéologie de 1848," *Mythes et représentations de la Femme au dix-neuvième siècle* (Paris: Champion, 1976), 79-103. See also Marguerite Thibert, *Le Féminisme dans le Socialisme Français de 1830 à 1850* (Paris: Marcel Giard, 1926).

[164]There are many works which explore the influence of republican doctrine on male workers from 1830-1851; most ignore issues of gender. See for example Octave Festy, *Le Mouvement Ouvrier au Début de la Monarchie de Juillet (1830-1834)*; Edouard Dolléans, *Histoire du Mouvement Ouvrier 1830-1871* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1953), 75-80; 92-93; Maurice Agulhon, *The Republican Experiment*, vol. 2, *The Cambridge History of Modern France*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983; first publ. Paris: Seuil, 1973); Robert J. Bezucha, *The Lyon Uprising of 1834: Social and Political Conflict in the Early July Monarchy* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1974); Alain Faure, "Mouvements populaires et Mouvement ouvrier à Paris (1830-1834)", *Le mouvement social*, v. 88 (July-Sept. 1974): 51-92; John M. Merriman, *The Agony of the Republic: The Repression of the Left in Revolutionary France 1848-1851* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1978); Ronald Aminzade, *Class, Politics and Early Industrial Capitalism: A Study of Nineteenth-Century Toulouse, France* (Albany NY: State University of New York Press, 1981) and *Ballots and Barricades: Class Formation and Republican Politics in France, 1830-1871* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); Edward Berenson, *Populist Religion and Left-Wing Politics in France, 1830-*

from a "family romance" that cast revolutionaries as heroic brothers who banded together to rid France of its bad King-father and his degenerate wife and courtesans. Hunt, together with other historians and political theorists such as Joan Landes, Carol Pateman, Dorinda Outram, and Sara Maza, believe that in republican political culture, women could only be reintegrated into the family romance as good mothers of republican sons. Lacking the stoic and heroic qualities allegedly necessary for citizenship, and suspected of corrupting the monarchy by their erotic influence, women in republican ideology and practice were excluded from the public sphere.[165] "Conscious" workers with republican sentiments almost always defined active citizenship as an exclusively male prerogative, and viewed politics as off-limits to women. However, it does not automatically follow that the majority also embraced an essentially bourgeois definition of domesticity in which wives would remain at home, devoting all of their energies to nest-making and child-rearing. As Joan Scott has emphasized in the case of Parisian tailors, the gendering of specific work spaces and activities to preserve masculine definitions of craft skill and

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1852 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984; William J. Sewell, Jr.,*Work and Revolution in France*, 206-211 and passim.

[165]Hunt, *Family Romance*, also "The Many Bodies of Marie Antoinette: Political Pornography and the Problem of the Feminine in the French Revolution" in *Eroticism and the Body Politic*, ed. Lynn Hunt (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 108-130; Sara Maza "The Diamond Necklace Affair Revisited" in ibid., 63-89; Vivian Cameron "Political Exposures: Sexuality and Caricature in the French Revolution", in ibid., 90-107; Joan B. Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988); Dorinda Outram, *The Body and the French Revolution: Sex, Class and Political Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989); Carole Pateman, "The Fraternal Social Contract," in *The Disorder of Women: Democracy, Feminism and Political Theory* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989), 33-57.

dignity was a more vital concern than turning working-class women into "bonnes bourgeoises."[166]

Historians such as Louis Devance, and following his arguments, Michelle Perrot and Geneviève Fraisse, have argued that nineteenth-century workers were most attracted to the patriarchal and sexually puritanical model of family life promoted by Etienne Cabet and Pierre-Joseph Proudhon.[167] If so, this marked a significant departure by male artisans from an older tradition which tolerated, if not openly encouraged, male bonding through sexual promiscuity, drinking and socialization outside the home. It seems more plausible that male workers identified primarily with the two theorists' celebration of masculine authority and dignity than they did with their insistence on sexual continence by both men and women. Devance, for example, contends that Proudhon, with his *femme au foyer* dogmatism, articulated the aspirations that predominated among workers during the Second Republic:

> Master of his workshop as well as his foyer, the independent worker, loved and obeyed by his children and his infants, loving them in return, would produce and reproduce, achieving all of his legitimate aspirations, completely free from tutelage and in dignity.[168]

Other historians are more skeptical. Roger Magraw believes that Proudhon was too idiosyncratic to have many disciples and that he largely distanced himself from the

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[166]"Work Identities for Men and Women ," 102 and 107.

[167]Louis Devance, "Femme, famille, travail et morale sexuelle dans l'idéologie de 1848", 96; Michelle Perrot, "l'éloge de la ménagère dans le discours des ouvriers français au XIXe siècle," in *Mythes et représentations de la Femme au dix-neuvième siècle* (Paris: Champion, 1976): 105-106; Geneviève Fraisse, *Muse de la raison*, 71.

[168]Devance, ibid.

associational movement in 1848.[169] Jacques Rancière and Patrick Vauday argue that Proudhonist arguments were less well accepted by workers than is generally believed by academics, and only a few extremists parroted his crude arguments about women's inferiority. Yet they also maintain that by the 1860s, "the solution [workers had] reached was not very different from the Proudhonist one": "the only way to liberate women and restore them to a place where they would not be inferior would be to relegate them to the home."[170]

There were indeed identifiable Proudhonists among artisans in the 1840s, particularly print-workers, but the views of those who responded most forcefully and negatively to claims by socialist women may not be representative of workers as a whole, or even of print-workers more narrowly. Christopher Johnson has documented the substantial number of tailors and shoemakers attracted to Cabet's Icarian Communism, but some tailors and shoemakers were also involved in Fourierist associations and other kinds of mutualist efforts.[171] Workers in the construction trades, such as carpenters and masons, were typically apolitical and exhibited a traditional trade-centered outlook that

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[169]*The Age of Artisan Revolution, 1815-1871* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), 79.

[170]"Going to the Expo: the worker, his wife and machines," in *Voices of the People: The Social Life of 'La Sociale' at the End of the Second Empire*, ed. by Adrian Rifkin and Roger Thomas (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1988), 33-37.

[171]Christopher H. Johnson, *Utopian Communism in France: Cabet and the Icarians 1839-1851* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Univ. Press, 1974), 156-158; "Economic Change and Artisan Discontent: The Tailors' History, 1800-48," 89-90. Michael Sibalis, "Shoemakers and Fourierism in nineteenth-century Paris: the *Société Laborieuse des Cordonniers-Bottiers*", *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 20 (1987).

owed little to utopian doctrines.[172] Calling workers who exhibited patriarchal or misogynistic attitudes "Proudhonists" is an oversimplification which ignores the extent to which family relationships were contingent upon circumstances, subject to negotiation, and contested.

Certainly Proudhon had some working-class supporters, and they were among those most likely to respond in a hostile or defensive fashion to manifestos by socialist women. Flora Tristan's correspondents included several Proudhonist workers who protested the enlarged role she projected for women in her 1843 tract, *L'Union Ouvrière*. Among them were Louis Vasbenter, an early disciple of Proudhon and an activist in the Parisian Typographic Society.[173] While endorsing Tristan's call for better education for women, he objected vigorously to "the public exercise of her authority." "The life of

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[172]Alain Faure argues that wherever traditional forms of corporative organization survived, such as professions that remained dominated by compagnonnage, participation in political struggles was feeble and there was "weak penetration of ideas of political and social reform." He attributes the failure of the building workers' strike in 1840 to fact that workers had only narrow occupational amelioration in mind. "Movements populaires et Mouvement ouvrier à Paris (1830-1834)," 82. Roger Magraw, *The Age of Artisan Revolution, 1815-1871*, (84) notes that carpenters conducted six major strikes between 1822 and 1845; yet they were the most resistant of all craft workers to wider class solidarities and the least involved in political radicalism or associationism.

[173]Vasbenter, born in Lyon on 14 Jan. 1819, was a member of the Lyonnais committee of *L'Union*, a society which sought to reform compagnonnage and on which Pierre Moreau was also active. He was one of the first militant workers to appeal to the principles of Proudhon. He was chased from Lyon for having led a strike in 1845, was active in the Parisian typographic society and took an active part in the fighting in Feb. 1848. He was a director of the journal *Le Répresentant du Peuple*, and later *La Voix du Peuple* and *Le Peuple de 1850*. He was imprisoned for a press offense, and expelled 2 Dec. 1851. In London, he joined Cabet, Pierre Leroux, Louis Blanc and Martin Nadaud in attempting to establish a joint program of socialist action. J. Maitron, *Dictionnaire biographique*, 3: 487-488.

woman is in the life of the household, the domestic life, the interior life," he pontificated.[174] Identical sentiments were expressed by Hugont, a younger Lyonnais lathe-worker, who appears to have been under Vasbenter's sway. In his own letter to Tristan, written a few days later, he reiterated Vasbenter's themes:

> To man, discussion in the assemblies, pains and labor, war and dangers. To woman, the tranquil and uniform life for raising and giving first instruction to her children. From the state of savagery to the present civilized state which we have obtained, woman is almost everywhere devoted to the interior life. I do not mean by that she obey, like a slave his master... but I mean solely the true social order...[175]

Hugont's conception of the "true social order" suggests a trickling-down of the bourgeois notion of separate spheres. It is questionable, however, whether the majority of workers in the first half of the nineteenth century could identify with the bourgeois concept of the home as a privatized refuge from the outside world, or even, as Rancière has theorized for the late Empire, a viable way to escape from the constraints of capitalism and employer-oriented systems of labor exploitation[176]. Rather than representing a haven in a heartless world, the domestic foyer was for many simply a dreary reminder of the melancholy of their entire existence. There are workers' discourses that exhibit a gritty refusal to sentimentalize domesticity, a kind of familial anti-romance, arising out of a desire to proclaim the bitterness of workers' lives. As the journal *L'Union* asked:

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[174]Letter to Flora Tristan, Lyon, 11 June 1843. Text in Jules Puech, *La Vie et l'Oeuvre de Flora Tristan* (Paris: Rivière, 1925), 470-474.

[175]Lyon, 17 June 1843. Text ibid., 477-481.

[176]"Going to the Expo: the worker, his wife and machines," 42.

> How, in effect, can the worker have friends other than those which develop in the atelier, sometimes even in the cabaret, when his means do not permit him to have a presentable home, nor above all to incur the costs of the most modest hospitality.... Family and friendships require moreover some motive, a common preoccupation; what would this motive be? Will they talk of the affairs of each? But the circumstances of the worker hardly ever vary, the circle of his preoccupations is as monotonous as it is sorrowful, and it is in order to escape it that he spends several hours away from work each week... One should not be much astonished if our foyer often remains deserted; if the interior life, dignified, serious, busy, is among us an exceptional case.[177]

Between Proudhon's *femme au foyer* fantasies and the grimmer picture painted by *L'Union* lay a range of domestic and marital arrangements which workers constructed in accordance with their means, their customs and their values. If it is difficult to generalize about workers' attitudes towards *la vie intérieure* in the 1840s, it is not only because of the heterogeneous nature of the working-class, but also because literate workers rarely wrote about their relationships with their wives and children. In worker's autobiographies and memoirs, accounts of family life typically take a back seat to coming-of-age narratives, featuring their protagonists' socialization to work and their intellectual and political awakening. This may reflect standard narrative conventions, or it may be an indication of the secondary importance generally attached to domesticity in male working-class culture.[178] It may also reflect what Ellen Ross found in late nineteenth-century

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[177]*L'Union*, November-December 1845, 2-3. Garth Stedman Jones similarly argues that in working-class London, the home remained a crowded and unrelaxing environment, and men passed a high percentage of their evenings at the pubs. "Working-Class Culture and Working-Class Politics in London, 1870-1900: Notes on the Remaking of the Working-Class," *Journal of Social History*, 7 (1974): 487.

[178]Mark Traugott, *The French Worker: Autobiographies from the Early Industrial Era*, (28-32), argues that workers' narratives are typically framed within a set of conventions that influence whether and how various aspects of workers' existence are portrayed; few workers discussed the emotional side of their marriages or interactions with their children.

London working-class culture, that the strongest affectional bond was between mothers and children, not husbands and wives; in Cockney circles there was little social expectation of sexual compatibility or emotional harmony between a married couple.[179] For proletarian men, the all-male comraderie of the workshop and the wineshop was probably more potent than the kind of idealized love between men and women celebrated in utopian discourse.[180]

Many artisans who published tracts or memoirs were in predominantly masculine trades, such as construction and metallurgy, where journeymen's associations, the compagnonnages, structured socialization to work.[181] These workers were immersed during formative periods of their youth and early adulthood in an all-male subculture, where women rarely functioned as co-workers and primarily figured as sources of sexual relief or temptation. "Domesticity" in such an aleatory context was provided by the "mère", the female innkeeper in each town on the *tour de France* who housed journeymen

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[179]"'Fierce Questions and Taunts': Married Life in Working-Class London, 1870-1914," *Feminist Studies*, 8, no. 3 (Fall 1982): 578-81, 596.

[180]Christiane Dufrancatel, "La femme imaginaire des hommes..." (178-79) argues that a core ideology embraced by working-class men from the late Empire through the Third Republic was the idea that "love" could resolve all contradictions between the sexes. I have not found this emphasis on idealized love in workerist discourse in the 1840s.

[181]William J. Sewell, Jr. and Cynthia M. Truant are among the historians who argue for the continuity of compagnonnage structures and values well into the 19th century. See Sewell, *Work and Revolution in France*, 40-61; Truant, "Solidarity and Symbolism among Journeymen Artisans: The Case of Compagnonnage," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 21, no. 2 (April 1979): 214-230; "Independent and Insolent: Journeymen and Their 'Rites' in the Old Regime Workplace," in *Work in France*, ed. S. L. Kaplan and C. J. Koepp (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), 131-175; *The Rites of Labor: Brotherhoods of Compagnonnage in Old and New Regime France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994).

from the same sect. She and her husband, or "père", were expected to treat compagnons like surrogate sons, and probably provided some parental solicitude in their lives.[182] However, the atmosphere in which journeymen lived and worked was one in which "fraternity" far surpassed other forms of familial attachment, and the republican trope of the band of brothers united in mutual defense of their liberties could be evoked against rapacious masters and members of rival societies.[183] The attention which Agricol Perdiguier, for example, lavishes on the incessant male-bonding rituals so favored by journeymen, even while he deplores their excesses, testifies to the strength of the emotional ties which such masculine communities could create.[184] Cynthia Truant speculates that the high degree of sociability fostered by journeymen's organizations, with their constant round of revelries, games, tricks and communal feasts provided an attractive alternative for single men to traditional family life, with less burdensome obligation and more exciting mobility.[185]

As Judith Stone has noted with respect to bourgeois politicians of the Third Republic, socialization in an all-male environment contributes to an unease with women

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[182]Cynthia Truant notes, however, that although the function of the mères was to provide care, the compagnons' relationship with them, "even when deeply informed by sentiment, retained its contractual and economic quality." *The Rites of Labor*, 190-92; 329-330.

[183]Ibid., 12-13, 330-335 and *passim*.

[184]Perdiguier provides a long, rather fanciful history of the origins of compagnonnage, together with a detailed description of the customs and practices particular to it, in *Le Livre de Compagnonnage*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Pagnerre, 1841), v. 1, 20-78.

[185]"Independent and Insolent: Journeymen and their 'Rites' in the Old Regime Workplace", 172.

and a tendency to view them as the problematic "other".[186] In the songs of compagnons reproduced by Perdiguier, women appear primarily as sexual distractions which must be overcome in order to perfect oneself and one's *métier*. Leaving women behind is "conquering weakness"; in the struggle between "love" and "duty", manly "reason" must triumph over feminine "sentiment."[187] This cluster of attitudes and experiences may explain why compagnonnage reformers, such as Perdiguier and his chief rival, the locksmith and Unionist Pierre Moreau, have almost nothing to say about family life or the problems of female workers. In fact, women are such an afterthought that in Moreau's one-hundred-seventy-two page tract on the reform of compagnonnage, they rate only two sentences. When a worker asks Moreau the hypothetical question, "What would you do about married workers and their families?", Moreau responds: "Like the others, they would be admitted and associated. Their wives would occupy themselves with housework, and their children would be nourished, lodged and educated at the expense of the Society."[188]

Moreau's response obscures the critical economic role wives played in many artisan households, a role more evident in other sources. For compagnons on the *tour de France*, as Alain Faure notes, marriage symbolized the end of their freewheeling status as itinerant journeyman. Ideally, marriage to a woman with resources allowed a compagnon to set himself up as master of his own shop. However falling real wages in

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[186]"Republican Ideology, Gender and Class: France, 1860s-1914", 246-247.

[187]Ibid., v. 1, Part 3: "Songs of Compagnons". See for example *Les Adieux à Caroline* (214-15), which ends: "I flee from you, I conquer my weakness/Adieu, adieu, receive all my farewells."

[188]*De la Réforme des abus du compagnonnage* (Auxerre: Maillefer, 1843), 65.

the 1840s and a surplus of journeymen made this step impossible for many.[189] Journeymen nevertheless often married or cohabitated, relying on their partners' earnings to help support the household. For a lucky few, acquiring a wife with a dowry or savings facilitated upward mobility. Although elite workers and socialists were highly critical of the property nexus in bourgeois marriages, workers' own unions suggest a healthy degree of rational calculation. Perdiguier first fell in love with a seventeen year-old woman on his *tour*, but resisted marrying, he claims, because it would mean settling in her home town, away from friends and family in his native Avignon. He notes that compagnons who married outside of their region might do so because their debts prevented them from leaving a particular town.[190] Perdiguier ultimately married a seamstress in Paris, investing the savings of his in-laws, who came to live with him, in a school-cum-lodging house which he opened to teach drafting and design to young journeymen. He thereby secured a modest foothold on the ladder that led from manual worker to the petty bourgeoisie.

Martin Nadaud's family carefully shopped for a prospective bride whose dowry would relieve the substantial indebtedness of the family farm. Nadaud himself seems to have been a willing accomplice in their endeavor, provided the woman was not ugly.[191] For Nadaud, as for other masons of the Creuse who migrated regularly to cities to work, wives represented stability and rural attachment. They guaranteed that the family land

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[189]Alain Faure, "Introduction" to Agricol Perdiguier, *Mémoires d'un compagnon* (Paris: Maspero, 1977), 10-12, 21-23.

[190]*Mémoires d'un compagnon.*

[191]*Memoires de Léonard ancien garçon maçon*, ed. établie et commentée par Maurice Agulhon (Paris: Hachette, 1976; reprint of 1895 first ed.), 186-87, 209-215.

would not go to rack and ruin in their absence, and provided an appreciative audience upon their return, bearing gifts and tales of the outside world.[192] Such absences could be substantial; Nadaud was away for three straight years early in his marriage.[193] Not surprisingly, he has little to say in his memoirs about his emotional relationship with his wife, and rarely mentions her except in the context of gift-giving or to praise her for her hard labor. Of his only child, a daughter, he says not a word. Married in 1839, Nadaud finally brought his wife to Paris in 1847, where she died two years later after a "long and cruel" illness.[194] As a long-term denizen of the all-male rooming houses of the capital, he probably experienced little in the way of domesticity as a married man. When he shared quarters with Perdiguier in Brussels after both were exiled from France in 1852, he complained that he was not adept, like his roommate, at cooking, having taken most of his meals at the greasy-spoons (*gargotes*) of Paris.[195]

For proletarians like Norbert Truquin, who kicked around the better part of their working lives from one odd job to another, a good marriage might substantially improve their fortunes. Truquin was able to make a down payment on two silk looms and set himself up as a small master by combining an inheritance from his mother with the two hundred francs accumulated by a female silk weaver whom he married in Lyon. Despite their joint efforts, a slowdown in the economy ruined them within six months, resulting

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[192]For a vivid description of Nadaud's homecoming after three years with 4000 francs plus dresses for his wife and sisters, see ibid., 274-75.

[193]Ibid., 215.

[194]Ibid., 364-65.

[195]Ibid., 406.

in the removal of their door by their landlord for non-payment of rent. Truquin's wife was forced to give birth to the couple's first child in a charity hospital.[196]

For workers without personal assets or whose female lovers lacked nest-eggs or dowries, matrimony could be a risky business. Etienne Bédé, a Parisian chair-turner in the 1820s, admitted to considerable ambivalence about marriage in his memoirs. He was only persuaded to marry a woman that he genuinely loved and admired for her "serious mind" and "refined sentiments" after considerable pressure from his family and friends. He feared the hardships of marriage, which he claimed tended to the "disintegration of all feeling of friendship and the disappearance of all the charm and pleasure in life":

> This day of wedlock - once so intently desired, anticipated with such joy, prepared with such pomp and gaiety, and appearing to portend a happy future - is often nothing more than a contradictory act that poisons the time spent under these happy auspices and engulfs the newlyweds in a horrible morass of constantly renewed sorrows and regrets.[197]

Though both Bédé and his wife were industrious and frugal, they were hard-pressed to support their four surviving children and to provide each with trades. "It is terribly difficult for workers, who have no resources except their labor, to raise a large family," Bédé lamented.[198] Workers' budgets for the 1840s, discussed above, demonstrate clearly that the arrival of children could immediately destabilize a couple's finances and pitch them into dire need. It was difficult under such circumstances to

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[196]"Norbert Truquin: Memoirs and Adventures of a Proletarian in Times of Revolution", 300-307.

[197]"Jacques Etienne Bédé: A Worker in 1820," in Mark Traugott, *The French Worker: Autobiographies from the Early Industrial Era*, 57.

[198]Ibid., 63-64.

romanticize family life. While some of the starkest descriptions of proletarian marriage were authored by women, male workers too painted a bleak picture:

> When one sees the profound distress of the majority of workers' households; when one understands that the insufficiency of salaries and unemployment are the real cause, one is no longer surprised at bad morals; one understands that the foyer of the worker offers nothing but the prospect of misfortune, that family bonds disintegrate, and that young people of both sexes avoid contracting them.[199]

Some workers therefore contracted such bonds only when they were in need of female economic support. Alain Cottereau, in his analysis of Denis Poulot's *Le Sublime*, argues that it was a common strategy for Parisian metalworkers in 1870 to remain bachelors or cohabit until they reached the age that they were beginning to wear out - about thirty-five to forty.[200] Then they would marry and have children to support them in their old age. Based on Poulot's descriptions, Cottereau has developed a typology of such workers, each with its own characteristic pattern of marital relations.[201] Wives of "true workers" - the workaholic brown-nosers who aspired to be foremen - typically opened small shops or took jobs as concierges, thus earning the sobriquet "bourgeoises." In workers' argot this term was typically applied to a women who could balance the family budget without having to go out and earn wages, suggesting it was not the usual working-class pattern. The wives of "sublimes" generally had to do wage work to make up for their husbands' insouciance and declining health and strength. Frequently

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[199]A. Boyer, *De l'État des Ouvriers*, 88.

[200]Denis Poulot's *Le Sublime* (1870) presents a picture of Parisian metalworkers from an employer's point of view. "Sublime" was argot for an insubordinate worker who liked to make a monkey of the boss. Alain Cottereau analyzes Poulot's account in "Vie quotidienne et résistance ouvrière à Paris en 1870," introduction to the reprint of Denis Poulot, *Question Sociale: Le sublime* (Paris: Maspéro, 1980).

[201]Ibid., 34-36.

"sublimes" themselves, they were not above occasional prostitution if the rent was overdue. While "true workers" often had traditional notions of male authority in the home, the wives of "sublimes" seem to have had more autonomy; those that wrested control of the pay packet and became bossy were said in workers' slang to have "turned the Civil Code inside out."[202]

Cottereau argues that family arrangements and lifestyles have to be viewed as a collaborative effort between men and women, in which a variety of options and combinations were possible. However the evidence in Poulot's account suggests that "collaboration" largely benefitted working men, who, far from wishing that their wives be "bourgeoises", counted on them as an important form of social insurance for their declining years. Such women were in a double-bind: compelled into dependent relationships by low salaries and then obliged to support men who only formalized these relationships when their income and health were deteriorating. Although Poulot was writing about Parisian workers in the late Empire, there is little reason to believe that "sublimes" in the 1840s behaved much differently. However what percentage of workers were "sublimes" in either period is debatable.

Marriage could also bring demonstrable benefits to more conscientious and moralistic artisans, as suggested by the autobiographies of Agricol Perdiguier and Jules Vinçard (Vinçard aîné). Although Perdiguier says very little about his wife Lise, a seamstress, in his memoirs, it is clear from her letters to the family's patroness, George

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[202]Ibid., 35.

Sand, and to her husband, that she was both literate and perceptive.[203] On a visit to her in-laws near Avignon, she complained about the boredom of provincial life and the lack of books and journals, which she was accustomed to reading.[204] Sand, who gave her needlework to help the family out, described her as "good and honest, not happy, I believe, and perhaps a bit lazy. But who doesn't have their faults!"[205] Aside from modest commissions of this type, she seems to have spent most of her time running the family boarding-house in the faubourg Saint-Antoine with its twenty small *cabinets*, and raising the couple's three daughters, thus functioning as a "bourgeoise."

The modest comforts that a wife such as Lise could provide in the midst of squalor were admiringly described by the poet-locksmith Jérome-Pierre Gilland, who visited Perdiguier in 1840. The house in which Perdiguier lived, which Gilland flatly labels a "hovel", bordered on a huge and filthy courtyard in which all kinds of work took place. Everything about the surroundings was "repulsive and odious"; the stairway to Perdiguier's lodgings was steep and filthy, with only a cord serving as a bannister. But upon entering Perdiguier's two-room flat, Gilland found himself in a small oasis of order and cleanliness:

> The room was badly paved, it is true; it had, as in country houses, great black beams on the ceiling, but this room was furnished with an alcove and decorated with wallpaper in a light tint which gave it an air of gaiety. Plus it had two windows, and at these windows hung muslin curtains through which one could see

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[203]See "Lettres Choisies d'Agricol Perdiguier, de sa femme Lise et de George Sand," in Jean Briquet, *Agricol Perdiguier*, (Paris: Editions de la Butte aux Cailles, 1981,) 385-535, esp. letters 48 and 49 to Sand, 482-486.

[204]Lise Perdiguier to George Sand, Morières-lès-Avignon, October 1849, text ibid., 491-92.

[205]Quoted in Briquet, 390-91.

> bobbing outside the leaves of those climbing plants that the workers of Paris so love to cultivate. The furniture was composed of a very thin bed, several chairs, a washstand, a square and massive work table, and an oak bookcase whose shelves were lined with good books. Additionally there was on the chimney a little mirror in a mahogany frame, fixed to the wall by a gilded nail, and on the front a glass globe which contained a basket of painted porcelain where an artificial bouquet bloomed on silk moss. On each side of the mirror were suspended dainty black velvet cushions decorated with scallops, on which reposed a family medallion and a silver watch, the only jewels in poor households. All of this was clean, shining, polished, arranged with the exquisite care which a woman of order and taste brings to all that surrounds her. Agricol Perdiguier had the good fortune to meet just such a woman and to make her his wife.[206]

The aura of shabby respectability exuded by these lodgings was one of the benefits of domesticity, if a couple had sufficient income to sustain it. Additionally, a wife's managerial skills and ability to pinch pennies could mean the difference between success and failure for many small shops and enterprises. Lise's habit of extending too much credit to lodgers after Perdiguier was exiled to Brussels left him deeply in debt.[207] Jacques-Louis Ménétra's wife, who threw her whole life and capital into running his glazier shop, kept him solvent despite his free-spending journeyman's habits.[208] Jules Vinçard's wife admirably illustrates Michelle Perrot's observation that proletarian women constituted "the savings bank of popular culture."[209]

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[206]Gilland, "La vie des hommes obscurs" in *La Feuille du Village*, (1851), cited in Jean Briquet, *Agricol Perdiguier*, (Paris: Editions de la Butte aux Cailles, 1981), 173.

[207]Briquet (537) claims that he owed 50,000 fr. as a result of Lise's lack of economy; see his letter to her of 30 May 1852 urging her not to extend too much credit to lodgers (505-506).

[208]D. Roche, "Work, Fellowship and some Economic Realities of Eighteenth-Century France," 73.

[209]"A Nineteenth Century Work Experience... Norbert Truquin," in *Work in France*, ed. S. Kaplan and C. Koepp (Ithaca: Cornell University Press,1986), 311.

Vinçard, who had worked as a precision instrument maker before selling his father's shop and becoming a typographer, was a Saint-Simonian convert in the early 1830s. He participated in the editing of *La Ruche Populaire*, where he incurred Flora Tristan's wrath for failing to support her project for a Workers' Union, and was a well-known poet-songwriter in the singing clubs of the capital.[210] Significantly, Vinçard discusses his relationship with his wife only at the end of his autobiography, when her death by stroke apparently reminded him of her many services. An embroiderer at the time of their marriage, she supported the entire household when he was unemployed in 1848 by selling goods in a small retail boutique in the Grand-Cerf passage. At the time, none of his former friends in the Saint-Simonian movement would give him a job, because of his alleged radicalism and bad influence on other workers.[211] She kept the household purse and took charge of expenditures, eking out enough over the years to set aside the enormous sum (for a worker) of four thousand francs for their old age.[212] She also managed, through untold economies, to buy her husband books for his name day

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[210]*Mémoires épisodiques d'un vieux chansonnier saint-simonien* (Paris: Dentu, 1878). Although Vinçard never mentions Tristan in his memoirs, she did solicit his support for her Workers Union while he was on the editorial board of *La Ruche Populaire*. For her acerbic account of his behavior see her diaries, published as *Le tour de France: Etat actuel de la classe ouvrière sous l'aspect moral, intellectual et matériel: Journal 1843-1844*, text and notes by Jules L. Puech (Paris: Maspero, 1980), v. 1, 28-33, 42-43.

[211]*Mémoires*, 248-49.

[212]Ibid., 312. Michelle Perrot claims that working-class wives in France during the 19th century largely won the right to control their husband's pay packet, although there could be fights over how much he could have for his own pleasures. "la femme populaire rebelle," in *l'histoire sans qualités* (Paris: Editions Galilées, 1979), 131-32.

and a violin, and encouraged him to buy a piano when he wanted to learn that instrument.[213] Vinçard speaks of her with genuine warmth and respect, but largely in terms of her sacrifices on his behalf:

> This dear and true friend, how many attentions, cares, efforts has she not lavished in order to be useful or agreeable to me, during the course of our long companionship of more than forty years! Everything that might have satisfied my penchants, my tastes, my caprices, she offered to me eagerly.[214]

Vinçard was socialized to expect such feminine sacrifices. His mother, "solicitous of all that might satisfy our childish desires", breast-fed her three sons and worked tirelessly to support them and give them the rudiments of an education. She earned income by washing and mending silk stockings for a bourgeois clientele and also got up at dawn on Sunday to sell on the Pont au Change children's clothes that she made out of scraps of old dresses and linen. She still found time to try to teach young Jules to read, although she was barely literate herself. During the invasion of 1814, when Vinçard's father was earning only twenty sous per week making spear tips for the National Guard, his mother supported the entire family, plus her refugee brother and his wife and daughter, by selling brandy and foodstuffs on the streets of Paris, and in the afternoon cooked dinner for the whole lot.[215]

This pattern of hard work, economy, and solicitude for family members obviously defined the good proletarian woman and embodied the kinds of virtues working-class men praised in their wives, if they mentioned them at all. Proletarian families needed multiple

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[213]*Mémoires*, 311-312.

[214]Ibid.

[215]Ibid., 4-22.

sources of income, and a wife's ability to earn money, manage the household budget, and in more fortunate circumstances, put a little aside for emergencies or old age was crucial to family survival.[216] Despite the *femme au foyer* diatribes of Proudhon and the family wage rhetoric of the *Atelierists*, few workers argued that women should be banned from paid employment. They expected women to earn their keep and help support their children, but not in occupations where they would compete directly with men and undercut their wages or their familial authority.

The evidence suggests that although some educated artisans were attracted to the bourgeois ideal of the stay-home wife in the 1840s, most workers took women's employment as a given. While the notion of the mother-educator was beginning to surface in workerist discourse, it did not preclude employment for women, even outside the home. The mother who paid for her children's education with her own earnings, as Perdiguier's mother did by selling her needlework to send her daughters to school, represented a plausible alternative to the bourgeois mother-educator, particularly since not all proletarian women were literate.[217]

If there was a shared "family romance" among elite artisans in the 1840s, it probably came closest to Etienne Cabet's vision of "purified" marriage in which men would wield authority in the state and in the household, but both sexes would engage in

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[216]Ellen Ross notes that in Cockney subculture, a wife's skill and energy in budgeting, shopping, bargaining with tradesmen, pawnshop workers and the landlady was a major determinant of the family's standard of living; also the "credit" a mother built up with neighbors by good deeds and sharing determined whether others would come to the aid of her family in a crisis. "Fierce Questions and Taunts," 578-80.

[217]Perdiguier, *Mémoires*, 40-41. His mother paid the tuition for the village school (1 fr. per month per child) out of monies she earned making infants' bonnets; the boys were paid for by their father.

socially useful and remunerative labor that was appropriate to their gender-specific aptitudes and talents. Cabet's celebration of marital fidelity and pre-marital continence for both sexes was undoubtedly at variance with the norms of working-class culture, but it had appeal as a rhetorical antidote to bourgeois stereotypes of working-class debauchery. This vision, however, left little room to address the issues of feminine dependence and powerlessness that were central to the critiques and associational projects of socialist women. Nor did it address the problems of the young single *ouvrière* or the widow, except to suggest that her salvation lay, as *L'Atelier* suggested, in marriage. Women could be wives and mothers, sisters or daughters, but in the imagination of male workers, rarely persons in their own right. In the family romance of the age, they were conceptualized, if virtuous, as a supporting cast or a Greek chorus for the performances of the artisanal brotherhood. To strut or fret their own hour upon the stage was denied them.

Conclusion

The exceptional male workers who wrote for socialist and workerist newspapers, and who published reform tracts and associational proposals in the period from 1840 to 1851, were struggling to validate their labor and their character in a society which repeatedly denigrated both. They were engaged in a effort to rehabilitate themselves, to imagine a new moral order in which they would no longer be despised proletarians, but citizen brothers, dignified and upright, solidary and fraternal. This in turn required that workers' "skill" be recast as the equivalent of bourgeois property, and that workers' character be refined through education and moralization to exhibit the requisite Jacobin *gravitas*. However if skill represented the property of the worker, and constituted his claim to active citizenship, then the work of women had to be differentiated from that of men. To admit the *ouvrière* into the fraternity of labor as a true worker was also to admit her, at least potentially, into the brotherhood of *citoyens*. This threatened not only male workers' struggle for full membership in the polity, but their fragile sense of *amour propre* as well.

In an age in which "skill" was becoming increasingly irrelevant because of the spread of capitalist production processes, and proletarianization threatened to deprive most artisanal workers of any realistic prospect of dignified independence, such a project could only be conducted discursively. In the rhetorical struggle for the moral high ground which workers waged with their critics, the *ouvrière* was reduced to a token appropriated by all parties to indict each other. Workers foregrounded her "misery" to shame the defenders of laissez-faire. No other trope was as useful for skewering the hypocrisy of

the bourgeoisie, whose cult of feminine weakness and dependence was an ideological linchpin of the liberal political and legal order. Liberals and bourgeois moralists in turn used the suffering of the *ouvrière* to impeach working men for their alleged sins of commission and omission: drunkenness, improvidence, promiscuity and abusive behavior. Even socialist women such as Flora Tristan employed this tactic, arguing that male workers needed to be shown their "sores" before they could be cured.[218]

The issue of women's sexuality, and specifically, the sexual vulnerability of the single *ouvrière*, was rhetorically exploited by all parties to advance their arguments. For conservatives frightened by urbanization and nostalgic for a pre-capitalist moral or economic order, the working woman, particularly the *femme isolée*, represented social pathology and disorder. For male workers, the need to protect feminine virtue provided a convenient pretext for excluding them from physical spaces and occupational categories defined as morally dangerous or physically coarsening. Liberals pointed fingers at workers for their hit-and-run relationships and alleged preference for concubinage; workers in turn accused bourgeois men of harassing and seducing their women, and of corrupting women's weak and susceptible natures by their materialistic culture. The polemic over who were the real debauchers or defenders of proletarian women distracted attention from the primary cause of women's vulnerability - gendered wage rates and employment options which made it impossible for most women to survive without male support. Although they repeatedly deplored the "painful" and "exhausting" character of women's work, and routinely condemned women's exploitation at the hands of employers,

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[218]*Le tour de France.* Journal 1843-44. 2 v. Text and notes by Jules-L. Puech. New introduction by Stéphane Michaud (Paris: Maspero, 1980), v. 1: 30-31.

male workers rarely acknowledged their complicity in enforcing gender boundaries which severely limited women's alternatives. The issue of feminine dependence did not in any case arouse much concern in men who imagined women primarily in familial and supporting roles, as loving and devoted mothers, wives, sisters and daughters.

The debate about the *ouvrière* was thus a coded way in which male workers and their bourgeois critics contested each other's constructions of true manliness. One of the chief attractions of socialist associationism, which it shared with republican ideology, was its vision of a world transformed by masculine strength and solidarity. Women figured in the associationist myth primarily as signifiers of masculine virtue or vice; their happiness or misery was an indicator of the state of things that men had created. The economic and sexual exploitation of proletarian women was therefore peripheral to the main issue, which was what these conditions said about the power and honor of working-class men. Socialist women who understood such discourses as expressions of support for elevating women's status misjudged their purpose. They were not about proletarian women's place in society, but proletarian men's.

Male workers did not speak with one voice, however, on the issue of manliness and how real men should behave. Their discourses on sexuality, on work, and on the family are therefore not uniform and consistent, but multiple, conflicting and full of contradictions and evasions. Sexual discourses ranged the spectrum from the puritanical diatribes of Proudhon and the Atelierist school to the bawdy celebration of sexual machismo in the songs and stories of journeymen compagnons. There were workers who embraced Étienne Cabet's straight-laced ideal of "purified marriage," and irreverent "sublimes" who disdained marriage as a ball and chain until personal decrepitude

threatened. A few articulate proletarians influenced by Saint-Simonian or Fourierist doctrines condemned the sexual double-standard and acknowledged women's right to pleasure; the majority recoiled from such notions and feared women's sensuality would increase their vulnerability to seduction by men of higher class. Similarly, idealizations of family life show a wide variation, ranging from Proudhonist celebrations of the privatized, patriarchal household to depictions of the domestic foyer as a dreary prison and marriage as the death of all of natural affections.

In the last analysis, however, what united male workers on the subject of women was stronger than what divided them. Working women were almost universally regarded as auxiliary wage earners whose "natural" talents predisposed them to certain gender-specific niches in the labor market. They were entitled to masculine compassion and protection, but not to exercise skills or occupy positions that would enable them to live an independent life or compete directly with men. Faced with a choice between expanding the concepts of fraternity and solidarity to render them more sexually inclusive, or construing them more narrowly to preserve masculine dominance in the state, in the atelier, and in the family, male workers consistently chose the latter course. The socialist associationism of French workers at mid-century rested on a series of gendered definitions of skill, work, fraternity, solidarity and equality which naturalized women's subordination. In the face of such constructions and the behavior that they provoked, it proved difficult for socialist and proletarian women to sustain their own associational organizations during the Revolution of 1848-1851, or to participate as full partners in those initiated by men. The history and fate of such associational endeavors is analyzed in Part Two.

Part Two: Women Workers and the Politics of Association in the Revolution of 1848-1851

Introduction

Between the outbreak of the Revolution of 1848 in February and Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte's coup in December, 1851, some two to three hundred worker organizations calling themselves "associations" sprang up in Paris. There were at least a hundred more in the provinces.[1] Because the concept of association had great ideological appeal to workers as an antidote to the evils of laissez-faire capitalism, the label "association" was applied to a broad spectrum of groups and organizations. These ranged from production societies and consumer cooperatives to fraternal associations and mutual benefit societies. Most associational efforts were inspired by the belief that ordinary people, by pooling their labor and their resources, could obtain control of the instruments of production,

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[1]Estimates of the number of associations in this period vary, depending on how the term is defined. In July 1849, *L'Atelier* published a list of 99 Parisian associations, of which 11 were of cooks and 6 of hairdressers. Pauline Roland claimed that there were 170 "fraternal associations" in Paris at the time the Union of Associations of Workers was conceived in August 1849: "Des Associations ouvrières," *La République*, 11 January 1850. The *Almanach des Associations ouvrières*, published at the end of 1849 (Paris: l'Union essénienne), shows 255 Parisian associations (about forty of which were of cooks, several with multiple branches, and about thirty groups of hairdressers with around fifty branches). Emile Heftler in a pioneering survey, *Les Associations Coopératives de Production sous La Deuxième République*, summarizes the data from a number of sources, and concludes that there were perhaps 300-400 associations formed in France between 1848-51 and the median number that existed at any one time was about 150. (Paris: Arthur Rousseau, 1899), 190-92. Bernard Moss claims that under the Second Republic, nearly 300 socialist associations with perhaps 50,00 members from 120 trades were created in Paris, with an additional 800 projects in the provinces. *The Origins of the French Labor Movement 1830-1914* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1976), 44-45.

eliminate "*la domination du patronat*", and create a more democratic and egalitarian society through voluntary and peaceful worker cooperation.

The following discussion will explore the experience of women workers in a selected group of Parisian associations in the period 1848-1851, including all-female production societies, mixed-sex production societies in which women were either admitted as members or as non-associated laborers, and fraternal associations established by or for *ouvrières*. It will propose answers to these questions: How well did "association" as an organizing principle and as an ideology of worker empowerment meet the needs of proletarian women employed in typical women's trades? What obstacles did women encounter in attempting to found associations and in making them viable? How did women fare in associations that employed workers of both sexes, and what does this tell us about gender politics within the associational movement? Finally, what role did the state play, either through the National Workshops or the Council of Encouragement, in addressing the problems of unemployment and poverty faced by proletarian women during the Revolution of 1848-1851?

The available evidence indicates that women workers were generally slighted or ignored by male workers active in associational projects during the Second Republic. *Ouvrières* were seriously under-represented in all types of associations. When present in mixed-sex associations, they were rarely invited to participate in overtly political activities such as speaking at meetings, voting in general assemblies, or electing or serving as officers. Those associations that did admit women to membership usually treated them as "auxiliaries," with diminished rights, or simply hired them as non-associated labor. While there were a few exceptions, the response of male associationists to the problems

of working women can be characterized (at best) as one of benign neglect. This indifference was mirrored in the attitude of state authorities, who feared proletarian women's potential for disorder, but regarded their needs as secondary to men's.

Ouvrières in 1848 were certainly not passive in defense of their own interests. Groups of women in a variety of trades participated in meetings, street demonstrations and the presentation of petitions to authorities in the opening months of the Revolution, as discussed below. But they were generally unable to translate this activism into the creation of more durable structures that might have sustained it. In Charles Tilly's terms, their "repertoire of contention" was still pre-modern, at a time when many male artisans were making a crucial transition to more formal types of organization. Appeals to immediately available powerholders, in this case members of the Provisional Government, were not followed by the creation of more structured groups capable of continuing resistance or organizing production along associational lines.[2] Studies of English women in the Chartist and radical movements in the 1830s and 1840s have shown a similar pattern, with women active in the pre-modern "community demonstration" phases but becoming progressively more marginalized as those movements took on a more "modern" character.[3]

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[2]*The Contentious French* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), 4-10, 380-404.

[3]See for example Dorothy Thompson, "Women and Nineteenth Century Radical Politics: A Lost Dimension," in *The Rights and Wrongs of Women*, ed. J. Mitchell and A. Oakley (New York: Penguin, 1976), 112-138; Sally Alexander, "Women, Class and Sexual Differences in the 1830s and 1840s: Some Reflections on the Writing of a Feminist History," *History Workshop Journal* 17 (Spring 1984): 125-49, esp. 136 ff; Anna Clark, *The Struggle for the Breeches: Gender and the Making of the British Working Class* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 141-158, 220-248.

This observation, however, begs the question of why working-class women, as opposed to working-class men, should have been slower to make the transition to a modern "repertoire of contention". The hypothesis presented here is that women workers were disadvantaged as participants in the associational movement both in a material and a discursive sense. Discursive factors, however, must be accorded primacy in explaining their fate. Clearly women suffered from a variety of serious material obstacles to organization, including low wages, fierce competition for jobs in female trades, the burden of the "dual shift", the lack of public spaces in which to meet and organize, and the absence of pre-existing corporate traditions or institutions. However, these conditions were not "natural" or inevitable, but were the result of historically-specific discourses that constructed women's role in the family, the work place, and in public life in ways that severely limited women's options. As illustrated in Part One of this dissertation, women were defined as less productive than men, as "auxiliary" wage earners who did not require a living wage, as sexually dangerous and a threat to social and political order, and as emotionally and physically vulnerable beings in need of masculine supervision. Women's disempowerment was also a consequence of the way in which individual legal, economic, and political subjectivity were linked in republican discourse to the idea of property ownership, vested exclusively in the male either in the form of real property or as an identifiable craft skill.[4]

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[4]Sally Alexander has made this point with respect to radical discourse in England in the 1830s and 1840s, and the same observation is equally germane to republican discourse in France in the same period. "Women, Class and Sexual Differences in the 1830s and 1840s," 136-137.

Although a remarkable group of socialist-feminist women between 1848 and 1851 tried to use associational rhetoric and organization to dramatize and address the needs of women workers, they were fighting an uphill battle. Neither associational discourse nor the types of structures that it spawned were particularly hospitable to *ouvrières*. The experience of such organizers, particularly that of Jeanne Deroin whose life and work is the focus of Part Three, suggests that the associational socialism of French artisans at mid-century was ill-suited to addressing the problems of women workers. It incorporated many of the same gender biases as republican ideology, marginalizing women and silencing them by commission and omission.

1: The Promise of 1848 and Obstacles to Success

The Revolution of 1848 was preceded by a severe business recession and stagnation or decline in real wages for many hand workers.[5] The recession aggravated long-standing anxieties among artisans about increasing job insecurity and the decline of their standard of living during the July Monarchy. Well before the introduction of mechanization, capitalist production and marketing practices had begun to erode the position of the small producer and handicraft worker. Between 1815 and 1848, artisans in a number of trades, including textiles, tailoring, shoemaking, printing and construction, were becoming proletarianized, as market pressures increasingly reduced them to contracted laborers, working for jobbers (*tâcherons*), subcontractors (*marchandeurs*) or labor foremen who were agents for capitalist entrepreneurs. Neo-Marxists historians have emphasized the crucial role which such processes played in radicalizing artisans and in promoting associational ideals. The conflation of artisanal "skill" with masculinity has been so historically tenacious, however, that the same historians have largely ignored how workerist experiments with associational organization tended to marginalize women with artisanal skills, relegating them to a kind of proletariat within their class. To assume that

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[5]Roger Magraw, *The Age of Artisan Revolution, 1815-1871* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), 15-16. Magraw summarizes wage data showing stagnation or decline between 1820-50; in the spring of 1848, 60% of Parisian workers were unemployed. See also T. J. Markovitch, "La Crise de 1847-1848 dans les Industries Parisiennes," *Revue d'Histoire Economique et Sociale* 43 (1965): 256-60. For the four months of March-June 1848, unemployment among Parisian workers ranged from 19% to 75% depending on industry, according to Markovitch. The journal *L'Atelier* reported (21 May 1848) that there were 175,000 male and female workers without work in Paris, another 110,500 who worked only four days a week, and 52,000 working very sporadically, for a total of 337,500 workers in extreme misery.

women were labor proletarians without interrogating how they became so is to implicitly adopt the perspective of male artisans of this era.

By the time that the revolution erupted in 1848, a substantial number of Parisian artisans and those in larger towns with a tradition of worker activism, such as Lyon, Marseilles and Toulon, had come to believe that the solution to workers' deteriorating standard of living lay in a series of related reforms. These included the elimination of parasitic middlemen (*marchandeurs*), the negotiation of minimum wage scales (*tarifs*), the inclusion of workers on arbitration boards controlled by employers (*prud'hommes*), and the legalization of worker association. Parisian workers in 1848 also demanded the reduction of the work day from twelve or more hours to ten in the belief that this would relieve unemployment by compelling employers to hire more labor.[6]

Crowd actions in the opening days of the revolution in Paris forced the new Provisional Government to accept two socialists, Louis Blanc and a worker, "Albert" (Alexandre Martin)[7] into their ranks, and to accept a compromise negotiated by Blanc with workers who had invaded the Hôtel de Ville on February 25. By the terms of this compromise, the state undertook to guarantee the existence of the worker by work and to guarantee work to all citizens (*citoyens* - male form only). It recognized that workers had to associate among themselves in order to enjoy the legitimate benefits of their labor.

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[6]The pioneering study of Parisian workers and their demands, although it must be used with caution because of errors, is Rémi Gossez, *Les Ouvriers de Paris; Livre Premier: L'Organisation 1848-1851* (La Roche-Sur-Yon: Imprimerie Centrale de L'Ouest, 1967).

[7]According to Jean Gaumont, Alexandre Martin, dit "Albert" was a model-maker/mechanic, one of the editors of *L'Atelier*, and a member of various secret societies and revolutionary clubs. *Histoire Générale de la Coóperation en France*, vol. 1 (Paris: 1924), 24.

Three days later, the government yielded to another demonstration of workers in the Place de Grève demanding the "organization of labor," by agreeing to establish a Commission for the Organization of Labor to study labor problems in general and to prepare solutions to present to the Constituent Assembly.

These events unleashed a torrent of activity, as workers met in *corporations*, hastily convened assemblies purporting to represent all Parisian workers in a particular trade. The *corporations* elected delegates to the Provisional Government's Commission for the Organization of Labor which met in the spring of 1848 under the auspices of Louis Blanc at the Luxembourg Palace.[8] They also helped to organize the revolutionary *journées* and sponsored their own candidates in the elections to the Constituent Assembly in April of 1848. It was the inability of the *corporations* to transcend traditional trade loyalties and work for a common slate of deputies that led to the left's disastrous showing in the April, 1848 elections. These elections resulted in a legislature hostile to socialism, which dissolved the Luxembourg Commission in May of 1848 and the National Workshops a month later, precipitating the June Days and a climate of greater political repression towards all manifestations of worker activism.[9]

The term "*corporation*", together with the term "*corps d'état*", with which it was sometimes used interchangeably, evolved after the French Revolution to replace obsolete

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[8]Hereafter referred to as the Luxembourg Commission.

[9]That this failure was due to corporate exclusiveness is acknowledged by Sewell, *Work and Revolution in France*, 262. Tony Judt, *Marxism and the French Left: Studies in Labor and Politics in France, 1830-1981* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1986) faults the Luxembourg corporations for splitting the working-class vote by proposing candidates known only within their own trades and for their sectarian jealousies.

guild-based solidarities, as William H. Sewell, Jr. has shown.[10] An "*état*" designated a craft occupation, particularly one associated with the exercise of skill. A "*corps d'état*", according to Sewell, was "a solidary body, organized and capable of acting as a unit, composed of permanent members in the same trade." If that body became active, it was often referred to as a "*corporation*".[11] The expression "*état*" was occasionally employed by journalists in 1848 to describe women workers in the same trade. Similarly women who marched or demonstrated in the opening weeks of the revolution might be termed members of a "*corporation*". Whether the application of these terms to groups of *ouvrières* is evidence that some possessed trade cohesion, or simply reflects the common vocabulary of the period, is difficult to determine. The latter interpretation seems more plausible, however, because of the obstacles that confronted women who sought to organize more formally.

