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GENDER, RACE/ETHNICITY, WORK AND FAMILY:
THE EXPERIENCE OF SECOND GENERATION JAPANESE CANADIAN WOMEN
IN WINNIPEG, 1942 TO PRESENT

By

HYANG-SAE KANG

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

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University of Manitoba
Winnipeg, Manitoba

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the work and family experiences of second generation Japanese Canadian women in Winnipeg in order to examine the interaction of gender and race/ethnicity on their working and family lives. Drawing on in-depth interviews with twenty-three Nisei women, the study focuses on the interrelationship between Nisei women's wage work and family roles, occupational concentration among Nisei women, and their social mobility between 1942 and the present time. It examines women's experiences and perceptions in detail, analyzes them in a relation to the social context, and demonstrates how the structural elements have constructed Nisei women's social positions as minority women.

The study provides significant information about the complexity of minority women's lives and points out the inadequacy of the current feminist theorization by both socialist and black feminists who tend to overgeneralize women's experiences and situations in their argument. The findings demonstrate a negative interaction of gender and race/ethnicity on Nisei women's working lives which has had a different impact on different cohort groups of Nisei women who entered the labour force in different historical situations. The study also shows class differences in Nisei women's family experiences and discusses the contradictory aspects of Nisei women's ethnic family which has been both the site of cultural resistance and the locus of gender oppression. It is concluded that one must take into account not only ethnic and class divisions but also specific regional and historical contexts in her/his analysis of women's experiences and situations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my thesis committee, Dr. Rita Bienvenue, Dr. Jane Ursel, and Dr. Atsuko Matsuoka for their assistance in developing this thesis. I am especially grateful to my advisor, Rita, for her guidance, understanding, and support which made it possible for me to complete this thesis.

I also wish to express my deep appreciation to each Japanese Canadian woman who participated in this research project. They offered me not only their time but also warm hospitality and kindness. Special appreciation goes to Mrs. Connie Matsuo and Mrs. Thelma Kojima who have been always around to help me; I learned a lot about the Japanese Canadian community and Japanese Canadian women through personal relationships with them.

I feel very fortunate to have met many special people in the Japanese Canadian community in Winnipeg. Thanks to Florence Mitani who first introduced me to the community and continued to include me in various activities within it. I also would like to thank the Nishibata family; Ken, Nancy, and Tanis, the Rev. Matsubara and his wife, Mrs. Matsubara, and people at the Japanese Alliance Church in Winnipeg. My time in Winnipeg was rich and fulfilling because these supportive people treated me like a part of their families.

Special thanks are due to my parents, Takuka and Harue Tokugawa (Kang), for their continued support during my undergraduate and graduate career. My aspiration to study the lives of minority women originates in my personal relationship with my mother. She has shown me great strength by living cheerfully and compassionately while enduring many difficulties that she faces as a Korean Japanese woman in Japan.

Finally, I want to specifically thank my husband, Frederick Weil, who has patiently supported and encouraged me throughout this rather prolonged process of writing a thesis. Your belief in my ability has been the greatest encouragement of all.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1-1. Objectives

The primary aim of this research is to examine the work and family experience of second generation Japanese Canadian women after the evacuation of Japanese Canadians from coastal areas of British Columbia in 1942. The examination is animated by three concerns. The first is to understand the pattern of labour market incorporation of Nisei women. By examining the factors and process of their labour participation and occupational concentration, I will analyze the structural elements and social forces which produced a combination of race- and gender segregation in the labour market.

The second concern is to examine the interrelationship between Nisei women's wage work and their family roles. By examining how minority women perceive their family experiences as well as work experiences, I will analyze the interplay of work and family on minority women's lives. Through the analysis of their double day of labour, I would like to look at how the family relations of minority women are shaped by their wage work, and also how the situation in their work place is constructed in relation to their family roles.

The third concern is to examine the pattern of mobility of Nisei women within their labour experience. By tracking occupational biographies, I will examine whether these women actually attained upward occupational mobility in the postwar period, and then identify the factors which stimulated or

suppressed this mobility.

1-2. The Significance of the Study

The failure of the feminist analysis to consider the differential experiences of gender across racial and ethnic boundaries has recently become the subject of widespread discussion within the feminist movement. The social experiences of minority women differ from those of non-minority women, because they face double oppression not only as women, but also as racial-ethnic minorities in a gender and racial-ethnic stratified society (Almquist, 1975; Glenn, 1982; King, 1988; Smith and Stewart, 1983). However, their unique experiences have been frequently overlooked within the white-dominated western women's movement. In response to the growing recognition of this missing point in their argument, feminist scholarship is beginning to theorize about minority women's experiences by taking into account such significant concepts, as race and ethnicity in their analyses of women's oppression.

As a first step toward understanding how gender and race/ethnicity interact in the lives of minority women, an in-depth study of a particular minority group is the sort of research needed. As Stasiulis (1990) points out, in order to clarify such ambiguous concepts as double oppression of minority women, it is necessary to illuminate these women's lived experiences in relation to the broader social context, including historical background, economic structure and political system.

The purpose of this study is to provide a case study of minority women by examining the work experience of second generation Japanese Canadian women¹. Although they are a relatively small minority group, *Nisei* (second generation) women in the Japanese Canadian community are considered to be an interesting case group for analyzing the oppressive conditions of racial minority women. In the first place, Japanese Canadians, having one of the longest histories of racial minority status in Canada², provide a good opportunity for investigation into the historical experience of racial minority women in Canadian society.

In the second place, the historical experience of racial and national discrimination among second generation Japanese Canadian women during the Second World War provides a unique setting for the examination of the relationship between racial minority women and the State. Analysis of the impact of the wartime evacuation upon the work experience of *Nisei* women makes it possible to analyze minority women's oppression in the matrix of social relations formed by the State. Also, analyses of the impact of the evacuation on *Nisei* women's labour participation provide an opportunity for examining a pattern of female labour migration from rural to urban industries. This is because the evacuation became

¹. In this thesis, I use the terms of Japanese and Japanese Canadians interchangeably to refer people whose ethnic origin is Japanese, including both immigrants from Japan and their descendants who were born in Canada.

² Japanese immigration began in 1877, slightly after Chinese immigration, which was the first major inflow of non-European migrants into Canada, started taking place.

the transitional point in terms of the economic structure of their community which shifted from an agricultural to industrial base (Almquist, 1979; Leonetty and Newell-Morris, 1982).

In the third place, the examination of the real life experience of Nisei women makes it possible to point out some problematic aspects of the concept of a "model minority." Japanese Canadians, who stand out by having achieved high economic status in the current Canadian society³ are often held up as a "model minority" who have obtained social and economic success by overcoming their racial status without carrying out large-scale protests (Kitano and Sue, 1973). Although it is appropriate to state that Japanese Canadians in general have achieved relatively high economic and social status after the war, the economic success of their community results mainly from intergenerational mobility (Almquist, 1979). By emphasizing the current social status of their ethnic group without looking at the historical process of such mobility, we tend to discount social and institutional oppression which Japanese Canadians have experienced in the resettlement process after the Evacuation. Furthermore, the concept of a "model minority" which is based on the success stories of Japanese males ignores the experience of Nisei women who have been contributing to

³ According to Li's (1980) study, the Japanese have the second highest employment income among major twenty-one ethnic groups including the British origin. Driedger (1991:313) also concluded that the Japanese scores high on all socio-economic indicators of income, education, and occupation in his summary of several studies on socio-economic status among various ethnic groups in Canada.

the current economic achievement of the Japanese Canadian community by taking a vital productive role as well as a reproductive role under various oppressive conditions since the war. By listening to the real voice of Nisei women, we will bring new insight in the analysis of so-called "model minority."

CHAPTER 2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, I discuss the theoretical framework for analyzing minority women's work and family experiences by, firstly, conceptualizing two main issues of this study: gender relations and racial/ethnic relations and, secondly, reviewing literature on minority women.

2-1. Conceptualizations of Main Issues

2-1-1. Gender Relations

In contrast with the concept of sex which refers to the physiological differences between male and female, gender is "what is socially recognized as femininity and masculinity" (Mackie, 1991). In other words, gender is the societal definition of appropriate male and female behaviours and traits. According to these social expectations, the biological sexes, male and female, learn to be feminine and masculine through gender socialization.

The sex-gender distinction is the significant conceptual device to look into the social mechanisms which construct gender relations. Exaggerating biological differences between the sexes, societies build up additional meanings attached to male-female distinction; that is, gender. In every society, certain polarized psychological traits or attitudes are sorted into two sets and labelled "male" or "female." (Lipman-Blumen, 1984). Men and women are channelled into distinct social roles, despite minor differences in their biological functions. Societies, however, rationalize the gender division by defining it as a product of

natural and biological sex differences.

The significant aspect of gender relations is its hierarchal power structure. Every modern society is patriarchal characterized by male dominance and female subordination. Men, as a group, have a systematic power to control women's productive and reproductive capacities. This is evident in the fact that men occupy the highest stratum in every social institution --- the family, political organizations, and occupational or economic systems, while women are constantly situated in a lower status position than men within the same social groups (Lipman-Blumen, 1984). The reality of male power is intertwined with ideological constructions that justify and maintain male dominance. Men, who have authoritative status in society, create and perpetuate the dominant views of the world (Mackie, 1987). Therefore, they can control women's consciousness by imposing certain ideas and ethics in order to curtail their decision making about their own sexuality, mothering, and labouring by imposing (Eisenstein, 1981).

Although there is a great deal of controversy about the origins of patriarchy⁴, a growing body of evidence (e.g.,

⁴. Some anthropologists and sociologists argue that male dominance existed from the very beginning of human society. Ortner (1972), for example, observes that females, who are considered to be closer to nature in all cultures, tend to be devalued in all societies. Another anthropologist, Rosaldo (1974) perceives that women's reproductive function is the crucial factor to alienate women from inter-familial activities with which men could gain their political power. Likewise, Chodorow (1978) argues that the universal women's mothering role confines women to the domestic sphere and also reproduces gender-specific personality structures in all societies. However, these arguments of the universality of the patriarchy have been criticized because of their ignorance of heterogeneous features of gender relations in various cultures as

Boserup,1970; Draper,1975; Sacks,1979) suggests that patriarchy is not a universal feature of human society; it has formed and developed along with the socio-economic evolution through human history. As Engels (1972) noted a long time ago sexual stratification occurred within a general process of social stratification, which developed as the economic productivities and complexities of society increased through the establishment of settled agriculture, private property and the state. In fact, egalitarian gender relations in foraging societies became less egalitarian in the agricultural societies where the increasing need to create property and manage resources created co-operative but hierarchal social organizations, such as "kin cooperate property own groups or tribal communities" (Coontz and Handerson,1986)⁵. Gender relations became even less egalitarian in the societies where the nation-wide ruling system institutionalized hierarchal social relationships in both internal (husband over wife and children) and external (lords over peasants and serfs) spheres (Muller adapted by Hartman, 1976)⁶. Taking advantage of these

well as their biological determinism.

