Labourism and the commodification of work and social life

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Labourism and the commodification of work and social life

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DECLARATION

I, David B. Humphries, declare that this thesis, submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy, in the Sociology Program University of Wollongong, is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. The document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

David Humphries
18th of May, 2004
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ABSTRACT

The thesis explores concepts of alienation and commodification in relation to public and private themes of identity, in contemporary Australia. It is argued that as labour conditions have intensified and the social safety net has eroded the emphasis on private themes of identity have increased. These themes emphasise sexuality and gender, and down-grade the issue of work and labour. The Australian Labor Party helped create the conditions for postmodernist identity politics weakening their commitment to working class improvement in favour of emphasising “hypercapitalism” and “hyperliberal” gender discourses. This approach favours the inclusion of marginal groups that have been traditionally outside of labourist concerns (women, homosexuals, Aborigines) at the expense of civilising capitalism, labour alienation and commodification as the central concern for workers. In short, the abandonment of Marxism, labourism and Social democracy: and their replacement by identity issues.

The backlash to a post-welfare state social democracy designed to ameliorate conditions for marginal groups, become a key feature in the election of the Howard government in 1996, with “Howard’s battlers” consisting of former Labor voters disenfranchised by “political correctness”. This produced an attack on “welfare cheats,” high taxation, and “trendy” concerns such as Aboriginality – and reinforced Hansonism. In this context, the Australian and American relationship and the frontier tradition is stressed as a pivotal factor in determining the role of identity in the neo-liberal political
economy, with the pressures created by neo-liberalism and globalisation.

Australian mythology based on Anzac symbolism and ‘personality’ creates a vacuous phenomenon for genuine themes of Australian national identity to survive the homogenous nature of “hyper-capitalism”. The drift towards the power of American capitalism and political cosmologies can then been seen as a natural evolution of Australian political mythology. It is here that the thesis argues that hyper capitalist themes can have an implicit relationship to concepts of “hyper-liberalism” found in gender discourses and moreover, ironically evocative of the individualism Weber argued existed in American Protestant religious sects.

Subsequently the ‘de-construction’ of masculinity that has been characteristic of feminist and gay theory, that reflects a social psychological perspective rather than one based in Marx’s historical materialism that places ‘man’ within social history. Social theory therefore unfairly constructs the heterosexual masculine personality in relation to working class elite occupations such as coalmining or as a reflection of a corporate dominance, to create polemic ‘avenues’ for marginal groups.

The focus upon heterosexuality within the thesis links its relationship to the characteristics demanded by industrial capitalism such as the Fordist mode of production, and in Marxist terms, the complete enslavement and alienation that existed between “social man” and the capitalist mode of production. This approach emphasises the experience of wage labour, culminating with the high levels of unemployment that has risen concomitantly with de-industrialisation, globalisation and neo-liberalism. The disciplining of the unemployed in the post-welfare state exists alongside hyper-liberal themes of sexual and social identity, indicating a general shift to a “social fascism”, or two-tiered form of democracy that resides alongside, and is often in competition with
conservative advocates for the nuclear family and heterosexuality. The development of “Howard’s battlers” reflects a conservative appropriation of the original Australian legend that was based on labourism and mateship and now exists in a nationalist paradigm evocative of frontiersmen and Anzacs rather than one based on class. A framing issue for the thesis subsequently is what role does gender and sexuality have in the function of the industrial capitalist society?
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For my parents; and in memory of my father who helped inspire the journey.
INTRODUCTION

Chapter one (Australian masculinities, nationalism and cultural egalitarianism) explores the unique banality of Australian politics explained by its reliance on frontier, New World political and religious traditions. In this context, White’s (1981) notion of “national inventions” is used describe the idiosyncratic and ephemeral differences which evade the reality of Australia’s ‘Americanisation’. The chapter contests the secular legend of Australian culture by arguing the existence of an increasing link between Weber’s notion of the Protestant individual in capitalism and that of the distinctive Protestant culture of America. Previously,

In so far as gold brought more people to the bush and led to the growth of country towns, it may be said to have brought the bushmen into closer touch with organised religion, but this was a long-term process. (Ward, 1958:123)

The romance of the bush and the Australian ‘personality’ are revealed as the key features separating the frontier experiences of the two countries. The durability of the Anzac mythology, (where much of the conceptualisations of the personality originate) has evolved into a right-wing phenomenon in the neo-liberal economy that negates nationalistic divisions of substance due to the homogeneous nature of the globalised phase of late capitalism. National identity is seen increasingly from a perspective that focuses on consumption rather than work, as representations of identity are only useful in terms of marketing and advertising projections. Otherwise Russel Ward’s “mates” are only referred to in the context of nationalist and imperialist wars. The ‘apoliticality’ of Ward’s thesis that had appeal as a naturally evolving leftist bias was too easily turned
into a right-wing interpretation that involved soldiers that fought for Empire.

Capitalism has always had a ‘global’ perspective, and thereby played a central role in defining nationalism and “nation-building”. *Globalisation* then creates unique pressures on nations with small populations, and perceived nebulous or borrowed national identities. As Turner suggests (in Sterne), Australia’s economic base is inexorably linked to its nationalism that can appear increasingly contrary as globalised capital buffets the economy and sense of identity. An ‘incomplete’ capture of the state that does not incorporate the emotional and hegemonic concepts of nationhood, can unlock the hegemony of Anzac, appropriated to reflect a single nationalism in the maelstrom of neo-liberalism and globalisation.

Australian cultural policy is shaped by the fact that Australia is a “small and economically weak nation…torn between adjusting what it does in order to compete internationally…or alternatively maintaining a close relation between its activities and a sense of national identity – even when this incurs economic penalties”. (Sterne, 2003:104)

The Australian experience which is otherwise deliberately secular is based upon the Anzac iconography which resonates with mythology of battle, survival and the loss and sacrifice of neophyte masculinity. In the Australian experience, the Anzac soldier incorporates elements of the “noble worker”, through its portrayal of action, versus caricatured middle class corruption, inaction, and ‘flabbiness’. The Anzac mythology also serves as Australia’s pseudo fight for independence and a reminder of its vulnerability as a European country in Asia. As Kapferer argues,

Military symbolism in Anzac has little import outside Australian
egalitarian individualism, and the apparent stress on military symbolism in Australian nationalism is fashioned to the service of egalitarian ideals that may be even counter-military in spirit. (Kapferer, 1988:160).

The central discussion of this chapter is how masculinity and capitalism are related and defined in frontier societies. Furthermore, the commodification of a residual masculinity transformed by de-industrialisation, economic rationalism and neo-liberalism, and how elements of frontier masculinity have survived and transmogrified, is also the key focus of the thesis. Metaphoric and actual deaths, including the celebration of the Anzacs in Australian mythology, can be seen as a partial manifestation of the ‘death’ of the labourer in Marx’s theory of alienation. In nationalism, these ‘deaths’ are manifested in ritualised and innovative ways to punish the unemployed, to the enslavement of the Protestant ‘individual’ in Armageddon cults, and reinforce the concepts of domination and alienation in mainstream and marginal sexualities. Furthermore, the association of death and danger and the consumption of illegal drugs are juxtaposed with the use of legal drugs and the perpetuation of the Protestant-inspired work ethic.

The particularly American tradition of Protestantism and capitalism is revealed in the new Protestant sects such as Adventists, who practice extreme discipline and asceticism while awaiting and proclaiming the second coming of Christ. Their prominence in missionary work in Australasia denotes their cultural and religious influence, and their largely unconscious contributions to the neo-liberal political culture emphasising self-reliance and an apolitical work ethic. The analysis of fringe capitalist groups such as Amway suggest that they are pivotal in supporting liberal myths about opportunity irrespective of the endemic problems of the capitalist economy. These discrete
conceptualisations of autonomous individuals freed from the constraints of ‘society’ (and socialism), is contrasted with Marx’s secular morality that concentrated on recognising the ‘realness’ and inherent social value of labour. The rational Protestant individual evolved as such; as Weber argues,

For though the development of economic rationalism is partly dependent on rational technique and law, it is at the same time determined by the ability and disposition of men to adopt certain types of practical rational conduct. When these types have been obstructed by spiritual obstacles, the development of rational economic conduct has also met serious inner resistance. The magical and religious forces, and the ethical ideas of duty based upon them, have in the past always been among the most important formative influences on conduct. (Weber, 1930:26-27)

Drugs, masculinity, the work ethic and Aboriginality, become part of a nationalist obsession in uniting disparate Australian labourist traditions and ‘Aboriginal’ symbols that generate both failure and confusion. The phenomenon of the Australian state existing before the nation assisted in the desire for unification and it is argued that Aboriginality is a white appropriation that joins a queue for amelioration under a nationalist and reflexive state. As a manifestation of an imperialism/colonisation ‘guilt,’ ‘Aboriginality’ is granted a limited space within the liberal capitalist state. This however creates tension between the dynamics of original Aboriginal oppression due to colonisation and the problems of an Anglo working and underclass. Its central status in multi-cultural debates is part of a broader dynamic of the need to include outsiders
within liberal capitalism, and the expansionary nature of Australian capitalism in the post-World War Two era. This includes the successful assimilation of European migrants versus the influx of Asian migration during the 1970s, which was often linked to the importation of illegal drugs and dissolution of the work ethic.

Themes of postmodern identities therefore do not originate pressures from ‘below’ as such, but are stimulated by the hegemony of the Western middle class who by virtue of global capitalism, encroach on ethnicities that do not belong traditionally to this new social and economic order. The search for autonomous and authentic identities can then be increased by those ethnicities that that may ostensibly live a Western lifestyle, but seek to locate ‘indigenous’ loyalties and origins.

**Chapter two (Social democracy and economic rationalism)**

Tensions are explored between the rise of the state, (secular morality), and the arrogation of religious definitions of morality, to the “high point” of secular morality; Australian post-welfare state social democracy. The question for this chapter is; does social democracy unite the disparate forces in social analysis and generate a sustained critique of capitalism? This chapter continues the emphasis that amorphous concepts such as nationalism have had in the gestation of secular morality. The postmodern Australian state largely defined by the Labor Party in government shifted attention from problems in late capitalism such as unemployment and the diminishing role of working class politics and the proletarianisation of the middle class to a multitude of issues that could be caterogised as “second string” issues. In Marxist terms, they are issues relating to the superstructure, and as such, vulnerable to control and manipulation by the middle class.

The development of an alternate form of populism colloquially known as “political
correctness” emanated from institutions such as universities and changes within the parliamentary Labor Party. The Whitlam government of 1972-75 first used this approach in the great political and social ‘modernisation’ of Australia that was a response to the radicalism of the 1960s. This approach was supported by academics that used modernity and then post-modernity, to outline their autonomy through the use of non-mainstream perspectives. However due to the economic crises during the 1970s and the shift away from labour intensive work practices, this ultimately came at the expense of traditional working class politics. Therefore while the promotion of women’s rights appeared to evoke Australian traditions of egalitarianism, it also broke the male-centered-ness of Australian egalitarianism. As Frankel asks,

Can the egalitarian ethos – even though it was never very radical in the Australian context – survive postmodern individualism and consumerism? Or is the ‘old Australia’ being threatened more by modernist economic rationalisation than by postmodernist cultural values? (Frankel, 1992:177)

The emergence of socially conservative policies that matched the economic objectives, also reasserted traditional concepts of populism based upon the “hip pocket nerve”. The electoral success of the concept of “Howard’s battlers” re-creates the myth of the ‘worker’ in the Australian context into a non-unionised generic battler in the global marketplace. The dominance of populism in political discourse generally relates to the social underpinnings of the Fordist-labour intensive capitalist society, argues Harvey.

What was special about Ford (and what ultimately separates Fordism from Taylorism), was his vision, his explicit
recognition that mass production means mass consumption, a new system of reproduction of labour power, a new politics of labour control and management, a new aesthetics and psychology, in short, a new kind of rationalised modernist, and populist democratic society. (Harvey, 1989:126)

The chapter consequently draws an analogous relationship between the decline of Whitlam’s broad based social democracy and the rise of a selective welfare state that has reflected economic rationalist perspectives. The essential problem with defining groups that fall within designation for amelioration is that capitalism demands the appropriate distribution of intellectual and economic resources within an increasing paradigm of efficiency. With labour parties adopting traditional liberal themes such as citizenship rights, it has pushed, particularly in the Australian context, the Liberal party towards a perceived neo-fascism. The current government’s pernicious reaction to seemingly disparate economic and social issues such as “boat people”, a restrictive work culture, and the treatment of the unemployed, are linked to its requirement to project a distinctive nationalism despite the homogenising effect of globalisation. This ontology reveals that the celebration of nationalism invariably draws upon hegemonic concepts relating to race and political foundations.

Subsequently a more obvious form of social fascism results when conservative or ‘liberal’ governments rescind excessive “political correctness”, and emphasise a distinctly traditional social order that then flows into the desired economic paradigm. At a state level “law and order” elections dominate, with the ever escalating theme of the police, “on the beat”, aimed at those most affected by poverty and employment vulnerability. This is encouraged through talk-back radio and tabloid media, where
overt forms of discipline are encouraged to deal with society’s malcontents. A two-tiered democracy now operates, with freedoms promoted for the wealthy and the upwardly mobile, (the so-called aspirational voter), and punishment for the underclass or permanently poor. Such anomalies exist in democracy due to capitalism’s appeal to individual consumption and gratification to emancipated ‘individuals’, who “work hard”. “Hard work” taken in this context, attempts to de-politicise the actual work, in favour of what the “hard work’ can bring – a stronger identity as a consumer to ‘possess’ and to ‘have’. Advertising, through the promotion of various consumer goods, may use humour or pathos to state its message, but the reference point is always the product that remains untouched by society’s foibles. Capitalism itself then remains similarly unaffected.

The consumers are the workers and employees, the farmers and lower middle class. Capitalist production so confines them, body and soul, that they fall helpless victims to what is offered them. As naturally as the ruled always took the morality imposed on them more seriously than the rulers themselves, the deceived masses are today captivated by the myth of success even more the successful are. Immovably, they insist on the very ideology which enslaves them. The misplaced love of the common people for the wrong which is done them is a greater force than the cunning of the authorities. (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1988:133-134)

A paradigmatic shift in “social democracy” marks a deliberate drift away from politics focused on class towards an inevitable “politics of the personal”. These are
characterised by broader gender issues that argue that the politics of work can be defeated and superseded by the pursuit of private themes of sexual activity and identity. Alternatively the politics of work can be associated with placing women in the workforce, (affirmative action). They have the effect of negating an analysis of structural economic issues, with the goal of an “atomisation of the workers so that they turn to non-class issues: women’s liberation, consumerism, home ownership, education reform.”(Catley & McFarlane, 1974:37). However fundamental issues relating generally to work satisfaction (alienation), the need for an income to operate in the consumer society and non-work, (underemployment and unemployment) remain as significant as in any other time in the history of the capitalist society.

The worker therefore only feels himself outside his work, and in his work feels outside himself. He feels at home when he is not working, and when he is working he does feel at home. His labour is therefore not voluntary, but coerced; it is forced labour. It is therefore not the satisfaction of a need; it is merely a means to satisfy needs external to it. Its alien character emerges clearly in the fact that as soon as no physical or other compulsion exists, labour is shunned like the plague. External labour, labour in which man alienates himself, is a labour of self-sacrifice, of mortification. (Marx, 1844: “Estranged Labour”)

**Chapter three (Competing ‘welfarism’)**

The “death of the labourer” in the Marxist ontology is intensified by virtue of the domination of alienating work and unemployment in the neo-liberal economy. The
question for the chapter is how does post-welfare state social democracy impact on the welfare state that if not in funding, but in terms of philosophical support and rhetoric is in decline? The original marginal group, (the capitalist ‘reserve army’ of the unemployed), are ignored due to the focus on social groups based in ‘identity’ politics. While Cassidy suggests that Marx’s “mathematical model of the economy, which depended on the idea that labour is the source of all value, was riven with internal inconsistencies and is rarely studied theses days” (Cassidy, 2003:268), the theory could still form a significant bulwark against an economy that holds no specific value to labour.

The original impetus behind Marx’s theories, that of harnessing the productive capacities of the industrial society by focusing on the mechanics of labour rather than its exploitation, could be still realised in a humanist if not ‘economic’ context. For Jakubowski, Marx never renounced the “humanism” of his thesis, even when later on he abandoned the term itself. This needs to be remembered, for it represents the essence of marxist theory (Jakubowski, 1990:20). Welfare reliance would ostensibly occur through consistent problems in how capitalism operates, particularly its inability to distribute and sustain labour. However, as Considine demonstrates, the philosophical perspectives are fixed in claims that welfare mismanagement and abuse at an individual and bureaucratic level, is to satisfy the demands of business that caused the unemployment in the first instance.

At all points of the political spectrum there is a litany of complaints coming from social democrats, liberals, postmodernists and neo-conservatives – the state has become too big, too costly, too rigid, too standardised, and too
insensitive to individual identities. This remarkable consensus appears to be a consequence both of actual deficiencies and the emergence of anti-government ideologies associated with the new cultural power of business. (Considine, 2001:5)

As a consequence, the post-welfare state produces regimes of punishment, and in particular, apocryphal legends of “welfare abuse”. This approach inverts the philosophy on which the modern welfare state was built, on principles of inclusion and trust, rather than one that emphasises ‘bludging’. The consumer welfare state however, has always remained in conflict with Protestant concepts of the work ethic, and this is reflected in the fact that government benefits for the unemployed barely reach a subsistence level. The solidification of moral themes in welfare provision by the Howard government, with the encouragement of church-based groups joining the Job Network, creates a return to a form of pre-statism, where religious groups dominated welfare provision and the emphasis on correcting the erroneous individual. Subsequently the ethos of Mutual Obligation is to facilitate work-like accountability on the unemployed to be “work ready” and appreciative of tax-payer support. However as Jamrozik points out;

In Australia, already in the late 1960s, there were indicators of emerging trends which at that time were ignored. For example, the disappearance of jobs for young people without specific educational or occupational qualifications was already in evidence early in the 1970s. In the time-honoured way, explanations of unemployment among certain population strata or in certain occupations were always sought in suspected negative character traits located in the affected population, not
in the changing conditions in industry and economy. (Jamrozik, 2001:138)

Furthermore, an analysis of the aggregate unemployment rate between 1861-2000 demonstrated that the labour market “was highly unstable with the unemployment rate rarely below 5 per cent” (Mitchell, 2001:195\(^1\)), indicating that the stability produced in the post-war years was highly unusual in the history of Australian capitalism, and/or a product of interventionist economic policies, (Keynesianism). In the time following June 1974, there has been an average of unemployment-unfilled vacancies ratio of 11.1 per unfilled vacancy. (Mitchell, 2001:90\(^2\))

The undermining of the welfare state is also felt significantly in public housing policy, which has traditionally struggled for broad acceptance in Australia due to the emphasis on home ownership. Public housing’s previous role in securing a foothold for those saving for their own home has also been dramatically undermined by the politics of post-welfare state social democracy. Recognition of various marginal groups in gaining public housing tenancy reveals the economic reality that underpins postmodern imperatives, and competition for recognition in the post-welfare state. The shift towards “welfare” or “social housing” sees public housing existing only for the long-term unemployed or those with various disabilities as a reflection of the responsible use of ‘scarce’ public resources. Gramsci’s, concept of community based hegemony can be employed to include those who are marginalised, but fall outside of conventionally defined social groups that require epistemological and ameliorative change.

One cannot make politics-history without this passion, without

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\(^1\) Full employment abandoned – the role of the public sector.
\(^2\) The unemployed cannot find jobs that are not there!
nation. In absence of such a nexus the relations between the intellectual and the people-nation are, or are reduced to, relationships of a purely bureaucratic and formal order; the intellectuals become a caste, or a priesthood (so-called organic centralism). (Gramsci, 1971:418)

Chapter four (The formation of sexuality in industrial capitalism) is where the epistemological discussion of gender begins in greater emphasis. The question for this chapter is: how is heterosexuality defined as a result of its dominance in the anthropological construction of modernity and the industrial capitalist society? The unusual relationship between Christianity and science, also defined the moral and sexual asceticism required in capitalist production, with the advent of the “science of sex” attempting to define the procreation values of the industrial society that was restricted by Victorian morality. Subsequently this chapter focuses on the ‘mechanics’ of heterosexuality – a feature obscured by gender theorists who consider heterosexuality’s hegemony negates the requirement for analysis – particularly when compared to the marginalisation and stigmatisation of homosexuality. As Halperin forcefully argues,

Heterosexuality defines itself without problematising itself, it evaluates itself as a privileged and unmarked term, by abjecting and problematising homosexuality. Heterosexuality, then, depends on homosexuality to lend it substance – and to enable to acquire by default its status as a default, as a lack of difference or an absence of abnormality. (Halperin, 1995:44).

The focus on sexual practice whether it is heterosexual or homosexual conforms to a
general postmodern perspective of themes of consumption rather than work. Work as the central product of identity is mirrored however, by the dominance of heterosexuality in capitalist social formation. Despite claims of a residual Fordist economy and a post-Fordism, the procreation values that were imitated by the sexological culture of penetration and orgasm are still pre-dominant in late capitalist values. Re-definations of the family through delayed parenting or limiting the number of children can be seen in the context of an ad-hoc response to the pressures of late capitalism and neo-liberalism. Features that negate family life may see the neo-liberal labour market move into its post-Fordist phase lessening armies of reserve labour, yet precipitating a labour shortage or wages explosion. The attempt to modify social relationships according to the continual evolving nature of capitalism in its “post-capitalist” phase ignores for Hennessy that commodity production and exchange constitute;

A “phenomenological matrix,” a form of consciousness or a cultural logic that alienates many aspects of human life from the network of social relations that makes them possible. This atomizing perspective comprises the very scaffolding of bourgeois visibility and is played out in a host of strategies that fragment components of social life: in the separation of consumption from production, private from public life, market from household, individual from collective, and culture from political economy. (Hennessy, 2000:95)

The concentration on women’s sexual freedom is suggested as a manifestation of the reduction of male dominated industries in the “post industrial society” and that late capitalism creates the opportunity for a focus on women’s sexuality separate from men.
Marx’s materialist view of history is salutary when viewed against the banal human to nature analogies of sexology that had defined sexuality as a utilitarian function of the capitalist society.

Marx regards man not merely as the product of nature but as the product of social, human labour. It is not only consciousness that distinguishes men from animals but the fact that they produce their own means of existence. “They themselves indirectly produce their own life….World history is simply the production of man through human labour. Social laws, therefore, overtake the natural laws on which they are founded.

(Jakubowski, 1990:25)

The imitation of male heterosexual normalisations has also seen a focus the post-feminist activity of phallus humiliation. A liberal discussion of relative phallus efficacy via an appropriation of the “gay gaze” has turned what was an issue “amongst men” to one that has the potential to intensify anxiety and increase the competition between men for women’s attention. Phallus critiques then alludes to either/or the eternal search for the vaginal orgasm, (not long enough to achieve pleasure), or a general satire of masculine normalisations. Previously, Playboy ‘morality’ represented the ascendant position of post-war capitalism headed by male middle class heterosexuality. Playboy’s sexualisation of the breast emphasised the connection between sex and maternity, and women who possess prominent breasts seemingly extending invitations to be ‘fucked’ and by implication, impregnated

The advent of industrialisation provided the vehicle for the transformation of the related issues of private property and labour alienation. The centrality of sexuality of
post-modernism, reveals Marx’s principle that the commodification of this “final frontier”, the commodification of an individual’s sexual identity, may indicate this is the last great form of private property to be ‘valued’ before the collapse of capitalism. The problematic enjoyment/repressive phenomenon of bourgeois and Protestant sexuality will also be transformed.

human life required private property for its realisation” because “only through developed industry - ie through the medium of private property-does the ontological essence of human passion come to be both in its totality and in its humanity. (Meszaros, 1970:112)

The use of what were once considered private themes of identity, have become a significant feature of public discourse, rivaling the politics of labour, while also becoming a part of the commodification of all things non-labour. In post-modern terms, the accumulative ‘worth’ of endured alienation can be compared with the valourised activity of sex and the shunned activity of work. In Marxist terms,

The intensification of the social antagonism between private property and labour demonstrates the innermost contradiction of the given productive system and greatly contributes to its disintegration. Thus human self-objectification in the form of self-alienation loses its relative historical justification and becomes an indefensible social anachronism. (Meszaros, 1970:113)
Chapter five (Women’s roles and sexuality in capitalism)

The chapter poses the question, how are feminist social groups defined, and how they relate to work in the neo-liberal economy? As Hartmann famously asserted, “the “marriage” of marxism and feminism has been like the marriage of husband and wife depicted in English common law: marxism and feminism are one, and that one is marxism” (Hartmann, 1981:2). In post-modernism masculinity is isolated and is sacrificed, commensurate with the alienation of the male worker, on which the physical infrastructure of the mode of production was constructed. A sacrificial maternity in the private sphere was likewise necessary in supporting the social and physical infrastructure. Positions in the public sphere reflect the capitalist standardisation of women’s economic roles to that of service and sublimation as nurse, domestic servant, bar-maid or prostitute. However ascetic sexual behaviour underpinned the difference between public and private roles and women’s position within the nuclear family. In what Elshtain refers to as the “Aristotelian power-politics paradigm”, (Elshtain, 1982:65) she argues that the suffragists and later feminists underestimated the link between women and public/private definition of politics and responsibilities. These definitions were outlined in Greek society and philosophy, and increased through the articulation of woman in Christianity, and then of capitalism that placed the earning capacity in the public sphere.

Aristotle splits the public (political) from the private (nonpolitical) realm. There are greater (public) associations and lesser (private) associations. Fully realised moral goodness and reason are attainable only through participation in public life, and this involvement is reserved for free, adult males. Women
share in goodness and rationality in the limited sense appropriate to their confinement in a lesser association, the household. Their relationship to the public realm is that of one of its “necessary” conditions rather than its “integral parts”.

(Elshtain, 1982:53)

What is understated in traditional analyses of patriarchy is that the low status of women is a manifestation of the universal sublimation of wage labourer. A vague and ill-defined “middle class” feminism dominates as a result, exacerbating conflict between men and women in the shrinking job market. The influence of liberal egalitarianism that seeks to ameliorate women’s oppression within the public/private split dichotomy is ultimately limited by the capitalist social and economic order. The proletarianisation of the workforce when linked with a critique of ‘patriarchy’ intensifies such proletarianism, as class based commodification is de-emphasised in favour of an inclusion into the capitalist market-place. Seeking flaws in the post-modern argument that Marxism is ‘reductive’, Stabile argues,

Isn’t it reductive to suggest that the oppression I ostensibly suffer as an educated, middle class woman should be accorded primacy over the oppression of working class men? It may well be the case that some working class men are sexist, but to what extent does a focus on “their” sexism work to erase my class privilege, as well as the fact that the most powerful and oppressive forms of sexism are wielded by capitalists rather than disempowered workers? (Stabile, 1997:143)

Continuing the exposition on heterosexual normalisations, the legacy of women’s
relationship to romantic love in the capitalist social order is discussed. The notion of ‘having’ and ‘possessing’ someone through ‘relationships’ is indicative of the consumption ethos of the postmodern society. The *eroticism of the denied*, a feature discussed in chapter four in relation to sexuality, (the attraction lies in the opposition to Christian sexual asceticism), connects directly with capitalist imperatives which favour the delayed gratification of consumption. Female heterosexual normalisations of romantic love suggest the ritualised denial of men’s sexual needs and despite intentions to make women more sexually assertive, romantic love operates largely in opposition to sex and a male defined sexuality. Romantic love ‘individualises’ sexuality for women, yet takes the sexual out of sex, to promote procreation and monogamous values that even in the post-Fordist phase is still apparent. Love ideology optimistically promotes a discourse that is an antithesis of the pornographic gaze, and alternatively and ‘love hysteria’ exists as a manifestation of the failure of the failed ideologies, allowing ‘emancipated’ women to pursue promiscuous relationships while pursuing ‘love’. The mythology of love is that it should be difficult to obtain, but to be occasionally experienced vicariously which alludes to its egalitarian nature.

Popular literature and magazines encourage the notion of love’s ethereality, through role models such as Princess Diana, whose combination of an image of a dedicated mother linked with her pursuit of love, metamorphised into the ideal popular post-feminist heroine. The Princess Diana phenomenon can be measured in part, through a disparate link between the dominance of the bourgeois culture and royalty’s medieval association. This suggests her quest for love and the reality of her wealthy existence was unsullied by the traditional bourgeois appropriation of the working class’s surplus value. In a general sense, love becomes the ultimate individual sacrifice of concern for
others in contrast to the ruthless application of individuality required for survival in the neo-liberal capitalist society. The marriage or relationship furthermore, that is sustained for reasons other than love or fidelity, where the appearance of normality is all-with the notion of ‘working’ at relationships, (replacing initial feelings based on spontaneity and enjoyment), creating stable environments for the raising of children turning romantic love into a largely vicarious experience.

Conversely, the purity associated with romantic love and the role of commodification can also be measured by the promotion of instruments of shame and secrecy, such as women’s sanitary devices. Once advertisers were able to broach this controversial issue, women were then immersed fully in the commercial culture. Women could be promoted as autonomous consumers with sexual asceticism a mere illusion, although women’s placement within the family is still given pre-eminence. This contrary matrix of images is driven by the fact that “television channels desire women as audiences not in their own right, but for their attraction to advertisers” (Nightingale, 1990:30). ‘Openness’ as in the sexological definition of the term often translates as ‘freedom’, however the practice of “prick teasing” reveals the tension between women’s projected sexual growth and women’s often tenuous relationship to heterosexuality as defined by penetration. This is reminiscent of advertising’s ‘promise’ of satisfaction, versus what the products usually deliver. Obviously, ownership and consumption of the product advertised provides the missing link and this relationship is rarely presented in any self-depreciating or ironic fashion. Women as new and gullible consumers (for themselves, instead of their families), will ensure this tradition continues.
Chapter six (Men’s roles and sexuality in capitalism) focuses on the public construction of masculinity compared to women’s private themes that have related to sexual asceticism and romantic love. Consequently, how do workplace roles impact on definitions of gender and sexuality? The reification of masculinity has become a class identifier, and a substitute for class action, and this has been exemplified by the particular codes of masculinity expressed in trade unionism. Masculine codes however, are also used by capitalism and symptomatic of a capability and willingness to perform arduous tasks such as coal mining. The capitalist class reliance on expendable masculine labour preceded attempts at communism, and as such, communist reification of masculinity is explicable, (such as Stalinism) and held as indicative of its failure to resonate in the increasingly gender pluralistic West.

‘Masculinity’ has been used as a negatively reified symbol to assert the dominance of broadly defined social groups in high unemployment late capitalist society. Within social theory, working class heterosexual masculinity has been actively ‘de-constructed’, and masculinity consequently has been positioned between corporate conceptions and a working class ‘elite’ (‘wharfies’, coal miners). What has suffered is a dearth of representation of the great mass of wage work carried out by men, and the exclusion of unemployed men following the economic reconstructions of the economy during the last thirty years.

Masculine dominance in industrial capitalist society is characterised by the reference to patriarchy, constructed through the heterosexualisation of culture via the nuclear family. However as Gramsci argues in his theory of hegemony, everything but the real reason, namely capitalism, is blamed and assessed for contributing to inequality.

In a certain sense it may be said that this division is created by
the division of labour, is merely a technical fact, and those who see everything purely in terms of “technique”, “technical” necessity, etc., speculate on this coexistence of different causes in order to avoid the fundamental problem. (Gramsci, 1971:144-145)

The mutation of masculinity to suit the requirements of post-modernism and consumerism is evidenced by the changing character of Rugby League. Originally a working class sport with close local community links it has now been repackaged as a form of heterosexual masculinity attractive for families, but using the “gay gaze”, in its promotion to women. The game’s relationship with working class communities has become tenuous, with its players amongst the highest paid sports-people in Australia. The irony of this situation is discussed in relation to the re-admission of the South Sydney Rugby League Club, (a foundation member of the first-grade competition), following a two year hiatus as the club’s successful campaign for re-admission evoked traditional class politics, themes of community. Within other prominent national male sports such as cricket, heterosexual masculinity continues to exist strongly despite the deconstruction of male heterosexuality. Elite sportsmen then, are able by the virtue of large salaries and sponsorship to portray traditional relationships with spouses and children, demonstrating the central role heterosexuality has to capitalism and formalised patterns of consumption.

Remnants of masculinity can subsequently be found in criminal and “dangerous masculinities” that seek danger and pseudo or suicidal experiences that constitute the “death of the labourer.” Para-military and military forces are also seen as the last bastions of male authority in their role to protect the state and private property from the
high numbers of disenfranchised underclass males. As the public are usually dissatisfied with psychological and social explanations for crime yet social fascism produces seemingly endless claims for more police, security guards and prisons, to contain a dangerous lumpenproletariat form of masculinity - with little recognition how they are formed from a sociological perspective. The neo-liberal definitions of a good masculinity (expressed in nationalism and sport) and a bad masculinity that produces the majority of domestic violence and crime, mirrors the elitist social discourse that defines it in a self-producing prophecy. The ignorance of the growth of a socially produced lumpenproletariat is linked to postmodernism’s tendency to equate Marxism with heterosexual masculinity, implies Stabile.

“Twentieth-century Marxism,” maintains Linda Nicholson, “has used the generalising categories of production and class to delegitimise demands of women, black people, gays, lesbians, and others whose oppression cannot be reduced to economics.” This kind of judgement dramatically displays yet another feature of postmodernism: its historical amnesia. An argument like Nicholson’s not only represses a rich history of democratic class politics, it is remarkably insensitive to the simple fact that Marxism and socialist organisations in general have been repeatedly marginalised and delegitimised by capitalism.

(Stabile, 1997:136)

**Chapter seven (Homosexuality and postmodernism)**

While Marx’s secular morality was based in work, forms of secular morality that revolve around ‘identity’ and rejections of traditional Christian morality, are vulnerable
to the consumption ethos – we are what we have the potential to consume. In this context, marginal sexualities are non-confrontational to the hegemonic position of the worker/consumer. Therefore the social constructionist argument for homosexuality places it back within an anthropological context, and gives a materialist account for the gestation of gender identity.

It is subsequently considered that the ‘gay’ personality is a manifestation of a characterisation of its oppressors, and a reaction to the overt asceticism of heterosexual women. Binary aspects of the male heterosexual identity such as the “heterosexual wimp” and the “hyper masculine” gaol personality are contrasted with connotations of the homosexual male ‘personality’. In frontier societies particularly, there lies the requirement to project and display a physical and sexual competency and confidence with the inverse celebration of such social phenomena via Sydney’s Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gra. Subsequently, “the aim of queer visibility actions is not to include queers in the cultural dominant but to continually pressure and disclose the heteronormative” (Hennessy, 2000:114). Moreover, the argument in relation to homosexuality in the chapter is consistent therefore with Freud’s theory of “polymorphous perversity”, that hints at the social construction of heterosexuality and homosexuality, with ‘bi-sexuality’ the only biologically determined sexuality.

The underlying assumption (of Freudian theory) is that children are not born with a social and cultural identity, but that this comes to be formed as a direct consequence of their contact with others, in particular parents. As infants, boys and girls are neither naturally heterosexual nor homosexual; rather, they are in a stage of ‘polymorphous perversity’ and open to numerous
forms of gratification. (Whitehead, 2002: 24)

The chapter asks how do failures in heterosexuality and homosexuality produce nihilist, hyper-liberal discourses (such as sadomasochism and paedophilia) that promote individual agency over broader ‘moral’ concerns. A secular ‘morality’ presides over a Christian perspective, which is seen as restrictive and pernicious, (if not generally ignorant of humanist claims for social diversity). However the favoured postmodern perspective of moral relativism can also become the central conundrum in liberal discourse - where to demarcate moral, philosophic and capitalist principles? As Radin points out,

Saying that some things simply are not property is one way for a liberal to be a compartmentaliser. Then the social world is divided into a “pure” property realm, in which the laissez-faire market is inherent in the concept of property, and a non-property realm, in which things people value must belong to another category or categories. (Radin, 1996:33)

Hyper-liberal discourses pursue heuristic approaches that arguably do not offer realistic alternatives, but suggest potential for epistemological alteration. As Foucault argues in respect of the archaeology of discourses, it “is not an interpretative discipline: it does not seek another, better-hidden discourse. It refuses to be allegorical” (Foucault, 1972:139). However the approach must be speaking or knowing something, as any broad-based discussion is a starting point that has been arrived at arbitrarily. For Sterne, Foucault’s ‘governmentality’ thesis at one level offers potential for social transformation, however its deliberately unclear boundaries provokes epistemological questions relating to its intention.
As Amanda Anderson argues, Foucault’s work appeals “at some level to a vision of unalienated relations and undamaged forms of social life”. Otherwise, why make a critique of prison reform or so-called sexual liberation? In both cases, his criticism is that they did not do what they said they were doing. There is, then, some residual promise of liberation in Foucault’s work even as he declares the “death of man” and offers a genealogy of subjectivity. This contradiction between holding on to the possibility of some form of social and subjective transformation and the desubstantiation of subjectivity is perhaps one of the most productive tensions in Foucault’s work. (Sterne, 2003:103)

In relation to discourses that discuss marginal sexual practices and the politics of “the body” there is the risk that the abandonment of traditional forms and concepts of morality based on body denial, will result in an unrestricted practice of ‘sexuality’. This ultimately impacts on the most vulnerable to problematic discourses that are trapped within cultural history’s theoretical and practical limitations. However for Butler, “In the face of the prospective silencing or erasure of gender, race or sexual minority identities by reactionary political forces, it is important to articulate them, and to insist on these identities as sites of valuable cultural contest” (Butler, 1995:129). This battle for cultural identity is illusory when compared with a materialist account that recognises labour as ‘real’ versus identities that are awaiting full membership of liberal capitalism.

Materialism, in short, is a historical praxis and a structure of conflicts that determines other practices. Unlike the Foucauldian and ludic inert non-discursive, it does not simply exist side by
side with the discursive: it makes the discursive possible; it “explains” the discursive. (Ebert, 1995:125)

The radical discourse of lesbian sadomasochism is endemic of the feature of sexological discourse where truth is sought through extreme bodily experiences. This is represented as a type of erotic blasphemy, and more generally characterised by sexology’s culture of openness. Issues such as phallicism, orgasm and rape allude to the institution of hegemonic masculinity and with a particularly sexual and broader symbolic power. Masculinity’s hegemony however, is revealed in the desire to imitate its associative themes, such as lesbian sadomasochism. Its major themes of domination and humiliation are therefore perceived in a naturalistic fashion, ignoring their possible connection with the economic and social punishment of capitalism.

Sado-masochism becomes a theatre of sex, where the consenting partners freely engage in extreme activities, from bondage to fist fucking, mixing ‘shit, and cum and spit and piss with earthiness, all on the borderlines of endurance, to attain an intensified sense of release and pleasure. The political advocates of S/M take many of the beliefs of the early sexologists – that courtship, power, power and pleasure are intimately connected, as Havelock Ellis for one suggested – and attempt to transform them by taking them from the penumbra of individual pathology and placing them in the glare of publicity as daring acts of transgressive sex. (Weeks, 1985:237)

Traditional forms of lesbianism or bi-sexuality that are based in a profound anti-phallicism also indicate a basic inversion of masculine themes, rather than creating, or
testing epistemologies. Lesbian sadomasochism’s essential masochism lies in its reification of a cultural stereotype, masculinity, which has already been ‘killed’ by economic forces. It is argued therefore that Foucault’s multi-dimensional “queer theory” does not exist as an evolution of gay politics, but is produced as a result of the broader marginalisation of heterosexual men, and in one example, hebophilia acts as dialectic for paedophilia. As Dunaigre argues from a psychoanalytical viewpoint it is also a phenomenon of family and social re-orientation in the West.

The child thus ‘naturally’ becomes the focal point on which to base any analysis of the questions at issue in the social debate encompassing not only the crisis in parental authority; transmission of knowledge; reconstituted families; ‘new couples’; misgivings surrounding medically assisted procreation techniques; recognition of homosexuality as an accepted component of society; and abortion rights, but also the possibility of children’s access to sex education and the spread of AIDS. (Dunaigre, 2001:43)
CHAPTER ONE:

AUSTRALIAN MASCULINITIES, NATIONALISM and CULTURAL EGALITARIANISM

Cultural symbols that underpin conceptualisations of national identity can be shifted to accommodate changing economic traditions. The shift towards economic rationalism and neo-liberalism during the 1970s saw that the traditional Australian mythology that was focused on class based egalitarianism, was altered to include marginalised groups such as Aborigines and women. It also had the effect of marginalising those who were buffeted by economic ‘reform’ such as those affected by the consistent growth in unemployment levels since the 1970s. In this context, Australian nationalism that is built upon cultural symbolism, overarched by a hegemonic recognition of male sacrifice in war, can then be used to punish those who reject, or suffer the consequence of economic reform. In following chapters it is argued that claims of welfare abuse, leads to cultural symbols of the nation used against the ‘abusers’ to justify national economic and social policies.

The use of Weberian theory in the chapter establishes ‘individualism’ within capitalism and assists in the association of anti-liberalism with Marxism. The “inner rationalisation of the personality in the direction of unrelenting work and methodical self-control, Weber argues “provided a decisive impetus to the development of modern industrial capitalism” (Brubaker, 1984:24). Frontier societies such as Australia that place a special character to masculinity or use it to denote labourism or mate-ship perhaps offer hope for a worker’s paradise where none exists. Revealing the ephemeral nature of this mythology shifts the national capitalist character inevitably to that of dominant frontier
society of America. However the attempt to then include groups such Aborigines while “Australian legend” mythology is diminished, but remnants of the legend continue to constitute the notion of Aboriginality at the margins.

The advent of Protestantism, and Weber’s assertion that it was linked with the rise and underlying spirit of capitalism, made it difficult for socialist theory to adhere to the cultures of Western democracies with a strong Christian tradition. As Weber suggested, Christianity was also profoundly capitalist, with the ethos of Protestant individualism contributing significantly to the constant renewal of capital as an article, of ‘faith’. This relates to the assertion that the various Adventist and capitalist sects now reflect the dominant characteristics of the neo-liberal economy, and their claimed apoliticality (Jehovah’s Witnesses practice abstinence from voting in countries where voting is compulsory) actually assists in projection of neo-liberalism as seamless and linear.

This chapter suggests that America’s Protestant and capitalist values possess the capacity to usurp all other formulations of Australia’s national identity and thereby complete the process of homogenisation required for late capitalism’s phase of globalisation. Due to Australia and America’s similar frontier experience, and the shift towards conservative re-interpretations of Australian frontier mythology, the tension between notions of collectivisation in the Australian experience and the individualism inherent in Americanism has dissipated.
New World masculinity and egalitarianism

The mythology of frontier masculinities in the New World, gave impetus to the search for new markets, underpinned by the legend of conquering and settling lands far from Euro-centric concepts of civilisation. The industrial capitalist form of masculinity was re-invigorated by the politics and semantics of the frontier and despite Australia’s high rate of urbanisation, the mythology of the frontier dominated the earliest conceptualisations of Australian identity.

Australian shearers and squatters featured prominently in the literature of the Empire. Like the seal-hunter of Canada and the backwoodsman of the United States, they had been in the vanguard of white settlement of new frontiers: they had entered an alien landscape and made it profitable. (White, 1981:103)

The dominance of Anglo male heterosexuality was reflected in the representation of women and Aborigines, with survival frontier survival a manifestation of a unique collective will. Typical of frontier society, Russel Ward describes the Australian male as “a ‘hard case’ skeptical about the value of religion and of intellectual and cultural pursuits generally” (Ward, 1958:2). In the context of the focus on a “national type” that celebrates the characteristics of a people rather than shaped through their work, or waging a revolutionary war of independence, the military pastiche seems even more ironic. However the growth of localised festivals that have cultural, religious and racial connotations, form a bulwark against the homogenous nature of the global economy that limits the actual expression of nationalism. Gallipoli was subsequently re-interpreted as
a positive event for the emerging Australian nation.

The pre-eminent mate-ship mythology that began in colonial Australia was solidified in World War One. This hints at a collectivist strain in the Australian national psyche, and forms the central feature in demarcating Australian identity from the class-based perception of English society, and the strident Protestant individualism of the United States. Despite its centrality, there is little evidence to suggest that mate-ship extends beyond an emotional perception or a shared bond, (shaped by war, friendship or sport). The term has no more resonance than fraternal terms such as ‘buddy’, ‘pal’, or the earlier term ‘cobber.’ If the post-World War One mythology and concept of mate-ship can be seen as an expression of Australian modernity, then ‘cobber’ is evocative of a general (and authentic) fraternity that existed before the ‘nation’. Ephemeral themes of national identity can be interpreted as a thinly veiled attempt to address alienation, as Marx suggests,

An immediate consequence of man’s estrangement from the product of his labour, his life activity, his species being, is the estrangement of man from man. When man confronts himself, he also confronts other men. What is true of man’s relationship to his labour, to the product of his labour, and to himself, is also true of his relationship to other men, and to the labour and the object of the labour of other men. (Marx, 1844: “Estranged Labour”)
Anzac nationalism

“working men have no country. We cannot take from them what they have not got” (Marx, 1848:“Proletarians and Communists”).

The notion of Australia as a social laboratory had significant appeal in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Located far from Europe, but also the Americas, the linking of eugenics and a “national type” had its genesis on the frontier, and reached its culmination on the shores of Gallipoli. As White argues, it was not until the end of World War Two and the association with national types and “master-race” conceptualisations that it was abandoned – with the heterogeneity of the post-war American population also contributing to its decline (White, 1981:157).

The gestation of an ideal of the ‘pure’ Australian manhood was a combination of frontier types, and was produced in some compensatory fashion from a large loss of life in futile and foreign battles like the Gallipoli campaign. It contrasted honest and willing men with the ‘corruptness’ of British leaders and their tawdry, class-ridden society – the commanders who sent Australians to their untimely deaths. This corruptness was also signified by aloofness and effete mannerisms, uncharacteristic of the hard-working Australian frontiersman.

The Australian egalitarian ideal of mate-ship reached its zenith during World War One according to war correspondent Charles Bean¹. The battlefields of the Western Front and Gallipoli, brought to the fore the personification of the egalitarian strain

represented by ‘mate-ship’. This was to be the young nation’s defining feature, exposed through war and death and buried deep within the Australian ontology, the conscious expression of apoliticality, which had begun with a left bias (the so-called socialism by accident) to a right wing orientation that forged a jingoism evident in the oft repeated refrain, “Australia is the best place to live in the world.” It suggested that that all differences based on class, gender and ethnicity should be suspended, as the projected naturalness of the social order incorporates and supersedes real and potential divisions. Kapferer argues that,

> The death of the Anzacs represented as sacrifice is a consciously overt symbol of re-birth. This sacrifice is presented as one pure and potent youth, a holy cosmologically regenerative sacrifice. Kapferer, 188:135).

In death, men are rewarded by releasing them from the bonds that link them to their sacrificial bravery. The valorised and ritualised remembrance of soldiers who served and gave their lives in war, is difficult to reconcile and recompense, however it clearly encodes ‘dead’ masculinity above reproach. John Masefield, drew a highly idealised picture of the Anzacs argues Ward.

> …the finest body of young men ever brought together in modern times. For physical beauty and nobility of bearing they surpassed any men I have seen; they walked and looked like kings in old poems, and reminded me of a line in Shakespeare: ‘Baited like eagles having lately bathed.’

> There was no thought of surrender in those marvelous young men; they were the flower of the world’s manhood, and
died as they had lived, owning no master on this earth. (Ward, 1958:229)

The propagation of the Anzac mythology ultimately served the purpose or usurping all other allusions to the national identity - as the Australian soldier and male, was tested through war. The myth of Anzac bridged the gap between servility, compliance and rebellion that had previously characterised Australian colonial history. As Lohrey states, “the legend of the bushman and its post-war transmission into the Anzac myth is one of the most enduring strains in Australian culture, a veritable Lazarus of the national psyche” (Lohrey, 1982:29).

In the neo-liberal context, the recognition of masculinity expressed through remembrance rituals, can have the impact of denying the “living male”, who has suffered the restructuring of economy and the postmodern deconstruction of masculinity. In a youth-obsessed commercial culture it is the pivotal connection in recognising the old and the father, with its right wing symbolism grounded in the observance of institutions beyond the individual such as government, country and God. A Marxist perspective on Anzac reveals that the forging of heroes from death is the closest appropriation of a masculine sacrifice to a larger ‘machine’ within a nationalist and right-wing discourse. From this perspective, alienation serves to keep the labourer ready for battle and the “ultimate sacrifice”, as ‘freedom’ comes in its destruction in war, rather than in the historical materialist dialectic. Consequently its use is restricted to lying dormant in the national consciousness, until another traumatic event, with its reified nature making it impractical for use on a consistent basis. As Marx and Engels

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2 Themes of masochism are explored in chapters six and seven, relating to extreme and appropriated masculinities. These discourses deliberately pursue risk and danger, mimicking death rituals.

3 The bombings in Bali in 2002 that killed eighty-eight Australians evoked similarities with the sacrifice of Australian youth during World War One
argued,

Generally speaking big industry created everywhere the same relations between the classes of society, and thus destroyed the peculiar individuality of the various nationalities. And finally, while the bourgeoisie of each nation still retained separate national interests, big industry created a class, which in all nations has the same interest and with which nationality is already dead; a class which is really rid of all the old world and at the same time stands pitted against it. Big industry makes for the worker not only the relation to the capitalist, but labour itself, unbearable. (Marx & Engels, 1845: “Real Basis of Ideology”)

Countries such as Australia that focus on cultural symbolism in defining their nationalism, in contrast with nations that have defined their borders through war or revolution, arguably require “pseudo sites” of rebellion. Codes of informality that in the Anzac context are interpreted as indiscipline constitute a distinctively cultural ‘Aussie-ness.’ As Kapferer argues, “the celebrated indiscipline of the Australian soldier is actually a metaphor of his autonomy and his resistance to an order imposed artificially from outside the individual” (Kapferer, 1988:170). Celebrated Australian characteristics such as ‘larrikinism’ have a resonance with convict and bushranger mythology, with self-effacing humour underpinning further the egalitarian ideal. “To underplay ones identity in the face of other’s awareness of distinction is to become a “good bloke”, for it constitutes a manifestation of naturalness” (Kapferer, 1988:176). A good bloke has “a beer”, (although this usually means several), loves sport, and has a compunction for
various forms of gambling. The mythology of a wealthy man gambling his “hard earnt” next to a member of the working class, promoted the notion of a classless Australia. This projects idealisations of liberal political culture, (opportunity and equality), against that of the working class, where symbolic forms such as beer drinking are celebrated.

The Australian egalitarian ideal of the ‘underdog’ is a central feature in the perpetuation of the “lucky country” mythology. For Adorno however, “In the end, glorification of splendid underdogs is nothing other than glorification of the splendid system that makes them so”. Those who are considered to fail without ‘trying’ (have a go ya mug) can be treated with outright contempt in an ontology that demarcates between winners and losers in a seemingly subdued fashion. In the Australian cultural iconography, there is the tendency to venerate the concept that Australians should play “above their weight”, despite the odds. “Give it a Go”, becomes a literal and metaphoric expression of national solidarity. This is underpinned by the assertion that success had to be extremely hard won to be deserved – the combination of egalitarianism and Enlightenment sourced frontierism, states that real talent will be rewarded and should be ‘natural’. As neo-liberalism and economic rationalism have altered the sense of ‘achievability’ of goals, such mythology can be applied more harshly and unfairly to

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4 An easily accessible form of vicarious “social orgasm” (reflecting dissatisfaction with sex) is constituted in gambling, where the participant can have a minor role in the outcome. The use of money can be seen as merely a means of exchange to engage in the activity. Sexological thought focused on orgasm, (and orgastic like experiences), and openness, attempts at a sensory overload, which left un-sated, could also manifest itself in alcohol and drug abuse. One area of gambling that has seen tremendous growth in recent years, and has become a major social problem has been the growing popularity of poker machines. The combining of a uniquely private function, (the player is essentially playing with ‘themselves’ against an inanimate object), is carried out in the public sphere such as a club or hotel. This releases the onerous manifestations of a restrictive sexuality that is to be practiced privately. Furthermore, to the addicted player, it can become an extremely expensive habit due to the machines’ low returns particularly for the habitual player. See chapter four.

those who are considered not trying hard enough to succeed like the unemployed.