In the opening weeks of the revolution, women workers were caught up in the general enthusiasm for social transformation. There was a steady stream of petitions by *ouvrières* to the Provisional Government and the Luxembourg Commission between March and June 1848, sometimes colorfully presented by marching delegations with banners at their head.[12] The Chevillot Inventory, which records all petitions sent to the

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[10]*Work and Revolution in France*, 192.

[11]Sewell, ibid. A few workers' associations were, however, created directly by the Luxembourg Commission: the 1-2,000 worker-tailors lodged in the former Clichy prison, the saddlers' association, the spinners (filers) and the decorative braid-makers (passementiers). Jean Gaumont, 242.

[12]Such as the "corps of *frangeurs*" (fringe-makers) who marched to the Luxembourg under a tricolor flag, proceeded by a chief holding a golden baton and shouting "*Vive la République*", *La Démocratie Pacifique*, 5 Mar. 1848. For other accounts of petitions or demands by *ouvrières* see ibid., 12 Mar. 1848 (servants); *La*

Luxembourg Commission, shows that among the petitioners were needleworkers in the garment trades, including seamstresses (*lingères*), embroiderers (*brodeuses*), corset-makers (*corsetières*), dressmakers (*couturières*), breeches-makers (*culottières*), vest-makers (*giletières*), producers of fancy goods (*nouveautés*), laundresses, colorists, metal polishers, workers in the hat industry, such as pelt cutters (*coupeuses de poil de lapin*) and capmakers (*casquettes*), lacemakers, flower makers, and midwives.[13]

Rémi Gossez has interpreted this activity as proof that women in some trades had formed *corporations*. He asserts, for example, that the thirteen petitions from the Parisian laundresses were repeat petitions from a single unified *corps*.[14] Gossez may be correct in this instance, but there is little evidence that women workers in other trades were able to coalesce to this degree, with the possible exception of the midwives and some polishers in precious metals. The fact that laundresses typically worked in a variety of scattered settings, including private homes, makes Gossez's contention that they were formally

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Politique des Femmes, June 1848 (hatmakers, couturières), Aug. 1848 (midwives); *La Voix des Femmes*, 20 Mar. 1848 (laundresses), 22 March 1848 (petition on behalf of working women in general), 31 Mar. 1848 (midwives), 2 April 1848 (women in various trades and professions), 15 April 1848 (shirtmakers of the 1e arrond.).

[13]AN C934. This inventory, compiled by an official at the Luxembourg Commission, is alphabetized by trade and gives only very brief data: the industry, the number of petitions, and the nature of the requests. The majority of petitions from needleworkers contain four demands (not all in each petition): higher wages set by *tarifs*, an end to *confection* (entrepreneurs specializing in ready-to-wear goods who put out piecework to sweated laborers), a prohibition on work done in prisons and convents, and a shorter work day. The laundresses ask for higher wages and a ten hour day. Three groups, lace-makers, flower-makers, and mattress carders, request the establishment of national workshops. The midwives ask to be made civil servants and to be paid standard fees for delivering the children of the poor.

[14]*Les Ouvriers de Paris*, 62.

organized suspect. His tendency to interpret much worker organization in 1848 as "pre-syndicalist" may bias his interpretation of the data.[15] It was customary for petitioners to claim to be speaking for a whole category of fellow workers whether or not they were signatories to the document, a rhetorical device which could even extend to such a heterogeneous collection as "*ouvrières*" in general.[16] Contemporary newspapers also used the term *corps* rather loosely to describe various groups of female demonstrators. Womens' activism in 1848, however, seems more episodic than sustained, more sporadic than coordinated.

The flurry of petitions presented to the Luxembourg by groups of working women, and the demonstrations that accompanied them, must be distinguished from the establishment of either trade *corporations* or producers' associations. Although these activities were related in spirit, the creation of formal organizations required more resources and commitment than most working-class women could muster. Street actions and appeals to the authorities were traditional ways in which women of the poor manifested their discontent in hard times, but proletarian women typically lacked the kinds of occupational structures and traditions that allowed them to mobilize effectively over the medium to long-term.

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[15]See his "Pré-syndicalisme ou pré-coopération?: L'organisation ouvrière unitaire et ses phases dans le department de la Seine de 1834 à 1851," *Archives Internationales de Sociologie de la Co-opération*, 6 (1959): 67-89.

[16]There are about 50 signatures to a petition headed "In the Name of two thousand embroiderers" which protests against the labor practices of two confection houses. C2241: 938; (no day) May 1848. See also the 2 March 1848 petition to Louis Blanc from "Ouvrières" reproduced in *La Démocratie Pacifique*, 9 March 1848 and *La Voix des Femmes*, 22 March 1848. The postscript printed in *La Voix* from "the petitioner" is undoubtedly by Désirée Gay, its sole author.

Ouvrières were handicapped, in the first place, by their exclusion from or token representation in organizations created by male workers. Working women had minimal presence among the elected delegates to the Luxembourg Commission. Only two female trades, the copper burnishers (*brunisseuses en cuivre*) and the polishers of gold and gold plate, elected the permitted three delegates per *corps*. There was an additional woman chosen, an employee of the Lycée Louis-le-Grand, to represent a group of seamstresses from that establishment.[17] Either *ouvrières* in various occupations did not think of themselves as *corporations*, found it difficult to organize as such, were not encouraged to participate, or were actively dissuaded from doing so. Whatever the reasons, this lack of representation insured that the Luxembourg Commission would slight their problems. Sewell's belief that the Luxembourg Commission functioned as a kind of class parliament, an Estates General of Labor, in which the corporations played the role of "little republics with universal suffrage" reflects a gendered conception of universality that male workers of the period also shared.[18]

Exclusion from the Luxembourg also meant that women would continue to be seriously under-represented in workers' councils that tried to continue in its spirit after it was disbanded in mid-May, 1848. These councils included the *Comité Central du Département de la Seine*, composed of representatives elected by the corporations to serve on the Central Committee of Workers' Delegates at the Luxembourg, and spin-offs organized subsequently by subgroups of delegates, including the *Société des Corporations*

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[17]*Le Moniteur Universel*, No. 71, 11 March 1848, 591-92 and 23 March 1848, 664; cited in R. Gossez, *Les Ouvriers de Paris*, 173, 240.

[18]*Work and Revolution in France*, 255-256.

Réunies and the *Chambre Syndicale du Travail.*[19] Although none of these organizations lasted very long, they did have the prestige of speaking for large numbers of Parisian workers. It did not advance women's interests to be voiceless on these councils.

If the corporations of 1848 evolved out of an older culture of trade solidarity represented by guilds and organized journeymen's associations, as Sewell and others have argued, this raises the question of whether women's failure to form solidary organizations in 1848 was simply a continuation of an older historical pattern.[20] Recent research on women's participation in guilds under the ancien regime suggests that in cities such as Paris, Marseilles, Lyon, and Rouen, successful all-female and mixed-sex guilds survived until the abolition of the guild system in 1791.[21] Although pre-revolutionary women's

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[19]For a discussion of these organizations, see pp. 355-58.

[20]There is a debate, however, on whether corporative idioms or traditions had any continuing relevance to worker militancy or organization in the 1830s and 1840s. Arguing affirmatively is William H. Sewell, Jr., *Work and Revolution in France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980). Skeptics include Lynn Hunt and George Sheridan, "Corporatism, Association and the Language of Labor in France, 1750-1850", *Journal of Modern History* 58 (December 1986): 813-844.

[21]Judith Coffin, "Gender and the Guild Order: The Garment Trades in Eighteenth-Century Paris," *The Journal of Economic History* 54, No. 4 (Dec. 1994): 768-93; Cynthia M. Truant, "Parisian Guildswomen and the (Sexual) Politics of Privilege: Defending Their Patrimonies in Print", in *Going Public: Women and Publishing in Early Modern France* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1995), 46-61; Daryl M. Hafter, "Gender Formation from a Working Class Viewpoint: Guildswomen in Eighteenth Century Rouen," *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Western Society for French History* 16 (1989): 415-422. Studies exploring the interdependence of male and female workers in guild production include Natalie Zemon Davis, "Women and the Crafts in Sixteenth-Century Lyon," *Feminist Studies* 8 (Spring 1982): 46-80; Barbara Hanawalt, ed. *Women and Work in Pre-industrial Europe* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), and Merry Wiesner, "Women's Work in the Changing City Economy, 1500-1650," in *Connecting Spheres: Women in the Western World, 1500 to the Present*, ed. Marilyn Boxer and Jean Quataert (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 64-74; Michael Sonenscher, *The Hatters of Eighteenth-Century France*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 20-25.

guilds were few in number and never embraced more than a fraction of the female working population, they did engage in a protracted struggle to protect their right to control certain trades.[22] In the process they produced discourses, largely in the form of legal briefs and petitions provoked by Turgot's attempt to dissolve the guilds in 1774, that employed gendered arguments in defense of women's right to work and which protested male encroachment on their preserves. Historians such as Judith Coffin and Cynthia Truant have pointed to striking features of such arguments that seem to anticipate themes in later nineteenth century debates on women and work: the attempt to define "natural" spheres of male and female labor, using Enlightenment ideas; protests against male sexual and economic exploitation and the "tyranny" of husbands; and pervasive anxiety about women's vulnerability to prostitution and the social disorder and political corruption that it might provoke.[23]

Evidence of such discourses raises the question of whether proletarian women had their own stock of corporate "idioms" and historical memories that they could draw upon to construct a gendered "language of labor" in 1848, as Sewell has argued for artisan men. There is little evidence that they did, despite some parallels in the arguments made by

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[22]Daryl Hafter notes that of 70 sworn trades in Rouen, 10 were open to women exclusively or in mixed membership. Exclusively feminine guilds included the hand-knitters, fashionable plume makers, embroiderers of religious vestments, linen drapers of new garments, and linen drapers of old clothiers. Mixed sex associations included spinners, ribbon makers, decorative braid makers, lace makers, and button makers. In a population of 85,000, there were approximately 600 female guild masters (7% of the city's guild masters). "Gender Formation..." (1989): 418.

[23] Judith Coffin, "Gender and the Guild Order," 774-89. Cynthia M. Truant. "Parisian Guildswomen," 46-61.

both guildswomen and *ouvrières* in 1848 in favor of women's right to work. These parallels were more a function of women's continuing economic and social vulnerability than of real affinities between the corporative and associationist outlooks. In fact, the guild model of hierarchical privilege and trade particularism directly conflicted with the appeals for labor solidarity, fraternal love and mutualist cooperation that characterized associational projects such as that of Jeanne Deroin and Pauline Roland. The linen draper's guild, for example, was controlled in both Paris and Rouen by women, of whom forty percent could be single (*filles majeures*) according to the Parisian statutes. It was a mercantile guild of bourgeois women, who sold goods produced by others, including contract, clandestine, and rural piece-workers.[24] This kind of commercial "exploitation" was anathema to almost all socialists. The humbler corporation of seamstresses in Paris, with its 1,500 to 1,800 *maîtresses* in the eighteenth century, was composed of small entrepreneurs with one to two apprentices apiece. But such *maîtresses* similarly took advantage of a large pool of "clandestine" non-guild labor, and claimed privileges not available to others of their sex.[25]

Socialist women in 1848 could not easily embrace models of feminine entrepreneurship that relied on the perpetuation of labor exploitation. The women whom they represented better fit Jacques Rancière's description of indeterminate, low-skilled proletarians scrounging for whatever came up than guildswomen with a stable sense of craft "identity." It was perhaps this very precariousness and fluidity, as Rancière has insightfully suggested, that made visions of working-class unity possible, not the

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[24]Coffin, (1994): 774-76; Truant, (1995): 50-51.

[25]Coffin (1994): 774-80; Truant (1995): 49-51.

defensive particularism of the corporate ethos. If so, women should have been ideal recruits for associational schemes. The fact that they were not speaks to a variety of constraints that they faced in their lives, as well as to their exclusion from much of the masculine "language of labor."

The associational idiom in 1848-51 represented a fusion of discourses from a variety of sources. These included, but were not limited to, the tracts of compagnonnage reformers, manifestos by worker activists who proposed schemes for the federation of workers in all trades, and republican ideology promoted by both workers' political activism in 1830 and by bourgeois proselytizers from the Society of the Rights of Man who actively recruited worker acolytes in the 1830s. Associational ideology, therefore, largely derived from discourse communities that excluded women. *Ouvrières* were not members of the compagnonnages, journeymen's associations that operated in a number of *états*, particularly the building trades and metallurgy. Although compagnonnage was no longer very important among Parisian workers by 1848, the writings of compagnonnage reformers, such as Agricol Perdiguier and Pierre Moreau, were widely reviewed in the workerist and socialist press and helped to popularize the ideal of labor solidarity across the trades.[26] The discourse of compagnonnage reformers, as previously

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[26]On the obsolescence of compagnonnage see A. Faure "Mouvements populaires et mouvement ouvrier à Paris (1830-1834)," *Le mouvement social* 88 (July 1974):67; Lynn Hunt & George Sheridan, "Corporatism, Association and the Language of Labor in France, 1750-1850, *Journal of Modern History* 58 (December 1986): 813-844. For contemporary newspaper commentary on Moreau and Perdiguier see *L'Atelier*, 30 June 1843, which suggests that a reformed compagnonnage could still produce "admirable results." See also Vinçard ainé's review of Perdiguier's *Le Livre du Compagnonnage* in which he encourages all readers to support Perdiguier's project: *La Ruche Populaire*, March 1841, 1-13.

noted, was saturated with themes of male bonding and ignored female workers. Furthermore, the labor actions of the 1840s which did the most to promote a sense of labor solidarity among Parisian men did not involve *ouvrières*. These included the wave of strikes in 1840 that started with the tailors, spread to the building trades, and culminated in what was almost a general strike in September; the success of the typographers' society in 1843 and the hatmakers society in 1844 in negotiating uniform wage rates (*tarifs*) with employers; and the carpenters' strike of 1845.

Another source of male workers' pride and solidarity was their revolutionary initiatives on the barricades. Twice in a generation they had played a pivotal role in overthrowing monarchs, Charles X in 1830 and Louis-Philippe in 1848. Proletarian women could not easily lay claim to the fraternity of the barricades. Women did participate in many crowd actions and demonstrations in the revolutions which rocked France from 1789 on, and some even appeared on the barricades, but their participation aroused a backlash and left a legacy of negative stereotypes. A number of recent studies have demonstrated how fear of social upheaval and role reversal during revolutionary periods was translated into attacks on revolutionary women as whores, harpies and

usurpers of male privilege.[27] As Dorinda Outram notes, revolutionary activism was construed in a different light when women were subjects:

> It was made clear that whatever the heroic value of female action, it did not carry public weight. Women's actions were portrayed as being in the service of people, not of ideas.... no female in the canon was portrayed as acting from devotion to an ideal, or as an autonomous individual.... they showed that... they were concerned not with *le bien publique* but with the destiny of individuals near and dear to them.[28]

Certainly these cultural messages must have inhibited women's willingness to take initiative on their own behalf. Proletarian women did have a few historical role models that could serve as symbols of resistance in 1848, such as Olympe de Gouges, but they had not been successful and were shrouded in controversy.

Finally, women's ability to create and sustain solidary associations was undercut by a number of gender-specific limitations. Most women with children and households had little time or freedom to attend meetings. Single women could not easily venture out

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[27]See the collection of essays in *Eroticism and the Body Politic*, ed. Lynn Hunt, esp. those by Sara Maza, "The Diamond Necklace Affair Revisited," 63-89; Vivian Cameron, "Political Exposures," 90-107, L. Hunt, "The Many Bodies of Marie Antoinette," 108-130. Also Joan Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution*; Geneviève Fraisse, *Muse de la raison: La démocratie exclusive et la différence des sexes*; Dorinda Outram, *The Body and the French Revolution: Sex, Class and Political Culture*; L. Hunt, *The Family Romance of the French Revolution*; Janis Carton-Bergman, *The Woman of Ideas in French Art*, 1830-1848, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995).

[28]*The Body and the French Revolution*, 85. Outram is writing about the Revolution of 1789, but her remarks are germane to 1848.

in the evening after work without being accosted as prostitutes.[29] Women could not assemble in the back rooms of wine shops and other male haunts, and renting a meeting hall was expensive. They lacked discretionary income to pay dues or to contribute capital to production societies, as was often required. Unlike male artisans whose crafts were geographically concentrated in particular quarters of Paris, such as the furniture workers of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, many women, particularly those in the needle trades, worked in scattered and isolated settings, either at home or in small ateliers. Activities connected with the founding of associations, such as the election of officers, the drafting of statutes, and legal incorporation, were implicitly political in character. Women had been barred from politics, even membership in clubs, since the Jacobin period, and so had little experience with these formalities.[30] Furthermore, women operated under legal constraints that prohibited them, if married, from entering into civil contracts or disposing of their salary and savings without the consent of their husbands. All of these obstacles made associational organization much more difficult for women than for men.

Nevertheless, a small number of women were able to found their own production societies or fraternal associations in the period from 1848 to 1851, when a window of opportunity briefly opened. These organizations ranged from associations founded by

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[29]Suzanne Voilquin, for example, vividly describes her fear of returning home after working late because of incidents where she and her younger sister were accosted and harassed by strangers. *Souvenirs d'une fille du peuple ou La Saint-Simonienne en Égypte*, intro. Lydia Elhadad, (Paris: Maspero, 1978), 94-98.

[30]There appears to be no equivalent in France of the female friendly societies that Anna Clark claims gave many working-class women in Britain between 1780-1830 organizational experience and opportunities for socialization. *The Struggle for the Breeches: Gender and the Making of the British Working Class* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 36-38.

working women themselves, to charitable associations established by "*dames patronesses*", to ambitious but largely unsustainable projects initiated by socialist women on behalf of *ouvrières*. *Appendix A* lists associations established in Paris in the period 1848-1851 whose membership was primarily composed of working women.[31] This list was complied using contemporary journals, almanacs of associations, and studies published by journalists and social investigators who visited and observed workers' associations. It does not include artificial ""worker" or "employer-worker" associations hastily set up by entrepreneurs after July 5, 1848 in order to apply for the three million francs in credits made available to associations by the Constituent Assembly. Nor does it include political clubs or religious societies. What is striking about women's associations is how few actually existed, and how short-lived they were.

[31]See pp. 241-150.

2: The Gender Politics of Production Associations

Production associations: theory and practice

Production associations, also called "industrial" associations or societies, were groups of workers directly involved in the manufacture, and sometimes marketing, of goods produced in urban workshops. The proliferation of such associations between 1848 and 1851 was stimulated by the same events which gave rise to the organization of trade *corporations* and the establishment of the Luxembourg Commission. These organizations remained one of the few feasible forms of worker self-help and activism in the repressive atmosphere that followed the June Days. The majority of associations operating after June 1848, however, had modest memberships compared to the *corporations* that formed between February and May 1848, and did not attempt to speak for all workers in the same trade. Their objectives were also more limited. Some eschewed politics and confined their publicly-stated ambitions to ameliorating the economic lot of their members. To the extent that they could pass themselves off as apolitical self-help bodies, they aroused some sympathy and support from bourgeois members of the Constituent Assembly. But any effort to federate associations along socialist or mutualist lines triggered immediate repression.[32]

An important stimulus to the formation of producers' associations was the decision of the Constituent Assembly on July 5, 1848 to approve a credit of three million francs

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[32]See pp. 376-385 for a discussion of the state repression that shut down Jeanne Deroin's Union of Associations of Workers.

for loans to production associations, both those formed exclusively by workers, and those between workers and employers. To be approved, associations had to meet criteria established by an officially constituted "Council of Encouragement" under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Commerce. This quasi-official endorsement of association, although short-lived and half-hearted, did encourage a number of workers to "associate" in the hopes of receiving financial assistance. The activities of the Council of Encouragement and their consequences for women's associations will be considered in Chapter Five.[33]

Studies of association written in the nineteenth century tended to privilege production societies as the only "true" associations and to ignore or discount others that did not fit this model.[34] About a score of Parisian associations founded between 1848 and 1851 by male artisans were analyzed again and again by political economists and polemicists in the nineteenth century who were seeking to convince readers of the merits or flaws of worker association.[35] These studies undoubtedly grew out of an interest in

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[33]See pp. 222-236.

[34]Emile Heftler, *Les Associations Coopératives* (194-95) makes this distinction, counting as "true" associations "*seulement d'ouvriers industriels proprement dits*". Thus he discounts associations such as those of the wigmakers, lemonade sellers, coffee vendors, bakers, pharmacists, midwives, etc. as well as associations set up by Louis Blanc primarily to relieve unemployment such as the tailors and the saddlers. André Cochut in 1851 calculated the number of production societies at 40, and estimated that there existed in addition 130-150 small societies of cooks, hairdressers, and so on. *Les Associations Ouvrières* (Paris, Au Bureau Du *National*: 1851).

[35] Sympathetic studies of associations, most of them contemporary with the revolution include: J. P. Gilland, *Revue anecdotique des associations ouvrières* (Paris: Librairie Démocratique, 1850); André Cochut, *Les Associations Ouvrières* (1851); H.-R. Feugueray, *L'Association ouvrière, industrielle et agricole* (Paris: G. Havard, 1851); J. P. Beluze, *Les Associations Conséquences du Progrès: Crédit du Travail* (Paris: Chez le auteur, 1863). Beluze was an Icarian and Cabet's son-in-law; Feugueray and Gilland were associated with the journal *L'Atelier*. Less sympathetic or

producers' societies as precursors of industrial syndicates and unions. Those most fully and frequently described, however, were predominantly or exclusively male.

Production or "industrial" associations were usually formed by artisans in the skilled trades who banded together to escape the exploitation of subcontractors, the hated *tâcherons* and *marchandeurs*. Generally, in production societies, workers (occasionally workers and masters) pooled their labor, tools and available capital. They drafted statutes which specified the rights and responsibilities of members and provided for the election of the *gérant* (general manager) and other officers. In accordance with the widely-shared desire to create "the republic in the atelier," the statutes usually called for a general assembly of members to meet regularly and approve administrative policies. The assembly had the power to recall officers if they were dissatisfied. Membership in the association was restricted to those able to make a set contribution to the association's operating capital, or the requirement might be satisfied by regular deductions from wages. Profits, if any, were divided according to a predetermined formula. A portion was distributed to members, often in proportion to productivity or wages earned. The remainder was divided among several funds. These often included a capitalization fund, to finance the regular business of the association, a mutual assistance fund, to help sick

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openly hostile studies include: Louis Villermé, *Traité des Associations ouvrières* (Paris: Pagnerre, 1849); Louis Reybaud, "Mémoire sur Les Associations entre Ouvriers ou entre patrons et ouvriers, fondés en France avec une subvention de l'état", *Journal des Economistes* 33 (July-August 1852): 209-254; Anatole Lemercier, *Études sur les Associations Ouvrières* (Paris: Adrien le Clere et Cie, 1857); Emile Heftler, *Les Associations Coopératives de Production sous La Deuxième République* (1899); Octave Festy, *Les Associations Ouvrières Encouragées Par La Deuxième République*, (Paris: F. Rieder, 1915).

or invalid workers, and occasionally, an "indissoluble" fund to perpetuate the association, a Buchezian innovation described below.

If an association wished to apply for a government loan from the Council of Encouragement or protect members in the event of bankruptcy, its statutes had to conform to French civil and commercial law. There were essentially two legal forms that an association could adopt to incorporate. It could be established as a "society in collective name" in which all of the associates were individually and collectively liable for any debts. Or it could set up as a limited partnership (*société en commandite*) in which there were one or several "responsible" associates, with the remainder being simple providers of funds. Non-responsible associates were not liable for debts and could only lose their original stake if the association failed. This option required precise legal formalities and was employed primarily by large associations.[36]

One of the obstacles that women faced was that a married woman could not legally join an association without the formal consent of her husband. He was then theoretically entitled to cast her vote in the general assembly of the association. This anomaly was cited again and again by male workers as an excuse for denying women

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[36]A *société en commandite* could only be constituted as a result of strict legal formalities prescribed by article 1325 of the Civil Code. An "anonymous society" (the equivalent of a joint-stock, limited-liability company) could exist only with special government authorization and was restricted in this period to large capitalist ventures such as railway lines and mining companies. Several handbooks in the period attempt to guide workers through this unfamiliar legal maze. See for example Leon Hocdé, "Code-Manuel des Associations Ouvrières" in the *Almanach des Associations Ouvrières Pour 1850* (Union Essénienne, 1849), 71-75 and Antonym Romand, *Manuel des Associations ouvrières contenant un projet d'Acte de Société approuvé par le conseil d'encouragement* (Paris: Guiradet et Jouaust, 1849).

members the right to vote or the right to hold elective office in mixed-sex associations.[37] It also impeded the formation of all-female production societies, since married organizers or prospective members had to secure spousal consent if they wanted to be legally recognized.

In many respects, production associations represented a pragmatic experiment with worker cooperation, in which workers evolved forms and procedures to meet their own needs. However, there was a substantial body of theory on the subject of association which evolved in the 1830s and 1840s, and which did influence some workers, particularly better educated artisans such as those in the printing trades. As Roger Magraw notes, one of the most difficult problems for the social historian is weighing the relative importance of workers' experience and of socialist theorists in spreading what he calls the "associationist myth." He suggests that the discourse of intellectuals, by offering detailed blueprints for the workings of an associationist society, helped workers clarify their own values, gave them a sense of the various options and the differences between them, and crafted key slogans around which workers could mobilize.[38]

All utopian socialists proposed methods of rationalizing production that would give workers more dignity and control in the workplace. Two in particular, Philippe-Joseph Buchez and Louis Blanc, are generally credited with popularizing the concept of worker association in the 1830s and 1840s. Blanc, in his *Organization of Labor* (1840), proposed creating associations of nation-wide scope, which would embrace all workers in a given

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[37]See arguments made to Victor Hennequin by the upholster's association, "Les ouvriers Tapissiers," *La Démocratie Pacifique*, 26 October 1851 and by Wahry, *gérant* of the Proudhonist-inspired tailor's association, *La Reciprocité*, ibid., 23 Nov. 1851.

[38]*The Age of Artisan Revolution*, 72.

trade or industry.[39] The republican state, a necessary prelude to a just society, would finance the creation of producer cooperatives, which would be turned over to the workers themselves to manage. A national system of rational exchange would bind all workshops to each other. Although Leo Loubère argues that Blanc had a petty bourgeois distrust of an omnipotent state, his vision was too ambitious and étatist to attract the majority of workers in 1848, who were searching for more limited and pragmatic solutions to their immediate problems.[40] Nevertheless Blanc's reputation as a defender of the working class and his staunch republicanism elevated him to the head of the largely symbolic Luxembourg Commission in February of 1848, where he came to personify workers' desire for a more just and rational "organization of labor".

Buchez, a dissident Saint-Simonian who broke with the movement in December, 1829 to compete with it for worker acolytes, developed his own brand of associational socialism. He rejected the Saint-Simonians' faith in collaboration between workers and the educated and propertied elites. Buchez stressed association as a form of worker self-empowerment, a way for workers to acquire the instruments of production and free themselves from labor exploitation. He envisaged the most capable and moral workers pooling their resources to form their own associations. Such workers would commit themselves to adding new members as conditions permitted. They would do this by setting aside one-fifth of their profits in an indissoluble fund. These assets, the "*fonds*

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[39]The 1840 first edition was banned which greatly increased its popularity. It went through five editions by 1848. My citations are to Louis Blanc, *Organisation du Travail*, 5th ed. (Paris: Société de l'Industrie Fraternelle, 1848).

[40]Leo Loubère, *Louis Blanc: His life and his contribution to the rise of French Jacobin-Socialism* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1961): 38-39.

social" in Buchez's words, would permit the association to add new members solely on the basis of their morality and talent and without regard to their resources. Eventually, Buchez imagined, this process would result in the creation of large associations embracing the majority of workers in each artisanal trade (industrial workers who tended machines would have their own syndicates).[41] A number of the early, sympathetic studies of production associations founded during the Revolution of 1848 were written by disciples of Buchez, men such as André Cochut, H.-R. Feugueray, J.-P. Gilland and Auguste Ott.[42]

Buchez's working-class disciples, largely devout Catholics in trades such as printing and precious metals, gradually modified his theories to fit their own more pragmatic outlook. Their ideas about association took shape in the pages of *l'Atelier*, a journal written and edited by workers, published between 1840 and 1850. The

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[41]for Buchez's associational see his *The Means of Ameliorating the Condition of Urban Wage Earners* (Paris, 1831). Like his Saint-Simonian competitors, he spread his doctrines through public courses and a newspaper, *l'Européen*, (pub. 1831-32; 1835-38) designed to compete with the *Globe*. His paper was diligently read by the editors of the *Echo de la Fabrique* in Lyons, and he helped to write the statutes for a small association of goldsmiths in 1834. For an analysis of his ideas, see O. Festy, *Le Mouvement ouvrier au début de la Monarchie de juillet* (Paris: Edouard Cornély et Cie, 1908), 338; A. Cuvillier, *Un journal d'Ouvriers: L'Atelier*, (Paris: Alcan, 1914), 1-3; F. Isambert, "Aux Origins de l'Associationisme Buchézien," *Archives Internationales de Sociologie de la Co-opération*, 6 (1959): 29-66.

[42]J.-P. Gilland, *Revue anecdotique des associations ouvrières* (1850); A. Cochut, *Les Associations Ouvrières* (1851); H.-R. Feugueray, *L'Association ouvrière, industrielle et agricole* (1851); Auguste Ott, *Traité d'Economie sociale, ou Economie politique coordonnée au point de vue du Progrès*, (1851).

"Atelierists" favored small to medium-sized associations of workers in the same trade.[43] They espoused competition between associations as a spur to innovation and productivity, and believed workers should be compensated on the basis of their "works" - that is, their productivity and skill. They were hostile to state assistance or regulation, and believed that the role of the government should be restricted to creating a legal climate in which association could thrive.[44] Moralistic and puritanical, believers in original sin and redemption by work, they condemned everything which they believed corrupted the proletariat, from lewd cabaret songs, to drinking at the *barrières*, to theorists such as Fourier who promised to make work "attractive."[45]

Because of their relative conservatism and religiosity, the worker-editors of *l'Atelier* enjoyed a bourgeois readership and had ties to the men of the *National*, a right-wing republican journal and political faction. These connections allowed several Atelierists to rise to positions of political prominence in 1848. Anthime Corbon, a former

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[43]One of the few workers' association that conformed to Buchez's model was a jewelers' association, whose trade name was Dreville, Thibaut et Cie. It was founded in 1834, and reorganized eight years later after a number of members left. A small body, it never had more than 17 members and by 1850 was reduced to 11. Favored by the government because of its conservatism and Catholicism, it received a large subvention of 25,000 fr. from the Constituent Assembly's Council of Encouragement. For a sympathetic description see J.-P. Gilland, *Revue anecdotique des associations ouvrières*, 77-89. The resources and long-term commitment which Buchez's model required limited its appeal to highly-skilled male artisans in stable trades.

[44]For articles which outline their own views on association, see "Reform Industrielle: De L'Association," *L'Atelier*, February and March 1841); "Reforme Industrielle: Organisation du Travail," ibid. July 1841; "De l'Organisation du Travail," ibid., November 1844. For criticisms of Blanc, see "Les éducateurs populaires: Louis Blanc," ibid., October 1847, 7-10. They accuse Blanc of living in a fantasy world and urge workers to be pragmatic: "Aide-toi, le ciel t'aidera."

[45]"Variétés: Les chansons des rues", 31 August 1842; for criticism of Fourierists, see "Discussion sur le Fouriérisme", July 1846, 342-44.

typographer, was selected in February by Garnier-Pagès, the new mayor of Paris, to serve as his secretary. He was subsequently invited, along with Pascal, the director of *l'Atelier*, to come and defend his views before the Luxembourg Commission. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in April, Corbon served as vice-president of the Assembly until its dissolution. (Buchez was elected president.) Here he was instrumental in shaping the mission of the Council of Encouragement, and together with several other disciples of Buchez, drafted the instructions given to associations that wished to apply for state loans. Despite the political prominence of the Atelierists, they were far from commanding the loyalty of all workers. Their sharp polemics with other socialist schools and their failure to support the Luxembourg's slate of delegates to the Constituent Assembly made them a controversial faction within a very fragmented socialist movement.

The majority of production associations founded between 1848 and 1851 did not conform to Buchez's model or any other theoretical blueprint, however. Most evolved in more pragmatic and ad hoc ways. Some, like the *Société Générale des Ouvriers Chapeliers Réunis* developed out of earlier resistance societies, such as the hatmakers' society which negotiated a *tarif* between patrons and workers in 1844.[46] Others were given impetus by actions of the Luxembourg Commission. Louis Blanc was instrumental in setting up workshops for unemployed tailors and saddlers. About five thousand tailors were chosen by lot to work at the Clichy workshop, the site of the former Clichy debtors prison, making uniforms for the Guard Mobile and the National Guard. Following the

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[46]*Le Nouveau Monde*, 10 December 1849; Victor Hennequin, "Les Chapeliers réunis," *La Démocratie Pacifique*, 30 November 1851; R. Gossez, *Les Ouvriers de Paris*, 166-170.

dissolution of this workshop, smaller groups of tailors organized similar collaborative ventures to keep the Clichy spirit alive and to relieve unemployment.[47] Other associations were founded simply because groups of workers were inspired by revolutionary events to set up independent enterprises. Workers generally did what was feasible under the circumstances, and what was feasible for women differed considerably from what was feasible for men.

All-female production associations:

The number of exclusively female production associations founded between 1848-51 was quite small. They were confined almost entirely to small groups of women in the needle trades, such as seamstresses, dressmakers and corsetmakers. The majority of *ouvrières* who were involved with production associations worked in those controlled by men. Perhaps because female associations were relatively rare, some secondary works, such as Rémi Gossez's pioneering study, treat all societies of *ouvrières* as if they were

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[47]According to L. Reybaud, *Mémoire sur Les Associations Ouvrières* (240-41), fifty-four workers from Clichy, utilizing 37,000 fr. in profits left over from that body, set up a producers society in July 1848 in the rue du Faubourg St.-Denis. They had 160,000 fr. of sales in their first year. R. Gossez, *Les Ouvriers de Paris* (165-66) claims they had 74 associates and 400 postulants and had 200,000 fr. in capital when L.-N. Bonaparte's coup intervened to close them down. The group's trade name was *Association Fraternelle des Ouvriers Tailleurs*. For the original statutes, see AN F12/4618.

socialist or workerist in inspiration. Left-wing newspapers from the period contributed to this tendency by publicizing any evidence of "associational" activity, without always being aware of what they were promoting. Despite the paucity of surviving evidence, it is possible to differentiate between women's associations that were "workerist" in character and those that were not.

Some societies that appear superficially like workers' production associations were really traditional mutual aid societies, formed under the patronage of religious societies and/or charitable organizations. Two examples in this category are the *Société Chapelière de Sainte-Marie* and the *Association fraternelle des ouvrières en lingère et nouveauté* (also known as the *Association de l'oeuvre de Bon Secours*). The *Sainte-Marie* was an association of women in the hatmaking trades, founded in 1843. Its members included *couseuses* (stitchers), *éjarreuses* (workers who pincered out stiff hairs that marred the nap of hats), and *garnisseuses* (hat trimmers). In return for a small weekly contribution, the society assisted married members who were hospitalized and single girls who were orphaned. When the newspaper *l'Union* reported enthusiastically that the society was organizing to secure a *tarif* for women in hatmaking, its leaders wrote back to correct the journal. They emphasized the group's purely charitable intentions and claimed the patronage of the Virgin Mary.[48] Jeanne Deroin's assertion in August, 1848 that the society was "reworking its statutes in accordance with revolutionary principles," therefore seems implausible, and may have represented wishful thinking on her part.[49]

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[48]*l'Union*, January 1844, February 1844. Gossez mistakenly claims that this society was a "corps" and was the first female "corps" to secure a uniform *tarif*; *Ouvriers de Paris*, 170.

[49]*Politique des Femmes*, August 1848.

The *Bon Secours* association resulted from an agreement between a group of "*dames patronesses*" and an entrepreneur. He agreed to hire women recommended to him by the "*dames*", and paid workers by the piece. In return, the entrepreneur turned over one-tenth of his profits to an aid fund that provided for workers when they were ill or retired. The fund was administered by a council composed of twelve workers elected by their peers, and twelve of the "founding dames." The rules of the atelier were very strict, and the work day was twelve hours long. This was a commercial venture with a thin veneer of philanthropy and certainly did not contribute to women's emancipation as workers.[50]

The greatest obstacle facing women who wished to associate in a productive venture without interference from entrepreneurs or "dames" was the fact that they typically had few resources and could only bring their labor to the enterprise. If the petitions and loan applications submitted to the authorities are any indication, it took a minimum of ten to fifteen thousand francs to open a couture workshop and salesroom, hire ten to forty people, and pay operating expenses for the first six months until profits could begin to cover expenses.[51] Then the association, particularly if it were in

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[50]J. Tixerant, *Le Féminisme à l'époque de 1848 dans l'ordre politique et dans l'ordre économique*, (Paris: V. Giard & E. Brière, 1908), 179-80. Tixerant gives a BN citation for the statutes, but I was unable to locate them there: *Association de l'oeuvre de Bon Secours*, BN LB54/1530.

[51]Elisa Lemonnier's petition of June 5, 1848 to the Constituent Assembly on behalf of her *Association de Couturières* provides an itemized budget for the first six months for an "couture workshop on a small scale". It totals 10,000 fr. See *Politique des Femmes*, August 1848, 2. *Goreska et Debruges*, another couture association, received a total of 15,000 fr. from the Council of Encouragement.

needlework, would have to contend with cut-throat competition from prisons, convents and subcontractors who employed captive or sweated labor.

One way to deal with this problem was for a women's association to ally itself with, or receive support from, a sympathetic male corporation or association. This kind of collaboration was instrumental in helping establish an association of female shirtmakers, the *Association fraternelle des ouvrières chemisières*, rue de la corderie, 7. It was founded in October 1848, with help from the saddlers' association under one Captain Durand, who allegedly gave it an order of six hundred shirts. Although the saddlers' association soon folded, the *chemisières* were able to get an interest-free loan to buy material from the directors of le Gagne-Petit, a *maison de nouveautés*.[52] They were still in business in 1851. They are described in a short article by Émile Jay, a Buchezian lawyer, as part of a series, "Visites aux Associations" in *Le Bien-Être Universel*, and in a longer account written by Victor Hennequin, a prominent Fourierist, for *La Démocratie Pacifique*.[53] According to Jay, the association started without capital, but acquired a small nest egg by withholding from members wages. It had forty-five associates and paid piece work rates at twenty-five percent above the norm.[54]

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[52]Tixerant, 178.

[53]*Le Bien-Etre Universel*, 10 August 1851; *La Démocratie Pacifique*, 16 November 1851. Other brief references to this association include *Le Peuple*, 25 December 1848; *L'Opinion des Femmes*, 28 January 1849; Jeanne Deroin, *L'Almanach des Femmes Pour 1852*, 180-181; *Le Nouveau Monde*, August-September 1850.

[54]It appears that the *chemisières* are the same organization as the *Association fraternelle des ouvrières lingères* which Jeanne Deroin describes in the January 28, 1849 issue of *L'Opinion des Femmes*, and which she states was moving to 44 rue de Richelieu. This was the address of an association making "*chemises et nouveautes*" directed by Désirée Gay. The archives of the Ministry of Commerce show that Gay applied in October, 1848 for a loan of 25,000 fr. from the Council of Encouragement

Hennequin personally visited the association accompanied by Jeanne Deroin. Since Deroin was in prison until July 3, 1851, and the article was published in mid-November, the visit probably took place in late summer or early fall of 1851. What Hennequin saw at that time was a small association of thirty-five workers, operating out of two rooms, whose total inventory consisted of seven to eight dozen shirts. The majority of workers were married women who worked at home, and only about eight to ten worked in the atelier. Workers were paid by the piece. A committee of work and progress verified the quality of the work. It divided workers into three categories based on skill, and set the rates paid to each. The director, Jean Lermier, estimated the average pay for a twelve hour day at 2 fr., and for a half day, at 1.25 fr., with a dead season in September and October. If her figures were accurate, this was an above-average wage.[55] Members received a share of the profits and prizes were awarded for superior work.[56]

Although Hennequin called the tendencies of the society "quite radical," it seems to have made a number of compromises with strict socialist principles to stay afloat. The association had redrafted its original statutes in May, 1849, at the recommendation of

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for an association of seamstresses, based at the rue de la corderie. Gay's application alleges that the association had received an order for nine hundred shirts from the saddlers, who had advanced some of the money to buy materials. Her request was not taken up by the Council until July of 1849. By that time it had been modified and was apparently a new proposal on behalf of an association of seamstresses that would do "ordinary linen, fancy goods, layettes and trousseaux." This time she was successful, receiving a loan of 12,000 francs. Gay was apparently involved, along with Jeanne Deroin and Mme. Lermier, in founding the *Chemisières*, but left it sometime in 1849 to organize a new group.

[55]*L'Union*, January 1884 (4) cites 30 c. as the price paid by confectioneurs for a man's shirt; a good worker could make two per day. *L'Atelier*, 30 April 1850 (521-22) reports that shirtmakers in Bordeaux received 1 fr. 60 for a ten hour day.

[56]*La Démocratie Pacifique*, 16 November 1851.

"delegates of the principle workers' associations," to put them in harmony with commercial and civil law. In the process, it raised the contribution required of new members from twenty-five to one hundred-fifty francs. This was an enormous sum for an *ouvrière*, representing at least half a year's wages, and undercut the association's stated intent (Article 14) to admit all foreign and French workers with the necessary skills, provided the association was in financial condition to receive them. The society espoused free credit, but gave those who loaned the association at least twenty-five francs a discount of five per cent on orders. It also refused to allow any worker who left the association to withdraw their share of the social capital, a restriction which, as Hennequin noted, was contrary to French civil code. The director and sub-director were elected for three years, a relatively long term for a workers' association, which typically emphasized the sovereignty of the general assembly. But by extending the term of the directors and refusing to allow members who withdrew to remove their capital contribution, the society protected itself against two of the major causes of associational failure.[57]

Evidence suggests that this shirtmakers association was a shoestring operation, in which the majority of associates were engaged in traditional piecework in their homes. Thus it violated the stipulation of Pauline Roland, a leading socialist-feminist and collaborator with Jeanne Deroin on the Union of Associations, that an association, to be

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[57]Octave Festy, *Les Associations Ouvrières Encouragées Par La Deuxième République* (Paris: F. Rieder, 1915), provides an analysis of why many associations failed economically: 171-174.

truly fraternal, should bring workers together in common labor.[58] However it did accommodate the needs of married women with children by allowing them to work at home and by paying them twenty-five centimes to attend meetings of the association. The association also attempted to deal humanely with situations in which there was not enough work for all members. Article 15 of the statutes stipulated that in such situations work would be taken from the least needy and given to the most, although how "need" would be determined was not spelled out, and those with the least tenure with the organization would be the first to be laid off.[59]

In addition to the Fraternal Association of *chemisières*, several other women's associations may have received assistance from male counterparts, although it is difficult to tell how vital or extensive this aid was. The *Association Fraternelle des Ouvrières Corsetières* was constituted under the patronage of the delegation to the Luxembourg, although it was not represented there.[60] The *Association fraternelle des ouvrières en lingerie et nouveautés* shared a building in the faubourg Saint-Denis with the *Association*

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[58]"Revue des Associations ouvrières: Les cordonniers", *La République*, 30 June 1850: 5-6. "*...nous croyons que l'atelier, obligatoire à certaines heures, répond aux besoins de sociabilité inhérents à la nature humaine, et que plus les hommes seront en contact... plus la Liberté, L'Egalité, et la Fraternité s'établiront parmi eux.*"

[59]For the statutes, see V. Hennequin, *La Démocratie Pacifique*, 16 November 1851.

[60]Gossez, *Ouvriers de Paris*, 127. This is apparently based on the fact that it is listed as "constituted by the Delegates of the Luxembourg" in the *Almanach des Associations Ouvrières Pour 1850* of the Union Essénienne (Paris: Au Bureau de l'Almanach des Associations, 1849). It is also cited in notices in *l'Opinion des Femmes*, 28 January 1849 and in *Le Nouveau Monde*, 15 July 1849 and 15 August/15 September 1850.

fraternelle des Tailleurs (formerly of Clichy) and an association of cooks.[61] The *Association fraternelle des ouvrières pour blouses* (smocks) joined forces with a male association of *coupeurs* (cutters) to create the *Association Fraternelle entre les Ouvriers Coupeurs et les Ouvrières pour la confection des blouses, bourgerons et pantalons* (smocks, overalls and pants).[62] Joining men in mixed-sex production societies, however, did not always work to women's advantage, as the following discussion demonstrates.

Women Workers in Mixed-Sex and Male Production Associations

More women worked in or for male or mixed-sex production associations than they did in or for exclusively female ones. Here conditions conspired to make them, as Pauline Roland observed, a proletariat among their peers. Women were generally not admitted to full membership in male production associations. As non-members (*non-intéressées*) they were paid only piece-work rates, and had no share in the profits of the association, its governance or its benefits. When they were admitted, their opportunities were often severely curtailed. The "republic in the atelier" mirrored the larger republic outside its walls, silencing women, excluding them from administrative councils, and relegating them to passive roles.

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[61]*Almanach des Associations Ouvrières pour 1850*, Union Essénienne, 1849. *Le Nouveau Monde*, 15 July 1849 and 15 Aug./15 Sept. 1850.

[62]*Le Peuple*, 16 February 1849; *Le Travail Affranchi*, 25 February 1849.

The *Ouvriers fondeurs en caractères* (type founders), for example, employed some three hundred women out of total work force of eight hundred. Although their statutes did not bar women from membership, females were effectively excluded by the contribution required of applicants. Associates had to take out 900 francs of shares, with a fifth of their salary being withheld until the amount was satisfied, at six per cent interest on the unpaid balance.[63]

The statutes of the *Ouvriers tapissiers* (upholsterers), cour Saint-Jacques, specifically appealed to women to augment the number of associated limited partners (*associés intéressés comanditaires*). They were required, however, to contribute 250 francs to the capital of the society, to cover the high cost of luxury fabrics employed in the trade. While this was only one-quarter of the contribution demanded of a male applicant, and theoretically could be paid over time by a three per cent levy on salary (male workers paid ten per cent), it was an enormous and prohibitive sum for a female worker. Victor Hennequin, who visited the *tapissiers* in 1851 for *La Démocratie Pacifique*, found that they had yet to recruit a single female member, although a number were employed in their atelier.[64]

A more direct approach was simply to exclude women from membership outright. The statutes of the *Association des patrons et ouvriers tailleurs de la ville de Bordeaux* specified that women could be admitted to work, but could not become members of the

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[63]AN C2233/442. Petition by the *ouvriers fondeurs en caractères* to the *Comité du Travail*, 15 June 1848.

[64]"Visites aux Associations: Les Ouvriers Tapissiers," *La Démocratie Pacifique*, 19 October 1851.

society, or share in profits, or sit in assemblies.[65] The *Ouvriers Tourneurs en Chaises* (chair turners) of the rue de Popincourt in Paris had some three hundred male members and fifty non-member "auxiliaries", mostly women who did caning and chair-bottoming. They told Hennequin that they might incorporate women into the association in the future if business was good enough to insure that those taken in had constant employment.[66] One of the obvious advantages of excluding women from membership was to create a flexible labor force that could be released when business was slack. It should be noted that many associations hired non-associated male workers on the same terms, a practice which offended idealists such as Pauline Roland.

More revealing, perhaps, of the gendered limits of fraternity and equality are the statutes of those associations where both men and women were members. Typically in such mixed-sex associations, women were barred from leadership positions and from attending and speaking in assemblies. As Pauline Roland pointed out, the rationalizations provided by male workers for disenfranchising their female colleagues bore an uncanny resemblance to the arguments made before 1848 for disenfranchising the proletariat.[67] They also reveal considerable anxiety about feminine "disorder" and the transplantation of patriarchal norms from the family into governance structures in the workplace.

Restrictions on women associates could range from mild to severe. At the milder end of the spectrum was the *Association Fraternelle des Ouvriers et Ouvrières de la*

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[65]AN C2232/106 *Exposé Général de l'Association des patrons et ouvriers tailleurs de la ville de Bordeaux.* (Undated, received 29 May 1848 by the *Comité du Travail*).

[66]*La Démocratie Pacifique*, 12 Oct. 1851.

[67] "Associations Ouvrières: Les Chapeliers," *La République*, 6 January 1851, 1-2.

Chemiserie.[68] The statutes state that members of both sexes are equally eligible for all social functions, "with the exception however of the functions of director, which will be, for the present, exercised exclusively by men."[69] The original management committee (*comité de gérance*) was composed of seven women and two men. These same statutes were adopted by the *Association Fraternelle entre les Ouvriers Coupeurs et les Ouvrières pour la confection des blouses, bourgerons et pantalons* when that society was founded in January 1849.[70]

Other dual-sex associations, particularly where the membership was predominately male, were more restrictive. The *Association laborieuse et fraternelle des ouvriers cordonniers-bottiers de Paris*, a society dating from 1840 with Fourierist connections, took a harder line. Article 33 of the revised states of 1848 declared that women could join the corporation, but could not take part in general assemblies or participate on commissions.[71] The *Association laborieuse* may not have been typical of shoemakers, however. Pauline Roland praised a rival association headquartered at the Place du Louvre, which permitted women to sit at the side of men in all general assemblies, and

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[68]Jules Lechavalier, a former Saint-Simonian turned Fourierist, presided over the organizing session of 25 December 1848 which drafted the statutes of the association. *Le Peuple*, 25 December 1848 and 8 January 1849.

[69] Article 19, *Pacte Fondamental de L'Association Fraternelle des Ouvriers et Ouvrières de la Chemiserie*. Discuté et Adopté en Assemblée Générale, les 24, 27 et 29 Decembre 1848 (Paris: Pousielgue, 1849). BN (Imprimées) LB55-98.

[70]*Le Travail Affranchi*, 25 February 1849, 6.

[71]AN F12/4630. Callerot: *Association laborieuse et fraternelle des ouvriers cordonniers-bottiers de Paris*. One of the association's directors, Héronville, was also managing director of the schismatic Fourierist journal, *Le Nouveau Monde*.

have the same rights.[72] Other associations excluding women from their general assemblies included *La Réciprocité, Association d'ouvriers taileurs*, whose director, Wahry, was leader of the tailors' strike in 1840, and the *Ouvriers Tapissiers of the Cour Saint-Jacques.*[73] The *Ouvriers fondeurs en caractères* limited participation in their assembly to those holding shares worth at least 500 francs, which also effectively barred women.[74]

When socialists such as Roland and Victor Hennequin criticized these discriminatory practices, they were given specious rationalizations which concealed deeper anxieties about loss of masculine authority and control. An administrator for the upholsterers (*ouvriers tapissiers*) association told Hennequin:

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[72]"Cordonniers," *La République*, 30 June 1850, 5-6. See also Victor Hennequin, *La Démocratie Pacifique*, 30 November 1851. This association was a fusion of some four to six smaller associations, whose seat was in the Place du Louvre. Hennequin reported that it had mutual credit arrangements with many other associations, including the leatherworkers of Batignolles from whom it got materials, and associations of masons, lithographers, and the mechanics of La Villette. It paid piece-work wages.