⁵. In many tribal societies, land and property inheritance became patrilineal and the residence pattern became patrilocal, although women often had her own means of economic substance and political rights both or either in their husbands and in their natal lineage (Coontz and Handerson,1986).

⁶. Muller (Adopted by Hartman,1976) argues that the transformation of the tribal to the state society weakened cooperative kin groups in which women still had her collective rights as tribal members who contributed to the public economy of their kin groups, and developed nuclear type of family in which women's work became privatized under the authority of their husbands.

social transformations, males obtained and legitimized their control over the productive and reproductive power of women by incorporating sexual divisions of labour into new social institutions. This is why many scholars identify the development of the patriarchy with the transformation of egalitarian and flexible sexual divisions of labour into hierarchal and systematized forms.

Socialist-feminists (e.g., Eisenstein, 1979; Hartman, 1976 and 1981; Walby, 1986) argue that the patriarchal system shows its most intense features within capitalist society. The sexual division of labour has become more distinct due to the development of urban industries which have separated production of goods and services from the household. Prior to industrialization, the family, both in rural agricultural communities and urban craft centres, was the primary unit of production, where women's work was a very significant part of family economy, although their labour was already under the control of their husbands who were given legal authority as the head of household. In capitalist societies, the function of the household was, however, reduced to that of consumption and reproduction, because industrial enterprises took over the productive function of the household. In the process of this structural separation of the public economy of capitalism and the private economy of the household, the importance of women's economic role drastically declined. In the meantime, the ideology of motherhood, sexuality and femininity developed and prevailed in

society (Epstein,1982, Fox,1984; Hudson and Lee,1991)⁷ and women became alienated from the production process in the public sphere and relegated to the domestic world which lost its economic function. This intensification of the division of labour contributed to the subordination of women by making them economically dependent on men's wages, and also by trivializing women's domestic work and role in societies.

Capitalism, in fact, has developed by utilizing the sexual division of labour to its own advantage. The domesticity of women, first of all, served the interest of capital by providing childrearing, childbearing and housework at a minimal cost to the industry. It also created a cheap and flexible reserve supply of female labourers, who were defined as inferior or secondary workers in the job market due to the social notion of woman's role as an actual or potential wife and mother who ought to be economically and legally dependent on a male "breadwinner." In fact, many industries, such as textiles and clothing, have historically depended on a steady supply of cheap women's labour --- especially young single women whose labour participation could reconcile gender role ideology with the needs of industry (Kessler-Harris,1975). Furthermore, capitalists benefitted from the

⁷. The ideological view of a "lady", who was to be a fragile, pure, submissive and subservient to her husband and to domestic needs, had been established during medieval period prior to the advent of capitalism. However, only small number of women belonging to the feudal elite class could actually meet such expectations. As many authors (Fox,1984; Hudson and Lee,1991) point out, obtaining the "prestigious" state of becoming a "lady" became a possibility for more and more women as the industrial revolution produced a large middle-class population.

segmentation of the labour market consisting primary male and secondary female workers. By creating hierarchies in the production process, they could maintain their power in labour management. According to labour-market segmentation theorists (e.g., Edwards, 1979), capitalists have consciously exacerbated divisions among workers --- not only gender divisions but also racial/ethnic divisions as well --- in order to weaken their class unity and to reduce their bargaining power.

Socialist-feminists (Hartman, 1976; Milkman, 1980; Walby, 1986) also emphasize the role of male workers in shaping the sexual division of labour in modern capitalist society. The historical examination of the development of capitalist economy, in fact, indicates that ordinary male workers have had somewhat complementary interests in women's labour with those of capitalists. For example, the industrial revolution created some tensions in male-female relationship by providing women with new employment opportunities outside of the home (Hartman, 1976; Hudson and Lee, 1991). For male workers, who have been always interested in women's personal services at home, women's labour participation was a threat to their domestic power and authority, and also to their jobs in the labour market where competitions among workers were characteristic. This is why male unions, from the very beginning of their history, have been hostile to the employment of women in industries. Although they were not successful in completely excluding female workers from the labour market, male-dominated labour organizations have won 'family wages' which

guarantee higher wages for male workers by claiming that men are supposed to be the "breadwinners" in the household (Hartman,1979). The 'family wage' secured the material resource of male power both in the labour market and at home by ensuring women's economic dependence. While admitting the possibility that women have received lower wages even for equal jobs, male unions have attempted to prevent women from entering into high-skilled and higher-status jobs, thus enforcing job segregation within the labour system. As a result, women who become involved in productive activities in the public sphere are allocated to specific industries and occupations characterized by low-skill requirements, low-pay, low-productivity and few opportunities for advancement (Armstrong and Armstrong,1984; Bridges,1980; Loscocco,1990; Reskin,1984).

Socialist feminists,thus, argue that capitalist relations in the public sphere and patriarchal relations in the private sphere are two interlocking systems which reproduce and reinforce women's subordination in modern society. Women's positions in the labour market are controlled not only by capitalists' attempts to produce and utilize the low wages of female labour but also by ordinary male workers who want to maintain their dominant position at home as well as in the labour system. Women's inferior status and low wages in the job market, in turn, maintain their subordination at home by reproducing their economic dependency. This complex mechanism of women's oppression also has ideological backing. Ideals of femininity, sexuality and motherhood are utilized to

curtail women's potentiality by rewarding women for pursuing limited activities and developing certain characteristics. The patriarchal myth of the valuable nature of motherhood has been used to make women endure their status as secondary workers in the labour market. Concepts of femininity or sexuality have constructed occupational sex-typing which relegates women to 'feminine' types of jobs which are low-paying and low-status occupations (Armstrong and Armstrong, 1975; Cockburn, 1988).

2-1-2. Race/Ethnic Relations

Race and ethnicity are both ideological concepts which are used to divide people into different groups and collectivities (Miles, 1984; Anthias and Yval-Davis, 1983). Although race/ethnic divisions may appear natural or inevitable, they are socially constructed boundaries based on assumed biological and cultural differences among people. The ideological nature of race/ethnicity means that the concepts of race and ethnicity do not have analytical or explanatory significance in themselves. What is important in theorizing race/ethnic relations is the process of racialization and its social implications.

Very broadly, people conceive 'race' as a group of people who share the same phenotypical characteristics and ethnicity as a group of people who share the same culture. Scientists, however, acknowledge that race is not an objective biological category which can be used to divide human species into sub-groups in order to explain differences between them (Anderson and Friders, 1981;

Banton,1970). We actually cannot classify people into discrete categories according to any physical characteristics or any combinations of them. We have the same kind of methodological and epistemological problems with the notion of ethnicity (Satzewish,1990). There is no universal and systematic categorization to divide human population into specific ethnic groups. Both race and ethnicity are not social facts but rather convenient labels that are used to describe and explain differences among people (Bolaria and Li,1988). Thus, if we would like to define race and ethnicity in a more precise sense, "'race' should be referred to the delineation of group boundaries by reference to phenotypical or genetic criteria," whereas "'ethnicity' should be refered to the delineation of group boundaries by reference to cultural criteria" (Satzewich,1990:254).

Since group boundaries are products of internal and external definition, individuals may be regarded as belonging to a given social category, such as an ethnic or racial group, even though they may not share any sense of collectivity with that group (Barth,1969). In terms of this objective and subjective aspect of group distinction, race is considered to be a rather objective social (not biological) classification. Phenotypical features are easily identified by others (ven den Berghe,1967), so that racial distinction tends to be imposed on individuals by others, even when there is no sense of identity among individuals who share the similar physical traits. On the other hand, ethnicity tends to be discussed as the subjective social collectivity in which members

have a sense of belongingness, as seen in the interchangeable usage of ethnicity and ethnic identity in the literature⁸. However, as Isajiw (1985) argues, the objective aspect of ethnic group boundaries should be the centre of discussion of intergroup relations, because external boundaries of ethnic groups are not only imposed on people but also produce and maintain a sense of collectivity among members of ethnic groups.

The emphasis on the external boundaries of racial and ethnic groups leads us to perceive race and ethnicity as the same social phenomena which have a slightly different aspect. Although race and ethnicity tend to refer to different distinctions --- physical or cultural, the mechanism which establishes racial and ethnic divisions and the social implications of those divisions are very similar. Subtle differences in either physical or cultural characteristics are exaggerated to differentiate people and to justify differences in the social and economic situation of certain groups in society. What is used as a point of reference to distinguish people is not so important. It is actually impossible to even find systematic conceptual differences between racial and ethnic groupings, which are applicable to all social contexts (Anthias and Yaval-Davis, 1983). Race and ethnicity are both relational concepts whose contents and meanings vary from one place to another, so that group boundaries which are defined as ethnic

⁸. For example, Driedger's (1986) definition of ethnicity represents this approach. He defines ethnic groups as "group of individuals with a shared peoplehood based on presumed shared sociocultural experience and/or similar characteristics."

in one society are often conceived as racial boundaries in another society. As Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1983) clearly state,

"the only general basis on which we can theorize what can broadly be conceived as 'ethnic' (or 'racial') phenomena in all their diversity are as various forms of ideological construct which divide people into different collectivities and communities" (66).

Social formations of race/ethnicity involve exclusion/inclusion practices creating hierarchal power relations across established boundaries. Distinctiveness, either biological or cultural, is used to produce and rationalize the subordinate status of certain groups in society. By applying the Marxist perspective to the analysis of intergroup relations, some scholars (Bolaria and Li, 1988; Cox, 1948; Hechter, 1978) consider ethnicity and race as a by-product of the class structure in capitalist societies. They basically see race and ethnic relations as one aspect of the exploitation of labour by the capitalist class. Racial-ethnic divisions, according to their perspective, have been produced and maintained by capitalists in order to justify the exploitation of certain groups of people in society along with the development of capitalism.

