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DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

Working Paper

The Class Analysis of Households Extended: Children, Fathers, and Family Budgets

by

Stephen Resnick and Richard Wolff

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UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

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The paper extends our previous class analysis of the household and family life to include children, interactions between class structures of households and enterprises, struggles over the family budget, and father's household labor. Analysis show how the good and bad of family life are connected to class.

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Introduction

Since the 1994 publication of *Bringing It All Back Home*, commentators have raised a variety of questions and criticisms. Subsequently published applications of our book's new class theory of households, by ourselves and others, have raised new issues not foreseen when we first developed the theory. In this paper we will address the major points of these reactions in ways that extend the class analysis of households well beyond our book and the literature it provoked and informed. The following topic areas will sequentially structure our presentation: children, interactions between the class structures of households and of enterprises, the class complexity of the household budget, class contradictions between households and enterprises, fathers' household labor, and when children become household serfs. A short addendum addresses households from which class is absent because production there has dwindled and only consumption remains.

Analyzing these new topics broadens and deepens two central points of our 1994 work. First, by conceiving class processes and contradictions and struggles over class as components of households, we can explore how class directly affects all the other, non-class dimensions of those households: affective, marital, political, sexual, parental, financial, and so forth. We can show in particular how the class structure of households influences in contradictory ways (1) parents' rearing of children, (2) household budgets, and (3) father's household labor. Our analysis demonstrates and underscores how the good and bad of family life are intimately connected to class. Second, we will further

develop or analysis of the interaction between household and enterprise class structures. Here we will stress how individuals are shaped by class processes, contradictions, and conflicts not only on the job but also and differently at home. Marxian analyses need to recognize this differential shaping to understand better the complexity of individual behavior including, as we will emphasize, its contradictory nature.

Children

How are we to understand children in relation to the class processes we have identified and explored inside as well as outside the modern household?[1] In other words, how do children fit within our framework that defines class in terms of processes of producing, appropriating, and distributing surplus labor or its (surplus) products?

Depending on their age and other social factors including child labor laws, kinship traditions, religious customs, industrialization, and technical skills, children's labor power may be sold (by themselves, parents, or others) to employers outside their households. Their sustenance would then derive from the portion of the wages paid for their labor power that the children actually used for consumption. For example, Marx's Capital repeatedly pays attention to the factory labor of children in the rapidly developing capitalism of his day. Engels too described their horrifying conditions, pertinent today not only because children still comprise significant parts of capitalism's global labor force, but also as a reminder of capitalism's cruelty to its more vulnerable populations (1968). Historically, one source of children's subsistence has been value flows received for their labor power through market exchanges with their capitalist employers. Moreover, such children have performed as both productive and unproductive laborers according to the specific requirements of capitalist employers and the social conditions of their

employment. The class analysis of adult wage-earners applies and has been applied to children who occupy parallel positions in relation to capitalist enterprises. Here, however, our focus is on analyzing children whose labor power is not sold to capitalists.

Unlike adults, children rarely function as employers of others, adults or children. Because of their infrequent service on industrial corporate boards of directors or as surplus appropriators in smaller, unincorporated industrial enterprises, we do not analyze such possibilities here. However, a brief mention is warranted for children who live by owning property used in capitalist class structures. If they have received gifts or inheritances of property – such as land leased to capitalists, money lent to them, securities representing ownership of capitalists' means of production, etc. - children can live from the resulting payments (rents, interest, dividends, etc.) paid by capitalists for their access to such property.[2]

We turn our analysis then toward the mass of children whose connections to the capitalist class structures of most enterprises in modern economies are not those of wage-earners or property owners. Rather, these are the children who live within and depend upon households whose internal production relations are characterized, as per our earlier work (1994), by feudal and other non-capitalist class structures. Our tasks here are to show, first, how children survive and grow by consuming portions of the goods and services produced within those non-capitalist class structures, and second, how the arrival of children impacts both the non-capitalist class structures inside the household and the capitalist class structures outside. Achieving these tasks will, we believe, yield a class analysis of the mass of children who are not wage-earners or property owners.

We assume, to start simply, that the husband alone sells his labor power outside the household for a wage, a value received in exchange for his labor power. Later in the argument we shall assume that the wife also sells her labor power externally. Suppose they have a child. The survival and growth of the child - at least to some minimum age - depends in part on its care including a flow of goods and services that the child consumes. In so far as these goods and services have values – in the sense of embodying quantities of socially necessary abstract labor time - we can conceive of childcare in value terms.[3]

Our class analysis of children will also provisionally assume a household in which the feudal class process connects husband and wife. Thus, the wife performs necessary labor – whose fruits she consumes to sustain herself – and also surplus labor whose fruits are appropriated by her husband. She is "exploited" in the precise sense that someone other than herself immediately appropriates the surplus portion of her labor (or its fruits).[4] The class process here – the production and (exploitative) appropriation of the surplus – takes a feudal form since it occurs within a personal bond (marriage) relation rather than a contract (wage/market) relation or a slave (ownership) relation. The wife performs necessary household labor in such concrete forms as cooking, shopping, cleaning, and repairing whose products she consumes. She also performs surplus labor which may take the same concrete forms yielding products appropriated by her husband or else her surplus labor may produce a different set of concrete goods and services. For example, before a child arrives into such a feudal class-structured household, the wife may have performed surplus labor yielding cooked meals, washed clothes, cleaned space, and

repaired furniture, while afterward, part or all of her surplus labor may take the concrete form of child care.[5]

In any case, it is the husband (qua feudal lord) who appropriates her surplus labor (qua feudal serf) in the particular concrete forms shaped by the internal and external conditions of their household. Our analysis of a child's arrival into such a feudal household begins by provisionally assuming that nothing else changes in that household. The wife, we will further assume, has been socially conditioned to respond to the child's needs for household goods and services (food, clothing, shelter, cleaning, etc.) by devoting time to producing or otherwise securing them. Thus, in addition to the necessary labor she performs for her own sustenance and the surplus labor she performs to provide specific goods and services to her feudal husband, she must now do *additional* labor, namely child care. Since she does not consume the fruits of such additional labor, this additional labor represents her increased exploitation within the household's feudal class structure. The more children, the greater her additional exploitation if nothing else in the household class structure changes. In effect, the wife is delivering more surplus labor to her husband in the concrete form of child care.

Such increased exploitation of the wife-become-mother underscores the pertinence of the cultural, political, and emotional pressures in her social context that make her provide childcare as additional surplus labor. Her socially conditioned self-definition comes into play alongside those of her husband, relatives, and friends to shape her conceptions of and attitudes toward child care. Whether undertaken with happiness and eagerness or merely acquiescence or even resentment, the additional exploitation will affect her and her relationships. The nature of those affects will depend partly but only

partly on whether she is conscious of her exploitation or not. Indeed, her continued exploitation may well require that she be unconscious of it and perhaps of the very concept of exploitation per se. For example, extending our argument (Fraad, Resnick and Wolff 1994) that specific concepts of love operated to sustain feudal class structures in US households, child care too may be conceptualized as a matter of parental love having no relationship to class or exploitation.

While the impact of children arriving in feudal households may entail the increased exploitation of the wife, that is not necessarily the case. Consider some simple value equations. Dividing the wife's day into laboring and non-laboring portions, she has twenty-four hours to allocate among her feudal necessary labor time – NL (F) – her feudal surplus labor time – SL (F) – and a residual time – R. The R term refers in the broadest sense to the time she spends sleeping, eating, contemplating, playing, and so forth. Her twenty-four hour time equation may thus be expressed as follows:

1. $24 = NL(F) + SL(F) + R.$

We can measure the products of her necessary and surplus labor [NL (F) + SL (F)] in terms of the socially necessary abstract labor time embodied in them. In so doing, we borrow and extend Marx's notion of the labor time embodied in products as constituting their "values". Thus, the wife *adds* a total value by her labor inside the household that equals NL(F) + SL(F); we refer to the value *added* by the wife, since the total value of the outputs of her household labor also contain the values of the tools, equipment, and raw materials used up in and by her household production. She receives back and consumes only NL (F) worth of the household goods and services that she produces. She delivers SL (F) to her husband, as labor or as the products of such labor. The value that

her household labor adds thus *exceeds* the value of the household products she consumes to reproduce her household labor power. Because the first receiver (i.e., appropriator) of the wife's surplus labor - SL (F) – is not she herself but another and different person, her husband, he is therefore what Marx refers to/defines as an exploiter. In this instance, he is an exploiter within the feudal class structure of the household.

Using these simple equations, let us reconsider the impact of a child added to such a feudal class-structured household. If we assume no change in the wife's necessary household labor or in her consumption of its fruits, then sustaining children would require either of two household adjustments or possibly some combination of them. In the first sort of adjustment, the wife performs more surplus labor, SL (F), so as to deliver care to the child. In the second sort of adjustment, her SL (F) remains unchanged, but one portion of it stops taking the concrete forms it took before children (e.g., cooking, cleaning, etc for the husband's consumption) and instead shifts to the concrete forms of child care.

The first adjustment was what we assumed initially in this discussion of children: their arrival increases the feudal wife's rate of exploitation (SL (F)/NL (F)). This adjustment requires that she reduce her R. Thus, rising exploitation and fewer hours sleeping, eating, or merely finding a peaceful moment during the day to rest her body and mind are among the costs she incurs in this adjustment of the feudal household to the arrival of children. The adjustment may occur consciously or unconsciously, as the result of the husband's dictates to his wife or as the parents' cooperative execution of social norms they have both respectfully internalized.

The fundamental class dimensions of the household refer to the production and appropriation of the household surplus labor. Hence we focus here on the provision of child care within the class structure of the husband-wife relation and do not pursue the impact on the children of their consumption of a portion of the household's output of goods and services. We use the term "gift" to underscore that child care (the value flow of household labor and products to children) is not itself a part of a class process. It is a non-class process (as are, for example, loans among workers, gifts to elderly parents, etc.) that interacts with and affects class processes but is different from them. In our discussion above, the child does not perform, appropriate, distribute, or receive a distributed share of the surplus. The wife produces and the husband appropriates *all* her surplus. When the child arrives, she produces more surplus which takes the form of goods and services that are then gifted to the child.

To accommodate the arrival of children, the delivery to them of goods and services has been undertaken in the household by means of this first possible adjustment of its feudal class structure. Of course, the social context will overdetermine whether, when and how children arrive and whether and how goods and services will be delivered for their care. To the extent that this first adjustment is replicated with the arrival of more children, then the greater will be the mother's exploitation and the reduction of her R. Because we think very many US women still live and work within feudal households with children, it is often such increased feudal class exploitation that sustains those children. Similarly, when that increased exploitation undercuts mothers' ability or willingness to perform more household labor (or to stay married), such household feudal class structures (and the marriages that began them) could be undermined.