[73]For *La Réciprocité*, see Hennequin, *La Démocratie Pacifique*, 23 November 1851. For the *Tapissiers*, ibid., 10 October 1851. The tailor Pierre Wahry was one of the founders of the 1845 *Compagnie des Industries unies*, an early effort to organize a mutualist association among a number of trades. According to Maitron, *Dictionnaire biographique*, 3: 526; he allegedly counseled Désirée Gay, Jeanne Deroin and Mme Lermier on the formation of their shirtmakers and seamstresses' association in 1848. Inspired by the ideals of Pierre Leroux and Proudhon, he founded *l'Association Carra et Cie, La Réciprocité* in 1850; in 1851 it had about thirty members. Like Deroin's Union of Associations, it was based on the idea that consumers would advance monies to producers in return for coupons that they could redeem for finished goods; prices would reflect simply labor value and no profits would be earned. See Wahry's description of his principles in *Almanach des corporations nouvelles 1852*, (Paris: Au Bureau de la Société de la Presse du travail, 1851), 117-23.

[74]AN C2233/442 Petition to the *Comité du Travail* by the *Ouvriers fondeurs en caractères*, received 15 June 1848.

> We do not dispute the equality of the sexes in industry; the woman who works should have the same rights as the man in the accomplishment of the same duties; like him, she ought to be able, in theory, to supervise, to direct, according to the needs of the establishment where her interests are engaged. But we are not by ourselves the whole of society; we cannot, the day after tomorrow, reshape it in our image. The Code submits the minor daughter to her father, the married woman, to her husband. The women who present themselves for entry into our association are not the wives of society members. Industrial affinities can not be run along family lines... to give a deliberative voice to woman in our assemblies, is to give it to the man who is her master, it is to introduce into the most intimate of our affairs influences which are foreign to our industry...[75]

It is ironic that familial arguments were used both to deprive women of representation within associations by alleging the dangerous interference of husbands, and to buttress the authority of male directors, whom the statutes of the *Ouvriers et Ouvrières de la Chemiserie* assert "ought to be respected and obeyed like good fathers of families."[76]

Status distinctions between different types of workers and customary pay differentials between men and women also functioned, as Pauline Roland observed, to produce a two-fold division between "proletarians" and "privileged" within associations. Roland found the rigid division of labor and inequality of pay within hatmaking particularly odious, a division which produced a six-to-one ratio between the top male wages, paid to those who shaped and turned hats (*appropriers, tournuriers*), and the bottom female rates, paid to those who cut skins and tweezed the larger hairs from the nap of hats (*coupeuses de poils, éjarreuses*). The "proletarian" workers, including most

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[75] *La Démocratie Pacifique*, 26 October 1851. A similar argument was made to Hennequin by Wahry, gérant of the tailors association *La Réciprocité*, ibid., 23 November 1851.

[76] Article 19, *Pacte Fondamental de L'Association Fraternelle des Ouvriers et Ouvrières de la Chemiserie.*

women and lower-echelon men like the fullers (*fouleurs*), worked longer hours and made less money, which Roland believed accounted for their "*moralité plus grossière*". By contrast the highly-paid *tournuriers* could often be observed reading and might be mistaken for students.[77]

At least one male association, however, the Fraternal Association of Tailors of the rue du Faubourg St.-Denis, defended paying higher than average wages to female pieceworkers (in this case women who made vests in their homes), claiming that women needed at least 1.50 francs per day in order to live "honorably":

> ...if we wish to remain moral, if we have concern for our dignity, we cannot have it for ourselves alone... we do not want poor women and young girls to wear themselves out by sitting up nights without deriving any benefit from their painful labors; we do not want them to become demoralized by suffering and surrender themselves to prostitution, like desperate persons...[78]

According to J.-P. Gilland, this association paid its own male members more generously than average as well. It passed the labor costs on in prices that were significantly higher than those of confection houses, in the belief that people would voluntarily patronize associations because of their principles. Gilland, a good *Atelierist*, expressed skepticism about this abandonment of competitive practices.[79]

Despite the occasional exception, it is difficult to find much evidence that male workers were inspired by concern for the plight of their female counterparts, at least in their associational practices. Pauline Roland was impatient with the rationalization that

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[77]"Associations Ouvrières: Les Chapeliers," *La République*, January 1851, 6.

[78]Jérome-Pierre Gilland, *Revue anecdotique des associations ouvrières.* (Paris: Librairie Démocratique, 1850): 23-24.

[79]Ibid.

despite discrimination, women were better off working in associations than outside them. "The excuse that one could draw from the happiness of their current state has been advanced again and again for the maintenance of domesticity, and even of slavery;" she retorted, "it is a sophism, nothing more." She also bristled at suggestions that women lacked education, or reason, or were incapable of deliberation, or were capricious and inevitable sources of dissension:

> Hearing these pitiful arguments which we were given, not only by the hatmakers, but by the members of divers Associations where we have found the same vice, we were reminded of the time, well behind us now, although only three years at most separate us, when the bourgeoisie loudly demanded electoral reform with the **qualification of capacities**, receiving in response the law of universal suffrage.[80]

Roland's political analogy was apt. Production associations, like workers' corporations, functioned like "little republics" in which participatory rights were limited to those whose property in labor entitled them to full citizenship. The pervasive devaluation of women's work, and the fact that the labor value which married women created legally belonged to their husbands, relegated women in the majority of mixed-sex associations to passive rather than active roles. Republican and associationist discourses mutually reinforced this second-class citizenship. Working women might be addressed both as citoyennes and associates, but their exclusion from deliberative processes and political power was the price exacted for both courtesies. Just as the concept of fraternity implicitly excluded women, so too, in most instances, did the concept of association. To recognize *ouvrières* as co-equal members of mixed-sex associations was to acknowledge that their labor contribution and rights as producers were equivalent to men's. This threatened to undermine the whole ideological apparatus that buttressed a two-tier,

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[80]"Associations Ouvrières: Les Chapeliers", *La République*, January 1851, 2.

gendered wage structure and supported artisans' demands for universal manhood suffrage. The "republic in the atelier" could not be more generous than the republic outside its doors.

3: Varieties of association: fraternal associations, consumer cooperatives and mutual benefit societies

Women and fraternal associations:

In addition to production associations, there were a variety of societies organized by workers in the service sector between 1848 and 1851 which called themselves "fraternal associations" or "fraternal societies." These included associations of cooks, bakers, food and soft-drink vendors, hairdressers, laundresses, midwives and domestics. The large number of such organizations cited in almanacs and journals between 1848 and 1851 suggests that the majority were small businesses formed by a handful of affiliated workers.[81] They employed the logo "fraternal" and painted symbols like the carpenter's level on the fronts of their establishments out of revolutionary enthusiasm and to appeal to a working-class clientele. Some exchanged goods and services with other associations through reciprocal agreements. According to Louis Villermé, who was quite contemptuous of these groups, their members frequented the clubs, attended sessions of the Luxembourg, took part in the national workshops, and had "turbulent" tendencies.[82]

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[81]Pauline Roland, for example, claims that there were over 50 associations of *cuisiniers* in Paris, "and as soon as one falls, four others arise to take its place." "Les Associations de Cuisiniers", *La République*, 31 March 1950. The *Almanach des Associations Ouvrières Pour 1850*, published by the Union Essénienne, lists 50 associations of hairdressers, 38 of cooks, 4 of laundresses, and 1 of midwives. P. Leroux's *Almanach des Corporations Nouvelles* (1852) lists 21 associations of *cuisiniers*, 37 of *coiffeurs*, and 27 *limoniers* for Paris and suburbs. Since almanacs tended to recognize only affiliated associations, these lists are probably incomplete.

[82]L. R. Villermé, *Traité des Associations ouvrières* (Paris: Pagnerre, 1849), 79-80.

Fraternal associations established by and for working women were heterogeneous in character and not all shared an "associational" impulse in the socialist sense of the term. The *Association fraternelle des Femmes à Gages* (domestic servants), proposed by a "dame" patroness, one Mme Chenard, to assist unemployed female domestics, represented one end of the spectrum. Promoted in Eugénie Niboyet's journal, *La Voix des Femmes*, its ostensible purpose was to prevent unemployed young women from falling into prostitution, and perhaps also to provide bourgeois women with maids whose morality had been screened and certified. It may have been inspired by the formation of several fraternal societies by male servants, who according to press reports invited women to join. There is little information on these groups and none on whether female servants responded positively.[83]

Chenard's proposal called for the establishment of a home (*asile*) for out-of-work domestics, who would be assisted by food, shelter, and job placement. Employed domestics would contribute one franc per month to a mutual aid fund to support this effort. Those wishing admission to the home had to be recommended by two members, who would give guarantees of their probity. This was a charitable endeavor tinged with a good deal of bourgeois sanctimony, and there is no evidence to suggest that female servants responded to the "*Appel aux Domestiques Femmes*" printed in *La Voix des Femmes*, or that the project ever got off the drawing board.[84]

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[83]The *Association Fraternelle des Gens de maison* was founded on 1 April 1848; it had a mutual aid fund to assist members with illness, accidents, unemployment and pensions. Concurrently a *Société de l'Union*, founded by male servants, and a *Société Fraternelle des Gens de maison*, addressed themselves to domestics and concierges of both sexes. *La Démocratie Pacifique*, 12 March 1848.

[84]*La Voix des Femmes*. 27 April 1848.

Another fraternal association endorsed by *La Voix des Femmes*, this time worker-originated, was the *Société des Sages-Femmes Unies* (midwives). Suzanne Voilquin, former Saint-Simonienne editor of the *Tribune des Femmes* (1832) and a certified midwife, reported sympathetically on its organization and demands. Voilquin had just returned to Paris after a lengthy stay in St. Petersburg, and does not appear to have been a member of the society, but clearly supported its objectives. The petition, addressed to the Luxembourg Commission on behalf of five hundred members, asked that midwives be declared "social functionaries" and be paid by the government; it also requested that they be put in charge of hygiene in *crèches* and *salles d'asile* (day-care centers). This would not only assure midwives a living wage, but eliminate the need for humiliating charity bureaux so resented by the poor. The petitioners pointed out that approximately 18,000 of the 34,000 annual births in Paris were attended by midwives, and that compensation was so uncertain and variable that midwives rarely cleared more than 540 francs per year.[85] The midwives' appeals were ignored, and the society probably dissolved. Remnants may have survived as the *Association fraternelle des sages-femmes* which operated out of an office on the rue Montmartre in 1849. This association charged a very modest ten francs for births and after-care and was backed up by doctors of the *Association fraternelle médicale*.[86] The size of this group and its relationship to the

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[85]*Voix des Femmes*, 31 March 1848;, "Les femmes-médecins," *Opinion des Femmes*, June 1849, 5.

[86]*Opinion des Femmes*, June 1849, (5) implies its continued existence. The *Association fratenelle des sages-femmes*, rue Montmartre, 20, appears in the *Almanach des Associations Ouvrières Pour 1850*, (Paris: Union Essénienne, 1849).

earlier *Société des Sages-Femmes Unies* are impossible to determine, but it seems likely that the second association was a more modest and localized group of practitioners.

Parisian laundresses illustrate a category of service workers whose early activism in the Revolution of 1848 did not produce much in the way of permanent association. This was undoubtedly because the decentralized nature of the trade and the large number of small operators made any kind of comprehensive organization almost impossible. Laundresses typically worked for "*maîtresses blanchisseuses*" who set hours, labor rates and prices charged customers. The work day was from six in the morning to eight at night.[87] Rates of pay and long hours were the main grievances in the spring of 1848 when the laundresses first petitioned the Provisional Government for a ten hour day and higher wages. The fact that they did not elect any representative to the Luxembourg Commission suggests that they were not organized as a "*corps d'état*" as Rémi Gossez alleges.[88] They expressed their demands by demonstrations and by sending petitions asking for salary concessions and a ten hour day to the Provisional Government. All Parisian workers were granted a ten hour day by an edict of March 2, 1848. Some laundresses apparently got higher wages, but this may have resulted in unemployment for others as business slowed because of higher prices.[89]

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[87]*Voix des Femmes*, 20 March 1848, 1-2.

[88]R. Gossez, *Ouvriers de Paris*, 159-160.

[89]The Chevillot inventory of petitions to the Provisional Government, AN C934, shows that there were 31 petitions by laundresses; 13 from Paris alone. Most dealt with issues of salary and the ten hour day. The laundresses of Chaillot (Paris, 16e) marched to the Luxembourg on 4 March 1848 to demand "a more equitable distribution of labor and pay." There was also a demonstration in the Place de Caire by laundresses seeking support from the Provisional Government for a reduction in the work day and an increase in salary. *La Démocratie Pacifique*, 5 Mar. 1848; *La*

The immediate exploiters of many *ouvrières* were female employers - the "*maîtresses*," "*bourgeoises*" and workshop supervisors - who were themselves subject to fierce market pressures.[90] The appeal of fraternal associations lay in the hope that eliminating this stratum would make work more rewarding, both emotionally and financially. However, the number of associations organized by laundresses was very small, compared with those of cooks, hairdressers, and other male-dominated trades. Rémi Gossez claims that there were four associations of laundresses in Paris; I have found addresses for five in Paris in 1849 and one at Neuilly (banlieue).[91] None of these organizations appear in almanacs or journals published after 1850, so all were probably of short duration.

The most interesting of these groups, because of its political connections, was the *Association fraternelle des ouvrières blanchisseuses de Paris* (rue St. Honoré 66 and rue Croulebarbe 27). It was affiliated in 1849-1850 with Jeanne Deroin's Union of Associations of Workers.[92] Its directress was Louise Boulanger, aka "Femme Nicaud," who was arrested and tried with Deroin and Pauline Roland in 1850 as a co-conspirator in the Union. The prosecution claimed at the trial that balls and powder were being manufactured in her establishment, and that a picture of Robespierre was prominently

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République, 6 Mar. 1848, *La Voix des Femmes*, 3 April 1848.

[90]See for example the letter to *La Voix des Femmes*, 3 April 1848, on the "Organization of Work," signed by a number of women, of whom two are listed: Rosalie C. and Julia Hémal. They complain of maîtresses in the couture industry who pay workers 15 fr. for five dresses and charge the customer 50 fr.

[91]Gossez, *Ouvriers de Paris*, 159-160. See Appendix A for names and addresses of associations of laundresses listed in contemporary journals and almanacs.

[92]For a discussion of the Union, see pp. 351 ff.

displayed in her home.[93] Because the association applied for a loan of 3000 francs from the Council of Encouragement in January, 1849, there is some archival information about it. It had about ten members. Since Nicaud was married, her husband, a launderer, had to sign his consent for her to be part of the association, as did the husband of another woman.[94] This modest group was certainly no threat to the government, and it clearly lacked the numbers or resources to do much for its associates, other than sustain them in emotional fellowship. There is a letter from Roland, probably to Nicaud, which bears the seal of the Central Commission of the Union of Associations. It requests the addresses of male and female laundresses, suggesting that Roland hoped to expand its base.[95]

However, dreams of comprehensive associations of female service workers, so dear to the hearts of socialist women such as Pauline Roland, Jeanne Deroin and Désirée Gay, were just as utopian as their visions of networks of national laundries and restaurants that would relieve *ouvrières* of the burden of the dual shift.[96] The problems that confronted women in the service sector who wished to associate were if anything more formidable than those in artisanal industry. Employment in private homes, low status (especially true of domestics and laundresses), and the decentralized nature of such trades all militated

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[93]*Gazette des Tribunaux*, 13 November 1850, 1282. The "balls and powder" were a prosecution fabrication and the alleged picture of Robespierre turned out to be a portrait of popular novelist Eugène Sue.

[94]AN F12/4634.

[95]Letter by Pauline Roland to an anon. "Citoyenne" representing the *blanchisseuses*, Paris, 1er février, 1850. BHVP: MS NA 111, Fol. 182.

[96]For Gay's vision, see "Report of a public meeting, 2 April 1848, of the *Société de la Voix des Femmes*", *La Voix des Femmes*, April 1848, 3.

against effective organization. Most "fraternal associations" in Paris in 1848-51 seem to have been short-lived small businesses that traded on the sympathies of a working-class clientele, and were thus relatively impotent. They were symptomatic of the popularity of the associational ideal, but had little economic or political significance in the long-term. That women had more difficulty than men in sustaining such "associations" is hardly surprising, given their limited resources, the decentralized nature of women's service trades, and married women's status as legal minors. The paucity of women's fraternal associations compared to the scores founded by male cooks, hairdressers and soft-drink sellers is evidence once again of how societal obstacles and the economy of makeshift in which proletarian women were enmeshed operated to restrict their organizational options.

Consumer Cooperatives and Mutual Benefit Societies:

Other organizations calling themselves "associations" included consumer and credit cooperatives and mutual benefit societies that evolved out of the "*sociétés de secours*" of the July Monarchy.[97] The latter offered a range of benefits to members, such as job placement, sickness or unemployment insurance, or old age pensions. In 1847, only six

[97]For consumer cooperatives during this period see Ellen Furlough, *Consumer Cooperation in France*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 13-29 and Jean Gaumont, *Histoire Générale de la Coopération en France* (Paris: Fédération Nationale des Coopératives de Consommation, 1924), 222-223, 295-313. Neither work has much to say about women's participation in such cooperatives or gender issues in the period before 1851.

percent of members of Paris mutual aid societies were women.[98] Male workers were often reluctant to admit women to their societies because of the common belief that women were more sickly, and that it would be difficult to monitor malingerers, who might enjoy staying home with their families and being paid for it.[99] Since mutual aid societies could function as the nucleus of resistance efforts, by using funds and organization (illegally) to support strikers, women's exclusion from these bodies was a deterrent to militancy, as well as to self-sufficiency.[100]

Discriminatory policies were tenacious, and extended into credit and consumer co-operatives where male/female job competition or feminine "malingering" was never an issue. An article entitled "Women and Cooperative Societies," published in the *Almanach of Cooperation* (1867), raises the issue of women's continuing exclusion from such organizations. The author begins by noting that women have been reproached, with some reason, for being an obstacle to the development of consumer cooperatives. He then constructs an imaginary dialogue between two reasonable men and an irascible wife: "one of those women who complain ceaselessly against the injustice of men who are preoccupied with the organization of the working class." The wife gripes that even if women are admitted to consumer cooperatives, they are forbidden to speak in assemblies

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[98]Magraw, *The Age of Artisan Revolution*, 162. E. Lejeune-Resnick reports that in France in 1855, there were 3,123 mutual aid societies, embracing 345,128 workers of which only 41,736 were women. *Femmes et Associations*, (Paris: Editions Publisud, 1991), 11.

[99]Ibid.

[100]In the early 1830s, for example, both printers and shoemakers utilized pre-existing mutual aid societies as strike committees, although most never engaged in such tactics. Magraw, *The Age of Artisan Revolution*, 54.

and excluded from councils of administration. Her husband makes a dismissive and patronizing reply. It is often difficult to control the pretensions of members who want to participate but don't know the rules, he argues. How much more difficult it will be to keep order if women have the right of discussion! Even when women are excluded from administrative functions, even if they have no deliberative voice in assemblies, their interests will be well safeguarded, and "more surely still than if we let them debate among themselves." They can express their views to their husbands in more intimate settings, and their husbands will always take them into account.[101]

This dialogue suggests that even in contexts well removed from the atelier, male workers' need for dominance and control was expressed as fear of feminine "disorder," and manifested by silencing women and excluding them from arenas where they might publicly contest male authority. Since women were more directly involved in consumption decisions than men by virtue of their household purchases, the logic of excluding them from deliberative roles in consumer cooperatives seems particularly bizarre. Although the passage cited dates from 1867, it is reasonable to infer from the practices of mixed-sex production associations in 1848-1851 that the same paternalistic rationalizations were dragged out to muzzle women whenever they threatened to intrude on male deliberations, even in contexts where the relative worth of male and female labor was not a primary issue. Such resistance to letting women speak in public makes the organizational endeavors and public polemics of socialist women such as Jeanne Deroin,

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[101]Eugène Tartaret, *Almanach de la Coopération Pour 1867*, (Paris: Au bureau du Journal La Coopération, 1867).

Pauline Roland and Désirée Gay all the more remarkable, and explains why their achievements were so ephemeral.

4: Philanthropic association: the initiatives of bourgeoise women

The revolution of 1848 drew a number of former Saint-Simoniennes out of obscurity and into the public arena. Once again they could entertain dreams of social amelioration and class reconciliation, in which women like themselves, moral and loving, would function as apostles to the laboring masses. Lacking any real ties to the groups formed by male workers - Flora Tristan's example illustrates how difficult it was for women of apostolic ambition to connect in this way - they focused their energies on organizing proletarian women and girls, whose alleged vulnerability was in many ways a projection of their own. They would instruct them, give them useful work, moralize them, and protect them from the streets. They would be repaid by their surrogate daughters with gratitude and esteem.

Two prominent socialist bourgeoises, Elisa Lemonnier and Eugénie Niboyet, developed and promoted schemes for associations of women workers in 1848. Lemmonier attempted to organize an *Association des Couturières*, and subsequently, a more ambitious and comprehensive *Société Fraternelle des Ouvrières-Unies*. Niboyet was the author of two projects, one under the auspices of the *Société de la Voix des Femmes* in Paris, and the other the *Association Fraternelle des Femmes Ouvrières Lyonnaises*. Although these associations were ostensibly production societies, they shared certain characteristics of urban phalansteries, purged of all taint of "passionate attraction."

The similarities between Eugénie Niboyet and Elisa Lemonnier's proposals is matched by striking parallels in their personal backgrounds.[102] Both were born into educated Protestant families that had produced scholars or pastors of some eminence; both received sufficient education and had enough interaction with educated males of their own circle to make them acutely aware of the restrictions imposed upon them. Both translated their discontent and longing for transcendence into a Calvinist drive to instruct and moralize others. The Saint-Simonian movement attracted them at a time when, as recent brides of ambitious, slightly older men, they were struggling to come to terms with the diminished expectations of their new roles. Clearly excited by the emancipatory message of the doctrine, and the possibility for apostolic careers it held out to women, they were subsequently bitterly disillusioned by the libertine sexual morality of the self-appointed "Père" of the movement, Prosper Enfantin, and his attempt to limit the apostolate to men. Charles Lemonnier describes his young wife's outraged response when a family friend attempted to explain Enfantin's theories to her: "This doctrine is a monstrous immorality," she indignantly burst out.[103] Dissension between husband and wife subsequently placed a severe strain on the marriage, as Charles Lemonnier was initially unwilling to sever his ties to the movement despite his wife's deep disapproval.

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[102]Charles Lemonnier, *Elisa Lemonnier: Fondatrice de la Société pour L'Enseignement Professionnel des Femmes* (Saint-Germain: Toinon, 1866). For Niboyet, see Michèle Riot-Sarcey, *La démocratie à l'épreuve des femmes: trois figures critiques du pouvoir* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1994); Claire Goldberg-Moses and Leslie Wahl Rabine, *Feminism, Socialism and French Romanticism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993); F. Rude, "Eugénie Niboyet", in *Un Fabuleux Destin: Flora Tristan*, ed. S. Michaud, (Dijon: 1984), 120-143.

[103]C. Lemonnier, *Elisa Lemonnier*, 16.

In 1831, at the height of the Saint-Simonian drive to proselytize workers, Niboyet became directress of the Fourth and Fifth Arrondissements in Paris and was placed in charge of a *maison d'association* in the rue de la Tour d'Auvergne. Here she preached the doctrine, heard the confessions of workers, whom she called "mes enfants", and helped them with their debts and daily problems. It was a role that she found enormously validating, and she protested bitterly to Enfantin when he decided to strip women of their apostolic functions:

> You wish that women be adjuncts and no longer directors. It seems to me that this imposes impotence on them, because if they have no ability to determine anything of their own will, they will be more than ever lorded over.... The Saint-Simonian word ought to be, I believe, taught and preached to workers by the mouth of women; to take this capacity away from us, is to deprive us of life... I wish to act on the masses because it is there that I sense all my power! I am an apostle, I have received much, I have much to give and I beg you, leave me in my element.[104]

Niboyet, defrocked, sought solace in correspondence with other dissidents, such as Jules Lechevalier, who were drifting towards Fourierism. She engaged in a number of short-lived journalistic and educational ventures in Lyon, and then moved to Paris, where she wrote for Mme. de Mauchamps' *Gazette des Femmes* and attended her Thursday soirées. Here she met Flora Tristan and other progressive women.[105] Niboyet's marriage had dissolved, and she supported herself by contributing to journals and writing moralistic tracts, several of which won prizes from the Society of Christian

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[104]Quoted in F. Rude, "Eugénie Niboyet," 121.

[105]Flora Tristan wrote to Niboyet on 1 March 1836 about their plans to collaborate on the founding of an association and a journal: *"je suis sûre que ce sera le moyen de nous rendre <u>utile</u> à la société chose que je désire avec tant d'ardeur."* *Lettres*, annoteés par Stéphane Michaud, (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1980): 24 bis, 58-59.

Morality. Elisa Lemonnier, by contrast, reconciled with her chastened husband and the two moved to Bordeaux, where he practiced law and she became a *bonne bourgeoise*, trying to make ends meet on his modest salary. They had given away their entire patrimony to the Saint-Simonian movement. The couple's one brush with notoriety in this fallow period came when they opened their home to Flora Tristan, who died there at the end of her *tour de France* in 1844.

While Charles Lemonnier describes his wife as a paragon of domestic virtues, there are hints even in his hagiography that she was restless. She wanted to open a lingerie store in Bordeaux, but that was socially impossible for the wife of a lawyer. When her friend, the novelist Angélique Arnaud, wrote asking her opinion of marriage, she gave an ambivalent reply. Although she described herself as happy because of the security marriage brought, she also admitted to "the monotony, the cooling of passion which results from life as a couple, monotony which might well find its explanation also in the life which society has created today..."[106]

That life was to change radically in February 1848, when the overthrow of the July Monarchy unleashed an enormous wave of idealism and activism that drew both Lemonnier and Niboyet into its currents. Niboyet immediately seized the opportunity provided by the collapse of press censorship to found a "socialist" journal for women, *La Voix des Femmes*, and a club of the same name, both dedicated to advancing women's interests in the new Republic. Her associational scheme was one of several initiatives

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[106]C. Lemonnier, 21.

undertaken by women connected with the paper, which had publicized the plight of *ouvrières* in numerous articles and meetings.

Niboyet made two appeals to the authorities in June, 1848 on behalf of an "Association of the Voice of Women", which she claimed was already functioning, but needed a "locale" and funding to expand. She requested three to four thousand francs and suggested that Le Palais National, at No. 8 rue Neuve des Petits Champs, would accommodate the anticipated two hundred workers. Her timing was terrible; the Constituent Assembly was considering ways to shut down the National Workshops, and her own paper and club were under heavy attack for their advocacy of women's rights and divorce reform. This may account for the placating, even pandering tone of her petition, which refers to women workers as "honorable mothers of families" and reassures the authorities that this was "hardly a communist work."[107]

Niboyet promoted her association to the largely indifferent authorities as an act of piety and nation-building: "We wish to ameliorate the lot of women and contribute in that way to the well being of the family, of national prosperity.... The religion on which we base our works will give us the courage to accomplish them." She also sought to distance herself from the radical left by emphasizing the "association of capital, work and talent" - a Fourierist and Saint-Simonian formula that many workers found offensive - and by repudiating leveling tendencies in the work place. In her blueprint, workers' salaries would not be equal: "Each will be classified according to her abilities, and

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[107]AN C2232/313: *Eugénie Niboyet à Citoyens Membres du comité pour l'organisation du travail*, s.d., received 6 June 1848. AN C2241/1391: *Aux Citoyens Représentants du peuple: Eugénie Niboyet, Présidente de l'Association La Voix des Femmes*, Paris, 10 June 1848.

rewarded according to her works." A carefully elaborated workshop hierarchy provided for seven levels of authority and remuneration, from directresses and sub-directresses, down through five categories of workers. The "least able" would be guaranteed one franc per day, because "one must be able to live while working." Good workers would be encouraged, as often as possible "and in their interests," to work by the piece. Profits would be distributed according to the productivity of the workers, who would also be motivated to emulate each other by prizes for order and morality and for the most chic fancy goods (*nouveautés*) of the season. A fund, nourished by a sliding scale of two to five per cent of salary, would be established to aid workers who were sick or injured.[108]

Little was left to chance. "The sentiment of fraternity cannot exist without morality," Niboyet argued, and morality in her proposals was clearly synonymous with order and labor discipline. She favored a regime of surveillance and control in which privacy and autonomy for *ouvrières* all but disappear. "In order that fraternity be a reality", women would get together at their headquarters on Sundays "as the fashionable do in their salons" - presumably for polite conversation, not for the drinking and dancing workers favored at the taverns and restaurants of the *barrières*. In good weather they would go on walks together. Niboyet imagined the association expanding to include a *crèche*, nursery school, school and communal kitchen, which would provide hot meals for twenty centimes on site and take-out service in the evenings. "Then the breast of the mother will replace the impotent nursing bottle, then the links of the family will be

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[108]AN C2241/1391 Aux Citoyens Représentants du peuple.

reknit," she argued. Almost as an afterthought, she factored men into the community: "That is still only a transition, in the future association will not separate couples."[109] Niboyet, whose own life following the dissolution of her marriage had been a struggle for self-sufficiency, was primarily interested in feminine community as a substitute for marital dependency, and never really theorized how association would be complicated by the legal minority of married women or the interference of their husbands.

Niboyet's solicitude for the *ouvrière* was largely confined to the kinds of charitable good works - education, moral uplift, finding employment for single women - deemed appropriate to *bourgeoises* with a social conscience, and rarely took the form of protesting working women's inadequate wages. She was critical of their demands in 1848 for shorter hours and higher pay, arguing it would cause hardship for people on fixed incomes and undermine support for the Republic. When informed, for example, that laundresses were demanding a ten hour day and higher wages, she claimed that *maîtresses* (female employers) would suffer and rising prices would force many people to do their own laundry. Social peace would be assured, she argued, if everyone (read workers) would moderate their demands.[110] Michèle Riot-Sarcey rightly emphasizes the degree to which Niboyet's essentially bourgeois caution and fear of social upheaval increasingly distanced her from her more radical colleagues on the *Voix des Femmes*; these included

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[109]AN C2241/1391: *Aux Citoyens Représentants du people*: Eugénie Niboyet, Présidente de l'association la voix des femmes, Directrice du journal, Paris, 10 Juin 1848.

[110]*La Voix des Femmes*, 3 April 1848. Report of a public meeting, 2 April 1848, of the Society of the Voice of Women, central committee of organisation.

socialist proletariennes Jeanne Deroin and Désirée Gay, who split off in June of 1848 to found their own newspaper and pursue their own associational schemes.[111]

The June Days and the imposition of higher caution money on the press put the *Voix des Femmes* out of business, and Niboyet moved back to Lyon, where she revived her project as the *Association fraternelle des femmes ouvrières lyonnaises pour l'exploitation de toutes industries.*[112] By this time the plan had become even more elaborate, embracing both a production society and a consumer cooperative, several workshops in different trades, and a course of schooling that would take two hours a day over three years. The statutes of the association contain forty-seven articles under six headings, preceded by a profession of faith. The statutes required that minor girls be authorized to join by their fathers and married women by their husbands. Riot-Sarcey reads this as a repudiation by Niboyet of her proto-feminist principles.[113] This is a bit unfair, however, since the society could not legally incorporate or seek government loans from the Council of Encouragement without this formality.

In a letter to Victor Considérant, editor of *La Démocratie Pacifique* and leader of the *École Sociétaire*, Niboyet plugged her association and tried to interest him in supporting it by suggesting it was Fourierist in inspiration. "This society progresses, it is already numerous," she enthused, "and my most beautiful title is that of founder, which in their gratitude, the women have given me." It was, she asserted, "united in solidarity"

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[111]*La démocratie à l'épreuve des femmes*, 183-220.

[112]AN F12/3195 Statutes of the *Association fraternelle des femmes ouvrières lyonnaises pour l'exploitation de toutes industries.*

[113]*La démocratie à l'épreuve des femmes*, 252-253.

with a fraternal association of men, organized by Vindry, "Phalansterian by inspiration.... This man thinks like you without being with you."[114] Considérant did not bite, and never publicized the association in his journal. Although Considérant was ostensibly sympathetic to worker association, he and the *École Sociétaire* had a propensity for intellectualizing issues rather than acting on them. Considérant's own reputation rested largely on popularization of Fourier's abstruse tracts and the sectarian polemics he conducted with other socialists, particularly Etienne Cabet and P.-J. Proudhon, who relentlessly attacked Fourier's alleged immorality.[115] Flora Tristan, who had solicited Considérant's aid for her *tour de France* in 1843, commented bitterly on the do-nothing, bourgeois complacency of provincial Fourierists she encountered, and claimed that they had no following among workers.[116] Shaken by, and strongly critical of, the worker uprising in June 1848, Considérant was an unlikely ally for an initiative headed by a controversial woman and a soi-disant Fourierist of uncertain origins.

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[114]AN 10 AS/41 dos. 1: *Lettre de E. Niboyet et petition des dames lyonnaises à M. Victor Considérant*, 6 Oct. 1848.

[115]His best known work was *Destinée sociale*, 2 vols. (Paris: Au Bureau de la Phalange, 1834), an effort to explain Fourier's system to a general audience. As editor of *La Démocratie pacifique*, the journal of the *École sociétaire*, he engaged in heated polemics with Cabet and Proudhon. See for example *La Démocratie pacifique*, "Les Défenseurs de la Famille," 4 August 1848; "Au journal le Peuple: L'Avenir des femmes," 15 January 1849; "Réponse de M. Proudhon à M. Considérant and réplique" 19 February 1849.

[116]There are numerous sarcastic references to Fourierists in her journal and the lack of support they afforded her: *Le tour de France: État actuel de la classe ouvrière sous l'aspect moral, intellectuel et matériel. Journal 1843-1844*, 2 vol., ed. Jules-L. Puech, intro. Stéphane Michaud, (Paris: Maspero, 1980), 1: 38, 135, 164-65; 2: 55.

Niboyet's reputation had been sullied by press ridicule of her *Club des Femmes* and the public furor that swirled around the club's debate of divorce reform. Not surprisingly, her loan application to the Council of Encouragement (curiously for an "indeterminate" sum) was refused in February of 1849.[117] The *Association fraternelle des femmes ouvrières lyonnaises* then disappears from the historical record, probably a victim of the same harsh market forces and state repression that undermined most attempts at association.[118]

Further humiliated after June 1848 when the Ministry of Public Education revoked her annual stipend of 800 francs awarded by the July Monarchy in recognition of her literary endeavors, Niboyet quickly learned the value of being more compliant.[119] Unlike her former socialist-feminist colleagues, such as Pauline Roland, arrested and deported to Algeria, and Jeanne Deroin and Désirée Gay, who fled France after the coup of 2 December, Niboyet stayed in France and reconciled with the new regime. Henceforth silent about her connections in 1848, she devoted herself to the less inflammatory cause of female education until her death in 1882. She founded the Mutual

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[117]Niboyet's association is mentioned in O. Festy, *Les Associations Ouvrières...*, "Table of Associations whose requests were the object of discussion before the Council of Encouragement," 407-442.

[118]For an analysis of this repression, see John M. Merriman, *The Agony of the Left in Revolutionary France 1848-51* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1978), esp. Chapter 3 which deals with voluntary associations. Unfortunately Merriman says nothing about women's participation in such organizations. He focuses more on consumer cooperatives than producers associations.

[119]See Niboyet's letters of 29 October 1848 to the Director General of the Postal Service begging for a job after the revocation of her pension, and of 26 December 1848 to the Minister of Public Instruction protesting the injustice of the action. **BHVP**, Fonds Bouglé, Carton 4248 (Lettres autographies: Eugénie Niboyet).

Society for the Protection of Women in 1865, and with the support of well-placed friends such as Mme. Jules Simon and Émile Olliver, was able to edit a journal from 1864 to 1867, entitled significantly and inoffensively, the *Journal pour toutes.*[120] A poignant letter in the shaky handwriting of an elderly women, written in 1871, pleads with an anonymous dignitary to pull strings so that she might be reunited before death with her only son Paulin, trapped as a consul in a place he detested - Chicago - "a town of no importance, inhabited by Germans."[121] While she never abandoned her faith in the power of women's moralizing influence, she no longer sought to exercise its salutary power on the masses. There were limits to her willingness to sacrifice and be ridiculed.

In the summer of 1848, Elisa Lemonnier also sent the statutes of her proposal for a *Société Fraternelle des Ouvrières-Unies* to Victor Considérant, thanking him for the warm welcome she and her collaborators had received in his Club of Socialist Republicans.[122] Lemonnier, now living in Paris with her husband, who had secured a position with the Compagnie du Nord railroad through the Pereire brothers, had taken advantage of new revolutionary opportunities to create a "couture" workshop in the Faubourg Saint-Martin in the spring of 1848. In June she sent a petition to the Constituent Assembly asking for a loan to set up an *Association des Couturières*

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[120]For an account of Niboyet's twilight years, see Riot-Sarcey, 278-281.

[121]Letter of E. Niboyet to Monsieur ou Messieurs, Paris, 3 August 1871. BHVP, Fonds Bouglé, Carton 4248.

[122]AN 10 AS/39 (7): Letter (attributed to Mme Elisa Lemonnier) to Monsieur le Président du Club des Républicains-Socialistes, s.d. The letter probably dates from late June or early July, for *La Démocratie Pacifique* carries an article about the "*Société de l'Union des travailleuses*" (sic) on 6 July 1848.

(dressmakers). The proposed society was not one of equals, but a two-tier *société en commandite* in which there were "responsible" and "free" associates. The responsible associates, who had proven their probity and ability, would make all the administrative decisions; the free associates would simply be workers by the day. All workers would be entitled to a share of the profits of the association, based on the number of hours worked. Three quarters of the profits, however, would go to special funds set up for mutual assistance, for the education of children, and for retirement pensions. These funds would be controlled by the responsible associates, who would decide if a free associate should receive assistance. Thus rather than enshrining the "republic in the atelier", Lemonnier's plan was a variation on the theme of rights according to capacities, where philanthropic *bourgeoises* would supervise the distribution of work, remuneration, and charity.[123]

Lemonnier was successful in securing a commission from the Constituent Assembly to make mattresses for hospitals and prisons. According to her husband, she employed some two hundred women. It was an administrative position she apparently relished, for she was at the atelier at six in the morning, and hardly took time to rest or to eat. Distressed by the women's lack of skill at simple needlework, which suggests that her "dressmakers" were a bit of an exaggeration, she resolved to dedicate her efforts to providing girls with better manual education.[124]

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[123]The proposal and statutes are reproduced in Jeanne Deroin's *Politique des Femmes*, No. 1: June 1848 and No. 2: August 1848.

[124]Charles Lemonnier, *Elisa Lemonnier*, 24-25.

Lemonnier's proposed *Société fraternelle des Ouvrières-Unies* was a collaborative venture bearing the names of several women formerly affiliated with the *Voix des Femmes*, including Jeanne Deroin, Suzanne Voilquin and Lemonnier's novelist friend, Angélique Arnaud. It was a rather grandiose project that called for the establishment of "workshops for exercising various professions, a *crèche*, a day-care center, a school, a library in a vast locale that has provisionally been promised for this purpose by the mayor of the fifth arrondissement." The surviving blueprint is sketchy. It takes the form of a "Note" to Considérant's club, which had asked for more information. It appears to be an uneasy compromise between a production association and a philanthropic society. Authority to run the association is delegated to a "Directing Committee", composed of an unspecified number of workers and "Dames," whose manner of selection is not spelled out. The major focus appears to be training workers, through a group apprenticeship system and two hours of free courses offered after a ten-hour work day. An instructional sequence for three years is carefully outlined, which includes, in addition to basic literacy and computation courses, vocal music, applied geometry, linear design, and "a history of women who had honored their sex and their country by their virtues and their talents."[125]

Under this plan, workers in the atelier would be organized in groups of ten (as in the national workshops), each having five instructors and five apprentices. These groups would be paid piece-work rates, with wages divided "according to the work of each in the proportion fixed by the Council of Administration." The founders expressed the hope that

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[125]10 AS 39(7) Letter: À Monsieur le Président du Club des Républicains-Socialistes; attributed to Mme Élisa Lemonnier, s.d.

as the society became more successful, women would have to spend less time at manual labor and would have more time for "advantageous distractions" such as helping out with child care. Lemonnier had hoped to raise capital for this association by selling five franc subscriptions, and also by securing a loan from the Council of Encouragement. Her request for thirty thousand francs was rejected by that body on 26 July 1848, and the project was abandoned. Certainly its ambitious scope, the radical reputation of its sponsors, and the fact that it was organized and headed by women made it unlikely that the project would be taken seriously by the Council of Encouragement, whose prejudices will be examined in the next chapter.[126] Like similar associational schemes of feminine origin in the period, it characteristically did not limit itself to the establishment of a mere production society, but tried to address women's deficiencies by including vocational training and support services.

Later, under the Empire, Lemonnier revived her educational endeavors. In 1856 she founded the *Société de protection maternelle*, which sponsored scholarships for poor girls to go to pensions. In 1862 she set up the *Société pour l'enseignement professionnel des femmes* which operated a day school enrolling 165 girls by 1864. The sequence of courses offered at the school was very similar to that proposed years earlier for the *Société Fraternelle des Ouvrières-Unies*, with the addition of specialized courses in the trades, such as accounting, porcelain painting and couture work. According to Charles Lemonnier, whose tendency to laud his wife's domestic and feminine virtues makes him a somewhat biased witness:

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[126]See pp. 219-233.

> It was her unshakable conviction that good mothers make good families, that social morality is, after all, nothing but the fruit of the morality of families.... To found a society of women, administered by woman, having as its object to assure the benefits of professional instruction to young women without fortune, to extend little by little the circle of feminine occupations which could assure the independence and dignity of women, favoring those that would not take mothers away from their children, this was...the habitual preoccupation of Mme Lemonnier, which she talked about constantly with her friends.[127]

While recognizing the value of education, particularly commercial education, in advancing proletarian women's independence, Lemonnier like Niboyet was determined to police her charges. She was impressed by the good order that prevailed in workshops run by religious orders, which were notorious sweatshops that relied on exploiting the docility of young girls, and sent some of her friends to study them.[128] In her last address to graduates of her day school shortly before her death, she emphasized the dangers that surrounded them and the need to preserve their purity, "the apanage of woman, which makes her admired in her youth, esteemed in her maturity, and respected in her old age." She herself had never ventured far outside the safe confines that defined the respectable woman, even in her educational mission. As she put it: "To found good schools for girls, is assuredly to engage in a maternal work, but it is also to underpin society."[129]

Philanthropic *bourgeoises* had no desire to undermine social order by challenging the role of capital or turning authority over to workers themselves. Their associations are

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[127]C. Lemonnier, 27.

[128]Laura Strumingher describes conditions in convent workshops in and near Lyons as prison-like, with young female "apprentices" held in isolation cells in straitjackets if they rebelled. *Women and the Making of the Working Class: Lyon 1830-1870* (St. Albens VT: Eden Press, 1979), 55-64.

[129]Ibid., 33-38, 42.

ironically reminiscent of well-run convents with child care, presided over by wise and benevolent mother superiors. Clearly they were concerned about the plight of *ouvrières*; just as clearly, they saw them as unskilled, dependent, and in need of strong moral guidance. Unfortunately, this stereotype was pervasive among working-class men as well, and was reflected in the subordinate place they accorded women in their own associations.

That women should band together across class lines to create new forms of feminine moral and economic community was a novel idea, and one of the signal contributions of socialist women in 1848-1851 to modern feminism. However, the issue of hierarchies of power among women and the ways in which class-based dominance would be exercised in such communities remained unacknowledged. The explicit assumption that women *qua* women had commonalities of experience and interest that transcended class divisions was an article of faith among socialist women in 1848. It blinded women such as Elisa Lemonnier and Eugénie Niboyet to the latent consequences of their charitable endeavors. It encouraged them to extend their maternal sway over what Niboyet revealing called "*mes enfants*," proletarian girls and women, without questioning their own power and prerogatives. The pleasures such power bought could only be purchased by denying full adulthood to their charges.

5: The Effects of State Policies on Women Workers: The National Workshops and the Council of Encouragement

The National Workshops for Women

The national workshops for women were a fleeting episode in the Revolution of 1848. Although they grew out of an entirely different approach than the associational movement, and were in many ways in opposition to it, the workshops illustrate presumptions about women as workers that were the common currency of the period. Widespread unemployment among women was ignored longer than it was among men, and when the authorities finally addressed it, they did so in a paternalistic and parsimonious way. They failed to consider the fact that many women supported not only themselves, but children and elderly dependents, and that women earned their living through a variety of crafts skills, not just needlework. Many women who needed assistance were not able to get it, and those who did found the benefits they earned for full-time work were only sixty percent of those paid to male workers who were idle for lack of jobs. Comparing the treatment of men and women who enrolled in the national workshops is instructive.

The Provisional Government announced its intention to open workshops for unemployed male workers on February 26, 1848. This was not a response to workers' repeated demands for the "organization of labor." The workshops were designed as a temporary expedient to relieve unemployment, and were simply a revival of the traditional *chantiers de charité* (open air workhouses). The project was put under the direction of

a twenty-six year old graduate of the École centrale, Émile Thomas. Thomas hired a number of students from his school to act as supervisors and imposed an authoritarian, military-style organization on the ateliers. An opponent of Louis Blanc and the Luxembourg Commission, he tried to create a fissure between the workers in the workshops and those active in the Luxembourg or in the clubs.[130]

A large number of those taken on were put to work as *terrassiers*, outdoor laborers on a variety of public works projects. Only about 10,000 men could actually be put to work at any given time, and the rest simply received unemployment relief. At first, workers were paid two francs per day when actually working and a franc and a half when idle. Both stipends were reduced to one franc on March 17. In addition, free bread, meat and soup were distributed to needy workers from a central commissary, using a sliding scale based on the size of a worker's family. This explicitly recognized the male worker's role as family head and provider, a recognition that was not extended to *ouvrières* who were single heads of household or who supported aged parents. In addition, men enrolled in the workshops had access to a free medical clinic and were given supplementary payments during illness. This service was utilized by more than 14,000 workers during the forty-one days it was available. By mid-June, there were 177,310 men enrolled in the National Workshops in Paris.[131]

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[130]The best study is still Donald C. McKay, *The National Workshops*, (1933). See also Maurice Agulhon, *The Republican Experiment 1848-1852*, v. 2, *The Cambridge History of Modern France*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 36-37.

[131]McKay, 25-27.

At first the issue of unemployed women received little attention. On March 29 the adjunct-mayor of Paris, Buchez, wrote to the mayors of the arrondissements. Citing the number of desperate women who assembled daily outside the town halls demanding "with insistence" that their plight be addressed, he urged the mayors to address this "embarrassment." They should put a hall at the disposal of the women of their arrondissement where the women could meet. He further recommended that the mayors select "an intelligent and reliable man to preside over or lead the meetings."[132]

This paternalism and anxiety about feminine disorder were the leitmotifs of the entire enterprise. Buchez had notices placarded around Paris informing women of the new opportunity. He urged them, apparently without irony, to conduct themselves with calm and order, and "to show themselves worthy of their titles of citizenesses and of the great epoch which we are inaugurating."[133] The women who assembled at the designated hall in each arrondissement were allowed to elect five delegates, who were charged with collecting information on unemployed women and turning this over to the authorities. On April 2 Buchez directed the mayors, as a stopgap measure, to distribute fifty centimes a day to unemployed women.[134]

Désirée Gay was elected a delegate by women workers in the Second Arrondissement and reported on her experiences in *La Voix des Femmes.* Initially she

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[132]BHVP MS NA 23: fol 65. Letter by Buchez to the mayors of the arrondissements. Paris, 29 March 1848.

[133]Affiche: *Avis Aux Femmes Sans Travail.* BN (Imprimés) LB53-1677. The notices are dated 29 March, but were posted a few days later.

[134]BHVP: MS NA 23. Buchez to the mayors of the arrondissements, 2 April 1848.

interpreted her role quite differently than did the authorities. She imagined herself the elected representative of the *ouvrières* in her district and hoped that she and others like her would be admitted to the Luxembourg Commission, where the problems of working women would be seriously addressed. She protested vigorously against condescending approaches that eroded women's dignity. "What the woman worker wants," she wrote, "is not organized charity, it is work fairly paid..."[135] However the authorities saw the female delegates as assistants who would help them verify the eligibility of applicants and maintain good work discipline in the ateliers.[136]

On April 14 the fifty centime handout was terminated and women were told to register for work making shirts for the National Guard. The work could be done either in ateliers set up in the arrondissements or at home. If there were not enough work to go around, it would be given to the most needy. Women without work who could "prove they have no other means of subsistence" would be given a kilo of bread a day at the charity bureau. Buchez feared that women might avail themselves of both options, and worried about how to prevent this.[137]

This hastily devised scheme ignored certain brutal realities. Despite the stereotype of the Parisian *ouvrière* as a *grisette* with a needle, many could not sew, or had no

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[135]"Economie de Temps", *La Voix des Femmes*, 14 April 1848. Unsigned article, but certainly by Gay. See also Gay's signed article, "Les Délégués des ouvrières de Paris," ibid., 18 April 1848.

[136]Buchez met with the mayors and Duclerc, appointed to lead the women's ateliers, on 12 April. There are brief notes of the meeting. These notes and his letter to the mayors of 13 April indicate a strong concern with verifying that women receiving aid actually need it. BHVP MS NA 23.

[137]BHVP MS NA 23/fol. 73: Letter of Buchez to the mayoralty of Paris, 13 April 1848.

experience with shirts. How, asked one female worker in a letter to the *Voix des Femmes*, could the workshops provide for the unemployed flower-maker or embroiderer?[138] The Chevillot inventory of petitions addressed to the Luxembourg indicates that lace-makers, flower-makers, and mattress-carders all asked for national workshops in their trades.[139] Because women were paid by the piece, women who were not experienced seamstresses were heavily penalized. Gay estimated that the most skilled workers could complete one and one-half shirts a day, the average worker one shirt per day, and many slower workers took two days. Furthermore, the design of shirts required decorative top-stitching (*picqué*), which Gay claimed smarter workers simply refused to do.[140] At the rate of 60 centimes (12 sous) per shirt, even the most productive women received less than an idle male enrolled in the workshops. Less than one franc per day would not support an adult, let alone dependents, and women did not enjoy the supplemental food or medical benefits available to men. It may, however, have been better than the going rate in the confection houses. Two businessmen who each applied separately for loans from the Council of Encouragement to establish shirtmaking

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[138]"Industry," signed Anne-Marie, 27 March 1848.

[139]AN C934 Chevillot, *Rélevé des pétitions adressées à la Commission de Gouvernement pour l'organisation du travail par des ouvriers de toute les industries de France.* Many male corps made the same request for trade-specific workshops. Male artisans who worked indoors, such as tailors and shoemakers, were ill-suited to work as *terrassiers.*

[140]"Les Délégués..", *Voix des Femmes.*

workshops noted that women workers who made shirts for soldiers typically got 35 centimes apiece.[141]

For women who believed that the Provisional Government should do better than the *confectionneurs*, and take prompt action to relieve popular misery, this was not enough. A delegation of forty women representing *ouvrières* from the First Arrondissement presented a petition to Louis Blanc in mid-April demanding at least one franc for making a shirt. According to the account in *La Voix des Femmes*, they were petitioning not on their own account, but for the benefit of those unable to come to the workshops:

> We would like very much to go into the national workshops, but a picquéd shirt is paid at the rate of 12 sous there, which is all we can make a day, and is it worth it at that price for us to leave our households? If we leave, there is no one to make the soup, there is no dinner for our husbands, there is none for ourselves, is that happiness?.... If you wish work by the piece, put it at a reasonable price, and give it to women to do at their homes so that the household does not suffer.[142]

Pay was probably a greater issue than homework, since work was in fact put out in a number of arrondissements. According to the mayor of the Fourth Arrondissement,

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[141]AN F12/4629 "*Mode d'Association: Confection de chemises*," request of Aubagnac, ancien négotiant, année 1848 à Neuilly. He claims that the most able can make two shirts per day, and if a woman has a household and children to support this is not enough and will put her in "la plus grande misère." AN F12/4635 N. Redler, "*Lettre au Citoyen Ministre de l'Agriculture et du Commerce sur un projet d'Association Fraternel, pour la Confection de la Lingère*," August 1848. Redler claims that seamstresses who work for confection houses generally earn 75 c. a day, but those who do military work earn only 35 c.