The egalitarian culture of the United States celebrates success and excess as a basis for its egalitarianism. America’s liberal-egalitarianism is founded in the common man mythology, best exemplified by the “log house to white house” legend. The entertainment industry promotes this theme in numerous narratives, and it is often signified by the “against all odds” success of the actor themselves. The growth of the motion picture industry in Hollywood from the mid 1920s has seen it emerge as the foremost means for the dispersal of political ideology, with apocryphal tales of marginality to success. In the film, The King of Comedy, a man is driven to become a famous stand-up comedian, and sees himself as equal, if not better than, his idol a famous television host and comedian. Subsequently he demands a spot on his television show, without any previous experience as a comedian, (so ‘naturalistic’ is his ability, he feels no compunction to gain experience in the traditional way). The sub-text explores the tension and dynamics that exist between talent and delusion, determination for success, opportunity and failure. He eventually achieves notoriety and ‘success’ by the abduction of the host, demanding and achieving, a spot on the show as a guarantee of his release. More recently, the plethora of ‘reality’ television programs capitalises on the attraction of immediate fame, (that will also produce fortune) and Andy Warhol’s observation that “in the future” everyone will be famous for fifteen minutes.

6 The formats of the American sourced reality television programs such as “Survivor” and “American Idol”, turns “getting the sack” into an entertaining art form with the ritualised practice of humiliation and rejection of contestants a core feature of the programs’ appeal.

7 1983, director M. Scorsese.
Drugs and cultural identity

A more traditional form of celebrity was exemplified by the entertainer known as the ‘King of Rock and Roll’, Elvis Presley, who led a bizarre double life which was in contrast with his projected image of success. Originating from the ‘South’ where white manual labourers had close proximity to a large black population and were referred to as “white trash”, Presley’s exemplified the log cabin to White House mythology. The original controversy associated with his version of Rock and Roll, was balanced by a stint in the US army, his devotion to family, particularly his mother, and his religiosity.

But, according to Goldman, in the later ‘Vegas’ stage of his career, “Elvis was a phony. He impersonated masculinity, but he was at heart a frightened child. He feigned piety, but his spirituals sound insincere or histrionic. He sought to portray the erotic but came off resembling a male burlesque star”. (Goldman, 1991:188) In the last few years of his life particularly, he was a prescription drug addict, in almost complete denial of his addiction. To reflect his anti drug zeal, he became an official of the Federal Drug Enforcement Bureau in 1971.

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8 See chapter six for reference to Presley as a romantic love ‘sacrifice’.
9 1977, S. Dunleavy. “Elvis: What Happened?” Told to Dunleavy by former long-time bodyguards of Presley, and released two months before his death, it detailed extensive drug use, particularly powerful prescription medications. The drugs that he became physically and psychologically dependent were used primarily for ‘kicks’ the bodyguards alleged. Biographers Brown and Broeske, indicate that his drug use had been long term and frequently chronic.

He was a connoisseur of opiates, of Dexedrine and Benzedrine, and of powerful sleeping pills such as Seconal, Demerol, and Dilaudid. As early as 1962, when he was filming Girls! Girls! Girls! in Hawaii, Presley had an attaché case that he shared with other cast and crew members. It was, recalled a co-star, “a potpourri of drugs,” filled with “old yellers, speed, and God knows what else”. (Brown & Broeske, 1997:298-299)

This revelation dovetails the myth that Presley’s heavy use of drugs only occurred in the last few years of his life. However, as with drug users generally, Presley at one point crossed the line between taking drugs and the drugs taking him. While Presley’s interpretation of the fledging musical style of “Rock and Roll” had left an indelible legacy, the musical and social transformations of the 1960s left him in their wake.
It is his pre-dominance in the American cultural tradition that prevents many fans accepting that either he is dead, or that drugs, if not the single cause, were the major contributing factor to his death. Moreover it reveals the deceit implicit in the commodification of people within a commercial world – that Elvis’ foibles and destructive habits were hidden as long as possible from his adoring public. In reference to the capitalist “culture industry”, Adorno asserts that the ‘artist’ as a commodity was exemplified by the twentieth century American entertainment system.

Its ideology above all makes use of the star system, borrowed from individualistic art and its commercial exploitation. The more de-humanised its methods of operation and content, the more diligently and successfully the culture industry propagates supposedly great personalities and operates with heart-throbs. It is industrial more in a sociological sense, in the incorporation of industrial forms of organisation even when nothing is manufactured – as in the rationalisation of office work – rather than in the sense of anything really and actually produced by technological rationality. (Adorno, 1991:87)

The increasingly open use of drugs for recreation and inspiration ultimately marked the difference between his musical generation and the present. According to John Lennon, who as part of the ‘Beatles’ phenomenon that equaled Presley’s fame, “Elvis died when he came out of the army. Everything else was like a living death”. (Playboy, (interview), Dec. 1980). (This refers to Presley’s two year army stint at the height of his fame, and his commercial re-packaging in the 1960s). The revelations contained in Elvis: What Happened? was the first stage in the destruction, then re-mythologising of the Presley legend. The Presley estate now makes significantly more money than when was alive.

10 According to Thompson and Cole who re-assessed Presley’s autopsy results, he most likely died from ‘poly-pharmacy’ – an allergic reaction to a combination of drugs, which preceded the official result of heart attack.

11 1999, J. Marx. Sorry. The Wretched Tale of little Stevie Wright. Marx’s book was an unconventional biography of the former lead singer of one of Australia’s best known rock groups the Easybeats. In direct contrast with Presley, Marx details a life lived in the full public glare of drug addiction and various attempts to conquer his addiction to drugs. Marx traces Wright’s fame to a life of an itinerant, now resigned to the power of his addiction, in the most spectacular and prolonged fall from public grace in Australian music history.
The extent in which ‘Elvis’ was prepared to deceive him-self and others regarding his drug addiction reveals the strongly defined demarcation between legal and illegal drugs. The ‘war’ on illegal drugs, led by the United States, still asserts the “just say no” type of campaign, despite evidence that it has little impact on teenagers experimenting with illegal drugs, and or developing destructive drug habits. The role of alcohol in contrast, is romanticised by its connection with the work ethic in Australian iconography. The fictional character of ‘Nino Culotta’\textsuperscript{12} exemplifies the iconic status of alcohol in Australian working class culture as he is sent to Australia by an Italian magazine, to write articles about Australia and Australians to be published in Italy. In the process of his research, he finds employment as a builder’s labourer, and in a telling feature of the sub-narrative, abandons his career as a writer and eventually becomes a full-time builder. His assimilation into the Australian culture is dependent upon having a “real job”, based on physical labour with other men, and here Culotta learns the values of mate-ship solidified by drinking copious amounts of beer, only after a long day’s hard work. The process of becoming Australian is almost complete with building a home in the suburbs and taking an Australian woman as a wife, pursuing his still conditional ‘Aussie-ness’.

The novel unashamedly promotes the Australian egalitarian experience as one that deserves and requires the immigrant to assimilate into a post-war world where employment and prosperity is always available to those who “work hard”. Consequently Culotta’s problems with assimilation are almost entirely related to the gulf between his textbook understanding of English and Australian linguistic and social customs, (the source of much of the novel’s humour). Despite the egalitarian ideal of Australian

\textsuperscript{12} 1957, J. O’Grady. They’re a weird mob: a novel by Nino Culotta.
assimilation, he will unfortunately, always be a ‘wog’, who should be eternally grateful that Australian egalitarianism gave him a chance to assimilate into its margins. This wariness and long term punishment of outsiders is uniquely Australian, and refers to the belief in Australian iconography that hard work and home ownership\textsuperscript{13} can partially transport the immigrant from his lowly status. Furthermore, the immigrant can set out to embarrass the Australian-born by making better use of Australia’s natural and cultural resources. For Kapferer, “Australian egalitarianism often values the outsider within the society positively as symbolic of the ultimate value of individuality” (Kapferer, 1988:15). However the Australian mythological standard of “giving someone a go” had some resonance in the full employment post World War Two era. Possessing no experience in the work of a builder’s labourer, Culotta compounds his appearance of naïveté by arriving for his first day of work wearing the clothes of a dandy rather than a labourer.

While post-war immigration consisted mainly of Europeans, the next major immigration influx in the 1970s was from Asia, principally refugees displaced by the war in Vietnam. Australia’s traditional view of Asia as a demographic and geographic threat was compounded by the long held stereotype of the opium smoking Chinese, and the effect that the type of structural and long-term unemployment that began in the early 1970s was having on the work ethic. When Vietnamese refugees became implicated with the burgeoning heroin trade in Australia, the disparity between the assimilative migrant versus the cultural manifestation of incompatible ‘multiculturalism’ occurred. In the context of Italian immigrants like the apocryphal Culotta, alcohol consumption was already a tradition, and he simply had to switch alliance from the ‘effete’ wine

\textsuperscript{13} See public housing in chapter three.
culture, to the egalitarian culture of beer. The Asiatic incorporation of a ‘new’ drug, tests the European allegiance to alcohol both culturally and economically. McQueen argues that the compression between European cultural themes against geographic realities defines the Australian nationalism.

Australia, was and largely is, a European frontier of capitalism. Australia’s prosperity, based on wool and minerals, is the prosperity of expanding capitalism. Geographically, Australia is a frontier of European capitalism in Asia. The first of these gives rise to the optimism which illuminates our radicalism; the second produces the fear which tarnishes our nationalism.

(McQueen, 1975:17)

Drugs such as heroin resonate with the image of the undisciplined junkie, who could not delay gratification until after a day’s work. This readily accepted belief that heroin use cannot be ‘delayed’ has never been tested, nor its qualitative and quantitative effect on the work ethic. Moreover, particularly in the neo-liberal work culture that creates high levels of stress, hysteria, and depression, illegal drugs may actual reflect its needs and characteristics better than alcohol. ‘Uppers’ such as amphetamine and cocaine mirror intensity of effort while the heroin ‘drops’ the alienated worker in a deep sedative state in readiness for the next sustained effort of work. A community of drug users, conversely, may be seeking a previously work-sourced sense of fellowship, united in the requirement to ‘score’.

last year, (2000), 18,200 people died because of cigarette related illness in Australia. (less than 1000 people died from heroin overdose in this period). One fifth of all deaths are drug related:
tobacco 72%, alcohol 25%, illicit drugs 3%. For 15-34 year olds, the corresponding figures are alcohol 62%, illicit drugs 34%. Over half of all heroin overdoses are, in fact, not due to heroin alone; they are due to a mix of heroin and pills or alcohol. (Community Campaign for Heroin Reform – fact sheet: 2001)

Furthermore, “about eight million people use heroin worldwide. Over two hundred million use legal prescription drugs like barbiturates and benzodiazepines. 141 million people smoke dope, whilst another thirty million use amphetamines and more than 13 millions use cocaine” (Community Campaign for Heroin Reform – fact sheet: 2001).

In European culture, the high tolerance to alcohol that is often achieved at a young age has to be interspersed by regular demonstrations of the work ethic. Large amounts consumed at the “weeks-end” (weekend) or even during the week, is concealed and justified that work activity is still adequately performed. Being able to withstand the powerful affects of alcohol becomes a measure of a man’s ability to cope and withstand pressure. Tales of excessive alcohol consumption are thereby considered socially amusing despite evidence of alcohol’s physical damage and it’s pre-eminence in causing car accidents.

The illegality, (and the amount of time required to raise funds, and then procure drugs other than alcohol), contributes to an association with a dissolution of work habits or ethic. Consequently the demarcation between legitimate and illegitimate drugs of addiction plays a significant role in defining an active and inactive working class, with cheap forms of alcohol such as beer and mass-produced cigarettes, previously acting as a form of discipline (delayed gratification) for the working class. This is also where the
stresses and strains that pre-ceded the addiction and originate in work alienation are concealed. This then adds to the perception that consumers of illegal drugs are selfish and undisciplined, and that the addiction remains principally their fault.

Working class culture is one of the last major bulwarks in projecting and producing, overt masculine stereotypes.\textsuperscript{14} Such imagery is reflected back to them and to the broader society by advertising images through products such as beer. A ‘beer’ is something that is earned separate from a wage payment. It is the collective manifestation of a sweated (or imagined) toil. Popular beer such as Victoria Bitter, uses a theme of a “hard earned thirst”, and by purchasing the product, it is immediately assumed that you in fact deserve this type of thirst. The notion of its consumption as a ‘reward’ an integral feature in maintaining discipline for the working class. The use of wine, paradoxically, is guided by sedate and limited use, with little reference to excessive consumption. It is the alcoholic drink of the bourgeoisie, who collect wine, and hence value its maturity through its storage. It is the actual and metaphoric drink associated with capitalist and Protestant values.

Those who do not belong to a ‘class’ such as Aborigines, or the unemployed, break the cultural understanding between delayed gratification and alcohol simply through their status as Aborigines. A beer is ‘earnt’ and paid for through and because of hard physical labour and is a symbol of (a man’s) contribution to his community and country. In this context, the illicit use of alcohol through consumption that has not been ‘earnt’ can provoke a community backlash, evidenced by attitudes towards the legend of Aboriginal alcohol abuse. Without the social codifications regarding legitimate alcohol abuse, Aborigines can openly drink themselves to death, which is also a white

\textsuperscript{14} See chapter six and sport masculinity.
masculine fantasy, where masculinity turns on itself, and literally dies through excessive consumption.

Illegal drug use now competes with alcohol as the ‘drug’ of first choice for some where at ‘rave’ parties, the amphetamine based drug ecstasy is followed up by large quantities of water. The therapeutic attraction associated with self-administration of substances, continues the tradition from the 1960’s, where popular culture and illegal drug use, particularly the hallucinatory substance LSD, profoundly affected social movements. The partial replacement of alcohol by various types of ‘drugs’ coincided with the growth of youth movements, and although the use of marijuana had been popularised in the Jazz era of the 1920s, the combination of rock music and youth culture sustained its prolonged impact. The moral antagonistic position between legal and illegal drugs became more apparent as rock and roll entrenched itself as an “anti establishment”, commercial success. The Rolling Stones, with their song Mother’s Little Helper, 15 explored the boundaries of drug use as defied by a female suburban drudgery and anxiety. This was defined in part by their own drug use, and mocking the conventionality of getting inebriated at the end of a day’s work by suggesting that they too required drugs to alleviate stress and to enjoy themselves from their working lives. This increasingly blurred the notion of having ‘fun’ all of the time, which was perhaps more tolerated in the economically protected era of the ‘sixties’. The permanence of unemployment on the landscape of Western democracies then requires a projection of the individual being “work ready”, when they are unlikely to be required at any stage. The commodification that underpinned the evolution of a “youth culture” and post war relative affluence that evolved from lumpenproletariat Dickinsonian England saw that;

The new images are superimposed on the old images: youth as trouble, youth as fun. During the 1950s, the distinction between “respectable” and “criminal” classes were transmuted into the distinction between “conformist” and “nonconformist” youth, the workers and the workshy, “decent lads” and “inverts”, “patriots” and “narcissists”. (Hebdige, 1988:30)

Protestantism and the New World

The impulse to acquisition, pursuit of gain, of money, of the greatest possible amount of money, has in itself nothing to do with capitalism. This impulse exists and has existed among waiters, physicians, coachmen, artists, prostitutes, dishonest officials, soldiers, nobles, crusaders, gamblers, and beggars. One may say that it has been common to all sorts and conditions of men at all times and in all countries of the earth, wherever the objective possibility of it is or has been given. It should be taught in the kinder-garden of cultural history that this naïve idea of capitalism must be given up once and for all. Unlimited greed for gain is not in the least identical with capitalism, and still less its spirit. Capitalism may even be identical with the restraint, or at least a rational tempering, of this irrational impulse. But capitalism is identical with the pursuit of profit,
and forever renewed profit, by means of continuous, rational, capitalistic enterprise. For it must be so: in a wholly capitalistic order of society, an individual capitalistic enterprise which did not take advantage of its opportunities for profit-making would be doomed to extinction. (Weber, 1930:17)

America’s more individualist strain of liberal/egalitarianism is underpinned by its marginal capitalist and religious groups. In this context, the promotion of marginality as a virtue becomes a hyper-individuality, indicating closeness with God. This perspective personifies the conservative viewpoint (which has always relied upon the influence of the religious-right), by asserting that ‘politics’ is the realm of leftist and revolutionary activity, with conservatism thereby to be seen to reflect the will of God16. Ironically however, God is perhaps not required when individualism is promoted as a separate entity that uses inculcated themes of reliance on the ‘self’. Gramsci also relates the unique American ethic to frontierism and a lack of tradition in their social classes.

The “vocation of work” was not a trait inherent only in the working class but it was a specific quality of the ruling classes as well. The fact that a millionaire continued to be practically active until forced to retire by age or illness and that his activity occupied a very considerable part of his day, is a typically American phenomenon. This, for the average European, is the weirdest American extravagance. This difference between Americans and Europeans is determined by the absence of

16 A place for God formed a significant feature of early liberal philosophy that made the first tentative steps in recognising the impact of science and Protestantism. This change was brought by the changing demographics of industrialisation that necessitated the development of a state to regulate the population. J. Weiss, 1977, Conservatism in Europe, 1770-1945.
“tradition” in the United States, on the other hand, there is a recent “tradition” of the pioneers, the tradition of strong individual personalities in whom the vocation of work had reached its greatest intensity and strength, men who entered directly, not by means of some army of servants and slaves, into energetic contact with the forces of nature in order to dominate them and exploit them victoriously. (Gramsci, 1971:305)

The invention and manufacture of home appliances such as television, washing machines, vacuum cleaners, and other household consumer products in the 1950s, realised economic opportunity through large-scale retail operations. As Braverman points out, “machinery comes into the world not as a servant of “humanity” but as the instrument of those to whom the accumulation of capital gives the ownership of the machines (Braverman, 1974:193). The ‘workers’ exist subsequently as adjuncts to the machines as operators in a factory environment, domestic workers, or as salespeople of the “labour saving” machines.

As an adjunct to large retail stores, Amway projected its marketing image to incorporate elements of nineteenth century laissez-faire capitalism and to maximise the opportunities presented by post-war consumerism. Highly motivated individual product distributors affiliated with Amway marketed household products that were a compliment to larger household goods bought at retail stores. Items such as dishwashing detergent and other cleaning products become a niche in the booming household consumer goods market. The cleaning products become a metaphor for a ‘clean’ asceticism, and a purposeful work ethic, which involved the aggressive selling of these various cleaning products, without the benefit of a shop front.
Amway, coined from the ‘American way’, was the first company to fully develop the concept of direct marketing in its most ruthless and saturated form, with its direct marketing techniques imitated in many countries. The inverted model of Marx’s theory of labour value operates on the principle that people are paid for results, not time spent attempting to market the products or building the pyramid network system. The basic pyramidal structure of capitalism is ruthlessly extrapolated to form an overt pyramid structure that rewards those who were in the system first, and builds an expanding ‘network’. New distributors are encouraged to commercialise friendships and acquaintances, based on the need to create your own dynasty, for the highest proportion of sales made by those lowest in the pyramid go to those who occupy the highest positions in the pyramid. The cannibalistic aspect of the system is hidden by a promotion of Christian ethics, and the adherence to Protestant/capitalist values. The shift to the notion of working hard for a limited period until a sustainable pyramid has been built is a deliberate discontinuity with the romance of work and the values of having the identity of a worker. This phenomenon is (or began the process) linked with the individual who invests wisely and no longer needs to work, as the performance of “work ethic” is reduced to those ‘failures’ that need to work.

The principle of delayed gratification is one of the cornerstones of both capitalist and Protestant belief systems, and the worship of material possessions and private property places it as a secular religion. Amway distributors rely heavily on evangelistic type mass rallies, meetings, and other motivational material such as tapes and books, which focus on unlocking individual potential to achieve their goals. Based in popular psychology, a direct distributor concedes, “big motivation products are well deserved even if they bring in more of a diamond’s (an up-line distributor) income than
marketing Amway products.” The constant replenishing at the ‘well’ of inspiration conceals the enormous task the distributors face in asking people to join them – and the macroeconomic problems associated with hyper-capitalist schemes.

Capitalist sects such as Amway, represent the apocryphal core of capitalist ‘freedoms’. While the largest capitalists such as Kerry Packer and those of a similar ilk operate somewhat independently from ideology, (for there is grudging acceptance that this type of capitalism is inherently inequitable and not duplicable), small capitalists provide the lifeblood of capitalist ideology. Particularly since the decline of the traditional industries of the capitalist mode, there has been an increased emphasis on the belief that new inventions or products will stimulate the economy and hence employment. When a new product comes into the market, there is a “reserve army” of entrepreneurs and salespeople ready to market the enterprises. Success is subsequently built upon a multitude of failures and with the high level of failure justifying the few that have succeeded it becomes mostly a permanently delayed form of gratification.

The Protestant concept of individualism and the closeness of God to the “fully developed” individual, suggests that the accumulation of money, and indeed inordinate amounts of money, are simply ‘scoreboards’ indicative of the individual’s completeness to God. This also becomes a privileged position to proselytize the ‘mutuality’ of such a ruthless capitalist system, for only a select few are chosen to be God’s millionaires.

For, in conformity with the Old Testament and in analogy with the ethical valuation of good works, asceticism looked upon the pursuit of wealth as an end in itself as highly reprehensible; but

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18 See reference to the punishment of the unemployed individual via a Christian dominated job network in chapter three.
the attainment of it as a fruit of labour in a calling was a sign of God’s blessing. And even more important: the religious valuation of restless, continuous, systematic work in a worldly calling, as the highest means of asceticism, and at the same time the surest and most evident proof of rebirth and genuine faith, must have been the most powerful conceivable lever for the expansion of that attitude toward life which we have here called the spirit of capitalism. (Weber, 1970:174)

With its foundation of Puritanism, America became the principal source of marginal Christian religious groups throughout the late Enlightenment. The rise of the Adventist churches during this period, distancing themselves from the hierarchical style of the mainstream Catholic and Protestant churches, created new authoritarian structures. However the roles of Deacons and Elders, leaders coming from within the ranks, emphasised the democracy associated with the New World. This authoritarianism emanating from frontier and industrial forms of masculinity, unconsciously imitated the authoritarianism of Catholic mediaevalists, giving immediate church leaders greater control and knowledge over the lives of its members. Conversely the bureaucracy can appear to serve the needs of the community and its members, contrasting with the grandeur of Catholic and mainstream Protestant traditions and churches. Consequently Amway and the Adventist sect, Jehovah’s Witnesses, share many similar themes in their social characteristics based upon New World democracy, and emancipation of the individual through the exercise of a distinctive Protestant ‘spirit’. Adventists’ belief are premised on the assumption that the aesthetic world is to be soon replaced by a new order where current evils are annihilated by a Biblical Armageddon where a financial
and material utopia exists for those who apply the ethos of Amway and succeed. This dichotomous view originates from

The strong reviverist tradition in America doubtless contributed to the tendency to see things in terms of simple antitheses. The reviverist believed that the universe was divided into the realm of God and the realm of Satan, the righteous and the unrighteous. (Marsden, 1980:224)

Both groups consequently rely on the total appropriation of labour and revel in their marginal status. This is supported further by the need to proselytize their beliefs and way of life, and re-invent the concept of the nuclear family. The practice of themes of exclusion against those uninitiated or hostile to them, sits uncomfortably with the expressed desire to recruit more members. This has an obvious restriction on the flow of outsiders or those with a casual or tentative interest, which may eventually restrict the shift to a complete commitment. Overt criticism of these groups from the ‘outside’ reflects for the Witnesses, proof that they are following what the Bible prophesised for God’s chosen people in the “last days” before Armageddon. The difficulty in obtaining a favourable position in the Amway pyramid also proves that rewards will come to those who truly deserve them. For Jehovah’s Witnesses this often involves shunning or distancing oneself from previous ‘worldly’ associations, including family.

Membership in the Watchtower organisation frequently leads to confusion, heartache, and family breakups, as the Society takes the place of the member’s family. Association with persons outside of the Watchtower is strongly discouraged, even among relatives. The Watchtower organisation uses the fear tactics of
“shunning” and “disfellowshipping” to maintain strict control over members and warns that friends and relatives may try to dissuade them from remaining with the Jehovah Witnesseses (Jehovah’s Christian Witnesses, 2001).

To promote their beliefs, “Witnesses” engage in street ‘witnessing’, which involves the knocking of doors in mainly urban environs. Similar to Amway, The Watchtower and Tract Society (Jehovah’s Witnesses) relies upon the work of individual ‘workers’, to commit to unpaid work called ‘witnessing’. “The Witnesses are very active in door-to-door proselytizing, and have a worldwide missionary outreach to gain new converts. In 1995, they accrued over one billion hours in door-to-door work” (Jehovah’s Christian Witnesses 2001).

Weber first analysed this extreme asceticism and social conservatism with the first Protestant sects, such as the Methodists and Baptists. Their engagement with the world was seen as temporary, necessary and fleeting. Adventists were originally known as the Millerites, and from this, various Adventist groups formed, including the Seventh Day Adventists, Jehovah’s Witnesses and Mormons. At is most elemental, it is religious fundamentalism promoted as something profound, proclaiming the “second-coming” of Jesus Christ. Their apoliticality is expressed by not voting in elections and is a feature of their contradictory stance to politics whilst awaiting Armageddon. Weber thereby implies that the drift to political conservatism is a product of mysticism.

Mysticism intends a state of ‘possession’, not action, and the individual is not a tool but a ‘vessel’ of the divine. Action in the world must thus appear as endangering the absolutely irrational
and other-worldly religious state. Active asceticism operates within the world; rationally active asceticism in mastering the world, seeks to tame what is creatural and wicked through work in a worldly ‘vocation’ (inner-worldly asceticism). Such asceticism contrasts radically with mysticism, if the latter draws the full conclusion of fleeing from the world (contemplative flight from the world). (Weber, 1948:325)

Ironically, in the epoch when thinkers such as Nietzsche proclaimed that God was ‘dead’, the Adventist movement had also decided that God had prophesised the death of the ‘world’, within the immediate timeframe of this epoch. Adventists consequently struggle to maintain asceticism while they wait for Armageddon, and this freezing of moral standards becomes more difficult as Armageddon is continually delayed. Watchtower publications reveal a nuclear family dressed in clothes resembling fashions and styles of the 1950s. The phenomenon of “cultural Adventism” sees that the political and social construct of the ascetic individual, remains, even if a member physically leaves an Adventist style group. If it can be assumed that Armageddon will continue to be delayed there the opportunity remains for Adventists generally to become more involved in politics for they are otherwise fully engaged in the worker-consumer economy. The distinctly American and religious view of the modern capitalist society can be traced to the anti-modern view of history compared to western European nations. These assumptions were lacking the enlightened belief that history was an evolutionary development, and that history could be understood by its past (Marsden, 1980:226).

19 As the secret ballot is a fundamental feature of democracy, people are not actually ‘forced’ to vote, but simply “turn up” to have their names marked off the electoral role.
20 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania.
The Adventist sects of the late nineteenth century, and the overtly separatist sects such as the Branch Davidians of Waco\textsuperscript{21}, along with their direct historical links, share the American tradition begun by the Puritans. It suggests the need for moral control over the state, and is motivated by the belief that without constant vigilance, the state’s secularism may begin to dominate the Protestant concept of individualism. Subsequently due to the unique pressures on this version of the ‘individual’ there is a symbolic form of suicide that manifests itself upon conversion, and this facilitates an escape from a ‘system’ they despise. This cognitive dissonance drives all doubts inward, focusing on control and discipline of the individual in response to negative perceptions and actions carried out by the governing body of the cult.

A more immediate version is the phenomenon of faith healing. This is where personal alienations such as an unhappy marriage or even an illness, will be cured by God, as a product of faith. In fact the greater the alienation, the more one’s faith is tested the more a denial of the temporal world is required, despite their inescapable placement within the materialist conception of history. As Marx argued in respect of Feuerbach’s incomplete materialism and the practice of human labour,

\begin{quote}
The chief defect of all hitherto existing materialism – that of Feuerbach included – is that the thing, reality, sensuousness, is conceived only in the form of the \textit{object or of contemplation}, but not as \textit{sensuous human activity, practice}, not subjectively. Hence, in contradistinction to materialism, the \textit{active} side was developed abstractly by idealism – which, of course, does not
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{21} The thirty-three-year-old self-styled Messiah, christened Vernon Howell, but since 1991 calling himself David Koresh, had become disillusioned with the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, defected, joined the off-shoot Branch Davidians in 1980 and became their leader in 1984 (Lane, 1996:61).
know real, sensuous activity as such. (Marx, 1845: “Theses on Feuerbach”)

Financial or ‘spiritual’ poverty subsequently requires a deeper level of trust in a religious or capitalist sect as an expression of the non-material and material idealism. This is despite the omnipresence of failure or difficulty in maintaining the faith that is overseen by an authoritarian ethos or structure. Religious and capitalist fundamentalism when combined with the literal characteristics of frontier folk wisdom gives “no way out” in either an intellectual or practical sense. This is why despite high levels of failure in Amway and other types of Protestant sects they remain relatively un-scrutinised – failure is not related to their practice or philosophy, the fault must lie within the individual. However in respect to labour centred materialism however, Marx asserts that,

Just as in religion the spontaneous activity of the human imagination, of the human brain and the human heart, detaches from the individual and reappears as the alien activity of a god or of a devil, so the activity of the worker is not his own spontaneous activity. It belongs to another; it is the loss of his self. (Marx, 1844, Estranged Labour)

Australia’s ‘dead heart’; the reification and ossification of Aboriginality

The prevalence of Protestant sect missionaries in the South Pacific challenges the notion that Australian socio-political culture is fundamentally secular. The indigenous peoples of new nations were a particular target for these religions, such as Methodist, Baptist,
and latterly, the various streams of Adventism. Literal interpretations of the Bible being particularly dangerous for peoples with a minimal grasp of English, indigenous groups who in many circumstances had little alternative but to believe what missionaries had told them.

The dead heart phenomenon doubles as the white appropriation of desolate Aboriginal territory and Australia’s consciousness of how Aborigines were conceptualised as noble savages by the white settlers. The collectivisation of the concept of Aboriginality began with the need to proselytize Christianity to the “savages and heathens”, and the homogenising of tribal Aboriginality into missions. This feature circumvents the fact that the ‘Aboriginals’ were a disparate group and did not all live in the desert, but is where they reside in Anglo imaginations. The link can then be made that ‘urban’ Aborigines with large portions of Anglo heritage, are not attending to the needs of the ‘real’ Aborigines who live in remote areas.

The use of the Aboriginal flag, although used as a unifying and politically expedient symbol for a broad Aboriginal identity, can be equally misleading, and be used against those wishing to portray an essential identity based on actual Aboriginal disparateness. This makes it difficult if not impossible for coastal or regional Aborigines to claim a heritage and identity, and for non-indigenous Australians to recognise Aboriginality as a diverse and disparate concept with an entirely different social ontology. The partial acceptance that Aborigines can traverse on pastoral land, while it has been problematic, would appear inconsequential if regional and coastal Aboriginal tribes attempted to use their traditional lands. It would be difficult to imagine that in suburbia, where the great mass of the working and lower middle class live, that they would consider the re-occupation of their patch of the Australian dream. Even more difficult to imagine would
be the sharing of multi-million dollar real estate and homes on Australia’s coastal fringes. Implicitly, Aborigines can have land or use of land, as long as no one else has an immediate use for it, as this does not contravene Protestant values of hard work and ingenuity, which produces immense wealth but justifiable waste and opulence. As Kapferer argues in relation Aboriginal ‘national’ identity,

> Aboriginals have become so close to the centre of nationalist thought that they have suffered from it. An Aboriginal who departs from Australian nationalist ideals, often inspiring a particular Western conception of the purity of tribal like, its unity in space and time, and its “natural” authority rooted in Dreamtime, can contribute to discrimination and administrative hardship exercised by members of the dominant white population. The experience of Aboriginal urban and fringe dwellers is frequent testimony to this (Kaperfer, 1988:142).

The beginning of the Olympic torch relay in Ayers Rock – Uluru typifies how white visions of Aboriginality was manifested in the national celebration of the Sydney Games, and how Aboriginality is ‘centered’ within the Australian desert. After the plane landed on Australian soil for the first time, the flame was passed to Aboriginal elders who passed it then to the first relay runner, Aboriginal athlete, Nova Perris - Kneebone. The actual Olympic opening ceremony, while having several Aboriginal themes and rituals, was initially dominated by the colonial reification of The Man From Snowy River with a lone horseman entering the stadium. Moreover, within the origins of Australian mythology, the bushranger is in conflict with Aborigines as the authentic

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22 1982, director, G. Miller.
Australians.

Their adaptation to the new environment, in its rawest and most difficult form was a nearly as it could be complete. Their lives depended on its being so. Only the Aborigines were more at home in the bush and these, when they took service with the police as black-trackers, the bushrangers feared and hated accordingly. Thus to the pastoral workers, to the free selectors, to lower class people in general, and usually to themselves, they appeared as ‘wild colonial boys’, Australians par excellence. (Ward, 1958:164)

Similar manifestations of the dead and mysterious heart at the ‘centre’ of the Australian national identity were represented in the Azaria Chamberlain disappearance and the film the Cars That Ate Paris. It is a fundamentally inert mythology that continues to mystify problems in Australian cultural history without remedying causes. This constitutes an appropriation of Dreamtime, and as such, needs to remain unsolved.

The township of the fictional Paris, (the name suggesting a cultural antithesis to Paris, France), is a conglomeration of various remote frontier towns in either Australia of America. Inhabited by an incorrigible and backward “white trash”, what they lack in intelligence they make up for in deviousness, by causing accidents for unwary travelers passing through the town. Insular and bizarre, it poses the question whether an alternate economy can be produced by this frontierism, or is perhaps equally restricted by this cultural phenomenon. The allusion to an unsophisticated nation that is in dispute with

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23 1975, director P. Weir. The Cars that Ate Paris, was part of the renaissance in Australian film making which attempted to find ‘authentic’ Australian cultures and traditions, irrespective of how unattractive the discoveries were.
itself is indicated by the brief display of a newspaper headline, (written during the reformist government of Gough Whitlam) “new laws turn Australia towards socialism, say conservatives”.

In the capitalist ontology, the concept of Aboriginality is fixed primarily within a tourist perspective, similar to how islands such as Fiji and Tahiti are marketed as tourist destinations. It promises a visit to a temporal place, where the complexity of Durkheim’s organic solidarity can be experienced for a short period. Many Aborigines are now employed at least partially in tourist type schemes, often “working for the dole”. There is little concept of where to place Aborigines in liberal/egalitarianism, and there is the tendency to treat Aborigines like local flora and fauna, hence the promotion of Aboriginality as a saleable product through tourism. Aboriginal land-rights underpinned this feature, argues Johnson,

Government arguments sometimes seemed to imply that land rights were a leftover issue from our colonial settler past that had to be worked out before we could move on to create the dynamic twenty-first century version of an Australian capitalist economy. Robert Tickner, minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs, predicted that there would be ‘a rapid growth in indigenous business and economic development opportunities over the next five years…… Priority areas for development will include art and craft, tourism, the pastoral industry and businesses associated with the mining industry’. The growth of such businesses would flow from the achievements of the reconciliation process and the related social
justice initiatives including the *Native Title Act* and the establishment of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Fund. Aboriginal culture and identity were becoming ‘trendy’ due to the reconciliation process and therefore saleable. (Johnson, 2000:32-33)

A new division of labour based on degrees of Aboriginality could result, as the educated lighter skinned Aborigines could become managers over ‘authentic’ Aborigines, who reside in remote areas and produce traditional Aboriginal cultural forms. In Thomas Keneally’s *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith*, a light-skinned Aboriginal is the archetypal ‘black’ who has lost his ‘real’ culture, and is caught between versions of colonising and indigenous cultures. The lightness of his skin

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24 Boxer Cassius Clay, later taking the Islamic name of Muhammad Ali, became a symbolic figure in the struggle for black autonomy and identity in America during the 1960s. Former heavyweight champion, and African-American, Floyd Paterson, a Catholic, bore the full brunt of Ali’s verbal and physical attacks. Ali’s use of the taunt, “an Uncle Tom negro”, symbolised his attitude towards black men he believed were overly compliant, and fearful of appearing like they were ‘uppity niggers’. Paterson believed that his attitude towards himself and other black fighter’s was designed to assert that because he was a black Muslim, he also had to appear as the superior black man.

Early on, as Cassius Clay, he had an insolent contempt, a promiscuous spray of disrespect that indicates someone trying to secure rank by mere display, a rather mean fool. When he became champ, he accelerated the contempt that shames and humiliates, especially against those he saw as threats to his superiority and rank amongst blacks, particularly the much loved Floyd Paterson and later the implacable challenge of Frazier. (Kram, 2001, 30)

Within the logic of Social Darwinism, this can be seen as a feature within white power structures which indicate superiority, as two black men fight over the remnants of Social Darwinism’s “second prize”; who is the superior amongst ‘blacks.’ With a distinct white ancestry, as well as a prominent black heritage, Ali used this to influence both white supporters and black detractors. As a result, Ali, the great champion of the black movement, also displayed racism to his ‘brothers’ who were of a fuller ‘caste’. Ali mainly used the notion that the fuller caste opponents such as his main protagonist and rival, Joe Frazier, as ugly and having animalistic characteristics. Frazier became to deeply resent both Ali’s politics and his personal attacks on him, and his role in Ali’s propaganda circus as a bad black man, because of his resemblance to a negro caricature.

Joe Frazier should give his face to wildlife fund! He’s so ugly blind men go the other way! Ugly! Ugly! Ugly! He not only looks bad! You can smell him another country! He held his nose. What will the people in Manilla think? We can’t have a gorilla for a champ. They’re gonna think, lookin’ at him, that all black brothers are animals. “Gorilla”, he said. “Ugly and stupid.” He then dropped low on his haunches, splayed his feet, knuckles waving by his knees, and turned his nose flat and gross as he mimicked an ape. (Kram, 2001:169)
serves as a barometer of his chances to be accepted within the mainstream, and as such, his ability to be inculcated in the imperialistic practices of Christianity and hard work. “Jimmie’s criteria were: home, hearth, wife, land. Those who possessed these had beatitude unchallengeable. Other men had accidental, random life Nothing better” (Keneally, 1972:15).
CHAPTER TWO:
SOCIAL DEMOCRACY and ECONOMIC RATIONALISM

The failure of post-welfare state social democracy poignantly reveals the alienation the ‘people’ experience from nationalism, and the bourgeois imperatives that underpin its existence. Its implied theme is that those groups defined as historically ‘privileged’, (such as white, heterosexual males), have to remain grateful and aware that there has been a ‘lowering’ of personal expectations, for until such time that all social groups attain equal status. The problem with a perhaps well intentioned “political correctness” is that it does not fully explain the underpinnings of prejudice – rather, it shifts ground, hoping no-one will notice the flaws within its frameworks, specifically the type of economic and social relationships that produce an ill-defined ‘patriarchy’. In Marxist terms, ‘individuals’ are taken in the context of the relation to class position and privilege to material advantage. The greater number involved in social group theorisation will inevitably produce those that possess advantage denied to the proletariat. “Individuals have always built on themselves, but naturally on themselves within their given historical conditions and relationships, not on the “pure” individual in the sense of the ideologists (Marx, 1845: “Proletarians and Communism”).

Therefore it should not be surprising that the dominant ‘left and right’ political parties in Australia are now reflecting a similar economic and social agenda. Subsequently it is asserted that the process of social fascism in post-welfare state liberal democracies first occurs from a form of social democracy that attempts a complex management of marginal groups. The re-alignment of capitalist values during the 1970s
profoundly altered the Whitlam government’s broad based social democracy particularly in relation to class based issues. What remained and in essence, ‘affordable’, were liberal left reforms that during the recessions of the 1990s, became derided as “liberal elitism”. As Beilharz indicates,

> It is self-evident that the 1970s were a vital moment in Australian cultural history. But this is only if we look back. Now, if we turn forward, it also becomes clear that the 1980s were constructed very much against a particular, ramshackle image of the 1970s. The Labor decade tried to present itself as everything which the Whitlam interlude was not, and more.

(Beilharz, 1994:82)

The decline in the effectiveness of unions and the ideology of the welfare state, combined with new industries that are less labour intensive, suggests that structural economic and social issues require careful analysis. Marx’s totalising theory is seen in a post-Cold War context as its greatest foible. However it provides greater insight in the labour process in a mode of production, than post-modern discourses that seek freedom and separation from economic and public sphere realities. Subsequently to restrict the level of populism that emerged in Australia during the 1990’s “everything but the real reason” must become the imperative for true social and economic change, based on the rationale that ‘everything’, has now been tried.

Consequently the attempt to include ‘outsiders’, within the hegemony of liberal capitalism is counter-revolutionary and based on a form of liberalism outside of the social individual within history. Moreover the relative class privilege held by academics
reflecting “politically correct” policy is the most enduring legacy of the Whitlam government’s broad-based welfare state and social democracy. Whitlam’s vision for a modern Australia was to be underpinned by the public sector, and the public employment was to reflect the need for a culture of anti-discrimination and political correctness. By the 1980s and early 1990s however, the selective welfare state increased its focus upon the maintenance of this cultural perspective, despite the dramatic decline in public service employment opportunities.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Australian cultural policy studies came together around the idea that cultural studies should engage policy bureaucracies. Writers in this field directly challenged what they saw as an unwarranted suspicion of the State and official politics in cultural studies. But they took a remarkably circuitous route to the policy position, using Michel Foucault’s writings on governmentality to provide theoretical justification – at both the epistemological and ethical levels – for cultural studies’ “move toward policy”. (Sterne, 2003:102)

Sterne’s thesis is that “Foucauldian governmentality provides no mechanism for determining the difference between working with the government and working for the government” (Sterne, 2003:115), and “in taking capitalism for granted, Foucault offers no account of corporate or economic power” (Sterne, 2003: 111)\(^1\).

\(^1\) See chapter seven for an analysis of Foucault’s governmentality thesis; (the control and regulation of bodies).
The Labor Party and neo-liberalism

“There is nothing to look forward to except king-making and wire-pulling in the A.L.P.” (McQueen, 1975:15).

Humphrey McQueen argues that that the formation of the Party came as a direct result of the futility of strike action in the 1890s, and a belief that Parliamentary representatives could ameliorate labour conditions. This pseudo unionism results in “the unionists and others who have found it necessary to oppose the Labor Party are indicative of a different class, of a proletariat” (McQueen, 1975:236). As the capitalist society has shifted focus from heavy industry and manufacturing in the late twentieth century, the problem of the Labor Party not representing the core concerns of workers, has become more apparent. High levels of unemployment produced by the post-industrial society have seen the Labor Party take the capitalist perspective of viewing unemployment as a necessary consequence of capitalist activity. As Marx and Engels argue,

The socialistic bourgeois want all the advantages of modern social conditions without the struggles and dangers necessarily resulting therefrom. They desire the existing state of society, minus its revolutionary and disintegrating elements. They wish for a bourgeoisie without a proletariat. The bourgeoisie naturally conceives the world in which it is supreme to be the best; and bourgeois socialism develops this comfortable conception into
various more or less complete systems. In requiring the proletariat to carry out such a system, and thereby march straightaway into the social New Jerusalem, it but requires in reality that the proletariat should remain within the boundaries of existing society, but should cast away all its hateful ideas concerning the bourgeoisie. Marx & Engels, 1848: (“Conservative or Bourgeois Socialism”)

The late twentieth century Labor Party practically abandoned any reference to the working class, justifying what McQueen saw as specious beginnings of Parliamentary representation for workers. The tenure of former ACTU (Australian Council of Trade Unions), leader Bob Hawke as Prime Minister, was marked by the creation of “super unions”, which removed rank-and-file conflict and participation. Moreover, the function of the Accord represented an informal consensus between government, unions and capitalists. In essence, the government became the protectors of the capitalist rate of profit.

The Accord, through successive major modifications between 1983 and 1993, was a consequence of the unlikely union of Thatcherite economics legitimised by contradictory appeals to the need to modernise the economy and to protect the interests of the least well-off, and implemented within a modicum of Swedish corporatist and welfarist institutional arrangements. (Watts, 1996:62)

Furthermore, for Kuhn, the Labor Party used its ‘capture’ and trust of the working class
to run its neo-liberal reformist agenda that was underpinned by the Accord.

Measures that would immediately attract hostility if pursued by a conservative government are given the benefit of the doubt by workers and unions when implemented by Labor. Under Hawke this mechanism was institutionalised as the 1983 Prices and Incomes Accord. (Kuhn, 1993:24)

The Labor Party Gough Whitlam had recast in his own bourgeois image was the gestation of a different type of masculine personality, and a deliberate shift from a blue-collar image. Yet a particularly ruthless form was re-produced following Whitlam’s sacking that had again seemingly consigned the Labor Party to another long period of opposition. The new Labor ‘men’ expressed a strong desire to dominate in the ‘business’ of government, with the urbane Labor personalities including Paul Keating, Neville Wran, Bob Carr, Graham Richardson². Consequently they were also dedicated to the nullification of the party’s left wing, which was seen as an impediment to seizing and retaining power. The ascent of Bob Hawke of the leadership of the party immediately prior to the 1983 election at the expense of Bill Hayden was to ensure electoral success. Then in 1991, this same ethos enabled Paul Keating to defeat Hawke who was the Labor Party’s longest serving Prime Minister. Suspected underworld involvement in the bashing of left wing M.P. Peter Baldwin, indicated how determined some forces associated with the right were to silence the left in 1980. The tribal-like loyalty of the right, the ruthlessness and efficiency of their machine bureaucracy, has

² Marian Wilkinson’s 1996 biography of Richardson, “The Fixer”, details his role in making the Labor Party a ruthless and poll-driven political party, as well as his association with criminals that were suspected to be involved in the bashing of left-wing MP Peter Baldwin.
led some observers such as former Liberal leader John Hewson\(^3\) to suggest that the right wing faction of the Australian Labor Party, is the closest manifestation of the Mafia in Australia. The symbolic masculinity of the right can be seen as an appropriation of the traditional forms that the Labor Party once represented to greater effect. As Watts states,

> Much of the distinctive ritual, modes of address and policy preferences have been until the 1980s grounded in the figure of the male. In policy terms laborism produced discourses and policies about a male wage-earner rather than the potentially more generic and strategically more open discourse about citizenship which some parts of European social democracy have sustained. Laborism’s ‘workers’ are ‘men’ and ‘mates’ rather than ‘citizens’. (Watts, 1996:50)

The Labor Party’s embracement of liberal and civil rights issues inevitably intensified the orientation of Australia’s traditional conservative parties, the Liberal and National Party Coalition. The long reign of this type of Labor Party between 1983 and 1996, (beginning with the Whitlam government of 1972), solidified the need for the Coalition to move further to the political right to maintain its identity. The deletion of class as a major identifying theme in nationalist politics, created the illusion that there are more significant issues in a nation’s social life. As Frankel asserts,

> Culturally, the Whitlam leadership signified the beginning of a conscious strategy – realised more fully by Wran, Hawke and

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\(^3\) This assertion, made in Parliament in 1993, reflected on the effectiveness of the dominant right wing of the Party to operate as a disciplined machine. Hewson suggested that there was a culture of criminality in this faction. Hewson it is assumed makes these assertions based on the involvement of ‘standover’ man Tom Domican in the Party, and the assault of left wing member Peter Baldwin in 1980.
Keating – to remould the ‘labour party’ into a classless ‘Australian’ party. (Frankel, 1992:34)

Subsequently a post-working class form of social democracy has been promoted by the Labor Party since the advent of the leadership of Gough Whitlam in 1967. The appeal now concentrated on a radical centre of Australian political life, based in what were once thought to belonging to a “lunatic fringe”, such as expanding various civil liberties and embracing environmentalism. The embrace of these policies by a largely mainstream political movement such as the Labor Party captured the electoral support of a new educated elite and a modernisation paradigm stimulated by 1960s ‘radicalism’. By the mid-1970s, the post-war economic boom was clearly over, and what was required was a traditional labour response to the rising unemployment. However the publication in 1971 of *Towards a New Australia*, a collection of essays in the expectation of a Labor government’s role, suggested that,

> An intent to modify and manage capitalism, not replace it; an emphasis on the market as the pivot of the economy; the use of monetary and fiscal controls as the means of managing capitalism; an emphasis on a rational, humane, efficient, ‘mixed-capitalist economy’; and emphasis on meritocracy, hence on equality of opportunity, not on equality per se. (Jaensch, 1989:92)

Whitlam’s quantum shift to the middle class (arguably the creation of a new middle class), originates from a pragmatic and tacit admission that Labor’s traditional support base and belief in class divisions, could not challenge Menzies’ capture of the “middle
ground”, and its middle class hegemony in Australia. “New Labor”, therefore had little alternative but to become middle class reformists if they were to achieve political power in Australia. Reforms like free university education encouraged a new emphasis on the bourgeois value of education, similar to the university led middle class revolts in America in the 1960s. However this approach remained isolated from traditional conservatism, and working class politics that used pragmatic manifestations of Marxism (unionism) to understand the dominant economic and cultural system. As Castles argues,

Gough Whitlam’s accession to the Labor leadership in 1967 marked what seemed to be a major change in Labor strategy from a labourist defence of the working man through the regulation of the wages system to a social democratic strategy of social wage enhancement. (Castles, 1988:149)

The broadening of the Labor Party’s electoral base to incorporate sections of the middle class did not initially weaken their traditional working class support base. Whitlam’s reform saw increased public spending and expansion of the non-means tested social wage now often referred to derisively as “middle class welfare”. Growing unemployment under subsequent Labor governments, saw the support of the traditional working class dissipate, culminating in the 1990s concept of “Howard’s battlers”, who were groups of former Labor voters. The loss of the Party’s core identity, and the failure of “social democracy”, has now placed the Labor Party in a difficult electoral position. ‘Conservative’ elements can still reinforce perceptions that Labor is a high-taxing, pro-welfare party in government, despite the fact that the Labor Party has been at the
forefront of instituting welfare state decline whilst in government. The post-Whitlam Labor Party has therefore struggled with Whitlam’s legacy that attempted to de-stigmatise welfare as a result of cyclical and structural causes of unemployment and underemployment. The underlying issue for Frankel is that,

instead of mass unemployment and poverty producing militant protest movements, we have a labour movement largely preoccupied with constructing a globally competitive ‘productive culture’ rather than a post-capitalist society.

(Frankel, 1992:24)

The long-term high unemployment levels have also extended into the proletarianisation of the middle class, and new adherents in the working class that are now often referred to as ‘aspirational’ The erroneous implication that this is the first time that the working class has aspired for conditions better for themselves or their families, illustrates the intensification of effort required to succeed in the neo-liberal economy. Subsequently the Howard government’s social racism and pernicious treatment of welfare recipients, is a manifestation of the insecurities of the middle and working classes, which ‘values’ their contribution to a difficult economy, while punishing ‘outsiders’, such as Aborigines, asylum seekers, (grateful, employable outsiders rather than more welfare recipients) and the unemployed. As Archer argues, “Howard’s neo-liberalism has a different (and much more complicated message) from that of Hanson. It shares the idealisation of the pre-1970s culture while rejecting its economic relationships” (Archer, 1997:96).