As mentioned in the previous section on gender relations, labour market segmentation theorists (Bonacich, 1972; Edwards, 1979) argue that capitalists have encouraged and utilized racial/ethnic divisions among workers in order to split the labour force into advantageous and disadvantageous sectors, so that they can maintain their control over labour by weakening solidarity among workers. However, Wilson (1978) points out in his discussion of blacks in

the southern United States that not only capitalists, but also ordinary workers have taken a vital role in excluding minority labour from desirable jobs. Although there is a great deal of dispute over whether racial/ ethnic divisions are products of class divisions, many sociological studies (e.g., Cox,1948; Tomaskovic-Devey,1993) have constantly observed that racial/ethnic minorities tend to be over-represented in low-status, low-paid, and disadvantageous sectors in the labour system.

Since race/ethnic stratification in the capitalist economy is one of the most essential elements of modern racial phenomena, Marxist argument which links race/ethnic divisions to class divisions have provided an influential perspective to look at race/ethnicity relations. However, more and more sociologists (e.g., Solomos,1986; Stasiulis,1990; West,1987) have recently applied a multi-dimensional framework to the discussion of race/ethnicity, while criticizing Marxist economic determinism and class reductionism. Rather than viewing the economy as the ultimate factor in explaining racist exclusionary practices, they consider social formations of race/ethnicity as the outcome of complex interactions of ideological, political, as well as economic systems which all have separate levels of determination. For example, racist ideology, such as white supremacist logic or ethnocentrism, has created racial/ethnic antagonism at its own level (West,1987; Abele and Stasiulis,1989). The state also has reproduced racial/ethnic oppression through exclusive immigration policy or discriminatory legislation, but it has done so by

reflecting not only racist sentiments or economic need within the domestic sphere but also diplomatic relations in the international community (Ujimoto,1985). Furthermore, the various historical cases of race/ethnic formations, such as conquest, colonization and migration, indicate that racial/ethnic phenomena have their own complex and historically specific modes.

Racial/ethnic phenomena have very similar aspects to phenomena related to gender. Both race/ethnicity and gender divisions are considered as 'natural' or 'inevitable,' even though they are, as we discussed above, social constructs. Such 'natural' ideological elements of race/ethnicity and gender are used to 'naturalize' the hierarchy among racial/ethnic groups as well as among men and women (Anthias and Yuval-Davis,1993). As evident in our social history, both racial/ethnic minorities and women have been relegated to low-status, low-paid, and disadvantaged sections in the labour system, and excluded from the political process. Racial/ethnic minorities as well as women have been also victims of negative stereotypes imposed by society. Inequality and unfairness are often justified as consequences of 'natural' differences among racial/ethnic groups or between sexes. There are, of course, a great deal of differences between racial and gender oppression. However, race/ethnicity and gender are the two most prevailing and profound social divisions which have been created and used to rationalize hierarchal social relations through the human history.

2-3. Literature Review on Minority Women:
The Interaction of Gender and Race

Both gender and race-ethnicity are relational concepts which are socially constructed in the power structure of the society. In a male-dominated society, the sex status of women is characteristic of a subordinate group, while the racial-ethnic status of minorities is also systematized as a subordinate attribute in a racial-ethnic stratified society.

Minority women, who have a double negative status as women and minorities, are in a unique situation in society. They are subjects of both gender and racial-ethnic discrimination. In other words, they experience oppression not just as women, but also as members of minority groups. Gender and race-ethnic relations have combined to shape minority women's positions in society, so that their experiences differ from both those of women in the dominant groups and those of minority men (Glenn,1982; Juteau-Lee and Roberts,1981; Reid and Comas-Diaz,1990; Smith and Stewart,1983; Stasiulis,1990).

The detailed case studies of minority women's work experiences has made this vague concept of double oppression more descriptive. A growing body of literature illustrates the relationship among social structures, institutional mechanisms and the lives of minority women in the work place and at home. I shall briefly review such literature in the following section.

2-3-1. Occupational Concentration among Minority Women:
Gender and racial-ethnic stratification in the labour market

The examination of minority women's work lives indicates a critical difference from those of women in the dominant groups: minority women have always participated in wage labour to a much higher degree than their non-minority counterparts (Almquist, 1979; Amott and Matthaei, 1991). This is because the occupational structure in a racially stratified society has not permitted their minority fathers or husbands to support their families without women's assistance. This aspect brings a critique of the prevailing feminist assumption based on white women's experience, which considers the intensifying domesticity of women with industrialization as a main source of women's oppression (Glenn, 1981; Stasiulis, 1990).

The examination of minority women's work experience in the labour market, furthermore, illustrates their unique position in the economic system. As minorities, these women experience racial subordination which functions to allocate them to certain types of work, i.e., low status and low paying jobs in the labour market. Unlike minority men who tend to have more occupational opportunities, minority women experience gender subordination which confines them to female defined occupations. As a result, minority women, having a double negative status, end up being marginalized into more limited and more exploitable occupations on the periphery of the economic structure (Almquist, 1975; 1979; Amott and Matthaei, 1991; Glenn, 1982; King, 1988). In other words, minority women tend to be allocated to the lowest paying, lowest status and most demeaning jobs in the labour market. Within historical and

contemporary contexts, many immigrants or ethnic women have been concentrated in limited jobs, such as domestic service and work in the garment industry.

The following case studies of such occupational concentrations of immigrant and minority women illustrate vividly the combined effect of race and gender segregation in the labour market upon minority women's work lives.

Domestic service. The involvement in domestic service has been a predominant phenomenon among minority women (Amott and Mattaei, 1991; Glen, 1981; 1985, Katzman, 1978; Leslie, 1974; Pedraza, 1991). Because of the content of domestic work which is often carried out by unpaid female labour in the household, this occupation is generally viewed as a women's job. However, domestic work as a paid job cannot attract non-minority or native-born women because of low social status and unfavourable working conditions which are always attached to this occupation. As a result, minority or immigrant women, who lack the access to other jobs, have become heavily involved in domestic service. In a gender and racially segregated labour market, domestic work has been one of the few occupations in which these women have found employment.

As Arat-Koc (1989) argues, the material conditions of privatized household work are the source of the social disregard of domestic work. She points out that the physical, ideological, and economical invisibility of domestic labour makes paid domestic service the most demeaning job in capitalist economy. Physically,

household work is performed in great isolation from the public sphere. Furthermore, the maintenance nature of domestic work, whose products are very quickly and neglectfully consumed, makes domestic labour even more invisible in a physical sense. Domestic work is also ideologically invisible, because it is generally considered a 'labour of love' which should be performed voluntarily by a wife or mother who 'naturally' takes care of the welfare of her family. Even when household work is performed by paid labour, it is still economically invisible, because it is not a part of the production of commodities which is more valued in a capitalist economy. As a result of this invisibility, domestic labour is not considered real work --- it is perceived as intangible and non-productive, thus becoming a very demeaning occupation.

Many studies (Art-Koc,1989; Coser,1973; Leslie,1974) indicate that poor pay and undesirable working conditions are prevalent in domestic service. Because of the physical isolation of domestic work which obstructs organization among workers and the standardization of working conditions, domestic service remains the most exploitative and disadvantaged job in the current labour system. Domestic workers are often subjected to very long working hours because of the repeating nature of household tasks. Those domestics, who live in their work place with their employers, are expected to be available anytime whenever they are needed. This also means that there is no boundary between work and leisure for those live-in domestics. In contrast with factory workers who can enjoy their freedom in their private life outside of factories, it

is very difficult for domestic workers to create and maintain their own private space and time apart from their job and employers. Domestics are also under the constant close-supervision of employers, so that they do not have so much control over what they do at work and how they perform their tasks. As a result, the working and private lives of live-in domestics can be tremendously stressful. Furthermore, as some studies (Silvera, 1989) indicate, live-in domestics who work in privatized household isolated from public eyes sometimes experience physical and sexual abuse from their employers.

Often referred to as "servants," domestic workers also suffer from the stigmatized social status of a menial and unfree labour. As Coser (1973) states, the role of domestics is "obsolete in modern society," because of the peculiar work environment of live-in domestics, which includes restrictions on the private life of workers and the high degree of control which employers can afford over their domestics. Although domestic service is formally a profession based on contract between an employer and employee, their personal relationship resembles feudalistic authority relationship between a master and servant. Employers often attempt to absorb the whole personality of their domestic worker just as masters in feudal society used to treat their servants whose status was totally tied to master's families. Employers of domestic worker often expect their employees to be obedient and loyal, and to belong to the family. Because of the stigmatized social status of domestic work, only marginal or disadvantaged persons in society,

such as minority or immigrant women, can be induced to entre domestic service.

In contrast to the case of the United States where a large pool of minority labour, mainly black women, has filled the unattractive domestic service sector, Canada has historically recruited immigrant or foreign labour in order to resolve the shortage of domestic workers who cannot be supplied by the native-born population. Originally, church groups and women's organizations, such as the National Council of Women and the Young Women Christian Association (Y.W.C.A.) began to establish domestic recruitment programs in the late 19th century. They sent individuals to Britain⁹ to find and bring back suitable domestics, supplied receiving hostels, and organized job placement (Barber, 1987; Leslie, 1974). As Leslie (1974) points out, the recruitment activities of those volunteer associations of upper and middle class women was a reflection of their own class interest in hiring cheap domestic labour. However, they rationalized their exploitation of domestic workers by defining it as a charitable activity which helped women who would have faced poverty in Europe find a chance to improve their lives in a new country.

The government has always been involved in recruitment and control of domestic workers. Although the style of this involvement has changed over the years, the underlying intention has been consistent: the government attempts to assist the import

⁹. The main source of early immigrant domestics (1880-1920) was Great Britain, although there was a significant number of domestic workers from Scandinavia and northern Europe.

of domestic labour and also to tie those workers to this specific occupation through restrictive immigration policies. Controlling the domestic labour force has been a significant part of legislation mechanisms, because domestic service is so unattractive that workers tend to move to other kinds of work whenever it is possible. The first legislative attempt to keep imported labour in domestic service was the so-called "assisted passage" agreement which was enforced by the Immigration Department at the turn of the century. This passage allowed women in Europe to immigrate to Canada as domestic workers by requiring those women to sign an agreement committing themselves to certain period of time with their first employer, so that it could bond these women to domestic service at least for a while after their arrival in Canada (Barber,1987; Barber,1987).