[142]*Voix des Femmes*, 15 April 1848.

there were about 20,000 Parisian women earning wages when the national workshops were closed down on July 3rd. Of the eleven hundred in his district, six hundred worked in the atelier in the salle de Louvre, and another five hundred at home. They earned "with difficulty" about sixty centimes per day. Obviously dismayed by the Assembly's decision to close the workshops, the mayor praised the workshops as "generally well-organized" and described the women as doing "real work" which was preferable to idleness and charity. He worried aloud that the 1100 women thrown onto the pavement were going to come to him demanding the right to earn their daily bread.[143]

The organization of the workshops, however, was less satisfactory to many *ouvrières*, who protested the shortage of work and who found the internal hierarchy oppressive and exploitative. A petition from two hundred working women of the Tenth Arrondissement to the Constituent Assembly complained of various abuses by their mayor. According to their allegations, he had chosen a woman who was "an intimate," one Mme Cousin, to direct the workshop. They were unable to enroll in this atelier and were placed on a waiting list. When a second workshop was opened up, the mayor gave admission cards to those already employed at the first workshop, and not to those on the waiting list. Moreover, Mme Cousin was made directress of both ateliers, thus pocketing two incomes. The women asked what right the mayor had to pick the director, who should be elected by the women themselves.[144]

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[143]Archives de Paris, V.D6 Fonds des Maires, Vol IV, No. 717. Correspondence 4e arrondissement to the Minister of Public Works, 4 July 1848.

[144]AN C2284/1026. *Pétition de 200 ouvrières réclamant contre un acte arbitraire aux citoyens représentants de la Nation.* Paris, 6 June 1848.

The women's workshops, like the men's, were run along authoritarian and military lines. The managing director of each workshop was appointed by the authorities. Workers were divided into units of a hundred, each with its own director, and each hundred was divided again into ten brigades, each with its own chief. The directors were paid three francs for a ten hour day, the chiefs 1.5 francs, while workers were paid by the piece. Rouget de Lisle, who served as director of the women's workshop in the Third Arrondissement, summed up management philosophy perfectly when he wrote:

> This is how I understand the organization of work:...to my mind, the word Organization of work ought to have the same meaning as: organization of the army, with competent and honest chiefs, who command favorably, and soldiers or devoted workers, who execute the orders with good will and with the hope that they will be well and sufficiently remunerated...[145]

Désirée Gay, who served briefly as one of five elected delegates in the atelier of the cour des Fontaines in the 2e arrondissement, was scathing in her assessment of the system:

> They [ouvrières] were dying of hunger, that was certain, the work which was given them in the atelier was a lure; the organization of the work of women, a despotism under a new name, and the nomination of women's delegates a hoax which men pulled on women, to shake them off.[146]

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[145]AN F12/4635. After the dissolution of the workshops, Rouget de Lisle applied for a loan from the Council of Encouragement on behalf of a proposed society of *lingères* from the Third Arrondissement. The quoted passage is from his letter of application to the Council. In this letter he claims that women in his workshop only worked eight hours per day, and even those of mediocre ability were able to make a shirt and a half in that time, earning 90 centimes.

[146]"Les Déléguées...", *Voix des Femmes*, 18 April 1848.

She was fired after this critique appeared in *La Voix des Femmes* and the workers at the atelier were threatened with retaliation if they supported her.[147]

Gay rightly perceived that the women's workshops were not an effective vehicle for pressing women's claims. Women, she argued, were intelligent; they were capable of organization; they should stand up and speak with one voice. But Gay was mistaken in imagining that the Luxembourg Commission would be a good forum in which to address their complaints. Louis Blanc and the Luxembourg Commission did not control the National Workshops, which were in the hands of their political opponents. The latter were only interested in temporary charity to defuse an explosive situation, the more temporary the better, not a critical examination of the "organization of labor" and comprehensive state-sponsored reforms. More importantly, the Luxembourg Commission represented the male artisan corporations in Paris. Women's presence there was almost non-existent. A few delegates sent by unemployed *ouvrières* would not have made any difference in its priorities or its agenda.

Women's suffering during 1848 aroused many sympathetic protests, but few male workers or socialists were eager to challenge structural barriers that handicapped women workers, such as gender-based wage rates and occupational categories, and the tendency to define women as supplemental wage earners. These cultural attitudes and practices were simply reflected in the way the women's workshops were organized and run. *Ouvrières* such as Rosalie C. and Julia Hémal, who drew parallels between the

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[147]"Comme on traite les Femmes après février 1848", *La Voix des Femmes*, 20 April 1848.

exploitation of workers in the large private confection houses and in those established by the state, had it right.[148] The two systems were in many ways mirror images.

The Council of Encouragement and Women's Associations

The Council of Encouragement was established on July 6, 1848 by the Constituent Assembly to oversee the distribution of three million francs in credits voted by that body for the encouragement of associations. The council was composed of fifteen members, including an administrator appointed by the Minister of Commerce, three presidents, and one vice-president of the *conseils de prud'hommes* in Paris (trade arbitration boards dominated by employers), and several legislators. Among the members were two editors of *L'Atelier*, Corbon and Danguy, and two other disciples of Buchez, Ott and Feugueray.[149] Corbon had earlier been instrumental in getting the assembly to restrict eligibility to "industrial associations between workers and between workers and patrons that present serious guarantees of success and longevity." In his report to the Constituent Assembly, he expressed the views of the *L'Atelier* faction when he wrote:

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[148]Letter to *La Voix des Femmes* on the "Organization of Work", 3 April 1848. Signed by a number of women; only Rosalie C. and Julia Hémal are listed.

[149]There are a number of studies that analyze the work of the Council of Encouragement. These include A. Cochut, *Les Associations Ouvrières*, (Paris: Au Bureau Du *National*, 1851); A. Lemercier, *Etudes sur les Associations Ouvrières*, (Paris: Adrian le Clere et Cie, 1857); L. Reybaud, "Mémoire sur Les Associations entre Ouvriers ou entre patrons et ouvriers, fondées en France avec une subvention de l'état", *Journal des Economistes*, 32 (July/August 1852): 209-54; A. Cuvillier, *L'Atelier*, (Paris: Alcan, 1914); Octave Festy, *Les Associations Ouvrières Encouragées Par la Deuxième République: Documents inédits*, (Paris: F. Rieder, 1915).

> ... we have the deep-seated conviction that the day will come when the majority of workers will have passed from the condition of wage workers to that of voluntary associates as formerly they passed from the state of slaves to that of serfs, and from being serfs, they became free wage workers. But this transformation will take time and the special efforts of workers. The State certainly should aid it; but... it will have a much smaller part to take than the workers themselves.[150]

The motivation for the council's creation was thus far removed from that which inspired the formation of the Luxembourg Commission; rather than pursue étatist solutions to labor organization in conjunction with trade-based *corps d'état*, the Council of Encouragement sought to give loans to model producers' associations that would operate competitively in a free-market economy. No leaders active on the Luxembourg Commission were represented on the Council of Encouragement. The latter's "socialist" membership was limited to those Buchezians who believed that competition between voluntary associations in the same trade was healthy. Although the decree establishing credits passed handily on 5 July 1848, not all legislators who voted approval were very enthusiastic about association. Many shared the views of Adolphe Thiers, who commented cynically after the vote:

> It wasn't three million that should have been demanded from us; it was twenty million; we would have given it to you. Yes, twenty million, that would not have been too much to create a striking experience which would have cured you all of this great folly...[151]

Ironically Thiers's cynicism was matched on the left. Pauline Roland noted sarcastically that the total amount voted by the National Assembly "doesn't amount to

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[150] Lemercier has the complete text of Corbon's report: *Études sur les Associations Ouvrières*, 43-46.

[151] *L'Atelier*, 27 Feb. 1850: 480.

166th of the annual budget for war" and observed that it was surrounded by so many restrictions that "this vain lure prevented more than it assisted the development of association."[152]

The restrictions which Roland criticized were created by a subcommittee of the Council of Encouragement that was charged with establishing guidelines for societies that wished to apply for state loans. The resulting "Instructions" reflected the continued influence of Corbon and the Buchez faction.[153] Associations were encouraged to submit their statutes as part of the application process. To assist them, the subcommittee published two sets of model statutes, one for workers' associations and one for associations between employers and workers. The statutes for the former were based on the goldsmiths' association in Paris. This was one of the first associations established with Buchez's help in 1834; it was reorganized in 1843. The model statutes, which many associations felt obliged to adopt in the hope of obtaining money, incorporated Buchez's requirement that one-fifth of all profits be devoted to an indissoluble capital fund. This fund was designed to perpetuate the association and permit it to add new members.

In reality, the council was so flooded with loan applications in the first months that decisions were made in a summary and *ad hoc* manner rather than according to objective criteria.[154] By December 1848 a split had opened up between the Buchezian

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[152]Pauline Roland, "Des Associations ouvrières," *La République*, 11 January 1850.

[153]O. Festy, *Les Associations Ouvrières*, 146.

[154]In less than three months, almost 400 dossiers were examined. Both proponents of association like A. Cochut and critics like L. Reybaud claim that the number of applicants and the lack of time to examine proposals resulted in decisions being made in an arbitrary manner in which chance played a role. A. Cochut, *Les Associations Ouvrières*, 19-20; L. Reybaud, "Mémoire sur Les Associations," 226.

faction and more conservative members of the council, which led to the resignation of Corbon, Danguy, Ott and Feugueray. After that the council began to favor employer-worker associations. Those that received funding were primarily failing industries, whose owners adopted associational window-dressing to secure low-cost loans.[155] In employer-worker associations, workers were not true associates, but simply employees who received profit-sharing compensation. They had no say in the day-to-day running of the business and no financial stake in its success or failure. A number of the so-called employer-worker associations in *lingère*, for example, were little different from ordinary establishments where a rigid hierarchy prevailed in the workshop and simple seamstresses worked for piece-work wages.[156]

The following section will examine how associations sponsored by and for women fared at the hands of the Council of Encouragement. Theoretically, the availability of credits should have acted as a stimulus to women's associations, since a major obstacle to their formation was lack of capital. In fact, the number of women's associations that applied for loans was very low, and the number who actually received them was minuscule. Octave Festy, who offers the most comprehensive and balanced analysis of the activities of the Council of Encouragement, includes in his study a list of associations that applied for loans and were refused.[157] Of the 436 associations that appear on this list, only thirteen clearly represent women's trades, and only eight are headed by women.

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[155]Reybaud (1852), 224; Festy (1915), 147-48.

[156]See for example the requests submitted by M. Redler to the Council for the *Association fraternelle pour la confection de la Lingère*, and A. Rouget de Lisle for the *Société des ouvrières en linge du 3e arrondissement*, both AN F12/4635.

[157]*Les Associations Ouvrières Encouragées Par la Deuxième République*, 407-442.

Of these eight, only four are workers' associations, as opposed to worker-employer associations. Only two women's associations, both of seamstresses (*lingères*), had their requests approved by the council, *Goreska et Debruges* and *Gay et Desroches*. *Gay et Desroches*, however, dissolved shortly after applying and never received any state monies.

The archives of the Ministry of Commerce contain a dossier listing all requests submitted to the Council of Encouragement between 18 July 1848 and 5 June 1850. It shows the names of the applicants or the societies making the demands, their addresses, the nature of the industries, whether the requests were accepted or denied, and the date on which the council met and passed on each request. There are 586 requests recorded.[158] It is not always possible using this list to determine the sex of the applicant, or whether the person whose name appears in the *raison sociale* (trade name) of the association was in fact its head. Applications submitted by women usually have the courtesy prefix *Mme*, *Vve* (widow) or *Dme* (dame) attached before their names.[159] Twelve associations on this list are clearly headed by women. Seven of these twelve are in traditional women's trades such as sewing, flower-making, and laundry. The five remaining associations are headed by widows or dames, who probably inherited their

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[158]AN F12 4618. *Associations Ouvrières, État général des demandes soumises au Conseil d'Encouragement en exécution de Décret de l'Assemblée Nationale en date du 5 Juillet 1848.* The discrepancy with Festy's list reflects the fact that some associations reapplied after an initial refusal, and so appear twice in this ledger.

[159]*Goreska et Debruges*, however, do not, which means that not all associations headed by women may be identifiable in this way.

businesses.[160] There is little, therefore, to suggest that the availability of credits was an important stimulus to *ouvrières* in forming their own associations.

Of the fifty-six associations that ultimately received funding from the Council of Encouragement, thirty in Paris and twenty-six in the provinces, only one, *Goreska et Debruges*, was female. It received a total of 15,000 francs, an initial loan of 10,000 francs in 1848 and a further advance of 5,000 francs the next year. Since associations between workers received a total of 1,089,500 francs, and between employers and workers, 1,501,000 francs, the share going to women's associations was extremely small.[161]

The fact that women's associations were under-represented both in the category of applications and of "encouraged" societies raises several questions. First, did the council's guidelines discourage women from applying, or was the low rate of application simply a reflection of how few women's associations actually existed? Did the council make decisions in a discriminatory manner, deliberately weeding out women's associations? How did they deal with those that were actually funded? And finally, although such a small sample makes generalization impossible, why did the two "encouraged" associations of women both fail?

Since the guidelines developed by the Council and published on 12 July 1848 were not applied with any real consistency in deciding which organizations to approve, it does

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[160]They include suit-tailoring, instrument making, designing and stamping, and cotton spinning. All of these trades suggest prior male ownership.

[161]AN F12/4623 Report to the Min. of Agriculture and Commerce on *Goreska, deBruges et Cie*, Paris: 16 Juillet 1850. Festy, *Les Associations Ouvrières*, 8, 151.

not appear that this was the decisive factor in eliminating women's associations.[162] However, the amount of information requested by the council when a loan application was submitted might well have inhibited women from applying. The information required included: the object of the association, the nature of the industry which it proposed to exploit, the elements of success, a statement listing assets and specifying what credits were needed, written statutes of the association, and a statement of account if the association was already up and running. Although several manuals were published to help workers with the task of drafting associational statutes, the whole process was time-consuming, somewhat complicated, and favored those with education, prior business experience, or access to legal counsel.[163]

It is not surprising, therefore, that the women who submitted applications to the Council of Encouragement were either socialist women or *bourgeoises*, women who wanted to set up worker-employer societies or who fronted for men who did. Three of the eight applications that specifically bear women's names were submitted by socialists: Elisa Lemonnier's *Union fraternelle des travailleuses*, Eugénie Niboyet's proposal for a society of seamstresses in Lyon, and Désirée Gay and Jeanne Deroin's proposal for a seamstresses' association in Paris (Desroches was Deroin's married name). A fourth proposal, submitted under the trade name Vve. Mollet, was an association of laundresses that included Louise Boulanger, aka Femme Nicaud, who was later arrested with Deroin

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[162]Festy notes, for example, that Corbon had envisaged providing aid to those associations in which workers were able to provide a certain amount of their own capital, but does not find any correlation between workers having capital and whether or not loans were made. *Associations ouvrières*, 151-57.

[163]A. Romand, *Manuel des Associations ouvrières contenant un projet d'Acte de Société approuvé par le conseil d'encouragement* (Paris: Guiradet et Jouaust, 1849).

and Pauline Roland as a collaborator on the Union of Associations on 29 May 1850.[164] The *Goreska et Debruges* "workers' association" turned out to be headed by two employers who were hiring seamstresses to work for them, although the council was not aware of this at the time the loan was approved. These examples all suggest that educated leadership was a crucial variable in determining whether applications for credits were made.

Did the council apply a sexual double standard in evaluating requests for funding? There is evidence that it did. If one looks at the remarks of committee members in the sessions where the Goreska and Gay petitions were considered, it is clear that the majority of members believed that women were less experienced in business and therefore in need of male guidance. The council was seeking evidence that associations that it funded would be economically viable, and the presumed experience or business acumen of the association's leadership weighed heavily in its decisions.

When the *Goreska et Debruges* application was first taken up on 19 September 1848, it triggered a debate about whether the council should even consider applications that came from associations composed exclusively of women. The council appears to have been swayed in a positive direction by the remarks of its president, Delambre, who expressed concern for plight of seamstresses and their exploitation at the hands of confectioners. Since *Goreska et Debruges* was the sole association of seamstresses out

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[164]AN F12/4634: *Association des ouvrières blanchisseuses de Paris.* This request shows as one of the signatories Louise Boulanger, "épouse duement autorisée du Ld Joachim Nicaud Blanchisseur demeurant ensemble à Paris Rue Croulebarbe 45."

of five taken up that day that seemed to be genuinely a workers' society, it was the only one approved. However, another member of the council's committee, Cerclet, expressed misgivings. He argued that in women's associations the administrative council and the general assembly should be presided over by a man who was completely outside the organization, "and who, more accustomed than women to business matters, might direct deliberations in orderly ways that conformed to the general interests of the association." The committee debated delegating that role to a member of the *prud'hommes*, and, when that was rejected as inappropriate by representatives from the *prud'hommes* themselves, voted to appoint an overseer chosen from the Council of Encouragement.[165] Although the council subsequently forgot to appoint a male overseer for *Goreska et Debruges*, the knowledge that one of their members might be appointed to this time-consuming task if they approved a loan to a women's association must have operated as a disincentive.

Another discussion centering on women's capabilities took place following a reading of Goreska's proposed statutes on September 26. Some members wanted to insert a provision that women could only become part of the Council of Administration if they were age twenty-five or above. One member, Alcan, demurred. He saw no reason to raise the age required of women above the usual age of majority, which was twenty-one. "The whole world knows that women of twenty have a spirit that is relatively more developed than that of men at the same age," he argued, "and every day one sees that they conduct their business affairs with as much intelligence as energy; it would therefore be very

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[165]Minutes of the Council of Encouragement, 19 September 1848, in Festy, *Documents inédits*, 95-97.

harsh if an *ouvrière* engaged in an real association were not able to take a direct part in the administration and surveillance of its interests."[166]

However, the majority of the committee agreed with Cerclet, who conceded that, while it was not uncommon to see women under twenty-five conducting their personal affairs very competently, women over that age would be less subject to "outside influence" that might be detrimental to the association. Presumably Cerclet was alluding to lovers or male family members that might bend an impressionable younger women to their will. The committee then voted to make the higher age mandatory. Significantly, the committee also voted on this occasion to change the name of Goreska's "administrative council" to "family council" (*conseil de famille*).[167] The idea of women "administering" anything must have disturbed them, while the idea of women meeting *en famille*, under the benevolent leadership of a father figure appointed from their own ranks, was more comfortable.

It is noteworthy also that some committee members were uneasy about the relatively "high" salaries that *Goreska et Cie* proposed to pay workers. The one franc per day minimum would render Goreska uncompetitive with other houses, where the average was fifty to sixty centimes, they argued. There ensued a discussion about whether high labor costs would be balanced by savings achieved by eliminating the middleman. The committee was ultimately swayed by the remarks of Richard, a representative of the *prud'hommes*, who observed that if an association of *ouvrières* could not pay at least one franc per day, it would be better not to form the association at all, since the primary

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[166]Ibid., 106-08; quotation, 107.

[167]Minutes of 26 September 1848, ibid., 108.

reason for state encouragement would be lacking. The committee then adopted a resolution fixing daily rates of compensation at 1 franc minimum and 3.50 francs maximum.[168]

Ironically, although *Goreska et Cie* was funded primarily because it appeared to be a genuine workers' association, doing the kind of plain sewing in which most needlewomen found employment, things were not as represented to the council. Subsequent visits by inspectors, sent out to check up on all "encouraged" associations, uncovered the fact that the association was not doing *lingère* work, but specializing in fashionable dressmaking and novelties. The two managers and the first worker had paid themselves 24,000 francs in compensation during the first eight months, while four workers received only 600 francs. One inspector noted that the managers seemed to have little idea of what an association of workers should be; they themselves were not workers, but simply in business relations with them.[169] They spent rather heavily on an expensive showroom to attract an elegant clientele, granted long credits, and ultimately went bankrupt, defaulting on their loan.[170]

By contrast, the association of seamstresses founded by Désirée Gay (*Gay et Desroches*) was an avowedly socialist enterprise. This appears to have worked in its favor with the council, who wanted to fund a true workerist association. Alcan, who met personally with Gay in July, 1849, reported that she made no secret of the fact that she

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[168]Ibid.

[169]Report of Guiradet, Minutes of the Council of Encouragement, 11 July 1849, ibid., 340.

[170]AN F12/4623. Report to the Min. of Agriculture and Commerce on *Goreska et Cie*, 16 July 1850.

was a socialist - she proclaimed it loudly. Alcan was persuaded that she had "very good experience for the foundation of a society." Ironically the experience Gay was touting was based on her foundation of an infant school that had failed a few years earlier.[171] Another member of the Conseil, Leblond, gushed that "one could not make a better choice in order to have an experience with persons steeped in the principles of association."[172] An unsigned note in the application file, probably also by Leblond, who reported favorably on the project to the full committee, observed that the society had very feeble monetary resources, but "It's certainly a true association for all, and not for the profit of only one or two persons."[173]

Although Gay obviously hoped to establish a genuine workers' association of some thirty seamstresses, she indicated that she wanted to start small, with a few close associates, and expand only cautiously.[174] The statutes of her society established a two-tier system of membership, rather along the lines of a *société en commandite* (limited partnership). They recognized two categories of associates, "responsible" and "free" associates. The responsible associates were financially committed and legally liable for the debts of the organization, and they alone were "proprietors of the social capital" and entitled to retirement benefits and assistance for their children. The second group were

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[171]Minutes of the Council of Encouragement, 20 July 1849, ibid., 352-53.

[172]Minutes of 3 August 1849, ibid. 370-71.

[173]AN F12/4632 Dossier: Gay et Desroches, Association de Lingères à Paris, rue de la Corderie St. Honoré.

[174]AN F12/4623 Letter by Gay to "Monsieur" [unk. member of Council of Encouragement, probably Leblond], 2 Aug. 1849.

simply "in the condition of workers by the day or by the piece."[175] Gay was apparently concerned about another business failure and wanted to start with a few workers, slowly adding more as business improved. Hiring "free associates" limited expenses and gave the association more flexibility to deal with business fluctuations. Although it conflicted with Buchez's precept that all workers must be associated on a footing of complete equality, many associations in this period nevertheless employed some variation of a two-tier system, in which there were "interested" and "non-interested" workers. However unfraternal, it made good business sense. Unfortunately, women workers affiliated with production societies were more likely to find themselves in the latter category, as simple wage-earners without the benefits of associational membership.

Despite the council's approval on 3 August 1849 of a loan of 12,000 francs, Gay's association dissolved shortly thereafter. In a letter written to Leblond, who had supported her warmly on the council, Gay revealed that her two closest collaborators, Jeanne Deroin and Mme Sébert, had withdrawn from the project, and she was unable to continue without them.[176] Deroin's growing involvement with her own plans for a Union of Associations probably conflicted with this effort; Sébert continued to work with Gay in an association of workers Gay established at her mother-in-law's house at Châtillon par Montrouge.

The two examples cited above are too narrow a base from which to generalize safely about the Council of Encouragement's attitudes toward women's associations.

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[175]AN F12/4632 Original application to the Minister of Commerce by *Gay et Desroches*, s.d. Received 16 October 1848.

[176]AN F12/4635: Letter by D. Gay to "Monsieur" [undoubtedly Leblond], s.d. A letter from the Council of Encouragement acknowledging receipt is dated 11 Sept. 1849.

Their decision to reject most women's applications is significant, but they also rejected the majority submitted by men, including those of some very large associations that seem to have been operating successfully.[177] The comments of council members recorded in the minutes do provide additional insight into their attitudes, however. Members were concerned about the plight of the *ouvrière* and were willing to test, in a very modest way, whether association might improve her lot. Festy is probably right when he argues that the council's approach was not overtly hostile towards associations, but was rather a "mixture of negligence and indifference."[178] However the natural skepticism of officials was higher when it came to dealing with women, who were regarded as less experienced, more impressionable, and therefore more likely to fail. Their patronizing attitude was reflected in the special controls which they placed on women's associations, including the provisions that such associations must have a male overseer, and that members must be twenty-five years or older. It must be added that not many loan applications were submitted by genuine associations of women workers anyway. Associations were difficult for women to organize and sustain, and the application procedures were fairly daunting, requiring some knowledge of accounting and legal terminology. The paternalism and condescension of state officials makes it unlikely, however, that many would have succeeded in acquiring credits even in the best of circumstances. In this the Council of Encouragement was simply a microcosm of the larger society.

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[177]The *cordonniers* presented a proposal embracing 30,000 persons; the tailors wanted to reconstitute the association that made uniforms for the national guard at Clichy. The building industry presented over 30 proposals. All of these trades had prior experience with association and large numbers of workers. All were refused. L. Reybaud, "Mémoire sur Les Associations", 225.

[178]*Les Associations Ouvrières*, 185-86.

Conclusion

Although the "associationist myth" was a powerful stimulus to worker organization in Paris in the years between 1848 and 1851, the empirical evidence suggests that women workers were only marginally involved in single and mixed-sex associations in this period, whether they be production, fraternal or mutual benefit societies. Women faced enormous practical obstacles to successful organization, ranging from their lack of a corporative tradition, their concentration in the most saturated and highly competitive sweated industries, insufficient time and resources, and the indifference of state authorities.

One of the greatest barriers to their inclusion in the associational movement was certainly the prejudices of male workers, who exhibited sympathy for their exploited and underpaid feminine counterparts in the abstract, but refused in most cases to allow them to join their own associations on equal terms, and who defended a gendered job and wage structure that kept women at the bottom of the occupational ladder. The same presuppositions that operated to deny women political rights in the Republic operated to deny women a vote in the general assemblies of most mixed associations. Male associationists preferred to hire woman as non-associated sweated laborers, who could be released during economic downturns, rather than admit them to full membership in their ranks. Neither government authorities, nor male workers, nor philanthropic women who founded associations for working women really believed that *ouvrières* were capable of self-governance; all focused on the need for systems of tutelage and control.

Only a few socialist women, such as Désirée Gay, Pauline Roland and Jeanne Deroin, believed in women workers' capacity for self-organization and mutual support. The formidable political and economic obstacles that they encountered, however, doomed their efforts to establish associations. The associational socialism of male artisans at mid-century, with its emphasis on trade solidarity, the manly dignity of the worker, and the duties and privileges of masculine citizenship in the democratic and social republic, had little place for women, except as loyal wives, sisters, daughters, and mothers. It was not capable of theorizing or addressing the place of women in the atelier and in the state.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Women's Production Associations: Paris 1848-1851

A note about sources:

The names and addresses of women's associations have been taken from newspaper articles dealing with associational activities and listings of associations published in the socialist and workerist press, as indicated by the citations below. *L'Atelier*, for example, printed a list of 99 Parisian associations in July, 1849. Articles describing visits to associations, such as those authored by Pauline Roland in *La République*, Victor Hennequin in *La Démocratie pacifique*, and Émile Jay in *Le Bien-être universel*, sometimes indicated the number of members in an association; listings never did so. Newspapers might publish news or announcements of associations if their statutes met their criteria of socialist acceptability. Proudhon's *Le Peuple*, for example, only recognized associations approved by the Commission of delegates to the Luxembourg.

Several almanacs of associations that appeared in the period also provide listings of associations. The most important is the *Almanach des associations ouvrières pour 1850*, published by the *Union essénienne* at the end of 1849. The *Union essénienne* was an organization founded in July 1849 to facilitate association between producers and consumers and to promote free credit.[179] Its almanach was contributed to by socialists as diverse as Proudhonists Georges Duchêne and Louis Vasbenter, as well as Pauline Roland, Lachambaudie, Magot, T. Leroux, Léon Hocdé and Théodore Six. Émile de Girardin's journal, *Le Bien-Etre universel*, sponsored another almanach, put out by an association of worker-typographers at the end of 1851, which also contains a list of associations. Finally, a group of typographers under the sponsorship of Pierre Leroux, the *Société de la Presse du Travail*, proposed a new union of associations, the *Association des Corporations Nouvelles*, and published an *Almanach des Corporations Nouvelles* in 1851. This almanach has a listing of associations in existence as of 25 October 1851 in Paris and its suburbs, and includes a few in the departments. Among the contributors to this volume are P.-J. Proudhon, Pauline Roland and Pierre Wahry.

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[179] For a discussion of this organization, see Jean Gaumont, *Histoire Générale de la Coopération en France*, vol. 1, 264-265.

Blanchisseuses (Laundresses):

Association fraternelle des ouvrières Blanchisseuses, aka *Association des ouvrières blanchisseuses de Paris*, rue St. Honoré, 66 and rue Croulebarbe, 27.

Members included Louise Boulanger, aka Femme Nicaud, who was arrested and tried with Jeanne Deroin and Pauline Roland in Nov. 1850 as a co-conspirator in the Union of Associations. Applied for a loan of 3000 fr. under the trade name Vve. Mollet from the Council of Encouragement on 23 Jan. 1849 and was refused. Four signatories to the application; may have had ten workers. Founders claim the association was functioning as of 1 Dec. 1848; formal act of association dates from 13 Aug. 1849. Does not show up in almanacs or journals from 1850 on. [AN F12 4634; Le Peuple, 25 Dec. 1848]. Was this the association that L. Villermé (1849, p. 78) reports had painted on its house walls "Association fraternelle des blanchisseuses"?

Association fraternelle et égalitaire des ouvrières blanchisseuses, rue Folie-Méricourt, 35.

Almanach des Associations Ouvrières Pour 1850 (L'Union Essénienne, 1849); L'Atelier, July 1849; Le Nouveau Monde, 15 july 1849 and August/September 1850.

Rue de Breda, 20. {name unknown}

L'Opinion des Femmes, 28 Jan. 1849; L'Atelier, July 1849.

Aux mères de Familles - Association Fraternelle des blanchisseuses, rue du Prouvaires, 4.

Almanach des Associations Ouvrières Pour 1850 (L'Union Essénienne, 1849).

Association fraternelle des blanchisseuses, av. de la République, 187 at Neuilly (banlieu).

Almanach des Associations Ouvrières Pour 1850 (L'Union Essénienne, 1849).

Rue de la Croix, 4. {name unknown}

Almanach des Associations Ouvrières Pour 1850 (L'Union Essénienne, 1849).

No associations of laundresses show up in the Almanach des Corporations Nouvelles for 1852. This may be because they were defunct, or because none joined Pierre Leroux's "*Sociétés et Corporations ouvrières*", whose members are listed in that almanach.

Laundresses: Political Activity

1. AN C934 (Chevillot inventory of petitions to the Provisional Govt.) shows that there were 31 petitions by laundresses; 13 from Paris alone. Most dealt with issues of salary and the 10 hour day.

2. The laundresses of Chaillot marched to the Luxembourg to demand "a more equitable distribution of labor and pay." La Démocratie Pacifique, 5 March 1848; La République, 6 March 1848.

4. Femme Nicaud: Is described in the Gazette des Tribunaux, 13 Nov. 1850, as *gérante* of an association of laundresses. She had a picture, allegedly of Robespierre, in her home when she was arrested (it was actually of Eugène Sue). The prosecution alleged that it was in her establishment that balls and powder were fabricated. She is described as being, like all of the women present, very much under the influence of "la dame Jeanne Deroin."

Chapelières (hatmakers)

Société Chapelière de Sainte-Marie {address unk.}

Founded September 1843. A mutual aid association of women workers in hatmaking made up of *couseuses, éjarreuses and garnisseuses* (seamstresses; workers who pull out with pincers large and stiff hairs that spoil the beauty of the nap, and trimmers). Collects a weekly contribution to assist the most unfortunate among them: married women who have to go into hospice and young girls without parents. Specifically repudiates idea of trying to establish a *tarif.* Under the patronage of the Virgin Mary, hence the name.

L'Union, (Jan. 1844, Feb. 1844). Deroin claims that the society is reworking its statutes in accordance with revolutionary principles (Politique des Femmes, Aug. 1848).

Ouvrières en Casquettes, rue St. Germain-l'Auxerrois, 45.

Le Nouveau Monde, Sept. 1850. No data.

Corsetières (corset-makers)

Association Fraternelle des Ouvrières Corsetières, rue St. Honoré, 145.

Gossez reports, (apparently based on the Almanach des Associations, 1850), that it was constituted under the patronage of the delegation to the Luxembourg, although it did not have representatives there. First mentioned in journals in 1849; still in existence according to Le Nouveau Monde, in August/September 1850.

Opinion des Femmes, 28 Jan. 1849; Almanach des Associations Ouvrières (Union Essénienne, 1849); Le Nouveau Monde, 15 July 1849 and 15 Aug./15 Sept. 1850.

Couturières (dressmakers)

Association des Couturières: director, Elisa Lemonnier. Statutes appear in Deroin's Politique des Femmes, August, 1848.

Provided for "responsible" and "free" associates (the later workers paid by the day); 10 hour day; elaborate educational plans; table of projected expenses. Applied for loan from Conseil d'Encouragement and was turned down. [see AN F12/4618].

Union des Travailleuses, rue de Chabrol, 10.

"A society of women have found an couture atelier, rue de Chabrol, 10, under the name of the *Union des Travailleuses*. They are associated together to work and to eat." L'Opinion des Femmes, 28 Aug. 1848.

Couturières: Political Activity

1. Chevillot inventory records one petition by couturières. This may be the petition that appears in Deroin's Politique des Femmes (18-24 June 1848), dated 5 June 1848. It was presented to the Constituent Assembly by "the delegates of a great number of worker couturières". It asks for a subvention to set themselves up as entrepreneurs. It was probably written by Lemonnier and has feminist language. The text of this document is also reproduced in L'Organisation du Travail (19 June 1848), along with the commentary: "*ce sont nos mères que nous défendons, et c'est le titre le plus sacré.*" The journal was the organ of the wallpaper printers' association.

Lingères (seamstresses)

Association Fraternelle des Ouvrières Lingères, rue de la Corderie-Saint-Honoré, 7 (5?). Membership: 50-30.

Le Peuple, 25 Dec. 1848; L'Opinion des Femmes, 28 Jan. 1849; Le Nouveau Monde, Aug./Sept. 1850; Le Bien-Etre Universel, June 1851; La Démocratie Pacifique, 13 Nov.

Deroin in L'Opinion des Femmes reports (28 Jan. 1849) that it was founded on 4 Oct. 1848. It has moved to the rue de Richelieu, 44. It has thirty members; pays piece work rates. It was founded without capital, with the aid of the worker tailors and saddlers. The same issue shows two separate organizations, Gay's at rue de Richelieu, 44 and "Lingères, 5 rue de la Corderie." This suggests that the original association may have split into two factions early in 1849.
Gay's organization applied for a loan from the Council of Encouragement. The loan application is headed: Gay et Desroches, Association de Lingères à Paris, rue de la Corderie St. Honoré. It is undated, but stamped as received on 16 Oct. 1848. The application says that the organization is "in full activity" but has not yet been definitively constituted because of lack of funds to accommodate all the workers who want to be associated; as of this date there were about 50. They were provisionally installed in the home of one of the applicants until they could open an atelier and store. The application says that the group is supported by the saddlers association, who have ordered 900 shirts. [AN F12/4632]

It was visited and described by Émile Jay in Le Bien-Être Universel (June 1851) and Victor Hennequin in La Démocratie Pacifique (16 Nov. 1851) who was accompanied by Jeanne Deroin. Hennequin refers to the association as "*Les*

Chemisières," and places it at rue de la Corderie-Saint-Honoré, no. 7. Le Nouveau Monde also shows it at rue de la Corderie-Saint-Honoré, 7 (Aug./Sept. 1850).

Association fraternelle des ouvrières en lingerie et nouveautés, faubourg Saint-Denis, 23.

Almanach des Associations Ouvrières Pour 1850 (Union Essénienne, 1849); Le Nouveau Monde, 15 July 1849 and 15 Aug./15 Sept. 1850.

This address is the former site of Proudhon's Bank of the People. A tailors association (formerly Clichy) and an association of cooks is also headquartered here.

Goreska, de Bruge et Cie., rue de Faubourg Poisonnière, 27.

A commercial operation rather than workerist; not listed therefore in Louis Blanc's Le Nouveau Monde. Appears in the Almanach des Associations Ouvrières (l'Union Essénienne, 1849). Applied for a loan from the Council of Encouragement. See AN F12/4623: File on Goreska, de Bruge et Cie.; O. Festy, Les Associations Ouvrières, and Lejeune-Resnick, (she incorrectly lists it as Dobreska, but gives data on inspections from AN F22/708).

Association de l'oeuvre de Bon Secours aka *Association fraternelle des ouvrières en lingère et nouveauté* , rue de Rivoli, 16. Affiliated with or founded by Abbé Roux.

Statutes are published in-8 and are in the BN [LB54/1530] according to Tixerant; I could not locate them there. Tixerant claims this organization was not workerist in character; probably religious or philanthropic.

L'Opinion des Femmes, 28 Aug. 1848, states that Bon Secours is going to obtain a place at the Rue de Rivoli, 16, for an association of female couturières.

Lingères: Political Activity

1. The Chevillot inventory lists 3 petitions by *lingères* or *ouvrières de aiguille* in Paris. Among the demands voiced are a minimum salary, an end to confection, the establishment of a *tarif.*

2. Voix de Femmes (20 Mar. 1848) reports that a delegation of *ouvrières lingères* have presented a petition demanding suppression of work in prisons. Le Moniteur (15 Mar. 1848) also reports a large delegation of *lingères* bearing a petition to the Provisional Government asking for cessation of work in prisons, religious communities and workrooms. They were met by Pagnerre, secretary of the Provisional Govt. He said the government had already taken action to restrict work in prisons, the other sites needed to be studied; gave assurances the Provisional Govt. would look after their interests.

3. Moniteur (25 Mar. 1848) reports that vest-makers and trouser-makers (*culottières and giletières*) have sent a deputation to the Provisional Government. They complain of lack of work, excessive lowering of salaries; want govt intervention to address their plight. M. Edmond Adam, adjoint to the mayor of Paris, tells them to address themselves to the Luxembourg.

4. R. Gossez cites the Commune de Paris (14 May 1848) which mentions a *Club Fraternel des Lingères*, headed by Désirée Gay.

Femmes à Gages (Domestic Servants)

Association fraternelle des Femmes à Gages, rue du Faubourg Saint- Honoré, 11.

La Voix des Femmes printed an "Appel aux Domestiques Femmes" on 27 April 1848. It speaks of a Société des femmes à gages" constituted by Mme Chenard, with an office at the above address. Chenard wants the Provisional Government to establish a locale for an home (asile) for unemployed servants. This would provide food, shelter and job placement. Servants would contribute 1 fr. per month to an mutual aid fund to support this endeavor. Those wishing admission have to be recommended by two members, who give guarantees of the moral probity. This would seem to have been a proposal by a charitable "dame" rather than a workers' association. There is no subsequent mention of it in any source.

Laitières (dairywomen)

Association fraternelle des laitières, rue des Ecrivains.

Two listings, one in the Almanach des Associations Ouvrières Pour 1850 (Union Essénienne: 1849); Pierre Leroux's Almanach des Corporations Nouvelles for 1852 (published in 1851).

Rouennerie (blouses, bourgerons et pantalons de fatigue (smocks, work overalls and trousers)

Association fraternelle des ouvrières pour blouses, rue Mondétour, 3.

Announcement is made in Le Peuple, 16 Feb. 1849 that on the 17th Feb. there will be a meeting of all the provisional adherents of the society, for the purpose of adopting statutes. "All the *ouvrières* of the corporation are invited to be present at this meeting and to subscribe to the formation of capital for the new society at the bureau of the gérant, rue Mondétour, 3, in Paris."

See: *Association Fraternelle entre les Ouvriers Coupeurs et les Ouvrières pour la confection des blouses, bourgerons, et pantalons*, rue Mondétour, 3. {under Mixed-Sex Associations}

There is an unnamed association engaged in *Rouennerie* (smocks and work trousers) listed at the rue du faubourg-Saint-Antoine, 45. This may or may not be all-female.

L'Atelier, July 1848

Sages-Femmes (Midwives)

Association fraternelle des sages-femmes, rue Montmartre, no. 20.

Charges 10 fr. for births and after care. Doctors of the *Association fraternelle médicale* back them up as necessary.
Almanach des Associations Ouvrières Pour 1850, (Union Essénienne: 1849).

Société des Sages-Femmes Unis, no address given.

Probably organized in March 1848. Presented a petition to the Provisional Government in March which was discussed in article by Suzanne Voilquin, Voix des Femmes, 31 Mar. 1848 and by Jeanne Deroin, Opinion des Femmes, 5 June 1849.

Citing the care midwives give poor women, and their meager reimbursement, the petition asks that sages-femmes be made civil functionaries and be paid by the state; also that they be put in charge of the hygiene of salles d'asiles (shelters).

Proposals - Never Implemented

Société Fraternelle des Ouvrières-Unies

Ambitious scheme for workshops, crèche, day care center, school, library, in a "vast locale" in the 5e arrondissement. Sent as a attachment to a letter from Ëlisa Lemonnier to Victor Considérant, thanking him for support. Letter is also signed by Jeanne Deroin, Suzanne Voilquin, Marie Monnier, Angelique Arnaud.

See AN 10 AS 39(7)

Appendix B

Mixed-Sex Associations
Paris: 1848-1851

Associations that admitted women to membership are proceeded with an asterisk (*). Those known to have employed substantial numbers of women who were not admitted to membership are also listed. Because few references to associations specify the sex of the membership or the number of women employed as non-associated wage workers, the list below is not definitive.

Chapeliers (Hatmakers):

Les chapeliers réunis, rue des Guillemites, 2.

V. Hennequin reported on his visit for La Démocratie pacifique (30 Nov. 1851). 900 members. Membership costs 50 fr. *Acte social* dated 22 July 1850 but grew out of a mutual benefit society that goes back twenty years. There is a woman's atelier on the first floor of the house; women are not members, but are salaried; no data on rates of pay. They are usually married to members or related to them.

Pauline Roland reports on a visit: La République, 6 Jan. 1851. Notes 6:1 ratio between top male wages and bottom female. Criticizes gap between "proletarians" and "privileged" in the trade.

Au travailleur, Association égalitaire des ouvriers chapeliers, rue Neuve-des-Petits Champs, 33. Branches: rue Dauphine, 11 and Blvd. Saint-Denis, 4.

Pauline Roland examines this association specifically in La République, 6 Jan. 1851; complains that in all chapeliers' associations, as in all those of tailors, women are associated incompletely, or not at all.

Chemiserie (Shirtmaking):

Association Fraternelle des Ouvriers et Ouvrières de la Chemiserie: seat, 27 rue de l'Arbre-Sec; central establishment, rue du Faubourg-Montmartre, 21.

Dates from 6/29/48. Gérants: J. Leinin, A. Souplet. General Assembly held under Presidency of Jules Lechavalier, according to Le Peuple, 25 Dec. 1848. Women admitted to membership, and to all functions save directorships. If society is liquidated, funds to go to ameliorating the lot of poor women.
See: *Pacte Fondamental de L'Association Fraternelle des Ouvriers et Ouvrières de la Chemiserie*, (Paris: Pousielgue, 1849). BN (Imprimés) LB55-98

Le Peuple (25 Dec. 1848; 8 Jan. 1849) reports that the society has 400 members, and that it will continue to receive all applicants, French and foreign, if they are of the profession and will adhere to the fundamental pact of the association. Listed in L'Opinion des Femmes, 28 Jan. 1849.

Association Fraternelle entre les Ouvriers Coupeurs et les Ouvrières pour la confection des blouses, bourgerons et pantalons, rue Mondétour, 3.

This represented a union of two associations; the women's association is also listed in Appendix A.

According to a notice in Le Travail Affranchi, (25 Feb. 1849), the society was founded 22 Jan 1849. It was composed principally of women, married women and minors. The associated cutters (coupers) invited the women workers of the specialty to come and register; it has the same statutes as the fraternal society of chemisiers (above).

La Mutualité, Association d'Ouvriers chemisiers et couturières réunis, rue Montmartre, 55 and 57.

Listed in the Almanach des Corporations Nouvelles (1852), p. 185. No other information provided.

Cordonniers (Shoemakers):

Association laborieuse et fraternelle des ouvriers cordonniers-bottiers de Paris, (La Laborieuse), rue Saint-Honoré, 123.

Fourierist society; President, Hamard. *Gérants* are Héronville, Guillaume, Tronchet. Formed 1 Nov. 1840; new statutes 1848. For statutes, see AN F12/4630. Héronville is also gérant of the schismatic Fourierist journal Le Nouveau Monde.

Art. 33 states that women can be part of the corporation, but can not take part in general assemblies or be part of commissions. There are two arbitration committees set up in 1845, one for women, one for men. Pauline Roland (La République, 30 June 1850) is critical of the association for these exclusionary policies.

In a petition addressed to the Provisional Government, the society claims to represent 3000 male and female members in the trade. Petition speaks of the untenable situation of *ouvrières* in the trade; describes them in familial terms, and speaks of their "exploitation corruptrice." Mention made of a tarif for *piqueuses* and *brodeuses*. AN C2232/214: Petition of the Société Générale de la Corporation des Ouvriers Cordonniers et Bottiers, Bureau général, Rue St. Honoré 123, 16 June 1848.

Cordonniers, Place du Louvre (outlet on Rue du Petit Hurleur, 12.

Pauline Roland (La République, 30 June 1850) describes five associations of shoemakers which fused into one larger association. Praises them because in this new association, women sit at the side of men in all general assemblies, and have the same rights.

Hennequin (La Démocratie Pacifique, Sept-Nov. 1851), speaks of the fusion of 5-6 associations of shoemakers on 22 Mar. 1850. They have mutual credit arrangements with many other associations, including leather-workers, masons, lithographers.

La Vérité Pratique (Cordonniers), rue St. Denis, 219.

Hennequin says formed 1 Jan. 1850 (ibid.). *Gérant*, Delclerques. 60-70 members; sex not specified. Listed in Pierre Leroux's Almanach des Corporations Nouvelles (1851) at rue St. Denis, 249.

Taileurs (tailors):

La Réciprocité, Association d'ouvriers taileurs, rue Coq-Heron, 4.

Gérant, Wahry. Eleven members, three female. In existence since 20 April 1848; officially incorporated 21 April 1850. Affiliated with *La Vérité Pratique* (see above).

Combines principles of Proudhon and Leroux in operating statutes. Repudiates profit, interest, accumulation of social capital. Consumers buy consumption coupons, which are redeemed for goods.

According to Hennequin (La Démocratie Pacifique, 23 Nov. 1851), the association allows women to be members, but they have no voice in the general assembly. Official excuse is that the civil code would allow their husbands to interfere.

Clichy, rue du Faubourg St-Denis (former site of Bank of the People)

Visited by J.-P. Gilland (*Revue anecdotique des associations ouvrières*, 1850: 23-24), a former Atelierist. Tailors of Clichy indicate they do not intend to cut prices in order to compete with houses of confection. Defend paying higher wages to women who make vests in their homes; women need at least 1 fr. 50 c. to live on per day. It is not clear, however, whether they regularly or only sporadically employ women.

Reybaud ("Mémoires sur les Associations..", 1852: 240-41) reports that it included the remnant of the defunct association of tailors at Clichy, closed by the government at the end of July, 1848. Fifty-four workers set up a new association and attracted a great no. of adherents; they were able to utilize the profits realized by the former association, to the tune of 37,000 fr. to set up a fund. Each member had to contribute one 50 fr. share to an inalienable social fund, and could acquire it by a payment of 1 fr. per month. Reybaud does not mention any female members. The society reported 160,000 fr. in sales its first year, and assets of 66,000 fr. in inventories. Work is paid by the piece.

Tapissiers (Upholsterers):

**Les Ouvriers Tapissiers*: Cour Saint-Jacques

Victor Hennequin, (La Démocratie Pacifique, 19 Oct. 1851) indicates that the statutes are remarkable in that they appeal to women to augment the number of interested members. He attributes this to the delicate needlework required in some aspects of the trade.

Social capital will be formed by means of "a contribution of 1000 fr. per man and 200 fr. per woman". The high figure is necessitated by the high cost of the raw materials - the luxury fabrics of the trade. Women pay less because of the recognition that they are less well paid than men and have a more difficult time supporting themselves. This must be paid either in money or in merchandise, and/or by a levy of 10% on male salaries and 3% on female. No women have yet applied for membership. The statutes deny women a deliberative voice in assemblies.

Ouvriers Tourneurs en Chaises (chair-turners, latheworkers):

Les Ouvriers Tourneurs en Chaises, rue de Popincourt, 28.

Hennequin reported on a visit to this association (La Démocratie pacifique, 12 Oct. 1851). The society was constituted 14 oct 1848, but act of incorporation dates from 19 June 1850. At the time of his visit there were about 300 workers working in the workshops and 50 auxiliaries, mostly women, who caned chairs and wove straw seats. He was told that they would be incorporated into the association when there was enough business to assure them constant work.

The association of turners accepts as a member anyone bringing 30 fr. to the association; it has 1800 fr. capital. Hennequin says that when he visited the association, it was clear that members had found this capital insufficient and were revising the statutes to require a contribution of 500 fr. On 27 Sept. 1851, the association changed from paying equal salary to paying piece-work rates.

Printworkers/Book Trades:

**Corporation des Ouvriers Relieurs (bookbinders)* - Plan of Association, 21 June 1848, submitted to the Committee of Labor (Luxembourg). AN C2233 No. 557:

The proposal is accompanied by a letter (undated) bearing the signature of Bélot, delegate of the ouvriers relieurs, to the Comité du Travail. Enclosed are printed statutes of association (printed). It is clear that this is presently an all-male corporation, but art. 22 states that: "The present act of association is made in favor of all workers who wish to participate without distinction of age, sex, force and capacity."

Ouvriers fondeurs en caractères *(type founders)*, Petition to the Luxembourg Commission, recd. 15 June 1848. AN C2233/442

Enclosed is undated letter signed by Hippolyte Salomon for the *corporation des fondeurs en caractères* and Articles of Association, dated 19 May 1848, which state that they first were entered into on 1 July 1846 and that 348 workers today adhere to the present statutes and 81 (85?) signed the original.

They employ about 300 women and "about a hundred engravers and mechanics" which make up a general atelier of 800 workers of both sexes; 500 currently are employed in the National Workshops because of the closing of printing houses.

Each worker working for the society has to take out 900 fr. of shares , which will be met by withholding one-fifth of salary. 500 fr. of these shares remain inalienable throughout the life of the association. There appears to be no provision for women to become associates in the society, and in any case, the investment required would be prohibitive. In order to be present and a have a deliberative voice at the General Assembly, one must hold at least 500 fr. of shares and those holding more have a proportionally greater voice.

Educators:

Association Fraternelle des Instituteurs, Institutrices et Professeurs Socialistes 1849

Educational Program: BN LB55-3083/ Microfiche M-12088.
Socialist association founded by Pauline Roland, Jeanne Deroin, Gustave Lefrançois, Perot and others to promote educational reform; not really a production society, nor is it workerist. See G. Lefrançois, *Souvenirs d'un Révolutionnaire* (Brussels, 1902): 79-83, for history of debates leading up to creation of society.