A second and different adjustment of the household feudal class structure to the arrival of children is also possible. For various reasons, including wives/mothers refusing greater exploitation and reduced R, the value flow for child care may occur *without* the increased exploitation of wives/mothers. In this case and again referring to our simple equation, a child's arrival and the consequent flow of value in the form of child care does not entail increased exploitation of the wife within the household's feudal class structure – no increase in SL (F) nor any reduction of her R. If we further assume that no change occurs either in her NL (F) – that she continues to produce and consume the same value of her household production of goods and services – then the child care must involve a change *within* the SL (F). That is, a portion of the wife's pre-child surplus labor that took the form of, say, cleaning, cooking, providing sexual services, etc. for the husband, will be switched after the child arrives to performing child care.[6] Instead of the latter requiring increased exploitation of the wife, it is rather that she alters the kinds of labor (and hence the mix of products) that comprise the feudal wife's unchanged quantity of surplus labor provided. The larger social context will determine whether husbands are persuaded and/or pressured to arrange or accept this second possible adjustment of a feudal class structured household to the arrival of children. As with the first adjustment, the second may be undertaken consciously or unconsciously; the existence of alternative possible adjustments may or may not be recognized by either partner.

Still other adjustments are also possible. For example, assuming no change in the wife's division of her day into NL (F), SL (F), and R, another way for child care to occur could entail the wife no longer consuming all the products of her necessary household labor. She reduces her own consumption to provide child care. Of course, to the extent

that such a value flow would jeopardize the reproduction of the wife's serf labor power, it would undermine the feudal class structure of the household.

Yet another possible adjustment to the child's arrival in a feudal household may be that the father undertakes some childcare labor alongside his wife or instead of her doing such labor. While we examine below possible class and non-class consequences arising from father's added household labor, we can say here that were father's labor to produce some or all of the child care required by the arrival of the child, it could correspondingly relieve at least some of the disruptive pressures of the other possible adjustments to the child's arrival. In this way, the father's performance of childcare labor might not only sustain the child but also reinforce the feudal class structure of the household.

For completeness, we need finally to consider yet another possible adjustment of the feudal class-structured household to a child's arrival. A rise in the productivity of the wife's labor (for example, by providing her with improved tools, appliances, etc.) may occur. Then, during the same number of hours of labor, wives may be able to produce a larger quantity of goods and services. To the extent that increased productivity provided the goods and services for child care, the other adjustments described above could be less difficult for and less disruptive of the household's feudal class structure. Of course, since improving household labor productivity typically involves and results from buying appliances, it requires outlays from the husband's cash income from work outside the household. That would set in motion other problems for the household considered below in our discussion of household budgets. Finally, if their increased productivity results in

wives spending fewer hours on products they consume and more on those delivered to their husbands, then the result would be an increased rate of feudal wives' exploitation.

The most likely adjustments of feudal class structured households to children's arrival will be those that reflect the customs, laws, and religions dominant in the US today (shaping, for example, the emotional needs, expectations, and taboos of wives and husbands). Thus, while productivity increases and childcare labor by fathers are possible, those adjustments, when they have occurred, seem rarely to have sufficed. Caring for children arriving in contemporary feudal households continues to depend on various combinations of increases in women's surplus labor (rising rates of household exploitation), reductions in their own consumption levels, and decreases in their non-laboring time (R) within their households.[7]

These consequences for mothers risk their mental and physical exhaustion and their alienation from their children, their husbands, and even from the family as a socially celebrated institution. To the extent that wives (and also husbands) lack any consciousness that their children's arrival has complicated and strained the household's feudal class structure, they will lack the concepts and vocabulary to address the class aspects of their problems. Hence they will be less likely to change their households' class structures, even though those very structures contribute to the tensions they otherwise experience. Instead, spouses will more likely blame each other and/or the children for the alienation, exhaustion, and interpersonal ambivalences that so often follow children's arrival. Continuing the tragedy, when those children reach adulthood they too will more likely blame their parents, ignore class, and so perpetuate the situation generationally.

Children thus impose particular personal costs on mothers and fathers living inside households with feudal class structures – alongside the opportunities they also present for parents to nurture, care, and both love and be loved by them. Mothers especially are generally expected to absorb those costs willingly. If they are not conscious of their rising feudal exploitation and its effects on the rest of the family and thus on the larger society too, that does not diminish its impact. Thus it not surprising those children at home are often victimized emotionally and physically by mothers and fathers who are themselves physically and emotionally stressed by the overwork they often recognize and the class exploitation they rarely do. In addition, children's arrival into a feudal household class structure also puts complex new demands and hence strains on its monetary arrangements. Feudal households must always balance the money inflows from the external sale of husbands' and wives' labor powers with the monetary outflows needed to reproduce not only the labor powers they each sell but also the household's internal feudal class structure. Children's arrival places new demands on that balancing process and thereby affects households and families in yet more ways. Thus we turn next to households and money.

Class interactions between households and enterprises

One consequence of recognizing households' distinctive class structures is that social theory has a new and no longer avoidable task. Grasping any society's dynamic henceforth requires taking account of the interactions between class structures inside households and those outside, e.g. in enterprises (Gibson-Graham 1996 particularly ch.9). Understanding individuals and groups likewise now requires exploring how the *multiple*

class structures that their lives engage, at home and at work, interact to shape their experiences, interrelationships, and consciousness. Individuals participate in different class structures, within their lifetimes and often within each day. Goods and services flow among these different class structures. The multiple class structures of any society are thus complexly interdependent. Changes in any one class structure will change the others and the interactions among them. Class changes will in turn alter all the non-class structures and processes that comprise the social context of class. When children are introduced into the household's class structure, its resulting changes ramify socially.

While various literatures explore other aspects of the complex relations between households and enterprises, all are virtually silent about how the production, appropriation, and distributions of surpluses occur differently in households and enterprises. They do not investigate why, when, and how surpluses flow between the class structures of household and enterprise, nor do they follow the social consequences of those flows. Thus, the contradictions besetting the class structures of households and enterprises and the relationship between them remain largely unrecognized in the contemporary families who struggle to manage those contradictions and their effects. Our goals here are to add class-qua-surplus analyses of households and enterprises to the existing literatures and to extend class consciousness generally.

Every class structure requires preconditions if it is to begin and ongoing conditions of existence if it is to be reproduced over time. As preconditions for any particular class structure to occur in a society's production activities, we may mention (1) that the requisite tools, equipment, and raw materials must be made available to commence such production, and (2) that laborers must be willing, able, and interested in

beginning to produce and deliver a surplus to the appropriators in that particular class structure. As ongoing conditions of existence of any particular class structure, used up means of production must be replenished and laborers must continue to produce and deliver surpluses to its appropriators. Additional ongoing conditions of existence include that the produced surplus must be quantitatively sufficient to enable its appropriators to distribute portions sufficient to secure all those conditions of the class structure's reproduction that would not otherwise be secured. And finally, the surplus must either take – or be easily changed into – the qualitative form(s) needed to secure those conditions. That is, the surplus must be distributed in a form acceptable to those recipients who provide the needed conditions of the class structure's reproduction. In more formal theoretical terms, the class structure's commencement and reproduction require that its preconditions and then its ongoing conditions be realized.

Once any particular class structure's preconditions have been realized and it comes into existence, its reproduction is threatened if and when any of its ongoing conditions of existence is withdrawn. For example, if, within any class structure, its productive workers refuse to continue to produce surpluses or to deliver them to the surplus appropriators, then that class structure's continued existence is rendered problematical. If the tools, equipment, and raw material used up in production are not replenished, that will also jeopardize the class structure. Similar jeopardy would attach to a class structure if the appropriators lack sufficient surplus to distribute the requisite portions to secure its conditions of existence. Finally, to take another example especially germane to the rest of this discussion, if a class structure generates a surplus that is

qualitatively unacceptable to its intended recipients, then that class structure is threatened.

This last is precisely the existential dilemma of the feudal class structures of households when they are located within today's highly monetized societies. The household's feudal class structure typically has several conditions of existence that can be secured only with money disbursements, yet the wife inside the household produces and delivers to her husband a surplus that is usually in-kind rather than in monetary form. These money disbursements pose a basic problem which has to be solved for the feudal class structure of the household to survive within a monetized, capitalist enterprise economy. For example, the wife's feudal surplus labor requires a physical space in which to work; the family home is a condition of existence of the feudal class structure within it. To secure the family home, the husband and wife perhaps undertake a mortgage loan that requires money payments to the mortgage lender out of the household's feudal surplus. Alternatively, they may rent the living space that enables their household's feudal class structure. Obliged then to make rental payments – necessarily in money form – they face the problem that their household surplus does not take the requisite money form. Other examples include possible taxes levied on the feudal households and interest payments on loans to the household.

Even before the problem arose of money payments needed to secure certain of the feudal household's ongoing conditions of existence, there were the money payments needed to secure the preconditions of the feudal household's coming into existence. That is, money was typically needed to make initial purchases of the tools, equipment, and raw materials to begin a feudal household (and then, of course, to replenish them regularly

thereafter). In sum, feudal households, both to begin and to continue, must make a variety of money payments.

However, one distinction that differentiates the feudal household from the industrial capitalist enterprise is that while the latter's class structure is usually fully monetized, inside the feudal household produced goods and services rarely take a monetary form. Thus the problem for the existing feudal class structures inside households – if they are to coexist with capitalist enterprises outside – is that they must make money payments while they do not generate money incomes.[8] The general solution typical in modern societies has been to work out household budgets that co-mingle monetized and non-monetized components from both class structures, the feudal inside the household and the capitalist outside. Yet, like all solutions, the budgetary solution is contradictory as it generates new problems and tensions even as it resolves old ones.

To explore the household budget and the feudal/capitalist class structures it encompasses, we make some simplifying assumptions. First, we assume that the husband is the only household member who earns money income from outside the household. Our argument can easily be extended below to accommodate today's more usual situation where wives also do wage work outside the household. Second, and also only for simplicity, we assume the husband sells his labor power to an industrial capitalist. Our argument could be modified for any other mode of earning money outside the household. Given these simplifying assumptions, it follows that the husband's money wages must be the source for those monetary payments required to secure the conditions of existence of the feudal class structure of his household.

The husband's money wages flow into the household's composite budget. A portion of those money wages then flows out as expenditures to purchase the tools, equipment, and raw materials that replenish, upgrade, or supplement those used up in household production and to secure those ongoing conditions of existence of its feudal class structure that require money payments. In effect, the household budget accomplishes a transfer of money from the husband's participation in the capitalist enterprise to the reproduction of its feudal class structure. The problem of the qualitative form (non-monetary) of the feudal household's surplus has been solved by this budgetary transfer. In this way, the household budget effectively encompasses and integrates the feudal and capitalist class participations of household members.