In the post-war period, the Canadian Department of Immigration has developed new schemes to import domestics workers to Canada. In 1955, the Domestic Worker Program was established in an attempt to bring domestics from the Caribbean region (Art-Koc,1989; Calliste,1989). Under this program, Caribbean women were allowed into Canada as landed immigrant on the agreement that they would work at least one year as domestics before seeking other types of work. However, the government has revised the scheme again in 1973 in order to tighten the control over imported domestic workers (Arat-Koc,1989; Calliste,1989). The Department of Immigration started issuing women work permits which allowed domestic workers to enter and remain in Canada with temporary status for working

specifically as servants for a specific employer¹⁰. Rather than bringing in landed immigrants who eventually would attain freedom and rights to change their jobs in the country, Canada started importing foreign labourers who are strictly tied to this undesirable work by restrictive work permits.

The involvement in domestic service has been and continues to be a predominant phenomenon among minority and immigrant women, In a gender and racially segregated labour market, these women are deprived of better employment opportunities, so that they are allocated to this low paying, low status and demeaning work which non-minority women would not take. It is not only the economic system in the segregated labour market but also political intervention that functions to construct the occupational concentration of minority or immigrant women into domestic service. As discussed above, the Canadian government have been actively involved in the recruitment and control of foreign domestic workers through exclusive and restrictive immigration policy. Targeting specific regions at times, the state has brought particular ethnic women from various countries into low status and low paying domestic jobs and kept them in the bottom of economic structure. Such a political practice is a clear instance of institutional mechanisms which produce and maintain a racially and gender stratified labour system.

¹⁰. Although foreign domestics are allowed to change employers with special permission from immigration authorities, they cannot stay in Canada if they leave domestic service.

Garment Industry. Occupational concentration among minority or immigrant women is also seen in the garment industry (Arnopoulos, 1979; Seward, 1990). Textile and clothing production is one of the oldest forms of women's work. In the very early stages of the North-American industrial revolution, women --- both single white women of established early immigrants and married and single women of later immigrants --- played a crucial role in the development of the textile industry (Fox, 1984). However, single native-born women soon began to leave the industry to obtain better employment, while immigrant women, who did not have other occupational opportunities, kept supplying a permanent labour force willing to work for low wages under increasingly mechanized and hazardous conditions in factories. As Waldinger (1986) points out, the rapid growth of the garment industry, which has occurred with an expanding market for ready-made mass-produced clothing since the late nineteenth century, was made possible by the availability of cheap immigrant labour pouring into North America. Low-paid and tedious garment marking has long been and continues to be work done by a valuable labour force consisting of a high proportion of immigrant women.

The garment industry is characterized as one of the lowest paid sectors of an industrial economy. In contrast to relatively monopolized, capital-intensive industries such as steel and automobile, the clothing business, where capital costs are relatively low, tends to be highly competitive, unstable, and labour-intensive (Coyle et al, 1984). Most clothing manufacturers

operated in small scale production shops based on a low profit margin, so that they can provide only low-paid and insecure jobs. In fact, their ability to survive in the extremely competitive industry depends on reducing costs, primarily wages. This is why the garment industry has been always absorbing workers who would accept the lowest possible wages --- in most cases, immigrant women. Since clothing manufacturers are currently facing severe import competition with lower wage production in the Third World countries, they have become more and more dependant on cheaper and more exploitable workers --- relatively recent immigrants, some of them "illegal." (Davidson,1984).

As indicated in the term 'sweatshop' which is often used to refer sewing factories, working conditions in the garment industry are very poor. Various studies based on interviews with garment factory workers (e.g., Coyle et al,1984; Gannage,1986; Lepp et al,1987) report numerous health problems in shop floors, such as, faulty equipment and facilities as well as inadequate safety devices. Since clothing production is very much seasonal, employees are often subjected to continuous overtime work during certain periods. Factory workers also suffer from tremendous psychological pressure for high productivity, since the piece-work system, in which employees are paid not for hours of work, but for actual production by each worker, is prevalent in the industry. As Arnopoulos (1979) points out, this practice based on piece-work rate makes it easier for employers to abuse labour standards legislation, such as the basic minimum wage.

Although a relatively large proportion of the garment industry is unionized¹¹, garment workers have not been well protected by their labour organizations. To begin with, most unions in the industry have been very weak and inefficient. They have been called 'company unions' which regularly collude with the management side (Arnopoulos,1979; Jensen,1984; Mochoruk and Webber,1987). To make the matter worse for female workers, the male-dominated labour organizations have long neglected or even sacrificed interests of female workers in order to secure positions, status, and wage for male employees (Asher,1984; Jensen,1984; Mochoruk and Webber.,1987). Job structure in the industry are highly sex segregated --- while men generally hold the higher paying, "skilled jobs" of cutter or pressure, women dominate underpaid jobs of machine operators or stitchers. The industry has obviously benefitted from such a segregated labour system, since it allows the management to control wages of female workers who consist of the majority of its labour force⁹.

The involvement of minority and immigrant women in the garment industry is a clear instance of the gender and race exploitation. Historically, minority women have been supplying a crucial labour force to this peripheral industry which can provide only low-paying and highly unstable jobs. Having nowhere else to find employment

¹¹. According to Arnopoulos (1979) calculation, 40% of the textile and garment industry in Canada is unionized.

⁹. According to Seward (1990), women account for 76.7% of labour force in the textile and clothing industry in Canada, while immigrant women constitute 48.9% of its labour force.

in a gender and racially segregated labour market, these women have been enduring poor wages and unfavourable working conditions in so-called 'sweatshops.' Women also suffer from systematized gender discrimination within the industry: they have been confined to the lowest paying jobs in factories where male workers monopolize prestigious and higher paying jobs. Neglected in male-dominated labour movement, women garment workers remain trapped at the bottom of the clothing industry. Currently, the intensification of import competition creates a major impediment to improvements of working conditions in the garment industry.

Ethnic Enterprise. The unpaid immigrant women's labour in the ethnic family business is another specific instance of the gender and race exploitation. Many immigrants who face barriers to mobility in a stratified labour market turn to self-employment (Light, 1980 and 1984). Ethnic entrepreneurs rely primarily on family labour, women and children, who often work long hours without pay. This is why ethnic enterprises are profitable and competitive in comparison to other businesses in the host society. By becoming independent in business, minorities avoid racial exploitation by others, but this independence relies on gender exploitation (Phizacklea, 1983). Within this economic structure, immigrant women experience the double oppression of being women and minorities since they are exploited within their own communities.

These studies on the occupational concentration of immigrant women show how social structures and institutional mechanisms function to incorporate these immigrant and minority women into the bottom of the economic structure. The demand for cheap labour, racism, sexism, and immigration policies all construct and maintain sex and race-ethnic segregation within the labour market. One of the main concerns of this research is to analyze the factors of such segregation by examining the process of labour participation and occupational concentration among second generation Japanese Canadian women in Manitoba after the evacuation.

**2-3-2. The Interplay of Work and Family:
the Case of Minority Women**

As discussed earlier, recent feminist scholars --- mainly socialist feminist theorists --- have been concerned with the interwoven relationship between women's wage labour and their domestic work. They argue that two interlocking systems of capitalist relations in the public sphere and the patriarchal relations in the domestic sphere have reproduced and reinforced women's subordination both in the labour system and at home.

Socialist feminists' discussion of the complex mechanism of women's oppression has developed by overcoming the limits of traditional Marxist argument that reduces women's subordinate and dependent status to their alienation from productive activities in the public sphere. Marxist feminists had expected that women's entrance into the work place would transform the domestic division of labour as well as the patriarchal power structure within the

household. Although some research suggests that working women's financial contributions and independence provides women with influence in some parts of family decision making (Blood and Wolf, 1960; Saflios-Rothschild, 1970), many studies (e.g., Hartman, 1981; Huber and Spitze, 1983; Meissner et al, 1975; Miller and Garrison, 1982; Robinson, 1980) indicate that the distribution of domestic tasks and basic male authority in the household have not changed despite the drastic increase in women's involvement in wage labour. Even in the double-worker families, the conventional division of labour is so pervasive that it continues to allocate domestic obligations to working women. As a result, an increasing number of women have begun to face the pressure of the double day of labour by taking responsibilities for both wage labour and domestic roles.

In order to resolve the contradiction between Marxist theory and the reality of working women's extended day, socialist feminists have begun to look into the other side of the relationship between women's wage labour and domestic work: not only does women's labour-force participation affect their domestic roles and status, but also their family obligations shape their wage work outside the home. We have already discussed that the joint efforts of capitalists and male workers have established sex-ordered job segregation in the labour market by emphasizing the significance of women's domestic roles. Women are defined as inferior and secondary workers in the labour system because of their socially imposed domestic responsibilities. Their low status

and low wage in the job market function to reproduce their economic dependency and their subordination at home.

While acknowledging the economic mechanism of capitalist patriarchy, some socialist feminists (e.g., Eisentein,1981; Mitchell,1974) have also focused on the ideological functions of the family which limits women's consciousness toward their liberation. The family is not just a site of the reproduction of labour power, where women have been buried apart from socially valued productive activities in the public sphere, but "it is a powerful cultural image" (Marshall,1988:213) which provides identity and a sense of rewards with women's domestic lives --- particularly with their motherwork. Despite an increasing visibility of women's activities outside the home, society continues to emphasize women's reproductive capacities and idealize their motherhood in order to control women's consciousness (Eisenstein,1981). Women are so emotionally attached to their domesticity that they tend to neglect their potentialities to gain their power both in the economic and social system and at home. As many studies indicate, working women themselves often see their employment as of secondary importance to their domestic role, thus sacrificing their jobs or career improvement to avoid conflict with responsibilities as wife or mother. In addition, women neglect or undervalue the undergoing changes in a balance of domestic power and authority that occur with their employment because of the symbolic meaning attached to the conventional gender roles.

As evident in their arguments, socialist-feminists consider

the family as a significant, if not the primary, source of women's oppression, where women's dependent and subordinate status is produced and maintained through the conventional division of labour based on the ideology of womanhood. However, black feminists (Caulfield, 1978; Davis, 1983; Dill, 1988; Jones, 1985), who attempt to conceptualize the experience of racial minority women, have criticized this approach of white feminists as eliminating minority women's unique experiences in their theorization. Black feminists claim that, for minority women, their family has been the least oppressive institution in a racist society. Instead it functions as a site for shelter or resistance and offers opportunities for rather egalitarian relations between oppressed minority women and men.