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EQUIVOCAL SOLIDARITY: GENDER AND THE POLITICS OF WORKER ASSOCIATION IN FRANCE, 1840-1851

VOLUME II

By

Lynne Bruehlman

A DISSERTATION

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Part Three: Jeanne Deroin and the Politics of Association

Introduction

Jeanne Deroin was one of a small group of socialist women who attempted to link, both in theory and in practice, the emancipation of the proletariat and the emancipation of women. Although this idea was implicit in much of the utopian socialist discourse of the age, few focused on this theme more relentlessly, or made it as central to their ideology, as did Deroin. Her brief career as a socialist activist, primarily limited to the four years between the outbreak of the Revolution in 1848 and her exile in 1852, was in many respects a magnificent failure. All of the associations she attempted to organize collapsed, and her effort to run as the first female candidate for national office in 1849 met with ridicule and defeat. Very little is known about her life outside of these critical years, and all that remains is a small but remarkable body of writing - mostly proposals for associations, polemics and advocacy journalism. The only weapons she possessed were her voice and her pen, which she used to interrupt and challenge the spurious discursive coherence of her opponents. Any analysis of her life and work, therefore, must privilege her rhetoric and the influences which shaped it.

As Geneviève Fraisse and other historians of feminism have emphasized, women's challenge to the status quo has been primarily discursive, an act of breaking silence, of appropriating language to define situations in new and often subversive ways.[1] But all

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[1]Geneviève Fraisse, "Singularité féministe: Historiographie critique de l'histoire de féminisme en France," in *Une histoire des femmes est-elle possible?* ed. Michelle Perrot (Paris: Rivages, 1984), 189-204.

historical subjects operate within pre-existing communities or traditions of discourse, which exercise a powerful constraint on originality. Subordinate groups in particular must appropriate the discursive conventions of dominants, if they wish to be heard and responded to.[2] Deroin was certainly not immune to this dilemma. Like other socialist women in the first half of the nineteenth century, she was schooled in republican and socialist doctrines that were predominantly created by men. These in turn were grounded in assumptions about innate sexual difference which were difficult to harmonize with demands for sexual equality. Deroin tried to effect a synthesis of both "difference" and "equality" arguments, combining an emphasis on women's innate qualities of nuturance and conciliation with a parallel insistence that they be admitted to equal and full participation in public life.[3] Like many nineteenth-century advocates of women's emancipation, Deroin fits neither of Karen Offen's rather strained categories of "relational" or "individualist" feminism.[4] While relying on highly idealized arguments about women's innate maternal capacities, she also exhibited a strong orientation towards individual rights derived from enlightenment rationalism. Historians such as Claire

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[2]Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 3-8.

[3]Joan W. Scott's *Only Paradoxes to Offer: French Feminists and the Rights of Man* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), which analyzes Deroin's campaign to secure the vote in 1848 (57-89) was published after I wrote this section. I agree with her refusal of "difference" versus "equality" categories, but as indicated in the Introduction, believe that she slights Deroin's associational praxis and the centrality of her class discourse to her feminism.

[4]"Liberty, Equality and Justice for Women: The Theory and Practice of Feminism in 19th Century Europe," in *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, 2nd ed., ed. Renate Bridenthal, Claudia Koonz, Susan Stuard (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1987), 335-366. See also Nancy F. Cott, Comment on Karen Offen's "Defining feminism: a comparative historical approach," *Signs*, v. 15 (Autumn 1989): 203-205.

Goldberg Moses have praised the ability of women operating out of the Saint-Simonian tradition, many of whom were Deroin's colleagues and collaborators, to use difference arguments to support emancipatory claims on behalf of women.[5] But this effort, however understandable in the context of the age, was also deeply problematic. Deroin's discourse suffers from internal contradictions that undermine her two most cherished objectives. The first was securing equal civil and legal rights for women. The second was convincing her socialist colleagues that the emancipation of woman was the necessary precondition for the emancipation of the worker, that their fates were inseparably intertwined.

Michèle Riot-Sarcey believes that one should not look for too much logical consistency in the thought of socialist women such as Deroin. Riot-Sarcey argues that they were severely handicapped by the silence which greeted many of their efforts, the refusal of their male colleagues to take them seriously. This indifference forced them to engage in monologues and deprived them of an opportunity to sharpen their ideas by sustained debate. They reacted to external events and circumstances in their private lives, but did not evolve a body of coherent theory.[6] While there is some validity to this observation, it is also true that few male socialists were themselves paragons of logical consistency. Deroin's ideas do shift over time, but far less than those of her socialist-feminist contemporaries such as Pauline Roland, Eugénie Niboyet or Flora Tristan. There is a good deal of constancy in Deroin's world view and in the principles she enunciated

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[5]"'Difference' in Historical Perspective: Saint Simonian Feminism," in *Feminism, Socialism and French Romanticism*, Claire G. Moses & Leslie W. Rabine (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 17-84.

[6]*La démocratie à l'épreuve des femmes* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1994), 24-25.

from her early adult years until her death. Like many people, she became more overtly religious as she aged, but she was an idealist even in her youth, who consistently elevated the spiritual over the material.

It is not difficult to discern the assumptions that lay behind Deroin's polemics and her political and associational praxis. It is less easy to assess the relative influence exerted by external events and conditions, personal experience, and dominant discourses, in shaping Deroin's ideology and her behavior. Historians influenced by post-modernist linguistic and literary theory have rightly cautioned against the traditional tendency in social and labor history, derived from Marxism, to assume a causal connection between material conditions and ideology, or between experience and consciousness. They argue that language shapes the way that people understand and interpret the social world and make sense of their own experience, and that it is more important to focus on linguistic processes of meaning-making and contention than on "objective" conditions, if one wishes to understand why people behave or think the way that they do.[7] This perspective has

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[7]Among the most forceful advocates for the linguistic paradigm in social history is Joan W. Scott, "On Gender, Language and Working-Class History," in *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 53-67 and Scott, "Experience" in *Feminists Theorize the Political*, ed. Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott, (New York: Routledge, 1992), 22-41. See also Gareth Steadman Jones, *Languages of class: Studies in English working class history 1832-1982* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Jacques Rancière, "The Myth of the Artisan: Critique of a Category of Social History," *International Labor and Working Class History*, no. 24 (1983): 1-16, and *The Nights of Labor* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989); William H. Sewell, Jr., "Toward A Post-Materialist Rhetoric for Labor History," in *Rethinking Labor History: Essays on Discourse and Class Analysis*, ed. Lenard R. Berlanstein (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993): 15-38 and Donald Reid, "Reflections on Labor History and Language," in ibid., 39-54. For a critique of Scott's linguistic paradigm see comments by Brian Palmer and Christine Stansell, *International Labor and Working Class History*, no. 31 (1987): 14-29.

forced labor historians to rethink their premises, and a new interpretive paradigm appears to be emerging. It emphasizes the crucial role that discourse plays in shaping consciousness and activity, but also recognizes that this is a two-way street. New experience or changing material conditions can also give rise to changes in consciousness, and ultimately to new discourses.[8]

Because so little is known for certain about Deroin's life before 1848, a traditional biographical account is not feasible. What follows therefore is an attempt at "genealogy" - an effort to trace her intellectual lineage by locating the likely origins of her most frequently reiterated ideas and constructs. Since Deroin rarely acknowledged other theorists directly in her published work, this must be done by inference and analogy. Her sole contemporary biographer, Adrien Ranvier, mentions a number of theorists that she allegedly studied, but what specific works she read and what she thought of them can only be conjectured.[9] Her rhetoric does exhibit repetitive themes, however, which suggest their likely antecedents. The opening four chapters of Part Three will examine Deroin's intellectual debt to Saint-Simonianism, Fourierism, and the communism of Morelly and Cabet, from which she derived her concepts of distributive justice.

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[8]For essays incorporating the new synthesis, see *Rethinking Labor History*; also Stuart Hall, "Signification, Representation, Ideology: Althusser and Post-Structuralist Debates," *Critical Studies in Mass Communications*, 2, no. 2 (June 1985): 91-114.

[9]M. A. Ranvier, "Une Féministe de 1848," *Bulletin de la Révolution de 1848,* v. 24, (March-May 1908): 318-355; v. 25: (Jan. 1909): 421-430 and "Rapport de M. A. Ranvier sur Jeanne Deroin", *Les Associations de Production: Comptes Rendus des Congrès National & International. Tenues les 8-10 et 11-13 Juillet 1900.* (Paris: Nouvelle Association Ouvrière, 1900): 129-151.

The outbreak of the Revolution of 1848 provided Deroin with a long-awaited opportunity to break away from her family responsibilities and to assume the role of a socialist journalist and organizer. The final two chapters of this study examine Deroin's public career: first, her campaign to secure the right to vote for women, culminating in her candidacy for the Legislative Assembly in April 1849, and second, her efforts between August 1849 and May 1850 to organize a Union of Associations of Workers that would embrace both male and female workers in all trades. They consider how Deroin's projects were shaped by the interaction of her circumstances, her experiences, and the discourses that she employed. Like Flora Tristan and Pauline Roland, Jeanne Deroin attempted to appropriate the concept of "association", with all of its multiple and contested meanings, and transform it into an emancipatory ideal broad enough to embrace *tous et toutes.* How well she succeeded in this ideological work, and the kinds of resistance that it aroused, are analyzed below.

1: "The ground trembles at our step": 1805-1832

Jeanne Deroin never completed the autobiography she was working on in the last years of her life, and her personal papers, with the exception of a handful of letters, have disappeared. It is not possible therefore to glimpse her in unguarded moments, as it is Flora Tristan, whose diaries, scrawled hastily on her *tour de France*, and numerous surviving letters, reveal her intimate thoughts and feelings.[10] Deroin's polemics and her praxis are all that remain, other than a brief biography published by a young socialist, Adrien Ranvier, who was twenty-five when Louise Michel introduced him to Deroin two years before her death.[11] Perhaps Deroin preferred it this way. Her silence about her personal life - her family background, her childhood, her husband and her children - is remarkable in an age of romantic effusion. Deroin's reticence may have been a protective reflex to buffer loved ones from the consequences of her notoriety. Possibly it reflected simple modesty. But it may also have stemmed from her desire to construct her life as a coherent narrative of engagement. The central focus of her published work is not her private life, with its inevitable messiness and contradiction, but her moral quest, her search for ethical certainty. It is also an apologia for her activism, for injecting herself

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[10]Flora Tristan, *Le tour de France: Etat actuel de la classe ouvrière sous l'aspect moral, intellectuel et matériel. Journal 1843-1844*, 2 v. Text and notes by Jules-L. Puech; preface by Michel Collinet (1973 ed.). New intro. by Stéphane Michaud (Paris: Maspero, 1980); *Lettres: réunies, présentées et annotées par Stéphane Michaud* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1980).

[11]"Une Féministe de 1848", *Bulletin de la Révolution de 1848*, **24,** (March-May 1908), **25** (January 1909); "Rapport de M. A. Ranvier sur Jeanne Deroin", *Les Associations de Production: Comptes Rendus des Congrès National & International*, (Paris: 1900): 129-151.

into the public sphere, for behaving, as Eugène Pelletan put it "as if I would shoot off a pistol in the street to attract attention."[12]

Deroin represented her public career as a categorical imperative, as a logical consequence of her belief that those who possess truth have a duty to act on it, to confront all human prejudice and error. "Indifference is a crime, neutrality a culpable weakness," she asserted as a young woman.[13] "What is most important," she wrote later in life, "is not to discuss, to formulate theories or plans of organization, but to act, to put in practice the most simple and most certain means for arriving at the goal progressively and peacefully."[14]

In a remarkable "Profession of Faith", written in her mid-twenties when she was contemplating joining the Saint-Simonian movement, Deroin chronicled her spiritual odyssey from childhood through early adulthood. In it she described her passage from youthful idealism through indignation, doubt, and despair as she discovered the injustices of life, to borderline nihilism, to ultimate redemption spurred by the conviction that human suffering was not inevitable. Characteristically her salvation came not through divine revelation and personal apotheosis, as it did for Tristan, but through socratic reasoning. It seemed self-evident to her that the universe in all its majesty, harmony, and

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[12]Jeanne Deroin, Shepard's Bush, England to Leon Richer, Paris, s.d. (1876?), Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris (hereafter BHVP), Fonds Bouglé, carton 4247.

[13]"Profession de foi de Mlle. Jenny de Roin," in *De la Liberté des femmes: Lettres de dames au Globe*, textes recueillis et présentées par M. Riot-Sarcey, (Paris: Côte-femmes, 1992), 132.

[14]*Lettre Aux Associations sur l'Organisation du Credit*, (Paris: Gustave Sandré, 1851).

order must have a first cause. That first cause must be God, who as a principle of order and harmony, and sovereignly intelligent, could not be held responsible for evil and disorder. Thus the corruption and injustice which reigned on earth must not be God's will, but the consequence of man's lack of moral understanding. God had given man absolute free will, and if he used it to discover and apply universal ethical truths, "moral perfection" was possible, and with it, ultimate human happiness. Deroin's affinity for Saint-Simonianism derived at least in part from its rejection of original sin and its promise of indefinite human progress.[15]

What makes her "profession of faith" so striking is not only its high moral tone, so typical of the romantic temperament of the age, but the strong critical intelligence that repeatedly breaks through the rather conventional moralizing discourse. There is none of the effusive gratitude towards the Saint-Simonian leadership found in so many other feminine professions, and certainly no paeans to the putative "fathers" of the school, Prosper Enfantin and Saint-Amand Bazard. Nor are there any appeals, replete with barely concealed sexual longing, for personal interaction and support.[16] Determined to preserve her autonomy, Deroin maintained her emotional and intellectual distance from the hierarchy, and may never have joined the movement. The sacerdotal pretensions of the leadership and the religious claims of the doctrine aroused her skepticism and alarm. "What guarantee can they give us," she asked "that their successors will not imitate the

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[15]"Profession de foi," 116-139.

[16]For characteristic examples of more emotional and sexualized appeals by women to the male leadership, see Riot-Sarcey's collection, *De la liberté des femmes: Lettres de dames au Globe*, and the letters by Pauline Roland and other Saint-Simoniennes published in Claire Goldberg Moses & Leslie Wahl Rabine, *Feminism, Socialism and French Romanticism*, 218-221.

successors of Saint Peter?" "If religious beliefs have produced some good, how much evil have they caused! she lamented. "How much tears and blood they have caused to be poured out!" While admitting that the doctrine had awakened in her "sweet dreams of peace and universal fraternity," she nevertheless was uneasy. "I still doubt," she admitted. "I want my conscience to be enlightened particularly on all the details of political organization."[17] Deroin's acute sensitivity to the importance of political power, which distinguished her from most of her feminine colleagues in 1848, is revealed here in embryo.

Did this strong desire for independence first surface as a willful young girl attempted to break free of parental or social strictures? Deroin does not tell us. She seems to lack the confessional impulse that led Suzanne Voilquin, another gifted Saint-Simonienne, to pour out the story of her proletarian childhood, her unhappy affair with a young medical student, her unsuccessful marriage, and the voluntary divorce she granted her unfaithful husband.[18] Deroin's family of origin is a cipher; she states that they were poor, but that is all.[19] Her silence about her mother is particularly curious in light of her later elevation of the mother-educator to a quasi-religious figure. Ranvier claims that Deroin's mother was "a woman of another epoch who judged that instruction was useless for a woman."[20] Deroin nevertheless became a self-described voracious reader, who

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[17]"Profession de foi," 116, 126-28.

[18]*Souvenirs d'une fille du peuple ou La Saint-Simonienne en Égypte*, intro. Lydia Elhadad, (Paris: Maspero, 1978).

[19]Deroin, London, to Hubertine Auclert, 10 January 1886, BHVP, Fonds Bouglé, Carton 4247.

[20]Ranvier, "Une Féministe de 1848," 320.

claimed she felt called "like the infant Samuel" to meditate from an early age on religious and social questions.[21] There were gaps, however, in her formal education, and she failed several times to earn the *brevet de capacité* required to teach primary school, because she lacked cursive writing and computation skills. Oblivious early in life to social distinctions, she soon discovered their implications: "The need to work came to make me understand that deprived of fortune I must renounce the pleasure of learning."[22]

The ambiguities and silences in her account suggest that she occupied that unstable middle ground between what Jacques Rancière describes as an autodidact proletariat, longing for bourgeois recognition and the leisure to be creative, and the sympathetic strata of petty-bourgeois intellectuals eager to connect with them.[23] As a girl, she apparently enjoyed the rare luxury of time for reading and contemplation, rather than being put to work at a early age. She has no laments as a young woman about sewing from dawn until midnight, of the kind found in Suzanne Voilquin's autobiography and Désirée Véret's letters to Charles Fourier.[24] Deroin never explains how she supported herself before her marriage in her late twenties. This union, to a minor official employed in an old age home, probably gave her a margin of security, but did not free her from genteel

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[21]Deroin, London, to the editor of *De la Direction Providentielle*, s.d. (1881-1882?), BHVP, Fonds Bouglé, Carton 4247.

[22]Deroin, "Profession de foi," 128-29.

[23]J. Rancière, *The Nights of Labor: The Workers' Dream in Nineteenth Century France* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989).

[24]Lettres de D. Véret 1830-1833-1834 à Fourier, Archives Nationales (hereafter AN) 10 AS 42 dos. 8. (Fonds Fourier et Considèrant); Suzanne Voilquin, *Souvenirs d'une fille du peuple*, 93-99.

poverty. Like a number of other socialist women in 1848, she was, to borrow a phrase from Geneviève Fraisse, socially "unclassifiable."[25] Neither a comfortable bourgeois or a true worker, she lacked a secure social base or a natural constituency.

Deroin was born on the last day December, 1805. She belonged to the generation whose most vivid memories of the revolution were of the warfare and hardship it engendered. A staunch and patriotic republican, she was also a lifelong pacifist whose fear of violence and conflict were widely shared in this era, not only by conservatives, but by republicans and socialists as well.[26] The theme of woman's role as peacemaker and conciliator which echoes ceaselessly through her work testifies to her obsessive fear of a renewed outbreak of class warfare in French society. Deroin's youth was spent in a period of political repression and social fluidity. The destruction of the ancien regime and its value system had swept away the old social structure, but a stable order had not emerged to replace it. The Revolution of 1830, so pregnant with promise of social regeneration for socialists and republicans, had proved stillborn. For the cohort who reached adulthood in the 1830s, the dominant mood was one of vague foreboding:

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[25]"Singularité féministe: Historiographie critique de l'histoire de féminisme en France," *Une histoire des femmes est-elle possible?*, ed. M. Perrot, (Paris: 1984): 195-96. Lydia Elhadad describes women such as Deroin as "*femmes déplacées*" by virtue of their youthful exclusion from conventional social bonds: the atelier, masculine politics, marriage. "Femmes prénommées: Les prolétaires saint-simoniennes rédactrices de 'La Femme Libre,' 1832-1834," *Les Révoltes Logiques* (1977), 4: 63-88, 5: 29-60; quotation, 76.

[26]Deroin, London, to Hubertine Auclert, 10 Jan. 1886, BHVP, Fonds Bouglé, Carton 4247. "Born at the beginning of imperial despotism I was more profoundly moved by the [illegible] and sufferings of mothers and the massacres of the victims of war than the false glory of conquests. I witnessed the despotism of kings, the hypocrisy of priests and their adherents, succeed imperial despotism."

> The ground trembles at our step: everything toters, everything crumbles around us; all the religious and political institutions resemble old buildings undermined at the base. We are in a century of light and obscurity reigns: all is disorder and confusion, each one walks gropingly and asks with anxiety, where are we? where are we going?[27]

In this atmosphere of mingled hope and anxiety it is not surprising that even strong anti-clericals like Deroin would be attracted by the possibility of a "new religion in the Nineteenth Century." Deroin learned of Saint-Simonianism by reading the *Globe*, the widely circulated propaganda organ of the movement. She may have attended the public preaching held weekly in the auditorium of the rue Taranne. Also instrumental was her future husband, Desroches, who tutored her in the faith. It is characteristic of Deroin that she says almost nothing about this relationship, which resulted in a civil wedding and a union that endured until his death in 1853. In response to an attack by the journal *La Liberté* in April 1848 on the women associated with *La Voix des Femmes*, she described herself as "the happy wife of a man endowed with a noble heart and an elevated spirit; we have obtained reciprocity in marriage...."[28] It is from Ranvier we learn that her husband promised to respect her freedom of action as a condition of the union, a loophole she exploited in 1848, when she left him, placing their three children with friends, to take up an activist career.[29] Her lifelong friend Hortense Wild claimed that Deroin had hoped for a celibate marriage, but if this was her plan, it clearly proved

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[27]Deroin, "Profession de foi," 116.

[28]Deroin, open letter to the editor of *La Liberté*, pub. in *La Voix des Femmes*, 19 April 1848.

[29]Ranvier, "Une Féministe de 1848," 321.

untenable.[30] Whether Desroches or any mortal could have measured up to her girlhood fantasy is debatable:

> I would encounter, I told myself a philosopher, disinherited like me of the goods of the earth, poor like Job, but rich in knowledge, ugly like Esope [sic] but loving and virtuous, he would communicate to me the gifts of knowledge, I would pay him in love and gratitude; linked by holy knots we would console each other about the sorrows of life.[31]

Michèle Riot-Sarcey believes that what attracted women like Deroin and her later collaborators, Désirée Véret, Suzanne Voilquin, and Eugénie Niboyet, to Saint-Simonianism, was their thirst for personal liberty. The social and sexual freedom which it offered was far more important to them than the promise of economic support which, as Jacques Rancière has suggested, attracted most proletarian converts.[32] There is no question that Deroin admired Saint-Simonianism for its forceful critique of women's subordination. For a young woman both drawn towards and repulsed by the possibility of marriage, the thought of a relationship based on obedience was intolerable: "never I told myself would I buy happiness at the price of slavery... I will never recognize the law of the strongest, never will I give my adhesion to principles of which my conscience disapproves...."[33] It is also true, however, that most young Saint-Simoniennes were avidly seeking a transcendent cause that would give their mundane lives meaning and purpose. By linking together the emancipation of women and of workers, and by

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[30]H. Wild, *Actes du congrès des Oeuvres féministes*, 1889, pub. in 1890: 473-74.

[31]"Profession de foi," 128-29.

[32]Riot-Sarcey, *La démocratie à l'épreuve des femmes*, 58-66; Jacques Rancière, *The Nights of Labor*, 192-228.

[33]"Profession de foi," 129.

asserting that both were necessary preconditions for human advancement, the movement allowed them to sublimate their personal ambition in the service of a higher ideal.

The "law of the strongest" was to become a leitmotif in Deroin's work, a shorthand for all forms of oppression which linked together the powerless and disenfranchised, proletarians and women. It enabled her to theorize a community of interest between the two groups which became the organizing myth of her ideology. What she most admired in Saint-Simonianism was its denunciation of the "two odious privileges left over from the time of barbarism... the slavery of women and the right of inheritance."[34] A fervent egalitarian, she was uneasy with the doctrine's emphasis on a natural hierarchy of talent, in which she saw the germs of a self-perpetuating elite: "The reign of capacity is without doubt much preferable to the domination of incapable men who owe their elevation only to chance and to birth," she admitted, "but man always commands man, man always obeys man! What are the limits of command and obedience?"[35]

Like modern feminists such as Gerda Lerner, Deroin believed that the paradigm for all social relationships of "command and obedience" was man's historic subordination of woman, and all iniquitous privileges were but echoes of this primal form of domination.[36] Throughout her career she insisted, reversing the conventional socialist formula, that "the proletariat cannot be abolished except with the serfdom of woman"

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[34]Ibid., 121.

[35]Ibid., 127.

[36]For a modern version of this theme, see Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

because "the exploitation of man by man is the result of the exploitation of woman by man."[37]

Deroin never showed any enthusiasm for Enfantin's endorsement of "mobile" sexual natures and free unions, as did sexual radicals such as Claire Démar and Pauline Roland.[38] As Claire Goldberg Moses and Barbara Taylor have demonstrated for the Saint-Simonians and Owenites respectively, the debate over sexuality was particularly divisive in these sects, not only because of differences in the way men and women conceptualized ideal sexual relationships, but also because of sharp differences among women themselves.[39] The uneasy truce between Saint-Simonian proletariennes who sported "flaming" and "dahlia" colored ribbons to advertise their support of sexual "mobility" or monogamous fidelity was symbolic of fissures that ultimately brought the

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[37]*L'Opinion des Femmes*, No. 2, August 1848: 2.

[38]Claire Démar, *textes sur l'affranchissement des femmes (1832-1833)*, ed. Valentin Pelosse, (Paris: Payot, 1976). See particularly Démar's polemic in favor of free love, "Ma Loi d'Avenir (1833) in which she repudiates the notion that there must be social control over amorous relations in favor of "le mystère" -la liberté du désir", 68 ff. For Roland's sexual views, see Edith Thomas, *Pauline Roland: Socialisme et Féminisme au XIXe Siècle* (Paris: Marcel Rivière, 1956), 57-72 and Roland's letters to Aglaé Saint-Hilaire in Moses and Rabine, *Feminism, Socialism and French Romanticism*, 255-272.

[39]Claire G. Moses, "Saint-Simonian Men/Saint-Simonian Women: The Transformation of Feminist Thought in 1830's France," *Journal of Modern History* (1982) 2: 240-67; Moses, "Difference in Historical Perspective: Saint-Simonian Feminism," in *Feminism, Socialism and French Romanticism*, (Bloomington: 1993), 17-84; Barbara Taylor, *Eve and the New Jerusalem: Socialism and Feminism in the Nineteenth Century*, (New York: Pantheon Books 1983), 41-48.

movement down.[40] As Moses and Taylor argue, the rehabilitation of female sexuality common to Fourierist, Owenite and Saint-Simonian ideology freed women in theory from traditional constraints, but not from social opprobrium if they dared to indulge their libido in the real world. These movements also failed to provide any realistic means for women in free unions to support themselves and their children. It was the harsh difficulties of unwed motherhood and economic hardship that turned youthful rebels like Pauline Roland into middle-aged advocates of compulsory monogamy, a sexual conversion that characterized the entire generation of socialist women by 1848.[41]

Late in life, Deroin told Hubertine Auclert that the Saint-Simonians had undoubtedly made grave mistakes, but that "it was necessary to consider that the most intelligent were only men who had not completely acquired moral understanding themselves, which is why they called woman to complete the work of social regeneration."[42] Deroin's essentialist assumption that "women" as a category shared a

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[40]Suzanne Voilquin, "Extrait du Règlement qui unit les femmes nouvelles," *La Femme de l'Avenir: Apostolat des Femmes*, No. 7, October 1832, 62-64. Also see following article (untitled) by Josephine Felicité, 64-65.

[41]In a series of letters to Pierre Leroux published in *Le Peuple* under the heading "On Association" (27 November 1848; 11, 18, 25 December 1848; 25-26 February 1849), Roland sets forth her own vision of moral community, in which "virginity is sacred, engagement is sacred, marriage is sacred." Divorce would be treated as a "veritable fall" and divorced spouses would suffer reversion to legal minority. See her "Rules of the Family", *Le Peuple*, 25 Dec. 1848. On the sexual conservatism of the women of 1848 see Edith Thomas, *Pauline Roland: Socialisme et Féminisme au XIXe Siècle* (Paris: Marcel Rivière, 1956), 114-115; Michèle Riot-Sarcy, "La Conscience Féministe des Femmes de 1848: Jeanne Deroin, Désirée Gay" in *Un Fabuleux Destin: Flora Tristan*, ed. Stéphane Michaud (Dijon: EUD, 1984), 157-165.

[42]Deroin, London, to Hubertine Auclert, 10 January 1886, BHVP, Fonds Bouglé, Carton 4247.

common moral perspective was belied by the distance separating Claire Démar, who wrote a caustic attack on the hypocrisy of contemporary sexual mores and was a passionate defender of woman's right to sexual freedom, and Suzanne Voilquin, who recoiled from such bluntness and took refuge in a conventional defense of Christian monogamy and maternalism.[43]

Deroin apparently never believed that if women were truly enlightened, they would opt for passionate over altruistic engagement. The fundamental obstacle that she saw to women's fulfillment was not sexual repression, but the perversion of their natures by inadequate education and opportunity. This made them incapable of understanding their "true vocation" and reduced them to "seducing and capturing their cowardly oppressors."[44] When she envisaged what kind of personal bond might replace the slavery and degradation of conventional unions, it was not amorous relationships, but a higher form of monogamy: "the sacred association of man and woman whose conditions will be reciprocal and freely entered into between wife and husband." The free woman would not be the libertine, but "an angel of peace and of conciliation whose soft and powerful influence will unite all of the members of the family in a perfect and sacred harmony."[45] Deroin's lifelong affinities were with more puritanical Saint-Simonians

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[43]See Suzanne Voilquin's preface to Demar's *Ma Loi d'Avenir*, published after the latter's suicide, in which she outlines her differences with Démar's stance: *textes sur l'affranchisement des femmes (1832-1833)*, 154-165. Voilquin wrote numerous articles advocating traditional Christian sexual mores in the newspaper published by Saint-Simonian proletariennnes, *La Femme Libre, (Le Tribune des Femmes)*. See for example "Morale", No. 18, 20 July 1833, 233-38.

[44]Undated letter attached to Deroin's "Profession de foi," (prob. December 1832), in *De la liberté des femmes: Lettres de dames au Globe*, 133-39; quotation, 136.

[45]Ibid., 138-139.

such as Olinde Rodrigues and Pierre Leroux, who split with Enfantin in November 1831 in protest over his new sexual doctrines.[46] Both advocated the civic and legal emancipation of women, but were staunch supporters of monogamous marriage and conventional sexual norms. Deroin, who became steadily more mystical as she aged, wrote several effusive letters to Leroux in 1858, praising him as the "father of religious socialism" and even endorsing his doctrine of spiritual reincarnation.[47]

Like many republicans and socialists of her generation, Deroin rejected the arid and authoritarian Catholicism of the Restoration but yearned for a religion of the heart. Although she did not openly embrace the mystical populist Christianity of Felicité de Lamennais and the social catholics, her rhetorical tone is remarkably similar.[48] There is the same fervid, millenarian urgency, the same obsessive appeals to fraternity and love as a solvent of all social differences. There is little doubt that what drew her to the "new Christianity" of the Saint-Simonian was its emphasis on *amour*, universal sympathy. This ideal, embodied in the gospel commandment "love you one another", became another

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[46]"Rapport de M. A. Ranvier sur Jeanne Deroin", (1900): 131.

[47]Deroin, London, to Pierre Leroux, 9 June 1858, pub. in *L'Espérance, Rue Philosophique, Politique, Littéraire* (July 1858), 99-101.

[48]Compare the imagery of Deroin's profession of faith - "the ground trembles at our step; everything toters, everything crumbles around us" - with Lamennais's description of the present age: "Tout s'ébranle, tout se meut, tout prend un nouvel aspect." *Paroles d'un Croyant*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Eugène Renduel, 1834), 8. For a discussion of the importance of populist Catholicism to democ-soc ideology see Edward Berenson, *Populist Religion and Left-Wing Politics in France, 1830-1852* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1984); for the popularity of Lamennais, see ibid., 49-51.

leitmotif in her work.[49] It led her ultimately towards Christian communists such as Etienne Cabet, and inspired her to elevate "fraternity and solidarity" over liberty in her pantheon of values after 1848.

One of the most important legacies of Deroin's interaction with the Saint-Simonians was the contacts she made with other intelligent and ambitious women, a number of whom joined forces in 1848 on the editorial board of Eugénie Niboyet's journal, *La Voix des Femmes* and the affiliated *Société de la Voix des Femmes*. Deroin may have contributed to an earlier, pathbreaking journalistic venture, *La Femme Libre* (1832-34), founded by Saint-Simonian *prolétariennes* Désirée Véret and Marie-Reine Guindorf and subsequently edited by Suzanne Voilquin.[50] Since all contributors used first names as a protest against patriarchal dominance, it is impossible to tell if Deroin was in fact "Jeanne-Victoire", author of the "*Appel aux Femmes*" which inaugurated the

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[49]Again, the similarity with Lamennais is striking, viz. his injunction "*Aimez-vous les uns les autres, et vous ne craindrez ni les grands, ni les princes, ni les rois.*" *Paroles d'un croyant*, 18.

[50]The title of the journal was changed several times in the course of its short history (Aug. 1832-34). It also appeared under the masthead *La Femme Nouvelle, La Femme Affranchie, La Femme de l'Avenir: Apostolat des Femmes* and *Tribune des Femmes*. Analyses of this journal can be found in Marguerite Thibert, *Le Féminisme dans le Socialisme Français de 1830 à 1850* (Paris: Marcel Giard, 1926), 238-255; Evelyne Sullerot, *Histoire de la Presse Féminine en France, des Origines à 1848* (Paris: Librarie Armond Colin, 1966), 143-162; Lydia Elhadad, "Femmes prénommées: Les prolétaires saint-simoniennes rédactrices de 'La Femme Libre,' 1832-1834," *Les Révoltes Logiques* v. 4 (1977), 63-88 and v. 5, 29-60; Maïté Albistur and Daniel Armogathe, *Histoire Du Feminisme Français: du moyen âge à nos jours* (Paris: éditions des femmes, 1977), 281-283; Laure Adler, *À l'Aube du Féminisme: Les premières journalistes (1830-50)* (Paris: Payot, 1979), 43-51; Claire Goldberg Moses, "Saint-Simonian Men/Saint-Simonian Women: The Transformation of Feminist Thought in 1830's France," *Journal of Modern History* 54 (June 1982): 240-267; C. Moses and Leslie Wahl Rabine, *Feminism, Socialism and French Romanticism*, 46-54 and passim.

first edition. The "Appel" urges women to imitate the proletariat and claim their own liberation. It calls for women of all classes to join forces in this common endeavor. The author advises them to employ their "attractive power" and "their irresistible charms and their beauty" to demand equality of the men who want to marry them. They "can calm the bellicose tendencies of men, their search for glory and grandeur" and inspire them with "a holy enthusiasm for the immense work which is in preparation." If this is indeed Deroin speaking, it is a rare instance of her urging women to use their sexuality for social purposes, perhaps reflecting a younger woman's confidence in her own attractive powers.[51]

La Femme Libre was an independent venture that was not supported by Enfantin and the Saint-Simonian hierarchy. As such, it was an act of considerable self-assertion in an environment where male tutelage was the norm. The editors, all genuine workers, were devoted to providing a forum in which women like themselves could develop their own voices. As "Joséphine-Felicité" put it succinctly, "Women alone will say what liberty they want":

> For too long men have advised us, directed us, dominated us: it is up to us to work for our liberty by ourselves; up to us to work without the aid of our masters.[52]

Although there were many differences of opinion among the contributors, especially on the thorny issue of sexual mores, they shared a belief in innate sexual difference, the

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[51]*La Femme Libre*, 15 August 1832. Evelyne Sullerot believes that "Jeanne-Victoire" was Deroin's pseudonym; Deroin was 27 at the time. *Histoire de la Presse Féminine en France*, 149.

[52]*La Femme de l'Avenir: Apostolat des Femmes*, No. 6 (masthead undated; Nov. 1832?), 45-46.

complementarity of male and female natures, and the apostolic mission of enlightened womanhood. The masthead of the first edition carried the banner "With the emancipation of woman will come the emancipation of the worker." By accepting the gendered construction of "women" and "worker" (or alternatively, "the people") as separate categories, they inadvertently contributed to their own exclusion from a class to which they belonged. The associational projects they proposed were separatist in character as well. Women would found their own solidary groups, and work within them for their own advancement, while workers would proceed on their own parallel track. Marie-Reine Guindorf, who authored several important articles on association for the journal, argued that the best way for women to achieve equality was to exhibit complete feminine solidarity:

> Women, understand this well, it is by association that we will be able to achieve this goal: thus let us unite, leave aside all the little rivalries which too often divide us, form but a sole corps in which each member will act according to his own ideas, but will bring everything back to a unitary center. Doubtless we have not yet arrived at the much desired moment when we form a harmonic corps, acting under the direction of chiefs whom we obey with pleasure, because their authority will be based completely on love. But we can hasten this moment by uniting...[53]

Guindorf's strategy anticipated by almost twenty years that adopted by Deroin and other socialist women in 1848. They originally concentrated on organizing women's associations and forging cross-class alliances between rich and poor women, assuming incorrectly that they shared a natural community of interest. Only after the failure of most of these initiatives, and the National Assembly's ban on women's membership in clubs at the end of July 1848, did the disadvantages of such an approach become painfully obvious. Despite her unshakable belief in the natural solidarity of all women,

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[53]"De l'Esprit d'Association," *Tribune des Femmes*, No. 15: 199-200.

Deroin did move to broaden her base after the collapse of her initial endeavors, both by seeking the support of male colleagues for her political candidacy to the Legislative Assembly, and by attempting to organize a Union of Associations that would embrace workers of both sexes.

2: *"Des ombres sanglantes ont obscuré (sic) la rayon de lumière"*: 1832-1848

The monarchy of Louis-Philippe witnessed an outpouring of works on the "social question" and the "organization of labor." This flood of tracts and *enquêtes* was inspired by the spread of capitalist processes, the growing gulf between rich and poor, and increasing labor unrest and worker radicalization, as evidenced by the uprisings of the Lyonnais *canuts* in 1831 and 1834.[54] Bourgeois republicans were attempting to reach out and propagandize workers through societies such as the *Amis du Peuple* and the *Société des Droits de l'homme*. Artisan intellectuals were combining ideas drawn from liberal political theory, utopian socialism, corporate idioms and traditions, and their own political and workshop experience to create a new ethic of masculine labor dignity and trade solidarity.[55] New journals created by and for workers began to appear, giving

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[54]Among the most influential of the social investigations of the age were Eugène Buret, *De la misère des classes laborieuses en Angleterre et en France* (Paris: 1840); Honoré Frégier, *Des classes dangereuses dans la populations des grandes villes...*, (Paris: 1840); and Louis Réné Villermé, *Tableau de l'état physique et moral des ouvriers employés dans les manufactures de coton, de laine et de soie* (Paris: 1840). For a discussion of these works see Hilde Rigaudias-Weiss, *Les Enquêtes ouvrières en France entre 1830 et 1840* (Paris: 1936). On the Lyon uprising see Robert J. Bezucha, *The Lyon Uprising of 1834: Social and Political Conflict in the Early July Monarchy* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1974).

[55]See Part One of this work. Pathbreaking studies of the evolution of artisan political culture under the July Monarchy include William H. Sewell, Jr., *Work and Revolution in France: The language of labor from the old regime to 1848* and Jacques Rancière, *Night of the Proletariat: The Workers Dream in Nineteenth Century France.*

voice to proletarian grievances and proposals for reform.[56] This intellectual ferment raises the question: what were the formative influences that shaped Deroin's discourse and world view in these years? What did she read and experience that led her to throw herself in the public arena in 1848 as an advocate for workers and for women?

Deroin's intellectual odyssey is difficult to track between her youthful profession of faith in 1831 and her sudden emergence as an activist in 1848. She apparently turned inward, her energies absorbed by the cares of a growing household. Her marriage to Desroches was followed by the birth of three children, two girls and a boy, her son afflicted with hydrocephaly. Hoping to educate her children, she decided to found a school which would be open to other children of the poor. The authorities were not cooperative; suspicious of her civil marriage, they several times denied her the necessary *brevet de capacité*, citing her poor handwriting and math skills. Only with the intervention of a populist priest, Abbé Deguerry, was she finally able to prevail and open her school, which she operated until the outbreak of the Revolution of 1848.[57] Adrien Ranvier claims that this experience brought home to Deroin the costs of educational

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[56]Aside from the short-lived journal, *L'Artisan* whose four numbers appeared briefly after the Revolution of 1830, the worker-edited newspapers Deroin was most likely to encounter in Paris before the Revolution of 1848 were *L'Atelier*, publ. September 1840 to July 1850, *La Ruche Populaire*, publ. February 1839 to March 1845, and *L'Union*, publ. December 1843 to September 1846. Étienne Cabet's *Le Populaire*, publ. March 1841 to 1851, although not worker-written, had a large working-class readership.

[57]Deguerry rallied to Louis-Philippe in 1830, but became an ardent republican in 1848 and one of the best known socialist priests of the Second Republic. He ran unsuccessfully for election to the Constituent Assembly in April 1848 and supported the electoral manifesto of *La Démocratie Pacifique*. He eventually rallied to the Empire and was curé of the Madeleine when he was shot as a hostage by the Commune in 1871.

deprivation for women, and made her determined to address this problem.[58] Her school was undoubtedly a charitable rather than a profit-making venture, since she was incapable of twisting arms for fees. When she ran a school later in London for children of those proscribed after Bonaparte's coup, those who sent their children often neglected to pay her and she suffered severe poverty.[59] In Paris, she had Desroches's salary to support her, but the pay of an official in an old age home could not have been enough to keep a family of five much above genteel poverty. Her gritty and unromanticized depiction of the day in the life of a young working-class mother, written for her *Almanach des Femmes pour 1852*, suggests that she was well acquainted with exhaustion and drudgery of domestic life on the margins.[60] However, compulsive readers tend to stay that way, and like the peripatetic Gauny and the other artisan intellectuals so admired by Jacques Rancière, she surely had her white nights of study as well.

There is no evidence that she was involved with any of the new women's journals that sprang up during the July Monarchy. They catered to a bourgeois clientele, and she would probably have found their emphasis on fashion and decorum frivolous and offensive. One journal, the *Gazette des Femmes*, published from 1836 to 1838 by Herbinot de Mauchamps and his companion, Marie-Madeleine Poutret de Mauchamps, was an avid champion of women's legal rights, and bombarded the Chamber of Deputies with petitions calling for legalization of divorce, property rights for married women, and

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[58]"Une Féministe de 1848," 320.

[59]Deroin, London, to Leon Richer, s.d. (prob. 1875-76), BHVP, Fonds Bouglé, Carton 4247.

[60]"Travail des Femmes", *Almanach des Femmes pour 1852* (Paris: 1851), 70-76.

similar reforms.[61] The de Mauchamps's salon on Thursday evenings was a gathering place for women of advanced views, and attracted at various times Eugénie Niboyet, Flora Tristan, and two women of letters who collaborated with Niboyet on *La Voix des Femmes* in 1848, Hortense Allart and Anaïs Ségalas.[62] However, the journal was very *juste-milieu*, and although it advocated complete legal and civil equality of the sexes, it supported a property franchise and the revised Charter of 1830.[63] It is unlikely that Deroin, with her fierce republican and egalitarian sentiments, would have felt comfortable there.

The most important influences on Deroin's thought appear to have been socialist intellectuals, not the workerist press or artisan savants. Unlike Flora Tristan, Deroin never alluded to the tracts of compagnonnage reformers such as Agricol Perdiguier, Pierre Moreau, and Adolphe Boyer. She was apparently not drawn to the kind of artisan "brotherhood" they were promoting, nor did she, like Tristan, need their support for an apostolic mission to the working masses. Ranvier, Deroin's biographer, cites Morelly, Mably, Saint-Simon, Fourier, Blanqui (presumably the younger), Comte, Leroux and Cabet as the theorists that she sampled and/or studied. However, Ranvier only knew Deroin in the last years of her life, and seems to have a somewhat shaky grasp of the

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[61]For a discussion of these petitions see Geneviève Fraisse, "L'Usage du Droit Naturel dans Les Écrits Féministes (1830-1850), in *Un Fabuleux Destin: Flora Tristan*, ed. Stéphane Michaud (Dijon: EUD, 1984), 149-153.

[62]Flora Tristan, Paris, to Eugénie Niboyet, 11 October 1836 publ. in *Lettres: réunis, présentées et annotées par Stéphane Michaud*, (Paris: 1980), No. 29: 64-65. The letter indicates that they were both in touch with Mme. Pouret de Mauchamps, who together with Herbinot de Mauchamps, directed the *Gazette des Femmes*.

[63]Marguerite Thibert, *Le Féminisme dans le Socialisme Français de 1830 à 1850*, 263; Claire Goldberg Moses, *French Feminism in the Nineteeth Century*, 106-107.

differences between the various socialist schools in the 1830s and 1840s. His attributions, therefore, must be regarded with caution. He claims in one account that Deroin finished by "adopting completely" the ideas of Cabet and Fourier.[64] In another, he alleges that after her encounter with Saint-Simonianism, she "threw herself into Fourierism", and remained a "fervent adept to the end of her life."[65] However, he also indicates that she was dissatisfied with the lack of "community" in Fourierism, and after studying various theorists, including Comte and Leroux, moved towards Cabet's Icarian Communism, which she combined with Fourierism.[66] Since the Icarians and the Fourierists were diametrically opposed on a number of fundamental issues, and engaged in bitter polemics with each other in the 1840s, Deroin's ability to combine ideas from both camps suggests either a pronounced eclecticism or a somewhat unsystematic willingness to ignore large blocks of doctrine she found irrelevant or contradictory.

Deroin in fact drew on several traditions in developing her mature ideology, including Jacobin republicanism, Saint-Simonianism and Fourierism, Icarian communism, and Proudhonian mutualism. She created her own synthesis out of a rights-based political approach derived from the Enlightenment, a communist ethic of distributive justice, a mutualist economics, and a utopian socialist teleology. She never understood association

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[64]"Une Féministe de 1848", *Bulletin de la Révolution de 1848*, 24 (March-May 1908): 319.

[65]"Rapport de M. A. Ranvier sur Jeanne Deroin", *Les Associations de Production: Comptes Rendus des Congrès National & International* (Paris: 1900): 130-131.

[66]Ibid. Gustave LeFrançois, a socialist who met Deroin for the first time in 1849, also claimed that she was a "phalansterian," as well as a religious pantheist. *Souvenirs d'un Révolutionnaire* (Bruxelles: 1902), 80.

as a specific type of community, as did Cabet and Fourier, but as a set of moral principles around which a number of different types of community might plausibly be organized. The fact that she shared emotional affinities with Christian communists like Cabet did not prevent her from attempting to collaborate in 1848 with Fourierists such as Victor Considérant and Republicans such as Louis Blanc, or from borrowing economic ideas from her chief antagonist, P.-J. Proudhon. She always believed that women represented the principles of peace and conciliation, and made them central to her praxis. Her pragmatic ability to bring people together without regard to their ideological affiliation was undoubtedly the key to her success as the guiding spirit and organizer of the Union of Associations of Workers in 1849-1850.

3: *"Le bonheur est assurément le désir de tous"*: The influence of Fourierism

With the collapse of the Saint-Simonian movement at the end of 1832, a number of disillusioned acolytes began to drift towards Fourierism. Fourierism was taking on new life in the early 1830s under the impulse of a younger generation of converts, who sanitized and popularized Fourier's rather abstruse and occasionally bizarre ideas. These included the former Saint-Simonian evangelists Jules Lechevalier and Abel Transon, and Fourier's chief disciple, the polytechnician Victor Considérant.[67] The *École Sociétaire*, established and directed by Considérant, tried to present Fourierism as both an exact science and a system of ethics compatible with Christianity, maintaining that Jesus was a misunderstood prophet whose true goal was the realization of human happiness on earth.[68] Considérant downplayed Fourier's libertine sensuality and his caustic attacks on the boredom and misery of conventional marriage and bourgeois family life. Instead, he emphasized a distinction between individual "households," inefficient and unnecessary, and "families", essential emotional units which Fourierists like himself endorsed and respected. He argued that marriage was essential in the present "civilized" stage of history, but must be based on genuine affection rather than crass commercial considerations, with the escape hatch of legal divorce if compatibility waned.[69] The

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[67]Jonathan Beecher, *Charles Fourier: The Visionary and His World*, (Berkeley: 1986): 422-428.

[68]Victor Considérant, "Doctrine de la Rédemption," *Déstinée sociale*, 2 v. (Paris: Au Bureau de la Phalange, 1848), 1: 25-89.

[69]Ibid., 1: 348-349.

École publicized its revisionist Fourierism though its newspapers, *La Phalange* (1832-34), and its successor *La Démocratie Pacifique* (1843-51), and through a wide variety of other publications. The most influential tract of the school was Considérant's two volume *Destinée Sociale*, whose first volume appeared in 1834, and which became the most widely-read popularization of Fourier's ideas.

Fourierism offered many of the same attractions as Saint-Simonianism, with the added fillip of an even more radical critique of woman's traditional subordination. Fourier's teleology, which presented human history as a steady ascent from barbarism to increasingly higher levels of progress and human happiness, inspired Saint-Simon and all subsequent socialist schools. His famous contention that the moral advancement of a society could be assessed by the degree of liberty that it accorded women, tied women's emancipation firmly to the concept of historical progress.[70] Fourier's fierce attacks on commercial middlemen and creditors as bloodsucking parasites and dishonest rogues, robbing the productive of the fruits of their labors, left a deep imprint on the thinking of most utopian socialists in the nineteenth century.[71] Deroin's attraction to Proudhonian mutualism, with its denunciation of commerce, money, and bank credit as the root of all evil, may well have derived from this source. Finally, as Marguerite Thibert correctly

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[70]Charles Fourier, *The Social Destiny of Man, or Theory of the Four Movements*, trans. Henry Clapp, Jr. (New York: 1973): 118.

[71]Jonathan Beecher, *Charles Fourier*, 200-204. Beecher notes that Fourier's attack on commercial middlemen had a long tradition in France, going back to the Physiocrats of the mid-18th Century.

asserts, Fourier, more than any other socialist of his age, emphasized the economic roots of women's subordination.[72]

Former Saint-Simoniennes Eugénie Niboyet, Marie-Reine Guindorf and Désirée Véret all gravitated towards Fourierism in 1832. Niboyet was impelled by the search for another cause into which she could throw her frustrated idealism. One of the few women to rise to degreed status within the Saint-Simonian hierarchy, she was deeply alienated when Enfantin stripped women of their apostolic functions at the end of 1831.[73] Retiring to provincial obscurity in Mâcon, she found that Saint-Simonianism was anathema to respectable people, who crossed themselves whenever they heard the word. Fourierism had not yet acquired notoriety, and she offered her services to Jules Lechevalier as an evangelist.[74] The same longing for purpose in life impelled the young Flora Tristan to write personally to Fourier in 1835, begging him to employ her services.[75]

For proletariennes Guindorf and Véret, Fourierism offered a tantalizing whiff of future economic and sexual liberation. As seamstresses, they were particularly receptive to Fourier's contention that women's economic vulnerability was the primary cause of their subordination. Following Fourier, Guindorf insisted that women could not acquire "moral liberty" until they had material security, and this in turn was dependent on "a new

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[72]*Le Féminisme dans le socialisme français de 1830-1850*, 99-121.

[73]See her protest to Enfantin, quoted in F. Rude, "Eugénie Niboyet," in *Un Fabuleux Destin: Flora Tristan*, ed. Stéphane Michaud (Dijon: EUD, 1984), 121.

[74]Niboyet to Jules Lechevalier, Mâcon, 16 July 1832 and Niviers, 20 Feb. 1833, AN /10 AS 41.

[75]Tristan, Paris, to Charles Fourier, 11 Oct. 1834, in *Lettres*, No. 24: 70.

social order in which association will replace isolation, where all work is organized in a manner... in which there will be a place for us." "Those that give us our material life can always demand in exchange that we submit to what they desire," she argued, "and it is very difficult to speak freely when one doesn't have the means to live independently." Also echoing Fourier, she criticized the "parcellization" of households, which forced woman to become domestic drudges, endlessly replicating childcare, cooking and laundry rather than efficiently centralizing these tasks.[76] The communal laundries, kitchens, and "well-ventilated" crèches that figure so prominently in the petitions and projects of the socialist women of 1848 have obvious antecedents in Fourier's phalanstery. Guindorf saw communal care and provision for children as a necessary adjunct to the "mobility of affections" for which she longed.[77] An unhappily married woman, she ultimately committed suicide rather than renounce a younger lover.[78]

Although Deroin also parted company with the Saint-Simonians in 1832, there is no evidence that she followed Véret or Guindorf in the Fourierist camp. Both Véret and Guindorf had passionate temperaments that made them receptive to Fourier's strong endorsement of sexuality as a positive life force. Véret, whose self-described coldness and reserve came from her acute consciousness of her inferior social status, was drawn to charismatic men who inspired both her idealism and her lust. She had a brief affair with Enfantin, who quickly lost interest, and at the close of her long life was still penning

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[76]"Aux Femmes," *Tribune des Femmes*, No. 16: 201-05.