Previously, former Prime Minister Robert Menzies had circumvented politically
divisive issues such as class warfare by emphasising the role of the “forgotten people”. Menzies appealed to those who did not have direct links to the obvious politics of class or did not want to be defined this way – the original aspirational cross-class voter. The attraction of a vague political symbol such as the middle class eventually seduced and ensnared those who were not in Menzies’ original description of membership of such a class. He argued that the middle class, were,

salary-earners, shop-keepers, skilled artisans, professional men
and women, farmers, and so on. These are, in the political and economic sense the middle class. They are envied by those whose social benefits are largely obtained by taxing them, (yet), they are not rich enough to have individual power. (Brett, 1992:6)

The model of the bourgeois family in developing post-war Australia was the cornerstone of life in the lucky country – particularly as the ‘foreign’ connotations of the Cold War impacted on insular Australia. Increasing the sense of insularity through the nuclear family, Menzies referred to the family as “the foundation of sanity and sobriety; it is the indispensable condition of continuity; its health determines the health of society as a whole” (Brett, 1992:7). This feature gave women a recognised role in the home, (a pseudo feminism), taking the emphasis away from male dominated union and workplace activity. Menzies could then suggest and imply that vaguely defined “external concepts” posed a threat to political and social stability – particularly those associated with communism. The “middle class” has thereby become a reified entity in the ‘classless’ Australia, and in an inverse interpretation of historical materialism,
communism was represented a retrograde step, as could ‘progressive’ politics generally. The requirement to secure ‘values’ that shape its existence is a feature of the denial of the alienation experienced by the middle class.

The bourgeoisie is as much subject to self-alienation as the proletariat, “but the possessing class…feels at home in this self-alienation, it finds confirmation of itself and recognises in alienation its own power. Unlike the proletariat, the bourgeoisie has no interest in seeing through and beyond this self-alienation or in removing it. The proletariat, however, is “annihilated” by it, lives an “inhuman existence” and is therefore forced to do everything in its power to remove it, theoretically and practically. (Jakubowski, 1990:110)

These middle class mythologies has served Australia reasonably well, however for at least economically at various periods during Australia’s brief history, it has been easier for working class Australians compared to workers in other mature industrialised countries to ascend class boundaries. It was once relatively common for example, for a young man who had completed his apprenticeship at BHP, (Broken Hill Propriety Ltd) as an electrician or plumber, to leave the company, begin his own small business, and eventually employ others. It is these mythological standards, now largely redundant in practice, which underpinned Donald Horne’s idea of an indolent “lucky country”.4 Consistent with frontier societies that were orientated to an expanding middle class and populism, Ward argues that the bourgeois respectability that emanated from Australian

society following the Gold Rush, terminated the overt romanticism held towards the bushranger. “For example, even the radical, and relatively cant-free, Bulletin took a wholly proper attitude in 1880 to the ‘annihilation of the Kelly’s,’ denying that they, or the spirit they symbolised, possessed any redeeming qualities whatever” (Ward, 1958:153).

While Menzies can be credited with solidifying a conservative tradition in Australia, his approach to the role of state was quantifiably different from that of late twentieth/early twenty-first century ‘liberals’, who often evoke his legacy. The Menzies era serves as a barometer in late twentieth century political history, and reveals how profoundly the Liberal and Labor parties have altered in philosophical structure in the intervening decades. As Bryson asserts,

During the post-Second World War era, when there was a period of over twenty years of conservative government, the platform of the Liberal Party was discernibly more politically liberal. The Party accepted the role of government as to ‘encourage’, ‘stabilise’, ‘maintain’, ‘promote’, ‘stimulate’, and ‘assist’. While there is no sense of any great originating role….neither is anything portrayed as ‘not government business’”. (Bryson, 1992:44)

By using the “Tampa refugee crisis” during the 2001 election as a backdrop, Prime Minister Howard exploited the social and economic fears wrought by globalisation, to assert somewhat contradictorily, that while Australia is a part of the global economy, its people are defiantly ‘Australian,’ evoking the type of racial nationalism not seen since
the “White Australia” policy. Post-welfare state social democratic proponent Mark Latham also reveals the dearth of answers regarding the “social fascist nationalism” wrought by globalisation and the proletarianisation of the workforce. Rather than seen as a disadvantage, (the shrinking of the middle class), it matches an Australian egalitarian and racial ideal that dispenses with a cultural and national ‘flabbiness’.

As long as workers regard their interests as matching those of footloose capital, distributional conflicts are externalised into national contests for competitive advantage. Economic leverage passes to the global sphere of capital, creating new issues of economic sovereignty and equity. Within terms of this analysis, the durability of nationalism is explained away in terms of capitalist hegemony. It is not available to social democracy, however, restricted to national systems of parliamentary democracy, to simply ignore the strength and political importance of nationalism. It needs to develop, consistent with its equity goals, a satisfactory response to the pressing nationalist tensions between the globalised sphere of capital and the localised features of governance. (Latham, 1998:44).
Post-welfare state Labor

Early twentieth century European representative democracy organised in liberal and labour parties were beginning to contest conservative dominance and reflected the requirements of a mature and diverse industrial economy. Post-welfare state labour parties, represent a trend where an increasingly unrepresentative form of democracy, exemplified by the Australian Labor Party’s, “right wing” faction formed a culture of “political correctness”. From his vantage point in 1992, Frankel was able to claim, “the U.S. campaign against ‘political correctness’, for example, has not really made much headway in Australia” (Frankel, 1992:145). However in the following few years it reached epidemic proportions in Australia, as Keating’s political opponents suggested that his vision for a compassionate yet hyper-capitalist Australia was impacting deleteriously on the mainstream. The ability for various small vocal groups to dominate against the omnipresence of the ‘apolitical’ Anzac tradition suggests that interference by the state is superfluous to independent “frontier individuals”. Moreover, Keating was not averse to using overt nationalist symbolism to divert attention away from the recessions of the early 1990s, even originating the notion of the “one nation” before Pauline Hanson. As Wiseman asserts,

The ALP under Paul Keating’s leadership has been very effective at playing the nationalist card, proposing that Australia should break its last ceremonial ties with the Britain monarchy by becoming a Republic. There has also been much talk of creating ‘one nation’ and supporting ‘the promotion of
individual and collective rights on one hand and, on the other, the promotion of common national interests and values’.

(Wiseman, 1996:105)

If political correctness is seen as a manifestation of neo-liberalism, it stems from the institutional problems of Western democracy that places the electorate in a profoundly subordinate position. As Hennessy suggests, “one of the reasons neo-liberalism has succeeded so well is that it works best in countries where there is formal democracy but the public is diverted from meaningful participation in governance” (Hennessy, 2000:77). This broadly un-consultative approach, and the traditional working class constituents that they took for granted, resulted in their collapse as a Federal political force. As Beilharz prophetically stated, “The final irony for Keating may yet be that traditionalism will be caught up in his downfall” (Beilharz, 1994:89). “Political correctness” implies within that in a relative context, a dominant group has “had it good”, and that they now have to have diminished aspirations until such time all social groups achieve equality. Kirchheimer suggests the relationship between interest groups and the former mass political party, acts as a de-facto arm of the party that now attempts to “catch all”.

Only the interest group, whether ideological or economic in nature or a combination of the two, can provide mass reservoirs of readily accessible voters. It has a more constant line of communication and higher acceptance for its messages than the catch-all party, which is removed from direct contact with the public except for the comparatively small number intensively
concerned about the brand of politics a party has to offer these days – or about their own careers in or through the party. (Kirchheimer, 1966:193)

A broader concern for former mass parties that have evolved in catch all movements and beyond, is a permanent loss of identity as their conventional left alliance becomes untenable to return to, and they are stranded if liberal left reforms become unpopular with the electorate. The unique characteristic of Australia politics where the ‘liberals’ are actually conservatives and the Labor Party are the liberals, is a product of the dominance of the labour movement and Labor Party in a historical context.

Lenin pointed this out – ‘Never a socialist party, but a liberal-capitalist one’ – long ago. He noted that ‘The Australian Labor Party does not even claim to be a Socialist Party. As a matter of fact it is a liberal-bourgeois party and the so-called Liberals in Australia are really conservatives’. (Catley & McFarlane, 1974:4)

The impact of a social engineering that has liberal connotations has occurred in an era of de-industrialisation and globalisation in the West that had been preceded by full employment in the immediate post-war years. The employment problems of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries give the appearance of relating to a transformation and decline in the original dynamics of industrial capitalism, based upon labour intensive work based in manufacturing and construction. Political parties that emanated from the labour movement and hence mass support, no longer support working class issues because they have been too difficult to manage in the “post-
industrial” age. With individual nations having no direct ability to alter the ascendancy of capitalism to globalisation, the management and manipulation of marginal groups becomes one of the few areas for government to define a nation’s identity. Policing of the welfare state in particular, can resonate with themes of a lean and hungry economy, keen to do business. However the potential for unemployed people to find work, accompanied by the work ethic, remains one of the key symbols of social and economic power in the West despite a decline in actual employment opportunities.

An unemployment per vacancy ratio existed ranging from 44.4 applicants in the recession of 1983, and 35.0 in the recession of 1993, to a low of 10.4 in 1988 and 14.5 in 1997. Part-time/full-time ratios jumped from 14.8% of the workforce in 1978, to 24.8% in 1997. Part-time workers who want to work more than their allotted hours rose from 13.5% in 1978 to 27.1% in 1997. (Mitchell & Watts, 1997:2)

**The selective welfare state**

The selective welfare state had to demarcate between groups as selectivity became associated with efficiency, and the philosophical desire to lessen the size of the welfare state. Post-welfare state social democratic rhetoric attempts to shift priorities from issues that cost money in real terms, such as unemployment, to identified social issues. While they are not distanced from the politics of funding, the post-welfare state suggests that it is now addressing the most salient social issues of the times. Conversely,
Jamrozik argues that the Australian welfare state has always been selective and residual in function.

It may have been a ‘wage earners’ welfare state’ as argued by Francis Castles (1985), but that concept applied to workers only, providing a minimum wage but not alleviating the inequalities of the market. Unfortunately, the period 1972-1975 benefited mainly the new middle class of professionals and administrators because the traditional and well-entrenched attitudes towards inequality and the narrow perspective on welfare were too powerful to overcome in a short period of time. (Jamrozik, 2001:81)

Moreover, consistent with Kirchener’s thesis that democratic political parties have experienced a weakening of its centre to incorporate potential supporters from its fringe, Frankel considers that the Accord signalled for feminists an opportunity, despite the overall restrictive and conservative orientation of the Accord. In late capitalism the consumer society\(^5\) distinctively aims products at women and the material – diamonds being a girl’s best ‘friend’. It also uses women’s residual antipathy towards men that has not been ‘cured’ by feminism, and perhaps most significantly, women’s moral and social asceticism, which created their principal identifying theme in early capitalism. Feminism, it could be interpreted, ‘plays’ within the epistemology of liberal/egalitarianism, and is by nature, opportunistic. As Frankel argues,

The ideology of the Accord legitimised femocrat activity as a

\(^5\) See chapter five and advertising that exploits ‘female’ characteristics.
form of ‘strategic feminism’ – similar to ‘strategic unionism’. Liberal feminists did not need to be persuaded as they had long been attracted to social-democratic reform agendas. Yet, many socialist feminists in the labour movement, education and social welfare sectors, despite their initial doubts, soon become promoters, or at best, non-opponents of the Accord. (Frankel, 1992:214)

With the labour movement increasingly corporatised, the “big picture” issues of social democracy have replaced the micro groups of the community such as small to medium sized unions. Post-welfare state social democratic policy reveals the Australian Labor Party’s problem with Marxism, by using the language of its oppressors to describe the inadequacy of Marxism to analyse the dynamics of the global economy. Reinvigorated social democratic theorists are now inverting their crude understanding of Marxism to assert that a “skilled worker”, can transcend their relationship to the capitalist order by the accumulation of marketable skill. Workers now can be interpreted as anyone not receiving welfare, or middle class if involved in the post-Fordist labour market.

The bargaining power of highly skilled, internationally competitive labour can often outstrip the value of capital. In a post-industrial economy, not all workers are vulnerable, in the sense of having their labour exploited. Some workers receive an economic premium on the contribution their skills make to the production process. If this contribution is expressed through the international production system, then the value of the premium
is usually multiplied several times over. (Latham, 1998:84).

Latham’s faith in capitalism poignantly reveals the Labor Party’s entrapment in attempting to continue manifestations of Whitlam’s legacy. Social democratic rhetoric served the governments of Hawke and Keating well as they pursued economic rationalist policies that impacted most profoundly on the working class.

Prime Minister Keating was fond of reporting to the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party on his sophisticated social democratic model for Australia: an open and competitive trading economy supported by strong citizenship rights and an effective social safety net. He had much to be proud of, with a record, too rare in Australian public life, of turning good ideas into reality. Yet, perversely enough, the big picture was never quite big enough. (Latham, 1998:8)

The social democratic backlash

The employment crisis in Western democracies from the 1970s onward was exacerbated by the expectation that the exceptional conditions that provided the “long boom” in Western capitalism following World War Two, would continue. As Jamrozik also argues,

In Australia except for the 25-30 years of the post-Word War Two period, unemployment was usually around the mark we now have, (7%-8%, if it were calculated as we calculate it now).
A similar situation was present in most industrialised countries. The exception was the period of the Great Depression during the 1930s, when unemployment was at extremely high levels. In a historical perspective, the so-called ‘long boom’ of the 1950s and 1960s was an aberration, but it came to be regarded as a norm. (Jamrozik, 2001:140)

A feature of Pauline Hanson’s unconscious critique of the “selective welfare state” is that of revealing the hegemony of capitalism. In particular, her critique suggests that for many alienated labour is not an enjoyable or profitable experience. (Capitalism is taken in the Weberian tradition as the internalisation of delayed gratification values and the purchase/ownership of large consumer items such as a house and car, and perhaps the possession of a “savings account”). The long hours worked by small business owners is further evidenced by those who “work hard” such as salespeople meeting enforced targets, to various semi-skilled and unskilled workers whose wages are low and the work menial and repetitive. Conversely, employees of the ‘state’ such as politicians, public servants and academics, or beneficiaries of the “Aboriginal industry” can be viewed as not directly related to capitalist ‘struggle’, and living in a quasi-socialist utopia.

For Hanson, the so-called new class made up of intellectuals, bureaucrats and other elitist no-hopers is the curse of the ordinary battler. It involves an intensely nostalgic recreation of an historical golden age of triumph for ordinary, unpretentious, hardworking, white Australians. For those entering the Hanson
mythology, this supposed achievement is now seen as being threatened by a conspiracy of the major parties, intellectuals and city based big business. The powerful symbols of Aboriginal Reconciliation and Land Rights are seen as particularly dangerous threats to this white heartland. They are resymbolised as a dispossession and a subjection of the battling settler. (Archer, 1997:95)

Therefore unless “social democracy” is underpinned by traditional democratic concerns relating to the ameliorating of labour problems and conditions, it becomes a victim of unleashing of expectations that cannot be met within conventional economic or nationalist paradigms. The tradition of antagonism based on class and capitalism were largely clear and concise – socially progressive ‘issues’ tend to perpetually accumulate in number. This also creates the environment for a populist reverse elitism, as people now feel free to air ‘bigoted’ opinions that contribute to the political and national debate. This development highlights the effect of a folk-lore or ‘wisdom’, and focuses on Gramsci’s contention that, “the notion that “the intellectuals” as a distinct social category independent of class is a myth. All men are potentially intellectuals in the sense of having an intellect and using it, but not all are intellectuals by social function” (Gramsci, 1971:3)

Right wing ideologue and commentator Alan Jones, uses the term “struggle street”, to allude to the working and lower middle class. It is a re-working of the political maxim of appealing to the “hip pocket nerve”, when talking politics to the mainstream. While commentators such as Jones are elucidating an appeal to the “little Aussie
battler” in Australian mythology, such an appeal can also locate the fascist strain that exists in right-wing populism. This relates to the implication that fascist politics has a place within capitalism, for through the elimination of some nefarious racial and social elements, capitalism is an equitable social and economic order and a natural base for nationalist politics. In contrast,

For Marx, “Communism is the positive abolition of private property, of human self-alienation, and thus the real appropriation of human nature through and for man. It is, therefore, the return of man himself as a social, ie., really human being, a complete and conscious return which assimilates all the wealth of previous development. (Fromm, 1961:33-34)

Economic rationalist sourced polemics coming from commentators such as Jones suggest that welfare payments to Aborigines and others are coming out of individual taxpayer’s pockets. This is despite the fact that governments have a variety of sources of expenditure and income, and various names for different types of ‘handouts’, including those to ‘assist’ industry. It also clearly implies that the problems of the urban existence - maintaining an unsatisfying job, (if employed at all) a mortgage, a family, and a concept of the personal, (sex and love), means that there is no time left for so-called big picture issues. Reactionary politics unleashes ‘pragmatic’ lower class conservatives, such as the fictional Alf Garnett, who see that ‘radical’ politics are practiced by ‘bludgers’ who come to the pub with no money. His flippant critique is significant, for what really achieves social power and individuality, is money. Well meaning notions

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6 1970. From the British comedy series, Till Death Do Us Part.
cannot change the true character of capitalism and the centrality of money in the fight against the alienated self.

By possessing the *property* of buying everything, by possessing the property of appropriating all objects, *money* is thus the object of eminent possession. The universality of its *property* is the omnipotence of its being. Money is the *pimp* between man’s need and the object, between his life. But *that which* mediates *my* life for me, also *mediates* the existence of other people *for me*. For me it is the *other* person. (Marx, 1844: “The Power of Money”)

Therefore in the climate of the philosophical reversal of the all-inclusive welfare state, the working class also becomes attracted to an ideology that concentrates on issues of welfare waste and abuse, under a nationalist discourse. Like Margaret Thatcher in the 1979 British elections with the British national front, John Howard was also able to appeal to the respectable racist vote, in the 1996 election while the extremists did the bidding for him. As Johnson asserts, “The ‘race relations industry’ was a common term in ‘Thatcherite’ discourse in the eighties” (Johnson, 2000:46). The small advantage however, gained by attacks on the “race relations industry” is counterbalanced by new pressures placed upon the dominant racial group. To maintain racial and cultural heritage involves overcoming significant economic disadvantage that been produced by economic reform. The emphasis is then upon the structural inefficiencies/problems of the welfare state, rather than the human cost of reform. In Dalrymple’s “common sense” view of the underclass he worked with in English slums, he asserts that;
In the past few decades, a peculiar and distinctive psychology has emerged in Britain. Gone are the civility, sturdy independence, and admirable stoicism that carried the English through the war years. It has been replaced by a constant whine of excuses, complaints, and special pleading. The collapse of the British character has been as swift and complete as the collapse of British power. (Dalrymple, 2001:5)

Dalrymple’s interpretation of the underclass as men chronically unemployed, substance abusers, habitual criminals, in relationships with women who are hapless victims of domestic violence and children suffering physical and sexual abuse, resulted from Margaret Thatcher’s view of a re-invigorated Britain, suggests Hall.

Ideologically, Thatcherism is seen as forging new discursive articulations between liberal discourses of the ‘free market’ and economic man and the organic conservative themes of tradition, family and nation, respectability, patriarchalism and order. Its reworking of these different repertoires of ‘Englishness’ constantly repositions both individual subjects and ‘the people’ as a whole – their needs, experiences, aspirations, pleasures and desires – contesting space in terms of shifting social, sexual and ethnic identities, against the background of a crisis of national identity and culture precipitated by the unresolved psychic trauma of the ‘end of empire’. (Hall, 1988:2)
and ‘subversives’, against the background of Nazi Germany’s ‘excesses’ that provide an exemplar model for democracies to compare and contrast themselves. John Howard’s use of “authoritarian populism” in defining the neo-liberal Australian state is evocative of Thatcher and the phenomenon of pushing, but not crossing, the historical understanding of fascism. Subsequently, no matter how pernicious late capitalism becomes, it can never compare with ‘real’ fascism, as social fascism operates on an economic rationalist criteria that then spreads to the social, seemingly as an unfortunate consequence. For Pusey, as Australia was ‘born modern’, the idea that Australians should have to choose between state intervention in the economy or free markets is not a natural choice. However the economic reformers have been able to inculcate (through the media and at election time), that an American-style ‘economic correctness’ presents private enterprise as the only alternative (Pusey, 2003:157).

Social fascism consequently can appeal to all strata of society, (marked by its self-serving comparisons to ‘real’ fascism) – and appeals particularly those who now have nothing to lose.

The ‘dangerous class’, the social scum (Lumpenproletariat), that passively rotting mass thrown off by the lowest layers of old society, may here and there be swept into the movement by a proletarian revolution; its conditions of life, however, prepare it far more for the part of a bribed tool of reactionary intrigue. (Marx & Engels, 1848: “The Communist Manifesto”)

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Academia and New Labor

Academic developments in the selective welfare state compounds Gramsci’s assertion that, “The popular element “feels” but does not always know or understand; the intellectual element “knows” but does not always understand and in particular does not always feel” (Gramsci, 1971:418). It has proved difficult to inculcate into the broader Australian community, and the ethos of the free market and the power of private employers. This approach promotes a position of an antagonistic polemic that seeks to educate society about its narrow-mindedness as it attempts to defeat Australia’s cultural cringe by obliquely contributing to it. Particularly in relation to the university milieu, it results in the phenomenon of “preaching to the converted”, and coerced those least likely to be misogynists, homophobes and racists. This ignores the fact that the type of traditional masculinity they reproach, is more likely to exist in the type of profession where such gender analysis is absent or minimal, such as the sciences, medicine, engineering, or in entrepreneurial activity. As Sterne asserts,

To draw out the broad contours of history, Zygmunt Bauman (1992) has argued that humanistic intellectuals have moved from “legislators” who legitimised the workings of governments to “interpreters” whose work is largely irrelevant to the functioning of contemporary States. In Bauman’s simultaneously tragic and comic view, the modern state started out by needing its intellectuals, but by the end of the twentieth
century it worked best by ignoring them. (Sterne, 2003:101)

This trend towards intellectual postmodernism reflects a *petit bourgeoisie* professionalism that implies that the marginalisation of labour in a post-Keynesian era is not as bad as it often appears. Moreover, it appears to link heterosexual masculinity to a myriad of stereotypes, ranging from corporate dominance to ‘elite’ working class occupations such as coalmining to domestic violence. The ignorance of changing conditions of life for working class is however based upon a 1960s social science that shifted attention from class-based issues during the post-war full employment period.

Although they acknowledge various influences—from earlier philosophers like Nietzsche to more recent thinkers like Lacan, Lyotard, Foucault, and Derrida—today’s postmodernism belongs above all to the sixties generation and their students. This postmodernism, then, is a product of a consciousness formed in the so-called golden age of capitalism, however much it may insist on the new (“post-Fordist,” “disorganised,” “flexible”) shape of capitalism in the 1990s. (Meiksins Wood, 1997:3)

Ultimately, as Pusey suggests, the inclusion of women in the labour market forces a co-habiting couple to earn what was once possible for one wage-earner, as “economic reform has made families more dependent on the market in a situation of rising consumption, rising debt, falling savings and eroding labour market lifetime incomes” (Pusey, 2003:91).

As women have been traditionally marginalised in capitalism and unionism, much of first and second wave feminism has been concerned with redressing the discrimination
against women in the public sphere. However the proliferation of employment growth in service sectors and casual employment generally, has not dispensed with the masculine bias in what remains of unionism. The new service industry of the so-called “call-centres”, operate on the principles of ‘Taylorism’\(^7\), where maximum effort is expelled in minimum time. As Beder states,

\[
\text{millions of employees today are subject to some form of electronic surveillance of their work, such as counting key strokes or keeping track of time spent on telephone calls. Such monitoring is just as intimidating, persistent and stressful as an assembly line. (Beder, 2000:141)}
\]

The employers exploit not only women’s traditional antipathy to unionism, but also the modern ‘superwoman’ image of the woman who juggles a job or career with the main responsibility of household\(^8\). Therefore to suggest that the pace of work is too great is to admit failure to a phenomenon that poses a challenge to masculine capability that thrives on over-tasking. As Kuhn argues, despite the influence of the Accord in Australia’s political and social history “the proportion of women in middle income jobs was nineteen per cent lower in 1990 than 1975”. Furthermore, “the centralised phase of the Accord initially froze existing inequalities in place, a situation compounded by the Commission’s rejection of the comparable worth claim” (Kuhn, 1993:36-37).

The inclusion of women at the margins proves that capitalism ultimately has no gender bias, (as this was ever in doubt), as the egalitarian mythology dominant in the descriptions of Australian democracy, has been altered to bring women within the ethos.

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7 The most significant “time and motion” expert in twentieth century capitalism. J.C.Spender & H.J.Kline eds. 1996 “Scientific management: Frederick Winslow Taylor’s gift to the world?”
The advocacy for equality in the labour market after generations of an unequal relationship between men and women cannot be achieved without an increasing competitiveness amongst all ‘labourers’. In a victory for liberalism and capitalism, this can be seen as evoking a new and more complete version of egalitarianism. Marx, reflecting on the nineteenth century phenomenon of replacing male labour with women and children, argues;

The more productive capital grows, the more it extends the division of labour and the application of machinery; the more the division of labour and the application of machinery extend the more does competition extend among other workers, the more do their wages shrink together. (Marx, 1944:39) (emphasis in original)

Neo-liberal “success stories” of women breaking through the “glass ceiling” and working in traditional male dominated employment such as entrepreneurship and technical spheres has not altered women’s overall marginalisation in industrial capitalism, nor that of working class men. Such success therefore, is at the expense of others, and is characteristic of a class based economic and social system. The role of enthusiasm and subservience by ‘outsiders’ to liberal capitalism, then acts as a general warning to those reject the notion of a ‘McJob’ in favour of welfare.

Female part-time employment now accounts for 21 per cent of total employment (12.3 per cent in 1978) and 46 per cent of total female employment (34 per cent in 1978). Male part-time

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8 See chapter five.
employment has steadily increased and now accounts for 8 per cent of total employment (3 per cent in 1978) and 15 per cent of all male employment (5 per cent in 1978). (Mitchell & Muysken, 2003:5)

Despite the legitimate claims about social and economic marginalisation under capitalism, women’s primary employment options have exacerbated the gender divisions inherent in a capitalist social order. In the context of neo-liberalism, women’s relationship to the neo-liberal labour market suggests a relationship similar to Weber’s view of the symbiotic connection between Protestantism and capitalism\(^9\). Working class men’s ambivalence and disengagement with the ‘status quo’, as articulated through unionism, produced a more relaxed attitude toward the demands of capital. A withdrawal of labour as represented through the appropriation of domestic work, would been seen in the context as an attack on the family, rather than attempting to subvert the inequities in capital, that exist ‘outside’ the home. A central theme and justification suffragists used was that so exemplary was women’s performance in the private sphere, that its value should be naturally extrapolated into the public domain.

The suffragists’ ultimate conclusions were that private morality could be transferred to the public level; that public persons ought to be judged by the rigorous standards of the private sphere; that the public (im)moral qualities men exhibited were probably innate to the male character, but that they, too, could be transformed (as could public life by the entry of women into

\(^9\) See chapter five.
it); that the qualities women exhibited were innate and were not merely an outgrowth of their enforced domesticity; that these same qualities were the qualities that would invest the political sphere with a sanctified aura. (Elshtain, 1982:63)

The tendency for women are to be over-represented in the lower level bureaucracy of the public service or related agencies, (despite large reductions in overall public servant staff), results from affirmative action policies and the disciplined code of the outsiders to liberal capitalism that produces the desired utilitarian effect for employers. The growth in the policing of unemployed is one area where these features can be advantageous, and where a “moral dimension” is used in the era of welfare state decline. This dynamic was apparent in the British response to disciplining and regulating the unemployed in the neo-liberal economy. Considine reports that,

The UK offices mostly employed women who made up seventy per cent of staff, higher than for the other countries in the study. This contrasted with the client population who were mostly men and this required careful planning in situations where job seekers became angry and violent (Considine, 2001:49-50).

The capitalist view of political correctness is recognised in a piecemeal fashion, and as a consequence, it has been prone to hegemonic corrections. However the ‘value’ that women bring to capitalism, and the divisiveness that liberal left theory presents, has seen it build its own niche in the capitalist economy. The conflict between good intentions and political reality is described by Speier as a process of “the economic need for gain, the political need for power, the social need for recognition figure prominently
in the theories that attempt to uphold the social determination of ideas” (Speier, 1970:267).

Academics in the humanities face a dilemma not presented in those academically trained professions that are not directly related to solving the complex psycho/social needs of individuals and societies. Consequently the elitism accorded to other professions, becomes problematic in the humanities that also use a middle class perspective. The challenge relates to whether to approach the dilemma similar to the “trickle down ethos” of capitalism, or engage directly with the social problems of the working or underclass. In the Australian context, the left and right wing has traditionally been bland and follow narrow polemical precepts and targets. The best option is to place these imperatives within a strategic position that exploits the ease of “ripping off” the Australian state. As Frankel argues in relation to feminism,

> Apart from minority radical currents, key aspects of feminism as practised in the public sphere have become profoundly de-radicalised. Even the feral forms ceased to frighten the suburbanites as they were assimilated or safely marginalised in the university and bureaucratic zoos. (Frankel, 1992:208)

Post-welfare state social democracy therefore is the new conservative left wing, occupying the space once taken by trade unions, with a similar degree of effectiveness in altering profound social and economic inequities. Its paradigms are bounded by a symbiotic relationship to ideology, policy, organisation and practice. Subjects such as Sociology, known for its interest in minority or “politically correct” issues, now constituted by much which was Labor government policy in regard to gender issues and
multiculturalism. For academics particularly, where much Cold War and social
democratic rhetoric has sprung, it reveals the bargaining position academics have been
able to wield in the capitalist society that is dominated by popular culture. There also
remains the prospect, similar to that of trade union leaders who are also divorced from
physical labour, of developing facile concern and imitation. Academics who concentrate
on social democratic issues can then resemble the trade union official – concerned but
relieved-to-be-distanced from the actual process of labour. Compounded by the fact
that, “It is well known that the various forms of Western Marxism thrived within
academic circles and were almost totally divorced from the labour movement” (Frankel,

The ascetic, contemplative academic is not a serious threat to ingrained inequality
due the trade-off they have within capitalism, “as it the separation of mental from
physical labour that permits the existence of a consciousness which believes itself to be
independent of material factors” (Jakubowski, 1990:83). Academics have replaced
mediaevalist religious scholars, where they represent a small proportion of people who
are truly literate. The use of universities to promote social equity, suggests that a state
that is mature and capable of reflexivity without the threat of dramatically altering it.
However in their general orientation and persona, academics resemble ascetic
Victorian/Enlightenment scientists, on which scientific method is concentrated. The
focus on models of literacy and a specialised academic form of argument negates other
options for overthrowing of state oppression, such as violent insurgencies. For Marx,
‘contemplation’ cannot compete with the need for a broader development of
‘consciousness’, which was preceded by production.
Man seeks to satisfy economic needs, produces means of satisfaction, creates new needs and reproduces himself – and in these four activities he cooperates with other men. Only after we have recognised these four aspects of the original historical relations, Marx declares, do we find that man also has consciousness. “Contemplation” was subsequently presented as a socially necessary illusion of man living in a capitalistic society; the so-called fetish character of that society serves to account for the contemplative attitude of philosophers who, failing to appreciate the dynamic and dialectical nature of the social structure, have no material interest in changing it. (Speier, 1970:268)

The growing pressure from governments for universities to find their own sources of funding, places pressure on Arts-based and humanities courses to reflect contributions to commercial culture. Disciplines in the Arts, which are often totally dependant on government funding, need to project their worthiness to the state and the nation. However, despite overall academic loyalty to this principle, they, along with other sections of the labour market, are increasingly pressured to undermine workplace standards and their traditional themes of autonomy and independence. The method of an overall acquiescence to capitalist demands, and a fairly organised and muted concept of dissent is manifested by the fact that;

Dilettantes and academics can afford to keep silent since they produce books for personal and/or career reasons.
Revolutionaries who retreat from any ideological struggle abandon one of their most important defences against the bourgeois trap of ‘good manners’ which are nothing more than rules for fighting on their terms and in no way preclude their backstabbing and gossiping. The impropriety of public debate is mild stuff compared to their maliciousness over cups of tea. (McQueen, 1975:14)

McQueen therefore is alluding to a central problem in academia – their *petit bourgeois* status - with the language and psychology of manners and civility being an invitation onto a terrain of limited power. This then can act as a delineation of what they dislike about the working class in comparison to the importance and significance of the working classes’ historical and social marginalisation. In the neo-liberal economy, the fear of the “savages at the walls of the city”, is represented more by the working class than Aborigines for example, who are once removed from the class struggle. Consequently while intellectual independence has coincided with a professed antipathy and ambivalence to the capitalist mode of production, they have become entrapped in its cultural and economic hegemony, due to the academic tendency for ‘abstraction’. The tensions in the neo-liberal workplace relating to job security and work-loads, also increases the tendency to ‘backstab’ colleagues out of frustration, and indicative of a growing sense of powerlessness.

The broadening of the scope and function of universities begun by the Whitlam Labor government ultimately created more academics in the social democratic ethos of ‘embourgeoising’ society. It also reduced the academic to the level of a public servant,
as academics became increasingly aware of the link between their employment and government policies. A phenomenon of governments desire to obscure the sharp and consistent rise in unemployment since the 1970s, has been to advocate greater high school retention, subsequently leading to a larger number of students attempting university degrees. This has turned academia from a part-time job, full-time occupation with light teaching responsibility, to one much closer to the pressures felt by school teachers. For while,

School retention rates had indeed more than doubled since 1983, but one never escaped the impression that the public suspected keeping kids at school was a means of keeping the unemployment rate down. Another section of the public, who were regularly represented among the talk-show calls and newspaper letter writers, believed their diligent, deserving children were suffering because children who were only fit for ‘dead-end jobs’ now remained at school to disrupt classes and drag down standards. (Watson, 2002:224-225)

Similarly, the advent of ‘Medibank’ while initially offering security for General Practitioners through the ethos of a national health scheme then reduced their faith in “socialised medicine” by increasing an emphasis on the means testing of patients. This was then combined with providing insufficient funds to provide the necessary support for the maintenance of such a health care philosophy. As Marx argued, “the bourgeoisie has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honoured and looked upon with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of
science, into its paid wage-labourers” (Marx & Engels, 1848: “The Communist Manifesto”).
CHAPTER THREE:

COMPETING ‘WELFARISM’

The notion of wide-scale welfare abuse has attained hegemonic status. Despite consistently high levels of unemployment during the last thirty years, the suggestion that ‘individuals’ are primarily responsible for their joblessness remains. Sustained by an unquantifiable assertion that the unemployed are simply not trying “hard enough”, it largely ignores the cultural developments such as welfare poverty traps that results in the unemployed ‘choosing’ government benefits over low-paying work. Ignoring working class issues in time of great structural change has become a tradition in all Western countries, focusing on minority issues that enhance a democratic ideal “on the cheap”. The concept of “mutual obligation” for the poor removes any doubt if indeed any existed, that an individual’s worth is aligned to their respective positions in the labour market. As Harvey argues, this is related to the re-alignment of capitalist values during the 1980s.

And then there is the whole question of how an “industrial reserve army” of labour has been produced, sustained and manipulated in the interests of capital accumulation these last decades, including the public admission by Alan Budd, an erstwhile advisor to Margaret Thatcher, that the fight against inflation in the early 1980s was a cover for raising unemployment and reducing the strength of the working class. “What was engineered”, he said, “in Marxist terms – was a crisis in capitalism which re-created a reserve army of labour, and has
allowed the capitalists to make high profits ever since.” (Harvey, 2003:262-263)

The traditional tension between liberalism and individual freedoms and the policing powers of the state, results in the “social fascist” strain being barely concealed behind liberal/egalitarian nationalist discourse. Post-welfare state social democracy has become complicit in this new virulent and strident form of nationalism, which imitates fascism through the sublimation of dissent for the “national good”. At a time when “global forces” limit a nation’s ability to act with autonomy, welfare also becomes a key ideological weapon for governments. Rhetoric that asserted that ‘Aboriginality’ was more deserving in a nationalist and welfarist ontology eventually produced the rationale for the conservative backlash, which undermined the idea of universal welfare access. A problematic middle class reformist ethic, later satirised as emanating from a “liberal elite”, enhanced the creation of a socially conservative government and created a two-tiered democracy. As Wiseman suggests, “the most lasting legacies of Labor’s period in government will be a deregulated and globalised economy fully engaged in a race to the bottom with the low wage, low taxing economies of South East Asia” (Wiseman, 1996:101).

Perhaps the most difficult and intractable problem of capitalism, unemployment exists as both an example of capitalist ‘efficiency’ and its ruthlessness. This chapter extends the themes of chapter two where it was argued that post-welfare state social democracy has increased the levels of alienation for the working class. Reference to a “post-industrial society” obscures the type of work conditions that still exist for workers in new industries such as fast food, call centres and hospitality that are organised on the same principle of the nineteenth century factory. As Marx noted,
Modern Industry has converted the little workshop of the patriarchal master into the great factory of the industrial capitalist. Masses of labourers, crowded into the factory, are organised like soldiers. As privates of the industrial army, they are placed under the command of a perfect hierarchy of officers and sergeants. Not only are they slaves of the bourgeois class, and of the bourgeois state; they are daily and hourly enslaved by the machine by the overlooker and above all, in the individual bourgeois manufacturer himself: The more openly this despotism proclaims gain to be its end and aim, the more petty, the more hateful and the more embittering it is. (Marx & Engels, 1848: “Bourgeois and Proletarians”)

**Unemployment and notions of ‘bludging’**

The late twentieth century had been marked by the notion of “the end of ideology”, coinciding with the decline of twentieth century communism. Post welfare state social democracy has implied that ill-defined concepts of compassion and inclusiveness, separate from the politics of work, will compensate sufficiently for a society that needs specific answers to structural problems. Its parameters are unclear, and as a result the outcome is often glib, pretending to offer opportunity and equality to those who are ostensibly blocked from middle class aspirations. Previously, the key to an expanding middle class was the product of government invention in the economy through tariff

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protection for major industries, and an alliance to the economic logic of Keynesianism.

As Pusey asserts,

Until the early 1960s, about 60 per cent of Australian secondary industry was protected by tariffs. During those postwar years to 1965, Australian gross domestic profit increased by nearly 5 per cent per annum, faster than in the United States or Britain, and with lower levels of unemployment and poverty. Incomes were, disputably, more equally shared than in any other ‘developed’ nation in the world. Real average weekly earnings for employed males grew by 52 per cent from 1945 to 1965. (Pusey, 2003:22)

Economic reform has now created a permanent underclass, where they are alienated from all mainstream functions, such as work and housing, the principal themes of survival in the urban society. The tension between good intentions and economic reality is played out from;

The fierce pressure to attract footloose capital, expand exports and compete on more open world markets generates a process variously described as ‘downwards harmonisation’ a ‘race to the bottom,’ ‘competitive austerity’ or the ‘low road to restructuring’ in which there is constant downwards pressure on wages, working conditions, social programmes and environmental protection. (Wiseman, 1996:94-95)

Subsequently the welfare state can be seen as a patchwork response to capitalist inefficiency and inequity, with its post-welfare state form defining the politics of a neo-liberal work culture. The policing of the welfare state, particularly of those on
unemployment benefits is contrasted with the glorification of gratuitous wealth that is appropriated by a relative minority\(^2\). The disdain of the “well-off” is matched by those on low wages who can easily be persuaded about the connection between the high rates of tax and a ‘bludging’ minority who abuse an overly ‘generous’ welfare system. While welfare access is based on egalitarianism, governments have concentrated on stigmatisation in an attempt to limit the number of applicants. Alternatively, this ostensibly ‘generous’ system of welfare also forces those retrenched before retirement age to live off accrued superannuation (that is otherwise inaccessible) in preference to collecting government benefits\(^3\). As Beder points out, “today Australia has one of the ‘most tightly targeted welfare systems in the OECD – and one of the stingiest’, spending a significantly lower proportion of GDP on welfare than the average OECD country” (Beder, 2000:159-160).

A distinctive theme that has emerged from the existence of a more flexible and vulnerable labour market is how quickly a responsible taxpayer can be transformed into a potential welfare abuser, and that success or failure in securing employment is defined by the eternal question of is the individual trying “hard enough”. Compared to the legislative protection existing for other marginalised and stigmatised groups in the community, systemic and verbal abuse of an unemployed person is seen as a ‘natural’ feature of their status.

‘Bludging’ is then often seen apocryphally as a manifestation of the Australian beach culture, where an unemployed person prefers to spend their time rather than looking for,

\(^2\) This form of private property is in contrast with classical liberals such John Locke who had also placed private property central to his interpretation of liberalism. “Locke believed people should be allowed to accumulate only as much as they could use. He did not support amassing huge fortunes in the hands of some people while others lived in poverty” (Baradat, 2003: 75).

\(^3\) Cash amounts of between two and a half to five thousand dollars, can be counted as “liquid assets” affecting payment of benefits. www.centrelink.gov.au
or engaged in work\textsuperscript{4}. Work-shy tales also emanate from the Australian traditional ethos of working to live, rather than living to work, yet ironically, Australians now have to work harder to maintain the lucky country legacy. Residual welfare states will use elements of a nation’s mythology to stigmatise the individual, (in the projected hope that the treatment will push the abuser into action – or perhaps more saliently that “dole-bashing” has become a new national sport). An unpublished 1974 study into the work-seeking activities of the unemployed suggested very few are work-shy, (as did similar studies in the US and UK), however the media preferred to emphasise the “beach bum” having fun at the taxpayers expense. As a result of a negative media campaign suggesting abuse of welfare in 1975, a poll found that the question of “did unemployed people want to work” that had provoked a response of thirty per cent in 1974, had risen to forty-eight per cent in 1975 (Beder, 2000;159).

That ‘bludging’ is linked with physical rather than mental labour, ignores the fact that the eradication of alienating work through continued mechanisation and computerisation, practically invites the unemployed person to “take it easy”. Moreover, in this context, it becomes clearer why Marx considered the working class as the agents of revolutionary change in the industrial society – humankind was either going to be advantaged by technological benefits that eradicated alienating work, or they were simply dispensed with unceremoniously as the advancements occurred in the usual haphazard fashion.

However at its peak, labour intensive work was an “alienation trade-off” for the working class; as unchallenging repetitive work was rewarded with generous staffing

\textsuperscript{4} The so called “Byron Bay” policy limits the movement of unemployed people into areas of high unemployment. Such relocations of unemployed people can result in financial penalties, such as forgoing benefit receipt for up to six months. www.centrelink.gov.au
levels and job security. This feature also applied to lower level public servants whose work was principally manual in orientation. The association that this work was conducted at relaxed levels of exertion has underpinned the rationale of efficiency cutbacks in staffing levels. While ‘bludging’ is a relatively new term that originated in the response to long-term structural unemployment, the notion of disciplining workers has always had currency in the industrial capitalist society.

A man does not “by nature” wish to earn more and more money, but simply live as he is accustomed to live and to earn as much is necessary for that purpose. Wherever modern capitalism has begun its work of increasing the productivity of human labour by increasing its intensity, it has encountered the immensely stubborn resistance of this leading trait of pre-capitalistic labour. And today it encounters it the more, the more backward (from a capitalistic point of view) the labouring forces are with which it has to deal. (Weber, 1930:60)

Hence governments have been successful in using the desire to work to force the workers to internalise their ‘inadequacies’ that ultimately portrays government’s function as ‘lackeys’ for business, rather than deal with the actual causes of unemployment. Within a paradigm that a traditional welfare state equals abuse of taxpayer largesse, a “carrot and stick” approach is used by the government to force or push people into what the government implies, is innumerable work opportunities. This is further revealed in Minister Abbott’s speech, when he states,

another way to make work pay is to make non-work pay. If the alternative to working for a wage is working for the dole, there’s
much more incentive to take work, particularly the entry-level
and temporary jobs that employers often find hard to fill even
when unemployment is high” (Abbott, 2001:4-5).

Lost in the rhetoric of welfare abuse and ‘grateful’ welfare recipients is the fact that
pernicious treatment of those out of work has a significant impact on those ‘in work’.
The competition to avoid the dreaded “dole queue” is used by employers and
governments to maximise employee output, minimise wages. In some instances,
employees, in their enthusiasm to work efficiently, “work their way out of a job”. This
relates to capitalism’s tendency to ‘cannibalise’ those who contribute to its success, by
using fewer workers to do more work. As Marx asserts,

The worker becomes all the poorer the more wealth he produces,
the more his production increases in power and size. The worker
becomes an ever cheaper commodity, the more commodities he
creates. The devaluation of the world of men is in direct
proportion to the increasing value of things. Labour produces
not only commodities: it produces itself and the worker as a
commodity – and this at the same rate at which it produces
commodities in general. (Marx, 1844: “Estranged Labour”)

Moreover, the ability for people to make money simply through investments
theoretically creates the situation where investors never actually have to work. When
this is combined with the beneficiaries of corporate fraud, leaves a significant gulf in the
operation of a work ethic based on ascetic and disciplined codes. As in Marx’s thesis of
alienation where the labourer experiences a “death” in the practice and experience of his
work, the unemployed become “cannon fodder”, in the ‘war’ against national
subversiveness and indiscipline. They become a metaphoric step away from being expendable within the national discourse and occasionally as a literal reserve army in an un-winnable military conflict. Short of this becoming public policy, the individualisation of structural unemployment produces a form of public shaming. Already identified by a menagerie of concession cards, the only feature preventing a more permanent form of public identification and shaming, (such as the wearing of the cards in public), is the egalitarian mythology which underpins the otherwise pernicious unemployment policies. As Marx suggests, the marginalisation and stigmatisation of unemployed ‘individuals’ is an inherent feature of the relationship between labour and capital.

Capital can multiply itself only by exchanging itself for labour-power, by calling wage-labour into life. The labour-power of the wage-labourer can exchange itself for capital only by increasing capital, by strengthening that very power whose slave it is.

**Increase of capital, therefore, is increase of the proletariat, i.e., of the working class.** (Marx, 1944:27) (emphasis in original)

As there are high rates of welfare dependence but with no clear alternatives, welfare becomes a central feature in the politicisation and proletarianisation of the middle class, and the attempt to eradicate class-consciousness amongst the working class. Both classes are now amenable to the “abuse of taxpayer” rhetoric that selective welfarism creates. This battle amongst the ‘lowers’, in social Darwinistic terms, is used

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5 As Beder points out, the ritualistic shaming of the unemployed goes back to at least to the seventeenth century when the poor wore badges on their sleeves. “Those receiving poor relief in the American colonies were also required to wear badges sewn into their clothing” (Beder, 2000:161).
symbolically and metaphorically for those remaining in employment, and in the name of ‘survival’. All are expected to be as ruthless and efficient as the capitalist.

The comfortable majority has been developing an increasingly antagonistic attitude towards the marginalised persons, perceiving them to be ‘dole bludgers’, or irresponsible and morally suspect. That attitude is deliberately cultivated by the government and by many public figures. The ‘underclass’ – a socially and economically marginalised population in sociological terms – becomes a ‘moral underclass’ – a population with perceived inferior personality characteristics (probably with deficient genes), with biological determinism expressed in many forms. (Jamrozik, 2001:146)

However despite massive social dislocation brought about by de-industrialisation and globalisation, and hysteria regarding welfare abuse, the balance of recipients versus expenditure reveals that despite the growth of overall recipients, its impact on GDP, (gross domestic product), has remained relatively stagnant. While in 1966 recipients as a percentage of the population were 8.7%, and rising to 32.4% by 1995, expenditure had risen from 4.3% in 1966 to 9.6% in 1995 (Latham, 1998:201). Abstract categories such as unemployment statistics then become the determinant, and without recognition of the incongruity that unemployment is both de-personalised, but a problem of the “individual”. Previously,

The transformation of the conceptually liberal state into a welfare state, or – in broader terms – the transition from liberal to organised modernity, involved the ‘substitution of the
homogeneous language of statistics and social research for the contradictory language of rights’. Or, as Winston Churchill put it in 1911 on the occasion of the passing of the British National Insurance Act, it meant ‘bringing in the magic of average to the aid of the millions’ (Wagner, 1994:106).

The movement away from the all-inclusive welfare state, to one that is “means-tested”, results in the welfare state becoming increasingly problematic. For means testing immediately implies the practice of abuse as the rhetoric of the “safety net” is applied to a range of issues. While all Western democracies have experienced a rescinding of the welfare state, residual systems in the United States, Great Britain and Australia remain the most vulnerable, as the “safety net” becomes increasingly tested against capitalist normalisations. A toughening of welfare criteria can be seen as an outcome of economic reform that articulates profound difference between “winners and losers”. For Pusey, despite the fact that “Middle Australia” clearly see who are the winners and losers of economic reform, judgements about the fairness of the restructuring has produced a hardening of attitudes even during times of economic boom (Pusey, 2003:45).

Post-welfare state social democratic rhetoric and practice therefore plays a central role in producing welfare outcomes that assert notions of the deserving and undeserving poor. In neo-liberal terms it also suggests that traditional welfare provision does not cater for ‘individual’ needs. Wagner suggests that such perceptions are an inherent feature of the standardised welfare state bureaucracy.

Interventionist policy-making had relied far too strongly on the idea of the possible cognitive mastery of society. The definition
and analysis of societal issues that could be turned into policy problems seemed relatively unproblematic at the height of social science optimism. For policy-makers and administrators it was often an incomprehensible and painful experience to see that the instruments they offered had been derived from a problem definition which their clients and supposed beneficiaries did not all share (Wagner, 1994:133)

The argument that welfare packages do not cater for individual needs, allows the practices of capitalism to remain as unencumbered as possible, as “individual needs”, are overwhelmingly defined by the culture of business. Significantly, it cast no aspersions on capitalism itself, and its traditional failure to generate economic and social equity. Alternatively, Aboriginality as the most deserving welfare category, evoking the inclusive policy of the original welfare state, does little to shift Aborigines away from being permanent welfare subjects, as well as creating divisions between the Anglo working and middle class. The politicisation of the welfare state thereby plays a significant role in restricting working class recognition of the source of their oppression and subsequent reliance on welfare. As Jakubowski states in relation to the core identity of the bourgeois state,

The lack of a developed proletarian class consciousness is thus vital to the existence of the capitalist state. If the state apparatus is to maintain the class rule of the bourgeoisie in a period when the objective economic conditions for its defeat are already a reality, then to have a monopoly on the ownership of weapons is not enough. The maintenance of bourgeois rule requires also
that the proletariat and the other oppressed layers have no clear socialist consciousness. (Jakubowski, 1990: 52)

The broadening of the welfare state by Gough Whitlam, was followed almost immediately by a winding back of reforms by subsequent governments, both conservative and reformist. Malcolm Fraser in particular, attempted to shift the focus back onto the work ethic with his famous epithet “that life wasn’t meant to be easy”. In the frontier context, this perspective also resonates with the assertion that “hard work never killed anyone”. The re-alignment of capitalism during the 1970s asserted the need for the re-definition of the high unemployment capitalism as being partially related to the phenomenon of the unemployed as individuals that had become welfare dependent. Therefore the notion of a job, any job, is preferable to a residual welfare state that stigmatises those brave or desperate enough to register for support. A simple connection can then be made those recipients who were more likely to be ‘bludgers’, or “job snobs”. For Castles then, the reality lay in the fact that there were actually “too few jobs”.

For the Fraser Government, it was no longer the case that the level of employment ‘was the chief test of whether economic policies are successful’, or, if it was, the test seemed to imply policies exactly the reverse of those which the Liberals had thought appropriate less than a decade earlier. The deficit and public expenditure levels were targeted as chief public enemies, and it has been argued that, in the Fraser years, Australia experienced a welfare backlash, despite not yet having achieved
anything like the status of a fully matured welfare state.

(Castles, 1988:27)

More recently the Federal Minister for the Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business, Tony Abbott, argued

since the beginning of the welfare state, successive governments here and abroad have made the discovery that guaranteeing the wherewithal for life can easily remove the motivation for work. After one hundred years, western countries are still coming to terms with the complex impact of the welfare state on the work ethic and wrestling with new ways of supporting people which don’t discourage self-help. (Abbott, 2001:1)

Deliberate welfare income choice or ‘abuse’ can occur when poverty traps inherent in welfare are preferable to choosing low paid employment. Transport, health care concessions or public housing subsidies are factored in when considering the effects of employment that takes individuals off benefit. Particularly for those with children, it becomes increasingly difficult to find an unskilled or entry-level position that will justify, in the short or long term, leaving a benefit payment and associated concessions. Given that rising unemployment rates coincided with the Whitlam’s government’s brief attempt to de-stigmatise welfare provision, welfare as a lifestyle choice for some would be undeniable. If it is accepted that the unemployed are the most alienated in the community, with too much “time on their hands” the feared reality of the social security ingrate can become a legitimate social reality.