However, this budgetary transfer solution raises new problems of its own. In the simple feudal household we have assumed, the transfer diverts a portion of the husband's wage income to reproduce the household's feudal class structure. The question thus arises: how does this wage diversion affect the husband? Our answer draws on Marx's classic definition of the value of labor power as equal to the sum of values of the commodities workers customarily demand to reproduce their labor power. Like Marx, we assume, for expository simplicity, that the wages employers pay for the labor power they buy from workers equals the value of that labor power. Thus, diverting a portion of the father's wages to secure his feudal household will prevent him from buying and consuming the full set of commodities customarily needed to reproduce the labor power he sells to his employer. This is a problem for the capitalist enterprise that employs him because a husband's reduced consumption may jeopardize his continued productivity and hence employability (because of deteriorated physical, psychological, and/or emotional

well-being). The husband's reduced consumption also presents risks to the household, since if he consequently lost his job in the capitalist enterprise, that would undermine the household budget and hence the household altogether. If children were added to the feudal household, likely requiring still more monetary payments to secure their places within the household class structure, further pressures for diverting the husband's wages might well ensue and thus cause further problems for both class structures.

The general response to the problems raised by the transfer of some of the husband's wages to securing the household's feudal class structure has been to compensate him by diverting to his consumption a portion of the feudal household surplus. This compensation entails a reverse transfer. In the first transfer, money wages from the father's participation in the capitalist class structure of the enterprise are transferred to reproduce the household's feudal class structure. In the compensating reverse transfer, a portion of the feudal household's surplus labor, embodied in non-monetized goods and services, is consumed by the father to reproduce the labor power he sells to the capitalist employer. One transfer reproduces the household's members' participation in its internal feudal class structure, while the other reproduces the household's members' participation in an external capitalist class structure.

These internal transfers of the household budget make it one site of the class contradictions in the relation between household and enterprise in many contemporary societies. Husband and wife will not always agree on which household conditions of existence require monetary payments, how large each of such payments should be, when the payments should be made, etc. They may dispute the portion of the husband's wages to be used to purchase commodities for the reproduction of his labor power or the portion

of the household surplus to be provided for the husband's consumption. Husband and wife have different relations to and dependencies upon the two opposing transfers within the household budget. The differences and tensions resulting from these contradictions can aggravate, disrupt, and even fragment households. The arrival of children and possibly other adults into such households will further complicate and perhaps aggravate their contradictions and tensions.

If the lives of the wife and children revolve mostly around the feudal household, they may well favor its well-being by supporting a household budget that transfers more of the husband's wages away from expenditures to reproduce his labor power. If the husband, whose life is split between two class structures, is more invested for cultural reasons in his capitalist employment, he may well resent the deflected wages and view household budget priorities very differently. The husband who seeks more surplus labor from his wife to compensate for the wages he uses to support the feudal household may find her resistant. Children may enhance her resistance and eventually weigh in on her side of such conflicts with the husband. In short, household budgeting is replete with class dimensions and contradictions.

The husband must reproduce his labor power to be able to sell it again and thus ensure his income and his social position. He uses his wages to do that. He has certain conscious or unconscious ambivalences about marriage and household and children. He is culturally disposed, in most circumstances, to want them, yet he also senses the difficulties their sustenance will provoke for him as they likely did in his family of origin. The feudal wife is more intimately connected to the household's maintenance and likely, again for cultural reasons, to appreciate its importance for the family more than the

husband does. The children developing inside such class-conflicted households will exhibit all manner of complex responses to how each parent struggles in and with those conflicts. The children's responses will, in turn, shape their own later adult engagements with the class contradictions connecting their households and enterprises. Just as those class contradictions shape the personal interactions and relationships between husband and wife, they do likewise, albeit in different ways, for the children growing up in such households.

Negotiations among family members may achieve some at least temporary compromise regarding monetized feudal subsumed class payments and the accommodating transfers within the household budget. However, changes within the two class structures as well as non-class changes affecting household members undermine and disrupt such compromises. The class contradictions of contemporary households constantly shape their trials and tribulations and their lasting impacts on all its members. Class contradictions thus ramify their effects across the social landscape. Because those effects include serious social costs, we presume that rendering the class contradictions visible and explicit will give modern society a better chance to deal with if not reduce those costs. Our household class analysis provokes especially this new question about contemporary household-enterprise interactions and their social effects: what sorts of class changes in both households and enterprises might yield preferable social results?

Class complexities of the household budget

To further unpack the mutual dependency between the class structures of feudal household and capitalist enterprise, and to set the stage for much of the rest of this paper,

we propose a simple value analysis of the flows between them. To summarize our argument so far, namely that the husbands in our simplified narrative have one foot in (enterprise) capitalism and another in (household) feudalism, we offer a simple inequality. Inequality 2 below slightly modifies Marx's similar formulation for the value of labor power in Capital, Vol. 1. It does this by taking into account the fact that the value of labor power received by the husband - V (CAP) – does not suffice for *both* the reproduction of his labor power and the monetized payments required to secure the conditions of existence of his feudal household.

2. $V\ (CAP) < C_c\ (CAP) + Y_{HB}$

Here, V (CAP) stands for the value of the husband's labor power sold to the capitalist enterprise (presumed to equal his money wage). These wages are understood to flow into the household budget as its monetized income. Following Marx, V (CAP) is defined as equal to the value of all the commodities he must customarily purchase and consume to reproduce his labor power (i.e., V (CAP) = EV/UV x UV where EV/UV stands for the unit value of each customarily consumed commodity and UV stands for the entire bundle of such commodities). Let us define C_c (CAP) as this value the husband must spend on such customarily consumed commodities to reproduce his labor power: $C_c\ (CAP) \equiv$ EV/UV x UV. Finally, Y_{HB} stands for the portion of the husband's wages diverted away from commodity purchases for his own consumption and used instead to (1) purchase tools, equipment, and raw materials (appliances, children's' clothing and toys, raw food, etc.) to replenish those used up in the wife's household production, and (2) secure certain conditions of existence of the household's feudal class structure (rent, insurance premiums, and property taxes on the feudal home; donations to the church; expenditures

on childcare such as children's clothing, diapers, carriages, cribs, toys, and baby-food, etc).[9] As in all of the following equations and inequalities, the variables here are measurable in the usual "value" (i.e., socially necessary abstract labor) terms.

Clearly, if Y_{HB} were zero – for example, an unmarried male wage-earner living alone who spends all his wages on commodities for his personal consumption – then V (CAP) = C_c (CAP). Likewise, if $Y_{HB} > 0$, then only *part* of the husband's wage is available to purchase only *part* of the commodities he needs to consume to reproduce his labor power.

The inequality sign in expression 2 above follows from Marx's value assumption, namely that the value of labor power equals the abstract labor necessary to produce the bundle of commodities (EV/UV x UV) whose consumption will just reproduce the husband's labor power. Thus, once the wage-earner uses some part of his wages for purposes other than buying commodities to reproduce his labor power, Marx's equation converts into the inequality of expression 2.[10] If wages equal the value of the husband's labor power, then they cannot pay for both the reproduction of his labor power and the payments included in the Y_{HB} term that reproduce the household's feudal class structure.[11] Using any portion of the husband's money wages for the reproduction of the household's feudal class structure (i.e., $Y_{HB} > 0$) reduces the commodities he can buy and consume, and that threatens the reproduction of his labor power.[12]

In many countries, most male wage laborers live in households whose budgets use portions of their wages to secure conditions of existence of those households' feudal class structures. Such household budgets thereby threaten capitalism. Indeed, the more pressing become the financial demands to support feudal households, including raising

children there, the stronger this threat becomes.[13] Yet the husband whose participation in the capitalist class structure is threatened in this way is also the "head" of the household, the appropriator of the feudal surplus produced within it. He is, in short, torn between the contending demands and rewards of his positions within the two class structures that his life engages. The need to purchase commodities to reproduce his labor power contradicts the need to fund his household, to "support his family" there. Moreover, this contradictory tension in the husband is no doubt communicated to and shared by wife and children; indeed it becomes woven into the culture of the larger society. We suspect that the demands of family and children today, as compared, say, to Marx's day, tip the balance such that now relatively more of the husband's wages are diverted to securing the feudal household.

This change in household budgeting arose alongside the historical development of a new world-view of the family and children. Modern capitalism is increasingly viewed as resting ultimately on the strength of "an underlying family structure." More than before, children are conceived of and treated as cherished wards there. Earlier capitalism's harsh treatment of children (so aptly described by Engels) contributed to this evolution. New discourses arose that not only documented abuses, but also produced children as new objects of social – legal, medical, economic, and above all family – concern and need. Sensitivities changed as well, thereby helping to instill in wage-earners a propensity to spend relatively more on family and childcare at the expense of commodities for personal consumption.[14] Capitalism's abuse of children in many "less developed countries" today evokes similar sentiments and reform movements aimed, at least in part, to "strengthen families and households."

However, the household's reproduction requires a balanced coexistence of its various members' participations in both feudal and capitalist class structures. The threat to the husband's reproduction of his labor power must somehow be compensated or offset. Otherwise a threatened capitalism will react back and threaten the household as well (for example, by dismissing male workers whose productivity falls as a result of their not adequately reproducing their labor power). As we shall show, the husband's threatened labor power reproduction is partly offset by reorganizing the household's internal feudal class structure to provide more of its output for the husband's personal consumption.

We begin our demonstration of this argument by introducing inequality 3 to represent the household feudal class structure in value terms.

3. $SL\ (F)_{NM} + NCR_M > SSCP\ (F)_{NM} + SSCP\ (F)_M$

$SL\ (F)_{NM}$ is the feudal household surplus labor (in "value" terms measured in abstract labor time) that husbands appropriate from their wives; the subscript NM indicates that this value takes a non-monetary form. NCR_M represents the transfer of value (a "non-class revenue" or NCR since it is neither a surplus appropriated nor one distributed) to the feudal household resulting from the diversion of a portion of the husband's wages; the subscript M indicates that this value flow has a monetary form.[15] On the right hand side of inequality 3, we have disaggregated the household's feudal subsumed class payments, i.e. its outlays to secure the conditions of existence of its internal feudal class structure.[16] One portion, $SSCP\ (F)_{NM,}$ stands for those feudal subsumed class distributions that take a non-monetary form. The remaining portion, $SSCP\ (F)_M$ represents those subsumed class distributions that must be made in cash. As argued above, in most modern societies, this

latter portion is substantial and may well exceed the former. The inequality results because the husband transfers a portion of the monetized value he received from capitalist employment into the feudal household to finance its feudal cash requirements. This inflow of value from capitalism to the feudal household enables household revenues to exceed required expenditures.

Inequality 3 shows how the functioning of the feudal household depends partly on capitalism, specifically the diversion of husband's wages partly to sustain his household's feudal class structure. We show next how this very dependence yields a return flow of value to help reproduce the husband's labor power. This return flow is accomplished when the husband acquires for his own consumption a portion of his wife's feudal surplus labor inside the household. That consumption helps to reproduce his labor power; it compensates for the diversion of his wages within the household budget. The household budget has thus accomplished two value transfers: (1) the diversion of wages derived from a capitalist class structure (enterprise) for expenditures to support a feudal class structure (household) and (2) the diversion of a portion of the surplus in the feudal class structure (household) to help reproduce the labor power sold to a capitalist class structure (enterprise).