[77]Ibid.

[78]Suzanne Voilquin gives an account of her suicide in her *Souvenirs d'une fille du peuple*, 479-482.

letters full of unrequited longing to an old amour, Victor Considérant.[79] From England, where she migrated at age twenty-three to take up work as a dressmaker in 1833, she consoled herself by writing to Fourier, describing the monotony of her days and her detestation of the English. Undoubtedly aware that he enjoyed such confidences, she described several brief affairs with Englishmen, whom she dismissed as mere money-grubbers incapable of sexual passion.[80]

Deroin's relationship with Fourierism was much more equivocal. Passionate attraction was not a concept that ever entered her vocabulary, and it is difficult to imagine a woman who allegedly aspired to a celibate marriage finding Fourier's endorsement of unrestrained sexuality inspiring. However, she did have many friends and collaborators in her mature years who were Fourierists or who had passed through the movement, including a number of contributors to her newspaper, *L'Opinion des Femmes* (1848-49), and to her later *Almanach des Femmes pour 1852*. These included Désirée Véret, now married and using her husband's name, Gay, Eugénie Niboyet, Hortense Wild (who signed herself "Henriette, artiste" or simply "H" in Deroin's journals), the novelist Angélique Arnaud, Jenny d'Héricourt, the republican educator Jean Macé, the journalist Victor Hennequin, and Eugène Stourm, elected to the Constituent Assembly in 1848. Both Macé and Stourm were charter members of Deroin's *Association Fraternelle des*

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[79]For Véret's brief affair with Enfantin, see M. Riot-Sarcey, *La démocratie à l'épreuve des femmes*, 60-61 and Véret's letters to Enfantin (1831-32), publ. in *De la liberté des femmes: Lettres de dames au Globe*, 69-79. In 1890-91, when both were in their eighties, she wrote a series of letters to Victor Considèrant from Brussels, telling him she had not forgotten "the sentiments of the youth of 1832" and that she had loved him "passionately". AN/10 AS 42 dos. 8.

[80]Véret, London, to Fourier, Paris, 14 August 1833, 29 October 1833, and undated, AN/10 AS 42 dos. 8.

Démocrates Socialistes des Deux Sexes pour l'Affranchissement Politique et Social des Femmes in 1849, and Macé wrote a series of letters on women and politics for Deroin's journal.[81] Deroin also counted Victor Considérant as a ally in 1848-49, and regularly attended sessions of his *Club des Républicains Socialistes*. She protested vigorously when the club set up a commission to study the rights of man and of the citizen and refused to put any women on it.[82] She and her fellow detainees spent their pre-trial detention at Saint-Lazare prison in 1851, following their arrest for involvement in the Union of Associations of Workers, reading and discussing Considérant's *Destinée Sociale*, a work which Deroin regarded highly.

Fourierism was not popular with workers, however, and its bourgeois devotees, as Flora Tristan discovered on her *tour de France*, rarely had any connections with them.[83] There were many elements in Fourier's thought which were incompatible with the associational socialism of skilled workers, as artisan journals like *L'Atelier* were eager to point out. Fourier was a favorite whipping boy for his refusal to denounce "negative"

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[81]See Jeanne Deroin, *Association Fraternelle des Démocrates Socialistes des Deux Sexes, pour L'Affranchissement Politique et Social des Femmes*, (Paris: 1849). Macé's letters on women appear in *L'Opinion des Femmes* in January, March, April and June 1849, with the final one in her *Almanach des Femmes pour 1852*, (Paris: 1851), 93-100.

[82]Jeanne Deroin, Paris, to M. le Président du Club des Républicains, Paris, s.d., AN/10 AS 37.

[83]Tristan repeatedly rails against the Fourierist bourgeoisie for their timidity and lack of support. Only in Lyon did she find some workers who were phalansterians. *Le tour de France, Journal 1843-1844*, 2 v., intro. de Stéphane Michaud (Paris: 1980), 1: 135.

passions such as envy, greed, egotism, contention and the competitive spirit.[84] The fact that he welcomed the participation of capitalists in his proposed phalanstery, and alloted them four-twelfths of all profits (to five-twelfths for labor and three twelfths for talent) made him anathema to those who aspired to worker control of production. Deroin could not have embraced the perpetuation of status differentials that was intrinsic to Fourierism, after rejecting it in Saint-Simonianism. In her own associational projects she argued, in contrast not only to Fourier but to most workers who founded production associations, that the compensation of workers should be proportional to the number of their dependents and their basic needs, not to the laborer's talent, skill or even devotion.[85] However, Fourier's endorsement of a guaranteed standard of living, the "social minimum," that would abolish abject poverty and with it, class hatred, came much closer to her own ideals.[86]

As Jonathan Beecher points out, Fourier consciously rejected those ideals of the Enlightenment which he believed led to the evils of the French Revolution and Jacobinism. He faulted the leading philosophes of the age - Montesquieu, Diderot and Rousseau - with popularizing the idea that social life rested on restraint, obedience to the

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[84]See the criticism of Fourierists in *L'Atelier*, February 1841, 43-44; December 1843, 38-40; July 1846, 342-44. Also Proudhon's fulminations in *Le Peuple*, "Pour en finir avec M. Considérant", 12 February 1849 and "Demonstration of Socialism, theory and practice..." 12 March 1849. For Cabet's polemic with Considérant see *Le Populaire*, 27 September 1846 through 25 December 1846.

[85]"Appel aux Associations," *L'Opinion des Femmes*, August 1849, 1-3.

[86]For a discussion of Fourier's concept of the "social minimum" see Beecher, *Charles Fourier*, 247-249.

law, and a kind of "stoic moderation and ascetic self-discipline on the Spartan or Roman republican model." He was completely opposed to a society of equals that denied people sensuality, display, and luxury, arguing that people could not subsist indefinitely on "republican cabbage" and "spartan gruel".[87] And as Genèvieve Fraisse observes, Fourier's rejection of Enlightenment reason in favor of regulated passion allowed him to radically reject the notion that women must be paragons of private virtue and watchdogs of the morality of society.[88]

Deroin was too much of a radical egalitarian and a temperamental ascetic to embrace this hedonistic vision. A stoic at heart, she insisted that happiness came from "the moral perfection of intellectual pleasures rather than the possession of the things of this earth."[89] A lifelong "enthusiastic republican," she believed that the Republic would replace the Catholic Church as repository of people's deepest moral values, and that law, as the expression of the enlightened general will, should embody and express the republican drive for moral perfection.[90] It was this belief that impelled her, unlike the majority of socialist women in this period, to emphasize the absolute centrality of women's political enfranchisement. If women did not participate in the general will, the law would never be an expression of higher morality, but partial, incomplete, and corrupted.

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[87]Ibid. 220-223.

[88]*Reason's Muse: Sexual Difference and the Birth of Democracy*, trans. Jane Marie Todd (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 136-137 and 149-150.

[89]"Profession of Faith," 130.

[90]Ibid., 123-125.

After the Saint-Simonian debacle socialists of all stripes were extremely wary of being depicted as destroyers of the family and promoters of female debauchery. The *École Sociétaire* did its best to pass Fourierism off as a respectable ideology that simply sought to address the sexual hypocrisy of the age, not to overturn conventional mores. Fourier's sexual radicalism was ill-suited to an era in which widespread fear of social disintegration fueled enormous anxiety about controlling the sexuality of women. The growing visibility of prostitution in French cities and the attention focused on it by social investigators such as Parent-Duchatêlet, whose massive study of Parisian prostitutes concluded that many women were driven into the life by economic misery, triggered a veritable obsession with the issue of fallen women in the socialist and republican press, both workerist and bourgeois.[91] The equation of unrestrained female sexuality with the destruction of social order provoked a powerful need in the 1830s and 1840s to reaffirm the centrality of the patriarchal family. Deroin's fervent maternalism was an effort to provide an alternative that would retain the family as a moralizing influence while elevating women's position within it. Like Considérant and the *École Sociétaire*, however, she viewed the family as an emotional, and not an economic unit. The household as such held little charm for her. In this, she differed from artisan-intellectuals

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[91]Alexander Parent-Duchatelet, *De la prostitution dans la ville de Paris*, 2 v. (Paris: 1836). For a discussion of the issue of prostitution in working-class culture see Part One of this dissertion, pp. 29-43. References to prostitution in the workerist press are too numerous to list in their entirety, but typical examples include: *L'Atelier*: "Enquête: De la condition des femmes," 30 December 1842 and "Variétés: Les chansons des rues," 31 August 1843; *La Ruche Populaire:* Pierre Vinçard, "Encore une Plainte," February 1841, 11-13 and Emile Varin, "Du Salaire des Femmes," July 1841, 21-27; *L'Union*: Mora, "Souvenirs et Dernier Jour d'une Femme Déchue," January 1844.

such as Proudhon who romanticized the individual family hearth as a symbol of working-class independence and dignity.

Ranvier is probably correct in stating that Deroin failed to find a true sense of "community" in Fourierism, for her idea of community was a loving fellowship of people bonded together by ties of altruism and mutual devotion, not the elaborate calculus of complementary and counterbalancing drives, neuroses and quirks that formed Fourier's "series". Yet in Fourierism she found a radical critique of women's subordination and commercial capitalism which reinforced her own deep-seated opposition to both practices and encouraged her to theorize their obsolescence. Echoes of the phalanstery's comprehensive provision of economic, educational, social and psychological benefits are obvious in the associational schemes of Deroin and other socialist women in 1848. Far more than male artisans, who defined association largely in terms of productive relations and the brotherhood of skilled labor, they conceptualized association as a network of interlocking and mutual reinforcing institutions and relationships that would provide security and support to the most vulnerable members of society. Deroin's intellectual and tempermental resistance to hierarchy of any sort made her, at best, a lukewarm Fourierist, but a fervent communist of the heart.

4: "There are no bastards or disinherited among the children of God": The influence of Communism: Morelly and Cabet

Jeanne Deroin always avoided sectarian labels. To be a partisan of a particular socialist school would have limited her liberty of action, her ability to call things as she saw them. Yet her deepest affinities were with Christian communists like Étienne Cabet, whose socialism was pacific, communitarian and relentlessly puritanical. Deroin's polemics in 1848-1849 have the same emphasis on the centrality of fraternity and solidarity, the same stress on the necessity of peace and conciliation. But Deroin went well beyond Cabet in her insistence that women be accorded full political and legal equality. She was also much more pragmatic and flexible in her approach to worker association. While Cabet was increasingly preoccupied after 1846 with plans to establish a model Icarian colony in the New World, Deroin recognized that isolated communist enclaves could not survive in a hostile political environment, and that women were not free to break their familial and other ties to participate in such experiments.[92]

Both Deroin and Cabet's concepts of distributive justice appear indebted to Morelly's 1755 classic, the *Code de la Nature*. Like Morelly, Deroin derived the illegitimacy of inherited property and the necessity of an egalitarian society from the natural order and divine will. Her political vision is so different from Morelly's, however, that it raises questions about whether she read his work at all. The *Code de la*

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[92]*L'Opinion des Femmes*, 11 June 1848. The lead article contains a imaginary dialogue between an "*ouvrière socialiste*" and her female counterparts: an Icarian, a member of Leroux's community at Boussac, and a vest-maker from Clichy. The remarks are made in this context.

Nature was not published under Morelly's name in France until 1841, having previously been attributed to Diderot.[93] Since it inspired Babeuf and the Manifesto of the Equals, it is possible that Deroin absorbed some of Morelly's ideas indirectly, through Jacobin sources.

Morelly argued, as Deroin was later to do in her "profession of faith", that God is a prime mover who established order and harmony in the universe. He gave man reason and thereby the capacity for happiness on earth. Misery is consequently the result of a badly ordered society, not the innate depravity of man. Man is an innately social animal, because God has fashioned his creation in such a manner that he always needs the assistance of others to satisfy his basic needs. Those who aid him earn his gratitude and stimulate his fellow-feeling. The diversity of talents and abilities among humans also works to the same end.[94] In order that nothing disturb this solidarity, nature gave man the earth in "indivisible property," and all have an equal right to enjoy its fruits. Morelly's claim that "The world is a table sufficiently appointed for all the guests to whom all the dishes belong..."[95] is echoed in Deroin's repeated invocation:

> The child who is born has an absolute right, from birth on, to the complete satisfaction of his needs. It is not him who has demanded his place among us... It is a brother that God sends us, it is another worker... There are no bastards or

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[93]V.P. Volguine, in his introduction to the *Code de la Nature*, claims that as late as 1796 Babeuf attributed it to Diderot. It appeared for the first time under his own name in 1841, in a Villegardelle edition. (Paris: Editions Sociales, 1970), 7.

[94]*Code de la Nature*, (1970 ed.): 40-51.

[95]Ibid., 44.

> disinherited among the children of God. Thus the earth and all that it produces naturally belongs to all.[96]

Morelly posited an edenic state of nature in which familial organization prevailed, and benevolent patriarchs insured that everyone was treated equally and fairly.[97] Population growth, migration and dispersion had broken down these affectional bonds over time, he believed, but it was possible to reconstitute them in the present by implementing three "sacred laws" that would return man to harmony with nature's principles. First, all private property must be abolished, with the exception of articles of daily use and the artisan's instruments of labor. Second, all citizens must be guaranteed the right to exist and the right to work. Society must undertake to insure its members a uniform level of subsistence. Third, citizens have a reciprocal obligation to contribute to society by their labors, in proportion to their age, ability, and energies. Implementing these laws would require that society organize production and distribution more rationally. All products of labor should be registered and subsequently distributed to citizens in such a way that everyone would be guaranteed the necessities of life. Commerce and exchange among citizens themselves, however, were forbidden. Children would receive a common education, which would include professional education in a manual trade.[98] These principles are remarkably similar to the ones Deroin incorporated into her own proposals in 1848-1849 for an association that would unite workers of all trades and professions.[99]

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[96]"Appel aux Associations", *L'Opinion des Femmes*, No. 6, August 1849: 2.

[97]*Code de la Nature*, "The true origin of nations..", 68-75.

[98]Ibid., "Fundamental and Sacred Laws," 127-155.

[99]"4e Lettre de Jeanne Deroin aux Associations et aux Travailleurs de Toutes Professions," *Almanach des Femmes pour 1852*, 170-78.

Deroin had her own parable of the state of nature, however, and it was radically different from Morelly's. Morelly sought to recapture what he imagined to be the benevolent patriarchy of the earliest stage of human history by making the state a kind of supra-family in which male heads of household would rotate filling political offices. Familial authority would be the model for the polity: "all Senators, political chiefs, workshop heads, master artisans will be respected and obeyed for their common service to the country like the fathers of families by their children."[100] By contrast, Deroin's more Fourierist parable portrayed the first stage of human history as one of primitive barbarism in which man as warrior and hunter used his superior force to enslave his companion. In doing so, he overturned natural order and divine law, which mandated the union and equality of the sexes, and introduced exploitation and suffering on earth. All privilege and injustice stemmed from this primal power grab, and human happiness and progress could never be assured until woman was restored to full equality.[101]

Similarly, in Deroin's reworking of the Biblical story of Eve, she depicted the fall as a deviation from "the holy law of fraternity and solidarity which linked the destinies of man and woman." Man first endangered dignity and human liberty by enslaving his companion, who became his first property. But woman, out of love, without understanding what she was renouncing, submitted to the yoke of man. This submission to man's law rather than God's was the true crime of Eve, infecting man with the Promethean spirit of domination. God however had made a promise to woman which would someday be fulfilled: "fraternity will regenerate on earth when she has

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[100]*Code de la Nature*, 143.

[101]*Cours de Droit Social Pour les Femmes*, undated pamphlet, (1848): 4.

reconquered liberty and equality."[102] Deroin's teleology, like Fourier's, linked women's emancipation to the concept of historical progress, but unlike Fourier's, made women themselves the primary agents of mankind's moral ascent.

Morelly's communism derived from eighteenth century rationalism, Cabet's from the romantic religiosity of the post-revolutionary era which celebrated the social gospel and depicted Jesus as a radical egalitarian. Deroin's communism was a blend of both traditions, combining rationalist arguments based on natural right with a mystical belief in a coming era of social regeneration. Deroin shared Cabet's intense moralism, his sexual puritanism, and his longing for a warm and supportive community of equals. His avowed intention to "purify" marriage and to elevate the status of women within the family harmonized closely with her own aspirations.

The two were contemporaries, although Deroin was a generation younger than Cabet. Born in 1788 in Dijon, the son of a cooper, Cabet earned a law degree with the patronage of several influential republicans and began his political career under the July Monarchy. After a brief and undistinguished stint as a deputy in the early 1830s, he founded a widely successful republican newspaper in 1833, *Le Populaire*, and became active in the Society of the Rights of Man. A charge of press sedition in 1834 forced him into five year exile in London, where he wrote his four volume *Histoire populaire de la Révolution française*, in which he celebrated the role of Robespierre and "the people" in

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[102]"Religion from the perspective of the Social," *L'Opinion des Femmes*, 28 January 1849, 3-4.

the revolution. Here he also completed his utopian fantasy, *Voyage en Icarie*, which set forth in stultifying detail his blueprint for a future communitarian society.[103]

Unlike Morelly's agrarian utopia, Icaria was an industrial society in which workers were freed by machinery from daily drudgery and lived a life of comfort and ease. But like Morelly's ideal state, Icaria was meticulously regulated and nothing was left to chance. The morality of all citizens was constantly scrutinized, and people were expected to be models of republican rectitude, exhibiting modesty, temperance, and brotherhood at all times. Morelly's obsession was to eliminate greed; Cabet's was to eliminate egotism and lust. Icaria combined all the seductions of material progress and religious fellowship with the moral intrusiveness of a Calvinist boarding school. The Foucaultian "watchful eye" was everywhere: in the constant care and concern parents, especially mothers, were expected to devote to children; in the meticulous instruction they received in the "duties" of matrimony and the close supervision of their courtship; in the harsh penalties inflicted on adulterers who had the temerity to evade the all-seeing eye, however briefly.[104] The same sexual puritanism led him to endorse a strict code of separation in work and education for the sexes, with repeated assurances that this did not imply inequality. Cabet apparently atoned for his long-term relationship with a working-class mistress and his out-of-wedlock child not only by finally legalizing both relationships, but

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[103]For Cabet's life and thought, see Christopher H. Johnson, *Utopian Communism in France: Cabet and the Icarians 1839-1851* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1974) and Robert P. Sutton, *Les Icariens* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994).

[104]*Voyage en Icarie* (Paris: Au Bureau du Populaire, 1848), 5th ed. For a discussion of marriage and sexual mores, see 139-43; for the socialization and education of children, 77-94. Cabet's final comment in this section summarizes his philosophy admirably: "Vous pouvez dire même que la vie de famille est un cours perpétuel de morale en action..." (94).

by mandating "purified" marriage for everyone. Purified marriage was a union based solely on love, not sordid material gain, which Cabet had himself renounced in marrying beneath his station.[105]

In March of 1841, after his return from exile, Cabet resumed publication of *Le Populaire*, this time in an entirely new format aimed at a working-class audience. The four page daily, which was topical and chatty, avoided theory in favor of vivid stories dramatizing the misery of workers and juicy tales of corruption and scandal in high places. Because it carefully targeted its audience, it had the widest circulation of any proletarian newspaper in the decade.[106] Icarian communism, as Christopher H. Johnson has shown, became particularly influential among artisans such as tailors and shoemakers, who were literate and contemplative, and whose sense of independence and integrity was threatened by the encroachment of capitalist production processes.[107] As Johnson notes, Cabet was a master propagandist, adept at presenting his ideas in simple and compelling terms. The Icarian presses churned out a steady stream of pamphlets, almanacs, and other publications designed to win converts and keep Cabet in the public eye. Letters published in *Le Populaire* suggest that proletarian women appreciated Cabet's effusive praise of

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[105]For Cabet's views on marriage see *La Femme, son malheureux sort dans la société actuelle*, 9e ed. (Paris: 1848): 19-22; "c'est la femme surtout qui doit désirer la conservation du Mariage et de la Famille, purgés de tous leur vices..." (21). Also *Opinion Icarienne sur Le Mariage*, (Paris: 1855).

[106]Johnson claims it had a press run of 4,500, compared to 1,000 for *L'Atelier*, and estimates there were twenty readers for each edition sold. *Utopian Communism in France*, 84-85.

[107]Johnson (1974): 156-58.

women's services to men as wives and mothers and his condemnation of secret societies, which took their husbands out of the home and sometimes to prison.[108]

Cabet made "fraternity" and "solidarity" the rhetorical linchpins of his ideology. Although Deroin was never an Icarian, she was strongly influenced by Cabet's use of these terms and foregrounded both in her own discourse after June 1848. It is therefore relevant to interrogate what meanings both theorists attached to these concepts, and how they came to be gendered in differential ways.

"Our primordial principle, the fundamental generator of all other principles," Cabet wrote, is FRATERNITY." It was, he said, at the same time a "science, a doctrine, a theory, a system" that distinguished Icarian communism from all other socialist schools and their pretensions. It was the purest distillation of the "law of Jesus".[109] "Fraternity" in republican discourse had traditionally been a gendered ideal. Symbolic of male bonding across class lines, it rendered women at best extraneous, at worst, a threat to republican virtue.[110] By recasting fraternity as a doctrine of reciprocity and Christian

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[108]See for example the reverential letters Cabet selected for publication in *Le Populaire* in 1848: "Dames Icariennes de Nantes", 2 January 1848; "A. P. in Périgueux", 16 January 1848; "A. L. and three other Icariennes of Sainte-Croix," 6 February 1848. Johnson (173) also quotes from women's letters to *Le Populaire*.

[109]"Our Principles," *Le Populaire*, 2 March 1848.

[110]Joan B. Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), esp. Ch. 5; Lynn Hunt, "The Many Bodies of Marie Antoinette: Political Pornography and the Problem of the Feminine in the French Revolution," in *Eroticism and the Body Politic*, ed. Lynn Hunt (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991) 108-130 and Hunt, *The Family Romance of the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); M. Riot-Sarcey, *La démocratie à l'épreuve des femmes* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1994), 105-108.

love, Cabet was able to soften the militant and exclusive edge it had acquired in republican rhetoric without undermining men's centrality to the "Community". The spirit of fraternity would assure women the constant support and solicitude of men:

> our Communism wishes that the first duty of the Community of Men in general shall be to assure the happiness of Women in general, and considers marriage rendered perfect as the most sure means of guaranteeing the happiness of Women, and consequently that of Men, of Society and of Humanity.[111]

Men were now going to exhibit the same concern for the happiness of women that mothers had traditionally displayed for their children. In a uncharacteristic burst of feminine imagery, Cabet compared the Community to "the most tender and the most just of Mothers, who only occupies herself with the perfection and the happiness of her children, distributing to them equally her tenderness and her attentions, and showing no preference except for the feeble and the infirm."[112] The fact that men were constantly urged to defer to women, to "worship" them and make them happy, suggested that women were incapable of achieving fulfillment on their own.[113]

For Cabet, "fraternity" was not only brotherly love, but a willingness to sacrifice personal autonomy for the good of the community, to conform to central discipline. In his family romance, the parricide brothers of the first republic had been transformed into

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[111]Cabet, "Communism is Christianity," extract from *Le Vrai Christianisme*, reprinted in *Le Populaire*, 26 July 1846.

[112]Ibid.

[113]*Voyage en Icarie*, 5e ed. (1848), 57 and passim. *La Femme, son malheureux sort dans la société actuelle*, 9e ed. (Paris: Au Bureau du Populaire, 1848), 17-18.

obedient sons of the good father.[114] In a transparent projection of his own ambitions, Cabet depicted God as a benevolent patriarch:

> Father of all men, he loves them like the most perfect of Fathers loves his Children, demanding from them fraternal love towards each other as the best proof of their filial love towards him; in consequence, for him, all men are brothers and equals and form but one Family.[115]

Cabet asserted that "the fraternity of men necessarily entails their equality." Equality in turn meant that "all brothers or associates ought to be EQUALLY citizens, electors, eligibles."[116] When it came to the exercise of political power, fraternity was definitely gendered. In Cabet's equivocal conception of sexual equality, all persons would be equal, but male persons would be more equal than others: "I would wish that the law would proclaim, as in Icarie, equality between the spouses, only rendering the voice of the husband preponderant.... "[117]

Johnson argues that "solidarity" entered Cabet's vocabulary after an 1846 polemic with Ledru-Rollin and the editors of the moderate republican journal *La Réforme*. The hostility that they displayed towards Icarian communism came as a rude shock to Cabet, and forced him to think of himself for the first time as a working-class leader. It was then, Johnson believes, that he borrowed the concept of working-class solidarity from

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[114]I am indebted to Lynn Hunt's *The Family Romance of the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992) for this concept.

[115]"Communism is Christianity," *Le Populaire*, 26 July 1846.

[116]*Comment Je Suis Communiste et Mon Credo Communiste*, 4e ed., (Paris: Au Bureau du Populaire, 1845), 8.

[117]*Voyage en Icarie*, 5e ed. (1848), 299.

Flora Tristan's *Union Ouvrière*.[118] This is possible, for Cabet may well have imagined himself in the role of Tristan's noble and articulate "defender" of the working class. However, Cabet was earlier quite contemptuous and dismissive of Tristan.[119] The term "solidarity" is also prominent in the work of theorists such as Morelly, who are known to have influenced Cabet, so that it could also have derived from other sources. As used by Cabet, solidarity was simply a variant of fraternity, a reiteration of the need to put community above self.

Fraternity and solidarity, however, took on new meanings in Deroin's discourse, particularly after the June Days in 1848. During the uprising, Deroin had vainly attempted to assemble "a large number of women to carry words of peace and conciliation onto the barricades, and to prevent a bloody triumph which would be a lamentable source of profound hatreds and new civil disorders."[120] In the aftermath of this disaster, her search for a new religion of peace, love and conciliation intensified. By August, she was invoking the need to found "the temple of the future, the grand religion of fraternity and solidarity whose bases have been established by Christ."[121] But if socialism was to become the religion of humanity, then women must be admitted to the temple and the

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[118]*Utopian Communism in France*, 221.

[119]See Cabet's polemic with Tristan over her *Union Ouvrière* in *Le Populaire*, June 1843 and October 1843 and his article, "Système de Mme Tristan", ibid., June 1845 in which he writes: "Unfortunately, this project of Mme Flora Tristan is nothing, in our opinion, but the most obvious of illusions and deceptions."

[120]Jeanne Deroin, Paris, to M. Lammenais, Répresentant, 3 July 1848, BHVP, Fonds Bouglé, carton 4247.

[121]"Prospectus," *L'Opinion des Femmes*, August 1848, no. 1: 5.

state. "Fraternity will regenerate on earth," Deroin argued, "when [woman] has conquered liberty and equality."[122] True fraternity and solidarity required that the struggle between the two great halves of the human family be ended; it was the necessary prelude to the reign of God on earth.

Deroin's belief in innate sexual difference made it difficult for her to detect the hypocrisy and equivocations in Cabet's emancipatory rhetoric. Her celebration of "sacred motherhood" and her conviction that women had an instinctual ethic of care and concern blurred easily into Cabet's incarnation of women as earth mothers, "the depository of the creative power of Nature, mother and nurse of the human species."[123] Cabet imagined that men could liberate women by marrying them and giving them respect and security. Deroin imagined that women could liberate men by inspiring them with the regenerative spirit of love, peace and conciliation. Both assumed that the mutual dependence of the sexes dictated their genuine solidarity. The whole history of republican France argued otherwise.

In fact, Cabet was hardly a reliable ally. Although he was only too happy to concede women a hypothetical place of honor, he was incapable of viewing women in anything other than relational roles. Every male in Icaria regards women "as if they were our mothers, our wives, our sisters, or our daughters".[124] You would marvel, he tells the jaded reader, at how Icarian men treat women, "how they surround them with

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[122]"Religion from the point of view of the social: the Fall," *L'Opinion des Femmes*, 28 January 1849, 4.

[123]Cabet, *La Femme, son malheureux sort dans la société actuelle*, 9e ed. (Paris: 1848), 19.

[124]*Voyage en Icarie*, 5e ed. (1848), 13.

their care, with their respect and with their homage....how they work ceaselessly to please them to render them happy, how they embellish them, already so beautiful, in order to have the pleasure of adoring them."[125] Equal education for women is mandated in Icaria, but largely "to make [woman] a companion worthy of man and capable of insuring his felicity."[126] Although Cabet concedes the possibility of professional careers for women in medicine and the liberal arts, the only working women portrayed in Icaria are in a "perfumed" millinery workshop. Here they assemble pre-cut hats according to a half-dozen fixed designs, occasionally interrupting their labors to sing sweet songs of praise to the country's leadership. Compulsory marriage guarantees every woman a spouse and her own household, where she will still be responsible for the housework and childcare - allegedly light and pleasant, because of the existence of communal kitchens and laundries. Thus women in a well-organized society will always be "clean, elegant, careful, industrious, attentive to pleasing everyone and above all displeasing to no one...."[127] What this meant in real life can be seen at the Icarian colony established at Nauvoo, Illinois in 1849. Here women were required to attend the General Assembly of the Community, and were fined if they refused, but had only a "consultative voice". They could vote solely on those questions "that particularly concerned them."[128] Cabet assigned all occupations on the basis of sex, and women served as cooks, seamstresses,

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[125]Ibid., 57.

[126]*La Femme, son malheureux sort...*, 18.

[127]Ibid., 11.

[128]*History and Constitution of the Icarian Community*, trans. Thomas Teakle (Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1917; reprint New York: 1975), Articles 119 & 120.

laundresses and ironers, while men did the artisanal work. Women were expected to do all routine housework in the family living quarters. Marriage was obligatory, and those who broke the community's moral codes, such as the unfortunate "Femme C" who became pregnant by a lover, were expelled. "Femme C" and her companion received a paltry ten dollar severance allowance.[129] Women who brought jewelry or fancy toilet articles into the community had them confiscated, and Cabet constantly fumed about those who deviously hid their small luxuries.[130]

From today's perspective it is relatively easy to see the glaring contradictions in Cabet's "egalitarian" discourse and to wonder at the unctuous letters of praise and thanks sent to him in March 1848 by socialist women, including the editorial board of the *Voix des Femmes.*[131] For women such as Deroin, facing the silence and indifference, if not outright hostility, of many of their male colleagues, Cabet's ostensible "worship" of women and his condemnation of their "slavery" made him an ally worth cultivating. So, too, did the depth and breadth of his contacts with workers. His *Club Fraternel Central* was the largest revolutionary club in Paris, and one of a handful that admitted women. Despite the profound fear and hatred which the specter of communism evoked among the propertied, Cabet was apostle of peace to many workers and socialists fearful of class

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[129]This episode is recounted in Cabet's *Opinion Icarienne sur Le Mariage*, (Paris: Au Bureau du Populaire, 1855), 7.

[130]Robert P. Sutton, *Les Icariens*, 63-84. For a brief account of how women were treated in the American Icarias see also Diana M. Garno, "Gender dilemmas: 'equality' and 'rights' for Icarian women," *Utopian Studies* v. 6, no. 2 (1995): 52-74.

[131]"Address to Citoyen Cabet by the women who publish *La Voix des Femmes*," dated Paris, 31 March 1848, publ. in *Le Populaire*, 2 April 1848. See also the letter from the Society for the Emancipation of Women, signed by Vierjole Longueville and Felix Lamb (pen name of Jenny d'Héricourt), *Le Populaire*, 9 April 1848.

conflict. The placards that he posted on the walls of Paris on February 25, 1848, urging workers to support the Provisional Government and to avoid attacking property, had been instrumental in calming the situation, as was his insistence that the application of communist principles could only be assured "by discussion, by conviction, by the power of public opinion, by individual consent, by national will."[132] It is not hard to imagine why Deroin, with her egalitarian convictions and deep fear of violence, would admire Cabet and imagine that he supported women's rights, even their right to vote.

In fact, Cabet was a most reluctant warrior. The transcript of the session of the *Club Fraternel Central* on March 29, 1848 which aroused the hopes of Deroin and her colleagues on the *Voix des Femmes* that he would support their demand for electoral rights, shows Cabet engaging in his usual evasions. He expresses approval of the fact that women want the right of association, the right of discussion, the right to defend their interests. He then attributes all of these initiatives to men: "If women today have a club, a journal, it is to you, male defenders of liberty, martyrs of the barricades, that they owe them." Playing on male anxiety about women's new militancy, he provokes "hilarity" and "explosions of laughter and applause" by suggesting that if women had been given the right to join the National Guard, they "would already be armed." Lastly, he finesses the "delicate" question of political rights for women by assuring his listeners that "if we listed to our hearts, our desires" it would be decided by acclamation:

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[132] *"Aux Communistes Icariens et Travailleurs nos Frères"*, affiche dated 25 February 1848.

> But, since the question is completely new, since few people have studied it, since it is infinitely complicated from all perspectives, I will ask your permission not to give you my opinion today.[133]

The audience responded to this clever dissimulation with "approving laughter" and "prolonged applause."[134]

The concept of "fraternity" was so fraught with masculine overtones in French culture that socialist women such as Deroin could not cleanse it of its exclusionary connotations and make it do the ideological work of supporting women's emancipation. To the extent that fraternity and equality were bound together in republican and socialist discourse as cognates, equality was gendered too. If women and men had essentially dissimilar natures, then equality between the sexes could be seen as a kind of equivalency, rather than a literal identity, of rights. Men and women could be equal, but their equality could take different social and political forms. This allowed for the kinds of equivocations typical of Cabet and other "champions" of woman's emancipation. Deroin herself wanted to have it both ways. She insisted on women's difference, but she also insisted that it was this very difference that entitled women to sit side by side with men in the temple and in the state. However, it was much easier to use a discourse of sexual difference to support an ideology of separate spheres than to use it to integrate women and men into the same institutions, as Deroin's experience in the Revolution of 1848-1851 suggests.

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[133]Société Fraternelle Centrale, *6e Discours du Citoyen Cabet sur Les Elections* (Paris: 1848). Session of 29 March 1848.

[134]Ibid.

5: "You say that our glorious revolution is made for all": Deroin's Campaign for Electoral Rights

Sixteen years of silence abruptly ended when Jeanne Deroin picked up her pen in March 1848 to compose the first of four petitions to the Provisional Government. Her long dormant dream of social regeneration had reawakened with the stirring events of February. The rapid collapse of the July Monarchy had opened the channels so long dammed up by repression and censorship. From all directions a flood of idealistic proposals, petitions, and manifestos poured from the desks of republicans and socialists and washed over the new government. This torrent of discourse was like a hard rain on a desert. Words resumed their intoxicating, almost magical power to arouse and inspire. Languishing in domestic tedium and obscurity for so long, her youthful dreams of Saint-Simonian apostleship almost extinguished, Deroin leapt at the chance to add her voice to the chorus. Now, more than ever, women's devotion, love and pacific gifts were needed to insure the reign of fraternity and universal harmony on earth. The new republic had proclaimed liberty and equality for all; why should women, the mothers of citizens, remain helots? The time had come to hold republicans and socialists to their principles. They must be made to see the logical consequences of their doctrines, the irrationality and hypocrisy of denying equal rights to half of humanity:

> You say that our glorious revolution is made for all, but, being half of the total number, how could we not believe it?
>
> You say that this sublime motto {liberty-equality-fraternity} is one and indivisible; but in recognizing it like you, and recognizing in addition that... there cannot be

> two liberties, two equalities, two fraternities; so that the liberty, equality, fraternity of man are very clearly those of woman, how could we not believe it?
>
> You say that royalty is called to transform itself over the entire earth and that there has now arrived the sacred era of the people-king; but the people is composed of two sexes, like royalty itself.... beside the people-king, one must of necessity proclaim the people-queen, or better yet know them both as the people-sovereign. The people therefore being you, being us, how could we not believe it?....
>
> You say that personal and dishonorable punishment, condemnations and judgement, established insanity, can alone deprive the elector of civil rights; but, the qualification of woman not appearing, as far as we know, in any of these categories, electoral rights therefore belong to her, how could we not believe it?[135]

Thus it was imperative for woman to act, to take up the apostolic role. Had not Jesus told his followers to forsake family and friends if they stood in the way of preparation for the kingdom? Had he not called women as well as men to discipleship, by rebuking Martha and preaching to her sister Mary?[136] Entrusting her husband and children to the care of friends, Deroin entered the fray, free for the first time in years to devote all of her energies to the public arena. Others like her began to coalesce, drawn together by a common zeal and a common past, bittersweet memories of youthful idealism and disillusionment in the Saint-Simonian movement. Now these women were middle-aged and more cautious. They had been through all the travails of adulthood - marriage and sometimes the failure of marriage, the anxieties of childrearing, efforts to

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[135]*Les femmes au gouvernment et au peuple français* (Paris, 16 March 1848). Petition de Antonine André de Saint-Gieles, signed by numerous women. Reprinted in *La Voix des Femmes*, 23 March 1848: 1-2.

[136]Deroin frequently appealed to the gospel story of Martha and Mary to prove that Jesus intended women to be apostles. See for example "Simples Mots," *La Voix des Femmes*, 28 March 1848, 3; see also her *Lettre d'une Femme à M. Athanase Coquerel* (Paris: Lacour, 1848).

find meaningful work. Sexual freedom was no longer high on their agenda; they were ready to trade on their motherhood, to emphasize the *droits* due those who had accomplished their *devoirs*. They aspired to be reasonable, they thought themselves respectable, but they demanded that the republic be just. They were ill-prepared for the disapproving silence, then the outbursts of sarcasm and hostility that fell upon them, especially from their alleged allies on the left. It was only the staunchest of idealists who could stand up under these conditions. It required a willingness to risk reputation and honor, to become a public woman with all the insinuations attached to the term. It demanded, in Deroin's case, an obliviousness to the irony of leaving one's children, and endangering the career and the emotional stability of one's spouse, to preach a doctrine of redemptive maternalism and sacrificial love. Only a few women were willing to pay so dearly for their convictions. The majority backed off, surrendering the dream of public power for the tired sop of private influence so often reiterated in the phrase: "men create the laws, women the mores."

What made Deroin's rhetoric and her praxis exceptional in 1848-1849 was her stubborn insistence on the centrality of political empowerment to women's emancipation. While she certainly never minimized women's moralizing influence, or their capacity for self-help and charitable works through mutual association, she always understood that relationships of domination and subordination reflected differentials in power, and that power in French society was centered in the state and its legal apparatus. With one foot planted firmly in the enlightenment tradition, she consistently emphasized the equality of the sexes in rights, and the fundamental illogic of denying what nature or God had mandated as just and productive of happiness to half of humanity. With the other in the

romantic tradition of celebrating diversity and difference, she argued that women's special gifts, particularly their capacity for harmony and conciliation, were needed in the political arena. Some historians, such as Claire Goldberg Moses, have argued that this essentially Saint-Simonian resolution of the "equality versus difference dilemma" was innovative and remains relevant to feminists today who operate out of a "difference" perspective. However, there was a dangerous slippage in Deroin's political discourse between representing women as rights-bearing subjects and representing them in a relational capacity. To assert that women deserve rights because of their essential humanity is different from maintaining that women deserve rights because of their services to others or to society. Deroin wanted to advance both positions simultaneously, to argue that all liberties are solidary, and to claim for women a "sublime humanitarian maternity" that set them apart.

Deroin's reliance on both an essentialist rhetoric celebrating the unique social contributions of women, and her attachment to the concept of natural rights for individuals independent of their social status or function, exhibited contradictions that provided an opening for her republican and socialist critics. Following Jean-Jacques Rousseau, republicans retorted that she was in fact endangering women's unique qualities by wrenching them out of their most effective context. Equality, they argued, did not demand a literal equivalency of legal and political rights, but genuine respect and reciprocity between the sexes. Such reciprocity demanded that each sex recognize the limits which nature had "assigned" to it and act accordingly. This was the position advanced by Eugène Bareste's *La République*:

> Women have the right to dispose of their fate, to determine their functions, the attributes which are proper to them. They have too much tact, sense and finesse to take a role which nature has not assigned to them. They will leave us those barbaric functions which bathe the earth in blood and tears, under the pretext of liberty or of conquest.... Peace, the arts, the comforts of life, softness of customs, the amenity of habits and relations, polish in language, delicacy in sentiments will signal their coming and their empire.[137]

Deroin and other socialist women were well aware that this was a hypocritical bargain which rendered women vulnerable to man's "barbaric" inclinations. But they too couched their demands in essentialist and relational terms, emphasizing women's familial services, sacrifices made and burdens endured. Believing that women had an underdeveloped sense of personal entitlement, the newly formed Society for the Emancipation of Women, of which Deroin was a charter member, decided in March of 1848 that the best strategy for enlisting women's support was to appeal to them as caretakers rather than to stress their individual rights:

> Since the fund of tenderness is greater in woman than her self-esteem, generally we will see more prompt success crown our efforts if we speak to their mothers' hearts, rather than addressing ourselves to the dignity of our sisters as human beings.[138]

The manifesto of the society enumerated a comprehensive list of demands for civil and legal rights for women, including "the master key to the edifice of their emancipation", the right to vote. The petitioners wondered aloud, however, how all of this liberty could be introduced in the family without disrupting its "harmony and

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[137]"De la position des Femmes dans la société," *La République*, 13 April 1849, 1-2.

[138]AN BB30/307 *Société de l'émancipation des femmes: Proposition et Règlement de la Société.* Mme de Longueville was president and Jenny P. d'Héricourt was secretary of the society. Its founder, Dr. Malatier, was a Fourierist. He later wrote an article on the evils of tight corseting for Deroin's *Almanach des Femmes pour 1852.*

hierarchy." "How can one effect a convergence between the liberty of the wife and that of the husband?" This might be particularly difficult in working-class households, they reasoned, and would require the prior moral education of working-class women, so that they would not become persons "that one might continually tremble to see rise up."[139] There is no evidence that Deroin herself regarded proletarian women as potentially dangerous or disorderly, but the pervasiveness of this imagery, even in the rhetoric of those who promoted women's rights, suggests the persistence of stereotypes stemming from the First Republic and the class fears of bourgeois feminists of the period. Flora Tristan had earlier sounded a similar theme in her blueprint for a "Workers' Union," warning that education was necessary to break the cycle of abuse and neglect which working class mothers allegedly inflicted on their families and their children.[140]

In an historical context where the republic was barely consolidated, workers were in deep economic distress, and enemies of the revolution lurked on all sides, it was difficult to advocate a course of action that threatened to disrupt "harmony and hierarchy" in the household. How did one reconcile the demand for political rights for women with the equally pressing conviction that "a high mission of conciliation is imposed by the present situation on those who sincerely love their country"?[141] Deroin's solution to this dilemma was dictated by her moral absolutism. There were eternal principles of truth and justice, and they were embodied in the republican principles of liberty, equality and

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[139]Ibid.

[140]*Union Ouvrière*, 3e ed. (Paris et Lyon: 1844; reprint Paris: Editions d'Histoire Sociale, 1967), 58-64.

[141]Deroin, "Simple Mots," *La Voix des Femmes*, 28 March 1848.

fraternity. Failure to implement these principles completely had led to the collapse of the First Republic, and was responsible for the cycle of political upheavals, wars and crises which had plagued French society ever since. Black slavery had been abolished by the republic, and the male proletariat declared full citizens, but the slavery of woman remained intact. How could slaves raise and educate future republican citizens? Fraternity would always be an empty word, and the republic a polity sapped at the base, if women did not receive the same liberty and equality vouchsafed to men:

> No law of the future can be elaborated and formulated without the concurrence of woman, of half of humanity; just as the political enfranchisement of the proletariat is the first step towards his intellectual and moral enfranchisement, so too the political enfranchisement of woman is the first step towards the complete emancipation of all the oppressed, it is the most radical extinction of all privileges, it is the realization of our sacred principles, liberty, equality, fraternity, for all women [toutes] as for all men [tous].[142]

Deroin's logic is unassailable - universal principles should apply to all. Yet she was more than willing to abandon logical appeals in favor of emotion, if it would serve the cause. Playing on the sympathy displayed by the left-wing press for proletarian women in the abstract, especially long-suffering *mères de famille*, Deroin constructed women as a homogeneous moral category - "mothers of humanity." All distinctions of class, age, and marital status would mystically dissolve, she argued, in the face of the "immense need to love and be loved which God has placed in the heart of woman".[143] In a series of essays significantly entitled "The mission of woman in the present and in

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[142]"Rectification du compte-rendu du comité démocratique-socialiste des électeurs," *Campagne Electorale de la Citoyenne Jeanne Deroin, Pétition des Femmes au Peuple* (Paris: Dépot Central de la Propagande Socialiste, 1849).

[143]"Mission de la femme dans le présent et dans l'avenir," *L'Opinion des femmes*, 10 March 1849, 2.

the future," written in 1849, Deroin urged women to avoid the political factionalism of men and develop a transcendent politics of maternalism:

> ... she ought to plumb her heart, interrogate her conscience and her motherly love, take council with her primitive instincts, distorted by a faulty education, and there reawaken her natural compassion for the suffering and for the oppressed... For women, there can be no spirit of party, no difference of social or religious opinion, before this sentiment of maternal love which fills their hearts, before this grand ideal which ought to dominate their spirit, the future of their children, and which makes them understand that all have the right to the happiness that each of them desires for her own.[144]

Perhaps Deroin's ambiguous social status, as a *prolétarienne* whose self-acquired education gave her entree into left-wing republican circles, encouraged her to imagine that class boundaries would dissolve in the face of feminine solidarity and idealism. Or perhaps it was the feminine activism of 1848, which found formerly titled women, respectable *bourgeoises*, and educated *prolétariennes* joining together in clubs, associational efforts and journalistic enterprises, such as Eugénie Niboyet's *Société de la Voix des Femmes* and its successor, the *Club des Femmes*. Undoubtedly Saint-Simonian discourse, with its insistence that women personified the principles of "love, union, and harmony", played a primary role in inspiring her belief in women's ability to reconcile and transcend class difference. Ironically the prospect of feminine solidarity frightened many republican and socialist men and stiffened their resistance. Women's social identity had always derived from their husbands and fathers; to imply that gender was more important than class in constructing social alliances challenged men's ability to shape women's identities and loyalties. Furthermore, the feminine self-sufficiency implied by socialist women's associational proposals, which typically included a whole range of

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[144]*L'Opinion des Femmes*, no. 5, June 1849, 5.

childcare and domestic services, threatened to erode the centrality of the individual household, and men's dominance within it. When Deroin proposed in June of 1848 that the Constituent Assembly build shelters for neglected and abandoned children, to include a *crèche*, dormitory, infirmary, school and workshop in each arrondissement, the government's *rapporteur* sputtered that "The obligations and the rights of families ought in no fashion to be weakened... comprehensive establishments such as those proposed by Dame Jeanne Deroin... appear in opposition to the spirit of the family which it is desirable to conform to and affirm."[145]

Evidence that the real threat perceived by men was to their dominance within the family is suggested by the furor that erupted when socialist women connected with Eugénie Niboyet's *Club des Femmes*, of which Deroin was a member, attempted to debate divorce reform in late May and early June of 1848.[146] Michèle Riot-Sarcey finds it significant that up to this point, most of the proposals and petitions submitted by women to the Provisional Government and the Constituent Assembly were simply ignored. The republican and socialist press met most of these initiatives with studied silence. However, the sight of middle-aged married women seriously debating the dissolution of the marriage bond was so disturbing that it provoked noisy charivaris, one outside the club

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[145]AN C2233/489 *Project de décret pour prévenir l'exploitation des enfants pauvres*, addressed to the National Assembly by Jeanne Deroin, undated, received 22 June 1848. Attached is cover sheet entitled "ordre du jour", signed by M. Gillan, rapporteur.

[146]Among the members were writers Eugénie Foa and Gabrielle Soumet, Suzanne Voilquin, Elisa Lemonnier, Jeanne Deroin, and of course, Niboyet. For an account of the uproar at the meetings see the article by Henriette: "Club des Femmes," *La Voix des Femmes*, 6-8 June 1848 and Niboyet's "La Liberté et La Légalité," ibid., 8-10 June 1848.

on June 3rd, and another inside on June 5th. On the second occasion the Garde Mobile had to be called in to clear the hall, and according to a hostile journal, a large crowd waited outside for the members to exit, in order "to inflict on them the punishment reserved for children."[147] The outpouring of public and press ridicule forced Niboyet to close the club on June 6th. Since the majority of socialists and republicans were on record as supporting the legalization of divorce, the vehemence of the response seems surprising. Niboyet herself argued that the majority of those disrupting the proceedings were not republicans.[148] Riot-Sarcey, who believes that republicans were indeed outraged by the club's activities, attributes their hostility to a fear of right-wing critics and a desire to legitimize the new regime by appropriating the reassuring dyad "property-family" for themselves. For workers who lacked property, family became the mark of eligibility, and authority over it the distinguishing mark of the citizen-equal. For women to take it upon themselves to debate that authority was to attack the core assumptions of republican citizenship.[149]

There is no question that this dynamic was operating, but it is also important to emphasize that simply by imitating male socialization patterns, by gathering together in a public place to debate political issues, women were breaking taboos in French society and conjuring up images of the revolutionary harpies of the Jacobin period. These memories, reinforced by women's presence on the barricades during the June Days, inspired the notorious decree of the Constituent Assembly on 26 July 1848 forbidding

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[147]"Club des Femmes," *Le Droit*, No. 132, 6 June 1848, 536.

[148]"La Liberté et la Légalité," *Voix des Femmes*, 8-10 June 1848, 1.

[149]*La Démocratie à l'épreuve des femmes*, 217-20.

female participation in clubs. One of the more vociferous supporters of this ban was Athanase Coquerel, a Protestant pastor and putative supporter of women's rights, whose candidacy for the Constituent Assembly had earlier been endorsed by the *Voix des Femmes*. In her letter of protest to Coquerel, Deroin tried to counter the stereotype of feminine disorder by emphasizing the trope of the state as an orderly household, with woman's presence calming and moderating "irritated spirits".[150] However, much of the satire directed at socialist women in 1848-49 focused obsessively on the carnivalesque image of the household turned upside down.

The "revolt against husbands" was a favorite theme in the song-sheets, vaudeville romps and political cartoons of the day, with the insinuation that women were going to arm themselves, and with these misappropriated phalluses, stick it to men.[151] The specter of the 1793 Society of Revolutionary Republican Women, who sported the male Phrygian cap, trousers and carried a pistol and a dagger, was revived in 1848 with the appearance of the "Vésuviennes", a group of single, working-class women from Belleville, largely in their late teens and early twenties, led by an eccentric ex-soldier named Bourme. Bourme's self-proclaimed accomplishments included the invention of a machine gun capable of launching three hundred bullets a minute, which he maintained would

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[150]*Lettre d'une Femme à M. Athanase Coquerel*, (Paris: Lacour, 1848).