Since production is the expression of the social life of men, and since the product is therefore the objectification of this social
existence, the alienation of labour has the effect of an alienation
of man from man. Social life becomes merely a means for man’s
self-preservation. (Jakubowski, 1990:86)

Unemployment that results partially from the problems created by global “level playing fields,” sees those countries with the lowest minimum wage levels dominating labour intensive employment. The undermining of the welfare state at a time when it is greatly needed is evocative of a ‘need’ to discipline and punish the unemployed of the Western countries, despite structural unemployment. Consequently the white civilisation has to prove itself superior to the feared ‘Asianisation’ of the Asian Pacific, because of their significantly lower minimum wage levels. This is then matched by the increased policing powers of the welfare state as welfare recipients are further monitored, stigmatised and conditioned. Abbott argues that the resentment of people whose benefits rarely seem enough, coupled with the resentment of middle-income taxpayers at those “working the system”, threatens to undermine the social consensus on which the welfare state rests. (Abbott, 2001:1-2)

What Abbott fails to acknowledge is that the Government is actively stoking the resentment of these “middle-income taxpayers”, through the tax system and the media. Dominated by the virtues and power of American capitalism, the trimming of the welfare state varies only marginally according to local political traditions, as globalisation creates an equalisation in all economic and political markets. The change from the Department of Social Security to Centrelink, to an Agency of the Commonwealth, further suggests that the government is attempting to diminish its ‘central’ welfare responsibility. The term ‘centrelink’ appears to imply that it is viewed
as only a link in welfare services, albeit a ‘centre’ link – currently at least. Where the majority of welfare resources may eventually reside, is discussed below.

**Mutual Obligation**

A foundation philosophy of the Keating government’s Working Nation white paper, “Mutual Obligation”, attacks the perception that older forms of welfare provision such as the ‘dole’ and the supporting parent’s pension placed no imposition on the recipient to reflect their gratitude for welfare support. Concepts such as “working for the dole” reflect this new approach to welfare and “mutual obligation” that is active recognition and gratitude for accepting state, and hence taxpayer support. Part of its theoretical basis consists on ‘helping’ those who have been “lost in the system” with their decreasing skills base and work ethic the longer they are unemployed. However Mutual Obligation is a forced concept of community, and a manifestation of “third way” perspectives, revealing the emphasis in post-welfare state social democracy on placing higher expectations and demands on those most vulnerable. From this position, the ‘conservatives’ can then simply intensify the ‘obligation’. As Pusey illustrates,

> It is a policy with broad appeal: it also gathers up the differently grounded sentiments of the ‘North Shore’ people, and the high-achiever elements of the upper ‘middle class’ who actively back the reformers or, like their American equivalents, have not much idea of and little interest in how the other half lives. (Pusey, 2003:73)

The payment of unemployment relief, originally called “the dole” during the 1930s
Depression, consisted mostly of food rations. Cash payments in countries such as Britain and Australia have traditionally been at subsistence levels, indicating that punishment has always been a feature of the distrust that exists between government, employers and workers. Subsistence payments are underpinned by a consumer culture that perpetually promotes the notion of ‘worthy’ individuals who can afford the latest consumer goods, versus the unworthy, punished and teased by what they cannot afford.

The process of de-industrialisation beginning in the late 1960s saw a gradual increase in the policing of the unemployed. In the late 1970s, as the unemployment rates stabilised around ten per cent, the then Department of Social Security attempted to track the activities of the unemployed through activity statements that were lodged in person every fortnight before money was deposited in a bank account. This is still the primary way that unemployment relief is allocated, although further activities such as “dole diaries”, increased the level of job seeking activity before the benefit was forwarded. The economic conditions of the post-war boom concealed the true nature of Australian capitalism and its residual welfare system, suggests Castles.

In 1970, at a time when average weekly earnings for an adult male were eighty dollars a week, an unemployed man with a wife and two children received a mere twenty three dollars a week. Before the very substantial increase in benefit rate initiated by the McMahon Government in 1972, and subsequent increases by the Whitlam Government between 1973 and 1975, residual ‘state charity’ for the unemployed, and destitution and misery for their families for their families if they remained so for any length of time, was still very much the order of the day.
in Australia’s affluent society. What saved the situation in the 1960s was, of course, an average duration of unemployment well below ten weeks; by the end of the 1970s, it was nearly thirty weeks; and by 1985 nearly fifty weeks. (Castles, 1988:157)

In principal, the policy of Mutual Obligation also attempts to include those at the highest level of the socio-economic scale. The example of media magnate Kerry Packer losing thirty million dollars gambling in a single weekend, wrought the ire of “third way” proponent Mark Latham. For Latham, the “third way” is based on a holistic community approach, and not just in the punishment of those most vulnerable in the welfare system. However his ‘equitable’ approach includes policies such an unemployed person paying back to the state income earned through unemployment benefits, once they find work.

While governments need to advance income support whenever its citizens are victim to economic un-certainty, they should also consider the equity features of a repayment scheme (similar to the principles underpinning HECS, the Higher Education Contribution Scheme) for recipients who subsequently benefit from economic change. This should be regarded as a key aspect of the development of reciprocal responsibilities in the welfare system. Those who benefit most from the discharge of public responsibilities have a moral obligation to replenish the common pool of public resources from which their improved
circumstances, at least in part, originated. This concept also aids the intergenerational equity of the public commons by ensuring a reasonable balance of revenue contributions across all generations. (Latham, 1998:227-228)

The reality in dealing with wealthy individuals such as Packer compared to welfare recipients is that they can be moulded, manipulated and forced into mutual responsibility. Control of wealthy individuals in contrast is almost entirely contingent on their will to co-operate. Already taxation minimisers, the government or state remains beholden to the magnate and in relation to welfare policy, the wealthy individual would have negligible interest or exposure. Any attempt to legislate against their economic power could result in the withdrawal of investment in the Australian economy, and the abandonment of the country if they suspect that the government is attempting to undermine their autonomy.

A justification used by the wealthy, particularly in countries such as the United States, is that the practice of philanthropy alleviates their community responsibility to those who cannot help themselves. Particularly in the American context, philanthropy is closely linked with the Christian charity ethos suggesting that Christianity engages with the capitalist status quo in a non-threatening and compliant fashion, if not overtly.

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6 “Latham suggested that this sort of gambling puts notions of public morality and justice under threat” (www.abc.net.au/lateline/s170683.htm “Friday forum”, broadcast 1/9/2000.

7 The concept of philanthropy would also seem to originate from the conflicting sentiments of economist Adam Smith. While he asserts that,

It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest. We address ourselves, not to their humanity but to their self love, and never talk to them of our own necessities but of their advantages. (Smith, 1954:13).

With allusions to a charity ethos, he also states that, “To feel much for others and little for ourselves…..to restrain our selfish, and to indulge our benevolent affections, constitutes the perfection of human nature” (Smith, 2000:27). It can be assumed therefore that those who cannot achieve ‘self love’ require love from the community as a substitute. Eighteenth century French theorist Rousseau with his notion of surrendering to the ‘general will’ of the community also evokes the practice of a mutual
supportive of it. Moreover, charity functions instigated by the wealthy can result in just another opportunity for mingling with their own social class, and for society matrons to have an occupation in lieu of a career.\(^8\) Implicit in philanthropy is that it edifies the person and the ‘individuality’ in dispensing the largesse. This promotes the concept that assistance should only be given when the ‘individual’ considers that there is a crisis worthy of their involvement. In this context, the waste involved in government bureaucracy is highlighted, and the claim that government welfare programs are not targeted at needy individuals but welfare abusers. Consequently another phenomenon of philanthropy or charity is the ability to portray those that are extremely poor in a non-Western context, against various definitions of poverty in the Western nations that have ‘generous’ welfare states. Famous charitable figure, Princess Diana, exhibited this new type of caring in a conservative political culture. The creation of the Diana myth, contributed to the perception that the monarchy or at least manifestations of it, are involved in the politics of neo-liberalism\(^9\).

To an extent, the increased uncertainties of economic conditions in New Right Britain worked to preserve the cultural role of the Royals. Diana appeared on the stage as a sign of continuation: she became a mother, worked for charities, later nominated herself as ‘Queen of Hearts’- symbolising the traditional clutch values associated with caring femininity. Her connections with

\(^8\) A typical corporate response to philanthropy is the promotion of charities and causes that are in contrast with negative public perceptions of the corporation. “Ronald McDonald House”, provides accommodation to the parents of sick children who are in nearby hospitals.

\(^9\) obligation to be practiced by those who offend the sensibilities of the majority. According to its logic, “if those in the minority refuse to follow the general will, they are violating their own will and thus are refusing to be free” Baradat, 2003:82).
the established Royal Family reinvigorated not just their profile as ‘modern and progressive – but also their affectivity as bearers of English History, as living embodiments of a self-perpetuating social contract. At a time of social stress, through increased individuation and an unsure industrial landscape – shipyard and mine closures, decimation of the North, the new homeless on the streets of London – the emotional appeal of this continuing royal theatre is obvious, particularly as manifested in a female, demonstrably capable of modifying the entrenched aloofness of the House of Windsor. The spectral Diana was a repeated feature – we might say ‘a certainty’ – not delimited, but a delimiting for a culture coming to terms with the new uncertain torsions of a diminished public infrastructure, and a conservative government moving at times towards authoritarian restructure.

(Alberts, 1997:100)

Dalrymple also bases his attack on the overly generous welfare state against his experience and observation of what he considers the “real poverty” of Africa and parts of Asia. According to this paradigm, the disciplined workers and families of the West and post-war period have undergone a remarkable metamorphosis due to the crippling effect of the welfare state – rather than the social conditions that produced such a reliance, (whose position as an ‘objective’ observer appears remarkably similar to Minister’s Abbott’s assertion that the welfare state is the singular cause for the sharp rise in unemployment levels during the 1970s).

9 Voluntary work is encouraged as an activity to fulfill mutual obligation objectives.
Yet nothing I saw – neither the poverty nor the overt oppression – ever had the same devastating effect on the human personality as the undiscriminating welfare state. I never saw the loss of dignity, the self-centeredness, the spiritual and emotional vacuity, or the sheer ignorance of how to live that I see daily in England. In a kind of pincer movement, therefore, I and the doctors from India and the Philippines have come to the same terrible conclusion: that the worst poverty is in England – and it is not material poverty but poverty of the soul. (Dalrymple, 2001:143)

The Job Network and working for the ‘dole’

The Howard government’s attempt to reinvigorate the welfare sector saw the closure of the Commonwealth Employment Service, (CES) and replaced by a free market orientated Job Network, which involved several private job service providers. More controversial was the involvement of Church based groups such as Mission Australia, Salvation Army and the Wesley Mission, in the Job Network. This brooked the traditional separation of church from state, and particularly controversial was its function of disciplining job seekers, as this involved informing Centrelink if welfare beneficiaries breached Mutual Obligation guidelines. Work For The Dole schemes play an integral feature in the concept of Mutual Obligation and the private sphere

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10 Mission Australia is a non-denominational Christian organisation. The McClure report was produced by Mission Australia on behalf of the Federal government. The proposals included the controversial option of financial penalties for breaches of welfare ‘responsibilities’ by the recipient.
involvement in the Job Network – no longer is the government to be seen as perpetually involved in “doling out” welfare to ‘unworthy’ recipients. In what resembles a form of indentured labour, and evocative of Arbeit Macht Frei (work makes you free) signage that adorned Nazi concentration camps, the lack of a training component is further indicative of its punishing and corrective rationale. As the experience of Australian and American Work For The Dole participants reflect, work involved “sanding the rust off memorial cannons at the Wollongong Lighthouse” or street-sweeping, that revealed for the participant that it was “not a training programme at all. It’s a kind of slave labour” (Beder, 2000:182).

Working for unemployment benefits in the Australian context appears to have originated from the Regional Employment Development, (RED) schemes of the Whitlam era that gave unemployed people a wage in work-creation community projects. Despite unemployment levels not seen since the Great Depression during the early 1990s, the Keating Labor government stubbornly refused to return to the program. “RED schemes became a symbol of all that was wrong with the Whitlam government and the embodiment of Keynesian follies. It was a hallmark of Hawke-Keating Labor that there were ‘no RED schemes’” (Watson, 2002:135).

This was exacerbated by the perception that the Labor Party and in particular Prime Minister Keating became inured to the human cost of the recession and unemployment, (the recession we had to have). Despite increasingly tenuous relationships with the “labour movement”, the Labor Party of the 1990s would still not have been able to instigate policy as controversial as working for unemployment benefits. The Coalition in government simply followed the logical conclusion to Mutual Obligation by including working for the ‘dole’. Watson’s sentiments regarding unemployed “pot
smokers” reflects the traditional conservative view about lazy jobless people, as Watson flippantly alleges that the ‘RED’ scheme, “through bringing young people into contact with each other and putting money into their pockets, gave an unprecedented stimulus to cannabis consumption” (Watson, 2002:135).

Therefore while the Labor Party has been highly critical of the Job Network in Opposition, they have not denied that it would continue if elected, a similar scheme, based on using the philanthropy of church and charity groups.

Labor acknowledges that there are strengths in a framework that allows local individuals and groups and businesses to get involved in job matching and intensive assistance provision for their communities. Local contacts and community ownership of decisions and solutions does matter. Together you are stewards of local infrastructure; of social capital. And I think it’s true that there is indisputably a history of a strong caring ethos in many elements of the community and church sector. Some of the private providers are going to be similarly orientated. (Kernot, 2000:3)

While the tendering of contracts for the job network are conditional and regularly open for tender, the involvement of Protestant based groups such as the ‘Salvos’ Mission Australia and Wesley Mission, results in a high collective representation in the Job Network. It also suggests the first phase of the state alleviating its responsibility to the poor as once again welfare is in the control of charitable and philanthropic based groups. This again may involve the shift away from cash payment to emergency provisions such as food relief, and may be precipitated by the popular perception that
payments are too generous, and substance abuse problems are pivotal in restricting the individual in finding work. In one sense this already occurring when recipients who are ‘breached’ (amounts deducted from Centrelink payments), are forced to rely on the charity arm of Job Network provider). Wiseman predicted the pattern created by Hawke/Keating Labor governments when he stated,

While the ALP has been good at winning elections the price of competitiveness has been heightened inequality and a radical program of deregulation and privatisation, which prepares the ground for more savage forms of economic restructuring when a more openly right-wing Liberal/National Party government is elected. (Wiseman, 1996:101)

The forerunner to the welfare state, The Poor Laws, indicated that the Church was defining morality, and although the state was increasingly involved in legislative functions regarding poverty. The most persuasive socially conservative argument for the role of churches, welfare and the State, is Protestantism’s role in defining the individual as an adjunct to capitalism, suggests that it should also be involved in its ‘diminishment’. As Bryson asserts,

The Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 was significant for the manner in which it enshrined the concept of ‘less eligibility’. In doing this it established not merely an administrative principal but also a moral code. The intention was to ensure that a person in receipt of welfare would experience a lower standard of living than an employed person. The 1834 Poor Law Report (Vol. Xvii) expressed it thus: ‘The first and most essential of all
conditions…..is that his (the pauper’s) situation on the whole shall not be made really or apparently so eligible as the situation of the independent labourer of the lowest class. (Bryson, 1992:78).

The Salvation Army revels in its pragmatic and active involvement in the helping of the poor. Founded by in William Booth in 1861 the ‘army’ bases its philosophy in pragmatic asceticism, and turning around the lives of the homeless, alcoholic, and drug dependant, through abstinence and the dignity of work. The non-alliance with the labour movement has left them open to criticism by forcing people into unskilled and underpaid work, onto this path of “self healing”. The Wesley Mission also focuses on the problematic individual, and the need for personal re-orientation before re-joining the labour market. This is exemplified by programs such as the Community Support Program, managed by Wesley Mission and funded by the Department of Employment, Workplace relations and Small Business, (DEWSB), it aims to identify and assist those troubled by:

*Drug, alcohol and gambling addiction* *Homelessness* *Very long-term unemployment* *Mental illness* *Time spent in custody* *Domestic Violence* *Victims of Trauma* *Behavioral problems* *Motivational problems* *Disabled* *From non-English speaking background*

Dr. Keith Suter says

Our Mission is to ‘help the community’, and is a direct response to our commitment to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This includes the operation of the job network. Our rationale for all our caring
work is the example shown to us through the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. For the Mission, this includes caring for the homeless and the jobless, the alcoholic and the drug addicted, the deserted wife and the fatherless child. It is the example and then the command of Christ that provides us with the framework in which we run all our services.

Asked if Wesley’s involvement with the Job Network reflect a broad acceptance of the government’s policies in relation to the unemployed? He answered with, “Yes”.

Do ‘job snobs’ exist? “This is not a phrase we use or understand” However, the term has currency in media, and has been used repeatedly by Minister Abbott in describing employment solutions. For Abbott, this relates to the phenomenon where there was even a period under the Whitlam Government when it was officially decreed that people on unemployment benefits were not expected to take jobs beneath the status of their former employment. Although the Fraser Government quickly reversed this edict, the era of unconditional entitlement had begun, if not in theory at least in general practice, and unemployment steadily rose from under two per cent in the 1960’s to about five per cent a decade later (Abbott, 2001:2).

“Job snobbery” or ‘bludging’ requires to be put in the context of the development of the ‘McJob,’ where pay rates are barely above welfare, and by implication, the work is highly undesired. The ‘McJob’ has been a pivotal revolution in labour practices in the last few decades, and is the colloquial and collective term for work in the McDonald’s

11 Dr Suter, director of Wesley employment programs, answered some questions in relation to Wesley’s
fast food restaurants. Utilising the development of the youth wage, the phenomenon also trades upon the exploitation of youthful enthusiasm, and the lack of after-school work opportunities. A revolution beyond the scope of the “service industry”, it codifies the approach required in the post-Keynesian economy to keep unemployment rates down – and to justify the disciplining of those who reject the new code12.

Suter’s evasiveness on the question of “job snobs”, suggests that they leave the necessary and abrasive ideological work to the government, while they can simply appear as ‘caring’ and pragmatic. This projected state of apoliticality is a seemingly pious view favoured by various other manifestations of philanthropy by clubs such as Rotary, where the membership mostly consists of local business leaders. This could not be achieved however, without the coercive and pernicious authority of the state, to force welfare recipients into the purview and influence of job network providers like Wesley Mission. The issue is responded to evasively by Dr Suter, and only obtuse references are made to the government’s role in the ‘successful’ participation of their programs. This is if to suggest that the “invisible hand of God”, is superstition and surreptitiously involved in the programs.

The government had previously followed media initiative in welfare abuse campaigns that made the government look more benign on the subject of welfare, and philanthropists as ‘pragmatic’. This is further revealed in the response to the question: Do you believe that a culture of welfare abuse or “dole bludging” exists on a broad scale? “Welfare abuse does exist, but we are not in a position to judge whether it is on a broad scale or not. However many previously long-term unemployed people are now

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12 In 2002 people between the ages of 25-40 that had been unemployed for twelve months or more were included to participate in a Work for the Dole activity. www.centrelink.gov.au
employed because of our work for the dole programs”. Suter adds that “while the title (working for the dole), is somewhat unfortunate, (a US government agency would have created a more inspiring title) he argues, “the essence of the scheme is very good”. Characteristic of the blurring between Wesley’s ideological position and their ‘pragmatism’, he states that further that,

The Work for the Dole\textsuperscript{13} scheme is very controversial. It has attracted negative comments – even from agencies with which this Mission enjoys a close friendship. Some agencies have refused to participate in the scheme. This is counterproductive. First, as the Mission has shown, the provision of training can make this scheme very useful to our clients. Second, agencies which boycott the scheme, exclude themselves from involvement in discussions with the Australian government on how it can be enhanced. Incidentally, the “work for the dole” scheme is not all that new. Australia’s indigenous peoples have had a similar scheme for several years (Community Development Employment Programme) and they have made a success of it.

\textsuperscript{13} In an ironic position in relation to claims of protecting tax-payers’ funds, Minister Abbott was forced to concede in Parliament that the cost of administrating the ‘Work for the Dole’ scheme in the last two years amounted to ‘about’ 190 million dollars. (The Daily Telegraph, June 15, 2002).
Public housing and neo-liberalism

The position of the New South Wales Department of Housing, reflects the pressures and changes brought by economic rationalism, the reduction of the welfare state, and increased demands brought by a diverse social democracy. The capitalist society based on the ownership of private property, and particularly large items such as a personal dwelling, (the home), becomes an expression of individuality and autonomy. This is also reflected in style, shape, and location (postcode) of the house, with public housing often recognisable by its bland uniformity of construction reminiscent of government housing in former Communist countries. The conformity of style in Western democracies constitutes a need to reflect an “anti-individualism”, represented in welfare generally to diminish the recipient. Hence, public housing style must reflect part punishment, part incentive to reclaim individuality through private home ownership.

Originally designed as low-income housing, the former Housing Commission, is now known internally as reflecting a philosophy of “social housing”. This re-definition of the deserving and undeserving poor is consistent with Commonwealth welfare state reform, (state government housing also being partly dependant on grants from the Commonwealth government), by asserting that efficiency is derived through assisting those defined as most marginal. Therefore poverty as the central criterion remains along with a litany of social problems that are associated with poverty that gives greater legitimacy within the social housing ontology.

The building of large-scale public housing following 1945, mirrored the growth of the British welfare state, and its development of a large public housing estates, called ‘council’ flats and houses. The greater acceptance of public housing in Britain following
World War Two reflected the reality of a large population and limited land mass. In the Australian experience, it has come to constitute a more American-style version of public housing. It represents an association with outright poverty, stigmatization and failure. The “white trash” populations of estates such as Claymore, Miller and Cartwright, in Sydney’s southwest, operate as a socio-economic group that are barely above those of Aborigines in social status and employment opportunities, yet can appear privileged by comparison within the liberal/capitalist social democratic or social justice regime. Eligibility requirements have become more stringent, and if accepted on a housing list or register, waiting times for assistance are usually several years in duration. The re-definition of public housing to service only the needs of those who fit the most marginal social and economic paradigms makes it unattractive in terms of perceptions and actual living standards. In combination with high crime rates, turned some of the largest estates into urban ghettos. As Davis argues in relation to the walled communities of Los Angeles,

The old liberal paradigm of social control, attempting to balance repression with reform, has long been superseded by a rhetoric of social warfare that calculates the interests of the urban poor and the middle classes as a zero-sum game. In cities like Los Angeles, on the bad edge of postmodernity, one observes an unprecedented tendency to merge urban design, architecture and the police apparatus into a single, comprehensive security effort.

(Davis, 2003:308)

Those who wait patiently on extended housing lists or registers, or tolerate with resignation the poor living standards, inculcate varying degrees of their ‘deserved’
punishment. By creating an analogy between public housing and more overtly ritualised forms of punishment, it can be argued, “Penal punishment is therefore a generalised function, coextensive with the function of the social body and with each of its elements. This gives rise to the problem of the degree of punishment, the economy of the power to punish” (Foucault, 1977:90).

The complex relationship between changes in mental health policy, public housing and welfare state decline is indicative of the determination to speciously assert that while the state is deconstructing the welfare state, it is still compassionate. The campaign in the 1990s of “question your attitude” to mental illness, was supplemented by psychiatric hospital closures and a policy shift towards short-term hospital stays for patients. In between these short-term hospital stays, they require permanent accommodation, and as such, the co-operation from the Department of Housing. The “question your attitude” campaign and the resultant economic cutbacks in permanent psychiatric vacancies, was one of the most complex manifestations of welfare state decline. By putting the question and issue back onto the community, mental health dynamics become difficult to criticise on legal and moral grounds. This was compounded, it is asserted by the latest inquiry into mental health services in New South Wales, that;

The Richmond, Barclay and Burdekin reports, and the accompanying policy and legislative changes, were prepared in a decade of increasing recognition of civil liberties and at a time when the powers to schedule (involuntary admit) patients to psychiatric hospitals were being restricted. (Pezzutti, 2002:11)
A tenant\textsuperscript{14} supplied information about life on a large housing estate in Newcastle, which had a high rate of mentally ill people. His experience is not necessarily typical of life on a housing estate, as the problems can be diverse, and disparately hidden or spread in these large communities that resemble commune living. In his side of the block which housed nine one bedroom units, four of the tenants, which included one couple, were on disability pensions due to psychiatric problems ranging from manic depression to paranoid schizophrenia. The informant, Paul, had also periodically resided in psychiatric institutions following a motorcycle accident in 1970. Paul however, is intensely private and keeps his problems to himself, whereas tenants upstairs fuelled by various addictions and their psychiatric conditions regularly ‘party’ or argue during the day and night. One tenant, whose one job lasted for only for two days, is also outside of the concept of routinisation so valued in the operation of the capitalist society, and as such, this ‘problem’ resides next to a designated psychiatric condition.

The shift from low-income housing to a quasi-medical institution has been surreptitiously achieved, relating to a duel application process. One relates to a general admission, to which an intending tenant must fit the limited economic criteria. At present, income for a single tenant must not exceed three hundred and ninety eight dollars a fortnight\textsuperscript{15}. A second application process is where an intending tenant, as well as meeting the economic criteria, fits a medically defined housing priority. Priority applications consequently take precedence over those that are exclusively economically based. By using the stringent economic criteria as the fundamental measurement for all eligibility, they are largely able to conceal their involvement in the housing of people with medical problems. Commensurate with the broader proletarianisation of the middle

\textsuperscript{14} Interviewed 10.9.01

\textsuperscript{15}
class is the merging of the Anglo/Celtic underclass with Aboriginality and those with profound mental disturbances. This becomes indicative of all marginal groups, including ones based on class that are all “thrown together,” as economic and social class, unless linked with another type of social marginalisation becomes the least significant factor.

While public housing tenants are housed in separate adjoining accommodation the financial ‘squeeze’ on the welfare state in re-creates the general environment in houses for the poor instituted by the Elizabethan Poor Law of 1601. Foucault’s *Madness and Civilization* reflects upon the contradictory savage anti-humanism in Christianity, and the “there I go but for the grace of God” pseudo-humility in the leper houses on the fringes of European cities in the Middle Ages.

Within these enclosures lepers were isolated from the inhabitants of the city and, at the same time kept close enough to be observed. Their liminal position – at the edge but not beyond – was paralleled by the acute ambivalence with which they were regarded. Lepers were seen as dangerous and wicked; they had been punished by God but by the same token they were physical, bodily reminders of God’s power and of the Christian duty of charity (Dreyfus, Rabinow, 1983:3).

The renaissance in morality and welfare has risen proportionally to structural shifts in late capitalism from high employment, high growth economies to high unemployment, growth economies. In this context, perhaps unsurprisingly, the Department sees the decline of the welfare state as ‘natural’. “In the nineteen fifties,
public housing was mainly a stepping-stone towards home ownership for low income working families and a way of helping to get the post war economy going again” (Woodward, 2001). It can hardly be disputed, unless on ideological grounds, that the same degree of assistance would not be required today for individuals or couples in using public housing as a ‘stepping-stone’ to home ownership. Particularly in Sydney, where rental properties and accommodation prices are high, this problem is exacerbated by a weak public housing sector. An effective public housing system could act as a brake on private home prices, thereby providing an inbuilt inflation barrier against often un-sustainable private home values.

During the nineteen sixties and seventies public housing was used as a way to support industrial expansion and decentralisation into cities and towns across the state. It was during this time that most of the large estates were built. Housing was still directed at low-income families with the intention that work would be available locally in the new industries. (Woodward, 2001)

There are oblique references in this paragraph to the ‘unforseen’ unemployment problems in the Western economies, and how, large housing estates, built in a pragmatic function to house masses of low-income working people, now resemble urban ghettos where the myriad of social problems reside next to one another. In the Campbelltown LGA, (Local Government Area) 41.7% of residents of public housing estates are unemployed, compared to 10.7% of the remainder of the Campbelltown LGA (Latham, 1998:105). For Latham, the problems with these housing estates mostly built in the decades following World War Two, reflect the ‘Fordism’ of the old industrial economy.
The “broad-acre public housing estates were built on the edge of Australia’s major cities to accommodate a blue collar workforce engaged in tariff protected manufacturing” (Latham, 1998:209).
CHAPTER FOUR:

THE FORMATION of SEXUALITY in INDUSTRIAL CAPITALISM

In the following two chapters heterosexuality is considered from an anthropological perspective – an inherent feature of the structural and organisational aspects of the industrial capitalist society. Its dominance in previous epochs increased its tendency to coalesce during the Age of Enlightenment. Consequently, this gave the appearance that it provided the theoretical underpinnings for capitalist social expansion. In this context, the attempt to include marginal sexualities discussed in chapters six and seven, (particularly when they are viewed separately from work and mode of production issues) increase the opportunity for a cultural backlash to interventions based upon a liberal/egalitarian ethos. Moreover, the gradual inclusion of various ‘marginals’ within the scope of liberal capitalism are ultimately conservative in nature, and tend to exacerbate the traditional problems of capitalism itself.

Consequently a dialectic is formed between Marx’s concept of alienation which has been linked to the public sphere of work, to the failures and foibles of liberal left theory that has favoured private spheres of identity over work based issues. Intractable levels of unemployment that has resided alongside traditional conceptualisations of alienation see the intractability of public and private issues of alienation converging with heterosexual concerns that directly impact on the majority of the population. For Marx, ‘identity’ in its generalised constitution, was not meant to have explicit separation from work identities. An ‘individual’ can only operate within the economic framework that connects their personal and social space, as Meszaros argues, “in Marx’s dialectical conception the key concept is “human productive activity” which never means simply

For as soon as the distribution of labour comes into being, each man has a particular, exclusive sphere of activity, which is forced upon him and from which he cannot escape. He is a hunter, a fisherman, a herdsman, or a critical critic, and must remain so if he does not want to lose his means of livelihood; while in communist society, where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticise after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming a hunter, fisherman, herdsman or critic. (Marx & Engels, 1845: “Private Property and Communism”)

Debauchery or Morality?: the choice between Classical or Christian sexual ethics

Christianity first denoted the shift away from the homoerotic cultures of antiquity. A principal myth of Christianity is founded upon the assertion that the decline of the Roman Empire was principally caused by a particular lack of sexual morality. As Webb states, “this view conveniently ignores the fact that such debauchery was merely symptomatic of the political and economic chaos that brought The Roman Empire to an end” (Webb, 1975:71). The influence Christianity had in the latter stages of the Roman Empire enabled this myth to consolidate its reign and pronounce a new morality, a
forerunner to the sparse Middle or Dark Ages. It was this propagandistic beginning which set the parameters for future cosmologies that were pivotal in the problem of sex. The problem of homoerotic masculinity in Classical cultures and how this epistemological shift was achieved formed the basis for Christian icons and belief.

Christianity was forefront in separating the spiritual from the profane, meaning that bodily pleasures could only obstruct the relationship with God with anxiety about sex fueling much of the Christian cosmology. The concept of the self, as mediated and defined by Christianity, is a method for controlling the sinning self, and the use of the body as the instrument of this sin. While in Genesis 1:28, God says, “Be fruitful and multiply”, St Paul taught a new way of life based on a revelation of Jesus Christ in a post-Armageddon world. (Galatians 1:12). Jesus said “for in the resurrection they neither marry nor or given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven” (Matthew 22:30; Mark 12:25; Luke 20: 35, 36). Paul even opposes sexual activities within marriage, (1 Corinthians 7:1, 5, 8-9, 29), and that “marriage and sex are only for those who cannot control their libidinous impulses” (1 Corinthians 7:8, 9). Sex had perversely replaced the stealing of the poisoned apple as the original sin.

The cult of the death and resurrection of Jesus, and the semiotic purity of Mother Mary, formed the basis for Christian representations. The sacrifice of Jesus’ life in the physical world promoted the ideal that the body was merely a vehicle for the spiritual identity of mankind. His eventual return to his Heavenly Father was metaphysical proof that his life and physical sacrifice on earth was an ethereal existence. This life and sacrifice was to be temporary and marginal, compared to the spiritual life that existed outside of, and despite of, the body. Consequently “the “abnormal” status of the virgin

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1 The Holy Bible; Containing the Old and New Testaments.
body made it, like the angels, a “mediator between the human and the divine”, virgins were ‘heroes of the soul”(Bloch, 1991:97).

The absence of the physical act of sex and the exchange of bodily fluids represented through the virgin birth, gave indication of where ‘sexuality’, was directed. Mother Mary therefore plays a more gender-specific role than Jesus, although Jesus also had a feminised identity (based on the sublimation of the self), which contrasted with harshness of the God in the Old Testament. The objective behind this Christian iconography was to shift societal sexual mores away from homoerotic themes to a mystification and purification of a female virtuous identity. The notion of the virgin birth is symptomatic of this approach - pregnancy without sex is the ultimate female role, incontrovertible with pleasure. As Bloch argues, “for the early Church fathers virginity always carries a reference to Adam and Eve before the Fall, a time when, it was assumed, because of the absence of sexuality the sexes were equal” (Bloch, 1991:97).

The emphasis on female procreative powers and heterosexual attraction constructed around the fear of the vagina in antiquity, in combination with the myth of motherhood, created an “eroticisation of the denied”. The reaction to the overt heterosexualisation brought by Christianity attempted to define women as available, but only in a given context mediated by marriage and the principal responsibility of procreation. The negative vagina iconography in the Greek world appears to have assisted the Christian concept of the vagina where there exists a basic contradiction - desired but now regulated by other Christian requirements, that fuels a guilt-ridden obsession with female sexuality. It has proved difficult to eroticise, because of the feature that is so demonstrably linked with life and purity in Christian iconography, creating a form of
eroticism which is based in its denial – the multifarious cunt is to be desired in a distinctly sexual sense yet respected for its maternal function. This constituted an epistemological transformation, compared to Greek concepts of the vagina, as Keuls reveals,

Men’s mythological imagery reflects their castration fears:
Snaky Medusa heads, the jagged aegis of Athena, and a whole cup-board-full of female monsters are rightly considered as revealing Greek’s men’s fears of the vagina dentata the emasculating machinery of female revenge. (Keuls, 1993:125-126)

The emphasis now on maternity through the image of Mother Mary, was to shape the role of the modern woman, as Jesus represented the generic symbolism of body (life) excrescence, and spiritual normalisation. Nuns became the essence of Mary’s role and sacrifice, and in the Christian iconography Horner argues that the “body is both an enclosure, a vessel that must be discarded or transformed in order to reach the spirit within, and a spiritual text of truth that itself be enclosed or veiled. The exposure of this truth to the pagan gaze thus becomes analogous to rape” (Horner, 1994:664). In this context it is considered that periodic or sustained withdrawal of access maintains allure and purity. This then provokes a problem for male responses and construction, which are foreign to such prescriptive and complicated rules and procedures. For Reich the problem of release in the sexually moral society, results in,

Sexual excitations as tortuous, burdensome, destructive. In fact, sexual excitation is destructive and tortuous if not allowed to achieve release. Thus, we see that the religious conception of
sex as an annihilating, diabolical force, predisposing one for final doom, is rooted in actual physical processes. As a result the attitude toward sexuality is forced to become divided: The typical religious and moralistic valuations “good”-“bad,” “heavenly”-“earthly,” “divine”-“diabolical,” etc., become the symbols of sexual gratification on the one hand and the punishment thereof on the other hand. (Reich, 1970:149)

In the Enlightenment society dominated by science and Protestant values, women became the barometers of the heterosexual values of the capitalist society, and active in the definition of heterosexuality. The ‘civilising’ of men and capital, results in maternal values residing along the domestication of society as a whole. The narrow moral framework in which women reside exacerbated by the public/split of morality, places the virgin and the prostitute at obverse ends of the spectrum that accentuates difference. While according to Christian dictum all sins are viewed equal in the eyes of God, the prostitute seemingly has a great distance to travel to seek and find complete redemption. Beginning in later Middle Ages Roman Catholic Europe, Weisner-Hanks argues the prostitute had to be presented as repentant.

Mary Magdalene was the most popular saint after the Virgin Mary in the Middle Ages, although, like the Virgin, she provided an ambiguous message about female sexuality, and by extension male sexuality as well; yes it was possible for someone who had been sexually active to be saved, but only by renouncing sexual desire and activity. (Weisner-Hanks, 2000:45)
If a woman *falls*, therefore, it can only be hoped she does not fall too far. In the popular film *Pretty Woman*\(^2\), the basic subtext of a wealthy male white knight rescuing an unfortunate damsel in distress is repeated in a well-crafted narrative. The male character in *Pretty Woman* is Jesus *in situ*, where he ‘cleanses’ the fallen woman eventually by marriage as he sacrifices and shares his integrity with the fallen woman. Here he shifts the prostitute from official to unofficial status based on the acceptance that prostitution is defined legally as the exchange of money for sexual favours. Usually covert payment or protection is not, and those that can parry the line between the unrespectable and respectable seem guaranteed ‘successes’.

The narrow ideological framework of Christianity reveals poignantly how it reacts to the role of the “world’s oldest profession”, with Victorian England in particular, mirroring Greek concepts based on a male’s civic or public role. Although some Australian states there have legalised brothels, police tend to sporadically attack street prostitution, when its presence becomes too noticeable and a nuisance to the local neighborhood.

**Sexology: the sexualisation of Age of Enlightenment discourses**

In terms of maternity, (the maternal instinct), sexual drives, and later, biological assumptions on homosexuality, science assumed a unique legitimacy. The certainty of Age of Enlightenment promulgations and the enmeshing of ‘natural’ science with the developing human sciences, along with a renaissance of religion, via Protestantism, created a dynamism that was unique in its ideological force. Protestant religion and

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Enlightenment science formed a beguiling relationship that produced syntheses despite the fact that Enlightenment science eventually promoted the theory of evolution. However, the general orientation to explaining the universe by way of advanced scientific methodology usurped and appropriated conceptualisations of God’s power; previously, power was invested in ignorance and mystery and a fear of heresy. Modern science therefore created a great fervour and zealotry. Science ultimately became a phenomenon unable to recognise its cultural or historical milieu, and became a reified entity, absorbed and consumed by the limits of its own discourse. As Freud argued,

The liberty of the individual is no gift of civilisation. It was the greatest before there was any civilisation, though then, it is true, it had for the most part no value, since the individual was scarcely in a position to defend it. The development of civilisation imposes restrictions on it, and justice demands that no one shall escape these restrictions. (Freud, 1930:33)

The eroticism of the denied that was formulated by early Christianity exacerbates the gulf between women as a sexual creature and object versus their maternal and social role connected to this responsibility. Consequently, it exploits the moral dilemma promoted by the simplistically defined and strident moral frameworks as it produces a constant extinguishing and repudiation of the lessening of morality. Therefore the greater the emphasis on sexual modesty the greater the desire exists for displays of sexual immodesty. Enlightenment theorists also believed that an open sexuality could promote a healthy heterosexuality, possibly identify and remedy causes of homosexuality, which in turn could assist the burgeoning eugenics movement. As Foucault argues,
Sexuality must not be thought of as a kind of natural given which power tries to hold in check, or as an obscure domain which knowledge tries gradually to uncover. It is the name that can be given to a historical construct: not a furtive reality that is difficult to grasp, but a great surface network in which the stimulation of bodies, the intensification of pleasures, the incitement to discourse, the formation of special knowledges, the strengthening of controls and resistances, are linked to one another, in accordance with a few major strategies of knowledge and power. (Foucault, 1978: 105-106)

Although sexology had an implicit relationship with the scientific discourses of the era, the controversial nature of its material placed it on uncertain ground with the religious tone of the day; which was one of unbridled conservatism. The constraints of Victorianism created the culture of openness, which sought to circumvent the influence of conservatism by testing the boundaries of what was considered decent behaviour and attitudes, through a legitimising scientific gaze. The public/private concept of morality meant that displays of immodesty were highly desired and covertly encouraged, in the form of prostitution and pornography. It implies that a certain type of woman is required for different types of male needs, (although the pornographic image of women implies that all women want to be viewed this way, and is their true sexual identity). The sexological emphasis on the male sexual response provided further justification for prostitution as the ‘innate’ biological sexual drive cannot be sated by wives and partners. The tension between these points was underpinned by the fact that “married heterosexuality displaced monastic denial as the most honoured form of sexuality. The
cultural authority of compulsory heterosexuality clearly followed this shift” (Connell, 1995:186).

The didactic nature and character of Enlightenment discourses came to their ultimate scientific nirvana in the study of sexuality. The pursuit of sex as happiness or fulfilment was a chimerical illusion for other agendas such as the growth of eugenics, and the goal of the heterosexualisation of culture. The pursuit of ‘openness’ and the amelioration of inhibitors to sexuality focused on orgasm culminated in the theory of Wilhelm Reich in the 1920s. The orgasm as the locus of physical and psychological health has subsequently become the principal motivation behind twentieth century sexuality. The building upon Freud’s psychoanalytical understanding of the psyche through bodily functions, combined with the splitting of the body from the spiritual that flowed from the cultural impact of Christianity, proved to be fertile ground for sexologists. For Laqueur, the identification of masturbation as a feature in defining the problematic individual by doctors was a distinctive element of Enlightenment constructions. Previously,

They were largely silent on the topic because it was not particularly exigent in thinking about how a reasonable man should live his life. In a world in which the upper-class male had available almost unimaginable possibilities for excessive behaviour – slaves and prostitutes of both sexes, endless rich food, almost no external curbs on anger or violence – masturbation was off the lower end of the scale. (Laqueur, 2003:88)

The meaning and practice of sex or sexuality has been one of the pivotal markers in the
development of societal and civilisation changes. With Christian-directed societies, sexuality moved from the centre of life to a despised marginality, that eventually placed it awkwardly back in the centre, through an emphasis on biological determinism. The result was the furtive and distorted, culture of openness. As Foucault argues, “what is peculiar to modern societies, in fact, is not that they consigned sex to a shallow existence, but they dedicated themselves to speaking of it ad infinitum while exploiting it as the secret” (Foucault, 1978:35). In respect that sex and the conduit of romantic love has been one the most eulogised subjects of the twentieth century, sexology’s findings and propositions are even more remarkably restrictive and contrary. For women, there was an attempt through sexology to enable women to have a sexual consciousness, separate from the motherhood doctrines promulgated in the Enlightenment treatises. On closer inspection however, it mainly operates as a normalisation of male driven heterosexuality and a minimalist (and adjunctural) role for women, for it “underscored the notion that a mature, fulfilling sexual experience for a woman could only be achieved through a vaginal orgasm in heterosexual intercourse” (Groneman, 1994:359).

Havelock Ellis a founding sexologist, articulated the banal “human to nature” stereotypes on which modern sexology is built. His allegiance to these doctrines is evident when he asserts that, “Feminine modesty is itself an expression of the female sexual response: the more modest and timid the girl the more ardent the desire.” (Jackson, 1983:8) This perspective, with the reliance on the male to locate and extrapolate the female sexual response, places all of the trust and expertise in the responsibility of the male. Implicitly, male sexual ‘violence’ (and control of violent sexual urges) becomes the ultimate expression of masculinity. In a literal interpretation it has a connotation of legitimising rape, and for this apparent problem Ellis developed
the contingency of the “art of love”. This ability, which was aimed at separating man from the animals, required the man to learn a particular script, which he could apply generally to all females.

While the clumsy, inept husband was symbolised by an orangutan trying to play the violin, woman was variously described as a harp or other delicate instrument who, provided her husband studied the book of rules, would eventually reward him with melodious tunes. (Jackson, 1987:61-62)

Ellis’ theory of the art of love intervening between the human and the biology is an variation and extrapolation on the thesis of the “great man”, where women are the muse of the man who is a master of various arts and exponent of many skills and attributes. The man in the sexual context, was not only responsible for the control of his own body, but the woman’s, where she is to possess largely un-quantified, ethereal characteristics. The discursiveness of Ellis and the general intellectual environment that promoted the seemingly incongruity of science, religion and evolution, could legitimise the notion that men are also controlled by hormones. For the biological constructionists, it also gave unintended legitimacy to the assertion now generally adhered to, that the cause of homosexuality being one of biological deterministic reasons - homosexuals are born, not made, victims of their unique, yet undefined biology, that drives them out to seek sex from other men. The search for the so-called gay gene continues³. As Hennessy argues, this perspective underpins the orientation of capitalist culture to commodification and consumerism.

Since the late nineteenth century the growth of consumer culture

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³ The social construction of homosexuality is discussed in chapter seven.
has depended on the formation and continual retooling of a desiring subject, a subject who honours pleasures and may even see them as forces that drive one’s existence or as pressing needs. (Hennessy, 2000:69)

The uncomfortable arrangement between the concept of romantic love and rampant orgasm-focussed sexual expression creates the dilemma of deciding what is more important - ethereal concepts of love or powerful orgasm-focused sexuality. The promotion of a hyper-virility meant that it was unlikely to be contained by marriage, and the dominance of men in the public sphere conceptualised their autonomy away from an increasingly marginalised domestic sphere. Moreover, the type of male sexual response suggested by Ellis is probably best directed at homosexual relations between men. They would not for example, have to learn a complex set of rules euphemistically referred to as lovemaking, or persuade an unwilling partner whose increasingly stringent denial of a sexual interest supposedly indicated a strong subliminal desire. Animalistic desire and violence could be a key component of sexuality between men. The restrictions placed upon homosexuality in broader society (and a narrow construction based on effete characteristics), sees manifestations of male violence more likely to be exhibited against women through rape. Conversely, this propagates the belief amongst women that men are unbalanced and obsessed about sex, and the belief held by men that women will use the lure and promise of sex, or regular sex, to orientate men into their world of monogamy and domestic civility.

Unsurprisingly, the unusual relationship between nature and gentlemanly sexual prowess provided a new dynamic, and one that would provide fertile ground for future sexologists that of performance anxiety. With men bearing the onus for their own
response, (and at least in principle for their female partner), manifestations of male performance anxiety therefore implied a greater failure in terms of maintaining heterosexual values. Performance anxiety could then range from a temporary aberration, to a recurring theme throughout adult life. Some of the manifestations could also include an eventual mastery of their own performance that pays little heed to actual female desires. Furthermore an emphasis on performance will drive him to seek out many different partners so the confirmation of his virility and mastery is continually maintained. During sex, the male’s ‘performance’ is the one most easily measured with the notion of delaying orgasm to give time for the woman to climax once or repeatedly. As Weeks asserts, “sexual self-confidence is seen as one of the yard-sticks of masculinity – to such an extent that performance anxiety is a leading cause of secondary impotence” (Weeks, 1985:190). The implication for the work ethic, and particularly for older males with concerns regarding virility and their relevance in the work force, sexuality and work become analogous to issues such as “staying power”, youthful stamina, “am I up to the job” and a general anxiety pertaining to usefulness.

The female performance anxiety is primarily internal - largely sublimated, and given to a performance of its own - minimalist or faked enjoyment and arousal. Moreover, particularly in the repeated occurrences of various “sexual dysfunction” by either sex, could result in the individual considering themselves homosexual on the basis of these subjective failures. As Morrow asserts, “sexual dysfunctions have no intrinsic and self-evident meaning apart from their construction and interpretation by sexologists” (Morrow, 1994:33).

As men are central to the sexual ‘performance,’ men are much more likely to be identified by sexual failure with various levels of impotency, to claims that they are
inadequate or selfish lovers. In this context, a boy or young man seeking a successful introduction to heterosexuality is fraught with difficulties, for there is no complete way to digest and put into operation the complex art of love theory. Young women can at least pretend to know, and hope that their signals that express an interest in sex is received by someone who has partially mastered the rules. Generally, however, most people tend to “muddle through” and become relatively normal adults expressing mild forms of sexual dysfunction, or lack of sexual satisfaction.

The theorisation of heterosexuality by sexologists such as Ellis, gained wide currency due to its perceived pragmaticism and its mechanical mode that imitated industrial production techniques. Ultimately the gulf between the promotion of sexuality and Victorian asceticism was the principal problem in turning the mechanical model into one encouraging real intimacy and enjoyment for both partners. The ‘Englishman’ was also restricted by a gentlemanly ethos incompatible with the notion of sexuality as enjoyable, as it promoted an obsequiousness or aloofness that orientated the sexual act towards perfunctory ‘performances’. To counter the dynamic of sexual failure for men, particularly in the earliest stages of their sexual ‘career’, a French tradition has been for a mature woman (not a prostitute), to act as concierge for young men seeking sexual instruction, based on learning the “art of love” symbolism. This was usually arranged by the father, and was highly significant in not just making sure the young man was sexually potent, but he was a powerful and considerate lover. In countries where English traditions dominate, no such practice exists, and largely operates on an ad hoc basis, with a young man seeking out his sexual instruction (and initial conquest), on self appointed visits to a prostitute. The folly of this position, and the lack of adequate
instruction for a young man was satirised in the American film, The Graduate.\(^4\) Significantly, the young man is an older than ‘normal’ male virgin, as he has graduated from college, without graduating, as a ‘man’. The older woman, a family friend, seeks out to seduce him, (although this is unknown or unplanned by the family). His extreme reticence about sex with the woman reveals the problems that have occurred as a result of his delay in initiation.

Problems relating to ‘experience’ and impotency were explored in the 1972 film, Play it Again Sam\(^5\). Woody Allen plays a morose heterosexual male who has inordinate problems in attracting and communicating with women. He feels that his lack of masculine efficacy and charm is preventing him from succeeding, so he has surreal conversations with his idol, screen legend Humphrey Bogart. Bogart is everything Allen’s character is not: tough, cool and self-assured, especially with women, where he is particularly insouciant. Allen’s type of character, prominent in his other movie roles, is closer to caricatured effete homosexual, yet Allen always attempts to present as a heterosexual man with various difficulties. Rather than hint at a subliminal homosexuality, Allen alludes to impotency. When a friend asks if Allen’s marriage breakdown was related to sexual problems, he self-effacingly jokes, “do I look like the type of man who has sexual problems”? Meanwhile Bogart gives the appearance he can sexually satisfy a woman while he is doing something else.

**Late capitalist sexology**

The nineteenth century form of sexology that originated from Europe reflected the

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\(^4\) 1968, director M. Nichols.
European origins of capitalism that were constrained in comparison with the mid-twentith century American version of sexology, liberalism and capitalism. American cultural dominance in the post-World War Two era was exemplified by Playboy magazine, with the promotion of urban consumerism creating further distance from the staidness of American frontier myths of family. Conversely, to be consumed entirely with one's sex life or sexuality in a capitalist mode of production, would be also to suggest that sex can be performed without shelter or sustenance. As Marcuse argues,

Hedonism wants to preserve the development and gratification of the individual as a goal within an anarchic and impoverished reality. But the protest against the reified community and against the meaningless sacrifices which are made to it leads only deeper into isolation and opposition between individuals as long as the historical forces that could transform the established society into a true community have not matured and are not comprehended. (Marcuse, 1968, 167)

As men’s sexuality ostensibly became freer, the focus on women’s sexual pleasure ultimately increased in emphasis. The legitimation of clitoral orgasms was central to the work of 1960s sex therapists, Masters and Johnson⁶. Previously, Freud believed that those “who could not experience a vaginal orgasm as “frigid” even though they could masturbate to orgasm through clitoral stimulation” (Morrow, 1994: 27). Under this schema, the only power women could possess or exert over men was through the denial or delaying of penetrative sex. As it is open to manipulation from those men who feel justified in seeking a quick release, women will invariably know this is what men are

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⁶ 1972, director H, Ross.
seeking and react accordingly, either through acquiescence or manipulation. The Freudian concept of immature and mature orgasms for women meant that;

In becoming adult they had to give up not only masturbation but also the kind of orgasm produced by their infantile efforts.

Giving it up meant, in this account, giving up clitoral for vaginal sexuality, fantasies of active masculinity for the reality of passive femininity. (Laqueur, 2003:72)

The control of fertility, saw that medically controlled contraception, “the pill”, presented the opportunity to fully unleash the male centered sexual response, and for women to increasingly attempt to facilitate or mimic it. Women in particular were encouraged to engage with the opportunities modern contraception presented. The legitimisation of the clitoral orgasm in combination with the contraceptive pill, indicated that women could mirror aspects of the male sexual response if not create their own version. Sex freed from concern and worry of an unwanted or unplanned pregnancy indicated that sex did not necessarily equate with love, and that sex could be performed recreationally with men that were not their one true partner. Conversely, promiscuity could heighten the feeling and pursuance of love as sex became increasingly distanced, if not completely divorced from love⁷.