As many studies (e.g., Anderson and Lynam, 1987; Dill, 1988; Glenn, 1982 and 1986) indicate, attaining the ideal state of womanhood has never been possible for minority women who have always been engaged in income-producing activities to support their families. In their dual-worker families, minority men and women have been economically interdependent. Although minority women have been struggling with their double day of labour by taking responsibilities for household tasks besides their wage earning¹⁰, their reproductive activities which function to maintain their culture and community in the hostile society have been experienced

¹⁰. In her historical discussion of Black, Asian and Hispanic women in the United States, Dill (1988) clearly points out that these minority women were already facing the double day of work, when the expanding middle-class population drove a majority of white women into a cult of domesticity after industrialization.

as a form of resistance to oppression, rather than a form of exploitation by men. In her historical study of black working women, Harley (1990) found that unpaid domestic work in the household and in the community has been a great source of pride, self-esteem and satisfaction for black working women who could attain only degrading and demeaning wage work in the gender- and racially stratified labour market. Another black feminist, Collins (1994) also points out that black women, who are involved in fostering a black community by mothering not only their own children but also children in their extended family network or those in the community overall, receive respect and recognition within their local community and even become powerful figures who contribute to survival and development of their Afro-American community.

The racial and ethnic family also provides minority women with material and social resources which are necessary for their survival in a racist society. Unlike the prevailing nuclear family structure in the dominant society, the domestic sphere of minority families encompasses a large private network based on extended kin relationships (Anderson and Lynam, 1987; Collins, 1994; Dill, 1988; Gannage, 1984; Glenn, 1982; Iacovetta, 1986). As some of the literature on immigrant women (e.g., Gupta, 1994; Iacovetta, 1986) suggest, the extended network of immigrant families is a crucial system to support immigrant women who often suffer from language, cultural, and social barriers in the process of adjusting to new environment. Extended kinship networks provide these women with

material resources, such as shared accommodation and housework, and social resources, such as information on where to find a job, as well as psychological resources, such as a sense of bonding. As many studies (Blassingame,1972; Collins,1994; Dill,1988; Glenn,1982; Gutman,1976) indicate, not only immigrant women but minority women, in general, have historically relied on their extended families for good and services, such as child care and other domestic, social and economic activities.

The close-knit kin or community network of minority women, however, has negative aspects as well. Although some black feminists emphasize the egalitarianism within the black families, studies on immigrant families indicate that immigrant women and their daughters often suffer from the patriarchal ideology and organizations of their ethnic family and community brought from their original countries. As Gupta (1994) notes, for example, South Asian Canadian women in their ethnic families, which are usually marked by hierarchies of sex and age where the elder male and female hold higher authority and power, are subordinated not only to males, but also to older females, such as mothers or mother-in-laws. In the case of Italians in Canada, women's decision making and behaviour often receive heavy restrictions within their watchful community and extended kin network (Iacovetta,1986). Because of various external pressures in hostile social environments, such as racist attitudes, exclusionary legal or social practices, and the threat of westernization, the extended kin network based on the cultural conformity among the ethnic

family tend to impose pressure on its members to maintain culturally defined behaviours or ideology --- behaviours related, especially, family or gender relations.

A growing body of literature on minority women indicates the complexity of the functional aspects of the racial/ethnic family. As some black feminists argue, the family is a site of shelter and resistance for minority women who experience racial oppression in society, but it is also a source of gender oppression that those women had to experience as women. Studies of various racial and ethnic minority women also suggest that minority women are heterogeneous --- each racial/ethnic group has different social and historical experiences that lead to different situations and affect the status of minority women at home as well as in the labour system.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

In-depth interviewing was employed as the method of data collection for this research. Twenty-three Nisei women in Winnipeg were selected by snow-ball sampling and interviewed using a semi-structured questionnaire. The in-depth interviews, which mostly consisted of open-ended questions, were applied not only to obtain biographical information of Nisei women's work and family lives but also to explore these women's perceptions of their own work and family experiences.

3-1. Rationale

The use of in-depth interviews has been encouraged by feminist scholarship which attempts to reconstruct a new body of knowledge about women's lives. For Oakley (1990), a prominent feminist researcher, interviewing women is "a strategy for documenting women's own accounts of their lives" (48) in order to give the subjective situation of women greater visibility both in sociology and in society. The replacement of women from the object of inquiry to the subject who actually contributes to the meaning-giving process of reality is a significant consideration among feminist scholars. Women's experiences have been largely interpreted and analyzed according to the concepts and theories developed by men who have been in dominant positions in academia (Smith, 1975). This omission of women's subjectivity in social research has produced erroneous assumptions about women and women's experiences. It is, therefore, significant for feminist

researchers to start reconstructing the reality from women's subjective point of view by hearing their own voice.

A concern with subjectivity is even more urgent for studies on minority women who have been neglected both in ethnic and women's studies. By marginalizing minority women's voice in their own discourse, feminist theories have distorted the unique experiences of minority women. As one of the leading black feminists, Collins (1994) claims, it is therefore necessary for us to place the subjective ideas and experiences of minority women in the centre of feminist theorizing in order to achieve a more accurate and precise understanding of women's situations in general. In this context, the use of in-depth interviewing is the most desirable method of data collection for this research which aims to contribute to the accumulation of accurate knowledge about minority women.

Besides such a theoretical argument, there are three practical reasons why in-depth interviewing was the best way to attain the appropriate form of data to satisfy the objects of this specific study. First of all, the exploratory nature of this research required an unstructured approach. One of the main objectives of this study was to obtain preliminary information about the work and family experiences of Nisei women whose lives have been a neglected topic in the social and economic history of Japanese Canadians. Unstructured information gathering, such as the in-depth interview and participant observation, would yield rich and various information about the subjects upon which researchers do not have enough established knowledge.

Secondly, in-depth interviews, which allow for inquiry into women's subjective experiences, provide a desirable form of data for this research which aims to examine the interplay of work and family on Nisei women's lives. The documentation of women's own perceptions permits examination of how women interpret their situation and how they react to the social environment around them (Gannage, 1984; Sheridan, 1984). This is important since women's work experience is strongly influenced by the dynamics of their internal families. For example, the gender ideology which is internalized and perceived by each individual woman affects her work life. Only by inquiring about Nisei women's own perceptions in regard to their family roles as well as wage work, could the detailed examination of the interplay of work and family on those women's lives become possible.

Thirdly, Nisei women's occupational biography obtained through semi-structured interviews permits the interweaving of several levels of analysis: the social, economic, and political structure which have affected their work experiences. In his influential work in the discipline of sociology, Mills (1969) states that history, anthropological awareness and critical sensitivity to the existing social structure, are three basic components of the sociological imagination. As Sheridan (1984) points out, the life history approach, which provides a firm grasp of the institutional changes in the background of the subject, is one of the best methods to examine the relationship between people's lives, the social structure, and history. In the case of this research, the

documentation of the occupational biography of Nisei women allowed me to trace the sequences of events, changes and conditions affecting employment of each Nisei woman. This made it possible to analyze Nisei women's work experiences in relation to structural elements.

3-2. Sampling

Twenty-three Nisei women in Winnipeg were selected by snow-ball sampling for the interviews¹¹. The exploratory nature of this research should allow for the application of this problematic sampling procedure and the small sample size.

In order to gain access to prospective research subjects, I first approached two Nisei women who were very active in the Japanese Canadian community in Manitoba and also who were my personal friends¹². Explaining my research project, I asked them to participate in the project not only as respondents for the

¹¹. Characteristics of the sample will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5: The Background of Nisei women.

¹². Prior to the actual data collection, the accessibility to the research subject, i.e, Nisei women in the Winnipeg community, had been established by the researcher through personal involvement in several activities held by their ethnic organization, such as the Manitoba Japanese Cultural Centre. As a person who is a long-term visitor from their original country, I could establish a relatively intimate personal network in the Japanese community by doing volunteer work in their organization or simply by being a member of their groups. This process of personal involvement in the Japanese community allowed me to do a sort of participant observation among Nisei women in the community. I gained an insider's knowledge about their life experiences through personal conversations with them as well as other community members. This became an important foundation of this research, since it helped me specify the focus of the study.

interviews but also as collaborators who would help me locate other participants. Their wide range of social networks and knowledge about people in the community helped me to reach a specific population in which I was interested, i.e, the second generation women. Once I began to interview other respondents, I started the snow-ball rolling by asking them to introduce me to their friends or relatives.

When a respondent mentioned other prospective participants in the research, I obtained their phone numbers and permission to use the respondents name as a reference. I contacted prospective participants on the phone. I first identified myself, then explained my project, mentioned who had given me their phone numbers and made appointments to meet them for interviews if they agreed.

People were, in general, very cooperative with the research. There were only three refusals to participate in the project. The reasons for rejecting to be interviewed were: no time (one person), having a time conflict with the research schedule (one person), and being unwilling to be interviewed (one person).

3.3. Rapport

The nature of this qualitative research was based on intensive interviews that required a strong rapport between the researcher and respondents. Since in-depth interviewing benefits from free and intimate interaction between interviewers and respondents, it is significant for both sides to feel comfortable and safe in order

for interviews to be a success. Feminist researchers, who are traditionally sensitive about the dynamics of personal relationships between the researcher and respondents, critically point out the effect of the researchers' personhood on the data gathering process (e.g., Kirby and McKenna, 1989; Roberts, 1981). Because of ascribed or achieved characteristics of the interviewer, the interviewees as well as the interviewer may feel less or more comfortable with each other, and may feel less or more open to talk about things related to the research. In conducting interviews with Nisei women, I fortunately found that my ascribed characteristics were advantageous to achieve rapport with my respondents.

Firstly, my gender status as a woman was certainly beneficial to establish a comfortable setting for Nisei women to talk about their personal experiences and feelings as women. As Spencer (1985) points out, "women-to-women talk" is quite different from talk in mixed-sex groups because of understanding and familiar comfort that women tend to experience among themselves. Our common background as women made both of us (me as interviewer and Nisei women as interviewees) feel comfortable to interact. I felt natural and at ease asking about their experiences as women, and they seemed to be quite open and ready to be asked and talk about such issues.