[151]The social significance of unruly women in the early modern period has been explored by Natalie Z. Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 124-151. For the Revolution of 1789, see Darline Gay Levy and Harriet B. Applewhite, "Women and Militant Citizenship in Revolutionary Paris" in *Rebel Daughters: Women and the French Revolution*, ed. Sara E. Melzer and Leslie W. Rabine (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 79-101; Vivian Cameron, "Political Exposures: Sexuality and Caricature in the French Revolution," in *Eroticism and the Body Politic*, ed. Lynn Hunt (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 90-107.

allow two thousand *citoyennes* to combat successfully fifty thousand enemy men.[152] The group attracted attention by their colorful marches in paramilitary garb, and by their constitution, which demanded full political equality for women and mandated obligatory marriage for men at age 26 and for women at age 21. Feeding omnipresent masculine fears of role reversal, their constitution declared that "public life is our GOAL" and demanded that men share in all household chores, so that they would cease to ridicule women's work in the home. Women in turn would serve in a reserve army and a "civil guard" which would protect hospices, charity homes, and public monuments.[153]

The amount of snickering press attention devoted to what was a very marginal and short-lived group is interesting primarily because of the socio-sexual anxieties it reveals.[154] Right-wing pornographers such as Jacques-Etienne Chénu, a police informer, raised the specter of a "community of women" by portraying the Vésuviennes as prostitutes at Montagnard orgies.[155] In a lighter vein, *Charivari* devoted a series of

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[152]Le Citoyen Bourme, Fils, *Aux Citoyennes Parisiennes Mes Soeurs en République*, 1 March 1848 (Paris: Imprimerie de SOUPE, 1848).

[153]*Les Vésuviennes, ou La Constitution Politique des Femmes par une société de Françaises*, (Paris: Imprimerie Bautruche, 1848). The frontspiece carries a quotation from Flora Tristan, "Pour tous et pour toutes," and the pamphlet opens with Jeanne Deroin's article "La Femme" from the *Voix des Femmes*, 19 April 1848. For reasonably objective press accounts of the Vésuviennes, see *Voix des Femmes*, 28 Mar. 1848, 3 and *Le Moniteur Universel*, 27 March 1848. These describe their presentation of a petition to Lamartine asking for the opening of a workshop at the former Clichy prison.

[154]For an analysis of this coverage, see Laura S. Strumingher, "The Vésuviennes: Images of Women Warriors in 1848 and their significance for French History," *History of European Ideas*, 8, no. 4-5 (1987): 451-488.

[155]Jacques Etienne Chénu, *Les Montagnards de 1848*, (Paris: D. Giraud & J. Dagneau, 1850).

satiric cartoons by Edouard de Beaumont to the Vésuviennes. Their humor derived largely from the contrast between the nubile sexuality of the young women, portrayed as *grisettes* playing at soldiers, and their masculine or menacing behavior. De Beaumont depicts the Vésuviennes dressed provocatively in tight fitting feminine bodices with narrow waists and exposed shoulders, complemented by military caps (from which leak cascading curls), pantaloons, and tiny espadrilles. Their officers by contrast are aging, overweight battle-axes devoid of sex appeal. One panel depicts an angry man in a nightshirt and cap holding three squalling, bottomless infants, confronting his young wife who thumbs her nose at him. She is in military costume with carbine, about to depart. "Mme Coquardeau," he sputters impotently, "I forbid you to answer the summons... it's not reasonable to leave me here with three infants and no diapers!"[156]

Another features an imploring husband in shirt and gaiters begging his wife to repair the button on his pants; she casts a disdainful look at him over her shoulder as she heads for the door, carbine in hand.[157] De Beaumont pictured off-duty Vésuviennes sprawled provocatively at male pastimes, playing cards, drinking, and selecting new plumes for their regalia.

The theme of emasculated men and virilized women was endlessly replayed in street songs and on the music hall stage. The "women's "Marseillaise" was a favorite

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[156]See Fig. 1, p. 306. Cartoons: *Charivari*. BHVP: Fonds Bouglé: Séries humoristiques, *Les Vesuviennes*: lithographie de Beaumont. Strumingher, "The Vésuviennes," (458) notes that the term "Coquardeau", a play on the word *"coquard"* (rosette), had several connotations, including black eye (implying debauchery) and an old fop or old beau. It carried associations of a "pompous, bourgeois, and disobeyed husband."

[157]See Fig. 2, p. 307. Cartoons: *Charivari*. BHVP: Fonds Bouglé: Séries humoristiques, *Les Vésuviennes*: lithographie de Beaumont.

vehicle. An 1848 illustrated song sheet of this genre is characteristically subtitled "the departure song of these ladies, or the great expedition against these bums of husbands." Another ditty popular on the streets in April 1849, during Deroin's candidacy for the National Assembly, mocked female pretensions:

> What a great day when, spinning at our distaff
> We shall see you a slave at our knees!
> For too long you have gone on patrol:
> Its our turn to do it for you.
>
> To the devil then with gauze and lace.
> What would we do with all that frou-frou?
> Woman has the right to be at least a colonel
> Embroider, messieurs, we'll fight for you.[158]

A popular vaudeville production, mounted in June 1848 during the height of the furor over Niboyet's *Club des Femmes*, was a one-act satire entitled, not very imaginatively, *The Husbands' Club, and the Wives' Club*. When the women break into song, it is to challenge male authority:

> Housework is their business,
> Let them do the cooking;
> In short we pledge to do nothing
> that they ask us to do.
> Let them perish by our vengeance
> down to their posterity,
> So that my cry may be repeated:
> Long live independence!
> Long live liberty![159]

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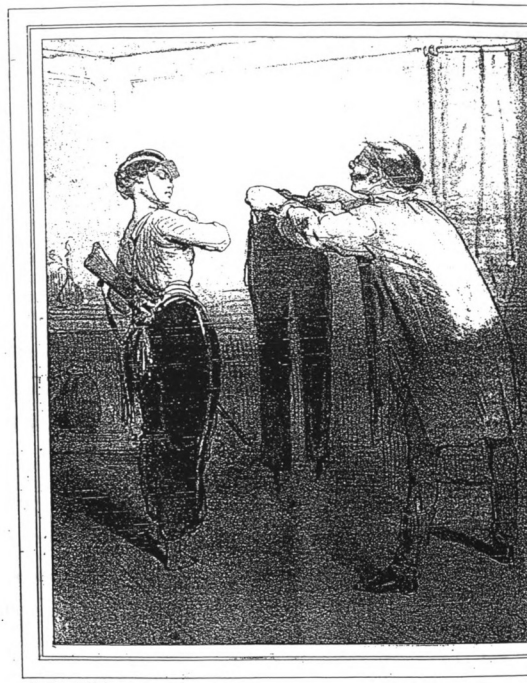
[158]Reproduced in Leon Abensour, "Une Candidature Féminine en 1849," *Le Figaro*, 1 June 1912.

[159]Claireville (Louis-François Nicolaie, dit) et Jules Cordier, *Le Club des maris, et le Club des Femmes, Vaudeville en un Act.* (Paris: Beck, 1848); presented for the first time by the Theatre de Vaudeville, Paris, 4 June 1848.



– Mame Coquardeau, j'te défends d'aller au rappel.... n'y a pas d'bon sens de me laisser comme ça avec trois enfans sur les bras.....et pas de biberon!

Figure 1: *Mame Coquardeau, j'te défends...*



— Phrasie ..... recouds-moi rien que ce bouton là, je n'peux pas sortir sans ça!.....
— Plus souvent!.....

Figure 2: *Phrasie.... recouds-moi rien que ce bouton là...*

The hapless husbands in this play have the temerity to establish a misogynist club, whose presidency is reserved for the man most compromised in his honor by his wife. The angry wives form their own club in retaliation, whose agenda includes such juicy topics as "the uselessness of men in the household," "abolition of marriage," and "sharing men." Among the members are Mme Bonnivet (the satiric sobriquet of Eugénie Niboyet), Mme Triquart (clink-glasses), and Mme Lampion (stamp-feet). The club song ends with the rousing chorus:

> I will speak, I will speak!
> Here I will pontificate
> Shut up then! Listen to me!
> Woe to you who make the law!
> I will speak, I will speak!
> Yes, despite all, I will speak![160]

As Joan B. Landes, Geneviève Fraisse, and others have argued, women's appropriation of the right to speak was regarded with deep alarm by many men of the left. Landes points out that "the bourgeois public sphere of the cities... was oriented around language - its textual production, discussion and proclamation."[161] Male workers were already intruding upon this sphere by developing "*la parole ouvrière*." Their discourse could be successfully co-opted into republican political ideology, whereas women's could not. This was because, as Landes and Fraisse have shown, this ideology was constructed not just without women, but against women. The definition of public virtue upon which it rested required feminine silence; women who demanded a public voice were by

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[160]Ibid.

[161]Joan B. Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 41-42. See also Geneviève Fraisse, *Muse de la raison: La démocratie exclusive et la différence des sexes*, (Aix-en-Provence: Éditions Alinéa, 1989).

definition disorderly and deviant. The statutes of "*La Constitution Politique des Femmes*" alleged drafted by the Vésuviennes, which declared that "*citoyennes* have the right to manifest their thoughts and their opinions with entire liberty and without marital control," conjured up a nightmare scenario for those raised on Rousseau.[162] Deroin, who never missed an opportunity to speak, whether from the rostrum in the clubs, at socialist banquets at the barrières, and ultimately in the dock of the Cour d'Assises, was mercilessly ridiculed for her loquacity. Vaudevillians Clairville, Dumanoir, and Labiche featured her in a comic revue as "Jean Bedouin", singing a "profession of faith" which became popular on the streets:

> Sur les questions les moins comprises
> Pouvant parler deux heures de temps
> Comme vous j'dirais de bêtises
> Mais j'en dirais bien plus longtemps.[163]

Under this barrage of sarcasm, the solidarity of socialist women broke down. In March of 1848, Deroin had joined Eugénie Niboyet and several other former *Saint-Simoniennes*, including *bourgeoises* such as Gabrielle Soumet and *prolétariennes* such as Désirée Gay and Suzanne Voilquin, on the editorial board of the *Voix des Femmes*. The newspaper in turn gave rise to other initiatives, including a committee to study public education for women, several associations for working women (discussed in Part Two of this study) and the infamous *Club des Femmes*. Although the editorial board of the *Voix des Femmes* officially endorsed "complete equality, true equality" for their sex, including

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[162]*Les Vésuviennes, ou La Constitution Politiques des Femmes par une société de Françaises,* "Les Droits des Citoyennes," Art. 4: 20.

[163]Dossier Jeanne Deroin, Bibliothèque Marguerite Durand, Doc. 6 (undated manuscript; author unk.). "On the most obscure questions/I can talk for two hours at a time/Like you I can spout nonsense/ But I can do so a whole lot longer."

the right to vote and to run for public office, their de facto political demands were actually much more modest. Deroin suggested in March that "several women chosen from among the most worthy, the most honorable, the most capable," be nominated by men to serve the republic, but no names were forthcoming.[164] The following week, the editors proposed George Sand as a candidate for the National Assembly. In Niboyet's florid prose, Sand was a spiritual hermaphrodite: "*le représentant qui réunit nos sympathies, c'est le type un et une, être* ***mâle*** *par la virilité,* ***femme*** *par l'intuition divine, la poésie.*"[165] Sand, who had not been consulted, angrily declined, adding insult to injury by sending her response to the republican journal *La Réforme* rather than to the *Voix des Femmes*. By proposing a singular woman, particularly one who had established a quasi-masculine identity, the editors had hoped to disguise a universal principle in the cloak of exceptionality, but their would-be ally refused to cooperate. Sand's haughty disclaimer suggested a woman conscious of her own superiority, who had little identification with ordinary women. She was clearly unwilling to risk her considerable popularity and moral influence for what she saw as an untimely and quixotic crusade.[166] Perhaps fazed by this humiliation, the editors' *Pétition des Femmes* to the Provisional

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[164]"Aux citoyens français," *La Voix des Femmes*, 27 March 1848.

[165]*Voix des Femmes*, 6 April 1848.

[166]For Sand's political views and her "feminism" see Naomi Schor, "Feminism and George Sand: Lettres à Marcie", in *Feminists Theorize the Political*, ed. Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott (New York: Routledge, 1992), 41-53 and Whitney Walton, "Writing the 1848 Revolution: Politics, Gender and Feminism in the Works of French Women of Letters," *French Historical Studies*, 18, No. 4 (Fall 1994), 1001-24.

Government in late April 1848 asked only that non-married adult women and widows who had attained the age of majority be allowed to exercise electoral rights.[167]

After the Sand debacle, a schism began to develop between moderates such as Niboyet, who was reluctant to push the voting issue more than symbolically for fear of antagonizing and embarrassing the new republican leadership, and radicals like Deroin and Gay, who believed, as Gay put it, that "women ought to take part in all social deliberations" because "on the exercise of our rights depends the future of our children and the peace of society."[168] Niboyet's conception of women's role in the unfolding drama was the more traditional one of moral suasion:

> We are made neither for struggle, nor for combat, we are there to calm spirits, to inspire them, to indicate to them the route; man has the honor of laying out the road!...
> Women, women it is not in the street that you will first triumph over time and over men, it is in the family, it is around the foyer...[169]

Deroin was far less compromising. Women's militancy was justified, even required, when the cause was just and women could contribute to the triumph of virtue. Addressing herself to men, she asserted:

> To you, heroic combats and the glory of triumph in martial struggles; but we ought to be at your side and take part in your glorious struggles when it is a

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[167]*Voix des Femmes*, 28 April 1848. As Geneviève Fraisse points out, the unmarried woman in particular was an anomaly that threated the division between private and public realms: "the single adult woman, the woman without husband or father, was the figure for all women seeking independence." *Muse de la Raison*, 71.

[168]*Voix des Femmes*, editorial by Désirée Gay, 30 March 1848.

[169]"Participation des Femmes au Mouvement Social", *Voix des Femmes*, 23 March 1848.

> matter of combatting egotism, of regenerating humanity, of delivering it from its moral and material miseries.[170]

To the editors of *La Liberté*, who declared that women should be "dedicated to obedience, to silence, to trusting love and obscure devotion,"[171] she observed that the châtelaines of medieval castles had put down their needles and picked up swords to defend their homes while the men were on crusade, otherwise their husbands would have come home to a heap of ashes and ruins piled up around the graves of their fathers and their children. (It was this militant declaration that was in fact incorporated into the preface to the constitution of the Vésuviennes). Citing the examples of Christian martyrs and women in the French Revolution, including Olympe de Gouges, Deroin continued:

> No, [woman] is not sworn to obscure devotion; each grand epoch of the history of the human race gives us proof that, if she knows how to resign herself to the most humble, the most generous abnegation, she is also capable of the most heroic devotion.... She no longer wishes to be loved as in the past, but honored as a *citoyenne*, daughter, sister, wife and mother of free citizens.[172]

Deroin's model of the engaged women was the controversial Olympe de Gouges, executed during the Terror. In the latter's (1791) *Declaration of the Rights of Woman* one finds the same contradictions between an assertion of feminine equality and of difference that characterized Deroin's own political rhetoric.[173] Deroin's favorite

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[170]"Simple Mots", *Voix des Femmes*, 28 March 1848, 3.

[171]14 April 1848.

[172]Response of Jeanne Deroin to the journal *La Liberté, Voix des Femmes*, 19 April 1848, 2.

[173]*Les Droits de la Femme addressés à la Reine* (Paris: 1791). For an analysis of the contradictions in de Gouges's discourse, see Joan W. Scott, "The Uses of Imagination: Olympe de Gouges in the French Revolution", in *Only Paradoxes to Offer: French Feminists and the Rights of Man*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996) 19-56.

aphorism was likewise drawn from de Gouges: "Woman certainly has the right to mount to the tribune since she has the right to mount the scaffold." And in the spirit of de Gouges, Deroin was willing to become a very public martyr for principle, if the situation required it.

Eugénie Niboyet, however, had had enough. The butt of ridicule in *Charivari* and on the music hall stage, she decided in May to "purify" her paper by ridding herself of the radicals whose "imprudent zeal" had exposed her to so much contempt. "The time of terror is over, the punishment of our time is sarcasm," she wrote, and she was no longer willing to absorb so much. She vowed to make her publication one that "the father can readily confide to his daughter, a brother to his sister, the young husband to his young companion....no more useless pleas in favor of a cause that is self-defending."[174] Her solution was for women to be patient, to do their duty, to be orderly. Her role model was not the flamboyant de Gouges, but the more reserved *salonnière* Mme Rolland, whose bourgeois caution matched her own:

> No woman understood better than Mme Rolland the revolutionary movement and the role which her sex ought to play in it: "I do not believe, she wrote, that our customs yet permit women to display themselves. They ought to inspire good and nourish, kindle all sentiments useful to the country, but not appear to cooperate in political work. They cannot act openly until all Frenchmen have merited the name of free men.[175]

Deroin and Désirée Gay, convinced that this precondition had already been met by the events of February, split away from Niboyet's group in May to found their own journal, *La Politique des Femmes*. One issue appeared before the June Days. The

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[174]"A Nos Amis," *Voix des Femmes*, 29 May 1848.

[175]"Les Femmes de 1848," *Voix des Femmes*, 10-13 June 1848.

authorities then declared the title too provocative, and it was reissued in August as *L'Opinion des Femmes*.[176] The June uprising and the brutal repression that followed convinced Deroin of the validity of her central thesis: the "incessant political convulsions" of the age proved that man alone was incapable of organizing society. Politics could only be transformed by the principles of love and non-violence that were inherent in woman's nature.[177] A woman must be found to run for election to the Legislative Assembly in April 1849. Earlier, Deroin had approached her socialist colleague Pauline Roland, who had been arrested for attempting to vote in the communal elections at Boussac in March of 1848 as "Marie-Antoinette Rolland." Roland, however, was more interested in moral and educational issues, such as her recently founded Association of Socialist Teachers and Professors, of which Deroin was also a member.[178] Roland begged off, saying that her spirit was not compatible with the making of useless laws. Convinced of the justice of her cause, and fearful that "the great work of social regeneration" would fail without women's participation, Deroin decided to throw her own hat into the ring. On April 10, 1849, handbills went up on the walls of Paris appealing to the "sovereign people" to support her candidacy for the Legislative Assembly. Drawing once again on her favorite analogy between proletarians and women, she declared that:

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[176]The reimposition of caution money forced Deroin to suspend publication until January, 1849. Six issues were subsequently published, the last in August 1849, which described her project for a Union of Associations. The government then demanded 5,000 fr. caution money, forcing her to shut down permanently.

[177]"Aux démocrates socialistes," *L'Opinion des Femmes*, 10 April 1849, 2.

[178]*Association Fraternelle des Instituteurs, Institutrices et Professeurs Socialistes 1849: Programme d'éducation* (Paris: Gustave Sandré, 1849). Gustave LeFrançais describes the formation of this group in his *Souvenirs d'un Révolutionnaire*, 79-83.

> a legislative assembly composed of men is as incompetent to make the laws which reign over a society of men and women as would be an assembly composed entirely of the privileged to discuss the interests of workers, or a society of capitalists to defend the honor of the country.[179]

This radical act of self-assertion won her immediate notoriety and touched off a press polemic with Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, former printer, editor of a widely read socialist journal, *Le Peuple*, representative to the Constituent Assembly, and *bête noire* of the bourgeoisie for his alleged opposition to inherited property. In his outrage Proudhon at least paid Deroin the compliment of taking her seriously. The majority of socialist and republican newspapers simply ignored her candidacy. The few journals that acknowledged it had long-standing differences with Proudhon, such as Victor Considérant's *La Démocratie Pacifique*, which published Deroin's reply to Proudhon without endorsement or comment.[180] The sole journal to devote front page coverage to the affair was Bareste's *La République*. Although the journal endorsed civil and legal equality for women in abstract terms, in the manner of Condorcet, it characterized Deroin's candidacy as an "eccentric step":

> Mme Deroin raises, in the middle of passionate political preoccupations, in a moment when the dangers of the Republic narrow the horizon of desire and the circle of combat, an idea which, still too new for most spirits, must breed repulsion.[181]

How much repulsion is suggested by the vehemence of Proudhon's response. The two had sparred earlier in January, over Proudhon's rebuttal to a letter addressed to him

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[179]"*Aux Electeurs du Départmente de la Seine*", (Paris: Imprimerie Lacour, undated affiche).

[180]13 April 1849. They prefaced this bold step by stating that Deroin asked them to print the letter, as if to disclaim responsibility for it.

[181]"De la Position des Femmes dans la société," 13 April 1849, 1.

by Marie Meunier, advocating full civil and legal rights for women. Proudhon had refused to print the letter, but felt obliged to attack it after it was published in *La République*. Referring to his interlocutor obliquely as Mme Marie M***, perhaps in an effort to discount her, he countered with his own vision of a society organized around sexual duality and hierarchy: "To men the life of the forum and the workshop; to women the life of the family and the household." This scheme, he said, was not based on personal prejudice; it was dictated by "the nature of things", of which he was simply one of "the very humble transmitters." Woman's deepest desire, he alleged, was to have her own household, and to be free to stay home and "embellish" it. What was essential was not to liberate woman from the household, but to restore the household to its proper importance. "Housewife or harlot, for women there is no middle ground."[182] Deroin's response reveals the same uncompromising dogmatism:

> Socialist, Christian, I would say like you, Monsieur, better housewife than harlot, if I were not certain that a great number of women become courtesans in order to escape the necessity of being housewives.... To your dilemma, Monsieur, I will oppose another which for me is an axiom: slave and prostitute, or free and chaste, for woman there is no middle ground.[183]

Although Proudhon and Deroin held widely divergent views on the meaning of liberty and equality for women, they both argued from a position which endorsed sexual difference and saw men and women as playing complementary social roles. Deroin's reluctance to attack Proudhon sharply, her restraint in the face of his wilder flights of misogyny, probably stemmed from the parallels between their positions. One could argue,

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[182]*Le Peuple*, 4 January 1849. Meunier's letter also appeared in *La République* on 4 January 1849. It had earlier been sent to Proudhon's journal.

[183]*L'Opinion des Femmes*, 28 January 1849, 6-7.

as Riot-Sarcey does, that they were simply talking past each other, in mutual incomprehension. However, the similarities between their rhetorical strategies suggest that they were operating in the same discursive tradition, and understood each other very well. Both claimed to be acting in the interests of public morality. Deroin asserted that it was her duty to run for office, that she was doing so "in the name of public morals and justice".[184] Proudhon countered that her pretensions were a violation of public morality.[185] Deroin repeatedly argued that woman "is the equal of man, not his like," and it was her unique attributes that would compensate for the defects in man's nature. The latter she held responsible for all the evils of contemporary society, including "the inequitable division of the products of work, slavery, servitude and the proletariat, ignorance, corruption and misery."[186] Equality therefore meant "the right and the duty [of both men and women] to take part in all the acts of social life to the extent of their abilities and their aptitudes without distinction of sex or race."[187] Proudhon simply reiterated the same formula, but with different conclusions: "Man, inasmuch as his reason develops, clearly sees in woman his equal, never will he see in her his like." The difference between them was a "qualitative essence" which "assigns her a completely different destiny and functions in social life."[188]

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[184]Deroin to *La Démocratie Pacifique*, 13 April 1849.

[185]*Le Peuple*, 12 April 1849.

[186]"Aux démocrates socialistes", *L'Opinion des Femmes*, 10 April 1849, 2.

[187]"Rectification du compte-rendu du comité démocratique-socialiste des électeurs," in *Campagne Electorale de la Citoyenne Jeanne Deroin, Pétition des Femmes au Peuple* (Paris: Dépot Central de la Propagande Socialiste, s.d. {April 1849}).

[188]*Le Peuple*, 12 April 1849.

Both believed that woman represented "sentiment" and that the consensual and loving union of man and woman was the expression, in microcosm, of the natural sexual cooperation that ought to prevail in social life. While Deroin imagined this union to be a voluntary association of equals, similar to that prevailing in worker's production societies, Proudhon saw woman as entirely subsumed in man's being:

> Properly speaking, woman is not the associate of man, she is united with him; there are between them not only legal bonds, but relations of love and sympathy. They form between them one and the same human personality, which has its expression in the family. The family is the only personality which political right recognizes.[189]

The fundamental question was whether woman's "difference", acknowledged by both antagonists, was a disqualification for public life. Here Deroin was at a disadvantage, for having previously conceded that woman was dissimilar to man, it was more difficult for her to make her case that all liberties were solidary, and restricting them for one sex meant endangering them for both. Deroin always defined "liberty" in gender-neutral terms: "Liberty for woman as for man, is the right to exercise and develop freely all of her faculties."[190] But that begged the question of what those faculties might be. Proudhon countered that liberty "is the totality of conditions that are necessary for her to fulfill her destiny as a woman... it is ...the right to develop in a milieu which corresponds with her sympathetic nature and which has fallen to her share."[191] What restricted the liberty of women was not men, he argued, but capitalism, which deprived women of marriage based on love and dragged them from their home and children into

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[189]Ibid.

[190]Deroin, Paris, to *La Démocratie Pacifique*, 13 April 1849.

[191]*Le Peuple*, 12 April 1849.

"the empoisoned sphere of the atelier."[192] Thus as Deroin had argued many times, the fate of women and the fate of proletarians were intertwined, because their woes were similar. It would not help to make them voters; one must first change the economic base of society. This was an argument dear to the hearts of the social Catholic artisans on the editorial board of *L'Atelier* as well.

Unable to counter with arguments that questioned sexual essentialism, Deroin took refuge in rhetorical flights of religiosity reminiscent of the Saint-Simonians and Pierre Leroux. Woman's mission in the present is apostleship, she argued. Its aim is to realize the reign of God on earth, the triumph of fraternity and universal harmony.[193] Deroin did construct some purely pragmatic arguments for female enfranchisement. She pointed to the skill and experience that socialist women had acquired in founding associations for working women, in establishing courses and conferences, and in publishing journals and brochures.[194] She also argued, as did many of her colleagues and even *La République*, that the skills women acquired in household management could be an asset in government: "you ask what will be the mission of woman outside the family? She will come to assist you in re-establishing order in that great badly administered household which is called the State."[195] Allowing women to vote, she acknowledged, would entail the same dangers as giving it to proletarians in the cities and in the countryside, who had

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[192]*Le Peuple*, 14 April 1849.

[193]"Mission de la femme dans le présent et dans l'avenir," *L'Opinion des Femmes*, 10 April 1849, 2.

[194]Ibid.

[195]Lettre à M. Proudhon, *L'Opinion des Femmes*, 28 January 1849, 7.

given France a national assembly hostile to republican principles. But violating these same principles when it came to women would undermine the moral foundation on which the Republic rested.[196]

Ironically the most hard-hitting attack on Proudhon came not from Deroin, but from her Fourierist colleague and friend, Hortense Wild, whose *nom de plume* was "Henriette, artiste" or simply "H". To Proudhon's claim that woman did not seek to be emancipated from man, but from capitalist despotism, she replied sarcastically:

> Pardon, Monsieur, woman seeks to be emancipated from man, don't fool yourself; its very simple, because man represents, in almost all of his relations with woman, the sacrifice of right to power, the law of constraint and of necessity.[197]

It would be better to reform workshops for both men and women, Wild argued, than to shut women up in households, where the hidden evils and secrets were no less real. Furthermore, while the idea of separate spheres might sound poetic, it didn't stand up to critical scrutiny. A man might get tired of the workshop and politics, and want to devote more time to his family; similarly, a woman might well have interests outside the home. But her most telling shot was reserved for Proudhon's biological reductionism. "We don't understand a woman legislator any more than we understand a male nurse," Proudhon had sneered. To which Wild rejoined:

> In that case, it ought to be very easy for you to say what organs are characteristic of the function of legislator. If nature is so positive in this regard as you seem to think, our debate is over, and you will have nothing more to fear from our competition at the National Assembly than we have from yours at the placement bureau for nurses.[198]

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[196]"Mission de la femme..." 10 April 1849, 2.

[197]"Réponse au journal *le Peuple* by "H"," *L'Opinion des Femmes*, May 1849, 3-4.

[198]Ibid.

Wild had in fact framed the issue quite baldly: woman seeks to be emancipated from man, who is a despot in his personal relations with her. The proletariat had dealt with despots by rising against them. When Deroin invoked the analogy of women as the ultimate proletariat, she inevitably raised the specter of the war between the sexes, and the overthrow of masculine authority. She tried to compensate for this by obsessively foregrounding woman's role as peacemaker. Women, however, are almost always mothers in her rhetoric, rarely wives or single women. When adult men worried about disorderly and insubordinate women, they were thinking about their peers. And they wanted to make sure that if such women rose up, it was only to exercise innocuous moral suasion. As Desplanches, a former worker-editor of *La Ruche Populaire* put it:

> To man to speak publicly, to woman to inspire him with moderation in his opinion. To man to act, to woman to inspire him with the desire to ameliorate the fundamental laws which ought to regulate the country without upheaval and without hostility. To man to create, to women to moralize. Yes, my sisters, the moral revolution can only be made by women, but this revolution ought to carry the stamp of virtues which God has assigned to you.[199]

Deroin's appropriation of the masculine right to speak publicly was therefore a deeply subversive act, and she was aware of it. In support of her candidacy, she made the rounds of the socialist clubs and electoral meetings in the arrondissements, asking to be put on the agenda so that she could make her case directly to the "sovereign people." Almost everywhere she met with the same response. Embarrassed by someone who took her socialist principles so literally, the executive boards of these bodies evaded the fundamental issue by declaring her candidacy unconstitutional. When she persisted, as she did at the electoral assembly of the Fourth Arrondissement on the 16th of April,

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[199]"Actions de Grâces Rendues Aux Femmes du Peuple," *Voix des Femmes*, 6 April 1848, 2.

demanding to be given the tribune, tumult erupted. No sooner had she started to speak, than a violent disturbance broke out near the door of the hall, supported by the majority of the audience. "Strengthened by the intimate conviction of the grandeur of our mission and the sanctity of our apostolat," Deroin refused to step down.[200] When it was finally possible to continue, she reproached the audience for its hypocrisy:

> we manifested our astonishment to see men who call themselves men of the future, who declare themselves socialist democrats and who repulse the logical consequences and the application of principles which are the base of socialism, who recoil before its practice and who do not have the courage of their opinion; who demand the abolition of privileges and who wish to conserve that which they share with the privileged, that which is the source of all other privileges, of all social inequalities, the domination of man over woman.[201]

She went on to upbraid them for their lack of solidarity, warning them that if they sought liberty and equality only for themselves "ignorance, misery and corruption would not cease to reign on earth." This courageous jeremiad was heard in silence, and though a few listeners rose afterwards to concur with her presentation, Deroin did not get the endorsement she was seeking. It was the same at most other venues, where she was either refused permission to speak at all, or where she was introduced with the caveat that her candidacy was unconstitutional. She did receive a warm reception from workers at the salle des Acacias in the quartier Saint-Antoine, where the presiding officer, Delbrouck, was a friend and sympathizer, but a member of the board spoke after her, branding her candidacy as unconstitutional. She was nevertheless able to win a vote of sympathy from the audience in favor of the *principle* of the right of women to civil and political equality.

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[200]Deroin provides a full account of these efforts in her brochure: *Campagne Electorale de la Citoyenne Jeanne Deroin, Pétition des Femmes au Peuple* (Paris: Dépot Central de la Propagande Socialiste, 1849).

[201]Ibid.

This convinced her that the "sovereign people" were more just than their leaders.[202] The vote, however, was purely symbolic and cost the workers of the club nothing. The Democratic-Socialist Committee of Electors refused to include her name, or that of any woman, on the list of twenty-eight officially endorsed candidates from the Seine district.

Although most republican and socialist journals maintained a conspiracy of silence on Deroin's candidacy, her activities inspired a series of ten caricatures by Honoré Daumier in *Charivari*, which appeared from April to June 1849. Daumier, a staunch republican and bitter foe of women's emancipation, depicted "Les Femmes Socialistes" in scenes of domestic discord, bullying hapless husbands, neglecting their households and children to run off to meetings and banquets, and conspiring against men in general.[203] The women themselves are generally fat and ugly, with shrewish temperaments. One angrily berates her husband, as she points towards the door: "Ah, you are my husband, ah! you are the master...well then, I have the right to throw you out... Jeanne Deroin proved it to me yesterday evening!... go explain yourself to her!"[204] Deroin herself is portrayed only once, as a bitter-looking, sharp-featured, and despondent woman sunk in a chair before a table piled with papers. She dismisses a friend with the grandiloquent comment: "Repulsed as a candidate for the national assembly, a door still remains open

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[202]Ibid.

[203]The series is reproduced with commentary in Daumier, *Intellectuelles (Bas Bleus) et Femmes Socialistes*, préface de Françoise Parturier, catalogue et notices de Jacqueline Armingeat, (Paris: 1974).

[204]See Fig. 3, p. 325. *Charivari*, 23 May 1849.

to me... leave me Zénobie... don't trouble my thoughts... I am in the middle of composing a manifesto to Europe."[205]

Disillusioned by her defeat, Deroin abandoned electoral approaches. She urged her readers in June 1849 not to associate themselves with the "impious and cruel politics of men", with party hatreds, with these "lamentable violences which provoke incessant anger and prepare the way for new violences."[206] Frustrated by her political impotence, she began to transfer her energies to a new project which would be socially regenerative but apolitical. The August 1849 edition of *L'Opinion des Femmes*, carried her "Appeal to Associations," an invitation to workers' associations to join together in mutualist supra-association. True bonds of socialist fraternity and solidarity, so obviously lacking in the fractious Legislative Assembly, could be forged by workers themselves outside of the political system. What was needed was to overcome the isolation and egotism that divided workers and their associations from each other. A great union of associations would insure all members the right to work, give workers control over the instruments and conditions of their labor, and guarantee a secure existence even to the weakest and most vulnerable. Society would have to be rebuilt from the economic foundations up. The Union of Associations of Workers would be the first step.

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[205]See Fig. 4, p. 326. *Charivari*, 4 June 1849.

[206]"Mission de la femme dans le présent et dans l'avenir," *L'Opinion des Femmes*, June 1849, 4.



—Ah! vous êtes mon mari, ah! vous êtes le maître . . . . . eh! bien moi, j'ai le droit de vous flanquer à la porte de chez vous . . . . . Jeanne Derouin me la prouve hier soir ! . . . . allez vous expliquer avec elle! . . .

Figure 3: *Ah! vous êtes mon mari...*



– Repoussée comme candidate à l'assemblée nationale, une porte me reste encore ouverte ..... laisse moi Zénobie ..... ne trouble pas mes pensées ..... je suis en train de rédiger un manifeste à l'Europe ! .....

Figure 4: *Repoussée comme candidate...*

6: *"Vous n'avez-pas supprimé votre véritable patron... le capital"*: The Union of Associations of Workers, 1849-1850

Jeanne Deroin's project for a Union of Associations of Workers, first proposed in *L'Opinion des femmes* in August of 1849 and organized over the next nine months, was the final chapter in her brief but impassioned career as a socialist activist. Just as Flora Tristan's "Workers' Union" recapitulated the central themes in Tristan's life and thought, so Deroin's Union of Associations of Workers epitomized the values which shaped her life and work. Unlike Tristan, who assumed the need for a savior or defender of the working classes, Deroin believed in workers' capacity for self-liberation. Workers themselves could break down the walls of egotism and inequality that had historically divided them. They could demolish the master link in the chain that bound them to the old society - capital.[207]

The failure of Deroin's political candidacy and her movement towards mutualist association produced a subtle but significant shift in her rhetoric. Before these events, liberty and equality held pride of place in her pantheon of values. Fraternity was their logical consequence: "fraternity is the practice of liberty and equality for all women [toutes] as for all men [tous]; it is respect for human dignity...."[208] From August of 1849 on, "fraternity and solidarity" became the core terms in her discourse, paradoxically the very fraternity and solidarity which her candidacy had failed to evoke. Fraternity for Deroin was not the corporate male bonding celebrated by elite artisans such as Agricol Perdiguier, Martin Nadaud or the editors of *L'Atelier*. Still less was it the brotherhood

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[207]"Appel aux Associations," **L'Opinion des Femmes**, Aug. 1849: 1-3.

[208]*Aux Electeurs du Département de la Seine* (Paris: 1949).

of the barricades. It was a universal ethical imperative, transcending sex, skill, and class, summarized by the gospel commandment: "love your brothers more than yourselves." Increasingly, Deroin linked fraternity and solidarity to issues of self-actualization and economic justice rather than to political participation:

> Association cannot achieve the principles of fraternity and of solidarity until it recognizes the right of all of its members, without distinction of sex or profession, to live a complete life, that is, the right of consumption insured by the equitable distribution of the products of the labor of all, according to the needs of each and the requirements of his profession.[209]

Deroin's proposal for a Union of Associations of Workers started with the conviction that it was possible to replace a system of commercial exchange based on money with a system of mutual and reciprocal exchanges of goods and services between producers' associations. All the fragmented and endangered workers' associations desperately trying to stay afloat in the wake of the sinking democratic and social republic would combine forces to build a new ark, a mutualist supra-association, that would buffer them from the winds of capitalism. On this ark, socialist interdependence would be expressed not only by a system of exchanges in kind that would replace money, and mutual credit organizations that would replace banks, but also by a network of *crèches*, schools, communal housing, public baths, and medical services that would sustain even the weakest members of the community. The Union of Associations would thus permit the individual to enjoy what Deroin repeatedly insisted was his or her most important human right: "The right to live a complete life, intellectually, physically and morally, that is, to exercise and develop freely and harmoniously all of one's faculties."[210]

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[209]"Appel aux Associations," *L'Opinion des Femmes*, 21 August 1849, 2.

[210]Ibid.

Deroin was certainly not the first to propose combining the fragmented and struggling Parisian associations into a more effective union. This idea went through a number of incarnations after the Provisional Government dissolved the Luxembourg Commission in May of 1848, depriving workers of a public forum for airing grievances and a mechanism for collective action. During the Luxembourg's brief tenure, a typographer named Parmentier organized a central committee of workers of the Department of the Seine to coordinate the activities of the more than 600 delegates elected to the Commission. This committee continued to meet after the Luxembourg was disbanded in May 1848, under the rubric of the "Société des Corporations Réunies." Led by Pierre Vinçard, a typographer and nephew of Vinçard ainé, the Saint-Simonian chansonnier, the group published its own newspaper, *Le Journal des Travailleurs*, and developed liaisons between workers' corporations, the national workshops, and the clubs.[211]

According to Rémi Gossez, the *Société des Corporations Réunies* was supported by dues paid by the corporations, and intervened on their behalf on a number of occasions with public authorities; for example, to prevent the suppression of prefectoral placement bureaus and the application of an unpopular new law on the *prud'hommes*.[212] The revised statutes of the Society, published in the *Journal des Travailleurs* after the June Days, show that the Society was contemplating a move towards mutualism. The avowed

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[211]The journal published six issues between June 4-25, 1848. No. 6, 22-25 June 1848, carries a summary of the objectives of association of the Corporations Réunies.

[212]"Pré-syndicalisme ou pré-coopération? L'organisation ouvrière et ses phases dans le département de la Seine de 1834 à 1851," *Archives Internationales de Sociologie de la Co-opération*, 6 (1959), 67-89.

goal of the society was "the abolition of the exploitation of man by man by the immediate association of producers, and the creation of workshops of associated workers."[213]

After December 1848, the central committee of the *Société des Corporations Réunies* styled itself the "Permanent Commission of delegates," and jealously guarded its right to speak for the corporations of Paris. It tended to be suspicious of other initiatives, such as Deroin's, to advance worker association. Also in December 1848 representatives of a number of workers' associations formed a rival body, the *Chambre Syndicale du Travail.* It was headed by Edouard Frossard, ex-delegate to the Luxembourg from the tailors association of Clichy. The *Chambre Syndicale* marked the first concrete effort to link workers' associations together through a network of reciprocal services and exchanges. It proposed to facilitate direct exchanges of products among member associations, extend credit through a common bank, arbitrate disputes among associations, provide assistance to workers who wished to draw up acts of association, and help them to procure work and raw materials.[214] However, the Chambre Syndicale fell victim to police repression and to dissension between Frossard and the Permanent Commission of delegates, who feared being supplanted by the new body.[215]

Delegates from the Permanent Commission then linked forces with Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, who proposed, in January 1849, the establishment of a mutual credit bank, to

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[213]For the original statutes see the *Journal des Travailleurs*, no. 3, 11-15 June 1848; for revised regulations, no. 6, 25 June 1848. Article 2 states: "The Society has as its goal mutuality of production and consumption..."

[214]For an account of its objectives see *Le Travail affranchi*, 8 January 1849.

[215]R. Gossez, "Présyndicalisme ou pré-coopération...", 75-76 and Gossez, *Les Ouvriers de Paris*, 332-334.

be called the "Bank of the People." This was a revised version of Proudhon's abortive project for a Bank of Exchange.[216] It was now expanded by being combined with an ambitious scheme for syndicates of production and consumption developed by Proudhon's collaborator, Jules Lechevalier, a Fourierist. Proudhon wanted the Bank of the People to function as a populist alternative to the Bank of France, liberating workers from the tyranny of gold and capital. It would link all interested producers and consumers together by ties of "reciprocity," the mutual exchange of goods and services. To facilitate such exchanges, and to break the "monarchy" of gold, the Bank would issue exchange notes in various denominations. These notes would be backed by the value of the goods and services produced by member organizations, and would circulate in place of specie. The Bank, a non-profit corporation, would discount such notes for members for a nominal fee, and provide interest-free loans, with funds supplied by members and by philanthropists.[217]

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[216] The statutes of the Bank of Exchange were printed in the *Représentant du Peuple*, May 1848. On 31 July 1848, Proudhon made a speech to the Constituent Assembly, demanding the establishment of the Bank, whose funds would be accumulated out of money recuperated by lowering rents, tenancies, and interest charged on capital by a third. His idea received only one supporting vote, that of a Lyonnais worker, Greppo. Daniel Halévy, "Introduction" to *Les Confessions d'un Révolutionnaire*, v. 8 of *Oeuvres Complètes de P.-J. Proudhon* (Paris: Marcel Rivière, 1929), 35.

[217] Proudhon outlined his scheme for a credit bank and "reciprocity" in a number of publications. See his series of articles, "Organisation du Crédit et de la Circulation, et Solution du Problème Social," *Le Représentant du Peuple*, esp. 11 April 1848, 3-4. See also *Le Peuple*, "Report of Citizen Chipron... to the General Assembly of delegates to the Luxembourg...", 16 & 29 January 1849; "Banque du Peuple", 5 February 1849; "Demonstration of Socialism, theory and practice, to serve as instruction to the subscribers and adherents of the Bank of the People," 12 March 1849.

Jules Lechevalier's allied *Mutualité des Travailleurs*, which Proudhon endorsed, envisaged the creation of two great syndicates, a syndicate of production and a syndicate of consumption, open to all of the associations of Paris. These syndicates would act as giant coordinating committees, centralizing and organizing production, apportioning work, tools, and raw materials among associations, warehousing and distributing finished products, and supplying credit to workers. They would also be responsible for regulating apprenticeship and for the establishment of mutual benefit funds to cover sickness, accident, and old age. In addition Lechevalier hoped that the syndicates would undertake to construct economical and hygienic housing, as well as cooperative bakeries, butcher shops, and grocery stores.[218]

The Proudhon-Lechevalier project excited considerable support among workers in Paris and in larger cities such as Marseilles and Lyon.[219] Chipron, a mechanic and a Fourierist, reported favorably on the proposal to a general assembly of former delegates to the Luxembourg in Paris in January 1849.[220] Proudhon, however, abruptly pulled the plug on the enterprise in February, after his arrest for a press offense, apparently out of fear that his endeavor might be misdirected in his absence. It was following the failure of the Bank of the People that Deroin proposed her own scheme for a Union of Associations of Workers. Ironically, although Deroin and Proudhon were on opposite

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[218]"Report of Citizen Chipron..." *Le Peuple*, 16 and 29 January, 1849.

[219]Rémi Gossez reports that within six weeks of the opening of the Bank's offices, there were 20,000 subscribers and 100,000 fr. capital; there were committees of the Bank at Lyon, Beaune, Nîmes, Besançon, Agen, Figeac, Belfort, Dijon, Nantes, Bordeaux, Marseille, and Reims. *Les Ouvriers de Paris* (1967), 334-340.

[220]"Report of Citizen Chipron...", *Le Peuple*, 16 and 29 January 1849.

sides of the socialist debate over women's rights, Deroin's blueprint appears to be based, in broad outline, on Proudhon and Lechevalier's project. This similarity may simply be due to the popularity of mutualist ideas at mid-century. It may also stem from the fact that both Proudhon and Deroin were influenced by some of the same theorists, including Morelly and Charles Fourier.

Pierre-Joseph Proudhon was Deroin's fiercest interlocutor on the left and the most determined opponent of her efforts to open the public sphere to women. Because the two shared a number of economic assumptions, but had radically different perspectives on the place of women in society and in the socialist movement, their rhetoric reveals how issues of class and gender could be injected into associational discourse and utilized to support alternative visions of distributive justice and moral economy. Proudhon was intensely moralistic, as was Deroin. Both shared a fundamental sexual puritanism. Neither was an economist; for both, economics was simply a coded way to debate larger ethical and political questions. Proudhon's ideas about property and labor are inseparable from his tenacious defense of the patriarchal family and republic; Deroin's ideas about association are intertwined with her brief for equality between the sexes.

Pierre-Joseph Proudhon was born in 1809, the fifth child of an improvident Besançon cooper and cook of peasant stock. He escaped the idiocy of rural life by winning a scholarship to the collège of Besançon. Upon graduation he became a typographer. While working for a religious press in Besançon, he read from Church fathers and Catholic theorists such as de Maistre and de Bonald. Although he became staunchly anti-clerical, he nevertheless retained a puritanical religious sensibility and a patriarchal social outlook derived from his Catholic and peasant childhood.

In the late 1820s, Proudhon was introduced to Fourier when he was given the job of correcting the proofs for Fourier's *Le Nouveau Monde industriel et sociétaire.* He admired Fourier's stinging critique of bankers and commercial middlemen, but found his sexual theories repugnant and bizarre. In 1838, at the age of 29, he applied for and was awarded the "Suard pension," given by the Academy of Besançon to a poor bachelor's degree-holder for a year of study in Paris. Subsequently he began to publish the works that gained him wide notoriety, particularly his three memorials on property, in which he hotly criticized rentier income as theft.[221]

A move to Lyon in 1843 introduced Proudhon to the mutualism of the Lyonnais silk-workers, whose uprisings in 1831 and 1834 had electrified France. He incorporated their mutualism into his own economic theories and his philosophy of worker self-help and education.[222] An eclectic and somewhat eccentric thinker, a lone-wolf never truly affiliated with any socialist school or camp, his ideas were a strange mélange of economic radicalism and social and sexual conservatism. An impassioned defender of the patriarchal family, Proudhon's famous dictum on women's options in French society - "Housewife or harlot" - was the most naked expression of a view expressed frequently but less brutally in the liberal and workerist press - that proletarian women should be liberated from the atelier and confined to the home.

Deroin and Proudhon embraced certain of the same economic premises, but differed significantly in their social visions. Both shared a belief in the labor theory of

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[221]Steven K. Vincent, *Pierre Joseph Proudhon and the Rise of French Republican Socialism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984); Maitron, *Dictionnaire Biographique du Mouvement Ouvrier Français, 1789-1864*, v. 3: 256-60.

[222]Vincent, *Pierre Joseph Proudhon*, 88-89.

value, regarded the shortage of credit as one of workers' greatest economic disabilities, and imagined that some kind of mutual credit bank supported by a voluntary network of producers and consumers could ease this crunch. Beyond this, their views diverged sharply. Proudhon welcomed a competitive economy of small producers, unfettered by state regulation and buttressed by patriarchal and patrilineal family relations, in which a traditional and rigid sexual division of labor would prevail. Deroin, by contrast, sought a genuinely collectivist and egalitarian social order, in which an ethic of mutual care would replace that of *chacun pour soi.*

Proudhon's notorious 1840 tract, *On Property*, had set forth a stirring defense of the labor theory of value and an attack on *oisifs* that had been widely shared among workers in the 1840s. In this early work, Proudhon had spoken of the right of every person who comes into the world to sit at the table and share in the benefits. "The right to live and to develop completely is equal for all (*tous*)," he had written, "inequality of conditions is an obstacle to the development of that right."[223] However by 1848, Proudhon had significantly muted his tone, partially as a result of his own growing conservatism, partially to avoid prosecution and to win over well-heeled supporters for his Bank. He now stoutly denied that he intended to challenge existing property rights, and endorsed "freedom of commerce and emulative competition as the principle of all progress".[224] Nevertheless, he continued to associate interest income and gold with

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[223]Ibid., 90.

[224]Art. 28, Statutes of the Bank of the People, printed in *Le Peuple*, 5 February 1849.

"regime of feudal property and the monarchical organization of society,"[225] and argued that the way to "republicanize" credit and specie was to replace them with the principle of "reciprocity." Reciprocity, defined as a mutualist exchange of goods and services, was a "middle way," or synthesis, between the antitheses of "property" and "community". If property without reciprocity was theft, then "community" was also a form of non-reciprocity, and equally theft. To reward the less capable in the same manner as the most talented and energetic constituted theft as much as the proprietor who rented land he could not work himself, or the capitalist who lent money at interest.[226] However, by 1848, Proudhon's notion of "reciprocity," was becoming a calculus of equivalent exchange, stripped of its radical critique of property or solicitude for the weak.[227]

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[225]P.-J. Proudhon, *The Solution of the Social Problem*, ed. with introd. Henry Cohen (New York: Vanguard, 1927), 68. This is a compilation and translation of a work Proudhon was engaged in when the Revolution of 1848 broke out. It appeared in published form cut up into pamphlets and newspaper articles. Two pamphlets were published in March 1848 before Proudhon became editor of *Le Répresentant du Peuple*. They bear the same title, "Solution of the Social Problem". The first is mainly a criticism of the early acts of the provisional government, and energetically opposes the establishment of national workshops. The second, "Organization of Credit and Circulation," sums up in a few pages his idea of economic progress: a gradual reduction of interest, profit, rent, taxes and wages. Other sections represent a series of articles published in *Le Répresentant du Peuple* in April 1848 under the heading "*Organisation du Crédit et de la Circulation, et Solution du Problème Social.*"

[226]*Le Répresentant du Peuple*, 12 April 1848, 4.

[227]In a "Declaration" which prefaces his statutes for the Bank of the People, Proudhon swears that "in making a critique of property, or better put, of the collection of institutions of which property is the pivot, I never meant either to attack individual rights recognized by earlier laws, nor to contest the legitimacy of acquired possessions, nor to provoke an arbitrary repartition of goods, nor to place an obstacle to free and regular acquisition, by sale or exchange, of properties; nor yet to forbid or suppress, by sovereign decree, land rents or interest on capital. I believe that all these manifestations of human activity ought to remain free and operational for all.... My only goal... has been to arrive, by a long and laborious analysis, at the discovery of

By 1849, too, Proudhon had clearly lost faith in workers' associations, which he believed limited the liberty of the worker and bound the most able to the least capable. Rather than supporting association, he preached that "the liberty of labor must be absolute... governments exist only to protect free labor, not to regulate and to restrain it."[228] Communism had become an anathema to him, as had any notion of "community" which placed a higher value on worker solidarity than on liberty. He deplored "that which, under the pretext of harmony and fraternity, tends to destroy in society the divergence of opinion, the opposition of interests, the battle of passions, the antagonism of ideas, the competition of workers."[229] Organization of credit had replaced organization of labor or organization of society as his solution to the social problem.