The unabashed pursuit of clitoral orgasms through either penetrative or non-penetrative sex and appropriation of the male sexual response applied belatedly to women created the environment for non-penetrative sex. Subsequently a greater emphasis was on foreplay and a partial rejection of men through lesbianism, bisexuality and self-stimulation. Continuing the ‘naturalism’ of the Enlightenment, non-


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phallic lesbian sexuality could now be argued as a more ‘natural’ orientation for
women. Unless women are prepared to abandon heterosexuality completely the role of
“clitoris sex” remains unclear, however a compromise position exists through a greater
acceptance and practice of cunnilingus.

In the theoretical milieu where sexual emancipation appeared possible, the work of
sexologist Alex Comfort proved popular with the heterosexual status quo by promoting
nudity and wife swapping, otherwise known as ‘swinging’. Sexology’s raison d’etre of
normalising heterosexuality saw the sex manuals The Joy of Sex and More Joy, were
used by psychologists and sex therapists to deal with “sexual hang-ups”. They mainly
relate to issues of sexual modesty, for he implores that “there shouldn't be any pressure
on anyone to adopt any form of sex behaviour - only encouragement not to miss good
ones” (Comfort, 1973:116). In contrast, Jeffreys feminist critique reflects upon
participant/observer Gay Talese’s experiences at the sexual commune of the Sandstone
mansion in California in the early 1970s.

Sitting in the centre of the room, surrounded by a small circle of
people who seemed to listening raptly to his words, was the
burly figure of John Williamson, broad-chested with a pot belly
and small penis, a blond Buddha whose right foot was being
massaged by the dazzling olive-skinned Oralia, a nude Nefertiti
whose perfect body….. was the envy of every woman in the
room. (Jeffreys, 1990:128)

Sexology’s development as a respected discipline on matters pertaining to sexuality
has created some skewed results, which would have been apparent in the early stages.

\footnote{See chapter five and romantic love.}
Its identity however, is intrinsically limited by its fundamental orientation to biological essentialism. Moreover, there is little social or historical context to its findings. The import of Christianity/sexology/science is endemic of its shortcomings, as its celebrated openness is also its greatest weakness. The practical expression of openness is a hedonistic fallacy that life can be the sum total of gratifying experiences rather than a transcendence of the purely personal. Moreover, as Hennessy states,

> By consolidating human sensation into discrete and bounded sexual identities, heteronormativity helped shape the human potential and need for sensation and social interaction (or eros) in terms of objective aims and desires. This reification of the erotic would prove vital to the development of commodity culture insofar as it helped consolidate forms of desire that would be crucial in the marketing and consumption of commodities. (Hennessy, 2000:104)

**Pornography**

Mass produced pornography exploits the frustrations produced by a sexological theory that placed onerous expectations upon men in heterosexuality. These expectations range from initiating contact with a woman, to being a master of romance and seduction and the resultant problems with sexual access when these approaches are attempted and fail. Pornography and hence masturbation, circumvents the delaying of orgasm caused by the heterosexual seduction process and frustrations that result from failure and rejection.

While pornography alludes to being an art form of nudes, it has been equally argued
that the nude representations were actually serving a mass-market masturbation culture. Pornography has become an inverted model of the Roman concept of sex *ars erotica* or erotica art, transcribed into public space and commodified in accordance with the capitalist ethos. The ‘gaze’ is also reminiscent of the Enlightenment focus on the ‘natural’, and nature, and hence capturing nature (nudity), with photography being the most popular form, accessible through mass-produced magazines. For Horrocks,

> The porn nude is more self-conscious than the classical nude.

Often she stares at the camera. She invites the viewer to inspect her, to examine her proffered breasts, her splayed thighs, her genitals. She has a curious look on her face, a mixture of coy salaciousness (the ‘come on’ look) and aggression. (Horrocks, 1995:106)

Pornography thereby operates on the inversion of Christian sexual asceticism, to expose what is generally uncommon public practice such as nudity, which is seen as a temporary aberration in between being clothed. The clothed asceticism (the fig leaf phenomenon, where at minimum, the genitals are covered) means that nudity encourages sexual notions when they are revealed. Jesus says in Matthew 5:28, “whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart”.

The Christian inspired fig leaf culture intensifies the interest in nudity and the genitals, through the continuation of the small pieces of cloth that is required on public beaches. This is the last defiant frontier in the nude gaze, despite the radical changes in public swimming attire during the twentieth century. Pornography simplistically, aims at discarding the fig leaf to promote an illusory openness and accessibility to the
genitals, marking it as cult of the body and of the orgasm, in particular. As Connell argues, “Auto-eroticism builds up the narcissism implicit in the ordinary masculine cult of physicality, making one’s own body the object of skill and an object of admiration” (Connell, 1983:21).

In pornography and prostitution, the viewer or participant is encouraged to suspend belief that this is paid work or a job, as is preferred to be seen as an outlet for sexually avaricious women, who enjoy performing for a public audience. The underplaying of the financial aspect in a commerce and profit driven society, is deliberate, for it presents women in the idealised, sexological state - keen, earnest to please, and compliant, as it becomes an outlet for their secret nymphomania. Moreover, it presents women in their most powerful sexological position - the ability to tantalise and deny, with the women acting out how men wish or think they really are. Therefore the pornographic image is the closest women get in appropriating the male sexual response, as it is founded upon appearing available, and that women share men’s enjoyment of penetrative sex. For the nude model and the prostitute who reasons that “he is only getting my body”, the ethereal and essential female self remains untouched and remote, and known only to herself. Consequently the commercial link and entrapment inherent in pornography means that if a man has minimal skills in relating to women, he will have to buy an actual woman if he wants to transcend merely masturbatory responses. As Horkheimer and Adorno argue,

By representing deprivation as negative, they retracted, as it were, the prostitution of the impulse and rescued by mediation what was denied. The secret of aesthetic sublimation is its representation of fulfilment as a broken promise. The culture
industry does not sublimate; it represses. By repeatedly exposing the objects of desire, breasts in a clinging sweater or the naked torso of the athletic hero, it only stimulates the unsublimated forepleasure which habitual deprivation has long since reduced to masochistic semblance. There is no erotic situation, which while insinuating and exciting, does not fail to indicate unmistakably that things can never go that far. (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1988:139-140)

The embourgeoisment and mass production of pornography began in earnest in the early 1950s, with Playboy magazine, often referred to euphemistically as entertainment for men. The Playboy ‘bunnies’ were part of a holistic fantasy package that promoted an urbane lifestyle to the Playboy consumer, promising an endless supply of young 8 attractive women, who, unlike real women were compliant to most male whims. Playboy attempted to encompass an ideal away from a ‘grotty’ and desperate masturbation culture, to one, which promoted also in its editorial approach, an urbane professional man, who while riding the post-war economic/consumer boom, could now afford to add improvements in his private life. The bourgeois values in Playboy however, like most bourgeois values were illusory, and based on the concealment of the purchase of a mass-market magazine for masturbatory purposes. Masturbation, while ignored completely in its expressed sub-narrative, played an integral role in the projected myth that Playboy readers could have sex with women like those portrayed in the images. Masturbation remained the furtive, if denied, activity of most men who

8 The focus on female youth is significant in the Playboy morality. It distances itself from suburban drudgery, promising escape. In the series of James Bond films, his courageous and debonair masculinity is invariably rewarded by a liaison with an appreciably younger female.
bought the magazine, beginning the now infamous and often repeated line, which satirises their embarrassment, “I only buy it for the articles”. Scrine argues that in relation to the proliferation of eighteenth century anti-masturbation treatises that,

Masturbation posed a fundamental challenge to the innate qualities attributed to bourgeois masculinity on which the struggle for hegemony, the model of citizenship and a sexual identity were all based. The solitary, antisocial practice of masturbation and the way in which it was perceived as the product of an uncontrollable imagination were ideas diametrically opposed to the understanding of the male political subject – and the definition of man as a rational, controlled, reasonable and free subject. (Scrine, 1999:96)

The “Playboy interview” was the underpinning of the bourgeois values that produced interviews with famous people, (usually men) from science, politics and entertainment. For Connell however, “The readership of this magazine was positioned as a corporate sexual hero, consuming an endless supply of girls” (Connell, 1995:215). Playboy attempted to locate its reader as a Renaissance man, consumers of an art form that comprised entirely of nude women. Consequently Playboy morality suggested that the man should be prepared to pay for female company in an unspoken quasi-prostitutional role, as it enhanced their sense of economic power and dominance in the public sphere. The commodification and reductionist ethos of “I want it, I can get it”, and “I can then dispose of it”, dominated the exchange. Rather than direct payment, it would be manifested through the payment of dinners, entertainment and gifts, broadening and legitimising more obtuse versions of prostitution. This was an extension from women’s
traditional economic reliance on men and as such, while Playboy’s nudity offended sexual ascetics, these aspects were counterbalanced by its traditional economic and social values.

The Playboy ethos legitimised the emancipated man having a “little on the side”, as a reflection of his autonomy in the public sphere, and conditional that he maintain the façade and substance of his married and family life. The major themes then resonated with the message that a man could not live like a woman – trapped by a primarily caregiving role. The phenomenon of the ‘sexless’ housewife became reified through the cultural accessibility of other non-threatening forms of sexual gratification to a marriage or the nuclear family. The pornographic vision of a woman’s body and the pressures of monogamy sanctioned a partner thinking of others while maintaining the monogamy and romantic love ‘contract’. The practice of vicarious adultery through masturbation, fantasy or literal incorporation of the Playboy lifestyle shifts women towards the emotional ephemera of romantic love, as juxtaposition to the ‘sexual’ men’s life. Additionally, masturbation probably has ‘saved’ many from homosexuality as pornography attempts to align heterosexual discourse within the limitations of its masturbation culture, despite its connection with losing control.

The result of the sacrificing of neophyte femininity to the heterosexual masturbation culture was exposed in a film about the life and death of an actual Playmate of the Year Dorothy Stratten9. The narrative focused on her murder by a jealous husband who had originally promoted her to Playboy as a model and the tragedy that enveloped the magazine following her death. This brought into focus supposedly benign methods and philosophy, as Playboy’s key marketing pitch of the nude “girl next door” was exposed

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9 1980, Star 80, director B. Fosse.
as instrumental in Stratten’s death, as well as the lure of fame. Many Playboy models have aspirations of stardom in the entertainment industry, and while Playboy may not be their ideal beginning, they feel they can use Playboy as a vehicle to gain a general ‘exposure’. Typecasting for nude models is particularly apparent, and for most, Playboy is the only pinnacle they ever climb in the entertainment industry. Such things were promised to Stratten and it was her escalation to, and away from Playboy, which precipitated her partner’s murderous rage.

The desire for pornography manifested in the sexological response to Christianity/Victorianism, for the popularity of pornography relates to a sexual void that only can only be filled by a deliberate “eroticisation of the denied”. The cycle is created thereby through a phenomenon of the more increased the activity and focus, the more the tension increases, necessitating the desire for further fixation and release. Pornography therefore inevitably thrives when attacked by society’s conservative elements, and attacks made by anti-pornography crusaders such as Andrea Dworkin and Katherine MacKinnon become ensnared unwittingly in same crusade conducted by the religious right. However as Dworkin suggests, “pornography does not, as some claim, refute the idea that female sexuality is dirty: instead, pornography embodies and exploits this idea; pornography exploits and promotes it” (Dworkin, 1981:201).

While moralists and feminist moralists are philosophically and morally correct in arguing that pornography is exploitative for women, pornographers are then forced into semiotics that increase an intensity of focus, as pornography requires some resistance to remain viable. Subsequently it results in the need to spread the culture of openness even further and perhaps recapture the days of mythological decadent Rome. However

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10 Seen chapter seven and internet pornography.
in the post-Enlightenment society, too much openness has the potential to destroy allure through the weakening of the bonds of purity, and the dialectic of ‘dangerous’ sexualities. The following video review from Hustler magazine illustrates a quantum leap from Playboy’s “tits and bums”, hidden by a bourgeois editorial approach.

I always look forward to the Private Stories, because their six or seven different tales always have me tossing load after load of hot, sticky scrotum slop around the room. None of my furniture is spared from the creamy protein sprinkle from my overworked, extremely happy purple - headed warrior. Let me describe to you what was featured in this fuck fest. There was knob polishing, muff diving, jizz, cum - guzzling cracks and most importantly, there were big, gooey torrents of bubbling gonad juice - from them and from me. Did I forget to mention the amount of drilling of every squishy nook and cranny of the ‘fuck - hungry harlots’ poop-shutes that occurred throughout? (Muff, 1998:22).

There has been a significant shift in men’s magazines market in recent years. The Australian edition of Playboy magazine has ceased production replaced by a new breed of men’s magazines that readers were not embarrassed to leave adorning coffee tables. These magazines with names such as Ralph and Max focused more on editorial content and used models that already had some type of media profile - hence there is less graphic nudity, which also means a wider sphere of public display for sale, including supermarkets. Masturbation had become furtive again, or as the trend attempts to imply, men are masturbating less and having more sex.
The original Playboy ethos is open to misinterpretation due to the uncomfortable association between viewing nude women necessitating a requirement to masturbate. Once this view is accepted, the projected male corporate dominance and that of men generally in the post-World War Two era appears more evidently as an elaborate and ingenious marketing ploy. An appropriation of the Playboy morality by women via the gay gaze further reveals the limitations of the association between viewing pornography and actual social power.

**Phallus critiques**

The cultural phenomenon of phallus critiques continues the search in an inchoate fashion for an autonomous female sexuality, and the evolution of sexology’s culture of openness.

The pattern of difference/dominance is so deeply embedded in culture, institutions and body-reflexive practices that it functions as a limit to the rights-based politics of reform. Beyond a certain point, the critique of dominance is rejected as an attack on difference – a project that risks gender vertigo and violence. In Lacianian terms it means attacking the Phallus, the point of intersection between patriarchal dominance of culture and the bodily experience of masculinity; in more orthodox Freudian terms it means reviving the terror of castration. (Connell, 1995:232)

The politics of ‘size’ can be made relevant to men, as the penis becomes a ‘tool’ for
ownership legitimacy, firstly of his wife, and then his children from where they originate. His penis efficacy is also a metaphor for his physical strength and his rank amongst other men, where separate discourses pertaining to how a penis looks un-aroused, or on the ‘slack’, (where other men view the penis) compared to the erect size, (a women’s view), originate. Elvis Presley’s former bodyguards commented in their book on the “King of Rock and Roll”, that when he wanted to urinate, he always went into the toilet cubicle rather than the urinal. “He will never stand up alongside you in the men’s room when you’re taking a leak; he will always go into the booth” (Dunleavy, 1977:89).

The predominately homoerotic Greek society used male phallic worship as a manifestation of all things ‘male’. Whereas the phallus was portrayed as proud and significant the female genitalia is constructed as an otherness that at best can only threaten the phallus. The penis as a sexual instrument usurped the significance of female procreativity, by emphasising the power of the seed, with Freud later basing his Oedipal phase on the semantically charged concept of the ownership or lack of a penis. Representations of a particular phallic masculinity “include double phalluses, phalluses with eyes whereby they gain a kind of separate living identity; phallus plants, an entire bestiary of phallus shaped animals and creatures with part of their anatomy transformed into phalluses” (Keuls, 1993:76).

The practice of phallus humiliation by women is largely an unconscious attack on

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11 Aware perhaps that a large appendage equated to “sex appeal” a musician that worked with Presley in the 1950s claimed that the singer even fashioned a prosthesis of sorts – to rock and roll inside his baggy pants. Said Houston, “He would take the cardboard cylinder out of a roll of toilet paper and put a string in one end of it. Then he’d tie that string around his waist. The other end, with the cardboard roller, would hang down outside his drawers.” Once onstage, as Elvis pulled his body backward as he
Classical homoerotic phalluses, but is also stimulated by women’s assertion of the ‘patriarchal’ dominance in capitalism and sex theory. The perception that women were manipulated into accepting penetrative sex forms part of the rationale for the attack on phalluses or relative penis size. While feminists rightly perceive that penetrative sex and procreative demands are related in part to an imperative to contain women in the home, traditional analyses fail to account for the broader population imperative of capitalism that ensnared men and women. Symbolic critiques of social characteristics therefore operate in lieu of more significant analysis. Segal subsequently asserts that, “It is not feminism which is the motor of male insecurities, but the fact that being a male entails no psychological essence of ‘masculinity, merely a penis and scrotum – in most cases” (Segal, 1994:283).

Women’s new critique of phalluses follows from a relative tradition of denial. The type of questionnaire which focused on relative phallus efficacy found in magazines such as Playboy and Cosmopolitan in the 1970s and 1980s, tended to prevaricate with the sense that a vigorous discussion would be taking “things too far”, and result in the overt humiliation of men. It has now become the new sexological openness issue of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries and perhaps the most interesting feature of post-feminist-feminism. This development however also conceals (yet builds upon) the fact that men had already been partly humiliated and referenced by their phallus previously in heterosexual pornography, where actors with well above average phalluses are depicted, along with ‘dildoes’ that often exceed any human dimension.

Popular television programs such as Sex in the City based in heterosexuality, fulfils a significant role in articulating ‘feminist’ themes in a post-feminist world. The began strumming his guitar, he would also yank at the string. (Brown &
perception that feminism was dominated by non-mainstream women or dominated by lesbianism is redressed in a female led perspective that imitates Playboy morality. In the female appropriation however, it is about women leading a single lifestyle while awaiting their perfect partner, rather maintaining the façade of a home-front. The narrative is also limited by the fact that the characters’ promiscuity and disappointment with men may be actually concealing a desire for lesbian experiences. In one episode of Sex in the City\textsuperscript{12}, one of the characters finally finds her “Mr. Right”. Attractive financially secure and that intangible ‘something’ draws her to him. There is a scene where the couple, are having sex. Tears are streaming down her face, and he asks why. It is because she is so happy she says. Yet the real reason, as she reveals to her girlfriends later, is that his penis is so small that she does not derive any pleasure from it!

Despite the emphasis on the sexual aspect of their love lives, compared to traditional female idealisations based on romantic love the characters are often disappointed in what sex ultimately does not give them - love, commitment, and the eternal myth of finding that one true love. Subsequently while the women are presented as equal to men, they do not want the appropriation of the male sexual response to indicate that they are entirely like men. Therefore there is the sense that their partial appropriation of masculine codes is only because of exasperation in finding a monogamous partner.

An internet “singles club” revealed individuals pursuing various sexual pleasures based in heterosexuality. Members of Adult Friend Finder\textsuperscript{13} put profiles of themselves and pictures if they wish to, in various sections that define their sexuality. In the sanctity

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\textsuperscript{12} 2000, director, A. McLean
\textsuperscript{13} AdultFriendFinder.com Accessed April 2000
and safety of this environment, female members seek the ultimate sexual experience often defined by physical attributes, or pursue bi-sexual experiences. “Andi”\textsuperscript{14} is a forty-year-old full time mother, and part-time computer student. Separated from her husband, she has a penchant for sex toys, and pornographic videos that are lesbian in orientation. She has had one lesbian experience, which was arranged, and shared by a male partner. She claimed that she had no particular desire to repeat the experience, although she stated that she enjoyed it immensely. She is mostly kept busy with looking after her two young children, and arguing with her husband concerning maintenance payments and visitation rights.

“Gypsy”, thirty-two, has been a prostitute for several years, and counts sex as one and only interest, both professionally and personally. She sees prostitution as “just a job”, and views the role of the prostitute pragmatically however she does not like to talk about her job. She largely demarcates the sex she performs for work, against sex for fun through the use of intimacy, for she prevents her clients from kissing her on the lips. Her main sexual aspirations include achieving a vaginal orgasm during heterosexual intercourse, having lesbian lovers, group sex, and watching two men having sex with each other, (all of which she is also yet to experience).

“Blossom” forty-seven and a schoolteacher, has had several lovers aged between twenty and thirty recently. When asked why she preferred younger lovers, she stated that older men, such as those in their forties, and older, were often impotent. Another interpretation is that younger virile men also make her feel younger and an experience with an older man who was impotent, would have the double effect of her feeling older, and reminiscent of losing her sexual appeal or sense of virility. This is confirmed by her

\textsuperscript{14} Informants interviewed between April and July 2000.
main sexual fantasy (of which she achieved once) of two young men having sex with her at the same time.

“Blossom” also made the observation that men fall into ratios of seventy-five and twenty-five percent when it came to the size of their phalluses. She claimed that seventy-five per cent of men fell within a ‘normal’ range, which she identified as between four and seven inches long when erect. The twenty-five per cent range includes those with three inches and less, which she stated is relatively common. In the twenty-five per cent range, there was also those eight inches and above. Blossom claimed that once had a lover whose penis was one inch long when erect, and that he displayed no outward signs that it disturbed him. She also stated that on the one occasion she had sex with him, it did not obstruct her enjoyment. It is also worth noting anecdotally, that women use vibrators almost entirely on the clitoral area, therefore those who fall outside of statistical models of normalcy can rightly feel reference to penis size is a sarcastic reflection on their sexual potency. Edwards’ Definitive Penis Size Survey suggests that ‘modest’ length ranges from 141.5mm (5.6”), ‘average’ 161.8mm (6.4”), and ‘endowed’ 181.1mm (7.1”). This was based on a combined adolescent/adult sample of 3,100 subjects. Those within a modest range expressed a 70% dissatisfaction rate with the length of their penis, compared to a 10% dissatisfaction rate for those endowed” (Edwards, 1998).

The Enlightenment relationship to Social Darwinism builds a mythology about large black appendages with black men being closer to nature and white men the superior intelligence and civilisation. The following example from an advertisement reveals a complex weave of racism, commercialisation, and sexual semiotics, by playing on long-held fears that white women will prefer black men, because of their larger appendages.
This fear of male black sexuality was exploited in the campaign for Bundaderg Rum\textsuperscript{15}, where the links with an alcoholic drink and masculine culture is obvious. Moreover, with rum being a powerful alcoholic drink, there is a fine line between an inspired sexual performance and impotency.

Bundaberg Rum is an Australian product, originating from the North Queensland sugarcane fields. A large white polar bear has been the symbol used on their product for many years, but for the television advertising campaign, the bear materialises as a quasi-white man the viewer is left to presume. The creature goes to a blues/jazz club, inhabited mainly by black men. After giving a black man a drink of his Bundaberg Rum, the black man exclaims, in jubilation, “give me five”. The high five, clasping or grasping of hands is associated with contemporary African culture. The creature feigning ignorance, states, “you better have one at a time”. This is both a cultural appropriation and minimalisation in one movement. The advertisement reaches its semiotic climax in the urinal where the creature lines up along with black men in the men’s toilets. The shot is taken from the rear, and shows the bear straddling the individual urinal, (this is done to emphasise the creature needing to accommodate his large appendage). At this movement all the other men gaze down in wonder at the size of the bear’s appendage.

The sub-text of the narrative is that the bear, representing the white man’s version of a well-known Caribbean product, outstrips it in performance. This “white man” not only drinks more, but his penis is larger (when it is generally accepted that black men have an overall size advantage). Moreover, he can outperform those who in a Social Darwinian cosmology are considered closer to the animals and nature. Edwards found

\textsuperscript{15} Viewed in national television campaign, 11/8/2001.
however that “black men had slightly shorter erect lengths than their Caucasian counterparts, 6.1” to 6.5” respectively. However, ‘the average flaccid length among Blacks was 93.8mm (3.7”) compared to 87.7mm (3.4”) for Caucasians, which may explain the impression that Black men have greater erect dimensions.” In the context of the necessary public display at places such as urinals, the length of the flaccid penis is perhaps more significant as a statement of manliness. Therefore “the difference in flaccid length between those who are reluctant to potentially expose their penis to public scrutiny and those who are not, remained strong. 81.0mm or 3.2” versus 89.6mm or 3.5” respectively’ (Edwards, 1998).

Male revues such as the Chippendales uses male models wearing spandex type G-strings, showing well above average appendages. The film The Full Monty\textsuperscript{16} satirised the popularity of shows such as the Chippendales, but was also following a well-worn path of gently poking fun at masculine standards, but used a larger sense of humiliation to attack the male’s role in the family. He may be the head of the household, (albeit grudging), but he is invariably taken advantage of, and made to look foolish by his wife and children, based on an interpretation of male foibles. By using one of the few sites where women exhibit an overt ‘sexuality’ (male strip shows), the writers of The Full Monty took the concept of masculine humiliation to its theoretical conclusion. Whereas he once gained respect in his role as head of the nuclear family, his function now is reduced to a commercial value only, with the selling of their labour transposed by the need to sell them-selves.

The narrative is based on a group of unemployed unskilled men in a formerly prosperous British steel-making town, being driven to emasculate themselves further in

\textsuperscript{16} 1997, director P. Cattaneo.
the public sphere by putting on a stripping show for local women, along the lines of a Chippendale production. The film had wide appeal, for the narrative completed the public humiliation of issues that their wives had been implying for years. The failure to perform as the primary breadwinner was equated to the notion that their penises were small in relation to their sex drive and that of their social marginalisation and emasculation through unemployment. As the men were looking for employment outside of their usual employment options is indicative of the ideological power (and benefits) of liberalism. Combined with the egalitarian notion that physically unattractive men could use their bodies in an erotic show, they are further recognised for their bravery in attempting a role given their physical limitations. Ultimately, they are rewarded and compensated for their public shaming through their ingenuity to save them from unemployment, albeit briefly. (The lead character is behind in maintenance payments to his ex-wife, and is denied access to his child).

Indicating a female efficacy and the economic rationalist tone of the narrative, (which appears to link women with its practice), the lead character’s ex-wife, who works in a factory in a managerial position, offers him a below award wage job, so that he can pay child support. The ex-wife had also recently moved in with a new boyfriend a white-collar worker with a large house, with the only balance presented in the schema is that her new partner is portrayed as effeminate, nasty and aloof. This serves as motivation for the father to reclaim his ‘masculinity’ through stripping. The female appropriation of masculinity is complete when in an earlier Chippendale strip show, one of the intending strippers breaks in to the men’s toilet, (the show being closed to men), where a woman, unknowing of his presence, in front of her girlfriends urinates upright at the urinal. The implication in this context suggests perhaps, that women are still the
real ‘tarts’.

Another British film, *Brassed Off*17, looks at the same issues relating to male unemployment in an industrial town, but this time linking the male and female’s experience of mine closures. Whereas the female lead character is first represented by a function of an economic rationalist manager, she is soon is linked with the men through a common love of music, (the Colliery Brass Band). In contrast the woman does not appear to profit from the men’s misery, as evidenced in *The Full Monty*, but neither can she do anything but to offer to go down bravely with them. The playing of *The Land Of Hope and Glory* at their last performance, a pithy response to the reality of their lives in a post-Thatcher Britain, attempts to obscure the feminisation of the narrative. The corollary becomes that the female ex-manager encourages them to play their beloved music, despite the inevitable conclusion, (no Colliery, no Brass Band). In an allusion that economic rationalism has its advantages, (the greater involvement of women in the economy), is that working class masculinity is not usually represented through music, and that a woman had to show them how.

However, most representations of masculine marginalisation tend to follow the style of *The Full Monty*, rather than *Brassed Off*, in the implication that women should take full advantage of masculinity’s devolution from respected head of the nuclear family, to satirised figure of fun. Therefore the post-feminist society tends to view masculinity through a caricature of Greek homo-erotica, where it has repackaged it to satisfy the desire for male heroes. By taking the homoerotic gaze, women have placed it within their actual gaze, where they appear to have power. That the recipient of their gaze is homosexual or heterosexual is irrelevant, as an example from a television advertisement

17 1996, Director M. Herman
illustrates\textsuperscript{18}.

The advertisement involves two young women sitting in a room eating yogurt, (the product), with a very small plume of smoke coming from a table in front of them. A fireman is shown entering the building, designer stubble on his face, designer dirt covering his muscular torso. He enters the room where the smoke is, and finds the women calmly eating yogurt while approvingly gazing upon him. The smoke is now revealed to be coming from a toaster from burnt toast. The “fireman” merely reaches over and turns the toaster off, and the smoke disappears. His gentle yet purposeful touch of the switch is reminiscent of expertly touching a clitoris, (sighs, giggles, emerge from the women). He then shakes his head good humouredly, and leaves without comment as if conceding he has no control over this female centered gaze. Implied however, is that the danger can be increased on the discretion of the viewer, and the man, along with his masculinity is equally disposable and transient. The overall suggestion is that they would hire a male prostitute if they could find someone as masculine, gentle, and ultimately submissive as this fireman, replicating the appropriation of the surplus value of the housewife. A distinctive theme in male sexuality in the post-feminist society, and in particular how women perceive and now accept male sexuality, is the development of the disposable male – the ‘gigololisation’ of men. Those who fit the physical dimensions of the ‘stud’ are highly valued – linked to the emphasis on body aesthetics and the growth of fitness and weight loss industries.

The use of chocolate as a product more private and satisfying, (yet also dangerous due to its high fat content) than sex or masturbation, alludes to the female phallus and orgasm. Metaphorically and whimsically, they reflect vehicles that articulate women’s

\textsuperscript{18} Viewed in a national television advertising campaign, November 2002.
new conceptions of power in public and private realms. The advertisers usually play upon the perception that the modern woman is extremely stressed and busy, but that nothing can be done that may improve their lives. Implied therefore is that sexual pleasures are unsatisfying or that lesbianism or bisexuality may be more gratifying, but socially and personally stigmatising. Heterosexual promiscuity may be viewed the same way or just generally unsatisfying. To reflect women’s greater economic and sexual freedoms, symbolic relationships to the capitalist social order are stressed within the restrictions posed by established moral codes. As Hennessy suggests

In advanced capitalism’s industrial sectors, middle-class women have increasingly been invited to see themselves as sexual agents, as “women on top” – with or without the boys on the side – as professional managers in charge of their subordinates and of their own orgasms, competing equally in the marketplace with men, “fighting fire with fire”. (Hennessy, 2000:197)

The eroticisation of chocolate is consequently portrayed as a sin greater than sex because of the effect on body image and health. Consistent with the ‘promise’ of advertising, popular chocolate biscuit Tim Tam\(^{19}\) suggests the accruement of female agency and power by consuming the product. The appropriation of the clitoral orgasm - an extremely private and individually accessible pleasure, indicates the smallness of the female psychic and genital ‘space’. The advertisers have repeatedly followed a concept that what every woman secretly desires is a pack of Tim Tam (an orgasm) that never ends. This is automatically granted by a male genie, which then leaves two wishes left. One advert uses a male sarcastically wishing that the two women should have dressed

\(^{19}\) Advertisement viewed in national television campaign May 2001.
for the occasion. One woman off-handily wishes that the annoying man to be transplanted to a remote area of Russia. Wish granted. The intruder in their private space and pleasure (an allusion to viewing lesbianism) disappears where he cannot occupy this exclusively female site.

Whereas the association with women and chocolate is often portrayed as a secret place and an oasis in their daily lives, an inverse approach is taken to men and alcohol. Where the consumption of beer is usually in a public setting, never alone, for this can be construed as alcoholism, chocolate for women is something which can be consumed at various and repeated times of the day - which also implies that women’s neurotic (sexual) impulses are frequent. A “man’s thirst” is quenched by “a beer” although his consumption may be several that produces a negligible interest and capacity for sex.

In a series of Bundaberg Rum advertisements the advertisers combine alcohol and football to suggest that in the final analysis men prefer both to even a good probability of a “one night stand” with an attractive female. A private conversation between girlfriends is listened to by the omnipresent bear, and passed onto a nearby table of men. However the ‘footy’ starts on the pub’s large screen television and all interest in sex is lost. As the gulf between chocolate and alcohol indicates, when alcohol is linked with football, pursuing women for sex is too difficult perhaps and not worth the trouble, even when given the type of privileged information men usually only dream about.20.

In an attempt to capture the development of the ‘ladette’21, Australian advertisers have pursued the nation of female ‘mates’, who ostensibly now act in a very similar fashion to men when socialising in hotels and nightclubs. One advertisement has an

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20 Advertisement viewed in a national television campaign, July 2003.
21 “A label chiefly used in Britain to describe beer-swilling females who are at home on a bar stool”. The Sun Herald, February 2004, Fairfax Press, page 35.
attractive young woman surrounded by a group of men in a bar, who are in competition with another group across the bar to see who can open a twist top of beer in novel ways, (teeth, forehead). All are shocked when the woman in the first group calmly and decisively reaches down below the level of the bar with an unopened bottle of beer. The viewer is left in little doubt that she has used her vagina to open the bottle, until she lifts her shirt and torso above the level of the bar, to reveal that in fact she has used her “belly button”.
CHAPTER FIVE:

WOMEN’S ROLES and SEXUALITY in CAPITALISM

This chapter continues the anthropological perspective of the capitalist society, emphasising the dynamics of the public/private split and attributions given to women to perform tasks in the private sphere. Protestantism gave women a distinct role in Church and society that reflected female strengths and ‘freedoms’ given by liberalism’s connection to Protestantism. Arguments that are based on female involvement in public sphere are restricted by the historical legacy of these developments that assisted in the growth of capitalism. Nurturing, romantic love, and a particularly pervasive form of consumerism aimed at women, underpinned by a Protestant conservatism, results in feminism and women in general lacking a mechanism for providing revolution in a broader context.

Women and families

John Stuart Mill expanded liberalism to incorporate the notion of marriage as a ‘contract’ similar to the work contact, but women remained in a distinctly unequal relationship to men. This has been due to the fact that these amendments to liberalism could not alter the public/private dichotomy that emerged through industrialisation, and the public/private dichotomy in relation to morality. The ideological construction of the home as a source of stability gives the impression that it is separate from the demands and characteristics of the wider society. For Pateman, advocates of female equality such as Mill still underestimated the impact of the family that included women within
domestic hegemony.

The structure of everyday life, including marriage, is constituted by beliefs and practices which presuppose that women are naturally subject to men – yet writers on democracy continue to assert that women and men can and will freely interact as equals in their capacity as enfranchised democratic citizens. (Pateman, 1983:213)

By focusing on maternity and the dogma of liberal/egalitarianism, women were supposed to civilise men through their personal asceticism, as the principal aspect of their role in the home. Later, through feminist movements, liberal/egalitarianism also gave women one theoretical base from which to argue for greater equality with men. In effect, it was a lower-level policing role that did not threaten men’s hierarchical position in Church and society. The general role of moral policing and the emphasis on female sexual ascetics, broadened the gulf between public and private spheres of acceptable expressions of sexuality, and heightened the distance between legitimate and illicit forms of sexual desire. This made it more difficult for the sexologists to subsequently separate sexuality from procreation and promoted a conundrum that the pornography and prostitution industry exploited so effectively. Asceticism was applied to the “sexless” housewife while women as sex objects, existed in the public domain. As Marx and Engels argue in relation to private property and the division of labour,

The nucleus, the first form, of which lies the family, where wife and children are the slaves of the slaves of the husband. This latent slavery in the family, though still very crude, is the first property, but even at this early stage it corresponds perfectly to

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the definition of modern economists who call it the power of disposing of the labour-power of others. Division of labour and private property are, moreover, identical expressions: in the one the same thing is affirmed with reference to activity as is affirmed in the other with reference to the product of the activity. (Marx & Engels, 1845: “Private Property and Communism”)

The society constructed around industrial capitalism saw an increased emphasis on women’s utility that connected to them to their maternity. This emphasis resulted from the new mode of production demanding armies of workers to fill its factories. For women furthermore, the Christian concept of marriage and monogamy was the link between illicit and legitimate expressions of sexuality. Consistent with the capitalist emphasis on private property, paternal genes assisted identification and the concept of ownership, as equally, women’s sexuality was became a function owned and scrutinised by the society. Cott asserts that, “evangelical Protestants constantly reiterated the theme that Christianity had raised women from slaves in status to moral and intellectual beings. The tacit condition for that elevation was the suppression of female sexuality” (Cott, 1978:227).

The awkward placement of women in the public sphere reflected their sublimated status and servant role, but also the limitations and restrictions caused by an overt sexual asceticism that could often only imply availability. While feminism has improved the types of jobs and careers available to women the biological maternal ‘clock’ produces an inertia emanating from traditional roles. The creation of a partially emancipated female subject has placed women in a “double bind,” as they are still
expected to provide nurturing and meet domestic responsibilities. Consequently the phenomenon of a “maternal sacrifice,” must be acknowledged in the social formation of the industrial capitalist society. Thus, patriarchy is generally defined by feminists by the contrasting positions held by dominant men and subordinate women in the family. As Summers asserts,

Families provide an entire little world in which the man is the legally acknowledged boss; and this can be a powerful compensation for the man who has a menial or boring job, especially one where he is continually forced to obey orders. At home he is king and his dependent wife and children accord him love, honour and obedience. Or, at least, this is how it is supposed to be. (Summers, 1975:148)

The long periods of time spent by men in the public space of work, then in public places such as hotels, gambling dens and brothels, necessitated unofficial prostitutes, “baby makers”, moral police, and domestic scientists, working to civilise men from the pressures and dangers omnipresent in the public sphere. By virtue of their public or implied sexuality, women working as barmaids and similar occupations were required to sell something of themselves alongside the obvious product. The incongruity of sexual asceticism in Christian semantics, and the capitalist need to sell and promote products and services, underpins the notion that sex ‘sells’. Much of capitalist work for women has been semi-prostitutional with displays of ‘flesh’ assisting in work-place dynamics, however an implied desire or offer of sex by women is often juxtaposed by Protestant moral asceticism that will deny the opportunity of it actually occurring.

Other jobs that requires the female worker focus to be deliberately friendly or
flirtatious, are indicative of this moral dilemma that adds to the general contradiction of Christian support of a commodified economic system. Alternatively, women’s maternal role and the implied nurturing, direct women to careers such as nursing and teaching. However Summers points out, in Australia “in the 1880s, women who worked as nursemaids or in similarly esteemed jobs earned from 18 pounds to 25 pounds per annum; by contrast, women in such disreputable occupations as barmaids earned between 40 and 70 pounds per annum (Summers, 1975:313). The blending of the sexual and maternal could therefore include prostitution², and is done both overtly in public space, and covertly in their roles as housewives. The promotion of a male-defined female sexuality was to play an integral feature of the industrial capitalist social order and the promoting of ascetic values that characterised capitalist expansion. The existence of the nineteenth century middle class wife;

Was, biologically speaking, specialised for one function alone - sex. Hence the elaborate costume-bustles, false-fronts, wasp-waists which caricatured the natural female form. Her job was to bear the heirs of the businessman, lawyer or professor she married, which is what gave her claim to income. (Ehrenreich & English, 1979:95)

Subsequently the female sphere was based on pursuing (or covertly encouraging) husbands to provide financial protection for maternity. Tennessee Williams in the play The Glass Menagerie³ explored some of the negative consequences when a husband leaves his wife, and/or fails as provider for ‘his’ family. The overbearing maternal

² For Summers in the Australian context, the sheer disproportion in the numbers of convict men and women between 1788 and 1841 underpinned a profound orientation to the sexual abuse of female convicts. 78, 077 male convicts were sent to Australia in the period compared to only 9,422 women. Summers, A, (1975), p.275
presence of the woman who is left to fend for herself during the Depression in America is stark, as she fails to recognise the problems for disabled daughter in finding an interested suitor, and the son who feels an intense burden as the family’s only wage-earner. The mother reminisces over past “gentleman callers,” who were potential husbands, rather than the inadequate father of her children. The son plays a man cast in his father’s shadow as he leaves the family due to the mother’s overbearing maternity and bitter disappointment ‘caused’ by men. The belief that women possess the real power in the family structure stems from their maternity, and is a play upon the Oedipal complex. This coping mechanism attempts to negate the physical and economic power of men, and is often referred to as ‘feminine wiles’, a manipulative theory which relies on the woman knowing and controlling ‘her’ man. The extent and success of women negotiating the conditions of their oppression have often been ignored by the polemical practice of feminism. This perspective has been overridden by the implication that men are identified either with the capitalist class, who exploit women directly or a working class elite that exploit women as domestic and sexual slaves. However as Summers concedes, structural problems that exist within marriage, are also conditional on individual differences between men and how they relate to their wives.

Once in a marriage both partners can suffer – and sometimes the men may suffer more. To express her resentment and frustration at her overall situation of impotence, and unhappy woman may dredge up whatever subversive weapons she can find to take what is inevitably a petty retaliation. A woman who resorts to nagging, or refusing to have sexual intercourse, to neglecting the housework or the care of her children will not, by these means,
remedy or escape her cultural prison. Her revenge is ignoble because it can only create guilt and self-hatred in herself – and can no way alter the structural inequities of her situation. Such measures can usually only be taken against a meek and acquiescent husband – for a brutal or domineering man can simply terrorise his wife into conformity or his will – and are thus directed against an individual rather than the institution.

(Summers, 1975: 149-150)

Women make numerous sacrifices for the family unit, although they may also be clinging to financial security and the material comfort the nuclear family brings. Women, however, can become so immersed in the realm of the family that they have difficulty in seeing the family in ‘objective’ context. Men’s more complete immersion into the public sphere gives them distance and arguably a greater degree of objectivity. Marriage then becomes a source of entrapment for women who are primarily defined by their involvement in the nuclear family4.

The industrial capitalist family is unique that despite a great uniformity in living arrangements in urban society, families came to represent secret societies, where

4 There has been much literary material in relation to women’s relationship to the nuclear family and hence capitalism. Delphy and Leonard strongly assert that,

We see men and women as economic classes, with one category/class subordinating the other and exploiting its work. Within the family system specifically, we see men exploiting women’s practical, emotional, sexual and reproductive labour. For us ‘men’ and ‘women’ are not two naturally given groups which at some point in history fell into a hierarchical relationship. Rather the reason the two groups are distinguished is because one dominates the other in order to use its labour. In other words, it is the relationship of production which produces the two classes ‘men’ and ‘women’. (Delphy & Leonard, 1992:258).

The central flaw in this argument however, is that it obscures the fact that men and women have the unifying problematic in capitalism, in “having only their labour to sell”. Moreover, the artificial creation of a “class within a class” can directly assist the overarching thematic of capitalism itself. It therefore tends to view patriarchy as merely a psychological or cultural phenomenon, rather than as a system which has a material base in social relations.
problematic marriages and families were commonplace but denied. Paradoxically little is otherwise known of the actual internal workings of individual families. Experiences of rape, child physical and sexual abuse, domestic violence and mental cruelty, are difficult areas for many health professionals to access due to the veil of secrecy over the nuclear family. Actual or implied violence, so called “domestic violence,” often plays a pivotal role in maintaining relationships behind the façade of the united nuclear family. Subsequently, coexistent with the experience of work, the family or marriage relationship is coercive rather than contractual. On the basis of experienced women’s refuge workers, the relationship with the perpetrator of violence is underpinned by the perhaps naïve wish that “many women who have experienced domestic violence say that they do not want the relationship to end but rather the violence to stop” (Summers, 2003: 90). In the early Enlightenment period, at the extreme;

The accused spouse was usually simply admonished to behave better, and only on a third or fourth court appearance might stricter punishment be set. Courts generally held that a husband had the right to beat his wife in order to correct her behaviour as long as this was not extreme, with a common standard being that he did not draw blood, or the diameter of the stick he used did not exceed that of his thumb. (This is the origin of the term “rule of thumb”) (Weisner-Hanks, 2000:76).

The ideal of the nuclear family has dominated sexuality and romantic love in modern society, and represents a type of individual sacrifice, which resonates with implications for racial and national survival. Sexuality as a proponent of liberal theory is counterbalanced by the limited individualism produced by the function of the nuclear
family. Single status for women has been frowned upon relating to the imperative to “populate or perish,” although the requirement to heterosexualise society is also revealed when a single man’s heterosexuality is open to question.

Such intellectual and social frameworks helped perpetuate the belief that the emerging capitalist middle class was one of the most stultifying, contradictory and narrow portrayals of human social organisation. The term ‘bourgeois’ that connotes smug and boring ignorance is particularly marked in ruling class families. In Mike Donaldson’s analysis of ruling class families he discovered a belief that ‘ignorance’ of the world outside of the family dynasty was integral its continuation. A lack of intimacy with the male children was justified as a toughening process that was necessitated by instilling in them the foibles of lesser men (people outside of the family dynasty).

The boys are toughened, hardened, disciplined, strengthened and stiffened, but within a particular environment, one which effectively blocks them off from pernicious influences which might soften their characters and undo the difficult and laborious construction of their masculinity. They are brutalised and protected at the same time. (Donaldson, 2003:171-172)

However the lives of the working class and middle class in the industrial capitalist society have one stark similarity - the prosaic order of their lives. While the families of the two classes were vastly different in many respects, they both shared enslavement to the rapid and continual rise and demands of the new economic system. Women were subsequently placed in these subordinate positions because of the exploitation and sublimation of the working male. Women leading men into the virtues and attributes of monogamy, do so to create for paternal identification and create stable environments for
children to become citizens and workers for the new social system.

The unique pressure placed on women in monogamy raises the issue of whether they are being led by their desires or are they simply being forced to inculcate an inverse or inverted model of the male sexual and social response. The question whether or that women even ‘want’ children, is concealed by the hegemony that has been built around monogamous marriage, that there is little room for manouevre to alter or subvert this ideology. Greater emphasis on liberalisation weakens the intrinsic appeal of the illicit, and a return to a conventional concept of marriage for life and a sense of duty is, in effect, too late and has a limited appeal. Careers and incomes that create genuine independence, but finding a man to satisfy the desire to have children before the women suffer from age-related infertility, is a new challenge for ‘emancipated’ women5. As Summers points out, according to 2002 ABS figures, “more than one third (36 per cent) of women aged 30 and over who earned more than $52,000 a year had not had children” (Summers, 2003:243). An inversion of patriarchal marriage and monogamy to suggest a post-modern matriarchy can only invert the hegemony of the original paradigm that favoured men. The advent of men as househusbands, sperm donors to career women, will perpetuate gender inequality that is reproduced by class divisions. Equally, the ‘gigololisation’ and transitory nature of male sexuality based upon women’s ascendance in the public sphere will impact on working class women who will be employed as child-carers and domestic workers for career women. The duplication of what are perceived to be the male privileges continues the principal function of class division amongst all men and a new proletarianisation of women who fall short of possessing a ‘career’.

Producer: A. Buchner, 2/5/04.
Giving voice to those who were previously silenced, exploited, marginalised or oppressed, ‘a history from below’, a ‘people’s history’, though not unrelated to the interests of labour historians, dramatically redefined the historical terrain. These shifts from social class to the people – an altogether more heterogeneous entity – broadened the scope but weakened the theoretical and political coherence of socialist historiography.

(Wells, 1990:230)

The liberalising of marriage and marriage type relationships has diminished the allure of the ascetic and the erotic through a destruction of mystique. The social implications behind the so-called “impotence drug” Viagra suggest not merely a drug providing assistance to geriatric men who have physiological problems in maintaining erection, but as an answer to a sexual problem. The relative demystification of female genitalia has led to a loss of erotic appeal, based on early Christian semiotics and iconographies. Viagra suggests a social impotence, and an attempt to realign the masculine hegemonic order reminiscent of Victorian imagery of women taking their partner’s erections, obtaining no pleasure themselves, and metaphorically “laying back and thinking of England”. The taking of a drug like Viagra suggests the maintenance of the image of virility is important when a general interest in sex is waning, or at least with the current partner. The mechanical and stratified occurrence of modern sexuality is emphasised, as it mimics the dominant mechanical features and imperatives of the economic mode. Sex therefore is to be performed at night, and libidinous impulses that are felt during the day are considered unnatural, and are to be sublimated. As Macuse argues,
These constraints, enforced by the need for sustaining a large quantum of energy and time for non-gratifying labour, perpetuate the desexualisation of the body in order to make the organism into a subject-object of socially useful performances. (Marcuse, 1966:199)

Late capitalist families

The pace intentional chaos and hysteria of the capitalist “market place” have placed special needs and emphasis on individuals in the family. Its ‘hystericalisation’ is related to the volatility of markets, and how unpredictable forces, can stimulate or deflate a market or an economy. Darwin’s theory of natural selection also stimulated the belief in laissez-faire capitalism that markets defined both the economy, and the ability for people to adequately cope with the mode.6

Freud’s discovery of hysteria in the lives of middle class women was part of the general malaise that emerging social sciences such as psychology explored - there was little or no social context that fed and created some of these ‘illnesses’. Weber alludes to this ‘rationality’ inherent in capitalism, its development from the Enlightenment and its degeneration into socially created hysteria. “For rationalisation leads to a growing consciousness of the autonomy (Eigengesetzlichkeit) of the individual value spheres, thus creating latent tensions among them which may develop - under conditions Weber

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6 Capitalism that is innately hysterical and unequal was satirised by Mark Twain in the novel, The Million Pound Note. It is based on a poor American living in London that becomes involved in an experiment, by two London bankers. They wished to prove that the mere possession of a million-Pound note could influence people’s attitudes and hence markets. The American soon found himself in the receipt of many unpaid goods and services, and the lending of his name to a business venture, ensured further capital investment and success.
The movement to high unemployment economies in the West, and dominated by the share-market, has also intensified this trend towards anxiety and hysteria-producing outcomes. Capitalism’s fabled strong feature of ‘choice’, is an intentionally anxiety producing condition. Promotion of brand recognition rather than the products themselves, results in an ever-increasing escalation between competitors marketing similar products, deliberately creating hysteria and tension. “That the difference between the Chrysler range and General Motors products is basically illusory strikes every child with a keen interest in varieties” (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1988:123). Moreover it is a fundamentally deceptive and illusory bourgeois vision that attempts to sell products to new and potential markets. Those who live on subsistence payments and denied access to consumerism (compounded by welfare punishment regimes), can be seen as being on “trial for being alive” as a result of their temporary or permanent failure within capitalism. In Marx’s “species being” the estrangement from labour and the political economy is a fundamental denial of human rights. As Marx asserts,

*Political economy conceals the estrangement inherent in the nature of labour by not considering the direct relationship between the worker (labour) and production.* It is true that labour produces for the rich wondrous things – but for the worker it produces privation. It produces palaces – but for the worker, hovels. It produces beauty – but for the worker, deformity. It replaces labour by machines – but some of the workers it throws back to a barbarous type of labour, and the other workers it turns into machines. It produces intelligence –
but for the worker idiocy, cretinism. (Marx, 1844: “Estranged Labour”)

The effort required to fit into the various markets, or by the failure thereof, further produces a social anxiety. Andreski asserts, “whereas in Antiquity the policies of the city-states necessarily set the pace for capitalism, today capitalism itself sets the pace for bureaucraticisation of the economy” (Andreski, 1983:158).

Capitalist society and capitalists in general, make more money through the exploitation of the traditional family unit that works consistently over a long period of time to obtain large material possessions such as a house and car. The use of transitory consumer goods such as food and clothing is also concentrated within the family unit. Whereas men are generally attracted to the large commodities such as a house, car or boat, a woman turns the house into a ‘home’ via the plethora of household accoutrements that shape its aesthetics. Nightingale argues that the connection between women and ‘shopping’ that began with the nineteenth century department store, was solidified by the impact of shopping complexes that provided a unification of “things for sale”, free entry, and the institutionalisation of the impulse buy.