While unlikely, it is possible that the two opposing value transfers are exactly equal. We may express such an equality viewed from the vantage point of the feudal household as equation 4:

4. $SL\ (F)_{NM} + NCR_M = SSCP\ (F)_{NM} + SSCP\ (F)_M + Y_{NM}$

The newly introduced variable, $Y_{NM,}$ represents the non-monetized portion of the wife's feudal surplus labor diverted to help reproduce the husband's labor power. This diversion

diminishes what remains of the wife's feudal surplus available to secure household feudalism's conditions of existence (i.e., SSCP $(F)_{NM}$). The equal sign in Equation 4 signals that what the household's reproduction suffers by providing Y_{NM} for the husband's personal consumption is exactly offset by what the husband suffers by providing NCR_M for the household's reproduction at the expense of reproducing his own labor power.

Equation 5 shows the same result considered from the vantage point of the husband as wage laborer:

5. $V\ (CAP) - Y_{HB} + Y_{NM} = \hat{C}_c\ (CAP) + C_H$

On the equation's left hand side is the husband's money wage income, V (CAP), minus the portion of his money wage diverted to the budget for securing the feudal household's reproduction, Y_{HB}, plus the portion of value transferred to his personal consumption from the feudal household, Y_{NM}. On the right hand side is the husband's new level of consumption: the value of commodities he can actually buy with the portion of his wages ***not*** diverted to reproduce the household's feudal class structure, $\hat{C}_c$ (CAP), plus the portion of his wife's feudal surplus labor (non-monetized) diverted for his personal consumption to reproduce his labor power, C_H. Assuming, as we have, that this value inflow, Y_{NM}, equals the value outflow, Y_{HB}, then what the husband suffers by the reduced purchase of commodities, $\hat{C}_c$ (CAP), is exactly balanced by what he gains in feudal household consumption, C_H.

Class contradictions between households and enterprises

Equations 4 and 5 allow us to pinpoint the tensions surrounding the household's attempt to integrate external capitalist wage labor and internal feudal production. To the

degree that the value transferred from feudal household surplus to the husband's reproduction of his labor power, Y_{NM}, is less than Y_{HB} (the reverse transfer of the husband's wages to reproduce the household's feudal class structure), the husband's total consumption falls. Tensions then may arise among husbands, wives, and children over supporting the household versus reproducing the husband's labor power. Needless to say, were Y_{NM} instead greater than Y_{HB} tensions might well arise provoked by wives and children whose household lives were pinched by such an inequality (the rise in the husband's total consumption). Indeed, with or without consciousness that these transfers occur, household members' conceptions and measurements of household circumstances may well clash. Then, too, changes inside the household's feudal class structure or inside the enterprise's capitalist class structure will convert these equations into inequalities provoking further tensions. One way the household might try to ameliorate all such tensions would be through raising the wife's productivity: purchasing more efficient tools and equipment to enable more household output from the same labor time. However, as noted earlier, raising household productivity has its own limits and contradictions; it offers no guarantees that it can reduce households' class tensions.

Equation 5 can also clarify the alternative household reactions if and when changes occur in either the feudal or the capitalist class structures that the household engages. As one example, we may consider possible consequences if the husband's wage falls. One possibility is that he simply accepts reduced personal consumption: he buys fewer commodities and nothing else in the household budget changes. Of course, such a consequence undermines the labor power he offers for sale to capitalists and also reduces the wage-earner's demand for capitalist commodities: in short, problems for the

reproduction of the capitalist class structure ensue. A second possible consequence of the husband's falling wages is that he may demand or command a larger Y_{NM} to offset his diminished wage. If all else remains the same, the wife must perform more surplus labor (in equation 4) and deliver its fruits to her husband for his personal consumption (C_H in equation 5). Increased household exploitation is then the "compensation" for the husband's fallen wages, but it will also provoke all manner of problems for the household with spill-over effects on the husband at work. A third possibility is that the wife will not perform additional surplus labor in the household to enhance the husband's personal consumption; rather she may reduce some kinds of the surplus labor done before the husband's wages fell (e.g., child care) and substitute instead other kinds (e.g., personal services for the husband). In such cases, children's vulnerability to their households' efforts to integrate their feudal and capitalist class engagements/dependencies may be abused. Beyond these illustrative examples, there are, of course, many other external changes that can and do impact such households, just as there are other possible household reactions to such changes

Equations 4 and 5 can also serve as frameworks for examining how other sorts of changes can affect the contradictory relationship between household feudalism and enterprise capitalism. For example, if the husband reduced the portion of his money wages made available to reproduce his household's feudal class structure and/or if the household's reproduction suddenly became more expensive (higher home maintenance costs, property taxes, children's school fees, etc.) the household's feudal class structure would be jeopardized. Without one or another compensating adjustment in the terms of Equation 4, the household might dissolve or disperse and thereby set in motion secondary

consequences for capitalist enterprises. For example, rising household costs may lead the wife to sell her labor power to a capitalist employer as well ("to solve the family's financial problems"). However, that decision will also generate new problems. Will such a wife simply add her wage labor outside the household to the necessary and surplus feudal labor she performs inside (the famous "double shift")? If she does, how will her physical and mental health be affected and likewise the qualities and quantities of her household labor? If she does not, will she reduce her necessary and/or her surplus household labor, and with what consequences for the reproduction of the feudal household, for child care, and so on?

In summary, the relationship between traditional feudal households and capitalism is contradictory. Household feudalism simultaneously supports and undermines enterprise capitalism. When husbands sell their labor power to capitalist enterprises (and indeed when their wives do as well), they spend their wages partly to create and maintain their households. In this way, enterprise capitalism supports household feudalism. At the same time, using part of their wages in this way threatens capitalism by undermining the reproduction of the labor power that capitalist enterprises must buy and on which they depend to produce and appropriate the surplus (generating their profits). Likewise, when household feudal class structures generate surpluses used in part for husbands' and wives' personal consumption (helping them to reproduce the labor power they sell externally), it is household feudalism that supports enterprise capitalism. At the same time, using household feudal surpluses in that way makes them unavailable to secure the conditions of existence of household feudalism, thereby undermining it. Given that the class structures of households and enterprises are interdependent, undermining either

threatens the other. Moreover class structures are interdependent with all the other structures inside households and enterprises (political structures, cultural structures, and so on). Thus, our focused examination of the class contradictions between households and enterprises yields a new vantage point for social analysis and new insights into the contemporary problems and dynamics of both social sites.

We may illustrate the contradictions between household and enterprise class structures by examining the recent wage depression in the US. Since the mid 1970s, US workers have endured by far the worst three decades of real wage changes in the nation's history (at least since the 1820s). In most of the last thirty years, real wages fell; across the period as a whole, average real wages stagnated at best. Meanwhile, labor productivity rose rapidly, inside and outside the US, thereby dropping the prices of domestically produced and imported consumer goods. Money wages could be lowered in a variety of ways (outright cuts, shifts from full-time to part-time "temp" designations, restructuring job descriptions, etc.) partly because falling consumer goods prices cushioned the impact of falling money wages. Likewise, actual and potential outsourcing of US jobs, especially to Asia, and a ceaseless drumbeat of threats regarding the imperative "need" to cut wages to "protect jobs from leaving" had their impacts. US workers, inside and outside of unions, fearfully accepted the falling money wages (consoling themselves with lower prices in proliferating Wal-Marts and other discount stores). But most workers sank further under they weight of rightwing ideological hegemony and also accepted falling real wages alongside the work-place pressures that yielded rising labor productivity.

In Marxian terms, US capitalism thus succeeded in its most beloved of combinations over the last thirty years. The value paid to workers dropped while the value added by their labor rose.[17] The quantity of surplus value appropriated by capitalists thus exploded. Not surprisingly, the stock market bubbled (and burst) in the usual hysteria of top corporate managers, shareholders, bankers, and others in positions to tap the surplus value explosion. In the process, the inequalities of wealth, income, political power and cultural access all widened significantly.

The centerpiece and source of capitalist success in the last twenty five years was thus a rising rate of exploitation. The celebrants of that success, in business, government, and academic circles, could not see, let alone consider, its exploitative foundation. They spoke instead – and as always - about lean managements, entrepreneurship, and marvelous new technologies. Such self-serving celebrations precluded any serious examination – let alone class analysis - of rising exploitation's social costs including especially the resulting stress and strain placed on American households. To illustrate the importance of what the celebrants missed and move our class analysis another step, we propose here a brief class analysis of how the recently rising exploitation affected households including children therein.

For the many millions of US male workers who suffered a falling value of their labor power and of their real wages, they immediately confronted a personal as well as a household crisis. They had to cut their own personal consumption – an additional reduction in $\hat{C}_c$ (CAP) further jeopardizing the reproduction of their labor power – and/or to demand more household-produced goods and services for their personal consumption – a rise in C_H thereby jeopardizing the reproduction of the household's class structure.

Under these pressures, workers' households responded in two major ways. First, they sent additional members of the household, chiefly wives, out to do additional wage work to increase the household budget's inflow of cash. At the same time, partly because household budgets were so strained and partly because wives' wage work imposed new costs on those budgets, US households also responded by enormously increased borrowing.

Wives newly earning wages provided desperately needed additional monetary inflows to household budgets suffering from husbands' falling wages.[18] While this solved some of the problems imposed on household class structures, it also introduced new ones. On the one hand, wives' wages helped households to secure the conditions of existence of their internal class structures that required cash outlays (which included rising interest payments on home mortgages/equity loans and credit card debt). In this way, wives' additional wages offset the impact on household budgets of husbands' reduced wages. Likewise, wives' wages could finance husbands' additional personal consumption as compensation for husbands contributing portions of their wages to household budgets. However, wives' wages spent in these ways were unavailable to reproduce the labor power wives now sold to employers. That introduced new strains on marriages and households.

However wives' wages were spent, their wage labor introduced extraordinary extra burdens on them. If they maintained unchanged their household labor, necessary and surplus, and thereby their labor contributions to reproducing the household's class structure, it meant that their wage work reduced their free time ("R" from our earlier equation and the "double shift" exposed by feminist writers across the last 30 years).[19]

The wives' resulting physical and emotional exhaustion threatened the reproduction of household class structures and the reproduction of the wives' newly marketed labor power. Such threats then spilled over to affect the husbands and children in ways that could and often did aggravate intra-family tensions that sometimes culminated in abuses (spousal, child, substance, etc.) and/or divorces that drew increased public attention across the last quarter century.

An alternative, as noted above, was for the wives not to continue their internal household labor undiminished after they added external wage labor. Less household labor would assuage wives' exhaustion, but it, too, introduced its own problems. If wives performed less *necessary* household labor, they thereby jeopardized the reproduction of the labor power they devoted to household work. If wives performed less household *surplus* labor, they thereby jeopardized the surplus available to reproduce the household's class structure and/or to compensate the husband for the portion of his wages not used for his own consumption. Either option or any combination thereof would likely reduce the flow of values to sustain children, thereby threatening their physical and emotional development. It might also place new cash demands on the household budget, e.g. for purchased housecleaning and/or childcare services in lieu of the wife's housework.