Secondly, my racial background as a non-white person was also beneficial to break the social gap between the interviewer and respondents. My appearance or status as a visible minority is not

intimidating for respondents. They did not seem to hesitate much in talking about their experiences as minority. We share experiences of racial discrimination or feelings of being different. This shared background must have made respondents to feel easy with me to talk about related matters.

Thirdly, my cultural background as a Japanese person from Japan functioned to build instant intimate relationships between respondents and myself. Most women were very interested in my background and often asked me personal questions regarding that. Through personal conversations, which were often initiated by respondents, women seemed to become relaxed and comfortable with me. Moreover, I recognized that women tended to assume that I, as a Japanese, could naturally understand their culturally specific experiences or situations. For example, women often said in our conversation, "You know about Japanese people," or "That's Japanese men, isn't it."

Fourthly, my linguistic background as a Japanese speaker provided opportunities for Nisei women to express themselves in Japanese when they wanted. In fact, some women suddenly began to speak in Japanese, although all interviews were basically conducted in English. I also could understand certain Japanese expressions or vocabulary which have survived within the Japanese Canadian community even among younger generations who are not able to understand or speak Japanese, such as "*hakujin*" (white people), "*gaman*" (patience), or "*haji*" (shame).

3-4. Data Collection

3-4-1. **Consent Form.** Before I started each interview, I explained the purpose and the content of the research to respondents and asked permission to record the interviews with a tape recorder (Appendix A). Then, I asked respondents to sign the consent form which stated their agreement to be interviewed (Appendix B).

3-4-2. **Questionnaire.** Although interviews with Nisei women were in-depth ones which allowed respondents great flexibility to talk about their experience, semi-structured questionnaires (Appendix C) had been prepared for the purpose of standardization. The questionnaire consists of two parts: one includes demographic questions about respondents and their families, and the other part is a general guideline for inquiry about the respondents' work experience, family relations and their perceptions of their life experiences.

Demographic questions (Q.1-15, Q.37-42 and Q.57-60) are basically for attaining respondents' background information, such as birth date and place, educational attainment, family background, the time of marriage, and the number of children. I took into account the time of marriage in particular: whether a respondent married before or after the war, because I wanted to examine the differences in work experience among Nisei women who are sometimes divided into different cohort groups, such as older Nisei and younger Nisei (refer to Glenn, 1984 and Matsumoto, 1990). I did this because some studies on Japanese Americans have revealed that

there is a significant difference in socio-economic achievement among Nisei depending on their age during the relocation period¹³. In addition to demographic questions about respondents themselves, some questions were asked about the occupational and/or educational attainment of the respondents' siblings and husbands as well as their children. This data was for the examination of gender differences in socio-economic status among Nisei and inter-generational mobility of the Japanese community between second and third generations.

In the second section of my inquiry, the questionnaire was constructed with the aim of tracing the life events of Nisei women by starting with the Evacuation and continuing with their involvement in the labour market, their family and work responsibilities, and retirement. Although the questionnaire was structured in this order, I was flexible and let respondents talk freely about the various topics. In order to achieve such flexibility, many probing questions, which are not necessary to be asked by the interviewer, but might be answered in the flow of the interview by respondents, are included.

There are, however, some key questions which should be answered in order to realize the objectives of this research. For the examination of the incorporation of Nisei women into the labour market, some questions (Q.23-26) were asked about how they found

¹³ Nisei who were children or young adults at the time of the relocation had achieved an occupational status that was virtually identical to that of whites in the same age group (Thomas, 1952 and Varon, 1967, cited in Almquist, 1976).

their first job, why they began to work and who had made a decision about their involvement in wage labour. In order to analyze the interplay of work and the family on Nisei women's lives, I asked them to describe a typical day which they had when they were working while managing household tasks and child care (Q.30 and 44). Some questions (Q.31 and 45) were asked for examining whether they gained power in the household due to their engagement in the labour force. In order to obtain the occupational biography of Nisei women, I asked them about how and why they changed their employers or occupations as well as about any social change within the workplace (Q.36).

Because of the nature of these questions which required respondents to recall their past experiences, memory problems were a concern. However, emotional and/or important personal experiences, such as work history and family relations, seemed to be easily and truthfully recalled. One interesting thing in regard to respondents memories was that women tended to recall their work history in association with significant events in their family lives, such as marriage, child birth, or their children's entry into or graduation from school. This must be because women's work experiences were strongly influenced by family matters or situations.

3-4-3. Method of recording data. All interviews were recorded with a tape recorder after obtaining consent from the respondents. While answers to some demographic questionnaires were coded, most

parts of interviews were transcribed in written documents after the interviews.

3-4-4. Location of interviews. Twenty interviews out of twenty-three were conducted at respondents' residences. The other three interviews took place at the Manitoba Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre in Winnipeg.

3-4-5. Length of interviews. Interviews lasted for one to two hours.

3-4-6. Time Period of data gathering. Twenty-three interviews were conducted between February and May in 1993.

3.5. Data Analysis

The content of transcribed interviews was analyzed in an attempt to seek the pattern of labour incorporation of Nisei women and their occupational mobility. By examining these patterns, I identified the factors which constructed, maintained, and/or changed the occupational concentration among Nisei women, such as the local economic structure, racism, sexism, and political forces. Through the content analysis of interviews, I also examined the relationship between Nisei women's wage work and their family roles: that is, how the family relations of these women were shaped by their wage work, and also how the situation in their work place was constructed in relation to their family role.

CHAPTER 4
THE HISTORY OF THE JAPANESE CANADIAN COMMUNITY

Historical perspective is essential for the analysis of ethnic relations. Without looking at the social historical process from which ethnicity is formed, we cannot comprehend the meanings of minority status for any minority individuals. In order to understand the background of Nisei women as a minority group, it is, therefore, necessary for us to examine the historical process of the formation of their ethnic community in relation to Canadian society.

This chapter, aims to give such an examination. First, I will discuss the early history of the Japanese community in British Columbia by dividing it into two stages: the Frontier Period (1887-1907) and the Settlement Period (1908-1941). Then, the impact of the evacuation on the Japanese Canadian community will be examined while discussing the nature of discrimination against Japanese Canadians during the Second World War. Last of all, I will briefly sketch the history of the Japanese Community in Manitoba.

4-1. The Frontier Period (1887-1907)

The history of the Japanese in Canada began with the arrival of the first Japanese immigrant at New Westminster, British Columbia in 1887. Japanese immigrants during this period were primarily single young males who came to Canada as sojourners and intended to return to Japan after obtaining enough money to establish themselves back in their home country. Such an international migration of Japanese was an extension of labour

movement from rural to urban industries which had begun to develop since the breakdown of the feudal system of the Shogunate Tokugawa era in 1868 (Kobayashi, 1984). Having high expectations to earn much more money than they could earn in Japanese factories, labourers started migrating to Canada.

Such a movement of labour, however, could not happen unless there were pull factors from a receiving country. It was the increasing labour demands in newly developing Western Canada which caused this labour migration from Japan. From a macro-economic perspective, the cheap labour supply from less advanced Asian countries, such as Japan and China, was essential for the development of the capitalist economy in Western Canada beginning in the mid-nineteenth century (Abele and Stasiulis, 1989). The flow of the Japanese immigrants at the turn of the century was a part of stream of Asian labourers into the growing industries in British Columbia. In such a context, the Japanese began their history in Canada as unskilled workers in mines, in rail-road construction, in logging camps or sawmills, or in the fishing industry on the west coast.

As observed in the common pattern of coloured labour migration and settlement, immigrants were recruited by host societies strictly to fill labour demands, but not to become permanent members of receiving countries (Cheng and Bonacich, 1984). Immigration policies, therefore, tend to be designed to prevent long-term settlement of such immigrant labourers. For example, the federal government made constant attempts to restrict Chinese

immigration, which had started as the inflow of unskilled labourers indentured to contracting companies in the late nineteenth century, by imposing a head tax on every Chinese person entering Canada and by denying them the possibility of gaining citizenship (Abele and Stasiulis, 1989). Although the treatment of Japanese immigrants by the federal government was less severe than it was on Chinese immigrants because of the diplomatic relationship between the Japanese and British government¹⁴, the B.C. government still imposed severe political restrictions on the Japanese in an attempt to marginalize this minority in the province (Ujimoto, 1985). Like Chinese immigrants who had started to migrate to Canada earlier, the Japanese were deprived of the provincial franchise in 1895¹⁵. Consequently, the British Columbia government passed the Alien Labour Act in 1897, which prohibited Japanese and Chinese employment on work authorized by the provincial government, such as medical and educational occupations.

As labour-segmentation theorists (e.g., Bonacich, 1972) argue, the existence of migrant labour became a significant factor in producing and maintaining a split labour market in which capitalists could control the price of labour by dividing the working class across racial boundaries. Racial hostility against Asian workers had risen among white working class in British

¹⁴. Although Chinese immigrants were subjected by the federal government to increasing head taxes, such a restriction was never applied to Japanese immigrants.

¹⁵ The Chinese were already deprived of the franchise in 1875 (Li, 1979).

Columbia since the arrival of the Chinese labour in the mid-nineteenth century. A racist ideology among whites assumed the social and cultural inferiority as well as the unassimilatable nature of Asians (Abele and Stasiulis, 1989). In addition to the fear of the cheapness and strike-breaking potential of Oriental workers, such anti-alien sentiment was the basis for the formation of the provincial White Labour movement which excluded and attacked Asian workers (Abele and Stasiulis, 1989). Being marginalized in labour movements as well as the political process, Japanese immigrants were exploited as a convenient labour force which structured the lower end of the split labour system.

Despite various levels of discrimination, early immigrants from Japan gradually achieved economic progress. As seen in cases of other minority groups (see the discussion of the ethnic enterprise by Light, 1980), many of these early Japanese pioneers left the discriminatory labour system by establishing independent economic ventures, such as small businesses, self-supporting fishing operation or farming. Some Japanese immigrants who worked in sawmills around Gastown started running small businesses, such as hotels, groceries, and restaurants that catered to a Japanese clientele (Sasaki and Shimomura, 1993). By 1907, a little Japanese town emerged that covered a few blocks on Powell Street and was filled with various kinds of service establishments for other Japanese. On the other hand, many Japanese achieved remarkable success in the fishing industry. Many of those who had started out as employees of other fishermen came to own their own fishing

boats. Some other Japanese immigrants used their savings from several years of labour to purchase land in the Fraser and Okanagan Valleys in order to get into the agricultural industries, such as fruit farming and market gardening (Shimpo, 1975).