This involved the acceptance as ‘natural’ of the irrationality of shopping, of the nature of women as superfluous and frivolous, narcissistically absorbed in the beautification of themselves and their houses. It involved persuading women shoppers to accept the view of themselves as reflections of the style presented inside the display window – the entrepreneur’s most desirable object, and to believe that there she saw ‘what she wants and what she wants to be’. (Nightingale, 1990:32).
The marketing philosophy behind the success of the fast food chain McDonald’s, appealed to both parents in the family by aiming advertising directly at very young children. By appealing directly to children, the company uses them as the leverage points to persuade parents with the resources to purchase their products. “A survey of American schoolchildren in 1986 found that 96% of them could identify Ronald McDonald, making him second only to Santa Claus in name recognition” (Donaldson, 1996:5). McDonald’s is a phenomenon of American capitalism that has thrived ideologically with no effective opposition since the devolution of twentieth century communism. The type of corporate capitalism constituted in McDonald’s (and its imitators) is opposed in function to the petit bourgeois spirit of capitalism that is orientated towards competition between small-scale operators. A Marxist critique of mass culture and a “culture industry” that underpins monopolised forms of capitalism suggests that,

The customer is not king, as the culture industry would have us believe, not its subject but its object. The very word mass-media, specially honed for the culture industry, already shifts the accent onto harmless terrain. Neither is it a question of primary concern for the masses, nor of the techniques of communication as such, but of the spirit which sufflates them, their master’s voice. (Adorno, 1991:85-86)

Such totalitarian capitalism can use judicious advertising that is ethically dubious (such as directing their marketing and advertising at children, who have no disposable income) and can overcome the fact that the actual food is bland and nutritionally poor. Moreover, advertising in the ‘West’ rather than just an indicator of the “free world,” is

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7 In the 1997 ‘McLibel’ case, it was found that McDonalds exploited children through their advertising.
now the world, and as ubiquitous thereby increases its subliminal power. In particular, television advertising mirrors the capture of the customer with the television station forcing viewers to endure frequent interruptions to their favourite television programs. This feature is vital to enhancing the popular and subliminal efficacy of the advertisement, as interrupted pleasure is the intended focus of the medium, argues Nightingale.

It is because of the relationship between advertising and television that watching television is work. Watching television is a leisure activity in the pursuit of which viewers are asked to lose themselves, to blur the distinction between reality and fantasy. They are also asked to forget that watching television is also work, to see television advertisements not as a continual reminder of the work of purchasing, but as entertainment.

(Nightingale, 1990:34)

The identification of women as the primary domestic providers and purchasers of these transitory consumer products makes it simpler for advertisers and their clients to appeal directly to women, while alluding to a power and autonomy in the domestic sphere. The successful “milk is legendary stuff” promotion at one and the same time, gave women oblique heroine status, while re-orientating them toward the home, and congratulating them for being overworked and undervalued. This in itself was the central feature of the campaign, as the appropriation of the surplus value of their labour is portrayed as a virtue, not a problem. This is a pragmatic plea based on the tension between partners who are working full time, and who have the primary responsibility for the domestic sphere in general. In this context, advertising as a form of propaganda
for the consumer society gives a presentation of how things are (a traditional capitalist
economic and social order) versus what things could be (social engineering that
attempts to ameliorate social inequality). The use of traditional symbols exist continue
because they have a resonance with the buying public, notwithstanding the conservative
nature of television. The link between women and shopping is integral to television’s
world-view, argues Nightingale.

Commercial television is an integral part of the modern
shopping world. In this age of image advertising, it is from
television that the meanings of brands are learned. If women
learned to shop in the nineteenth century, they had to be taught
to shop for others in the twentieth. The unpredictable woman of
the nineteenth century had to be transformed into predictable,
programmable ‘Mum’ one hundred years later. (Nightingale,
1990:33)

Based on television and billboard advertising, the female is *masculated* through the
image of an urban warrior. In the television version, coming from a morning domestic
scene that has run out of milk, the women walks into a corner store at the same time as
an armed robbery is occurring. Blithely ignoring the masked bandit, she proceeds to the
refrigerator, takes out a large carton of milk, and takes it to the counter. For the wife and
mother the bandit is just another inconvenience to the daily routine of looking after the
home, children and husband. Upon reaching the counter to pay the attendant, she knocks
the bandit out with her carton of milk. Hurried but unflustered, she walks out the door.
The billboard adverts bring the semiotics of the images into sharp focus. A single large
torso - head-shot - shows the woman, age between thirty and forty, standing defiantly

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8 Viewed in a national advertising campaign, September 2000.
with two cartons of milk clasped tightly to her chest. Wearing no makeup, except for darkly drawn dark circles under her eyes, which in the context of the overall semiotics, is another badge of honour, there is no suggestion that this should or could change. The connection between women, milk, and breast feeding, (although the product is from a cow), suggests biological determinism, which invidiously places women in this role.

A following advertisement in the series suggests that the intake of dairy products by women is essential in the life of today’s woman, who needs to juggle a fine line between sanity and insanity. A male voiceover accompanying the vision of a woman states “he constantly marvels at her ability to cope”, (also with no suggestion of how he might assist). This time the use of dairy products is directed at women, who need the complex sources of minerals and vitamins from the dairy to supplement their equally complex lives. Women in this context, are given a grudging acknowledgement of status, versus ‘real’ concepts of status that exist outside of the home. The transformation of the workplace and gender relations sees that the creators of the advertisement feel impelled to reflect something from both traditional and post-modern values. As Adorno argues,

The more inarticulate and diffuse the audience of mass media seems to be, the more mass media tend to achieve their ‘integration’. The ideals of conformity and conventionalism were inherent in popular novels from the very beginning. Now, however, these ideals have been translated into rather clear-cut prescriptions of what to do and what not to do. The outcome of conflicts is pre-established, and all conflicts are mere sham. Society is always the winner, and the individual is only a puppet manipulated through social rules. (Adorno, 1991:140-141)
Romantic love

Romantic love is a distinctly heterosexual theme that mediates between the extremes of prostitution, pornography, and homosexuality. It operates as a ‘pure’ discourse with allegorical precepts attempting to marginalise the excesses of sexual discourses. Moreover, by implication romantics suggest that homosexuality cannot be about love, but is an activity that is reminiscent of Classical physical excesses. The heterosexualisation of culture that began with Christianity, and culminated in Enlightenment religion and science placed women as the central love object and as the barometers and interpreters of the feeling. The Christian characteristic of asserting heterosexuality compared to the homoerotic cultures of the Greek and pre-Christian Roman Empire could constitute a “Christian antifeminism (that) represents one of the sublimated effects of the repression of the freer homosexual practices of both the Romans and the Greeks” (Bloch, 1991:76).

The ideology of romantic love has a symbiotic relationship to the Christian ascetics of chastity before marriage, as sex becomes the prime barometer of love - at least in the initial stages of a union. Women created a uniquely active proselytizing role in the Church and marginalised by capitalism, also gave love an ethereal quality which they could make their own. Consistent with Protestant discourses generally love emphasises individual agency within an overall ontology of discipline and denial. As Cott argues, “the pervasive ideology of romantic love, and also the evangelical conflation of the qualities of earthly and spiritual love, bridged the gap and refuted the ostensible contradiction between passion-less-ness and marriage” (Cott, 1978:234). The extremely
high moral standards set for women in regard to sexuality suggests that women will frequently ‘hide’ behind love as an excuse to have sex, but not necessarily to heighten its enjoyment. Therefore knowing or feeling that a man loves a woman does not necessarily increase the experience or sensation of sex, but the woman becomes more compliant and accessible in the performance of the sex act. Romantic love therefore, like Christianity, is fundamentally an anti-phallic discourse, with coitus as the absolutely final act in the journey along the road to ‘love’. ‘Deconstructed’ notions of love arguably existed in the original practice of lesbianism as Winkler argues,

Among the thoughts which Sappho has written into her poetry in a way which both conceals and reveals without portraying, are sexual images. These are in part private to women, whose awareness of their own bodies is not shared with men, and in part publicly shared, especially in wedding songs and rites, which are a rich store of symbolic images bespeaking sexuality.

(Winkler, 1981:77)

The mantra of love has had a similar result the promise of un-alienated sexological sex, based on frequent and powerful orgasms. The further it is pursued, the harder it is to achieve the more it is desired and eulogised. Consequently, it ultimately places women on the margins as it suggests an autonomous female sexuality that is guided by love. Possibly even more than the sexological vision of sex, romantic love ideology must operate on illusions and the need to allegorise. The tendency to project or over empathise with the other person’s ‘individuality’ places it in contradiction with notions of freedom, with many love affairs causing great psychological stress or violence when the ‘individual’ refuses to behave in a manner consistent with expectations.
The centrality of the nuclear family in the industrial capitalist society suggests it would be easier to love someone, (a shared history, children, a long marriage), than to stay *in love* with someone. A relationship breakdown can often reveal this as a painful fantasy, or it is an accepted part of life that you do not find real love. This fundamental essentialism of finding *true* love that has limited historical and social context then has to be understood through psychology or astrology. For men, the desire to capture, keep and control a love object can conceal a hostility that emanates from a sublimation of their ‘self’ to maintain this *status quo*. For, “he desires his own interminable suffering: “Lady, I fear nothing more than failing to love you” (Bloch, 1991: 150).

The key to the working class marriage in particular was that clearly defined public/private roles precluded overt expectation and intimate knowledge of each other. Moreover, the tradition of the man initiating contact with a prospective date/girlfriend/wife is in itself implying an expectation of paternalism. To give the illusion of emancipation through marriage and monogamy, links were made with romantic love. This created the notion that ownership and exclusivity of each other would ultimately set individuals free, with the two intertwined individuals then operating as a collective unit to confront and engage with capitalism. But the focus on ‘knowing’ and obsessing about an individual is simultaneously a phenomenon of private property ‘ownership’. Temporary monogamy contests, yet increases the intensity of the love relationship. The actual underpinning of the relationship is the potentiality of the man providing material support argues Goldman.

Ours is a practical age. The time when Romeo and Juliet risked the wrath of their fathers for love, when Gretchen exposed herself to the gossip of her neighbours for love, is no more. If on
rare occasions, young people allow themselves the luxury of romance they are taken in care by the elders, drilled and pounded until they become “sensible” (Goldman, 1970:232).

The shift towards secular monogamy is a partial rejection of the female enslavement to Christian iconography and its religious symbolism and sacrifice. Temporary monogamy is increasingly linked to a performance evaluation that is harder to achieve in marriage, despite readily obtained divorce. Once relationships are put on covert “performance contracts” however, they risk losing the bonds that tie - everyone at all times is “on the market,” and hence bound by challenging performance evaluation markers.

“Tonight the light of love is in your eyes, but will you still love me, tomorrow.”

The female sexual and maternal role demands for possibly unspecified periods of time women will remain monogamous despite an inadequate sexual and emotional life with their partner. The modern woman may have several partners while she is uncommitted, but when she finds someone she considers appropriate, she will commit to the same cycle of monogamy, again until the new bonds weaken.

Shifts in social mores, reflected in popular music, indicate a tentative shift to the moral and personal implications of sex before marriage for a woman. The “light of love” is an oblique allusion to manifestations of male desire, I know you want to ‘fuck’ me, but will you still want me respect me in the morning? Is sex with me special, or is it merely sex? Written on the cusp of the sexual revolution, the tension between sex and romantic love is explored in the narrative of the song. Sex for men, suspects Vidal is a quasi-masturbation experience when “few lovers”, “are willing to admit in the sexual act that to create or maintain excitement they may need some mental image as erotic
supplement to the body in attendance” (Laqueur, 2003:69).

The changes in late capitalist sexological theory indicates that a heterosexual sexual rite can have increased efficacy the more it is repeated with different partners, and involve varying degrees of disconnectedness from ascetic sexual codes. Ultimately the participant, immersed in the culture of romantic love, seeks a cleansing that only true love and the correct monogamous partner can provide. There are few myths as powerful in Western civilisation as the virgin bride married in white that will last the couple’s respective lifetimes. As the ‘permissive’ society has not totally abandoned virgin reification can now place an emphasis on the “born again virgin” – a sexually mature woman who once again seeks love through sex.

In either the virginal or promiscuous cases, they both produce a type of romantic love hysteria, where the search for love - either through chastity or promiscuity - produces anxiety as a result of failure or disappointments. This idealisation of love is closely related to the notion of sexual purity (and a general cleanliness) and while promiscuity may eventually heighten the feeling of love for women, men are often not interested with potential partners who have a promiscuous background, such as a prostitute. The prostitute will often have a no-kissing relationship with her clients. While in some circumstances this would be in part for a concern of oral hygiene, like some lesbian discourses that are anti-phallic, kissing may be saved for her lover, as her mouth transforms the site of the misused ‘cunt’. Women accept that men’s sexuality is overt, and therefore have trouble understanding true intimacy, and tender romantic feelings, unless guided by a woman in love. Heterosexual love based on a female purity and the dynamics of capitalist social order is illustrated by Horrocks in the sub-narrative interpretation of Pretty Woman. Moreover, there exists a requirement to eliminate

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themes that are ‘subversive’ to romantic love and late capitalism, which itself practices a dubious morality.

It can be seen clearly enough with Hollywood, which has often functioned as a ‘dream factory’, pumping out the reassuring message that American society is the best in the world, that every American can become rich and powerful if they want to, that things like poverty, crime, homosexuality and feminism will all evaporate. A film such as Pretty Woman (1990) shows this perfectly: a ruthless and soulless businessman meets a sassy hooker and they are transformed by each other. The zombie-like man is enlivened by the woman, and becomes a good capitalist; the energetic hooker becomes a Barbie doll with a credit card on Rodeo Drive, Beverly Hills. All ills are healed and smoothed over. (Horrocks, 1995:26)

Social Darwinism’s emphasis on male dominated animalistic and scientific functions, and a banal and mechanistic sexuality necessitates the requirement to lift the human existence to a higher level. Women represent a group where the mire of Freudian defecation and oral stages, leads to a mystified ‘heavenly’ human existence on earth, expressed through romantic love. Women were subsequently projected from the profane subjects of defecation,\(^{10}\) and sex, ‘fucking’ - the combination of highly alienating and dangerous work, (usually the ‘merely’ alienating) and the severe embarrassment and shame of menstruation which became carefully concealed.

In essence the emphasis on love places it in conflict with sexological dogma such as

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\(^{10}\) An inversion of the female reticence to display the most profound of human odours - (faeces) is discussed in chapter seven in reference to lesbian sadomasochism.
the art of love, as the catharsis of romantic anticipation realised suggests that love will
guide the way, without the need for an instruction manual. In this environment,
technique limits the natural gestation on this emphasis on feelings. Subsequently
romantic love represents the only site where the mechanical nature of sexological theory
is questioned. While there may be a temporary synthesis, the two ideologies continue to
contribute their own alienated themes and phobias. Principally this is because they have
an unhealthy symbiotic relationship - one which cannot lift itself from the mire of
alleged debauchery, (sex), and one so entrenched with its own asceticism that it
becomes too derivative of itself to play a role in the everyday life of people, (love).
Confusing messages in feminist discourse (and feminist icons) may also indicate a
return to the concept of love, as a discourse of last resort or familiarity. Segal
facetiously refers to:

  Erica Jong, having made her name and fortune writing the
  adventurous woman’s fantasy of a ‘zipless fuck’ with a stranger,
is now welcoming AIDS for having made sex ‘a little more
precious again; heading us back to a time when many women
were glad for an excuse to turn away from it’. Germaine Greer,
having once urged all women to fuck more freely, is now
advising us to welcome the menopause for finally unlocking the
‘leg irons’ which hobble us: the shackles of our sexuality.
(Segal, 1994:69)

Marriage and relationship counseling also tends to skirt the problematic issue of
romantic love, preferring to concentrate on learning improved communication skills,
providing no substantive theory or sociological base. In a case study described by
psychologist Toby Green, she makes certain assumptions that she hopes will reunite a
previously happy and contented couple. Her assumptions, which are typical of
psychology generally (indicating a close relationship with sexology) that men are
basically ‘insensitive’, and that it is men who set the parameters and environment for
sex, (ie, the art of love). Max and Julie are both professionals, with a mathematically
‘gifted’ son, Greg, fifteen. Max resents Julie’s inability to be wrong. He feels that Greg
should be more rounded and involved in sports. “Last but never least sex was boring
and too infrequent. His decision to leave was sanctioned by the executive committee,
being his parents and brother. They’d always thought Julie a borderline bitch.”

Time away from Max made her realise that that there were things about Max that
grated with her also. “she hated the way he always checked with his family before
making decisions. She resented the fact that he was often publicly nice, but privately
grumpy. And sex? She considered Max an insatiable and clumsy lover who never read
her right.” Eventually Max wanted to come back however he did this several times and
his confusion still did not clear. Green ultimately discovered that Max possessed angst
over his concern “to “do the right thing” by Julie and Greg and go back. Green felt
compelled to explain to Max the difference between being Mr. Nice Guy, and being a
nice guy. Green states that “suddenly a very heavy therapeutic penny dropped. “What

Green suggests that “Max is scared of what he’ll find under his “Mr Nice Guy”
image. Green’s perspective reveals one of the few lasting legacies of feminism that is to
turn men into “sensitive new age guys.” The polemic style of feminism obscures the
role of women in a relationship breakdown, while still advocating that men should act
like ‘gentlemen’, for significantly, in sex, he needs to be more ‘loving’. Green therefore
builds her framework around the assumption that the problems are principally caused by the insensitive Max. That Max’s family considers Julie a “borderline bitch” is not considered in this Freudian perspective that implies that he has not sufficiently moved on from his original family ties to have control of his new family. Romantic love therefore becomes a test for men, reminiscent of the knight winning over his damsel. Men in the post-Enlightenment society also have to define themselves against the rudimentary aspects of their sexual response, to appear worthy to a prospective female sexual partner.

**Popular literature and soap operas**

The relationship between romantic love and sex suggests that if women are to pursue a man that is based in physical attraction it should be shrouded by other issues. Intergenerational relationships while very common when instigated by men, has not been duplicated easily for mature women. The example of the popular novel *Tim* sanctifies the concept for a woman who falls in love with a strikingly handsome young man who has an intellectual handicap. The fact that she is physically attracted to him is balanced by her maternal caring. Popular culture constitutes that individuals are too alienated from their everyday lives to have anything but a cursory relationship to the world at large – and increasingly this is defined by media manufactured images designed to titillate, and release surface tensions and stresses. Furthermore as Radway states, they rely upon standard cultural codes correlating signifiers and signifieds that they accept as definitive. It has simply never occurred to them that those codes might be historically or
culturally relative. Thus the romantic heroine becomes their version of an “independent” and “intelligent” woman. (Radway, 1984:190)

The suggestion that it is mildly and harmlessly titillating, becomes similar to the argument that other forms of cheap entertainment have for the working class, such as vaudeville, pornography, beer, cigarettes, or that;

the women may in fact believe the stories are fantasies on one level at the very same time that they take other aspects of them to be real and therefore apply information learned about the fictional world to the events and occurrences of theirs (Radway, 1984:187)

It subsequently operates in feeding and releasing love hysteria, and simultaneously, it sedates as it enhances expectations. As the gap between the ideology and the reality grows, popular literature that exploits the contradictions continues to expand and flourish. This is manifested in the exaggerated romanticism of a Barbara Cartland novel, to the general kitsch expressed in popular music that is dominated by insincere and insipid platitudes. It promotes to the consumer that if they are not experiencing it for themselves, it needs to be experienced vicariously through popular art forms, which obliquely promises in a liberal tradition that it can still happen to them.

Soap operas are concerned with the stuff of traditional women’s culture not only in the subject matter (i.e. domestic matters, kinship, sexuality) but also in their style. In particular, the importance of talk in soap opera plots indicates the basis of orality that persists in television in general, and affirms the

11 1980, Colleen McCullough.
power of talk in creating and maintaining relationships. (Brown, 1990:184)

Programs such as Neighbours have an explicit narrative with the closeness of neighbours that live in a cul de sac. Others such as the Brady Bunch or Home and Away, use existential concepts to highlight the exemplar or conventional. Therefore while the narrative of the Brady Bunch is about uniting stepfamilies, the sub-narrative argues that if this problematic group can succeed so too should the conventional nuclear family. Home and Away employs a similar perspective of homeless children and troubled adults overcoming their respective problems to find support and love through a community that acts as an oasis. Love and acceptance competes with an ever-expanding middle that is dominated by ongoing tragedies that envelops the town and its visitors. This, as Brown states, is “one of the most striking features of soap operas in this regard is the openness of their narrative form” (Brown, 1990:186).

The voyeurism that probes the lives of celluloid representations and the rich and famous, (real life soap actors, dramatised by media portrayal), is motivated by the search for exemplars and the ever-present theme that delights in their failures. It is based in the narrative of ‘gossip’, and gossip as a form of pornography, for apocryphal love visions, underpinned by “its aimless style that is apparently most objectionable. The Biblical admonition by St. Paul to ignore ‘fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions rather than godly edifying’ (Timothy 1.4) (Brown, 1990:184).

The Princess Diana phenomenon is endemic of this search for romantic heroes and heroines, as Diana represented the concept of the virginal bride sacrificed for a “higher calling” such as the royal family. For the followers of Diana’s life after separation from Prince Charles, her quest had that quixotic appeal of the mediaeval royal tradition and
the ‘single mum’, fighting prejudice and seeking ‘real’ love in the modern world. Her alleged virgin status completed the vision of the neophyte royal female sacrifice and could love re-birth the world’s previously most famous virgin? The media captured her appeal to the women who adored, but secretly loathed her. Her charity work, which became her epitaph, was generally seen with suspicion before her death, and death transformed her back into virgin status and sainthood. Fear loathing and confusions about the nature of love and sex are projected onto cult figures such as Diana that become targets for other’s alienation. In the semiotics of the soap opera, this anger is also a result that the vehicle for their escapism inconveniently cut the melodrama short.

The diagrammatic mappings many women have made between Diana’s life and their own form axes of partial identification, to which they supply their own meanings and affects. But like female consumers of soap operas and melodramas, the audiences of Diana do not only simply identify with her: they also get caught up in the soap opera of the British Royal Family.

Part of the shock and incredulity many people experienced at the news of Diana’s death stemmed from dismay at a fairy tale cut short, like a fan’s resistance to the sudden, unannounced cessation of a soap opera that they were expecting to go on indefinitely. (Sofoulis, 1997:15)

In respect of her ethereal life in the media, her premature death had the perfect ending. She would never have to suffer the pain of love and in particular, unrequited love again or old age. The notion of knowing someone through media image or identity was exemplified by Diana, and while women’s magazines lost a large revenue base with her
death, they have continued the Diana theme. The focus is now on her sons and the legacy of her charity work that became her epitaph, which was central in her use of the term, “Queen of Hearts.” But as Kennedy argues,

while Diana undoubtedly undertook her charity work with compassion and inspiration, charity is one of the few public roles for upper-class women in Britain. Millions of people were grieving for a woman who may have challenged the conventions of the British royal family, but who in fact reinforced many of the conventions of conventional femininity. (Kennedy, 1997:51)

The Queen of Hearts was an image that Diana herself, actively promoted, which by implication, she preferred, and was more relevant than the actual queen or a monarch. Ultimately, Diana is modern culture’s ultimate pseudo radical figure, and the type of ‘feminist’ role model that is more persuasive to the majority of women than feminist icons such as Germaine Greer, or Simone Bouvoir.

Like Princess Diana, ‘Elvis’ also became much larger in death than life, as if there was some public recognition or guilt of the personal sacrifices made by the idol in life. These post mortems on media stars pays homage to their image as altruistic in their earthly existence, and Presley, primarily a romantic balladeer in the later stages of his career, made reflections on love and loss in the narrative of the songs. This saw that Presley’s personal problems being played out on stage, in a case of life imitating art, rather than the preferred position of art imitating life. It therefore remains open to question whether Presley’s audience wanted to be aware, that he was an ‘artist’ embarrassingly living out a tortured and sacrificial life onstage. The death phenomenon of alienation, that is endemic in work life and permeates into the social, means that the
individual either performs a suicide ritual upon themselves, or looks for another person to safely perform it subliminally such as a media star. In the post-death Presley narrative, his legend as a romantic hero negates the circumstances surrounding his death as his fans realise now his sacrifice for them.\(^\text{12}\)

A more graphic and ostensibly realistic view of love and sex is presented in the 1995 film, *Leaving Las Vegas*.\(^\text{13}\) The story centers on a self-destructive prostitute, and an alcoholic. The alcoholic’s character is a man who comes to Las Vegas to literally drink himself to death, after losing his job and family through alcohol. They form an unusual relationship, which is largely non-sexual. The sub-narrative is concerned with the notion of death and sex as redemption, and death and love as redemption for sex. The prostitute has already metaphorically died through her lack of regard for herself and her chosen occupation, whereas the alcoholic seeks masochistic death. It ends where they have sex for the first time, and he dies through the physical exertion of his alcohol-ravaged body, and when love, redeems them both. Moreover, the gender subtext reveals her character appropriating his masculinity, through a combination of love, sex, and death, and this ethereally empowers and cleanses her. The pseudo-existentialism lies in the message that their unconditional love can only operate in the mode as she as the prostitute and he as the alcoholic. The film attempts to re-invent the notion of romantic love, and states that the defining feature of a relationship between a man and woman is romantic love, held against disposable and purchasable sex. Therefore the narrative does not reinvent the relationship between love and sex, but re-emphasises it.

In every product of the culture industry, the permanent denial

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\(^{12}\) The film “The Rose”, loosely based on the life of Janis Joplin, suggested that the audience or fans, were looking for ‘kicks’ of various kinds, and were often intentionally oblivious to the real suffering of a performer.

\(^{13}\) 1995, director M. Figgis.
imposed by civilisation is once again unmistakably demonstrated and inflicted on its victims. To offer and deprive them of something is one and the same. This is what happens in erotic films. Precisely because it must never take place, everything centres upon copulation. (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1988:141)
CHAPTER SIX:  
MASCULINITY and SEXUALITY under LATE CAPITALISM

This chapter argues that liberal/egalitarianism attempts to ameliorate inequality between the sexes by altering identities at the expense of other’s, such as the female’s becoming closer to the male’s. Masculinity then has a tendency to reify themes of opposition such as extreme masculine sub-cultures, as a product of its hegemony in the gender order. Sub-cultures that have lumpenproletariat and pseudo lumpenproletariat identities have grown, partly as an emancipated female identity encroaches on masculine themes of identity. Significantly, this gender phenomena is underpinned by neo-liberal economic policies that have polarised and re-emphasised class divisions.

The hegemonic position of masculinity in the gender order dictates the lack of options for alternative discourses, (hence their tendency to mirror dominant themes which characterise their oppression, or direct replications which mimic heterosexual masculinity). The problem then becomes a typically liberal version that produces tension between notions of ‘freedom’ to one that polices those who do not or cannot become ‘free’ individuals within a gender dominated paradigm.

The structural issues that defined first-wave feminism were complicated in the “second wave” by the highly emotive (and arguably atypical) situations that existed under the marriage veil, such as instances of rape and physical abuse. Alternatively, women assuming a straddling dominance in heterosexuality, lesbianism and bisexual choice, could exaggerate tensions amongst men for the remaining women that have become highly discerning and critical. Moreover, sexual harassment legislation that acts to impede on men’s “natural urges”, is problematic.
Analyses of sexual harassment raise a number of paradoxical questions for men and men’s sexualities. On the one hand, sexual harassment is usually an instance or a commentary on men’s sexualities; on the other, sexual harassment is often understandable as about violence, power, authority, labour-power, protection of space and wage levels, economic discrimination, rather than just sexuality in any kind of isolation. (Collinson & Hearn, 1996:64)

Men and families

The institution of the nuclear family has felt the strain as high rates of divorce and the alleged bias against men in the Family Court has left men disengaged from their role as father, as well as husband. Men are now questioning the role of women at the centre of the nurturing role, as this is the main justification used by the Court in deciding who should have the principal custody of children. Men participating in pre-natal ‘workshops’ viewing the birth and changing of ‘nappies’, inevitably draws men closer to the female experience of children, as the attempt to blend various gender discourses across a broad spectrum has attempted to ‘feminise’ heterosexual men, (with no improvement in divorce rates). This also opens debate on whether fathers really wanted their children, or were ‘tricked’ into servicing or satisfying the mythical maternal instinct. Subsequently the assertion that women then have no further need for men becomes popular in a post-welfare culture, because they are exploiting the safety net of the supporting parents pension, with “over 80 per cent of one-parent families are headed
by mothers in virtually all countries” (Bryson, 1992:193).

Moreover, and consistent with the surveillance function of the post-welfare state, scrutiny of the “single mother”, extends to monitoring of the recipient’s living arrangements. The state takes the view “that if a pensioner lives with an employed person of the opposite sex, this person is deemed to be supporting them” (Bryson, 1992:32). Prior to the advent of the supporting parent’s pension by the Whitlam government, the shame associated with illegitimate births was compounded by a lack of financial independence available to single parents. This helped justify forced adoptions, with this other “stolen generation”¹ hardly discussed. Ultimately however, the only way to remedy the inequalities produced by the supporting parent’s pension that is mostly accessed by women would be to grant simultaneous access to both parents – a move unlikely in the current welfare climate.

In contrast, separations are now dominated by forced contributions paid by working husbands, with a commensurate adjustment to the rate of pension paid to the mother. A separated or divorced man with two children is required by the Family Law Court to pay twenty seven per cent of his income as child support. The Court also has the authority to force a father to live on as little as two hundred and forty dollars a week to maintain this support². This also reasserts the capitalist dynamic in family structure, (and by implication, patriarchy), that links men’s ownership and responsibility for the reproductive ‘seed’. However it is the pragmatic money-saving function of the shifting of the financial responsibility from government to individuals that is preventing the

¹ A change in the Adoption Act in 1991 meant that adopted children could access original birth certificates. As long as the birth parents (often the mother was the only parent named) left no express wish for the child to contact them, the adult child could seek to find the mother. In the period before the supporting parent’s pension and more conservative attitudes towards “illegitimacy”, many adoptions were discovered to be forced, usually by family or church representatives. A.Marshall & M.McDonald, 2001. “The many-sided triangle: adoption in Australia”.  

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consistent devolution of Whitlam’s welfare state. Rather than coercing men into paternity, contributions could be made voluntary – and perhaps the father may then feel less burdened by ‘responsibility’, producing more generous financial and emotional support. This re-emphasis on patriarchal values attempts to suggest that the nuclear family receives its inspiration from Biblical concepts. However the ‘family’ is a unique creation of the industrial/capitalist society, and in Hitler’s Germany, single women who availed of themselves to be impregnated by officers of the elite army corps,\(^3\) were valourised for performing an important function for German society. According to Connell,

in gender terms, fascism was a naked reassertion of male supremacy in societies that had been moving towards equality for women. To accomplish this, fascism promoted new images of hegemonic masculinity, glorifying irrationality (the ‘triumph of the will’, thinking with ‘the blood’) and the unrestrained violence of the frontier soldier. Its dynamics soon led to a new and even more devastating global war’’ (Connell, 1995:193)

The dynamics of these historical tensions exposed by economic rationalism have unleashed volatile separations and bitter family court hearings, as the focus is thrown upon the foibles of the nuclear family. That custody is usually awarded pragmatically to the mother has created anger amongst separated and divorced men in recent decades, with the “maternal instinct” emphasised to reject the ‘unsuitable’ father. Generally however, the children are no longer \textit{wanted}. The narrow and tenuous experience of ‘love’, results in the children becoming burdens when the romance that produced them,

dissipates becoming more apparent when one or both partners begin new relationships, and have more children with a new partner. Therefore the original children become a bone of contention between a warring-couple, and ultimately the children can be used as pawns and as a vehicle to cause disruption and distress in the life of a former partner. In some cases, men have sexually molested their own children (or been accused of it) as revenge against a former partner. More commonly, children have uncomfortable relationships with their new stepparents.

With the growth of female rights under liberal/egalitarianism, men have needed to seek new ‘markets’, to satisfy traditional gender expectations. Men who no longer feel that women are “not like they used to be” have been ‘recruiting’ wives from the Philippines, or elsewhere. The phenomenon such as “mail order brides” fills the void created by Australian women who have become thoroughly ‘Westernised’ by feminism and access to commodities. The breakup of the Soviet Union⁴ and the often difficult gestation of capitalism, has also seen a growth of women coming from the former Soviet states to the West looking for men, marriage and financial security.

Liberal/Egalitarianism and masculinity

The growth of population created by the industrial capitalist society also produces expendable life. Its central promise of the integrity of the ‘individual’ becomes highly conditional and based in class dynamics and realities. The inability of governments,

³ D.F Crew, editor, 1994, “Nazism and German Society, 1933-1945”.
⁴ The commercialisation of love and sex has been exploited by Russian crime groups and individuals who offer love and loyalty to Western men. www.womenrussia.com/blacklist.htm, details a litany of introduction agencies and individuals who dupe Western men out of relatively large sums of money. Accessed 5.4.02. After gaining the victim’s confidence, the woman usually asks for financial assistance for a visa and airfares to visit/reside with the man with no actual intention of contact.
bureaucracies, and liberal/egalitarianism to adequately represent “the masses” also meant callousness towards individual life. In its overt form it is represented by the protection and advancement of the nation and empire through war. These aspects have been interspersed by the effect of humanitarian discourse based in the social sciences, which often allude to an ethos of inclusion, compassion, and non-violent forms of dissent.

The failure of a communist theory to be realised has seen a partial adoption of socialist ideals in most countries in the West. The influence of masculinity has confused however the role of the working class in Marx’s schema. The appearance of working class masculinity is often seen as more important than the substance of redressing working class inequality, with the most prominent figure in twentieth century Communism, Josef Stalin, exhibiting the rhetoric of masculine display, which evolved into the “cult of the personality”. The Bolshevik party as the vanguard movement under Stalin increasingly resembled a caricature of working class ideas, and the characteristics that identified a ‘worker’. Anti-intellectualism has a strong resonance in working class culture that results from a marginalisation from the intellectual and social capital, and the reverse elitism inherent in aspects of working class identity. However this reverse elitism concealed elements of elitism in the running of the Communist State, as bureaucratic representatives of the workers. As Fromm indicates,

   Indeed, while the Soviet Communists, as well as the reformist socialists, believed they were the enemies of capitalism, they conceived of communism – or socialism – in the spirit of capitalism. For them, socialism is not a society humanly

5 1974, Tucker, R. “Stalin as revolutionary, 1879-1929: a study in history and personality”. 218
different from capitalism, but rather, a form of capitalism in which the working class has achieved a higher status; it is, as Engels once remarked ironically, “the present-day society without its defects”. (Fromm, 1961:6)

The working class, were defined as little more as slaves in Stalin’s pursuit of building Russia. In this model, the rights of individual workers were temporarily sublimated and ignored. Ostensibly they were delayed until the revolution had matured and that the principles of liberalism inherent in Marx’s writings, could dominate. There is no evidence to suggest however, that this would have ever occurred in the Soviet context due to the reification of the subjugated worker, and his heroic masculine status in the building of the communist economy. This model of communism and its relationship to the working class increased its caricature of workers inversely to the ignorance of the worker in capitalist societies, suggesting that in part, this version of Marxism was as narrow as the West had forced them to be. The purity inherent in the descriptions of the working class ultimately transcended elements of social diversity in the immediate post-revolutionary period. The description of masculine elements of the working class as ‘pure’ appeared to be an unconscious appropriation of Protestant sexually ascetic models for women in the Western democracies. For in post-revolutionary Russia,

As early as nineteen eighteen, women were accorded full equal rights with men in all social and private areas, including marriage and family relations. Women had the right to choose their surname, place of residence, and social status. Their involvement in productive labour was supposed to ensure them
economic independence from men. If they became pregnant, they were entitled to paid holidays. To relieve women of onerous “domestic servitude”, the state began to set up a system of crèches, nurseries and communal food supplies. Medical service for mothers and children was expanded and improved and became entirely free. (Kon, 1995:55)

Most post-Stalinist critiques subsequently fail to acknowledge the enormity of the original Bolshevik party’s task – which consisted in part of the ‘de-commodification’ of the economy and the continual reproduction of alienation that had grown expediently under capitalism. As Marx had argued,

A commodity is therefore a mysterious thing, simply because in it the social character of men’s labour appears to them as an objective character stamped upon the product of that labour; because of the relation of the producers to the sum total of their own labour is presented to them as a social relation, existing not between themselves, but between the products of their labour.

(Marx, 1867: “The fetishism of commodities and the secret thereof”)

Communism that was not fully grounded in a materialist reality that acknowledged alienation has seen it operate as an alternate “opiate of the masses”, and morality as capitalism was frequently referred to as ‘evil’. It replaces the notion of an idealised existence in heaven by suggesting that ‘heaven’ can be created on earth. Good deeds to your fellow man may not only get you to heaven, but perhaps more importantly create the utopian industrial society, where the reward may be the love of your fellow man, or
more directly, one’s workmates. The English socialist publication, *The Ragged Trousered Philantropists*, also idealised the role of the workers in the narrative, (unemployed painters), against the duplicity of the bosses who were portrayed as “Sunday Christians”, while exploiting their workers. Sporadically employed before the institution of state welfare, they were “family men”, struggling to survive, showing ‘true’ Christian love to each other and society. For Weber, this morality was a reflection of a particular Protestant ethos that produced capitalism.

Irregular work, which the ordinary labourer is often forced to accept, is often unavoidable, but always an unwelcome state of transition. A man without a calling thus lacks the systematic, methodical character which is, as we have seen, demanded by worldly asceticism. (Weber, 1930:161)

In some respects it could be argued that as communists attempted to exceed the Christian democratic countries morally, their subsequent defeat has increased the Christian democratic countries sense of righteousness and superiority. This helps conceal the fact that when capitalist and Christian morality is intertwined it is inherently duplicitous, as Weber implies. For Benjamin Franklin, “Honesty is useful, because it assures credit; so are punctuality, industry, frugality, and that is the reason they are virtues” (Weber, 1930:52). Working class culture in both communism and capitalism has followed bourgeois and hence Protestant values of asceticism. According to Weber, the influence of bourgeois rationality was found only in the Occident because “the proletariat as a class could not exist, because there was no rational organisation of free labour under regular discipline” (Weber, 1930:23). In areas such as coalmining, worker

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6 1914 R. Tressall.
and union activity suggested that they were less interested in revolution, and more involved in securing a protected culture for coalminers that included safer work conditions and increased levels of pay. Metcalfe claims that, “rather than being the passive consumers of bourgeois values, then, respectable miners were actively consenting to them, seizing them as ideological weapons in a political struggle which they could not then win outright” (Metcalfe, 1988:136).

Consequently the workers were not against being identified as coal-miners in terms of alienation and the overt specialisation endemic in the industrial capitalist society; but the obverse occurred. The streak of Puritanism in communism and working class culture that had ascetic and religious overtones, defined the way men wished to see the coal mining industry - as beacons of hope in an unequal world. They wore the appropriation of the surplus value of their labour by the capitalist class as a badge of honour. Union semantics presented the working class as noble and honourable supporters of inequality, while the capitalist class, knew of, and exploited their ‘honour’.

Moreover, their attempts to maintain this reified ‘workers’ culture, via the White Australia policy, meant that they were not in competition with capital, but covertly and implicitly united. In this way workers could appropriate elements of bourgeois nationalism, and feel they were part of the nationalist discourse. The emphasis on egalitarianism, notes Metcalfe, in the “insistence that people are as good as their masters acknowledges the difference between people and masters at the same time as it denies the significance of the difference.” (Metcalfe, 1988:48) Unionism therefore became enmeshed in the “trade union consciousness” that became more interested in assisting workers in their own sphere of influence, along with the nations’.

Unions are ineffective when the economy is under real strain, as they do not value
labour in the sense that Marx’s labour theory of value does, but vaguely promotes the idea that workers are continually “ripped off”. Appropriation of surplus labour theory is reduced to making profit from the “sweat off our (the workers) brow”, and the longer the revolution is delayed, the more entrenched these reified cultures were likely to become. Reified working class traits and identifiers can easily dismissed by the ruling class as irrelevant, a secular belief system that cannot compete with another more powerful secular system such as the modern capitalist economy. Class identifiers are reflected back onto the working class through elements such as advertising, but have little other cultural or economic efficacy.

The appropriation of labour like that of coal miners is rewarded by the reification of its masculine codes, as it operates as a reverse elitism that entrenches inequality by virtue of cultural identity. It suggests that along with attempts to negotiate with the capitalist status quo, it is masochistic and either at an individual or collective level it can cope with dangerous and physically demanding work. The industrial society’s sheer physicality, and the size and grandeur of its cities, is evident of the worship of inanimate structures that required toiled and sweated labour. In neo-liberalism however, heterosexuality masculinity is now ‘passe,’ and except for examples of “boutique masculinity”, it remains a salient victim of de-industrialisation and globalisation. Masculinity defined through industrial labour argues Donaldson, is created by the fact that,

Work made meaningless by capitalist social relations is given significance by patriarchy. The necessity to do boring, repetitive, dirty, unhealthy, poorly paid, demeaning, self-destructive, mind-numbing, soul-destroying work is turned into
Male sports

Australians like to think of themselves ultimately as “good sports” with organised sport manifesting a desire for contest and a ‘fair’ fight. This focus on fairness is somewhat related to the English origins of a gentleman’s code of behaviour, but it is also a projection of a liberal/egalitarian model less ruthless than the dominant frontier culture of the United States. The desire to be a good sport however, is tempered with the aggressive manifestation that is partly borne out of the desire to take a gamble, for gambling is a natural anxiety-producing phenomenon. So while gambling can knowingly produce failure, in the Australian consciousness it does not diminish the need to gamble, or the fear of failure that produces an aggressive over-confidence.

The corporatisation of male sport is a feature of the commercial “culture industry” that parodies its links with community and work-based associations, and even the nation. Subsequently while labour is not valued as in the Marxist context, its cultural efficacy as a marketing symbol remains. The National Rugby League and Cricket Australia (formerly the Australian Cricket Board) are in effect private companies that administer the game and facilitate sponsorship. Despite holding international sporting contests, they have no formal links with the state or nation, except for use of the Australian coat of arms on clothing worn by the participants. This fact was exposed beyond the traditional bonds of loyalty in 1977 with Kerry Packer’s World Series Cricket and Rupert Murdoch’s attempted takeover of Rugby League in 1997. Both alternate competitions had teams that represented ‘Australia’ – the NRL and Cricket
Australia now have the best players sign loyalty contracts to prevent the rise of rebel competitions.

Corporate sponsorship is now the lifeblood of organised sport, with the sporting occasion seemingly re-created as one long piece of corporate advertising, intermingled with the regular television advertising. Moreover, the notion of “fair play, is diminished as sport’s relationship to “grass roots” community support, along with gentlemanly codes of conduct that reflect playing and enjoying the game, is overwhelmed by commercial imperatives. Even the game of Cricket, with its sedate English origins, now expresses a ruthless masculinity, to negate homosexual connections or the childishness of men playing games which have no significant impact on the lives of a people or the nation. The Australian team in particular is characterised by its use of ‘sledging’, a technique used on the field of play to unnerve and unsettle a batsman.

Former captain of the Australian cricket team, Steve Waugh, was a well-known exponent of the ‘sledge’. His ability to deliver this form of abuse, and to absorb verbal abuse, is construed as a testament to his mental ‘toughness’. Another regular Australian player has appeared in an advertisement, one of a series related to raising the awareness of female assault by employing famous male sporting figures. The cricketer states that to sledge a woman is unfair, yet implicitly, a male, by virtue of his masculinity, should be able to withstand any verbal assault. This aggression implicitly marks out the male heterosexual identity. Those who cannot cope with this aggression are described as homosexual if not in practice, but in ‘nature’. Moreover, despite attempts to make men more sensitive, the masculine hero remains authentic when compared to manufactured female pop stars that are a process of marketing and soft pornography. As Connell argues,
‘Hegemonic masculinity’ is always constructed in relation to various subordinated masculinities as well as in relation to women. The interplay between different forms of masculinity is an important part of how a patriarchal social order works. (Connell 1987:183)

However “the contradictions associated with being white and male (and therefore powerful) but also working-class and unemployed are complex and profound” (Willot & Griffin, 1996:89).

The retirement of Test cricket captain Steve Waugh in January 2004 evoked themes beyond sport, and indicated how masculinity has been successfully been ‘de-constructed’ in the working class, yet emerged unscathed and re-invigorated in the middle class. He was portrayed as a successful warrior with legendary mental resilience that proudly and stubbornly adorned his original Test cricket cap, with allusions to the sportsman/soldier serving his country. This feature plays upon the emotional character of nationalism versus the pragmatics of the state that employs the soldier to perform a job for the nation-state.

Overt masculinity expressed through individual men and team sports particularly, is based on the mythical power of collective masculinity, a form of ritualised warfare7. A working class legacy can be seen in the basic structure of Rugby League where the ball

7 Rarely has sport had a direct impact on relationships between nations. An exception would be the ‘Bodyline’ crisis, during the tour of Australia by the English cricket team in nineteen thirty two-three. Directed principally at restricting the run scoring ability of Don Bradman, it involved pitching fast-bowling repeatedly at the body. Australia’s captain Bill Woodfull reflected on the changing dynamics between the two countries with the comment ‘that there are two teams out there, and only one is playing cricket’. (The use of the term ‘cricket’ is also a metaphor for English codes of gentlemanly and proper behaviour).

A more significant break with the “mother country” occurred following the fall of Singapore during World War Two, with claims of British abandonment of Australia’s protection, with the United States fulfilling the role of protector. Cultural and military links with America increased dramatically during the
is passed backward to go forward, so that the team moves forward together as a unit. In contrast, with sports such as boxing, the emphasis is on individual warriors where the boxer appropriates the power of several men. A manifestation of (masculine) alienated labour is in the activities that are non-work in orientation, that mimic the danger and concentrated physicality of their working lives. However the corporatisation and professionalism of sport that deleted work-based associations has separated sport from its Australian link with egalitarianism and work-based ‘mateship’.

In its naked literalness, in the brutish seriousness which hardens every gesture of play into an automatic reflex, sport becomes the colourless reflection of a hardened callous life. Sport only preserves the joy of the moment, the thought of bodily liberation, the suspension of practical ends in a completely external distorted form. (Adorno, 1991:78)

Masculinity that was once linked to the pragmatic of the sport or of work is transformed into a phenomenon that appears not to have any historical origin. Therefore the post-modern supra-masculine male identity, distanced from any significant social or historical link, can conceal and subvert actual or unconscious homosexuality. This can be manifested through ambivalent or abusive heterosexual relationships, career and other public sphere activity. He can also avoid aspersions of perceived homosexuality as demonstrated by characteristics, and conduct his homosexuality ‘secretly’. The link with homosexuality however is mostly symbolic and part of a homoerotic promotion for female or homosexual audiences. For in reality, it is the commercial success of corporatised sport that secures the sportsman’s heterosexuality as a substantial salary subsequent decades.1984 R.Sissons &B.Stoddart. “Cricket and Empire:-the 1932-33 Bodyline tour of
paid by the sport’s controlling body, plus endorsements, makes him an attractive partner for women in conventional terms. This enables the option to have several children with an attractive and ‘devoted’ wife, when many other families are ‘downsizing’ their families due to financial constraints. Although the level of the intimacy of the sportsman’s relationships may be significantly limited by the extent of his sporting commitments, and his continual involvement in a culture that has a limited role for women.

In the male bonding phenomenon of sport, seminal orgasm experiences can be expressed through goals, tries and wickets, with overt celebrations, hugging and petting. This type of affection for other men relates to parodied forms of homosexuality, giving license to practice other forms without obvious vilification. Whereas in previous generations of sportsmen a handshake would suffice, displays of same-sex affection under the guise of sport are now commonplace. Their frequency and intensity is also ironic in a country where the men usually value distance from each other with minimal physical contact in social situations. The social orgasm in team sports is hidden by masculine concepts such as egalitarianism and residual levels of ‘mateship’, with the popularity of male sports indicating a re-marginalisation of women in the life of men. The deliberate renouncing of homosexual codes by male sport stars enables them also to justify male exclusivity; escaping from women and their sphere of home and family, where too much contact leads to emasculation. They can then refer to homosexual-like acts without fear of association. Rowe illustrates that,

In September 1997, the Newcastle Knights rugby league team won an Australian championship for the first time. After their
dramatic last minute victory – as is now commonplace in professional, male, team contact sports such as soccer and the other football codes – the players fell upon each other in a frenzy of hugging and kissing. One of the Knights’ players, Matthew Johns, said in a radio interview of the period after the game: ‘I’ve never kissed so many men in my life. I’ll dead set get a start in Oxford Street [Sydney’s “gay” strip] tonight. I kissed all the boys a hundred times over. I’ll kiss them again and again and again’. (Rowe & McKay, 1998:123)

More broadly, the ‘social’ orgasm is also a manifestation of a dissatisfaction of sexuality and a sex confused society. However strict moral codes and conventions required for the orgasm experience, has to be represented through socially acceptable practices. The concept of success, particularly success that has instant gratification such as sport, reflects that need for both spectators and participants for social release, which can add to, or subtract from, private pleasures. Organised sport at the elite level represents those ‘boys’ who have excelled at heterosexual bonding, and where at the elite or international level they are also highly paid, it resembles the realisation of a “boy’s own adventure”. Whereas most children play sport, to continue to play these games while an adult, is a heterosexual fantasy, (and a corporate reality for a chosen few), and therein lies the vicarious experience for the adult fan, who can react with child-like enthusiasm at sporting events where their heroes are present. In the ‘inaction’ of the spectator, argues Adorno, “a crude contemplative curiosity replaces the last traces of spontaneity. But mass culture is not interested in turning its consumers into sportsmen as such but only into howling devotees of the stadium” (Adorno, 1991:78).
While always a ‘professional’ sport, Rugby League has moved a long way from its origins in the coalfields of Northern England. The game of Rugby League now presents a ‘boutique’ masculinity that attempts not to move it far from its rugged working class origins, but eliminate some its more nefarious components that may reduce its commercial value. Illegal play was a tradition once valourised in Rugby League, but the incidence of high tackles, fighting and other niggling tactics have been largely eliminated in this marketing of the boutique version of league masculinity. The Australian Rugby League has concentrated its marketing in recent years on women, through the use of the “gay gaze” of muscular and physically fit footballers, with the added incongruity of attempting to attract the recruitment of children to play Rugby League. However, the homoerotic themes used to attract women and their children, are concealed by traditional masculine forms In the 2001 season a player was sacked by his club for digitally sodomising opposition players, and the League is determined to legislate against illegal (or homosexual) play that is unattractive to a family audience8.

The South Sydney Rugby League Club that were forced from the National Rugby League competition at the end of the 1999 season. Their re-admission in 2001 was indicative of the determination to embrace working class symbolism despite the evidence of its permanent decline. A foundation club of the original Sydney Rugby League competition in 1908, ‘South’s’ found itself squeezed by the ‘nationalisation’ of Australian Rugby League, the attempted takeover of the competition by Rupert Murdoch’s News Limited, (and hence pay television), changing demographics and decline in attendance at games. The axing of the club from the 2000 and 2001 competitions produced an outrage amongst the community, and League’s ‘traditional’

8 The group sex/rape allegations that engulfed Sydney team the “Bulldogs” can be seen as a manifestation
fans. High profile media personalities, Ray Martin and Andrew Denton, neither strongly identified with ‘masculinity’, led the chorus of outrage along with crusty league type, former South’s player and current South’s president, George Piggins. In traditional League lore, the Woody Allen type persona of Andrew Denton, (small, neurotic and comedic), would previously have had no relationship with League teams, and would not even make the grade as a ‘reserve orange peeler’ (oranges at half-time are a League tradition). Wealthy individuals such as Denton and Martin are more representative of the gentrification of the former working class suburbs of the inner city, where wealth is now juxtaposed with poverty. This inequality has been hidden by the corporatisation of Rugby League that has taken on aspects of the American style football ‘fan’. This has been symbolised by the support of ‘their’ team, through the purchase of team jumpers with various sponsors emblazoned upon them. Overt team identification through the purchase of team jumpers that retail for approximately one and hundred fifty dollars, formed a key strategy in the “that’s my game”, and then “that’s my team” slogans that the Australian Rugby League used to wrest control from News Limited. In allusions to the unfair takeover of Rugby League, and the corruption of community ties that became synonymous with Murdoch’s bid for the game, Murdoch was seen as a heartless (and foreign) capitalist who opportunistically used the proud and long-standing infrastructure of the game to his benefit.9

The situation of the South Sydney Rugby League Club is indicative of not just the permanent changes in class structures and realities, and the reification of marketing concepts of masculinity, but the Australian tradition to reify class symbolism over of promoting the footballers as sex symbols.