Finally, husbands often accepted their wives' entry into wage labor and their resulting needs to use a portion of their earnings to reproduce the labor power they sell to their employers. However, that usage of a portion of her earnings was often conceived as a "gift" from husband to wife for her consumption. In class terms such "gifts" represent rather the unconscious recognition that the household's survival requires the reproduction

of all its income-generating activities: the wife's no less than the husband's labor power sold to external employers as well as the wife's household surplus production.

These evolving class contradictions plunged millions of American women into extremely difficult personal situations. Wage labor outside the household represented for many a significant advance (variously conceptualized as "independence," "maturity," "equality," or "liberation"). Yet it also often meant increased stress and exhaustion, greater household exploitation, an irritating new dependence on husbands' "gifts", and enhanced anxieties over the accumulating household debts. Overstressed intra-household relations surfaced as intense feelings of guilt (over "time away from home" or "too little quality time with the kids") or conflict ("the impossibility of combining career with family") or animosity ("the spouse that does not understand" and "the kids/parents that seem so alien"). The households' class dimensions and contradictions – in the surplus definition of class utilized here - remained unknown. Because class consciousness was mostly absent, Americans deployed non-class conceptualizations to express, account for, and respond to the problems and crises of US households. Because they could not "see" (theorize) class, they could not consider, let alone advocate, class changes in enterprises and/or households as parts of possible solutions to those problems and crises.

Thus we confront the contemporary "dysfunctional family" ubiquitously displayed across the culture but never subjected to any class-qua-surplus analysis. On television and in films, household problems became ubiquitous themes for comedy and occasional objects for "psychological" explanations. Endless sermonizing advocated a return to idealized "family values" lost with traditional religion's decline. Depression, obesity, and substance abuse have become endemic and serve often to "explain"

household problems and crises. The same applies to alienation between parents and children, husbands and wives, and among the rising number of single people (expressed in extreme personal difficulties with intimacy and trust). Yet the dominant cultural themes, while often recognizing something profoundly amiss in American households and family life, nonetheless stay clear of class analyses in general. The wide and deep repression of concepts of class in surplus terms keeps class changes in households and/or enterprises off the agendas for change, let alone action, in both popular and academic discourses on America's problems and their possible solutions.

As US households tried to cope with falling real wages by having wives enter the wage labor force, enterprises producing child care and house cleaning as commodities grew quickly. Every city and its suburbs display a growing array of childcare providers including day-care enterprises, nursery schools, after-school centers, hired nannies, near and extended family members, and neighborhood baby sitters. With the partial exception of family members, these diverse providers produce and sell child care as a commodity. Their enterprises display class structures ranging from the large to the small capitalist to the self-employed (what Marx called "ancient"). Equally dramatic has been the growth in small capitalist and ancient house cleaners. Given the relatively small capital and limited skills required and the low level of government regulation or oversight, housecleaning enterprises often employ illegal immigrants and especially young women.[20]

Women's wages are, on average, lower than men's. Child care and house cleaning are often costly service commodities. These two circumstances add troubling complexities to the household-enterprise nexus. When feudal households respond to falling husband's wages by then sending wives out to wage work, new problems arise

when households must then purchase childcare and housecleaning services. A painful question imposes itself on the family and especially on the wife. How large will the net cash inflow be after subtracting childcare and housecleaning purchases from wives' disposable (i.e. after tax and other deductions) wage incomes? In almost all cases, the question – regardless of the answer – diminishes the wife's wage contribution to the household budget and its overall viability as perceived by both husband and wife. And yet, comparable questions and calculations are rarely applied to the husband, even though both partners similarly straddle the same two class structures (capitalist enterprise and feudal household). A consciousness of the two class structures and their interdependence would yield a more balanced appreciation of this similarity as well as the key difference inside the household where wife produces and husband appropriates the surplus.

So far we have assumed, to keep the analysis manageably simple, that the wife's household childcare and cleaning labors occur within the framework of a feudal class process. When these services are instead purchased as commodities produced by others, wives are freed from a considerable amount of household labor (since both child care and cleaning are labor-intensive activities). They can reallocate the time freed from those labors to R, "free time" (to offset the exhaustion from her wage labor), or to other forms of work inside and/or outside the household. Thus, on the one hand, switching to the purchase of child care and cleaning is a partial offset to the contradictions and crisis of the household consequent upon falling wages as described above. Yet once again, this partial offset introduces new contradictions and problems. For example, reducing or eliminating the wife's household childcare labor has its problematic consequences.

Child rearing plays a major role inculcating women into a life of nurturing and caring for the other. Supported as well by religion and the marriage contract, women and men alike often define women's *nature* as serving the family inside the household. Such serving is also understood *unconsciously* to include the performance of surplus labor for her husband (Fraad 2000, 74). In this sense, a wife's child care comprises one of the conditions of existence of household feudalism parallel to religious sermons about wifely duties, the banker's provision of a mortgage loan to buy the home, the state's provision of public services to homeowners, and so on.

Clearly, if women take jobs outside the home and that reduces or eliminate their childcare work, the feudal household will be threatened unless, for example, childcare services are purchased. However, even if substitute child care is purchased to replace the work no longer done by the wage-earning wife, that raises new problems. First, husbands and wives may incur new anxieties and guilt because of the further distance from their children when paid child care is inserted into family life. Second, the wife's reduced or eliminated childcare activities undermine one pillar of the feudal household: a waning of the conception of women as somehow inherently or naturally surplus performers for husbands. Not the least of the contradictions playing themselves out inside the contemporary American family is the rush of wives into the paid labor force to save their households (which it partly does) combined with the way that the resulting switch to purchased child care threatens their households (which it partly does). But, then again, it requires a class consciousness and a class analysis to be able to see, let alone address, such a contradiction.

Fathers' household labor

We may now turn to another issue not yet addressed in the growing class analytical literature on households: the possibility that husbands, as well as wives, perform labor inside households (Cameron 1996/97, 2000; Gibson 1992, 44). Suppose that husbands, partly to offset the "double-shift" experienced by their wage-earning wives, undertake various household production activities such as cleaning, shopping, cooking and child care. From a class-analytic standpoint, such production activities must be questioned to determine whether and what kind of class processes may occur with them. In other words, do such husbands' labors generate a surplus or not? If a surplus is produced, who appropriates and distributes it, and how is all this organized (i.e., in what particular kind of class structure does the husband's household labor occur)? Answering these questions for the husband's household labor will replicate the class analysis already undertaken for the feudal wife's household labor.

One possibility is that unlike the household labor of his wife the husband's household labor entails no surplus production; it is not divisible into necessary and surplus components.[21] He produces goods and services with or without household means of production and then distributes the output to himself and/or others as gifts. The following equation expresses such a husband's utilization of his 24-hour day:

6. $$24 = NL\ (CAP) + SL\ (CAP) + Z\ (NC) + R$$

where NL (CAP) and SL (CAP) stand respectively for the necessary and surplus labor time spent on his capitalist job; Z (NC) time spent on these new household duties (the letters NC signify non-class, i.e., the husband's labor generates no surplus), and, as

before, R the residual non-laboring time spent sleeping, eating, contemplating, and so forth.

If no class process occurs with the husband's household labor, his Z (NC) yields produced wealth (goods and services) that he distributes among household members as a gift. Assuming no change in the length of the husband's capitalist work day, for him to begin or increase Z (NC) requires him to reduce his R. On the one hand, beginning or increasing Z (NC) provides the household with additional wealth, while on the other it deprives the husband of non-labor time and the activities such time allowed. The specific historical and social conditions that combine to influence husbands to begin or increase Z (NC) will also shape what specific forms the resulting wealth takes (which goods and services husbands will produce), how the wealth is distributed, and how the husband's production and distribution of that wealth impact the household and the larger society.

In this context, we may consider why husbands in the US undertook household labor increasingly since the 1970s. The secular decline in most husbands' real wages and the resulting need for their wives to enter into the capitalist labor force pressured husbands to perform (or perform more) household labor. Initially wives had simply added their wage labor outside the home to their necessary and surplus labor inside. But the resulting exhaustion and interpersonal strains changed expectations, needs, and demands. Gradually, husbands and wives changed their household division of labor. Wives continued to perform necessary and surplus labor within the household's feudal class structure but less of such labor than before. Husbands, especially on weekends, undertook some or more heavy cleaning, yard work, household repairs, and child care. Of course,

social – and above all, cultural circumstances - determined the specifics differentiating each household (how much of what kind of labor husbands performed when).

In many of those households, we find no reason to conceive of the husband's labor as generating any surplus. In other words, the social context for such husbands' household labor prevented any class process from occurring with that labor. That context – for example, the relevant laws, religious commitments, conceptions of marriage, and so on – had not much changed even while one particular internal aspect of household life had changed significantly, namely the husband's work. Thus most wives continued in their feudal class position although sometimes tempered by some reduction of their total household labor time. The husband's household labor then functioned as a kind of act of generosity or "commitment" to the family – above and beyond the wage income he brought in - producing goods and services he distributed for the household's "needs." No surplus was produced by or appropriated from such a husband's household labor; that labor and its products were simply adjuncts to the household's feudal class structure.

We underscore this possibility for two reasons. First, by showing how husbands' household work can take either non-class or, as we shall show next, class forms, we can advance beyond analyzing merely the varying quantities of household labor husbands perform. As we shall show, those forms are at least as consequential for households and society as is the quantity of husbands' labor. Second, non-class labor by an appropriator of other people's surplus labor is a possible feature alongside all class structures. For example, consider the possible response by a feudal lord in medieval Europe when his manor is threatened by some economic, political, or cultural crisis. With appropriate fanfare, he may well have pitched in and worked alongside his serfs to, say, rebuild

ramparts or gather supplies to withstand siege. His labor in such circumstances need not have entailed production of any surplus; it could simply have yielded goods or services distributed by him as he and/or the church saw fit. Such a medieval feudal lord's labor was not surplus-producing, whereas his serf's labor was. The same sort of analysis may apply when a modern husband performs labor inside a feudal class-structured household. He appropriates his wife's feudal surplus whether or not he also performs labor as a non-class adjunct to his wife's performance of necessary and surplus labor.

Indeed, we may extend this analysis to other class structures and other social sites. For example, consider a productive wage-worker in a capitalist enterprise who sketches, during lunch breaks, and then distributes her drawings to fellow workers or keeps them or gives them to family and friends. The labor of drawing entails no surplus; it does not occur together with a class process. Her sketching labor is rather an adjunct to the enterprise's capitalist class structure. Whether this worker sketches (or not) is separate from her position as a surplus producer within the enterprise's capitalist class structure. Likewise when workers and capitalists together clean up a ghetto neighborhood as a Sunday charity project, their labor yields goods and services distributed to other neighborhood individuals, but no class process occurs together with their labor.