The clearest contrast between Deroin and Proudhon thus lies in their conceptions of social equity. Proudhon's was that of the self-reliant elite artisan, who dreams of being rewarded for his skill and endurance in an economy which validates masculine labor and invalidates capital. Deroin's was an ideal of solidarity which extended protection and succor even to the most vulnerable members of society - women, children, the aged, the sick and the infirm - while simultaneously offering them opportunities for growth and self-actualization. It is tempting to see both authors' notions of social equity as reifications of idealized parental roles. Proudhon's feckless father has been transcended by a patriarchal vision of masculine competence and control; Deroin's disapproving and

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superior principles, whose algebraic formula is enunciated in this act." Bank of the People: Publication of the act of the society, *Le Peuple*, 5 February 1849.

[228]*The Solution of the Social Problem*, 47.

[229]Ibid., 48.

restrictive mother by a social motherhood of boundless solicitude and nurturance. "The child who is born has an absolute right, from its entry into life, to the complete satisfaction of its needs," she wrote. "It is not he which has demanded a place among us... It is another brother whom God has sent us; it is another worker."[230]

In Deroin's vision of moral economy, existing workers' associations were flawed by inequality and egotism. This was exemplified by their disunity and practices such as unequal distribution of wages and profits. Deroin did not advocate that all workers in an association receive the same salary, nor did she advocate wages based on productivity. Her goal was to replace the salary system, that "germ of death in the heart of association", with a form of remuneration that guaranteed all dependents, especially children, the right to live. Dispensing with money wages and substituting the exchange of products and services based on need would provide a way to care for all, without humiliating charity.[231] Characteristically, Deroin foregrounded the claims of mothers and children, while dwelling on the contradiction between their social contribution and their social and political impotence:

> Poor mothers, who, because they accomplish the first, the most important, the most sacred of all social functions, are declared incapable, and are excluded from the right to concur in the formation of laws that regulate the fate of their children, and are compelled to submit to the yoke of a social organization which refuses them the right to abolish the vice tax and the blood tax; which delivers their children to prostitution, because they are poor, and their sons to the hazards of war, replacing the sons of the privileged....[232]

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[230]"Appel aux Associations," *L'Opinion des Femmes*, August 1849.

[231]Ibid., 1.

[232]Ibid., 2.

As mutualist organizers, both Proudhon and Deroin shared certain handicaps. The first was their "outsider" status, although this took different forms. Neither was active in an organized trade corporation before 1848, although Proudhon as former typographer (by 1848 he was full-time writer and journalist) was welcomed at the banquets of the Parisian typographers association and could count on the sympathy of one of the stronger corporations in Paris. Deroin's self-proclaimed status as a representative of Parisian seamstresses was by contrast extremely tenuous, since there was no formal corporation representing *lingères* in 1848, and Deroin herself was a teacher, not a needleworker. All attempts to organize associations of needleworkers in 1848-1849 failed, including those in which Deroin was involved. Additionally, both Deroin and Proudhon encountered suspicion and rivalry from some of the former delegates to the Luxembourg Commission, who owed primary allegiance to Louis Blanc.[233] Finally, Deroin's status as a woman in a movement overwhelmingly dominated by men saddled her with the extra burden of simultaneously asserting her credibility and competence while appeasing the male egos of her collaborators.

Given all these handicaps, it is a tribute to Deroin's perseverance and her organizational abilities, her "*intelligence fatalement organisatrice*" as the arrest warrant

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[233]Rémi Gossez argues that Proudhon and the representatives of the workers' corporations fell out over workers' pragmatic desire to make the Bank the center of all workers associations and to use it to defend their professional interests; Proudhon did not share this goal or their desire to enlist the support of the state. *Les Ouvriers de Paris*, 334-340. Deroin reports that the Committee of the Union wrote to Louis Blanc soliciting his support, to ally suspicions by the delegates of the Luxembourg that they were usurping his work. *Notes pour la défense de Jeanne Deroin*, BHVP/ MS NA 111, Folio 165, 23-24.

put it,[234] that she was able to translate a paper scheme in August 1849 into a organization that claimed 104 member associations by the spring of 1850. The appeal of the project is difficult to appreciate from a contemporary perspective, but is more comprehensible in the context of a culture in which financiers and commercial middlemen had been portrayed since the days of the Physiocrats as drones, and workers were desperate to acquire a modicum of security and control over their own lives. Deroin's fantasy of a completely fraternal and solidary society, however, was probably not as important to many workers as the chance to acquire assets and a measure of independence. Prosper Chesnel, a painter arrested for his involvement in the union, summed up his reasons for joining by denying in court that he was an enemy of property:

> because to the contrary I am bent on having the largest share possible (prolonged hilarity)... My acts are in accordance with my principles; because, in founding an association, I didn't have a sou, and the association gave me my share in a property. A little ball of snow grows as it rolls.[235]

When asked in his pre-trial interrogation if the union occupied itself with social reforms, he responded: "What do you mean? It is clear that we are occupied with the organization of work; in other words, we wish to work for ourselves and not for others."[236] It was probably this desire that attracted most workers to the Union of Associations, rather than Deroin's communistic ideals.

Deroin's vision of the communal life that the Union of Associations of Workers would make possible owes more to the utopians who were her intellectual mentors than

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[234]The *arrêt de accusation* was read by the bailif at the beginning of the trial and reproduced in the *Gazette des Tribunaux*, no. 7285, 13 November 1850, 1282.

[235]*Gazette des Tribunaux*, no. 7285, 13 November 1850, 1283.

[236]Ibid., 1282.

to pragmatic workers like Chesnel who sought simply to be their own masters.[237] Her design for spacious and well-ventilated *crèches*, each with its own garden and medical attendant, suggest those in Fourier's phalanstery. As in Cabet's *Icaria,* primary education would be equal and obligatory for all. After graduation, children would be classified by a "committee on distribution" and sent to scientific, artistic, or industrial schools, depending on their aptitudes and interests. Adult education would be available for all, taught by professors of both sexes. In the same halls that served for classes, associations of artists would give concerts and theatrical performances on Sundays and holidays. Committees within each association would decide on the distribution of scarce goods, not on the basis of talent or contribution, but of "need." Thus good wine would go to the convalescent and workers who did the hardest and most painful work. Fancy clothing would be reserved for those who worked in the coarsest garments, so that on fête days people would not make invidious comparisons. For similar reasons, all children would wear the same outfits to school. On holidays they could dress differently, provided their

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[237]Also to Owen, although there is no evidence that Deroin was familiar with him. Owen did make a visit to Paris in 1848, and Deroin's friend Désirée Gay (née Véret) was familiar with the Owenites as a result of her visit to England in 1833-34, where she made the acquaintance of Anna Wheeler. See Véret's 1833 letters to Fourier in which she alludes to Wheeler and Wheeler's note to Fourier (29 October 1833), both AN Fonds Fourier et Considèrant, 10 AS 42 dos. 8: 681 MI 74, For studies of the relationship between Owenites and French socialists, see Jacques Gans, "Robert Owen à Paris en 1837", *Le Mouvement Social,* no. 41 (October-December 1962): 35-45 and Gans, "Les Relations entre socialistes de France et d'Angleterre au début du XIXe siècle," ibid., no. 46 (January-March 1964): 105-118; Henri Desroches, "Owenisme et Utopies Françaises: Symposium commémoratif du deuxième Centenaire de Robert Owen," *Communautés: Archives Internationales de Sociologie de la Coopération et du Développement,* no 30 (July-December 1971).

clothes were of equal value.[238] In Deroin's social vision, as in Cabet's, an intrusive puritanism lurked behind a fraternal ethic of love and care.

Deroin's blueprint, first published in August 1849, was promoted by her friend Joseph-Louis Delbrouck, a thirty-three year-old architect, formerly involved with the mason's association, who had shown himself a loyal ally during her political candidacy.[239] Delbrouck was described in the arrest report as an orator much in demand in socialist clubs and banquets, with connections to the Democratic-Socialist electoral committee and *Solidarité républicaine*.[240] After the February Revolution, he belonged to the club Saint-Croix-de-la Bretonnerie, where he earned several indictments, one for inciting the hatred of citizens against each other, and another for insulting the members of the National Assembly in the session of 22 August 1848.[241] Delbrouck shopped Deroin's project around to a number of associations, and was able to arouse enough

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[238]Statement of Principles and 52 Articles of Organization, "Appel aux Associations," *L'Opinion des Femmes*, August 1849, 3-6.

[239]According to Delbrouck, he and Martin Nadaud had voluntarily resigned from the mason's association so that their political activities would not jeopardize the association's request for a loan from the Council of Encouragement. *Gazette des Tribunaux*, no. 7285, 13 November 1850, 1286.

[240]*La Solidarité républicaine* represented the first French effort to establish a centralized national political party. It was founded by three of Ledru-Rollin's political allies in November 1848 and joined together republican reformers and socialists to concentrate on political organizing, particularly of the rural masses. See Edward Berenson, *Populist Religion and Left-Wing Politics in France, 1830-1852*, 78-79, 83-94.

[241]*Gazette des Tribunaux*, no. 7285, 13 November 1850, 1282. Under the Empire he was among the founders of the *Crédit du Travail* and the *Association Générale des Consommateurs de Passy*; during the Commune in 1871, he was a member of the federal commission of artists of Paris with Courbet; finally he belonged to a section of the Internationale in the 13e arrond. R. Gossez, *Les Ouvriers de Paris*, 347-348.

interest that three preliminary meetings of delegates were held, on the 23rd and 31st of August, and on the 6th of September, all at the headquarters of a shoemakers' association on the Rue de Cadran. After much discussion, some of the more grandiose features of the proposal were dropped to give it a more practical and commercial character. A commission of five members was charged with drafting articles that would express the fundamental principles of the union. Deroin was a member of this group, along with Delbrouck, Blaison, a cook, Deschenaux, a physician, and a worker named Solon.[242] Their first draft was rejected at a large meeting of delegates held at the Salle Saint-Spire on September 18. A revised version consisting of six constitutive articles was accepted by delegates from 104 associations on October 5, 1849.[243]

The constitutive articles provided that three delegates would be elected from each member association to the General Assembly of the Union. The assembly would in turn elect a fifteen member Central Commission that would operate as an administrative council. The Central Commission was initially charged with drawing up a formal contract that would bind all member associations to the union. It was also charged with verifying the statutes of groups that wished to join the union to insure that they met standards of fraternity and solidarity.

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[242]There is no occupational information for Solon.

[243]There are several accounts of the organization of the Union, all fairly consistent: "Comte Rendu par la Commission Centrale de l'Union des Associations aux Associations adhérentes," in *La République*, 9 Dec 1849, 7; *Notes pour la défense de Jeanne Deroin*, BHVP/ MS NA 111, Folio 165 ff.; *Gazette des Tribunaux*, nos. 7285-7287, 13-15 November 1850.

The Central Commission was in turn to be subdivided into five subcommittees: production, consumption, finances, education and disputes (*contentieux.*) Plans called for the committee on production to draw up, at the end of each quarter, an exact inventory of the production of each association. The committee on consumption would make an inventory of the most pressing needs of the members of each association. These two reports would be submitted to the General Assembly. Based on the reports, the assembly would determine how many "exchange notes" to remit to each association. The number of exchange notes each association received would be proportional to the size of their membership, the total value of their production, and their documented needs. Using these notes in lieu of money, workers could theoretically procure from other member associations everything that they needed without going outside the union. Affairs would be managed so that no one group could engage in excessive production or consumption at the expense of other members of the association. The bureaucratic complexity of this task and the problems inherent in assessing "need" do not seem to have fazed the delegates. Elaborate blueprints reflecting a Jacobin tradition of democratic centralization were characteristic of the more ambitious associational projects of the period, whose complexity was in inverse relationship to their actual prospects of implementation.

Representatives from the 104 member associations voted their final approval of the Contract of the Union on November 22, 1849. On the advice of legal counsel, it took the form of a simple contract between the union and its member organizations, rather than that of a commercial society. The contract was registered, but never published before the Tribunal of Commerce. The authorities were subsequently to exploit this lapse to "prove"

that the union was really a secret society, with political rather than commercial objectives.[244]

From its inception, the Union of Associations of Workers experienced a number of difficulties, and probably never included the most influential and well-organized associations in Paris. There is no surviving list of the 104 associations that joined. *La Démocratie Pacifique* carried a notice of the meeting of delegates on 5 October 1849, along with the names and the occupations of the people elected to the Central Commission. They include, in addition to Deroin and Pauline Roland (both instructors and journalists), a shoemaker, a doctor, a spectacle-maker, a painter, a cook, a hatmaker, a pharmacist, a tailor, and a lithographer.[245] Since there were a number of associations of shoemakers, tailors, and particularly cooks, it is impossible to determine what percentage of their respective trades these delegates represented. Of the twenty-seven persons arrested by the police on May 29, 1851 at a meeting of the general assembly of the Union, about one-quarter were employed in masculine skilled trades (mason, locksmith, printer, joiner), roughly one-quarter were in the service trades (hairdresser, laundress, cook, soft-drink seller), and another quarter had bourgeois occupations (doctor, instructor, architect, pharmacist, food merchant).[246] Many so-called "fraternal associations" in the service trades were really small businesses which employed only a few workers. If a large percentage of associations that joined the Union were of this

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[244]Deroin credits M. Dain, a lawyer and deputy to the National Assembly, with suggesting this form of incorporation. *Notes pour la défense de Jeanne Deroin*, 21-23.

[245]*La Démocratie Pacifique*, 9 October 1849.

[246]*Gazette des Tribunaux*, 13 Nov. 1850, lists the names and other data on the twenty-seven detainees taken from the indictments.

type, then the total number of 104 member organizations is less impressive than it superficially appears.

Early in December 1848, the Central Commission of the Union learned that former delegates elected by the Parisian corporations to the Luxembourg Commission, now calling themselves the "Permanent Commission of Delegates," considered the union a usurpation of their own efforts. In order to gain legitimacy, the Central Commission wrote to Louis Blanc, now in exile in London, explaining their project and soliciting his support.[247] His reply was encouraging, and his newspaper, *Le Nouveau Monde*, mentioned the Union of Associations of Workers favorably.[248] However, in an article which appeared in the same journal two months later, Blanc noted that the union "has not been universally accepted, and that many associations, among them the most important and best constituted, have not yet adhered to it." He urged associations that were holding out not to engage in "systematic abstention," arguing that the Union was simply a trial, its organizers were open to amendments, and they ought to expose the reasons for "their repugnance," so that a fraternal solution could be worked out.[249] From the tenor of Blanc's remarks it appears that some associations were uncomfortable with the hasty way in which the Central Commission had been formed, and with the fact that people who were not members of workers' associations were actively involved in it.[250]

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[247]*Notes pour la défense de Jeanne Deroin*, 24-25.

[248]"Le Mouvement Social", 15 December 1849.

[249]"Les Comités Centralisateurs," *Le Nouveau Monde*, 15 February 1850.

[250]Gossez reports that workers involved in some previous pan-associational projects, such as the short-lived *La Solidarité Ouvrière* (1849) deliberately avoided electing delegates who were journalists or men of letters. *Ouvriers de Paris*, 344.

Several of the most influential members of the Central Commission did in fact lack working-class credentials: Deroin and Pauline Roland were both instructors and journalists, Descheneaux, was a doctor, and Delbrouck, an architect. Police reports of the meetings reveal that class tensions occasionally erupted in the deliberations. On December 14, after the appointment of Deroin, Roland, and a member named Poirier to the editorial board of the proposed newspaper of the Union, the *Moniteur des Associations*, a delegate named Hizay demanded that the journal be entrusted to "true workers" with calloused hands, and not to intellectuals who decorated themselves with the title of workers in the arts and sciences. He was tired, he said, of journals that took subscriptions from the people only to abandon them when they were sufficiently strong. Deroin retorted that this would create a new aristocracy, "the despotism of calloused hands" and that this was contrary to the principle of eliminating inequality for which the union stood.[251]

Resentment against intellectuals leading workers' organizations was undoubtedly compounded when they were headstrong women. Gustave LeFrançais, a bourgeois socialist who came genuinely to admire both Deroin and Roland, and who became a charter member of their Union of Socialist Teachers and Professors, was probably not alone in finding their florid religiosity a bit off-putting.[252] For those associations that could barely cover day-to-day expenses, Deroin's ambitious proposals for the social adoption of children and for other costly measures of social support must have seemed wildly idealistic. Another source of resistance may have been Deroin's insistence that

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[251]*Gazette des Tribunaux*, no. 7285, 13 November 1850: 1282-83.

[252]*Souvenirs d'un Révolutionnaire*, 79-83.

women be admitted to all functions within the union. Since many associations denied women a voice in their general assemblies and prohibited them from taking administrative positions, her proposal was a radical departure from conventional practice. Characteristically, Deroin argued that the admission of women would prove to the authorities that the goals of the union were entirely pacific.[253]

Another major stumbling block was disagreements centering on the whole issue of the "exchange notes." Not all members were convinced that the notes were a workable idea, and their skepticism obliged the Central Commission to proceed slowly. The original plan called for the union to issue these notes to member organizations when there was sufficient money in the treasury from dues payments to cover the costs of their printing and to back their first emission. It was anticipated that after this, notes would be secured by inventories of goods produced by member associations. However, not all associations had the resources to pay dues, and those associations that did saw their contributions eaten up by the costs of printing the notes, which were then not issued because there were no assets to back them. Associations consequently became reluctant to continue paying dues.[254] Billot, who was President of the Union in May 1850, when its leaders were arrested, was asked in his interrogation about the disputes that arose over the exchange notes. He reported that ten ballots taken in the Central Commission on the issue had ended in deadlock, with no clear majority emerging. One member, Blaison, "who did not share the amour-propre of the author", wished to avoid having all this finish

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[253]*Notes pour la défense de Jeanne Deroin*, 12-14.

[254]For an account of these difficulties see *Notes pour la défense de Jeanne Deroin*, 27-29.

up "like the Tower of Babel." He proposed to write to several high priests of socialism, such as Pierre Leroux or Victor Considérant, for advice (ironically ignoring the degree to which such "high priests" disagreed with each other).[255] The union was in fact held hostage by the very capital shortage which it had been designed to cure.

It proved impossible to resolve disagreements centering on the exchange notes in open meetings because of the presence of police agents at every session. The police interrupted whenever the subject arose, accusing the delegates of engaging in forbidden political discussion. It was to circumvent this constant interference that Deroin took the fateful step of renting three rooms in her own name on the mezzanine of a house on the rue Michel-le-Comte on April 8, 1850. The seat of the union was transferred to this address, and meetings of the General Assembly of delegates began to be held there, without prior notification to the police. Deroin later claimed that she believed no authorization was necessary because the locale was not a public hall, but the bureau of their administration, for which they had paid the rent.[256] This was a bit disingenuous; she and others were certainly aware of the interest which the police took in their activities and were eager to escape it. It was a calculated risk, made more dangerous by the probable presence of a police spy in their ranks.[257] Four meetings were held without incident, but on the evening of May 29th, as delegates waited in a dimly lit back room on benches made of planks and chairs for a quorum to arrive, a squad of eighty police,

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[255]*Gazette des Tribunaux*, no. 7285, 13 November 1850, 1283.

[256]*Notes pour la défense...*, 5-6.

[257]Ranvier, "Une Féministe de 1848," *Bulletin de la Révolution de 1848*, 24 (Jan. 1909): 355. He claims the spy was "a certain sieur Boutel."

headed by the commissioner, burst into the apartment, arrested forty-nine startled delegates, and seized their papers. Twenty-seven were subsequently arraigned and imprisoned, three of them women. They were charged with being in violation of the law regarding secret political meetings, and with being a political society. Deroin, Pauline Roland, and Femme Nicaud (aka Louise Boulanger), a laundress, were taken to Saint-Lazare, a holding tank for prostitutes. They were kept there for five months, two of these months completely incommunicado, and only allowed to consult with their lawyers and co-defendants briefly in the week before their trial.[258] While the accused were incarcerated, the police searched their homes, dredging up a host of "incriminating" evidence which was presented at their trial as proof of their political intent and violent proclivities.

The trial at the Cour d'Assises of the Seine, which stretched over three days, from November 12th to the 14th, 1850, was a tragi-comedic farce, a preordained fix which would have been humorous had it not been for the somber consequences for the defendants. The police dragnet "discovered" receipts for ingredients for making gunpowder in the pockets of Billot, the presiding officer, at the time of his arrest. In the home of Femme Nicaud, they claimed to have found twelve kilos of white powder and five hundred balls. They also seized incriminating documents: a couple of socialist song sheets, one provocatively entitled "The Guillotine"; a copy of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen; socialist brochures; an alleged portrait of Maximillien Robespierre surrounded by a frame of red ribbons; a portrait of the accused assassins of General Bréa; and cockades of red and blue ribbons ornamented with engravings. The

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[258]Ibid., 423-24.

portrait of Robespierre turned out to be an image of the popular novelist Eugène Sue. Billot, who had a previous political conviction in 1847,[259] did himself no good by an off-hand remark to a bailiff who wanted to know how to spell his name. Punning on his name (*billot* = block), Billot was reported to have remarked, "Think of the block on which your head will fall if we have the upper hand." Billot's version was slightly less inflamatory. According to him, the guard asked him if he spelled his name the same way as the deputy. To which he replied, "no, like a chopping block." "To chop what?" the guard asked. "Your head if you wish," Billot responded. Either way, he was a marked man.[260]

Deroin and Roland were the focus of considerable press and prosecutorial attention at the trial, which drew a large audience of lawyers, curious to see how workers would defend themselves.[261] The *Gazette des Tribunaux* described Deroin as "short, thin and very pale, coiffed with a hooded cloak of black crêpe garnished with bright pink ribbons. She responded with great calm; she gave evidence in the development of her ideas of a great socialist erudition."[262] It was noted that at the initial interrogation, all the arrested women seemed to be strongly under her influence, and rather than formulating their own

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[259]He was convicted on 16 October 1847, for illicit association and the making of incendiary bombs. This may have inspired prosecutors to fabricate the "balls and powder" story to win a second conviction.

[260]For an account of the trial and the evidence brought forward by the police, see the *Gazette des Tribunaux*, nos. 7285-87, 13-15 November 1850. For comments allegedly made by Billot, see 13 November 1850, 1282-1283.

[261]Gustave Lefrançais, *Souvenirs d'un Révolutionnaire*, (Bruxelles: 1902): 134.

[262]*Gazette des Tribunaux*, 13 Nov. 1850, 1283.

protests, simply responded "Like Jeanne Deroin."[263] She proved to be a feisty defendant. Dissatisfied with the common defense strategy, which she believed lacked heart and was too timid, she had requested the right to defend herself, but was denied.[264] Throughout the trial, she was torn between a desire to defy the authorities and the knowledge that this would be damaging to her fellow defendants. Her sense of solidarity won out, but not without a few fireworks. Early in the trial, the president of the tribunal asked each of the accused to state his name. This provoked the following exchange:[265]

The President:	What is your Christian name and surname?
Deroin:	Before responding, I must protest against the law by which you wish to judge me. It is a law made by men; I don't recognize it.
The President:	I am carrying out a judicial formality; give your Christian name and surname, you can protest later.
Deroin:	I will protest first, and now I will tell you that my name is Jeanne Deroin.

The issue of Deroin's sex and her marital status, like that of fellow defendant Pauline Roland, was a major subtext of the proceedings. Though she was clearly the author of the documents founding the Union of Associations of Workers, and the constitutive statutes bore her imprint, her male collaborators begged her not to take credit

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[263]Ibid., 1282.

[264]Ranvier, "Une Féministe de 1848...", 423.

[265]*Gazette des Tribunaux*, 13 November 1850, 1282.

in court.[266] Understanding that the issue was masculine vanity, she reluctantly agreed, although she was unable to be completely self-abnegating. When the president of the tribunal pressed her on whether she had founded the union, she answered that it was she, Delbrouck, and Billot.[267] Delbrouck proved eager to take primary credit for the entire enterprise, an act of pride or gallantry which earned him a much stiffer sentence than Deroin - fifteen months to her six, and a fine of five hundred francs.

The prosecution showed an inordinate interest not only in Deroin's political views, but in her views on marriage, as they did those of Roland, a single mother of three. Suin, the advocat-general, seems to have been obsessed with the two women's defiance of conventional norms, perhaps out of personal indignation, perhaps the better to paint them as dangerous radicals to the jury. However, both Deroin and Roland showed a willingness, even an eagerness, to exploit the public forum they had been offered. During the interrogation of "Fille" Roland, after an exploration of her views on property, Suin suddenly interjected the question: "What is your opinion on the legitimacy of children and on marriage?" Roland's counsel, sensing the trap, immediately snapped: "Don't respond to that."[268] But Roland persisted: "Yes, I will respond. I protest against marriage, because, as it is presently organized, it establishes the inferiority of women with

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[266]Ranvier found a handwritten note by Deroin dated 1880 which stated: "I had been insistently begged, in the name of the associations, not to reveal that I was the author of the act of the Union of Associations." "Une Féministe de 1848," 429.

[267]*Gazette des Tribunaux*, 13 November 1850, 1283.

[268]The lawyer for the defendants was Laissac, a deputy from the Haute-Garonne. Gustave LeFrançais describes him as a convinced republican, very sincere about the rights of the people and their virtues, "but at heart he considered these people like a pack of idiots, incapable of handling themselves alone." *Souvenirs d'un Révolutionnaire* (1902), 133.

respect to man." The frustrated defense attorney again protested that this was irrelevant to the proceedings, but not before Roland had repudiated the civil code and denied an interest in securing a patrimony for her children.[269] Suin later reproached Deroin during the proceedings for not using her husband's name, and suggested it was a protest against marriage. In her closing remarks to the jury, Deroin vigorously returned to this issue:

> ... If I do not bear [his name], it is first of all because I do not want to render my husband solidary to my acts. Next, I declare it, it is indeed because I protest against marriage; it is a state of servitude for woman. As for me, I wish absolute equality between the two sexes. It has been alleged that I dream of promiscuity. Oh heaven! Nothing is further from my thoughts. I dream, to the contrary, I desire the realization of that social state in which marriage will be purified, moralized, equalized according to the precepts established by God himself. What I want is to transform the institution of marriage which is so full of imperfections...[270]

The President of the Tribunal interrupted her and refused to allow her to continue: "you attack one of the most respectable institutions, you attack a provision of the Civil Code..." To which Deroin responded that she only wanted to defend her morality, which had been maligned. "I repeat that I want to moralize marriage and not destroy it. I want to liberate a portion of humanity; that's what I have to say."[271]

Despite Deroin's advocacy of "purified" marriage, the two women's unconventional views clearly embarrassed their male co-defendants, who were eager to put some distance between themselves and their female colleagues. In a printed plea by the defendants, read by Delbrouck at the close of the trial, they asked that the "individual opinions on marriage of one or two accused persons" not recoil back on the members of

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[269]*Gazette des Tribunaux*, no. 7286, 14 November 1850, 1286.

[270]*Gazette des Tribunaux*, no. 7287, 15 November 1850, 1290.

[271]Ibid.

the union in general. Of the twenty-nine accused before the court, they reminded the jury, "twenty were married and fathers of families."[272] Deroin's protestations to the contrary, "purified" marriage, with its Icarian communist overtones, was synonymous in the minds of many with the community of women and the destruction of the patriarchal family. The difficulty that socialist women such as Deroin and Roland encountered in attempting to integrate the emancipation of women into associational rhetoric is illustrated by the discomfort that their male colleagues felt about their sexual politics. As an ideology that sought to present the male artisanal worker as a dignified and productive citizen and worthy head of family, associationism could ill-afford to embrace the contention that contemporary working-class marriage entailed a "state of servitude for women" or was in need of radical transformation to "moralize" it.

The harsh sentences meted out to the accused suggest that the increasingly conservative government of the Second Republic was not prepared in 1850 to tolerate even fairly innocuous experiments with worker association which would probably have failed of their own accord even in a less hostile political environment. Their ties to Louis Blanc, however modest, worked against the leaders of the Union of Associations in court, as did the similarity of its objectives to Proudhon's Bank of the People. Deroin, Pauline Roland and Femme Nicaud received six-month sentences, which they served at Saint-Lazare. Billot, a recidivist, who had allegedly purchased gunpowder ingredients, got three years, and a thousand franc fine. Delbrouck received a fifteen-month sentence and a fine of five hundred francs; three other alleged ringleaders were each sentenced to a year in prison and three hundred francs apiece. These were enormous and crippling fines for

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[272]Ibid.

workers, made harsher by assigning the costs of the trial, totalling over 693 francs, to their account as well. A legal obligation of solidarity made all non-dismissed defendants collectively liable for the default of any of their number.[273] These consequences were usually compounded by a sentence of surveillance which required that offenders released from prison register with the police wherever they lived for a specified period. The police would then inform their landlord and prospective employers of their status. This crippling stigma doomed a worker to chronic unemployment, doubling the economic burden on his family, should he have one.[274]

The pleas to the Ministry of Justice made by the defendants and their wives for reduction of the fines graphically reveal the suffering inflicted on workers' families by these punishments. Billot's wife, a dyer, became the sole support of four children during his three-year incarceration, and the arrival of a fifth child after his release made things even more precarious. Her landlord testified that "each evening she worked well into the night." Despite Billot's acknowledged good conduct after his release, her plea to the Ministry that his crushing fine be reduced fell on deaf ears.[275]

Gustave Lefrançais reports that to give an appearance of impartiality, the police had raided a bourgeois republican group, the *Amis de la Constitution*, at the same time

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[273]See the pleas of defendants Boyer and Girard to the Ministry of Justice for relief from these additional levies. AN BB24/391-400 and BB24/431.

[274]Gustave LeFrançais, who was himself put under surveillance for three years for participation in the Association of Socialist Instructors, describes the penalties of this process for workers. *Souvenirs d'un Révolutionnaire*, 130-31.

[275]AN BB24/448-56 *Demande en Grace: Billot, Auguste-Adolphe.*

as the Union of Associations of Workers.[276] However, the treatment meted out to the two groups by the same jury was completely different. None of the bourgeois defendants was detained before trial, nor were their books and papers seized. Tried under the same judge and jury, none were sentenced to prison or fined. The defense was led by Crémieux, a former member of the Provisional Government, who sharply contrasted his own clients, whom he described as educated and enlightened people, with the previous defendants. They did not dream of social upheaval; they wanted to maintain absolute respect for property; they were true friends of the Constitution and of its sacred institutions. He finished with this phrase, which Lefrançais calls "astonishing":

> In acquitting my clients, messieurs the jurors, you will do nothing but logically give more force to the verdict which you have already justly rendered against those with whom we do not wish to be confounded.[277]

Deroin had hoped, through the Union of Associations of Workers, to accomplish what petitions and advocacy journalism had not been able to achieve. Women's civil and legal equality could not be won in the political arena, particularly one in which socialists were an increasingly embattled minority. In any case, they had shown little eagerness to embrace her crusade. From prison, Deroin watched helplessly as women's political options were further eroded by the introduction of a proposition in the Legislative Assembly, sponsored by a deputy named Chapot, that prohibited women from petitioning that body. Despite her protest, introduced and supported in the Assembly by former Saint-Simonian Laurent de l'Ardèche and Victor Schoelcher, the Chapot proposition was

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[276]Among those arrested in the second instance was Vasbenter, the manager of the socialist daily, *La Voix du Peuple.*

[277]*Souvenirs*, 138.

adopted almost unanimously on July 2, 1851.[278] Underneath the jocularity which accompanied the debate on the measure lurked the primal fear, expressed by the rapporteur Quentin-Bauchart:

> You well appreciate that it is a question of public decency, of parliamentary dignity. What if there were to arrive a petition signed in one sense by the husband, in another by the wife?
>
> [from the right] And in a third by the children (laughter).[279]

Deroin was released from Saint-Lazare the day after the Chapot proposition passed the legislature. Any lingering hope that women might at least be permitted limited electoral rights evaporated with the defeat in November 1851 of Pierre Leroux's proposal to allow them to vote in municipal elections. Deroin saw the irony of being charged with a political offense while at the same time being denied political subjectivity.[280] She did not see the futility, however, of continuing to advocate association as an apolitical strategy for social regeneration at a time when the authorities were hostile to such initiatives. Nor did she see the inconsistency of believing that male workers would support the economic emancipation of women although they had largely resisted their political emancipation.

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[278]For the text of Deroin's protest, see her *Almanach des Femmes pour 1852*, (Paris: 1851), 43-44.

[279]Quoted in Ranvier, "Une Féministe de 1848", *Bulletin de la Révolution de 1848*, v. 26: 485.

[280]Her protest to Chapot contains the line: "And if there was needed further proof of the political capacity of women, we might add that a certain number of them are subjected to imprisonment for political crimes..." *Almanach des Femmes pour 1852*, 43-44.

Even after the collapse of the Union of Associations of Workers and the imprisonment of its leadership, Deroin was still arguing that mutualism was a step that workers could take immediately to improve their situation. Later they could decide whether they wanted to live in phalansteries or communist communities; what was important was to do what was presently feasible.[281] An association of workers of all occupations would begin to heal the wounds that rent French society. It would dissolve rivalries between the trades and unite consumers and producers by common bonds of interest. It would also provide the preconditions for women's emancipation, by giving them a voice within the association, secure livelihoods, a chance for an education, and support for their children and their households. Men and women who worked together would no longer fear each other as economic competitors. All of this could be accomplished before the electoral issue resurfaced: "before going to claim the ballot to vote, sign of their political emancipation, [workers] will already have, if they want it, the credit ballot, sign of their industrial and social emancipation."[282] It was only a question of will.

Deroin's illusions were not seriously punctured until Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte's coup of 2 December 1851. Her own family had been shattered and dispersed during her detention. Her children were in pensions or with friends; her husband's health and spirit had been broken by the loss of his job and her long absence. Deroin nevertheless plowed doggedly on. She attempted to give courses in grammar, history, and arithmetic to

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[281]"4e Lettre de Jeanne Deroin: Aux Associations et aux Travailleurs de Toutes Professions," *Almanach des Femmes pour 1852*, 170-78.

[282]Ibid., 178.

workers, but was defeated by police harassment. She devoted herself to collecting aid for the families of those who had been proscribed. With the help of a number of friends and supporters, including, according to Ranvier, Marie d'Agoult (aka Daniel Stern,) Eugène Stourm, Victor Schoelcher, Joseph de Filipi, Angélique Arnaud, Jenny d'Héricourt, Jean Macé, Victor Hennequin, Pierre Lachambeaudie, Victor Considérant, and Pauline Roland, she published her first almanach for women in 1851.[283] In it she reprised many of her favorite themes, particularly the necessary correlation between the emancipation of women and that of workers:

> Up to the present, women and the proletariat have been considered machines for production; woman, because she gives birth with suffering, and is stamped with the stigma of servitude and civil and political unworthiness; the proletarian, because he waters with his sweat and blood the sphere of work, is driven back to the lowest rungs on the social ladder, and both, woman and the proletarian, are deprived of the means of completely developing and exercising their most noble faculties. Thus the destinies of woman and of the proletarian are providentially linked, and the right of woman is the prime foundation for the organization of work.[284]

Warned by a friend that she would shortly be arrested and deported without trial, Deroin fled to London in August of 1852. This was a decisive and irrevocable break with her activist past. She never returned to France, even after amnesties were later declared. Her husband died in 1853 of typhoid fever in Paris, and she was left to fend for herself and her children, who joined her in exile. Like many of the proscribed, she lived in

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[283]*Almanach des Femmes pour 1852*, (Paris: 1851). Although Ranvier claims that all of these individuals were friends or collaborators, it seems unlikely that the brief quotation from Marie d'Agoult and the extract from Considérant's *L'Avenir* proves any direct collaboration on their part. The majority of the biographical information about Deroin after 1850 comes from Ranvier, "Une Féministe de 1848," ***Bulletin de la Révolution de 1848***, v. 26: 480-498.

[284]"Introduction," *Almanach des Femmes pour 1852*, 10.

extreme poverty, scraping by on meager fees for schooling children of the exile community and on embroidery jobs scrounged up by friends.[285] Embittered by the collapse of the Republic and the lack of courage and devotion displayed by many of its alleged defenders, Deroin became increasingly convinced that only a religious and moral revival could transform the "old state of things" which was "cankered even to its very heart." What was needed was a "NEW FAITH", made and interpreted by women. Man, in reserving to himself the right to interpret all religious belief, she argued, "has disowned the true God, principle of love, of harmony and of liberty..."[286] The result was "a fatal circle of bloody struggles, and of moral and physical miseries." Redemption, however, was immanent:

> But the time of the coming of the Woman is at hand and Humanity will abandon the fatal paths of progress through suffering and through misery, to follow in the providential course of pacific and harmonious progress, through the intervention of the mother of Humanity, of the Woman regenerated by liberty.[287]

Henceforth Deroin wrote primarily on religious themes. She was unable to get her later work published, and most of it, with the exception of a few letters, has disappeared. According to Ranvier, it included an essay on the social gospel, and unfinished book entitled "Essai sur la doctrine de Pythagore", and an interpretation of the Lord's Prayer, intended as a prelude to a Gospel for women. Her 1852 and 1853 almanacs for women,

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[285]Ranvier, Une Féministe de 1848," *Bulletin de la Révolution de 1848*, v. 26: 480-498. Martin Nadaud provides a description of the poverty in which many of the proscribed lived in London, sleeping on straw in the slums and begging for alms. *Mémoires de Léonard ancien garçon maçon*, ed. Maurice Agulhon, (Paris: Hachette, 1976): 414-415.

[286]*Almanach des Femmes: Women's Almanack for 1853*, (London & Jersey: 1853): 8-9; 10-11.

[287]Ibid., 12-13.

the latter published in English in London and in French in Jersey, feature a summary of J.S. Mill's article in the *Westminster and Foreign Quarterly Review* on the Seneca Falls convention, attention to the role of women in the abolitionist movement and in world peace congresses both in the United States and London, and praise for female pathbreakers such as Elizabeth Blackwell, the first woman physician in the United States. They also include articles on the temperance movement, vegetarianism, and efforts to abolish the death penalty. Whether she participated in these causes or simply reported on them is unclear. Although Deroin retained a fervent interest in the issue of women's rights in France, as evidenced by letters she wrote to Leon Richer in the late 1870s and 80s,[288] advancing age, poverty, and the constant illnesses of her son sapped her energies and restricted her options. An annual pension of 600 francs, obtained for her in the early 1880s by friends who had been proscribed on 2 December, gave her some relief from chronic financial worries and allowed her to spend more time caring for her son. She was assisted by her eldest daughter, who never married. After her son's death in 1887, she was able to reach out to English socialists, including the circle around William Morris. When she died on the second of April, 1894, at the age of eighty-nine, the eulogy at her civil funeral was delivered by Morris, his son-in-law Haliday Sparling, and a friend from 1848, M. Lassassie.

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[288]BHVP, Fonds Bouglé, Carton 4247 contains six letters addressed to Leon Richer, written between 1851 and 1881. Richer was the founder of a journal, *Le Droit des Femmes* in 1869 and created the *Association pour le droit des femmes* in 1870 along with Marie Desraimes. The association was suspended by the government, and went through several name changes, to emerge in 1882 as *La Ligue pour le droit des femmes*. Richer was a tireless advocate of legal rights for women.

Conclusion

Jeanne Deroin's most important contribution to French socialism was her attempt to link, both rhetorically and in her praxis, two disparate themes, the organization of work through association and the civil and legal emancipation of women. She imagined that women and proletarians, by virtue of their mutual subordination and the social devaluation of their labor, shared a common bond, a consciousness of a common oppression. While acknowledging that all relations of domination and subordination were equally odious, she privileged women's subordination by representing it as the archetype of all inequality and injustice. It was the hydra's head, which if not destroyed would regenerate all traditional forms of privilege.

By equating discursively gender and class exploitation, Deroin hoped to make proletarian men allies in women's struggle for autonomy, and women of all classes allies in the abolition of poverty and inequality. Her ideology rested on two myths. The first was that men who were themselves exploited within the capitalist economy would be willing to surrender the privileges of their sex and the power which it conferred over their families, one of the few venues where they exercised some measure of control. The second was that class loyalties were less compelling for women than the bonds created by their common maternity, which could mystically transcend all social and economic antagonisms. Both myths were supported by reifications of "women" and "workers" which represented them as solidary social entities. Deroin's persistent foregrounding of "solidarity" as a moral imperative prevented her from perceiving how fluid and unstable these categories really were. Furthermore, the concepts of "fraternity" and "solidarity"

in republican and socialist rhetoric had already been gendered in ways that relegated women to passive and relational roles.

The majority of working-class men argued that women should exhibit solidarity with their "brothers" by supporting them as loyal and devoted mothers, wives, sisters and daughters. Deroin's impassioned rhetoric of social motherhood fed into this dominant imagery, while she simultaneously attempted to construct the individual woman as a rights-bearing, autonomous subject. The contradiction between these two constructions was too great to support the ideological work that Deroin wanted them to accomplish. To paraphrase Proudhon, most men on the left believed that women could be republican mothers, and responsible, or "femmes libres," and irresponsible. The autonomous woman was by definition selfish and "*insolidaire*". Deroin's attempt to find a middle ground between these two polarities was undermined by the discursive distance that separated them in French culture.

A woman of unusual courage, energy and determination, Deroin was also the product of an age increasingly obsessed with defining and enforcing sexual difference. Her effort to open the public sphere to women by emphasizing their moral superiority backfired in a culture in which the only acceptable venue for such influence was the home. Her idealization of maternity paradoxically reinforced the republican notion that woman's role as mother-educator took precedence over all other social functions. In a revolutionary period in which pervasive fears of social disorder were quickly translated into socio-sexual anxieties about gender upheaval and role reversal, Deroin's call to women to ascend to the rostrum inevitably conjured up old fears of revolutionary harpies and furies. In the end, it was women's "natural" difference as a gendered category rather

than their equality as rights-bearing individuals that resonated with her male contemporaries.

EPILOGUE

"Il faut convenir que les révolutions politiques sont des fameuses farces!"[289] Flora Tristan's frustrated assessment of the July Revolution reflected a perception widely shared by socialist women - that revolutions did not work in women's favor. In France, the Revolutions of 1789, 1830, and 1848 proved deeply divisive, inspiring intense social anxieties about the world turned upside down, the reversal of stable categories. Among the most frightening of these reversals was the prospect of "women on top." The threat of unruly women invading the public sphere and demanding men's roles and prerogatives was a specter repeatedly invoked by men of the right and center to discredit left-wing opponents.

Ideologies which aimed at the radical restructuring of society, including socialist associationism, defended against these fears by naturalizing sexual difference and projecting a vision of the future in which men and women would play complementary but distinct social roles. The two primary intellectual currents which nourished associationism in the first half of nineteenth century, left-republicanism and utopian socialism, were both heirs of the enlightenment tradition which endorsed universal rights and the equality of the sexes in the abstract, while simultaneously using arguments based on sexual difference to restrict the sphere in which such rights could be legitimately exercised by women.

Artisanal culture had its own traditions of gender exclusion which harmonized with separate sphere constructions. These included gendered definitions of skill and labor value, the spatial segregation of the sexes in workshops and wineshops, and the profusion

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[289]*Tour de France*, v. 2: 220.

of male-bonding rituals associated with compagnonnage. Associational discourses in the 1840s created and enforced distinctions between the labor of skilled and unskilled workers, Frenchmen and immigrants, men and women. Fraternity was equated with the comraderie of the barricades and the atelier; solidarity with craft cohesion, or in its most inclusive sense, the unity of all the (masculine) skilled trades. Republican ideology reinforced such constructions by encouraging male workers to define skill as a masculine apanage, in order to claim property in labor, and hence active citizenship in the state.

For socialist women such as Jeanne Deroin, it was an article of faith that male workers and women, being both proletarians, shared a common oppression which bound them together. Male workers, however, rejected such equations, which symbolically feminized them. They defined their own status and liberties in opposition to women, not in alliance with them. Deroin's hope that male workers would support the cause of women's emancipation ignored not only the lessons of the First Republic, but the precariousness of the Second. The divisions within the labor movement in Paris in 1848 and its vulnerability to state repression made it at best an unreliable ally. Parisian artisans were hard pressed to sustain even their own livelihoods; they were unlikely to take on a controversial new cause, even if they were sympathetic to women's rights, which the majority clearly were not. Women such as Deroin who were willing to fire off metaphorical pistols in the street to attract attention, or Pauline Roland who openly denounced marriage as a form of slavery, were an embarrassment to proletarian men trying to project an image of republican rectitude as dignified heads of household. They fueled stereotypes of socialists as destroyers not only of property, but of the family.

All *démoc-soc* endeavors were ultimately defeated by Louis- Napoleon Bonaparte's coup of 2 December 1851. A number of workers' associations had collapsed earlier under the weight of countervailing forces: a severe economic depression and attendant credit shortages, workers' inability to transcend traditional rivalries between the trades, and the hostility which "socialism" in all of its guises inspired in the propertied classes. The associationist dream of labor solidarity, however potent as an organizing myth, was no match for the centrifugal forces of a capitalist economy that increasingly atomized workers or for the police-state surveillance of the Second Empire. Networks of small-scale producers and consumers' cooperatives might have survived in a less hostile political environment, but could not have appreciably transformed the economy. The collapse of socialist women's associational projects in 1848-1851 was thus part of a larger pattern of associational failure and cannot be attributed to the actions of working-class men.

Yet in a fundamental way the Revolution of 1848-1851 had a more positive outcome for proletarian men than it did for proletarian women. Male workers were granted active citizenship in 1848, including the right to vote, the right of association, and in theory, the right to work. In cities such as Paris, they used their new rights to create a rich civic culture of clubs, newspapers, and solidary bodies: associations, corporations, and mutualist organizations. These groups drew up political manifestos and platforms, endorsed slates of candidates, and participated vigorously in electoral politics. The Revolution of 1848 gave working-class men political subjectivity, an attribute that they retained despite the constriction of political life under the Second Empire. Women who

tried to exercise the same prerogatives were quickly silenced by legislation that stripped them of their rights of assembly and petition.

Anxiety about women speaking or engaging in any form of political activity was acute during the Revolution of 1848-1851, and can be observed across the class spectrum. It manifested itself not only in the sarcasm directed at prominent targets such as Eugénie Niboyet and Jeanne Deroin, but also, less dramatically, in the multitude of restrictions imposed on women's participation in workers' associations. These constraints ranged from barring women from membership outright, to prohibiting them from voting or speaking in general meetings of the membership, to banning women from serving on administrative committees or in managerial positions. Although there are some exceptions to these practices, the overall pattern is discriminatory. It suggests that the obsessive celebration of women's private, and allegedly moralizing, influence in socialist and workerist discourses was fueled by an equally obsessive desire to silence its public expression.

Viewing the Revolution of 1848-1851 through the prism of gender as well as class makes it more difficult to interpret the revolution as either a significant advance towards representative democracy, as in republican historiography, or a watershed in the development of an universal and enlightened class consciousness, as in neo-Marxist labor historiography. The muting of feminist voices in France the 1850s and 1860s, and the relatively meager political results achieved by women's rights advocates during the Third Republic, when compared to their Anglo-American counterparts, suggests that the Revolution of 1848-1851 left many potential activists with a fear of controversy and a preference for caution and accommodation.

This study has focused on several interrelated aspects of the legacy of 1848. It explores why socialist women, particularly Jeanne Deroin, were unable to win the support of male workers and socialist intellectuals for expanding women's economic and political rights. It investigates why associationism in its various guises, and the organizations and practices that it spawned, proved unable to address in any meaningful way the plight of Parisian *ouvrières* during the revolution. The thesis that is presented here is twofold. First, that the discourses of male workers, whether on work, sexuality, the family, the *ouvrière*, or association, were gendered in ways that rendered them relatively impervious to emancipatory arguments and projects. Second, that socialist women who tried to exploit the ostensibly egalitarian themes in associational and republican discourses in order to challenge women's subordination failed, not only because of masculine resistance, but because of contradictions inherent in utilizing essentialist premises to argue for equal rights for both sexes.

The discourses of articulate and politically conscious workers during the 1840s rested on assumptions that denied women subjectivity either as producers or as citizens of the republican state. By systematically devaluing the labor of women and defining it as less valuable and less productive than that of men, and by representing the single working woman as an unfortunate anomaly, male workers were able to evade the crucial question posed by Deroin and her allies. Why should women, who contributed through their waged work and their reproductive labor to the welfare of society, not enjoy rights (*droits*) in a democratic and social republic which had established an explicit constitutional linkage between the rights of citizens and their social duties? Only by rendering women's contributions "natural" and hence ahistorical and non-volitional, could

motherhood and the support of family members be divorced from the concept of citizen entitlement. By insisting on women's innate superiority as nurturers and care-givers, Deroin and other socialist women who employed maternalist rhetoric unwittingly naturalized women's work in a way that deprived women of the ability to claim political compensation (or fair wages) for the fulfillment of their *devoirs.*

Socialist women's eagerness to endorse a discourse of sexual difference that emphasized women's superiority in the emotional work required for the establishment of a just society was an effort to validate the one type of labor that men conceded women did better than they. The use of arguments based on sexual difference to justify enlarging the sphere of women's activity was a common strategy, given the dominant ideologies of the age, but it was also unsuccessful. To this end, associational rhetoric may have been more of a liability than an asset. "Association" always implied at its most primal level the union of man and woman, the joining of complementary opposites who must combine forces in order for humanity to progress. Alone, woman was incomplete. Her claim to consideration rested on the way in which her virtues compensated for the defects in man's nature. Men's shortcomings were not obstacles to participation in the public sphere, since men were assumed to have those qualities that facilitated individual will and action - force, energy, reason and dignity. Tempered by women's love, devotion and sentiment, men's energies could be channeled in socially constructive and cooperative directions. Therefore women had a duty to cleave to men, not operate independently. To desire autonomy smacked of egotism; it violated the solidarity so necessary for the transformation of society. Socialist associationism, in the last analysis, was ill-suited to addressing both the emancipation of workers and the emancipation of women.

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391-400	Girard, Jean-Baptiste (Union of Associations)
431	Bouyer, Louis Charles (idem.)
448-456	Billot, Auguste-Adolphe (idem.)

Série BB/30: Papiers du Gouvernement Provisoire

These cartons contain addresses and petitions presented to the Provisional Government; a number drafted by workers are missing or were forwarded to the Comité du Travail at the Luxembourg. Those extant submitted by women include:

BB/30/300: #2951 Letter from Antonine André de St. Gieles and "Toutes les femmes Artistes, Ouvrières, Littérateurs, Professeurs et autres," Paris 16 Mar. 1848.

BB/30/307: #6764 "Ouvrières sans ouvrage du 11e Arrondissement," 8 April 1848.

BB/30/307: #6923 Petition by Eug. Niboyet on behalf of Central committee of the *Voix des Femmes*; classified 13 April 1848.

Série C: Versements des Assemblées

C934 Chevillot inventory of petitions addressed to the Luxembourg Commission by the workers of all the industries of France

C943 Comité du Travail: survey of agricultural and industrial work

Série C2232-34: Assemblée Constituante, Correspondence Comité du Travail

Petitions submitted to the Comité du Travail (Luxembourg Commission) including:

C2232/313 Petition by Eugénie Niboyet on behalf of an Association of ouvrières; received 6 June 1848.

C2233/489 Letter by Deroin calling for a house in each arrond. to lodge and educate poor children; received 22 June 1848.

C2233/774 Women embroiderers complain of competition from prisons; received 5 Aug. 1848.

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C2241/938 In the name of 2000 female embroiderers (no day) May 1848.

C2241/1391 To the citizen representatives of the people: Eug. Niboyet, President of the Association of the Voice of Women, Paris, 10 June 1848

C2284/1026 Petition of 200 female workers from the 10e arrond., 6 June 1848.

Série F12 *Commerce and Industry*

F12/4618-19 Council of Encouragement: list and dossiers of associations asking for loans and disposition of requests

F12/4620-35 Workers associations: loan applications to the Council of Encouragement

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