The economic achievements of the Japanese in British Columbia increased racial hostility among the white population. In a mood of intensifying racial tension among Asians and Whites, a sudden influx of more Japanese in 1907¹⁶ caused race riots against orientals in Vancouver (Ujimoto, 1985). In 1908, the federal government decided to restrict Japanese immigration to Canada in order to pacify racial tension in B.C. by concluding the "Lemieux (Gentleman's) Agreement" with the Japanese Government¹⁷.

4-2. The Settlement Period (1908-1941)

The legal restrictions of Japanese immigration from 1908 caused drastic changes in the demographic structure of the Japanese community, consequently it marked the start of the settlement period of the social history for the Japanese Canadians. As discussed earlier, early immigration from Japan consisted of

¹⁶ Japanese immigration had peaked at 7,601 in 1907-08, compared to 2,042 in 1906-07 and 1,922 in 1905-06 (Woodsworth, 1941). There are two factors for this sudden increase in Japanese migration. As Ujimoto (1985) points out, the change in the immigration policy of the United States in 1907, which prohibited the Japanese from entering the United States from Hawaii, caused more Japanese immigration into Canada. Another factor was, according to Kobayashi's (1984) argument, a severe crop failure of 1906 in Japan, which might have produced more labour migration.

¹⁷. According to the agreement, the number of additional Japanese immigrants was limited to an annual maximum of 400.

predominantly young single males, who came on a temporary basis. However, a substantial number of female immigrants started arriving in Canada after 1908, because the "Lemieux agreement" did not place any restriction on the immigration of immediate family members, such as wives and children, of Japanese residents in Canada¹⁸. Most of these female immigrants were picture brides of those Japanese males who had previously migrated to Canada. As a result of this change in the immigration pattern, the sex ratio of the Japanese population became less skewed¹⁹, and their community started to grow naturally with the birth of Nisei or Canadian-born Japanese children. That is, the majority of Japanese started establishing their family lives in Canada after 1908.

During this period of family building, the Japanese community became stabilized and developed with the great contributions of the Issei pioneer women. While taking vital reproductive roles for the growth of the community, the Issei wives also contributed to the economic development of the Japanese community (Kobayashi, 1994). They were essential labourers for independent economic ventures which were started by Japanese male immigrants. Farmers' wives

¹⁸. The number of Japanese immigrants dropped drastically after the agreement (Woodsworth, 1941). In 1909, the total number of immigrants from Japan declined to 495 from 7,601 in 1908. It dropped even more in 1910 when only 271 Japanese immigrants entered Canada. Between 1911 and 1929, an annual average of 510 immigrants from Japan arrived in Canada. The number of female immigrants exceeded that of male immigrants nearly every year after 1908.

¹⁹. A population which had been almost totally male in 1901 included 1,500 females by 1911 and 5,300 by 1921 (Barr, 1978). By 1928, the ratio of males to female in the Japanese community dropped to 10:7 (Multiculturalism Directorate, 1979).

worked on the farms as essential labour which supported this small-scale farming. The Issei women in the fishing community were involved in the cannery industry in order to supplement family income. In small shops, restaurants or hotels run by the Japanese men, women worked hard to maintain their husbands' businesses. Establishing family life as well as economic foundations, an increasing number of Japanese immigrants took up permanent residence in Canada. Kobayashi (1984) analyzes that Japanese immigrants who permanently settled down in Canada were more likely the second or third sons who had no obligations to carry on the family lineage back in their villages of Japan. While many immigrants returned to Japan with their families, those people who had no responsibilities nor privilege in their home country decided to establish their own lives apart from their origin while raising families in Canada.

During this period, an extensive community structure also developed with the founding of various kinds of ethnic organizations, such as prefectural associations, ethnic churches, Japanese-language schools, and business establishments catering specifically to Japanese clientele. Facing institutional discrimination and strong public hostility, the Issei established and depended upon social networks within their community. These provided psychological as well as financial assistance to its members. By 1934, there were 230 Japanese Canadian organizations established in the province, including 84 in Vancouver alone (Multiculturalism directorate, 1979). These commercial and non-

commercial organizations which were sustained on the basis of a common language and customs provided the social and economic grounds for the livelihood of the Japanese, and reinforced the cohesion of their ethnic community (Ujimoto, 1976).

While the immigrant generation was developing such self contained and geographically segregated ethnic communities, the Nisei or the second generation Japanese Canadians went through complex cultural and social experiences in pre-war British Columbia. Growing up in a strange cultural dualism between the ethnic and dominant culture, the children of the immigrants tended to experience cultural marginality (Hansen, 1962; Nahirny and Fishman, 1965). In the early socialization period, the Nisei had suffered from the great cultural conflicts between Japanese and Canadian cultures by being exposed to two different system of values and norms. While attending general public school with white peers, they were sent to Japanese-language schools run by the ethnic communities. At home, the Nisei internalized traditional Japanese values, such as filial piety, group conformity and unquestioning respect for authority from their Issei parents who were generally raised in rural Japan between 1880 and 1920; that is, Japan in the transitional process from feudal to an industrial society. On the other hand, the Nisei children were exposed to individualistic Canadian values in school by being taught to question, challenge and be aggressive in a classroom environment (Adachi, 1976; Hosokawa, 1969).

In terms of social experience, the Nisei confronted persistent

racial discrimination despite their Canadian citizenship and growing acculturation. The discriminatory legislation against Japanese immigrants was extended to the Canadian born Nisei. The Nisei were prevented from participation in the political electoral process, and excluded from several areas of professional employment, such as pharmacy, law and education. By 1940, the older cohort of the Nisei who were born in 1910s were reaching maturity and entering the labour force. Because of the economic restrictions imposed by the province, the Nisei became dependent upon their own community which was socially and economically controlled by the Issei (Adachi, 1976; Sunahara, 1979).

Prior to the war, Japanese Canadians, including both the Issei and Nisei, were living out their lives within their segregated and independent ethnic communities in order to survive the racist society of pre-war British Columbia. However, their community was broken apart with the outbreak of the Second World War. As a result, people in the community were forced to experience the traumatic changes in their life styles, and their future suddenly became unpredictable.

4-3. The Evacuation and Its Impacts on the Japanese Community

It was 1942 that the abusive political act known as the Evacuation uprooted the Japanese community in British Columbia. As the cohesive and self-sufficient Japanese Canadian ethnic community was developed, racial hostility toward the Japanese in pre-war B.C. had intensified (Adachi, 1976; Sunahara, 1980; Ujimoto, 1976).

External events like the Japanese intrusion into China helped to accelerate such anti-Japanese sentiments and influenced domestic politics, so that the "Japanese problem" was becoming a prominent political issue (Ujimoto,1985). In such a mood of intensifying racial tension, the outbreak of World War II provided the provincial government with a good opportunity to take more severe discriminatory action against Japanese Canadians, such as the demand for the removal of all Japanese out of the province.

In 1942, the federal government issued orders for the evacuation of people of Japanese race (Japanese nationals as well as Canadian citizens) from the coastal areas of British Columbia²⁰, for the reasons of national security. Removal began with Japanese male nationals in January 1942. Total evacuation including women and the Nisei started in mid-March 1942. As a result, 20,881 Japanese Canadians were removed from the west coast by November in 1942 (Sunahara, 1979). According to La Violette's (1948) figure, 11,500 persons were sent to ghost towns in the interior of B.C. 3,500 were relocated in the sugar beet farms in Alberta (2,500) and in Manitoba (1,000). The rest were engaged in self-supporting project in B.C. or in road projects in Eastern Canada.

As Davis and Krauter (1971) state, the historical experience of Japanese Canadians during the war was "probably the worst single

²⁰ According to Adachi's estimate, by 1941, approximately 96% of the 23,149 Japanese in Canada were in British Columbia, with the heavy residential concentration within seventy-five miles of Vancouver (Approximately three-fourth of the Japanese population).

Table 1. Historical Changes in Legislation and Policies
Applied to Japanese Canadians from 1887-1950

Year	Legislation/Policies
1895	The B.C. provincial government disenfranchised the Japanese, including those who became British subjects by naturalization as well as those who were born in Canada.*
1896	The provincial disenfranchisement was extended to municipal electorate process.
1897	The Alien Labour Act, which prohibited the employment of Chinese and Japanese on provincial public works, was passed by the B.C. legislature.
1908	The federal government concluded the "Lemieux Agreement" with the Japanese government in order to restrict Japanese immigration to an annual maximum number of 400 except immediate family members of previous immigrants.
1928	The "Lemieux Agreement" was revised to reduce the total number of Japanese immigrants to an annual number of 150.
1941	The compulsory registration by the RCMP of all persons of Japanese ancestry over the age of 16 was ordered by the federal government.
1942 Jan.	The partial evacuation for all Japanese male nationals aged 18 to 45 was ordered.
1942 Feb.	The evacuation order was extended to all persons of Japanese origin.
1942 Mar.	The British Columbia Security Commission was established.
1945	The federal government implemented its policies of dispersal or deportation of Japanese, that is, Japanese Canadians had to either go and resettle "East of Rockies" or to apply for voluntary repatriation to Japan.
1946	The deportation order was repealed.
1948	The house of Commons passed the bill which enfranchised Canadian citizens of the Japanese origin.
1949	The provincial franchise was granted to the Japanese and the policy of disperse was abolished.

* This restriction imposed by the provincial authority practically extended to the federal franchise, because the provincial voters list was used to comply the Dominion list for federal elections.

example of the oppression of a Canadian minority group by the combined forces of public opinion and government policy in the entire history of this country" (58). All evacuees were ordered to leave their houses, properties and jobs, which were built up with years of toil²¹. Furthermore, various restrictions were imposed on those Japanese: all opportunities for engaging in private employment and geographic mobility were restricted.