9 In 2001, the “National Rugby League” (NRL) became the peak body that incorporated ex-“Super League” clubs, and also gave News Limited a controlling share in the management of the game.
action. The Newcastle Knights, coming from a former “steel city” also has confusing images of the mediaeval and its industrial past with its mascot of a ‘Knight’, using an everlasting masculine steel culture despite its physical decline. The use of masculine sports to replace working class communities from where the sport originated, has reached fanatical levels in England, with the advent of the soccer ‘hooligan’, with sport is merely the vehicle for the disenfranchised male, and an outlet for political and nationalist expression. The neo-nazi, National Front, ‘skinhead’ is particularly apparent when the English soccer team plays abroad, resulting in them being banned in several countries when the English team is playing. Sport’s function as a corporatised activity however, ultimately limits participation even as a spectator sport as Canaan suggests.

Thus young unemployed working-class men, for whom present and future full-time employment could not be guaranteed, lacked the linchpin of their hegemonic masculinity – waged labour – and the prestige that went with it. They could no longer afford to drink heavily in pubs or go to football matches. If traditional forms of working-class masculinity were bolstered by both money and prestige of a job, then these men lost both. Perhaps their lessened interest in fighting, which occurred after they lost their jobs, signified their feeling that they could no longer view themselves in and through traditional hegemonic masculinity, as Connell suggested (1993). (Canaan, 1996:122)
Suicidal and violent masculinities

The actual decline of masculinity in previously working class communities cannot be replaced by the vicarious experience of male corporate sport. Exaggerating the problem identified by Marx, that alienating forms of work are a type of death, comes the experience of unemployment and underemployment that disassociates the collective experience of alienation. This builds upon the management practices that had, “in the setting of antagonistic social relations, of alienated labour, hand and brain become not just separated, but divided and hostile, and the human unity of hand and brain turns into its opposite, something less than human” (Braverman, 1974: 125).

In concert with media, the government enlists the support of the working community to increasingly marginalise the unemployed, facilitating a process of isolation that further concentrates on diminishing the individual’s self-worth. Similar to the “coming out” process for the homosexual, the unemployed person can experience losing the support of family as well as the community. These bonds are quickly tested as no hope becomes the ‘no-hoper’ and the more pointed American term, ‘loser’. The dichotomous orientation of American definitions of success and failure is endemic in a popular culture that suggests a profound subliminal violence based upon usurious values – a sickly sweet approach coupled with a disposal rationale – violently if need be - once the individual is perceived to be of no further use. Suicide in this context can be seen as eliminating the ‘useless’ individual who cannot sell their labour.

In Britain, men’s level of personal failure and aggression have kept rising after a decade of Thatcherite policies adopting the
ruthless economic priorities of monetarism associated with US capitalism, and a dramatic deterioration in the lives of the poorest sectors of society. The 70% rise in male suicides during the 1980s, paralleling unemployment has occurred alongside corresponding leaps in reported levels of men’s violence against women, drug addiction, crime, incarceration and educational failure. (Segal, 1994:275)

Unemployment for men has connotations that implicitly relate to their capacity as a ‘breadwinner’. Such men are often considered inappropriate for relationships, (particularly when their unemployment is linked to gambling or substance abuse problems). They are more likely to accumulate intense personal problems, have long-standing “issues” with women stemming from failed relationships, and become increasingly socially isolated. While masculinity is often seen as a destructive element, it is this very aspect to which men withdraw, and gain some inspiration from, when under great strain and pressure. This in itself makes it very difficult to eradicate from the personality structures of men as they regale in its dark and malevolent forces, attempting to invoke the heroic out of the truly tragic. The reliance on masculinity in the construction of the physical infrastructure of society, then its relative abandonment, and the development of nefarious elements within disenfranchised masculinity, can be seen as an organic response to its marginalisation. As Hedbidge asserts,

When disaffected adolescents from the inner city, more particularly when disaffected inner city unemployed adolescents resort to symbolic and actual violence, they are playing with the only power at their disposal: the power to discomfit. The power,
that is, to pose – to pose a threat. (Hedbidge, 1988:18)

Despite the earnest attempt within social theory to de-construct aspects of heterosexual masculinity, displays of violence in the public sphere have increased along with the overall perception that Australian society has become more violent and aggressive. In the Australian community, the death of ex-Test cricketer David Hookes in January 2004 following a ‘pub’ melee focused the public attention on destructive violence. While the association with men and public bars has dissipated along with working class culture generally, the competitive neo-liberal culture has created a greater sense of paranoia and anxiety for jobs, ‘scarce’ welfare resources, sexual partners, and the formation of sexual and social identities. The ‘mateship’ produced by working men drinking together in public bars, has been replaced by “yuppies with attitude” and elite sportsmen who frequent trendy bars and nightclubs, possessing remnants of the national mythology – their heterosexual masculinity secured by their class position.

The shrinkage of the “natural world” through the growth of cities has increased man’s desire to mythologise and partake in risk taking behaviour reminiscent of frontier conquests. Masculinity has been defined by a desire to master the public and natural worlds and this may require some physical sacrifice, with man’s relationship to the car revealing his autonomy and dominance in public space. Men’s predominance in motor sports is promoted through the advertising of “vee-eight” sports cars as the ultimate masculine machines, where speed and power is emphasised, despite a maximum speed limit of an hundred and ten kilometres an hour throughout most of Australia. The making of these cars, by two of Australia’s largest car makers, Holden and Ford, constitute a marketing exercise, for the companies, because the relatively low sale of “vee eight” cars (due to higher fuel consumption) would hardly justify their
manufacture. Therefore attempts to reduce speed limits, and to otherwise drive safely and conservatively, is limited by the type of marketing which exploits and is aimed at conventional masculinity\(^{10}\). As Walker notes, profound changes in the economy that has marginalised men in the public sphere necessitates amongst working class youth in particular, a desire to recreate symbols of masculine dominance, technical skill, and sites of male exclusivity. “Car culture functions to satisfy a considerable measure of their perceived needs. It serves, above all, to reinstate their male honour” (Walker, 2003:49). Despite the significance of the link between high rates of unemployment and the symbolism of cars in the lives of working class youth, she then goes on to state that “motor vehicle culture must be de-masculinised” (Walker, 2003: 68). However by simply deconstructing masculinity without an appropriate regard to its social context, may in fact increase the sense of marginality and risk-taking behaviour and danger to others.

Regardless of amendments to road rules, advertising campaigns aimed at reducing dangerous driving, and the introduction of Random Breath Testing, the road toll remains high, particularly over the Christmas holiday period. Dangerous drinking, copious alcohol consumption, and other forms of risk, are closely associated with masculine cultural norms and typifies the sense of hopelessness that is associated with quasi-suicidal behaviours. Moreover, motor accident deaths seemingly exist outside of the experience of the Australian state and nation, in terms of aligning such deaths as a “national tragedy”, (although this term is used repeatedly in relation to “road toll” deaths). When compared to the remembrance rituals relating to war or war-like events

\(^{10}\) Such is the resigned apathy and pragmaticism towards high rates of road deaths, is that the major form of organ donorship involves all licensed drivers given the option of donorship upon death on their license renewal forms.
like the terrorist bombing in Bali, these deaths are often viewed as an inescapable result of the inevitable progress of capitalism and the personal responsibility and autonomy involved in owning a vehicle and negotiating danger on the roads. Ultimately for the young Australian lumpenproletariat, there exists a profound contradiction between the right-wing appropriation of Anzac mythology and the outlaw reality of their lives that is evocative of older forms of national identity founded in the bushranger. In Connell’s analysis of a group young men on the fringes of the labour market he found that,

The outstanding feature of this group’s experience of power relations is violence. To a sheltered academic observer, there seems a great deal of violence in these lives. The interviews mention bullying and outrageous canings at school, assaulting a teacher, fights with siblings and parents, brawls in playgrounds and at parties, being arrested, assaults in reform school and gaol, bashings of women and gay men, individual fist fights and pulling a knife. Speeding in cars or trucks or on bikes is another form of intimidation, with at least one police chase and roadblock and one serious crash as results. (Connell, 1995:98-99)
Masculinity and the state

The diffusion of masculinity\textsuperscript{11} places at risk the ability for it to operate as a pragmatic and efficient force either individually or collectively, or at least this is the argument that would be presented against inclusion. If they are granted acceptance in the armed forces they then have to face covertly enforced military codes. The prevalence of bastardisation techniques still operate within the armed forces, and is used to separate the “men from the boys”, and in this ontology it would unlikely to accept those who do not see themselves as either men or boys. Sexual identity and practice is seen as a matter of discipline, and regulation of the individual. The deeply ingrained culture of bastardisation in the military relates to the preservation of masculine codes, which are pragmatically adhered to. A person thought of ‘weak’ physically and emotionally, is a threat to the code, is constructed as an other - a ‘woman’. ‘Bastardisation’ therefore builds loyalty to the code, humiliation tests loyalty, and is used to corral adherents and discontents into the code.

The para-military state police, while having a relatively high number of female members, is dominated by masculine semantics which project a code of keeping in check ‘civil disobedience’ and the more easily detectable crimes committed by the working class, underclass, and criminal working class. To maintain the masculine ‘overflows’ which upset civil order, a legitimised masculine force is used to quell the

\textsuperscript{11} In the United States in 1987, a man was dismissed from the military following accusations that he was homosexual. For Stychin, this highlighted not the marginalisation of gays, but the centrality of same-sex bonds and desires within the boundaries of the military. Steffen’s coming out publicised and articulated this paradox – that lesbians and gay men have been
outbreak of episodes. Sexual harassment legislation also operates to quell not only perceptions of an overly aggressive and persistent male sexuality, but seeks to contain the omnipresent and pervasive commercialisation of sex that underpins both its repressive and openness perspectives. Connell also argues,

the broad spectrum of equal rights, does not give any grip on the sexual division of labour among state personnel, or on the gender structuring of state violence. On the face of it, the approach is contradicted by the fact of state oppression of groups of men, notably homosexual men, and by the heavier criminalisation of men’s sexuality than women’s. (Connell, 1987:127)

The real divisions between socially progressive men and women, exists in the overtly sexual discourses of the male ‘minorities’, as the heterosexual male is excluded from the core thrust of social theory. Academic arguments for social diversity that provide the theoretical underpinnings of a public service sexual harassment/marginal identities code, can then produce discourses that are then too confrontational for mainstream sensibilities. As Jeffreys suggests,

At the same time we were just realising the seriousness of child sexual abuse, we were being told that paedophilia was a radical, progressive, socialist, and even a feminist issue. The first principle of the Gay Youth Movement’s Charter from this period states that the liberation of lesbians and gay men requires the liberation of women and all other oppressed groups erased from the armed forces not because of an otherness, but rather due to
including sexual minorities such as transsexuals, transvestites and paedophiles. (Jeffreys, 1990:188)

The failure of “political correctness” to function within the military is indicative of the hegemony of masculinity in the industrial society, and its pragmatic role in the protection of the state, irrespective of what gender politics are employed in other areas of government bureaucracy. The failure of marginalised masculinities to secure a place within the military compares conversely with how heterosexual women have dominated civil public service culture. In particular this also relates to sexual harassment policies that monitors the behaviour of heterosexual men. The appropriation of the “gay gaze” largely as a result of the defeat of the “male gaze”, also assists in this environment where women are more likely to claim sexual harassment As Connell asserts,

The link with the reproductive arena is social. This becomes clear when it is challenged. An example is the recent struggle within the state over ‘gays in the military’, i.e., the rules excluding soldiers and sailors because of the gender of their sexual object-choice. In the United States, where this struggle was most severe, critics made the case for change in terms of civil liberties and military efficiency, arguing in effect that object-choice has little to do with the capacity to kill. The admirals and generals defended the status quo on a variety of spurious grounds. The unadmitted reason was the cultural importance of a particular definition of masculinity in maintaining the fragile cohesion of modern armed forces.

the fear that the opposite might well be true. (Stychin, 1995:93)
(Connell, 1995:73)

The requirement to reflect overt themes of heterosexuality is focused strongly in the military and the paramilitary forces that protect the state and the nation, with the denial of homosexuality through a pronounced heterosexual discourse revealed in Hitler’s fascist state. Nietzsche’s\textsuperscript{12} ‘superman’ appealed to the Nazi’s racial theories, but also to the notion of the overcoming of desires and impulses within. Sado-masochistic tendencies obliquely reveal a profound sexual stultification that resulted in displays of extreme authority, control and cruelty, symbolised by the displays of leather and whips. Despite the official stand on homosexuality, several members of the Nazi’s highest officers were allegedly homosexual, and Ernst Roehm, leader of the Storm Troopers, was a recognised homosexual and close colleague and friend of Hitler. For Connell,

From the point of view of hegemonic masculinity, the potential for homoerotic pleasure was expelled from the masculine and located in a deviant group, symbolically assimilated to women or to beasts. There was no mirror-type of “the heterosexual”. Rather, heterosexuality became a required part of manliness. The contradiction between this purged definition of masculinity, and the actual conditions of emotional life among men in the military and paramilitary groups reached crisis level in fascism. It helped to justify, and possibly to motivate, Hitler’s murder of Ernst Roehm, the homosexual leader of the Storm-troopers, in 1934. (Connell, 1995:196)

\textsuperscript{12}1925, Nietzsche, F. translated by Zimmern H. “Beyond Good and Evil”. 241
CHAPTER SEVEN:
HOMOSEXUALITY and POSTMODERNISM

Post-modernists have generally failed to link neo-liberal social and economic imperatives and outcomes, hence the post-modern phenomenon of supporting “hyper-liberalism,” that supports by default, the existence of “hyper capitalism”. These have been based in gender and sexual differences, with a focus on the manipulation of definitions of the ‘personal’ and personalities. This is indicative of the need to ‘individualise’ those alienated through work practices or unemployment through the promise of freedom in what a ‘sexuality’ or sex itself can alleviate in the ‘private’ individual. The role of sex could be considered in a broader fashion in relation to alienation, but only after the relationship of sex is to work is discovered. Furthermore a re-conceptualisation of ‘work’ based upon the structural dynamics of the public/private split needs to be considered, as its material role in the mode of production is realised. While the articulation of secular morality has often been an intrinsic rationale and motivation of the social sciences, this chapter draws together themes from chapter one that discusses the tensions between a religious morality and definition of identity and the humanist project of understanding and compassionately comprehending human ‘impulses’. However the Marxist definition of secular morality that is underpinned by understanding labour as the real sensuous activity that dominates the “mode of production,” offers the most complete explanation of how “secular morality” should be constituted as the central unifying theme within labour.

Men can be distinguished from animals by consciousness, by religion or anything else you like. They themselves begin to
distinguish themselves from animals as soon as they begin to produce their means of subsistence, a step which is conditioned by their physical organisation. By producing their means of subsistence men are indirectly producing their actual material life.

(Marx & Engels, 1845: “German Ideology Part 1”)

**Lesbianism**

In connection with the commodification of everything, this chapter explores in detail how masculinity becomes re-produced as a product of its hegemony. The butch/femme dichotomy reflects the adherence to the normalisations of the Enlightenment. The ‘mannish’ or unattractive lesbian is seen less in biological terms (in contrast to male homosexuality) with her choice seen in part because she is perceived to be unattractive to men. The ‘femme’ remains generally undetected unless in the company of a ‘butch’ partner.

Masculine appearance, especially among working-class women, figured heavily in the early definitions of the female invert. A typical description was one by Krafft-Ebing in 1888. “She had coarse male features, a rough and rather deep voice, and with the exception of the bosom and female contour of the pelvis, looked more like a man in women’s clothing than like a woman”.

(Faderman, 1991:45)

In the 1950s Kinsey found that only a very small portion of females had exclusively
homosexual histories. He reported, “between six and 14% of females (ages 20-35) had
more than incidental homosexual experiences in their histories”. (Kinsey, 1953:488)
Whereas Kinsey estimated that nearly “46% of the male population had engaged in both
heterosexual and homosexual activities, or “reacted to” persons of both sexes, in the
course of their adult lives”. (Kinsey, 1948:656)

Alienated by their respective positions in the masculine hegemonic social order
homosexual men and heterosexual women have formed an unusual alliance as both
appear to lack “masculinity”. Heterosexual women’s reliance on men to dominate, relates
to the fact that women are ultimately as directed by heterosexual doctrines as much as
men. For effete homosexual men, their physical and psychic closeness with heterosexual
women is exemplified through transvestite parody – such as Barry Humphries’ satire on
the Australian housewife, Dame Edna Everidge. Furthermore, this is perhaps indicative
of a hidden resentment towards female ‘friends’ who contribute to homosexual
stigmatisation. This alliance has replaced the unique relationships/friendships women had
shared before discursive Enlightenment practices. As Faderman asserts,

It was still possible in the early twentieth century for some
women to vow great love for each other, sleep together, see
themselves as life mates, perhaps even make love, and yet have
no idea that their relationship was what the sexologists were now
considering “inverted” and “abnormal” (Faderman, 1992:48).

However as lesbianism operates in the shadow of male homosexuality, and not
associated with the same degree of failure, (and operates as a staple of pornography
produced for heterosexual men), there is no overt need for social identification.
Furthermore ‘lesbians’ can still bear children, and form nuclear families with their female partners, and lesbianism’s general ambivalence towards penetration suggests that it would be a more obvious choice for homosexual politics if heterosexuality was not defined by a hegemonic ‘maleness’. However, “more and more young women in their teens and twenties are experimenting openly in sexual relationships with other women (and I think “experimenting” may be the key word here) (Hennessy, 2000:175).

The gestation of the political lesbian in the 1970s has revealed the tenuous grasp that lesbianism has on an essential identity, and whether it should be maintained as a biological or social phenomenon. Due to its less defined status when compared to male homosexuality, bisexual women subsequently pose a threat to monogamous lesbian relationships. Rust’s study indicates;

That overall, lesbians do prefer to associate with other lesbians rather than bisexual women, and many feel very strongly about the issue. For example, 96% said that they would prefer to date a lesbian, and 74% said that their preference to avoid dating bisexual women is very strong. Only 13 lesbians said that they don’t care whether the women they date are bisexual or lesbian.

(Rust, 1995:100)

In direct contrast with early sexological connections between penetration, reproduction and satisfaction, “the human clitoris, physiological site of female orgasm and without reproductive purpose, undermines all attempts to link sexual pleasure to reproductive outcome” (Segal, 1994:218). Segal however fails to make the link between the late sexological discovery of the clitoris and founding sexology’s focus on orgasm
that was needed for reproduction. That the clitoris can be an exclusive site for orgasm has been accepted, although according to Greer, female genitals are defined by the necessity that “the best thing a cunt can be is small and unobtrusive: the anxiety about the bigness of the penis is only equaled about the smallness of the cunt” (Greer, 1970:44-45).

Women, now aware that the vaginal orgasm was predicated on male ideas, can turn the issue back onto men through the discourse of phallus humiliation. Iragaray also evokes pre-modern and post-clitoral contextual ‘feel’ in the following extract.

> Women’s erogenous zones never amount to anything but a clitoris-sex that is not comparable to the noble phallic organ, or a hole envelope that serves to massage the penis in intercourse, or a masculine organ turned back on itself, self-embracing (Irigaray, 1985:23).

The anti-discrimination or ameliorative vision for homosexuality, similar to feminism, seeks imitative opportunities that reveal their ‘individuality’ and right to exercise egalitarianism and become coupled worker/consumers. The banality of this approach is revealed by the fact that homosexual couplings will inevitably face the same pressures and social characteristics connected to the demands of the dominant mode of production. Issues such as compulsory monogamy, urbanity and the nuclear family will impact, underpinned by class and work-based issues. As Hennessy argues,

> The gender foundation of heteronormative sexual identities is directly related to the extraction of surplus value through the gendered division of labour both in the family’s role in the reproduction of labour power and in the workplace. To the extent
that heteronormativity is premised on a gender hierarchy, it has served to legitimate and naturalise the gender division of labour. However, just because capitalism has made use of heteronormativity does not mean that it is necessary for capitalist production. Capitalism does not require heteronormative families or even a gendered division of labour. What it does require is an unequal division of labour. (Hennessy, 2000:105)

In lieu of a broad realisation that it is the anthropological structure of capitalist social life rather than men or ‘patriarchy,’ greater access to reproductive technologies could aid the attraction of lesbianism. This could then allow those women dissatisfied with heterosexuality and men to follow a sexuality of ‘choice’, and the non-material criticism of men could be avoided. The Howard Government in 2000 prevented IVF treatment for single women, whether the individual had independent means of support and irrespective of sexuality. The determination to restrict this option for single women with fertility problems is held despite the knowledge that single fertile women can indiscriminately select a sexual partner. Moreover, monogamous lesbian relationships may be preferable for governments to protect coupled family values, and for women that are accustomed and socialised for monogamy. Pragmatically it could provide women

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1 Rust’s question, “Society makes it difficult to be a lesbian, so some women claim to be bisexual when they are really lesbians who are afraid to admit it”. How strongly do you agree or disagree with this statement? 26.69% (87) agreed slightly, 32.21% (105) agreed, and 24.23% (79), agreed strongly (Rust, 1995:310).

2 “Leesa Meldrum, a single woman from Melbourne who had gone to a fertility specialist to get pregnant and had challenged the law” (Summers, 2003:252). Although most State and Territory governments are opposed to such discrimination, The Federal government’s proposed amendment (Sex Discrimination Bill, (No.1, 2000) would allow State and Territory government’s to discriminate against some women by preventing single women, including lesbians from accessing assisted reproductive technologies such as IVF, artificial insemination, sperm screening, and embryo transfer. (www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/adb.nsf/search) 2002
with a diversity of relationship choices that avoid the problems associated with age-related infertility.

**Lesbian sadomasochism**

An aggressive appropriation of masculinity such as lesbian sadomasochism or a non-phallic lesbianism, are at obverse ends of the same hegemonic scale. It is a simplistic polemic when Butler asserts that,

> The parodic or imitative effect of gay identities works neither to copy nor to emulate heterosexuality, but rather, to expose heterosexuality as an incessant and panicked imitation of its own naturalised idealisation. (Butler, 1990:23)

The inability to overturn established ontological boundaries is compounded in the following statement on lesbian sado-masochism. “S/M is scary, Pat Califia, one of the leading spokespeople for lesbian sado-masochism admits. But it is more: ‘it is a deliberate premeditated erotic blasphemy, a form of sexual extremism and dissent’” (Weeks, 1985:237). The pursuit of a general catharsis or the female adoption of the male sexual response is explicitly revealed by Portillo.

> I was getting fucked by this stud in the black leather jacket who *fucked* just like a man. As a matter of fact, it was like I was being fucked by a man, except this was the first time my cunt ever responded, which amazed me. It was the most pleasurable orgasm I have ever had before or since. I was impressed - and hooked.
The two main themes of sadomasochism are seemingly contrary - an overt pursuit of genital/orgastic satisfaction, yet a deliberate divorcing from a culture of physical limitations – similar to an extreme version of “tantric sex” that is favoured by heterosexuals. For “it makes the whole body the object of erotic penetration through pain or bondage” (Connell, 1983:25). The Marquis De Sade from which the term sado originates, followed the credo of sexual satisfaction through ‘depravity’, as the various performance manifestations have a tendency to stimulate or deflate each other. “Sade’s heroes of the libertinage often suffer from failure of erection – one of the few touches of realism in his fucking scenes–which drives them on to worse and worse atrocities in the attempt to become hard” (Connell, 1983:24-25). The sexological focus on orgasm, particularly its mechanical orientation that originated in the need to procreate, drives the participant to achieve satisfaction regardless of cost. Conversely, masochism has the capacity to reduce satiation based upon orgasm to one resembling the oral-anal fixation of Freudian theory, as the need for orgasm becomes equated to food consumption and defecation - one that the ‘body’ needs to intake and release at various intervals. For Foucault however, S/M represented a complex interplay between the body as an instrument of pleasure distinct, yet not excluding the genitals. As Halperin argues, S/M represented to Foucault “a process of invention”, insofar as it detaches sexual pleasure from sexuality (in an S/M scene, the precise gender and sexual orientation of one’s sexual partner may lose some of their importance as prerequisites of sexual excitement) and insofar as it frees bodily pleasure from organ
specificity, from exclusive localisation in the genitals. S/M thereby makes possible a new relation between the body and pleasure, and one effect of continued S/M practice is to alter one’s relation to one’s own body. (Halperin, 1995:87)

In lesbian sadomasochism practice a continued pathologisation of ‘perversions’ dominates, with the objective of release and drama of display, rather than discursive practice that is truly revolutionary. It has a relationship to male patterns of abuse and may also have links with the lives of women who have suffered abuse in family and heterosexual or homosexual relationships. As Card argues,

Much consensual sadomasochism even among lesbians may be a playful reenactment of childhood abuse. In an essay in the journal *Lesbian Ethics* Ardel Thomas reflects on her experience both as the masochist in lesbian sadomasochism and as a survivor of mother-daughter incest, arguing the two are interconnected. (Card, 1995: 145)

Ultimately it is enslaved to a culture of openness that is highly ritualised and limiting, and reveals more than other sexological discourses the epistemological limits of ‘sexuality’. Such ‘extreme’ discourses that operate at the fringes of conventional sexological discourse, attempt to suggest that masculine symbolism in the possession of women is transformed into a power for good, rather than the type of erroneous and ruthless masculinity that exists in the sexual practices of the incarcerated male. Interpreting Foucault’s and Butler’s concept of power and the body as a transformative site for discourse, Ebert argues that, power “is “aleatory” (that is, marked by chance and
arbitrariness); contingent (rather than historically determined); heterogeneous (divided by difference within), and un-stable – by provoking “resistance” it “undoes” itself” (Ebert, 1995:133).

Consequently a critical perspective reveals that lesbianism sadomasochism reifies masculinity as it puts it further out of the reach of women. Variance comes with personalities, and likes and dislikes. Serious injuries, an accidental or ‘snuff’ death from the rituals, is at the outer fringes of the discourse based on the empowerment of some and the subservience of others. Themes of exacting revenge over those who may have played a role in their political and social oppression (using the political maxim that there are no political innocents) – a ritual sacrifice can occur and be enacted on a man that bears little relationship to their actual oppressors, initiating a journey of self-actualisation. Comparisons with ‘structural’ forms of logic for the postmodernist, denotes an inability to view extreme and unusual sexual behaviours conceptually and or as potentially transitory.

The following extract is from BBBDomme, whose sexual profile and interests appeared in an Internet site for alternative lifestyle personals³.

I own my beauty salon in Harlem which is frequented by black females. I am a widow, mother of two daughters (28&25), trained nurse, healthy, tall, powerful and attractive. A true dominant and a real sadist. I employ two black sistas, (19&39), both married, both secretly Domme. We all enjoy forced prolonged body-worship, especially anal worship. I am looking for a white male, to own by permanent contract 24/7/365 after an initial

³ Alt.com, June 2002.
acquaintance-training, who will then be kept locked in the basement under my shop, impaled on a large butt plug and cock padlocked to a ring on the floor during the day, serving me, my two sistas and a few select discrete clientele exclusively as our toilet. Sometimes my daughters will visit too. If you did obey well, there will be rewards, once the shop is closed, and heavy punishments, if you made a fuss. I am into fierce face slapping, trampling and whipping cocks and kicking balls. Fisting (by my sistas) to be expected, as well as more elaborate C&BT and electro games, as they husbands to be angry about. But they will play with you only occasionally (but use you daily). We are all very PMS prone. Your oral servitude will help you ease some of it, we’ll take it out on you. Sundays will be your resting day, unless I arrange a show-training and feeding frenzy for/with some of my clientele, daughters, etc. I will keep you healthy with pills and some food, so don’t worry. I look after my property, specially if it is such a useful one. Dare you enter a new world as a toilet for black women? Write to me now.

Ideal Person- You must be white or asian, preferably under 35 (over 18 and under 5’8”, healthy and not fat, but if you’re otherwise suitable, I may make exceptions. You must be 100% independent, free and available, (relocatable if out of town) with no obligations whatsoever! You must be quite determined and
honest to yourself before contacting me in person, I might make you sign a contract even during the first training, if I think you are the one for the job. I won’t respond to oneliners. Tell me why I should choose you and why you want this life for yourself. There must be no turning back, ever.

Looking for- A man for active participation

Activities enjoyed- 24/7 (total power exchange), altocalciphilia (high heels), asphyxiaphilia (breath play), branding, cock and ball torture, coprophilia (shit play), collar and lead, electro torture, fisting, handcuffs/shackles, oral fixation, piercings, rimming, sadism, urolagnia (piss play).

The strong racial overtones, and the systematic stripping of themes of identity, would make it unlikely that such a man could escape with his life in BBBDomme’s requirement of a slave. The desire to humiliate a small un-masculine man has several practical and desired outcomes, as she would require a small man for her dungeon. Secondly, a large or strong man would present physical challenges, but also he may represent what Domme actually admires – male physical strength - hence her reticence to demean him. With a small man, and (one who has low self esteem the main pre-requisite to sign her contract), he is almost totally humiliated before his torture begins. The hatred of such men extends to more than just a dislike of their biological masculinity. In an inversed romantic love theme, it is “hate at first sight”, for the type of man who seeks out this type of punishment does not deserve her respect, even though he may crave it. While his masculinity is

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4 In 2004, a German man responded to an internet personal that asked for someone who was willing to be the victim in an act of cannibalism. [www.arminm.com](http://www.arminm.com) Accessed, 5/5/04.

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minimal, her transcendent appropriation of the victim’s masculinity and his inevitable
death, gives the closest experience to being “male”. Reference to her ‘sistas’ being angry
about their husbands, perhaps the most revealing feature, and an indication of the real
source of their anger and modes of personal alienation without legitimate source of
redress.

A female submissive who wants to continue being controlled yet also seeking a path
to appropriated masculinity, writes the following profile. “worthlessecow”, is married, and
interested in intense abuse.

Let me begin by being upfront about my basic needs and
limitations. I am married. I do not anticipate this changing in the
near future. If you are interested in meeting me or exchanging
personal pictures/phone calls..... I am afraid that I am not the one
for you. I am not interested in illegal activities, particularly
anything relating to child abuse or fantasies of my untimely death.
Particularly given my husband’s career, our contact will
necessarily be discrete and anonymous. I am 27, have been
married 5 years, and have not had an overtly masochistic
experience since 1992. I am not what you call a “PC” type sub-
masochist. I am not interested in safe words, respect or kindness
or limited “scenes”. In fact, what excites me the most is intense
physical, mental and emotional abuse, extreme degradation,
humiliation, and training to the point of dehumanisation. While I
crave moderate levels of physical pain and discomfort, I am (at
least at this point), not a masochist really. In truth I can’t really say I know what I will be, or what I want to be. I am not very good at making decisions, and I get very stressed out by even the simple everyday choices that confront me in life. I am educated but uncreative. I think that like most people, I tend towards self-doubt (my husband often criticises me for depending on the approval of others). I am realistic about myself. I know that I am not special. Nor am I crazy, neurotic or depressive. I am 5’6, and 135 pounds, with dark brown hair. I graduated from college in 1994 and have one child. My husband works in “public policy”, while I am a fulltime mom at the moment. He has no interest of any kind in this type of thing, leaving me pretty much on my own. People would describe me as quiet and shy with above average looks, and somewhat yuppie tastes. I had submissive needs even before I had sexual needs, and would consider myself a natural submissive. I did not choose this, and often I wish I was not this way. Except for acquaintances in college and high school, no one knows this about me. I am not overly experienced. I have been beaten, and have dabbled in scat, water-sports and various humiliating activities. Since before I really understood it, I was very willing, but too shy to find the right person, and then all of this ended when I met my husband. At that point in my life, I was still hoping that those thoughts would go away. Now I am certain
that this is something I need to deal with. My hope is to converse with someone who is interested in fostering and shaping this part of my personality. If I cannot give up my body, at least I would like to give my mind and my sexuality to you, so that when I close my eyes at night my mind is full of your thoughts, when I masturbate I think only of the fantasies you shape for me, so that the first thing in the morning I think of is you. So that I become accustomed to and expect abuse as a normal part of my life. I want to repeat your words in my head until I believe they are my own. This is very hard for me to write, because I am sure that my words sound foolish to you. I hope you can see past all this and that I will be of interest to you. I want you to help me see how I am wrong, to criticise my mistakes, show me my weaknesses, so that I can see myself as I am, without illusions. I am weak and afraid and horny. Please write to me while I still have the nerve.

Sincerely----- (I have omitted my name in hope that you will give me a new name of your choice). I am shit I am a worthless cunt I am a sow I am an ugly bitch I am stupid I am a slut I am a pussy I am a whore I am a toilet I am a pathetic cow I am ashtray I am a pig I am disgusting I am subhuman I am weak I am a farm animal I deserve to be beaten I am filthy I am wrong. I cannot live on my own. I need your abuse. I want you to hurt me I deserve what I get I want to suffer I am boring I am foolish I am shit.
Ideal Person- I am interested in intense interaction with an intelligent, controlling person who will abuse me without scruples, and who would enjoy the opportunity of shaping my sexuality and possibilities in future life.

Looking for- A man or a woman or a couple or a gay couple, a lesbian couple or multiple persons for erotic email exchanges.

Activities enjoyed- 24/7 (total power exchange), algolagnia (love of pain), branding, coprophilia (shit play), discipline, exhibitionism, electrotorture, masochism, play rape, urolagnia

Unlike ‘Domme’, ‘worthlesscow’, openly concedes that her femaleness is her greatness weakness, and to her, it is evidently facile to challenge the physical and mental hegemony of men. Recognising the danger in rituals that mimic death, she hides behind a bourgeois identity seeking only metaphoric experiences. Using the ‘femme’ lesbian personality type as a base, she wants to build her superstructure as an example of her lack of assertiveness and masculinity. However echoing Butler’s thesis of efficacy in imitation, Sherman, (in Presdee), states,

What do women get from being submissive? The answer is they get what they want. If you want to be submissive you should be able to stand up and say ‘Tie me up I love it’. It requires being very strong to be a submissive. Being submissive does not equal being weak. (Presdee, 2000:100)

Consistent with the postmodern emphasis on relativism and context, Sherman can advocate submissive behaviour as long as it an individual choice, although sex as a
symbol of inverting oppression is also seen to be given sex an efficacy it does not materially possess.

While the examples are from America, there is a relatively high participation rate in Australia in the BDSM lifestyle personals\(^5\), an internet club that is based in America. Overall members in the United States total 539,132, compared to 24,759 for Australia. European countries with significantly larger populations than Australia, such as Great Britain and Germany, total 61,919 and 10,858 respectively. A further breakdown of listings sees that Australia has a slightly greater number of lesbian sadomasochists, than women seeking men, 1,668 and 1,502. The figures overall indicate that men are the group mostly engaged in homosexual and heterosexual sadomasochism, with heterosexual men dominating the listings in the United States, with 375,064 seeking to practice sadomasochism with women. Australian listings also reveal that heterosexual men dominate in the overall figures, with 18,042 men seeking women, and 3,053 men seeking men.

Taking a traditional feminist view on lesbian sadomasochism, and a confusing moral high ground, Jeffreys argues that, “gay men have not produced much theory about s/m. They have simply practiced it and taken it for granted. Lesbians were impelled to theory by their uncomfortable feeling that s/m ideology is in contradiction to the most cherished precepts of feminism” (Jeffreys, 1990:210). From Jeffrey’s perspective lesbian sadomasochism is an embarrassment to feminism, despite that it could have symbolic appeal in the inversion of Protestant asceticism, and women’s mediating role in Protestant capitalism generally. However as Faderman indicates, within lesbian politics there existed a desire to expand conceptions of feminist politics, and deconstruct

\(^5\) www.alt.com 12/8/2002
“politically correct” paradigms.

The resurgence of butch/femme was also a reaction to the “drab stylelessness” of the lesbian-feminist community in the 1970s that was “anaphrodisiac,” as one woman described it. Her friends in the ’70s, she recalled, were philosophically appealing, but they created “the most unerotic environment….No make-up, denim overalls, flannel shirts. I compared it to Mao’s China. Plain and sexless.” (Faderman, 1991:268)

**Homosexuality**

Homosexuality appeared as one of the forms of sexuality when it was transposed from the practice of sodomy onto a kind in interior androgyny, a hermaphrodism of the soul. The sodomite had been a temporary aberration; the homosexual was now a species. (Foucault, 1978:43)

The drive to identify homosexuals can see it defined before an actual technical definition can be applied, as their ‘homosexuality’, is overwhelmingly assumed. Relating to the Enlightenment phenomenon towards identification, effete characteristics became a cruel and pragmatic way or identifying those more likely to become exclusively homosexual, and it is this identity shaped by the persecutors that is ‘celebrated’. This feature was exacerbated or originated in the sexological creation of a disinterested female subject, who become socialised to be pursued by an assertive male subject. Therefore the
gay personality is an extension of other heterosexual masculine failures such as impotency. The utilitarian function of the phallus then becomes a key theme in defining the gay personality, as distinct from ‘homosexuality’, which is then even more difficult to define, and specifically, why a male anus is preferable to a vagina, or a female anus.

Homosexual sex in gaols without the associate effete symbolism of both partners is therefore unique, although like male sports, there often is the overt attempt to reflect heterosexual masculine codes in the final analysis. The various manifestations reflect the desire for the “double male” experience, a term used to describe a cult of raw and conjoined masculinity. In the mainstream community and with those men who are socially perceived as effete, the homosexual experience may be closer to two sublimated masculinities making one. As Bristow suggests,

We are – to the heterosexual world – walking definitions of sex.

We mean sex. Our lifestyle is defined as a sexual lifestyle, a lifestyle that says ‘fuck’. It is hardly a coincidence that it is one of the greatest insults to tell someone to ‘fuck off’. Fucking has a power that is hard to define. Sex is still bound up for many people with explosive fears and volatile hatreds. It is also the thing that western peoples talk interminably about. The fascination of sex is endless. Gay men provide a convenient target for the displacement and projection of a widespread social confusion about heterosexuality on to a small ‘perverse’ group. (Bristow, 1989:74)

There is an inversion of masculine parameters in gaol which suggest an overall shift to
a lesbian butch /femme dichotomy. Those judged effeminate are not just being defined as homosexual, but are in danger of rape, and are at risk of being used by several men as a symbol of sexual servitude. Meanwhile the sexual aggressor appears as the “real man”, as he aggrandises masculinity through the violence of rape, with its own linguistic sub-text of, “I’m not gay, but the bloke I fucked was”. This partial confession reveals that their homosexuality is transient, and largely predicated on the need to have somebody to ‘fuck’. The separation between sexual practices and ‘sexuality’ normalises heterosexuality as the hegemonic sexuality, and in an unconscious fashion, it is reminiscent of Greek man - boy initiation rites. However the type of brutality expressed through much of homosexual sex in gaols, and its emphasis on power and control rather than sex or affection, reflects broader society’s problem with homosexual sex. The overt denial of the caricatured homosexual type increases the general level of violence in the masculine personality, as this ‘freedom’ of the gaol environment, signifies one of the last remnants of expressive industrial masculinity.

This type of homosexuality suggests if not the fact that a high degree of undetected ‘homosexuality’ activity and orientation exists in the broader community, but that the set of gender symbols that ruthlessly ‘outs’ the caricatured homosexual is inherently problematic. Rape and sex in gaol also may reveal more than sex - starved men who have masturbation as the only outlet while incarcerated. While the lack of women is a factor in their choices, (it can only be assumed that women would remain first choice if they shared gaols with men), the male-only environment gives some individuals the chance to express aspects of masculinity frowned upon in broader society. As Gough argues,

The masculinisation of the homosexual, which began in the
1970s, has been joined in the 1980s by the increased masculinisation of the heterosexual man. These two trends have tended to reinforce each other: a masculinisation of the heterosexual is a result of the increased freedom of heterosexual women, at least in the middle class, to choose their sexual partner (a deepening of the female heterosexual identity itself), with heterosexual men, like gay men, becoming objects of desire. (Gough, 1989:130-131)

Somewhat contradictorily, the gaol culture stands as a bulwark against paedophilia, although the masculine gaol environment ruthlessly attacks those who cannot protect themselves. The “rock-spider”, becomes akin to the hidden and unrecognised homosexual, whose concealment contradicts Enlightenment ideology. The rock-spider ethos is also related to a lumpenproletariat sub-cultural form of masculinity, which defines itself against the traditional masculinity as represented by the law. The need to project a heterosexual standard based on the objectification and protection of children, is based upon legends of unfair treatment at the hands of jurisprudence that creates the need to project a higher, purer form of moral codification. Furthermore, as Hearn argues,

Interestingly, the focus on the public domain as against private domain crime is itself paralleled in legal constructions of men.

For example, Richard Collier (1995) has expertly demonstrated how the explicit construction of ‘dangerous masculinities’ in law

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6 The phenomenon of gaol masculinity and morality gaining broad acceptance, is reflected in the popularity of underworld figure Mark ‘Chopper’ Read. Read started to write entertaining books while still in gaol, with titles such as ‘Hits and Memories’. Later the subject of a major Australian film, Read’s popularity was underpinned by his ability as a raconteur and the legend that he only killed those who also made their living from crime such as drug dealers.
is itself premised on the implicit construction of the ‘good father’, the ‘family man’ and indeed heterosexuality itself. (Hearn, 1998:47)

While homosexuality became overtly associated with the Acquired Immunity Deficiency virus (AIDS), in the 1980s, masturbation implies Laqueur, has suffered a more significant and longer-term medical stigmatisation. The muted jokes regarding masturbation causing hairy palms or blindness, emanates from serious medical discourse that treated masturbation as a moral and physical aberration.

Charles Dickens’s shifty-eyed, pimply, sallow-complexioned, untrustworthy Uriah Heep is probably the most famous and easily recognised culprit in Victorian fiction, but there are many, many others. (There are also other, and literarily more interesting uses of masturbation in Dickens: his play on Swift’s old joke in Oliver Twist – “Charley Bates, Master Charles Bates, Master Bates”, - and the long account of Pip’s hiding his “wicked secret”, his “secret burden down the leg of his trousers” in Great Expectations.) He was building on a century-long tradition that believed that the masturbator was an easily recognisable type. “Pale, desiccated limbs, hollow chest, powerless, sunken head…dead white face…eyelids falling powerlessly over his dying fading eyes.” (Laqueur, 2003:64)

In the late twentieth century there has been an attempt reclaim gay stigmatisation through inversion - the celebration of the ‘gay’ personality, through events such as
Sydney’s Gay and Lesbian Madri Gras. This approach tends to have a limited impact outside of certain areas of Sydney, and becomes a localised phenomenon similar to San Francisco’s overt gay culture. Regional and country areas still express profound resentment towards aspects of this new, partially accepted, public space orientated gay politics. Certainly in these areas, overt displays of gayness are an open invitation to violence, suggesting what is accepted, tolerated and practiced in Sydney is unique to Sydney, as local regions are ‘policed’ by angry young ‘heterosexual’ males. For Tomsen, the majority of assailants in the killings studied are young, working-class and poor men with a marginal existence in the labour market and low social status. Much of this violence, especially the planned gang attacks on homosexual men, suggests an underlying compensatory search for masculine status among offenders, and an important cultural paradox which appears to shape many of these attacks. (Tomsen, 2003:95)

Alternatively gay parodies of heterosexual normalisations such as the ‘worker’ or ‘cowboy’ reveals that “to be sure, gay masculinity is not, in any simple way, ‘real’ masculinity, any more than camp is ‘real’ femininity. It is more self-conscious than the real thing, more theatrical, and often ironic” (Gough, 1989:121)

For gender theorists using a social psychological perspective, the “post-industrial society” presents the opportunity to assert the death of male heterosexuality. This perspective obscures the political relationship between postmodern gender theory and

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7In the “Australian legend” sublimated ‘homosexuality’ amongst ‘mates’ is unconscious and a product of casual relationships with women. R.Ward, The Australian Legend, pages 99-100
economic rationalist policies, and as Donaldson illustrates, the articulation of gender identities in the industrial workforce is defined by its utilitarianism.

Most non-manual work is regarded as effeminate, ‘sissy’, and is performed by ‘poofers’ and ‘wankers’. A steelworker commented to me, ‘Social workers? They’re just like fucking clerks. What would they know about life?’ And as Ken B. remarked, ‘the egghead brainy guy with good grades, the little wimpy guy with glasses, you might as well be a girl’. Men who do office work or nursing are, according to young working-class women, ‘limp-wristed’, ‘sissy’, ‘faggy and ‘weirdo’. (Donaldson, 1991:10)

The ignorance of the fact that the male heterosexual personality is largely a product of physical labour, becomes an appropriation of the male worker’s cultural “surplus value,” by the middle class. This de-construction of masculinity through post-modern social science discourses has taken advantage of the unemployment malaise to attack the core identity of industrial masculinity.

All the technological progress, the conquest of nature, the rationalisation of man and society have not eliminated and cannot eliminate the necessity of alienated labour, the necessity of working mechanically, unpleasurably, in a manner that does not represent individual self-realisation. (Marcuse, 1966:222)

Subsequently heterosexuality has been based in a pragmatic organising principle in the
revolt against economic oppression. In the Australian film *Sunday Too Far Away*\(^8\), the harsh reality of itinerant labour and their compulsory heterosexuality needs to be taken in the context of their oppressive labour conditions. Their overt heterosexuality is exercised to present a united front, (often with the requirement to express violence), with homosexuality viewed as divisive, and as a ‘sexuality’. Therefore while it can be assumed that gay politics wishes to distance itself from the heterosexual foundations of industrialisation, it also seeks distance from theorists such as Marx, who did not recognise the dynamic of ‘sexuality’ in his political and social analysis. The ‘feminisation’ of the male can be seen as an evolution in the changing dynamics of industrialisation that is less unionised, and hence less ‘masculine’.

The less the skill and exertion implied in manual labour, in other words, the more modern industry becomes developed the more is the labour of men superseded by that of women. Differences of age and sex have no longer any distinctive social validity for the working class. All are instruments of labour, more or less expensive to use, according to their age and sex. (Marx & Engels, 1848: “Bourgeois and Proletarians”)

In terms of contemporary social and intellectual debate, “the problem” of homosexuality occupies the type of “ideological space” that could be filled by substantive economic and class based analysis. In the neo-liberal context, the desire to feminise men suggests an alignment of gender identities and capitalist compliance, and furthermore, may prove useful to ‘push’ as many men into homosexuality. This leaves women to appropriate the cultural advantages of heterosexuality (in the absence of men), while still

\(^8\) 1975, director K. Hannam.
pursuing options in relation to bi-sexuality and lesbianism. This can then solidify their position in the female dominated neo-liberal labour market. Connell prefers to see the impact of neo-liberalism dominated by a masculinist theory rather than an economic tradition that is class aware, but gender blind.

The ‘individual’ of neo-liberal theory has the attributes and interests of a male entrepreneur. The attack on the welfare state generally weakens the position of women, while the increasingly unregulated power of transnational corporations places strategic power in the hands of particular groups of men. (Connell, 2000:51).

The notion of violence as a legitimate expression by disenfranchised heterosexual men is also questioned by Connell when he asserts the need for, “new and more democratic patterns in gender relations, not re-runs of discredited patriarchies” (Connell, 2000:6).

**Paedophilia (hebophilia)**

To identify as gay is accordingly to take on a stigmatised form of masculinity. Homosexuality is perceived as a failure to attain hegemonic masculinity. The prohibition of man/boy sex must be understood in this context. (Leahy 1992:72) ⁹

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⁹ Research based in the ‘sexuality’ of children remains one of the most contentious areas in academia. This is also compounded by the fact that academic studies, in contrast with most ‘folk wisdoms’, seek to locate examples and possibilities that adult/child sex can be ‘positively experienced’ in the post-Enlightenment society. Leahy’s doctoral thesis, which dealt with issues relating to “positively experienced man/boy sex”, follows on from groups seeking legitimacy such as the British Paedophile Information Exchange, (PIE), and the North American Man/Boy Love Association, (NAMBLA).
Homosexuality has become a political movement based on civil libertarian beliefs that homosexuality is an adult activity. This is related to the immersion of homosexuality into community values, particularly those relating to the nuclear family and the protection of children. In the Greek context however, Keuls suggests that ‘homosexuality’ was so free of stigmatisation that it could gravitate to its ‘real’ orientation of pedastry.

The homosexual connection favoured by Greeks was not so much homoerotic as pederastic; the archetypal relationship was between a mature man at the height of his sexual power and a young, erotically undeveloped boy just before puberty. (Keuls, 1993:275)

Leahy and his mentor Foucault, again link homosexuality with paedophilia, (hebophilia). Foucault also eludes to the suggestion that there existed an Athenian “high point” of homosexuality, and the general hegemony of homo-erotica, manifested in man/boy ‘love’. While child sexual abuse is now more widely reported, it has been the institution of the nuclear family that has traditionally concealed much of the unreported

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Indicating that such research is across disciplines is the example of Edinburgh Psychology Professor Christopher Brand, who was suspended from the University following the publication of his book, the G Factor. The book, which deals principally with ‘IQ’ (intelligence quotients) suggest that IQ is linked to racial differences, but also makes an association with the argument that some children can have non-harmful paedophilic experiences. Brand asserts that “Academic studies and my own experience (as a choirboy occasionally importuned by older men), suggest that non-violent paedophilia with a consenting partner over the age of twelve, does no harm so long as the paedophiles and their partners are of above average IQ and educational level” (Holden, 1996) – www.cycad.com/cgi-bin/Brand/holden.html.

In Australia, information was presented to the Wood Royal Commission in 1997, from a Sociology tutorial handbook containing pro-paedophilia references, and a doctoral thesis that reflected on a nuanced view of paedophilia. While significant evidence was not found against the two academics, evidence presented from a range of occupations that involved the care and instruction of children and young adults, led to the creation New South Wales Child Protection Act of 1998. The Act restricts the involvement of convicted child sex offenders in occupations directly involving children, with adult teaching institutions such as universities also covered by the Act.

By the mid 1990s child sexual abuse was still receiving a high level of publicity, but the focus had broadened to encompass paedophilia, which was outside the family and thus largely beyond the domain of the child protection system. In New South Wales the issue became highly politicised with concern about paedophilia and corruption in high places leading to the Wood Royal Commission. (Scott&Swain, 2002:172)
cases. However, the increasing fragmentation of the nuclear family has also been matched by the fragmentation of capitalism, perhaps precipitating a higher incidence of abuse. This could re-create the conditions that Foucault argues existed when family relations were based on kinship alliances before the beginning of the seventeenth century. This demonstrates his belief that within the alliance system there was a natural occurrence of incest. (Foucault, 1978:106)

It was a time of direct gestures, shameless discourse, and open transgressions, when anatomies were shown and intermingled at will, and knowing children hung about amid the laughter of adults: it was a period when bodies “made a display of themselves.” (Foucault, 1978:3)

In this context, as homosexuality implicitly defined as a sexuality it can act as a dialectic in the promotion and activity of heterosexual child ‘love’. Moreover it could be interpreted as one of the diverse approaches of gay politics in searching for political terrain that offends mainstream sensitivities. This subsequently releases the long-held fear that homosexual discourse, given enough latitude, will inevitably want to engage in child love discourses, beginning through legal and social argument that the “age of consent” should be same as it is for heterosexuality. An inversion of its marginalisation, can become a discursive tactic argues Foucault.