While household labor by a husband may thus not exhibit any class dimension – it generates no surplus itself – its commencement or increase may variously impact the household's feudal class structure as well as class structures outside the household. If and when a husband begins or increases household labor without reducing his wage labor outside the household – he will have to reduce his R, his non-laboring time. Such a reduction in R may, for example, damage the reproduction of the labor power he sells to

employers. In an alternative example, the husbands' household labor can affect the household's feudal class structure. The production and distribution of the husband's output within the household may enable reductions of the feudal wife's necessary and/or surplus labors. She would benefit from such reductions, gaining some R, namely more time for rest and other non-labor activities (with all the complex consequences of that on the household). However, such reductions presume that some portion of the husband's household labor's output is distributed either to her for consumption (to offset her reduced necessary labor) or to himself for consumption (to offset her reduced surplus labor). Of course, such distributions and offsets are possible, not necessary consequences of husbands' household work. With distributions of the husband's household output for alternative purposes, the husband's household labor might leave the dimensions of the household's feudal class structure largely unchanged.

Still other possibilities include a rise in the rate of feudal exploitation of wives flowing from their husbands' undertaking or increasing their own, non-class household labor. This might result from the following two-step scenario: first, a husband's extra household work supports his elderly parents newly entered into the household, and second, with or without demands from the exhausted husband, his feudal wife delivers more surplus to him out of feelings of guilt, admiration, love or combinations thereof (without, of course, consciousness of the class dimensions of her activity). The complex feelings generated in husbands and wives by the conditions and contradictions of their households, marriages, and labor activities yield a range of alternative reactions to any changes. We encountered a similarly wide range of possible reactions earlier in examining the possible household consequences of a fall in men's money wages.

We turn now to examine how, why, and with what consequences husbands' household labor may occur together with class processes. That is, we consider the circumstances under which husbands perform surplus labor inside their households (typically in addition to doing so in enterprises outside). Within a feudal household, the husband may, for example, produce a surplus working as a serf alongside his wife doing likewise. In this case, his work contains a necessary and a surplus labor component – like hers – and he is the appropriator of his own as well as her surplus. This is parallel to a capitalist spending part of his week working just like and alongside his productive employees and then appropriating the surplus value embodied in the commodities they and he have together produced. It is also conceivable, although admittedly rare, for the husband and wife to divide the different kinds of household labor (e.g. cooking, cleaning, etc.) between them such that the wife is serf and the husband lord in some kinds, whereas their class positions are reversed in other kinds.

However, we think it unlikely in the US for husbands to produce feudal surpluses for their wives. It is true that women are no longer tied by custom, tradition, and economics to work only inside households, increasingly take wage-labor positions outside, and enjoy greater personal freedoms and less social inequality vis-à-vis men. However, the still dominant cultural norms mark women, and not men, as household serfs. Women's labors inside households remain a basic part of their identities and definitions as workers, whereas for men household labor remains incidental and tangential to their identities as workers outside households. The latter remain much more places where women – whether or not they also hold wage labor positions – rather than men perform necessary labor in the sense of reproducing their labor power. In

comparison, men mostly buy the means of reproducing their labor power, viewing their household labor as secondary, minor, and a gracious gift to wife and family. Likewise, the raw statistics of time and energy spent on household tasks reinforces the tangential quality of husbands' household labor; the women continue to do the overwhelming bulk of household work.

It would require drastically different cultural and political conditions than currently exist in the US for husbands to perform necessary and surplus labor inside households within a feudal class structure, as their wives do. The traditions and rules of marriage, like the other norms, customs, and expectations of most contemporary societies, still place the primary responsibilities for housework and particularly child care on women in the vast majority of households. Women either accept or endure those responsibilities, perhaps asking husbands for "some help." Despite advances over recent decades in women's rights to control their bodies and gain wages comparable to men's, most religious leaders still endorse women's identification in terms of house and home far more than men's. God is asserted to have bestowed on women, not men, the nurturing gene. Husbands and wives still believe in large numbers that their marriage vows and their love entail (as well as require) that wives must perform surplus labor inside the household's feudal class structure. Women thus mostly still "choose" to marry, raise children, and deliver the fruit of their household surplus labor to their husbands. They prepare meals for themselves but also spend the extra labor time preparing meals for their husbands; they wash their own and their husbands' clothing; they make their and their husbands' sides of the bed. What household labor husbands may "generously" undertake

is thus very differently understood and differently organized, chiefly we think in the non-class way discussed above.

However, there are some exceptions to the dominant patterns of husbands' doing either no household labor or some limited non-class labor within their households. Husbands' household labor could sometimes occur within one of two other household class structures. The first of these – and much the more frequently encountered - is Marx's "ancient" class structure; the second kind of household class structure in which husbands could work is – in what we, following Marx, have termed - the communist class structure.

Movements such as women's liberation sometimes and in some places interacted with socio-economic shifts to induce women and men to establish marriages and households built upon shared commitments to substantial gender equality. In them, wives were entitled to earn wages in jobs outside the household. Husbands were obligated to share the housework (including child care) on a roughly equal basis with their wives. Such equality-focused households displayed an ancient class structure in which husband and wife were "ancient partners."[22] Wives in ancient households no longer perform any surplus for their husbands (as in feudal households). Instead, both women and men become partnered household workers performing tasks according to an implicit or explicit division of household labor between them. Each partner performs a roughly equal share of the necessary labor of preparing meals, cleaning, washing clothes, and so forth to reproduce their individual (ancient) household labor power. Each then also performs a surplus above and beyond that necessary labor and each alone appropriates his/her own surplus labor's product. They work out some method of distributing their respective

surpluses to secure the conditions of existence of their household's ancient class structure.[23]

A specific social context is needed to enable this kind of self-appropriating class structure to exist in households. Men and women must somehow have come to feel strongly that no marriage rule or custom is acceptable that obligates either of them to perform any (surplus) labor for the other's benefit. Given the prevalence of social conditions and norms entwining women in feudal household arrangements, some social space of dissent from and resistance to those norms would have had to exist. Women and men would have required such a space to conceive of households as partnerships of equal individual laborers (performing physical and emotional tasks) where neither "bosses" the other. Were class consciousness part of such husbands' and wives' self awareness, they might describe their households as sites where two self-appropriators of their own surpluses chose to cohabit and build a family around that particular class structure.

Husbands' household labors may take a class form other than the above described ancient partnership. This occurs if husband and wife undertake household labor together as a fully shared activity, collectively producing, appropriating, and distributing the surpluses produced inside their households. They may do this as a couple or possibly integrate others (relatives, friends, and housemates) into such a communist household. What distinguishes its class structure from the ancient is its collectivity. In an ancient household class structure, two individual producers who individually appropriate their individual surpluses work out a partnership household. In a communist household class structure, the collective of laboring household members (two or more) produce, appropriate and distribute their surpluses collectively.

For the communist class structure to exist within households, its conditions of existence must be in place within the larger social context. That is, the politics, culture and economics of some portion of the society would have to determine in women and men the desire and the demand for equality and community inside households (rather than feudal subordination or ancient individuality). Such wives and husbands would reject those aspects of the larger society that pressed women to serve men unilaterally in marriage and home. Similarly, such men and women would find households organized around the ancient class structure producer unattractive and unacceptable because they would associate it with lonely self-interest and self-absorbing behavior.

Women and men forming communist class structured households would reflect as well as advance ways of thinking that celebrate collectivity at home and perhaps even in society more generally. To sustain collective production, appropriation, and distribution of household surpluses, husbands and wives would likely establish as well collective means of wielding power inside the communist class structured household. That is, the distribution of authority between and among adults and children there would take on collective and egalitarian dimensions unlike the lordly authority typically arrogated to feudal husbands or the individually separated powers of the ancient household. Similarly collective and egalitarian processes of producing and disseminating meanings (i.e., cultural processes) inside the household (religious, educational, artistic, and so on) would likewise reflect and reinforce a communist class structure there. Indeed, the social space for and existence of such political and cultural processes would be prerequisites for the existence of communist class structures inside households. Wives and husbands could and would collectively produce, appropriate and distribute household surpluses only if

the larger society made such behavior conceivable, desirable, and operational in some form and also preferable to alternative household class structures for some members of that society.[24] Finally, the communist class structured household may include household laborers who also engaged in earning money incomes outside the household. If so – and quite like the parallel situation in feudal and ancient class structured households – the communist class structured household would exhibit a budget that combines monetized and non-monetized revenues and expenditures to reproduce the multiple, various class structures its adults engage.

When children become household serfs

Having assumed to this point that children are not able or not required to perform significant household labor, we may now relax that assumption. In this way we may extend some initial explorations by others likewise interested in the consequences of children's labor for households and their class structures (Fraad 2000, 74-76; Safri 2005, chap. 2). In households containing feudal class structures, children are typically integrated, once they begin to perform labor, as additional household serfs. They thus come to resemble, rather closely, the organization often found in medieval European feudalism. Such children are tied by familial and legal arrangements to an exploiting father – head of the feudal household - who appropriates the surplus produced by the household's children. Culture, law, religion, and so on intervene to bestow on the fathers the considerable power (which he may delegate) to order children's behavior including their household surplus labor. Also parallel to European feudalism, the fathers and mothers of such children are morally and legally obliged to care for and protect them.

Finally, these social forces also influence children to accept and obey the orders, decisions, and wishes of "the father" (or any others to whom the father may delegate such authority). The children will often find it "normal and natural" that a certain age brings an obligation for them to "share" the housework (likely with no more consciousness of its class – surplus – aspects than their parents possess). That most children eventually chafe and often rebel against their feudal households reflects in part the constraints of early childhood, the difficult transition to feudal serfdom as they grow older, and the mix of resentment and guilt in their reactions.

Children's household serfdom displays three major variant forms. In one, the father continues to receive the wife's surplus while adding the appropriation of surpluses produced by the children. In a second arrangement, while the wife continues to perform surplus for her husband, she assumes a surplus appropriating role in relation to working children. As in medieval Europe, serfs can also have serfs. In a third possible form of children's household feudal class position, both parents share the surplus-appropriating position, a kind of collective appropriation of their children's surplus. In all three of these forms, children do variable kinds and quantities of *necessary and surplus* labor: cleaning their rooms and clothes, preparing their meals, shopping, household repairs, and the like. Such children thus shift from being the objects of (mostly women's) surplus labor in the form of child care and become subjects performing surplus labor: a specifically class dimension of children's "growing up."

Children's feudal exploitation inside households exercises varying impacts. It may simply be additive to the wife's and so yield a rising mass of in-kind surplus for the

father. Had he been doing some household labor, the opportunity to appropriate his children's surplus might allow him to reduce or eliminate his own household labor and thereby realized an expanded free time (R). Alternatively, such a father might utilize his children's surplus to reproduce the labor power he sells to an employer outside the household. In this way, children's serfdom adds still another layer of complexity to struggles over the household budget. As we have already shown, the household budget can often entail diversions of the husband's wage income from purchasing commodities to reproduce his own labor power to, for example, expenditures to care for young children. This can threaten that wage income. Yet that same child care can eventuate in children's surplus labor later that the father can consume to reproduce or enhance the labor power he sells outside the household. In short, here is yet another way that children interact with their feudal households in contradictory ways, variously undermining yet also strengthening them.

Children's surplus labor could impact feudal households differently were the wife to appropriate that surplus. Suppose the older children's surplus labor yields roughly the same bundle of goods and services as the wife's necessary and surplus labor. The father could then continue to receive an undiminished quantity of surplus, if the wife transferred to him the children's household surplus. The wife might then herself consume her own household surplus, thereby freeing herself from household feudalism. In this stark example, she substitutes the feudal exploitation of her children for her own. That substitution might be difficult to rationalize or legitimate if conceptualized in terms of the burden of labor, let alone in terms of class. Children's work and exploitation might then seem a heavy price to pay for a wife's liberation from those burdens. A much more

appealing (to parents) conceptualization would construe all this quite differently, as a matter of helping children to mature into responsible adults by undertaking instructive and constructive household chores. Wives especially might thus insist on children's attendance at churches where authoritative clergy can reiterate such an appealing conceptualization as perhaps biblical in origin and power.

Another possible impact of children producing household surpluses for the wife rather than the husband might involve the wife continuing to produce surplus for the husband. Not only would the serf wife than have serfs of her own, but the two layers of serfdom would differ in their household *power positions* but not in their household class positions. Children and their mothers would then both be feudal serfs, but their mothers would have much the greater power and status within the household. Arresting parallels with medieval Europe suggest themselves. Feudal manors often displayed layers of more and less powerful serfs and serfs of serfs. Additionally, a lord might place a trusted serf in a managerial position over less trusted serfs only to find the trusted serf slowly transforming such management into the very different position of him appropriating the surplus of those he manages. Likewise, the feudal husband may trust his wife to manage the children's household labors only to discover that she may have altered the situation to become herself the direct appropriator of the children's household surplus. Both feudal household wife and medieval serf could continue to produce surpluses for their husband and their manorial lord, even as they appropriated the surpluses of the children and lesser serfs below them in their respective feudal hierarchies.

When children perform household surplus that is appropriated by both parents conjointly, the impact of the children's labor may well be different. For example, this

arrangement may emerge as a kind of compensation for a feudal wife: while she is serf to her husband they are equal appropriators of their children's surplus. Conjoint parental appropriation of children's surplus labor may also reflect the difficulty of either parent accomplishing such appropriation alone. Then children's household exploitation can function as a kind of cement for the parents' relationship. In households with non-feudal class structures, such conjoint appropriation of their children's surplus could have yet other impacts. For example, in ancient or communist class structured households, the transition of young children into children doing household work need not necessarily be accompanied by the integration of those children into the parent's household class structure.[25] Parents might then occupy one class position in relation to their children and a different class position in relation to one another: within households where the adults function within ancient or communist class structures, they might organize the children that reach a working age into a feudal class structure as their serfs. The parents might then conjointly appropriate their children's surpluses, even as their class connection to one another is either ancient or communist. Just as parents differentiate their interpersonal connection from their relationship to their children – in, say, their financial or sexual or power dimensions – so too can they structure the class relation of husband to wife very differently from that of children to parents. Of course, given the likely absence of class consciousness in the parents, they are unlikely to be conscious of a different class relation to their children. Instead, they may justify their children's feudal serfdom as required by their age, immaturity, lack of experience, education, hormones, lack of good judgment, and so forth.

We have hardly exhausted the complexity of class relationships among children and parents or the range of their possible impacts. We have not, for example, devoted attention to such possibilities as children exploiting their parents or one another.[26] Nor have we examined the subsumed class positions inside households: the positions of people who neither produce nor appropriate surpluses but rather provide the conditions of existence for the production and appropriation of the surplus. What we have elsewhere elaborated about subsumed classes in relation to capitalist enterprises can be readily extended to the class analysis of households (Resnick and Wolff 1987, Chapters 3 and 4). Thus, for example, a manager in a capitalist manufacturing enterprise is neither a surplus producer nor an appropriator; he/she rather provides the supervision of personnel or the purchasing of inputs or the sales of outputs that are all conditions required for surplus to be produced within the enterprise. Because such managers are paid via distributions to them of portions of the surplus appropriated by the enterprise's board of directors, they occupy capitalist subsumed class positions. By direct analogy, management of children's household labor may be a condition for surplus to be produced by them. Perhaps the wife will need to manage and so receive a portion of the household surplus for doing so. In other words, a complete class analysis of households, as of any other social site where class processes may occur, would need to include the subsumed classes. The latter comprise the "enablers" of surplus production – rather than being either producers or appropriators of household surpluses themselves - who get distributed shares of the surplus. Households, like enterprises, display class structures that include both the fundamental class processes (that define the performers and appropriators of the surplus)

and the subsumed class processes (that define how the appropriators distribute the surplus to those others whose activities "enable" the fundamental class process to continue).

Addendum: Households without class structures

Even our introductory analysis of the rich diversity of class structures that households may contain must include at least a brief mention of households without any class processes. We believe they are becoming more common in advanced capitalist countries today, especially where women have moved quickly into full time paid employment. Such households no longer display class processes because they are no longer social sites where production occurs (or they are, at least, approaching such conditions). Instead, such households have become sites almost exclusively of consumption and not of labor.

Some historical examples of this phenomenon can help to clarify its theoretical dimensions and implications. After 1917, the Bolsheviks debated the possibilities of a vast social transformation that would eradicate the exploitative production arrangements inside households and so liberate Soviet women (to join their husbands in wage labor and also to free them for full social participation). In the course of the Soviet debates, the focus was less on changing the class structures of households (say from feudal to communist) and more on changing households from sites of production and consumption to sites of only consumption. Some concrete steps were taken in the 1920s to realize such changes (Resnick and Wolff 2002, chapter 7).

When little or no production occurs there, households likewise stop being sites of surplus production, appropriation, and distribution. In short, as households lose their class

structures, so wives and husbands no longer need to work or strive (consciously or unconsciously) to reproduce those class structures. Their household budgets may become simplified in so far as they lose their non-monetary components. Money incomes from household members' jobs outside the household (and perhaps also borrowings) become the only revenue, and cash outlays (to buy commodities and perhaps service their debts) become the only expenditures. Eliminating households as places of production (and hence of class structures, tensions, and struggles) requires as well as furthers basic changes in how men and women identify themselves and conceive of their relationships to one another, to children, and to the larger economy and society.

In modern societies where capitalist class structures prevail in enterprises, households may cease production to become places to which husbands and wives retreat from the market and from their job. They retreat in order to consume there the commodities they purchased to reproduce the labor power they sell to their employers. For examples, instead of home-produced meals, they spend their wages to purchase store-prepared meals; instead of cleaning their homes and their clothes at home, they buy house-cleaning, laundering, and dry-cleaning as service commodities; and instead of caring for their children, they hire commercial childcare providers. Other comparable examples include proliferating commercial personal shopper services, healthcare providers, landscapers, repairers, security guards, and so on. Of course, affluence will also play some role in determining how far each household can go in reducing household production to consumption. However, at least inside the United States, abundant evidence already shows that many households at all income levels have reduced production; their

differing affluence affects rather the quality and costs of the commodities they all purchase increasingly to replace household production. Among

Of course, in relatively few households, even in the United States, has production been totally eliminated. Some work usually has still to be done inside the household even when its members consume goods and services almost exclusively purchased from producers outside the household. In many societies, much household production remains the norm. Moreover, economic, political, and cultural shifts may well reverse the process of substituting commodity consumption for household production where it has occurred. Hence, despite the forces at work constricting household production, it remains a major social site of production and of class around the world. It seems to us long overdue for the sort of class analysis commenced here.

Endnotes

[1] As far as we know, one of the first attempts to theorize children in class as surplus terms was set forth by Gibson-Graham (1996, 214).

[2] When the property is used by productive capitalists – those in whose industrial enterprises productive laborers generate surplus value – then the property-owning children's incomes constitute subsumed class revenues. Those revenues secure the provision of the children's productive property to the industrial capitalist for the latter's use in appropriating surplus from productive laborers hired by that capitalist. The children receive distributed portions of that surplus from the capitalist. If and when the children's property is used instead by unproductive capitalists such as merchants and bankers, then the children's income is not a surplus distributed by an appropriating capitalist, but is rather non-class revenue. The subsumed class vs. non-class revenue sources for children underscores the different possible relationships between property-owning children and class structures that include both productive and unproductive capitalist enterprises: see Resnick and Wolff (1987) and Wolff and Resnick (1987) for discussions of productive vs. unproductive capitalists.

[3] In Marxian terms, the goods and services (use-values) received and consumed by the child can be understood to also possess a "value" (without adjective) measurable by the socially necessary abstract labor hours materialized in such use values.

[4] The following illustrates what we mean by the two processes of labor and class operating within the feudal household. The wife engages in a household labor process: $L(F) \times a = UV_H$ where L(F) stands for her total feudal labor performed, say, over a day, a for her labor productivity, and UV_H the quantity of use values – household wealth – produced per day, a product of her labor times its productivity. The Marxian tradition often refers to or locates this labor process within the "forces of production." The class process refers to something very different. Over the same day, the wife also engages in a feudal class process: $L_{NL}(F) \times a = UV_{NL}$ where her feudal necessary labor $L_{NL}(F)$ times its productivity, a, yields household consumption to sustain her, UV_{NL}. However, over that day she also labors above and beyond that necessary labor performing surplus labor, $L_{SL}(F)$, yielding wealth, UV_{SL}, for her husband: $L_{SL}(F) \times a = UV_{SL}$. Her class exploitation is measured either in surplus labor time, $L_{SL}(F)$, or its yield, UV_{SL}. The same Marxian tradition typically refers to this class process as the "relations of production."

[5] The assumption typically made in discussions of class exploitation is that necessary and surplus labor takes the same concrete forms: for example, the wife produces, say, prepared meals and repaired clothes to sustain her and additional quantities of the same items delivered to her husband. However, that assumption is not necessary. A new mother within a feudal household may continue to perform necessary and surplus labor in the concrete forms of meals (and washed clothes, cleaned space, etc.), while adding or substituting a new concrete form of her surplus labor, namely child care. This situation parallels the typical circumstance in the European medieval manorial economy when serfs performed necessary labor producing one kind of crop on the land they had use of and surplus labor yielding a completely different crop when working on the lord's land. They sometimes produced no crop at all for the lord but rather performed their surplus labor for him in the concrete forms of making or repairing his furniture or providing childcare to his children. Class exploitation takes place in these examples – e.g., the performance of a surplus labor over and beyond necessary – even though different concrete forms of wealth flow from the performance of, respectively, necessary and surplus labor.