There is no question that the appearance in nineteenth-century psychiatry, jurisprudence, and literature of a whole series of discourses on the species and subspecies of homosexuality, inversion, pederasty, and “psychic hermaphrodisim” made
possible a strong advance of social controls into this area of “perversity”; but it also made possible the formation of a “reverse” discourse; homosexuality began to speak in its own behalf, to demand that its legitimacy or “naturality” be acknowledged, often in the same vocabulary, using the same categories by which it was medically disqualified. (Foucault, 1978:101)

Underpinning Foucault’s realm of “queer theory” (S/M, fist fucking, gay bath-house sex paedophilia/hebophilia, drugs to heighten the enjoyment of sex, and the incorporation of heterosexuality within the scope of ‘queer’), - was the objective to transcend the restrictions of a conventional gay identity. Broadly, he sees the constitutive framework of queer theory creating the environment for an emphasis on ‘pleasure’ rather than desire. As Halperin also argues,

It is not desire but pleasure that, for Foucault, holds out the promise of such a disaggregating experience. Unlike desire, which expresses the subject’s individuality, history, and identity as a subject, pleasure is desubjectivating, impersonal: it shatters identity, subjectivity, and dissolves the subject, however fleetingly, into the sensorial continuum of the body, into the unconscious dreaming of the mind. (Halperin, 1995: 95)

Post-Christian and Enlightenment assertions of the legitimacy of paedophile themes are also indicative of a ‘fraying’ of traditional heterosexual and homosexual cultures. “Child love” is a post-modern theory that desires a disconnection from the structural issues in the
capitalist economy, to one where, optimistically, a privileged middle class can indulge in a variety of sexual pleasures. As Patton asserts, “the postmodern state proposes lateral linkages, communities or consumption units held in relation to one another and operating through the commercial logic of a free market that circulates rather than negotiates freedoms” (Patton, 1994:172). Subsequently to place the theory within a traditional revolutionary praxis the children of the bourgeoisie would need to be ‘molested’ to contest the link between the nuclear family and capitalist social organisation. But the often unsupervised “latch key kids” from dysfunctional and poverty stricken families are the most likely victims and recipients of molestation or ‘love’, or seek ‘mentoring’ roles that may lead into abuse. Arguments that relate to a systematic abuse of children can attack the capitalist and heterosexual nuclear family, are similar to those that assert that illegal drugs can invert the work ethic. The ‘heterosexist’ nuclear family becomes a site for locating and extrapolating “child love” using aloof and condescending treatment by adults as justification for their ‘interference’. As one proponent of child love argues,

Have you been to a Communion in a Roman Catholic Church lately? Religion is rammed down kid’s throats every day much more than sex with adults ever occurs, and nobody says anything! This is a great parallel. Despite the long-term effects of this and other rituals, etc, practiced by religions that nearly qualify (like the Jehovah’s Witnesses) as cults, it goes on indefinitely with the full blessing of our hypocritical society! (Smith, Chapman, 1999:228-229)
Foucault made no claims that by attacking the social formations of industrial capitalism, or more specifically Enlightenment science paradigms and Victorian/Christian morality that an economic revolution would follow.

If the politics of sex makes little use of the law of the taboo but brings into play an entire technical machinery, if what is involved is the production of sexuality rather than the repression of sex, then our emphasis has to placed elsewhere: we must shift our analysis away from the problem of “labour capacity” and doubtless abandon the diffuse energetics that underlies the theme of a sexuality repressed for economic reasons. (Foucault, 1978:114)

Indicative of post-modern discourse, is the promotion of possibilities over realities with contrived outcomes, and an adherence to arbitrarily applied moral relativisms. Moreover, rather than an expression of individual autonomy, ‘positive’ outcomes could be as a result of a ritualised form of homosexual entrapment. Leahy found with his male interviewees, following a sexual relationship with a male adult as a child/adolescent that;

In the case of heterosexual interviewees the older partner was viewed as a mentor or friend and someone who helped the younger party to break free from parental authority and claim independence. In the case of the gay interviewees there was a similar understanding of these events as helping them to establish adult identity – in this case in the context of an underlying gay sexuality. (Leahy, 1992:87)
Furthermore and confusingly the homosexual identity should not really be about ‘sex’ at all due to its close relationship to productive and scientific values, although how this shift from these values to a politically neutral identity is not quantified by Foucault. For Foucault, queer theory produces alternate sexualities that enable the search for identity itself.

Through the invention of novel, intense, and scattered bodily pleasures, queer culture brings about a tactical reversal of the mechanisms of sexuality, making strategic use of power differentials, physical sensations, and sexual identity-categories in order to create a queer praxis that ultimately disposes with “sexuality” and destabilises the very constitution of identity itself. (Halperin, 1995:96-97)

Foucault clearly then requires a class or status based system for these personal histories to be played out. His favour for the Greek concept of *ascesis* (a form of self-stylisation) reveals an attempt to reconstruct the reign of elites who can fashion themselves according to their will or desires. This was “intentionally adopted by a few members of a male elite in order to enhance the beauty of their existences and to increase their mastery over themselves and others” (Halperin, 1995:109).

By not placing sexuality or “self fashioning” within a materialist context increases the theoretical and practical problems when the repressive Victorian era is analysed. To merely build a dichotomous polemic that attempts to artificially strip Victorianism from its historical and social relevance or context is to ignore significant historical and social facts. To able to transcend from the sexual at a point in time once “sexual demons” have
been exorcised on the path to another identity, may prove to be optimistic given some of the multi-layered manifestations of the Enlightenment and Victorian morality. Consequently the attempt to de-construct the discursive notion of the paedophile to literally mean merely a “lover’ of children” still faces considerable social inertia. Victorians uncovered the special life of childhood they also revealed childhood sexuality. Children were described as ‘little angels’ and ‘closer to god’ than other mortals. Like women they were ‘purer’ than adult males, and the ideas of femininity and childhood were and are interrelated myths. But children’s ideologically asexual appearance was threatened with denial by a barely suppressed acknowledgement of their actual sexuality. (Smith & Chapman, 1999:204)

The child ‘grooming’ process, (the preparation the child for a sex act, or sex play), is necessarily elaborate and well planned. It is also reminiscent of the sexological art of love, where the male (or one) partner is deliberately and purposely dominant. For those determined to acquire children for ‘love’, and subsequently punished or marginalised, can then claim in sexological terms that ‘paedophobia’ exists.

Throughout this process; the adult is constantly evaluating the child for the potential seduction, isolates the child from his or her peers and other adults, and desensitises the child to overt and covert physical or sexual stimulus, all the while engaging the child in a non-sexual relationship. These tactics are considerably more one-sided than the usual mating rituals adults employ to
seduce one another. With the age and experience disparity the child is always at a disadvantage and open to deceit and exploitation. Some offenders who openly acknowledge the child’s disadvantaged situation have claimed that they are operating in the best interests of the child and therefore it is not unhealthy. (Smith & Chapman, 1999:127)

Freud’s acknowledgement of children’s developmental stage based on sexual themes, was characteristic of Enlightenment discourse that attempted an ‘openness’, but from where more dilemmas and misunderstandings arose. The influence of American sexology in late capitalism and through the liberal theme of psychology, created a confirmation of Freudian psychoanalytic ideas that defined sexuality and the individual. The unfortunate undercurrent was the alignment of adult phobias and childhood sexuality that inevitably focused on the sexuality of actual children.

Ironically, the influence of psychoanalytic ideas actually became more embedded in western culture as a whole at the very time that it was declining in mental health professions. By the 1980s and 1990s, the very time at which child sexual abuse was becoming established as a social problem, such ideas were gaining greater currency in a society increasingly absorbed with a psychological world-view. (Scott & Swain, 2002:153)

The reification of children which was partly designed to protect them from the adult world, created an environment for their abuse and exploitation in advertising like McDonald’s. By directing advertising at children and exploiting child-like pleasures, it
shifts the focus from childhood from a transitory state preceding adolescence and adulthood, to the celebration of the permanence of childhood, and child-like desires. A conventional representation of adults wanting to be children is created in an advertisement for Holden cars\textsuperscript{10}. Using a ‘sports’ model of the Commodore sedan, a man is shown driving home after a day at the ‘office’ (the ubiquitous middle class white-collar worker, usually portrayed in advertising). Upon entering the driveway of the large house, he finds his young child’s toys scattered across the driveway. Initially exasperated, he rearranges the toys to construct a slalom course between his driveway and garage. This time his child looks out of a window exasperated as he sees his father become a boy once more. In essence, the boy feels that the father is now occupying his social space, and is uncomfortable and vulnerable, and becomes an immediate threat rather an aloof adult. Overtly, the treatment of adults as children through a pernicious and punishing post-welfare state bureaucracy, with its themes of domination of humiliation, may push the adult to replicate the same effect on those they can assume superiority. Alternatively, those that re-invent traditional hierarchical nuclear family values, such as Adventists, contribute to the theme of “eroticism of the denied”, by arguing for fixed concepts of morality, inverting the postmodern concept of moral relativism.

**Heterosexual paedophilia**

The 1953 book *Lolita*, by Vladimir Nabokov, (the subject of two subsequent films), was about a middle age man’s unusual sexual passion and obsession, for a precocious thirteen year old girl. Reflective of the postmodern interest in the Athenian practice of man/boy

\textsuperscript{10} Viewed in a national television advertising campaign, January 2003.
love, men’s interest in pubescent and pre-pubescent girls indicates an insecurity towards adult women - and/or an attempt to recapture what has been lost through feminist polemics. The appropriation of Playboy morality by heterosexual women has been met with a commensurate denouement of many men socially and economically. Similar to the practice of rape, paedophilia in relation to young girls, attempts to invert the themes of love routinisation and the delayed gratification inherent in female heterosexual culture. The child’s ‘sexuality’, alternatively, is there for the taking, or is easily manipulated or moulded to form an appropriate response to stimuli.

The late twentieth century concept of paedophilia also owes it origins to heterosexual dominated rock and roll, which has been marketed principally at pre-pubescent girls. In a heterosexual manifestation of “queer theory”, the use of drugs, and hedonistic sexual experiences were a feature of this lifestyle for the performers, and a site for contesting the feminist critique of patriarchy. Whereas Playboy morality was aimed at the bourgeois mentality of a business executive, with a projected demographic of thirties and upwards, “Rock and Roll” became an extension of Playboy morality, where men in their early twenties, were marketed to appeal to teenage, (and younger), girls. The moral outrage that greeted the suggestive rhythms and the gyrations of early rock and roll’s greatest symbol, Elvis Presley, was confirmed when singer Jerry Lee Lewis his married thirteen year old cousin. ‘Elvis’, aware that Lewis’ foray restricted his career as a pop idol, concealed the fact that his future wife was fourteen when she moved to his home, ‘Graceland’.

Elvis’ induction into the army in 1958 ushered in the end of “Rock and Roll’s” first

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11 According to the autobiography on her life with Presley, “Elvis and Me”, Priscilla Presley claimed that she was a virgin until their marriage when he was thirty two, and she was nineteen.
brief era. Sanitised and structured versions of rock’s earlier rebellion occurred until the Beatles phenomenon of 1964. While the early Beatles where highly stage-managed by manager Brian Epstein, “Rock and Roll” was rejuvenated. As an artistic and social force its peak was the late 1960s until mid-1970s, where “bad boy” groups such as the Rolling Stones, and the rock/psychedelic movement dominated. Consequently “Rock and Roll’s” appeal has been largely represented by male performers and groups personified by the shrieking and hysteria of young female fans. In Australia, during the late 1970s Cold Chisel had a song called, “You’re beautiful, you’re thirteen, and your mine”, while Dragon, asked rhetorically in a song “are you old enough for love”. This continued the Australian tradition in late capitalist sexology of re-asserting heterosexual values, values that are distinctively exhibited in frontier societies. The concept of the female Lolita “rock star”, and pop singers such as Britney Spears, traverses the distinction for the desire for underage Lolita’s, and Rock music’s masculine bias.

An internet search for ‘Lolita’ displays girls between the ages of seven to seventeen. The majority of the sites purportedly conform to a United States judgment that states that such nudity is tolerated, as long as there is no lewd or graphic focus or emphasis on the genitals. One such site Lolita Paradise, states that they “vehemently oppose what is commonly called “child pornography”, as legally defined by United States Code Title 18, Part 1 Chapter 110 Section 2256 as images containing “sexually explicit conduct”.....” They further state, that: “Lolita Paradise is simply offering you the same opportunity to view aesthetically pleasing images as the major bookstores do, just at a lower cost. As with all art, the question of the work’s artistic value is left solely to the viewer, and as

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12 Compared with Elvis’ toilet roll phallic prosthesis, the cover of the Rolling Stone’s 1970 album “Sticky Fingers”, with its close up picture of a large male appendage in tight jeans, brought the concept of so-called “cock rock” (male dominated popular music), to its obvious conclusion.
such, Lolita Paradise does not expect all viewers to like or even approve of nude images of minors”. (www.lolita-paradise.com/)

Lolita’s Paradise is an older site reflecting child nudity as art emanating from some Continental European and naturalism movements. The naturalism movement that had its genesis in sunny California, encouraged people to “let it all hang out”, and with the de-emphasising of sex in this environment, people could learn perhaps to eventually accept the sexual connotations of their bodies as well. As the environment was ostensibly unthreatening, men women and children frolicked naked on large and interactive nudist ‘colonies’. Nudity in the colony parried the line between returning man to ‘nature’, in his ‘natural’ nude state, and the “eroticism of the denied”, where upon viewing nudity, an individual is given to sexual thoughts and impulses. Consequently the nakedness of the children was being interpreted and sometimes depicted photographically as erotic. This period was the genesis of an underground movement in the eroticisation of nude children magazines that has now spread to the internet.

Current photographic and video images are contained within sites such as the “world’s biggest Lolita Portal”13. This reveals the ongoing nature of child erotic art, and is substantially more than photos that originated in nudist colonies, but a business that is constantly recruiting “new talent”. Most sites use children from Russia and countries of the old Soviet Republic, where legend of the “Russian mafia” permeates in all types of commodity transaction. While some might conform to Section 2256 of United States law in relation to pornography, there are numerous sites that offer indicate a flagrant disregard to Section 2256 while still stating their sites are legal. Membership prices average around US forty dollars.

13 www.bd-forum.com/popups/index.html
Such sites came from a cursory search on the internet – with up to ninety per cent of web sites unknown and unlisted on the known search engines, the potential for child sexual abuse is practically limitless. These sites operate as secret societies where children can be abused in “real time” via a web-cam, where members can view the activity. The problem in the existence of these extreme sites is that it blurs the distinction between the individual who has an interest in perhaps gently and persuasively ‘grooming’ a child, (or simply viewing child nudity) and the aggressive and ‘selfish’, child molester who will eventually act upon impulses. The sexological concept of the “art of love” is promising to be as problematic in the adult interaction with children as it is for heterosexual adults. However for Weeks, the average member of the Paedophile Information Exchange (PIE), was “his chief distinguishing characteristic is an intense, but often highly affectionate and even excessively sentimental, regard for young people” (Weeks, 1985:227).

While child nudity sites perhaps conveniently uses art as a justification (particularly in the softer versions) it follows the Playboy tradition of mass-produced nudity that parades as art. This attempts to suggest that the viewer is consuming the images in a detached, remote form, rather than an intense masturbatory experience. The type of morality originally promoted by Playboy, (young girls commodified for men), sets the paradigm for of using of even younger models. Subsequently it takes Playboy’s economic and social philosophy onto the global market, as the sexual use of children in poor countries is considered a delicacy to powerful Western men. (More vigilance in prosecuting paedophiles has also seen a sharp rise in the number of dedicated pederasts pursuing their activities overseas, rather than risk conviction in the Western countries, with Australia’s proximity to the Asian child sex trade thereby significant).
There is also the suggestion that as a result of feminist campaigns against the “male gaze”, and the ironic appropriation of the “gay gaze” by heterosexual women, has forced the male gaze onto a younger subject. Moreover, similar to the feminist campaigns against pornography, oppositional campaigns against child sexual abuse, (usually headed by women), tends to increase the attraction to the illicit efficacy of the form. Marked by manifestations of phallus ridicule that can then result in rejected or humiliated men seeking phallus efficacy elsewhere, its ascendancy as a ‘sexuality’ may be difficult to prevent. This compounds the original placement of women in Protestantism that tends to make women child abusers by proxy, with moral asceticism making them less available as sexual partners. Women’s association with paedophilia is likely to be covert, developing from a sexually ascetic tradition that was exacerbated by Protestant capitalism. The construction of penetrative sex that focused on re-production, but with obtuse “pleasure principles” that favoured men results in men’s orgasm focused sex, often being denied. This has traditionally been fulfilled by pornography such as Playboy, Hustler and their variants, or through adult prostitution. Child pornography or molestation becomes a “new frontier,” to sate men’s sexual appetites that cannot be reversed by ‘moral’ crusades led by women.

A psychoanalytical analysis suggests that by displacing men from a perceived form of dominance, in the public sphere of work and sexuality by a group (women) who have been traditionally associated with hysteria in the Athenian and Enlightenment contexts,

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14 Continual appropriation of the ‘gay gaze’ by heterosexual women will also result in ‘toy boys’ getting younger. Feminist icon Germaine Greer reflecting on a book of pictures she compiled of teenage boys titled ‘The Boy’, argued that,

I know that the only people who are supposed to like looking at pictures of boys are a subgroup of gay men, she wrote last year in London’s Daily Telegraph. Well, I’d like to reclaim for women the right to appreciate the short-lived beauty of boys, real boys, not simpering 30 year olds with shaved chests.

(Devine, 2003)
simply re-directs its elements in a disparate fashion. The reproduction of historical phenomena such as the high-point of Athenian masculine culture – the sexual abuse of children, by ‘falsely’ placing women in a position in society is “ahistorical materialistic”. Moreover such a ‘sexual’ placement of men is tragic rather privileged due to the marginalisation of the male citizen in late capitalism rather than the centrality in the Greek polis.

Overt molestation by women of children is therefore either extremely rare or significantly unreported, as it is assumed that women form an altruistic bond with that is apparently non-sexual. However, by including the notion of “domestic work” within the capitalist economy and the function of women as the prime-care giver gives the relationship a commodity value. Perhaps it is not surprising that cases of reported molestation are connected to women’s maternal role, for the Anglo-Saxon breast is unique in its presentation and operation as form over function. As Healy reports,

When the American Academy of Pediatrics urged in December 1997 that all babies be breast-fed for at least the first year of life, a 29 year old mother in Champaign Illinois, cheered: The woman’s son, then two and a half, was still nursing at least once a day, and seemed a rosy-cheeked testimonial to the health benefits of breast milk. He recovered quickly from stomach flus and colds, and seemed a bright, happy, and well-adjusted. The little boy was hitting developmental milestones and climbing the growth chart right on track. But in July, the applause suddenly stopped. The woman’s son, by then 5 years old, was removed from her home
after caseworkers responded to a babysitter’s complaint. Judge Ann Einhorn approved the separation that the woman’s continued breast-feeding had created a situation with “enormous potential harm to this child” (Healy, 2001:1)

Freud’s theory of the Oedipus complex, where the child forms a sexual bond to the mother, therefore owes more to the prevailing Enlightenment culture than Greek manifestations, although in itself, implies a subliminal sexual attraction for their child.

In cases of lesbian child abuse and of women generally, its detection is hidden and compounded by the fact that “lesbian love-making is not well described as “sexual.”(Card, 1995:135). The sexual abuse of children can then also be concealed by a multitude of ‘care’ issues directed at the child.

Spanking (ostensibly as punishment) and enemas (ostensibly for reasons of health) can be sexually arousing and can be carried out with varying degrees of publicity and ritual, which, in turn, can be become part of the arousal. Both activities are common in consensual lesbian sadomasochism. Punishment is an easy outlet for sadistic sexuality; it can easy become a domestic ritual. But, also, rituals as ordinary as dressing, undressing, bathing and health monitoring can become sexualised occasions for abuse. (Card, 1995: 135)
CONCLUSION

The thesis seeks to link arguments concerning dissatisfaction with sexuality and work, and how the pursuit of satisfaction results in a continuing sense of alienation. This subsequently questions the overall merit of the separation of the ‘personal’, from economic issues, particularly as they relate to the neo-liberal economy. Definitions of ‘structuralism’ in the contemporary sociological literature, now dominate class-based issues with the identity of gender-based groups, suggesting fundamental differences between men and women, gay and ‘straights’. The ability for micro social groups to achieve equality is questioned as the capitalist social order begins to resemble the increasing chaos of the economic. As Wiseman suggests that under Paul Keating’s government, we should;

Perhaps revel in the collapse of universal truths and values.

After all it was Paul Keating’s speechwriter Don Watson who has suggested that Australians should begin to imagine a ‘postmodern republic’ – a nation which is ‘aleatory [dependant on chance], impressionistic, figurative, behop’. (Wiseman, 1996:107)

Consequently these groups compete for recognition amongst the ‘mainstream’, and those most vulnerable in the neo-liberal economic culture. The amelioration of social groups over the importance of ‘society’ suggests a victory of the inclusion ethos of liberal egalitarianism, rather than the broader impact of “social science” and - a general theme of duplication where women become more like men and men more feminine. This is particularly evident in the assumptions of unquestioning epistemologies of how
social groups are defined and their key features – their rationale and “plan for action”.

As Larrain points out,

The supposed de-centering of the subject corresponds with the supposed triumph of objectivity, the supposed victory of unconscious and chaotic forces which totally destroy the individual’s sense of unity. To accept the total de-centering of the subject is to accept the final loss of agency of purpose, the inability of the subject to attempt to change the circumstances, its inability to posit any rational alternative future. It is the end of all political practice of transformation. (Larrain, 1995:287)

The de-centering of the individual, acts a liberal dialectic in destroying the potential unity of social groups – perhaps even in the groups they claim to represent. While Marxist political thought had been inevitably held responsible for many of the excesses of twentieth century communism post-modernism has escaped such scrutiny. Compared to the notions of inclusiveness expressed in Marx’s teleology, postmodern interventions into the social organisational aspects of capitalism have produced a mixture of failures and divisive outcomes. As Hennessy argues,

While they may disrupt norms and challenge state practices that are indeed oppressive, they do not necessarily challenge neo-liberalism or disrupt capitalism. To the extent that they de-link sexuality from its historical connection to the human relationships of exploitation capitalism relies on, and to the extent that they reify desire, postmodern sexualities participate
in the logic of the commodity and help support neo-liberalism’s
mystifications. (Hennessy, 2000:109)

The assertion is that the marginalisation of Marxist worker based polemics in
postmodernism indicates that this is connected to the hyper-liberalism found in
sexuality discourses such as paedophilia. As Meszaros asserts, “Labour produces not
only commodities: *it produces itself and the worker as a commodity* – and does so in the
proportion in which it produces commodities generally” (Meszaros, 1970:125). The
chaotic individual or groups of inchoate individuals will permeate their influence rather
than challenge society’s structures and prejudices overtly, or with any sense of urgency.
In contrast to the “ideologists” and the individual, Marx recognises the continuing
process of exploitation within a mode of production that contains unequal social
relations.

For the proletarians, on the other hand, the condition of their
existence, labour, and with it all the conditions of existence
governing modern society, have become something accidental,
something over which they, as separate individuals, have no
control, and over which no social organisation can give them
control. The contradiction between the individuality of each
separate proletarian and labour, the condition of life, forced
upon him, becomes evident to him himself, for he is sacrificed
from youth upwards and, within his own class, has no chance of
arriving at the conditions which would place him in the other
class. (Marx & Engels, 1845: “Proletarians and Communists”)
With paedophilia at the theoretical end of post-welfare state social democracy, it reveals that significant ‘conspiratorial’ forces now exist on the left, as well as on the traditional ‘right’. Heterosexual masculinity, on which capitalist economic relations are based, has become the key problematic discourse and generalised theme of sacrifice in the definition of all social groups and sexuality. This identity that was originally attained through work activities now is viewed as an illegitimate form of generalised patriarchy. This is subsequently justified through the alleged foibles of heterosexual masculinity that range from spousal abuse to homophobia. However Protestant asceticism, and the long-held belief that women can civilise capitalism, again dominate post-welfare state cultures that exploits female social conservatism. The type of work offered by the new economy, particularly in service industries, also fits with the tendency for women to be less unionised than men, accepting part-time work, and the ‘over-tasking’ capability of the maternal urban heroine. Kernot asserts that,

A stark example of the extent of this change in the makeup of the workforce is the fact that in 1966 women’s participation in the workforce was 36.3 per cent but by the year 2000 it was 54.5 per cent. Over the same period the number of workers employed full time has declined from over 90 per cent of all employees to 74 per cent. Only 35 per cent of those employed today work between 35 and 44 hours per week. (Kernot, 2001:1).

A pivotal adjunct to the ‘motor’ of the spirit of late capitalism is the relationship women have had to Protestantism that created a non-hierarchal but significant proselytizing role within Church and social structures. With few exceptions, women’s supportive role in the home and family has been extrapolated into public sphere
functions. The displacement of masculine-based unionism has also reflected the inability for middle class feminists to assist those women who have joined men in the underclass, such as “single mothers” who are taken off the supporting parents pension and put on the ‘dole’, once their children reach teenage. The inability of the welfare state and the labour market to cover the needs of the most marginalised women invokes the hegemony of a “cupboard love”, where men are still expected to provide the necessities of life. The left wing of the Labor Party the Hawke/Keating ‘hijack’ argues Jaensch, “is the culmination of a process during which Labor abandoned its commitment to the people who are its true base – the workers, the disposed, the underclass of a capitalist society” (Jaensch, 1989:173). In relation to women’s employment, Donaldson argues that;

The rise in levels of female employment has not transformed the class structure, but reinforced it. The increased opportunities for dual salaries in the family-households of the privileged may well be intensifying rather than moderating inequality between individual women and between family-households. Nor do women escape by marrying out of their class. In terms of the British Registrar-General’s scheme of six social classes, more than two-thirds of marriages involve intra-class marriages or partnerships with an immediately adjacent class member. (Donaldson, 1991:31)

Post-welfare state social democracy fitted an economic imperative, and filled the political void. Incremental in style, it introduced themes that shocked mainstream Australia, such as Aboriginal land-rights. The various manifestations of a “liberal left”
implicitly, and by omission has worked within capitalist frameworks rather than confrontationally. The social democratic ethos that attempts to manage capitalist foibles is therefore best revealed in its position on Marxism. The secular concept of morality attempts to articulate a modern capitalist society that can operate in harmony with those it has traditionally oppressed, such as women and indigenous groupings. As Latham asserts, “Unlike other forms of socialism such as Marxism, with a focus on equality through ownership of the means of production – social democracy has pursued a moral code relying on equal rights and obligations, especially an obligation on citizens to cater for the interests of others” Latham, 1998:153).

The tendency to allude to expectations that cannot be met by conservative economic paradigms creates perceptions of a “reverse discrimination”, that was also fanned by socially and economically political forces such as Hansonism and the conservatism of the Coalition led by John Howard. The popularity of this perspective was due to the fact that post-welfare state welfarism became highly selective in identifying affordable and meritorious groups. The ability of the Hawke/Keating government’s to capture the economic rationalist “middle ground” during the 1980s and 1990s has left the Labor Party little room for maneuver, even if in the Australia tradition, they could secure victory by the government “falling over”. In this context the Labor Party’s continual electoral losses since 1998 has arguably placed in it a worse position that the Coalition during the Hawke/Keating government’s. This relates to the ability for traditionally conservative political movements to continue an orientation to the right – moving back towards the left appears insurmountable in comparison. As Jaensch argues,

In theory, former cadre parties such as the Liberal Party have to make the fewest adjustments to become catch-all: relatively
unconcerned with ideology, cohesion, programmes and representation of sectional interests, transformation should be relatively simple. For a mass party such as Labor the change, in theory, should be traumatic and potentially fissive. (Jaensch, 1989:22)

During the Keating government (1993-96), many people became tired of social democratic rhetoric, particularly in the context of the difficult economic period of the early 1990s. Ultimately the three extra years the ‘labour’ movement secured by their surprise victory in 1993, as a result of the fear of the GST, (Goods and Services Tax), built an intense loathing for Keating’s “big pictures”, and Keating personally. His personal remoteness from the electorate was only equaled by the remoteness of his social ideas, personified by his emphasis on the need for an Australian republic. As Little argues,

he was a patriot in the vernacular but, in a dinner jacket and playing for higher stakes, he was also a card-carrying cosmopolitan. Frustrated by the delay in assuming Party leadership, he exploded to Hawke that Australia was the arse end of the world anyway; why should I waste my time? (Little, 1997:19)

Keating’s republican push inevitably contained elements of various ‘elites’. This group consisted of entrepreneurs, entertainers and social democrats, with visions of Republican France. However the French republic was built upon a more inclusive role and identity for the French working class, not its exclusion in favour of other marginal groups as in the Australian social democratic model. He was correct, however, in the
unconscious appropriation of the French revolution that inspired the bourgeois tradition of nationalism. That Keating did not see capitalism as the greatest threat to his social democratic vision belied his efforts to encourage capitalist endeavour, and the occasions he de-emphasised its importance, for arguments based on “social equity”. As Johnson argues, Numerous marginalised identities were being created in such discourse; for example, to mention just a few, environmentalists who believed that high economic growth was too damaging to the environment to be sustainable and wished to live a more green lifestyle; male workers who wanted to reconstruct masculinity by spending more time with their families through reducing work hours, productivity and the centrality of the workplace in their lives; people who saw themselves primarily as a transsexual or a lesbian rather than someone whose identity was centered around job identity. While Labor’s emphasis on economic identity might have been fine for those gays or (perhaps less frequently) lesbians who privileged the consumption element of the gay lifestyle, there were only so many issues in gay or lesbian identity that the narrowly economic could address. What if you were a cultural worker who wanted to produce art or film that wasn’t commercially successful or easily exportable? What if you were an Italian migrant who had lost their job in the (increasingly unprotected)
manufacturing sector? The list of potentially marginalised (multiple) identities is endless. (Johnson, 2000:33)

The three extra years of an unpopular leader and policies, also affected those groups who had attached careerist imperatives to post-welfare state social democracy, such as liberal left academics. The academic involvement in the propagation of “social democratic” values suggested that the creation of equal citizenry would result in those who still failed to adhere, only had themselves to blame. The displacement of religion by scientific discourses, created the environment for a humanist secularism to become the last great religion, with humanities academics now fulfilling the roles once taken by religious orders. Dibble suggests that,

Since contemporary intellectuals or artists live in more loosely structured environments, the social constraints which bind them to particular outlooks are weaker. Their receptivity to other outlooks are therefore greater. They can act as catalysts, picking up outlooks present in other groups, formalising or reshaping them, adding rationales of their own, and presenting them in turn to whoever will pay heed. (Dibble, 1970:447)

Moreover, disciplines such as Sociology have become dominated by post-modernity, promoting ideology through new intellectual paradigms. Trading on Cold War symbolism, post-modernistic social democracy works by promoting individual agency in the face of structural impossibilities and attitudinal bulwarks. While social democracy has flourished, (at least up until a conservative reaction following the defeat of the Keating government), unemployment has been ignored, and seen in relation to the death of Marxism, socialism, labourism and communism generally. That it has been mostly
men affected as a result of de-industrialisation in the West, is indicative of how working class men were forced to embody all that is wrong with heterosexual masculinity by post-welfare state social democracy. At the other end of the spectrum, older male workers that were ‘de-masculinised’ by retrenchment during the 1980s and 90s were made prematurely invalid, to keep unemployment rates down and to save them the indignity of belonging to official unemployment statistics. O’Brien’s study of retrenched BHP workers in Newcastle during those decades found that 48% of the men in the 55-59 age group were in receipt of the Disability Support Pension, compared with only 8% of other Social Security payments (O’Brien, 2001:147).

Postmodern areas of emphasis, subsequently becomes the key intellectual exercise - as it is likely to suffer the same fate as the Parliamentary form of post-welfare state social democracy. In the context of the social sciences in universities, it could result in budget cuts from successive terms of a non-politically correct government as their conservative social agenda filters through to all areas of social life. It could argued, that the only way to ‘defeat’ the mainstream - is to include them. As Larrain argues,

The postmodern discourse does not act like the old liberalism telling people that there is freedom, equality and property for all. It rather tells people that there is chaos in reality (carefully concealing the fact that this is brought about by the same market forces) and dislocation in themselves and that there is nothing they could do about it. (Larrain, 1995:288)

Consequently a hyper-liberalism that focus on lifestyle issues avoids those that occur in the politics of class and work, and assists in continuing Cold War stereotypes associated with Marxism and structuralism. Moreover wide-scale transvestitism or the
open molestation of children by adults is as utopian (and impossible to achieve) as any Marxist vision for economic equality. While Foucault promoted the notion that his approach lacked a normative position, his “history of discourses” conceals and appropriates Marx’s vision for a utopian society with Foucault’s utopian vision culminating in the practice of varied and ‘free’, sexual practices. Sexuality, then, can be seen in issues that relate to ‘death’ of the labourer, where a culture of self/other abuse dominates and is commensurate with legal and illegal drug users and gambling addicts. Therefore while sexual hedonists are ostensibly seeking pleasure, the real motivation is to escape the alienation experienced from the pressures and characteristics of the mode. Wiseman sees “moral relativism quite consistent with a reduction of all social relationships to the narrowly contractual and commercial relations of the market place” (Wiseman, 1996:108).

To become a real threat to the dominance of liberal theory Marxism had to be incorporated slowly into the middle classes of established European countries. This is where optimistically the middle classes could see the benefits of socialist thought not just for themselves or the working class, but for the ‘nation’. As Wagner implies, European nation-states were philosophically capable of handling socialist thought that originated from liberalism, and defined by a greater future potential, for further ‘revolutions’.

Americans regarded their own revolution, unlike the French, as a success. This entailed that no further revolutions were necessary; it was a revolution to end all revolutions. True, there could well be further conflicts of interests. But those conflicts could be handled and solved in a limited discursive space that
was marked by a broad consensus moving only between individualist liberalism and civic republicanism, and in the open social space of a society that was only just building itself, with plenty of resources to distribute and few rules that were already set. In continental European societies, in contrast, the social space in which conflicts could be handled was comparatively limited, whereas the discursive space opened by the French Revolution—in which the ideologies of the nineteenth century were to unfold—was wide (Wagner, 1994:177).

‘Incomplete’ revolutions such as the Russian version are seen therefore as existential manifestations of European peculiarities, which promote freedom through liberal revolutions, which ultimately produce totalitarian outcomes. The American Cold War victory over the Soviet Union is seen as a purposeful ideological commitment to failed European liberal ‘experiments’. The global phenomenon of late capitalism reducing culture and nationalism to reflect one commercial imperative, also ‘imperialises’ the microsphere of urbanity, aspirational lifestyles, and hence sexuality, love and the labour practices that produces and sustains them.

The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionising the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society. Conservation of the old modes of production in unadulterated form was, on the contrary, the first condition of existence for all individual classes. Constant revolutionising of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting
uncertainty and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed fast frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real condition of life and his relations to his kind. (Marx & Engels, 1848: “Bourgeois and Proletarians”)

The Weberian perspective on the capitalist society indicates that the pursuit of liberal ideals of personal freedom, even for the dominant groups, is restricted by a Protestant ontology that asserts that an individual is restricted by the ‘omnipresence’ of God. The sublimation of the ‘individual’ under God has blunted both the spread of secular ideals, as seen in a consistently inequitable capitalist social order. As Weber asserts in the context of Calvinism and predestination,

God does not exist for men, but men for the sake of God. All creation, including of course the fact, as it undoubtedly was for Calvin, that only a small amount of men are chosen for eternal grace, can have any meaning only as means to the glory and majesty of God. To apply earthly standards of justice to His sovereign decrees is meaningless and an insult to His Majesty, since He and He alone is free, ie, is subject to no law. His decrees can only be understood by or ever known to us in so far as it has been His pleasure to reveal them. We can only hold to these fragments of eternal truth. Everything else, including the
meaning of our individual identity, is hidden in dark mystery
which it would be both impossible to pierce and presumptuous
to question. (Weber, 1930:102-103)

The Adventist religions that are closely linked to the American frontier and ‘new
world’ democracy, exhibit the profound worldly asceticism Weber first identified with
the Protestant sects of Methodism and Baptists. As Brubaker asserts, “the logical and
psychological pressures generated by the ideas of Luther and Calvin led to the
development of what Weber calls ‘worldly asceticism-at once a new ethical attitude and
a new personality structure.”. Their profound disappointment over the continual
delaying of Armageddon will see a more active asceticism emerge, as a manifestation of
this disappointment. Their religious fundamentalism also suggests that the industrial
capitalist role of the nuclear family belongs to a biblical rather social orientation. Their
dominance in missionary work in the South Pacific was also significant in perpetuating
American religious imperialism with indigenous cultures inculcating Christian and
Western traditions.

Through symbolic forms of Protestantism, such as ‘laws’ relating to the legitimate
consumption of beer, a largely secular country such as Australia, can have a distinctive
work ethic. This can be advantageous in an economy that produces high levels of
alienating work and unemployment. Therefore those who use this legal drug
indiscriminately are verging on the perception that is wrought by illegal drugs such as
heroin. The foreign connotations of the drug war can be interpreted as being based in
the protection of work-based racial values. Consequently, it has become obvious that
both political parties have little idea of how to manage the problem of unemployment,
as men and women are almost equally affected, as Jamrozik illustrates.
In August 1999 unemployment in Australia was recorded at 7.0 per cent (men 7.2%, women 6.7% and married women 4.1%). The mean duration of unemployment per person was 52.8 weeks, but in the age group of 35-54 years it was 70.2 weeks (men 76.5 weeks, women 62.3 weeks). Of the 771,100 unemployed persons 58.7 per cent were men and 41.3 per cent were women (married women accounted for 15.0%). These numbers included 113,300 persons who had been unemployed for over two years. (Jamrozik, 2001:142)

The advent of Keynesian economics and its extension into the welfare state, sought to save and ameliorate the considerable flaws and inequalities of the capitalist order. The post-welfare state attacks the assumptions of social inclusion, by exaggerating the existence of wide-scale welfare abuse, and at the very least gross inefficiency. The initial Keynesian concepts bred the universal idea of a comprehensive guidance of the economic process, but,

The monetarist explanation of inflation was so general and simple compared to the complexities of the Keynesian analysis that it gained popularity and credence. The Keynesian-Monetarist debate appeared to become one of extreme views: The naïve Keynesian view where unemployment was solely due to deficient demand, and the monetarist “natural rate” hypothesis which treated all unemployment as voluntary. (Mitchell, 1998:4)
The ideological decline of the welfare state and its pernicious welfare culture plays a central role in the disciplining of not just the unemployed, but those who may consider the neo-liberal work culture unfair and alienating. The growing acceptance of work based inequities and alienation, results in a shift to private sexual pleasures as a means to compensate for the marginalised public sphere. However the apparent complexity of Victorianism/openness and Protestant values of thrift and asceticism/sexual hedonism, suits the requirements of a social democratic discourse that thrives on solving the ‘unsolveable’. This also ignores the fact that sexuality can never be ‘free’ when it is constrained and defined by the demands of the mode of production. The stratifications that are involved in sexuality and the nuclear family in the industrial society, is characteristic of the overt specialisation, and routinisation of tasks both in and outside of the home which form the basis, and foster the asceticism necessary to function in the capitalist society. Historical materialism in contrast;

It has not, like the idealistic view of history, in every period to look for a category but remains constantly on the real ground of history; it does not explain practice from the idea but explains the formation of ideas from material practice; and accordingly it comes to the conclusion that all forms and products of consciousness cannot be desolved by mental criticism, by resolution in to self consciousness, or transformation into “apparitions” “spectres” “fancies’ etc but only by the practical overthrow of the actual social relations which give rise to this idealistic humbug, that not criticism but revolution is the driving
force of history, also of religion, of philosophy and all types of theory. (Marx, 1845: “Socialist and Communist Literature”)

For the capitalist social order to function effectively, it needs to be presented as generally unproblematic, (evident in popular culture), which uses unifying and solidifying themes based upon family and generalised visions of the past. This is particularly evident in advertising, which uses a mix of messages based in traditional values, to symbolise evocative social codifications that reflect commercial imperatives. Advertising therefore can reveal social dynamics as they are, rather than how they should or could be. “Television’s relentless representational realism” (Kellner, 1995:235), sees advertising as popular culture’s most persistent and subliminal form. This is where “the artifacts of the culture industries exhibited the same features as other products of mass production: commodification, standardisation, and massification” (Kellner, 1995:29). Therefore the type of social fascism that underpins populism therefore cannot be altered until the nexus between the commercial culture and social organisation is broken. Or as Horkheimer and Adorno assert,

One could certainly live without the culture industry, therefore it necessarily creates too much satiation and apathy. It itself, it has few resources itself to correct this. Advertising is its elixir of live. But as its product never fails to reduce to a mere promise the enjoyment which promises as a commodity, it eventually coincides with publicity, which it needs because it cannot be enjoyed. (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1988:161-162)

Billie Jean King, a tennis player from the 1960s and 70s, was one who combined her social radicalism (lesbianism), with her economic conservatism. Her link with the
company that produced the Virginia Slims cigarette, (whose advertising persona was aimed directly at women), was justified by its support of the new women’s tennis circuit begun by King. The cigarette’s slogan of “you’ve come a long way baby” (Kellner, 1995:249), reflected the struggle of women’s tennis gaining the equivalent recognition of men’s, and the struggle of feminism generally.

However, lesbian relationships can be fraught with dynamics such as “domestic violence”, compounded by the belief that in comparison to heterosexual domestic violence victims, lesbians “fight back”. The notion of “mutual battering,” is borne from the belief that due to consciousness raising and self-defence training against sexual assault, and a lesser power differential between partners that lesbians are less docile victims. But, “many who have worked in shelters or as counselors argue that “mutual battering” is a myth” (Card, 1995:110)

The fact that most male writers, particularly within academia, are not in the machismo tradition of Hemmingway or Mailer, also fundamentally assists the alienation of heterosexual masculinity that has traditionally contested broad forms of economic equality. Moreover, with feminism based in heterosexuality, and male gender studies dominated by a male homosexual perspective, it is not uncommon to find feminists and ‘queer’ theorists aligned in university departments.

The attempt to marginalise male heterosexual discourse has seen a banal form of ‘feminism’ to occur in the post-feminist society. Based in extreme phallus critiques, the delicate and personal issue of penis size is discussed without any direct reference to the sexual efficacy, but alternatively was used to launch an incoherent attack on masculinity. The allegiance to masculine symbolism gives credence to Freud’s, assertion that women suffer from “penis envy”. The link with sexuality and the
industrial society, and the mechanical requirement for procreative sex that isolates the function of the penis, relates to the fact as Marcuse argues,

The organisation of sexuality reflects the basic features of the performance principle and its organisation of society. Freud emphasises the aspect of centralisation. It is especially operative in the “unification” of the various objects of the partial instincts into one libidinal object of the opposite sex, and in the establishment of genital supremacy. In both cases, the unifying process is repressive – that is to say, the partial instincts do not develop freely into a “higher” stage of gratification which preserves their objectives, but are cut off and reduced to subservient functions. This process achieves the socially necessary desexualisation of the body, leaving most of the rest free for use as the instrument of labour. (Marcuse, 1966:48)

The growth in an illusory female sexual ascendancy obviates the implication that women present the key problem in sexological discourse. While the “eroticism of denied”, and maternal focuses has ensured female allure, women are bound by codes defined by Christianity and romantic love that limits their actual sexual behaviour. Their overt asceticism relates inchoately to both the incidence of homosexuality and paedophilia, while also being engaged in the crusade against paedophilia, mimicking the anti-pornography feminist crusades of the early 1980s. Male child love proponents have attempted to align themselves with the socialist left, by asserting that that sanctifying child sexuality attacks the institution of the nuclear family, the principal social formation of the capitalist society. These movements were at a peak in the 1970s and
Keith Hose, a former chairperson of the main paedophile organisation, Paedophile Information Exchange (PIE) was interviewed in the Leveller, a radical left journal. He was asked to explain the links between socialism and paedophilia. He asserts that, ‘In Britain before capitalism one gets the impression that things were more free for paedophiles’ and suggests that paedophilia is only condemned because it ‘threatens some of the basic institutions of the nuclear family……(Jeffreys, 1990:189)

While feminism had a significant impact on adult pornography, the ‘art’ of “prick-teasing” is confirmed in popular music. Performers such as Kylie Minogue, Britney Spears and Holly Vallance, personify the gulf between “what men want and what most men can get”, as well as the commercial realities in the promotion of barely legal ‘Lolita’s’. The rejection of the physical objectification of women, is a key discourse in second wave feminism, but is obscured by the perception that feminists were physically unattractive women. Baptist raised Spears, has evolved her image around her alleged virginity status, and her overtly sexual stage and video performances. That someone could appear so comfortable and knowledgeable about sexuality while even remotely a ‘virgin’, is also indicative of the feigned essence of female heterosexuality, and hence, its entrenched commercial value. While liberal/egalitarianism tends to promote banal imitations, women, (as yet), have not precipitated a market-driven need for heterosexual prostitutes that in any way competes with female heterosexual prostitution. In that sense, little has changed since the 1969 depiction in the film Midnight Cowboy\(^1\) of a naive “country boy”, convinced that good looks and a long “hard on” will attract him to
the wealthy married women of New York.

One of the “last gasps” of industrial masculinity was portrayed in the post-World War Two youth movements, headed by cultural icon Marlon Brando. One of Brando’s most distinctive early roles was in *Streetcar Named Desire*\(^2\), where the “art of love” which implies a gentlemanly code of conduct, is stripped bare to reveal subliminal heterosexual desires based around violence and control. While Brando’s masculinity is ‘bad’, and extreme as his wife attests, she cannot control her innate desires for him, even after he rapes her visiting sister who is in nervous and emotional decline. In this context, the ‘bad’ and excessive masculinity mirrors the bad femininity, which has manifested itself in neurosis with the narrative suggesting that masculinity has a Pyrrhic but necessary victory over the ‘diseased’ femininity. Therefore while both forms are equal in nature, the masculine exercises its moral and physical authority over the weaker form.

In contrast, Princess Diana satisfied society’s admiration of virginity that was assisted by royalty’s medieval link, where the Prince was charming and the virgin cherished, that was ultimately sacrificed to the power and authority of the masculine.

The Dublin feminist academic, Ailbhe Smyth described Diana as the ‘virgin of the century’, and saw the picture the photographers produced, (the famous ‘see through dress’ picture), of Diana holding the two toddlers on her hip, as an ideal constellation of virginity. This was no old spinster, but an image of a virgin whose identity would soon metamorphose into motherhood, whose sexuality had been reserved for a man with

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1 1969, director J. Schlesinger.
2 1951, Director E. Kazan. From the play by T. Williams.
whom she could have babies. Here was virtual womanhood, ‘she had to be a bit of a baby herself’. She appeared as a woman with the touch, a woman who could touch babies, and in that kindergarten photograph she was portrayed already as a maternal virgin, a woman who could care. So, her virginity was not perceived as a lack, but as a prized prelude to maternity.

(Campbell, 1998:122-123)

The stud versus slut dichotomy has also been used sex symbols such as Madonna and Pamela Anderson who could suggest an all out aggressive sexuality that was becoming similar to the males. However the 1950s female sex symbol had to equally rely on coquetry. Slave prostitutes in Rome (meretrices), were forced to wear garish blonde wigs, later popularised by stars such as Marilyn Monroe and others. Dyed white blonde hair is therefore linked with overt sexuality and accessibility as it is of Nordic myths of fair-haired maidens with blue eyes. Monroe’s decline and death, marked by alcohol and drug abuse, and the realisation that personal tragedy underpinned her superstardom, cast a shadow of the role and construct of the sex symbol, and a quixotic attitude towards media stars.

The modern Playmate is now portrayed as considerably less child-like in her demeanour, but still maintains integrally, elements of the fresh and naive charm of the original girl’s next door. Blonde, buxom Cyber-Playmate of 1998, Christi Taylor exhibits these charms - and more - which reflect Playboy’s attempt to modernise and compete with magazines that show more graphic nudity, and deal with the criticism that it exploits female naiveté. In a question and answer format in Playboy’s cyber-club, Taylor admits to “loving to make the first move on a guy she likes”, and using “sex
toys”. “Anything to do with the clit area is just fine with me (laughs) guys aren’t down there that much during sex.” As an allusion to her traditional femininity she states, “And I like oils and powder – you put on with a feather.” Generally her narrative is suggestive of her overt ‘feminine’ sexuality and her availability if a Playboy reader sees the “girl next door” while she is out socialising. She concedes to being, “very sexual. I’ll do anything to spice things up, even if that means sitting in front of a porno for ten-fifteen minutes. You can’t be a prude if you’re gonna take your clothes off for Playboy. (laughs).”

Taylor’s attitude towards monogamy relates directly to the increased sexual pleasure that comes from familiarity, as appears to be giving potential lovers advice on how to please her if they happen to meet and have sex with a Playmate. The pragmatic aspect for Playboy is the greater intimacy that such disclosure brings, thereby heightening the masturbatory experience, as the owner of gaze has vicarious sex with his Playmate. Playboy asks, “is it hard for a guy to get to know your body?” Taylor responds, “it takes practice. You can’t learn that on a one-night stand. What your last lover liked, the next may not like at all. I like to kiss a lot, even when I’m having sex. And I have natural breasts. So they’re very, very sensitive. A guy’s got to realise that they’re not just there to look at. You definitely have to give them attention. (Hefner, ed. 2001)

The American dominance of twentieth century liberalism, particularly in the post World War Two era reveals America’s robust concept of individualism, capitalism and religiosity. This in turn has defined late capitalist sexology, with the “eroticism of the denied” becoming exemplified in a society that equally values sexual freedom and religious moral asceticism. While the advent of what is called soft porn began with Playboy in the 1950s, it was able to circumvent some of the moral outrage by cloaking its

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3 http://cyber.playboy.com
depiction of women behind a civilised, and fundamentally middle class facade. Publications such as Hustler magazine begun in the 1970s, pitched at an obverse model - revealing the real reason why men purchase any type of pornography - to look at nude women and masturbate. Its unabashed proletarian approach tapped into a needy market, yet the stripping away of bourgeoisie sensitivities also offended America's deeply religious origins.

Playboy morality embodied briefly and sporadically, heterosexual men’s economic and social dominance in the post-war period. The isolation of industrial masculinity by traditional gender discourses, argue that its previous ‘dominance’ negates the need for a class perspective on masculinity. This has seen it weakened or manifested through repackaging via the “gay gaze” such as in Rugby League, and by the incidence of masculinities that regale in risk and masochism.

Publisher of Hustler magazine Larry Flynt, took on the incongruity evident between America’s strident liberal and religious codes through the courts. During the protracted battle his magazine, perhaps unintentionally, highlighted the key issue that both attracted and horrified America to publications such as Hustler. A satirical piece produced in the magazine suggested that prominent religious leader, Jerry Falwell4, had had sex with his mother. Arguing that the ‘truth’, represented by an open sexuality, will be perverted made it analogous to the prohibition on alcohol in the 1920s and 30s. Like the war on drugs, the moral crusade against pornography in the commercial world also appears ‘lost’, as ‘family’ newspapers hide advertised sexual services in the rear of their papers. This obliquely acknowledges both the commercial reality and the incongruity of a ‘respectable’ newspaper profiting out of a market usually associated with sleaze and degradation. The growth area in liberal capitalism of child pornography is also satisfied.
according to the rationale of market need. Subsequently where to demarcate on ‘liberal’ issues that relate to capitalism as well as individuality, becomes more complex.

In the context of issues such as the defeat of Marxism and labourism, the end of the Cold War and the mediating force of post-welfare state social democracy, the question remains: are sexual or gender freedoms real freedoms? The placement of the Californian nudism cult, which indirectly led to a modern definition of paedophilia, becomes pivotal when compared to the cold and grime of Russia’s industrial city fortresses. Lifestyle issues that promotes freedom from clothes, relates to an exaggerated liberal framework that contrasts the alienated work associated with totalitarian communism, and the partial incorporation of Marxist principles. The cultural hegemony of capitalism in sexuality is reflected by the fact that while ‘possessing’ someone through heterosexual sexuality and love is going through transformation, (shorter periods of ‘ownership’) the notion of owing someone through sex is intensified in pedophilia/hebophilia. The organised function of Marxist thought is seemingly contrasted continually with the chaos of queer theory, as Morton also suggests,

Ultimately, the queer subject is also not a specifically sexed, raced, gendered...subject but the subject of sensation. Post-al theory represents the queer subject’s fluidity not simply as something that “happens to” the subject but in which the subject “actively” engages: eager to find a sense of “agency” when some fundamental premises of post-al theory seem to rob the individual of agency, queer theorists encourage the subject to “affirm” and celebrate its own “shiftingness” as a form of “self-deconstruction” which is a form of performative “self-

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intervention.” (Morton, 1995:196)


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