[6] Partly because sexual services, like child care, are rarely analyzed within a class theoretic framework, and partly because of certain parallels in wives' resistance to increased exploitation within households' feudal class structures, we offer this brief class analysis. As with any other labor process – the use of brains and muscles to produce a good or a service - sexual labor can be conceptualized as yielding a specific service, namely sexual pleasure. Sexual labor need not, but it may occur together with a class process, i.e. intertwined with the production and appropriation of surplus labor. Thus, for example, a wife in a feudal class-structured household may have a sexual relationship with her husband such that she engages in sexual labor not to provide sexual pleasure only to her but rather to provide sexual pleasure also to her husband, while his sexual labor is not similarly focused in delivering a comparable surplus to her. That is, the quality of the sexual relationship between wife and husband may entail exploitation. Then, such a wife might well produce necessary household labor yielding prepared meals, cleaned rooms, etc. plus surplus labor yielding those items and also sexual pleasure for her husband and also child care for resulting children. Indeed, from this class perspective, the general question arises: how may feudal class processes (of producing,

appropriating, and distributing surpluses), when they characterize household production, influence other processes – cultural, sexual, emotional, etc. - inside those households?

[7] Given the labor intensity of child care, we surmise that most wives will likely resist continuing to perform other household labors – or at least try to perform them less intensively. Consciously or otherwise, they will at least want – if not easily be able – to offer fewer meals, do less washing and cleaning, and provide fewer sexual services, notwithstanding considerable guilt about such desires.

[8] We will not here inquire into the problem of the initial money needed to establish feudal households. That analysis is largely derivative of our text's discussion of the monetary payments needed for an existing feudal household to be reproduced.

[9] Strictly speaking and for completeness we should include here monetary outlays to provide the tools, equipment and raw materials to *begin* any new labor process assigned to the wife within a feudal class structure inside the household. For example, when children arrive and the wife must add additional surplus labor, money outlays will be needed to provide her with the requisite tools, equipment, and raw materials to commence that surplus labor. These money outlays are different from those discussed in the text, namely on-going outlays to replenish used up tools, equipment and raw materials. As noted earlier in the text, for simplicity we will generally ignore outlays to begin or establish new household feudal labor; our focus will be on the on-going replenishment outlays.

[10] Other key demands that add their contribution to the right hand side of the equation and enhance the inequality sign would be various kinds of taxes paid to the state, union dues, and workers' savings. Along with the household budget, they too contribute to the crisis experienced by the wage worker.

[11] On this point, Marx in Capital vol. 1 offers two different formulations of what are included in the "sum of means of subsistence" to reproduce workers' labor power. In one, he theorizes the value of labor power as equal to the "value of the means of subsistence necessary for the maintenance of its owner" (Marx, 274). Marx explains that those means of subsistence are required or necessary to enable the worker and the worker alone in laboring to replace expended human muscle and brain. He goes on to explain how society's "historical and moral element" helps to shape the actual quantitative amount and qualitative nature of those means of subsistence necessary to reproduce just the owner's labor power (Marx, 275). However, when Marx, on the same page, comes to discuss the mortality of the owner of labor power, he offers a second and different theorization of the value of labor power. He does this by newly including in those means of subsistence those necessary to support the worker's children so that "this race of peculiar commodity-owners may perpetuate its presence on the market" (Marx, 275). As far as we can determine, it is one thing to specify a bundle of means of subsistence to reproduce only the owner's sold labor power at a point in and over time; it is quite another to add to that bundle an amount aimed at reproducing the same owner's children as potential suppliers of labor power. That owners of labor power have children, typically within a family relationship, is, of course, relevant and requires further analysis. That the reproduction of capitalism requires a continued source of sellers of labor power as one of its conditions of existence also is relevant and needs analysis. Nonetheless, their pertinence and analytical attention do not warrant introducing an inconsistency into the logic of the value analysis, whether by Marx or anyone else. The inconsistency results from conflating the conditions required to reproduce no more than the workers' sold labor power as a commodity with the different conditions required to sustain a ready supply of future workers. Instead, we suggest that the introduction of children (and family) be handled similarly to Marx's introduction of still other analytical categories of price of production, unproductive labor, and so forth. Each new specification requires an extension and elaboration of the value analysis to include its presence and consequences. That is what we intend here for the categories of children and family and that is what inequality 2 portrays.

[12] A parallel result holds for all other kinds of "leakages" from income received such as taxes to the state, charitable donations, and savings. Similar to the impact of the household budget, each of these threatens the reproduction of labor power by reducing the worker's purchase of wage commodities. Each of these also serves in its unique way to help strengthen the reproduction of labor power. Our focus here is only on the contradictory nature of the household budget, but the analysis could be extended to show the conflicts presented by other kinds of leakages as well.

[13] While we wish here to stress how household feudalism can undermine enterprise capitalism, we do not deny that household feudalism also supports capitalist class structures in enterprises. For example, caring for children in feudal households may provide future suppliers of enhanced quantities and qualities of labor power to capitalism. Budgets to support household feudalism also help to secure capitalism by expanding

markets for its produced commodities. In any case – and this is the focus of our text – such diversions of fathers' wages have an immediate undercutting effect on the reproduction of their labor power and hence on their roles in capitalist class structures. This immediate effect is what provokes the reaction of a reorganization of household feudalism to compensate for and thereby offset the threatened reproduction of the father's labor power.

[14] While the emergence of this world-view helped result in a stronger feudal household including better protected and cared for children, we fully understand that these same households and children often face a precarious existence. The numbers are well known: after only a few years of marriage some 50% of marriages end in divorce or separation; too many children too often suffer physical and emotional abuse within the home. Exploitation and class contradictions of the sort we elaborate here contribute to these sad numbers.

[15] Note also that the NCR_M term in Equation 3 is equal to the Y_{HB} term in Equation 1. As noted in the text earlier, the transfer entails the passage of a portion of the husband's wages from his position in a capitalist class structure (the enterprise) to his position as an appropriator of the wife's feudal surplus (the household); it is a value transfer between the two different class positions the husband occupies.

[16] As suggested earlier, for simplicity of exposition we will here ignore the outlays for tools, equipment, and raw materials used up in household production to concentrate on feudal subsumed class outlays. No logical or theoretical problem arises if such replenishment outlays were to be added to the discussion in the text.

[17] Referring again to Marx's "historical and moral element" entering into the determination of workers' "necessary requirements," that is, their real wage (Marx, 275), we think such a changed "element" affecting workers' real wages arose in the US after the 1970s and soon became hegemonic. Contributing to this change was a theorization, formulated by neoclassical economists partly in opposition to the dominance of Keynesian theorizations and policies and supported by the media, business, and the Reagan political revolution, in which workers' unions and union-won wages were responsible for much of the internationally competitive difficulties faced by capitalist business at that time. In this world-view, workers' unions were portrayed as a "special interest group" that inflicted relatively high wages, archaic work rules, and constrained productivity that together worked against America's economic growth including growing jobs for workers. That view combined with eroded union power (initiated in 1981 with the Reagan offense against striking air controllers) and with dramatic changes in the labor market (a relatively constrained expansion of demand because of a rising organic composition of capital, even as labor supply rose dramatically because of a combination of rising legal but above all illegal immigration, women entering the labor force, and restriction on the state as the employer of last instance) produced a social environment in which workers' lowered real wage became rational and unavoidable even to workers themselves. Persuaded that their claimed high unit labor costs were the essential cause of business' inability to compete successfully with more efficient Japanese and German enterprises, workers, fearful of losing their jobs, acquiesced and came to accept lower real wages as a long run solution.

[18] While an important contributing cause, men's depressed wages were hardly the only reason for women entering the labor force. The culture in the land had changed to a view in which women were to balance the competing demands of career and family rather than – what it was for so long – managing only a home for their husbands and children. Whereas married women's mass participation in the labor force was once considered unusual, save for death of their husband or war, now the norm became participation in the work force when married and even when children arrived. Further, a long and relatively successful struggle for women's rights not only gave women power to make decisions over their bodies including the right to place it in the workplace, but also helped to give rise to a more inviting, less discriminating, and, in penalizing sexual harassment, a safer workplace for them. Laws thus changed making it that much easier to leave the household, compete with men for work and promotion, and narrow the gap between what they and men earned for comparable work.

[19] The impact on women's R may vary directly with their position outside households. For example, women who occupy subsumed class managerial positions in capitalist enterprises often are required to work longer hours than do women who occupy positions as productive laborers there. Hence the resulting stress on their households from their pinched R can be more severe, even though compared to women who occupy positions of productive laborers they are not exploited and receive higher incomes.

[20] Of course, many of these young women are also wives inside households that share many of the class and non-class contradictions depicted in the preceding text. See the dissertation by Safri (2005) for an analysis of immigrant households.

[21] Many labor activities in all societies occur without the accompaniment of any class process (i.e. without the production of any surplus). For example, an individual walking through a forest collecting pieces of wood, carving them into birds, and distributing them to children is certainly engaged in labor (using brains and muscles to transform objects found in nature into consumable products). However, no surplus is produced or distributed; the labor process occurs but not together with any class process. Other examples include many other kinds of artistic productions, the preparation of an occasional sandwich for oneself, family or friends; helping a neighbor clean a garage; reading a story to help children fall asleep, and so on. Of course, every one of these examples could, in other social circumstances, occur with a class process; that is they could occur such that a surplus is produced, appropriated, and distributed in some way. Our point here is only to register – and explore the significant implications of – the two possibilities: that a particular labor process may or may note occur together with a class process.

[22] As far as we know, the term "ancient partnership" was first coined and applied analytically by Satya Gabriel (1990); we gratefully acknowledge our debt to him for this very useful concept. Child care and children and much else too would be affected by the existence of or a change from a feudal to an ancient class structure. For example, no longer would women be associated with and responsible for much if not all of childcare obligations as occurs in the traditional feudal home.

[23] Such an ancient class-structured household will also develop a household budget that parallels the budget analyzed above in the case of the feudal household. Thus, the ancient partnership household's budget will have revenues that combine the monetized income from husband's and/or wife's wage work outside the household with the in-kind products of their household labors. That budget's expenditures will likewise combine monetized and non-monetized outlays including those aimed to secure both the external wage income (likely from occupying one or another capitalist class position) of husband and/or wife and their "partnered" ancient class positions within the household.

[24] Because we think the typical household is still organized in the traditional, feudal way, save for at least some men there offering their labor but without participating in any class process, we think combinations of class structures existing in the same household while feasible also to be rare. For example, we think it unlikely that a traditional feudal home in which women perform surplus for men will co-exist with an ancient in which men perform surplus only for themselves or with a communist in which they also appropriate surplus collectively.

[25] In fact, a similar situation likely existed in some Native American tribes. Where their class structures were communist (Amariglio 1984, ch. 3), they sometimes integrated captured "outsiders" as slaves (i.e. in a slave class relation) rather than as sharing the same communist class relationship as themselves.

[26] There are problems with both possibilities. To theorize children as surplus receivers requires specifying those social processes that could place them in a position to receive a surplus produced by others. Before children reach a minimum age, it is difficult to see how they might distribute a surplus they appropriate to secure such social processes (and it is difficult to see how those social processes might be secured without surplus distributions). Similarly, if surplus-appropriating children needed to make monetized payments outside the household, where could they secure the cash without money incomes of their own? To argue that conditions of existence for children appropriating household surpluses might all be internal and thus non-monetized might be possible, but such an argument stretches credulity.

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