In order to implement the evacuation process, the federal government established the British Columbia Security Commission (BCSC) in March 1942. BCSC was empowered to organize and supervise the removal of the Japanese from the coast, to provide them with housing and employment, and to administer the necessary social welfare programs for the evacuees. The task of BCSC was carried out relatively easily because of the lack of serious resistance by the Japanese Canadians to the evacuation order (Adachi, 1976; Sunahara, 1980; Ujimoto, 1985). The Issei whose cultural background was rooted in traditions derived from feudalistic Japanese society accepted the orders of authority without question. Some Nisei, on the other hand, followed the policy because they hoped they would be recognized as good Canadian citizens by co-

²¹. The fishing industry, which was dominated by Japanese, became the first target of such deprivation of jobs and properties. Japanese Canadians as well as Japanese nationals were prohibited from fishing in January 1942. At the same time, their boats were confiscated and sold to non-Japanese. Although some Japanese Canadians could sell their properties, the majority of them left their business and houses believing that custodians would maintain those properties until they would return after the war. However, properties of Japanese Canadians were sold for almost nothing by the government during the war.

operating with the government (Adachi, 1976). Although there were different reactions toward the evacuation order within the community, Japanese Canadians, including the Canadian nationals, were swiftly removed from the coastal areas under the control of the federal government and the BCSC.

The evacuation of 1942 changed every aspect of the lives of Japanese Canadians and affected their futures. First of all, the geographical structure of their community changed drastically. Relocation practically destroyed the segregated Japanese communities of pre-war B.C. The post-war government policy was also made in an attempt to disperse the Japanese population throughout the country. According to the deportation order which was announced in 1946, all the Japanese were required to make a choice whether they would go to Japan or to move east of the Rockies. It was, in fact, not until 1949 that Japanese Canadians were allowed to return to the West coast. As a result, the evacuees who spent the war-time in internment camps in interior B.C. moved eastward, while some people who had been relocated to Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario, remained in those provinces and settled there in the post-war period. The 1986 Census shows that the current decentralized distribution of 40,245 of the total population of Japanese origin (a single origin) in Canada. Ontario currently has the largest Japanese population (40%) of 16,155, followed by B.C. (39%), Alberta (13%), Quebec (3%) and Manitoba (2.6%).

The residential patterns among the Japanese Canadians became

decentralized within each local city as well. Currently, there are no geographically segregated Japanese communities which are equivalent to those developed in pre-war British Columbia. The residential concentration of Japanese Canadians is not seen even in Metropolitan Toronto which currently has the highest population density of Japanese Canadians. This is because when Japanese Canadians started to re-establish their lives after the war, they believed that reduced visibility of their ethnicity would decrease racial discrimination and increase opportunity of economic mobility in post-war period (Makabe, 1976; Barr, 1978).

Another significant consequence of the evacuation is the change in the inter-generational power structure within the family as well as within the community. The depletion of the economic resources of the Issei in the evacuation process destroyed traditional family values associated with property (La Violette, 1945), and reversed the financial dependency relationship between the Issei and the Nisei (Sunahara, 1980). In pre-war British Columbia communities, the Issei parents sustained their prestigious and authoritative status as household heads with the ownership of property and the control of economic means. In order for the Nisei to survive in the discriminatory B.C. society, it was necessary to seek employment in the ethnic community controlled by the Issei or to assist (and eventually take over) their parents farming, fishing or family business. After the destruction of their institutionalized ethnic community and the loss of property and financial resources, the Issei parents became dependent on their

Nisei children. During the war, the Nisei, who were recognized as Canadian citizens by government officials, gained their power as community leaders, mediating between the government and the community. The Issei, on the other hand, were considered as enemy aliens. In the resettlement process, the aging Issei who lacked fluency in English and valid education had difficulty in finding employment, so that many of them became financially dependent on their children.

The evacuation also became the transitional point in terms of the economic structure of the Japanese community, generally shifting from a non-industrial to an industrial base (Almquist, 1979; Leonetty and Newell-Morris, 1982). After losing their independent economic foundation based on fishing, farming and small businesses, they were forced to enter urban labour markets in cities where they had resettled after the war. Without having any economic resources or industrial skills, they began their new lives as unskilled labourers. Independent fishermen or farmers became dishwashers or factory workers. In particular, the aging Issei had difficulty in finding employment. At the same time, the wives and daughters entered the urban labour force in order to help support their families during these difficult years.

4-4. The History of Manitoba Japanese Canadian Community

The history of the Japanese Canadian community in Manitoba began with the evacuation, which assigned 1,180 Japanese to sugar

began with the evacuation, which assigned 1,180 Japanese to sugar beet projects in rural Manitoba²². Those Japanese voluntarily came to Manitoba, because the Security Commission guaranteed family unity for the evacuees who would agree to join the projects²³. The majority of the evacuees to Manitoba were from certain communities in British Columbia, such as Haney-Hammond and Steveston. This was because respected community leaders often encourage group relocation and determined the communities' next location (Dion,1991). However, those Japanese Canadians who were relocated to rural Manitoba experienced physical, psychological, and financial hardships under the exploitative conditions of the sugar beet projects during the war.

In the immediate post-war years, Japanese evacuees migrated to Winnipeg in order to resettle and re-establish their livelihood in an urban-setting. During this period, some people who had spent the war-time in the internment camps in interior B.C. also moved to Winnipeg where they now had their relatives or friends already settling down. Like any other of the cities where Japanese Canadians resettled after the war, there is no geographically segregated Japanese community in Winnipeg. However, the Japanese population in Winnipeg has maintained close-knit social networks

²². According to the 1941 Census (Adopted from Adachi, 1976:413), there were only 42 Japanese in Manitoba prior to the evacuation.

²³. When the evacuation order was facilitated, many Japanese Canadians experienced family separation, because the government sent Japanese males age between 18 and 45 to separate projects, such as road camps (Shimpo,1976).

among themselves, thus establishing active social, cultural and political organizations, such as the National Japanese Canadian Citizens Association (NJCCA) and the Manitoba Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre (MJCCC).

Although the Japanese Canadian community in Winnipeg has been well-known as an active community among the spread-out Japanese population in Canada, its size has always been relatively small. In 1971, there were 1,335 Japanese Canadians (single origin) in Manitoba, which consisted of approximately 4% of the total Japanese Canadian population in Canada (Statistics of Canada, 1976). In recent years, the Winnipeg community continues to experience the drain of its younger generations outside of the province in a trend similar to that of the general population in the Manitoba province. According to the most current statistics (Statistics Canada, 1994), the number of Japanese Canadians in the province declined to 1,020 which represents 2% of the Japanese population in Canada.

CHAPTER 5 THE BACKGROUND OF NISEI WOMEN

In this chapter, I discuss the background of Nisei women, whom I interviewed by focusing on their family experiences as well as their educational and social experiences before and during the war. The main purpose of this chapter is to examine the Nisei women's early lives which shaped their orientation to the labour market and the family. This examination proceeds by taking the cohort approach, which distinguishes Nisei women in my sample into three distinctive age cohort groups: the older, the middle and the younger cohorts. There are significant differentiations between these three cohorts in terms of their cultural or educational backgrounds, and consequently their work and family experiences. To begin with, I shall now discuss the significance of the application of the cohort approach for the analysis of Nisei women's experiences.

5-1. The Cohort Approach

A birth cohort which comprises individuals who were born within the certain time period has "a distinctive composition and character reflecting the circumstances of its unique origination and history" (Ryder, 1965:84). Members of the same cohort tend to experience the same social and historical events in the same stage of their life cycle. This means that a specific historical event or social environment has a similar impact on people's lives in the same age cohort, while affecting differently those who belong to the different ones. For example, individuals who are entering the

labour market experience an economic depression differently from those who are already in the labour force or those who are still in educational institutions. This means that individuals belonging to the same age cohort tend to share common social experiences and future prospects, and therefore tend to build up the same kinds of attitudes and behaviours, which are different from those belonging to other age cohorts.

In examining the patterns of the work and family experiences of Nisei women, it is useful to utilize this cohort analysis. The second generation Japanese Canadians, whose births were concentrated between 1910s and 1930s, appear to be a remarkably homogeneous group, sharing similar cultural backgrounds, historical experiences and socio-economic mobility²⁴. There are, however, significant differences in Nisei women's backgrounds, work and family experiences between three age cohorts: the older cohort who were born in 1910s, the middle cohort who were born in 1920s, and the younger cohort who were born in 1930s. These differentiations were created by the various stages of the life cycle in which Nisei women found themselves at the time of the evacuation. The older Nisei women were entering into the family building phase in their life cycle. Women in the middle cohort were in their adolescent years. The younger Nisei were still in their childhood.

As discussed earlier, the evacuation had a strong impact on

²⁴. For example, most research on Japanese Canadians or Americans focus on the generational differences in terms of ethnic identity, acculturation and socio-economic mobility, while neglecting significant variations within the same generation.

the lives of every single individual in the Japanese Canadian community. This drastic transformation of their living circumstances, however, affected differently these three age groups, and shaped distinctive work and family experiences among each cohort. In order to comprehend the experiences of Nisei women in a richer sense, it is necessary for us to take the cohort differences into consideration.

5-2. The General Picture of the Respondents

All twenty-three respondents were born in British Columbia between 1910' and 1930'. I interviewed nine older Nisei women, nine middle Nisei women and five younger Nisei women. The majority of them (19) were raised in rural areas where their parents were involved in small-scale fruit or vegetable farming in the Fraser Valley area, or in self-supporting fishing in Richmond, B.C.. Only four women in my sample have an urban background. Two women who grew up in Vancouver came from families who had small transportation businesses, while fathers of the other two urban women were involved in logging industries. This over-representation of the farming background among respondents was related to the history of the Manitoba Japanese community which began with the sugar beet project for Japanese evacuees during the war. Besides the desire for family unity, many evacuees chose to come to Manitoba for the project because of their agricultural experience. Although the majority of the respondents (16) moved to Manitoba for the sugar beet project during the war, six women moved

to Winnipeg after spending war-time in internment camps in the interior of British Columbia and one woman was engaged in sugar beet farming in Alberta. All the respondents, except one had or have been married. At the time of interviewing, fifteen women were married and living with their spouses. Six women were widows. Although these women seemed to have fairly constant contact with their children living in Winnipeg, none of them had other persons who lived with them. One woman was in her second marriage after her first husband's death. In terms of inter-racial marriage, I encountered only one respondent who was married to a non-Japanese. This number is equivalent to the findings in other research (e.g., Kobayashi, 1989) which indicate very few inter-racial marriages among second generation Japanese Canadians.

5-3. The Older Cohort

When the pre-war B.C. Japanese community was uprooted in 1942, this age cohort was entering into the family building phase in their life cycle. The families of some older Nisei women had already established relatively stable economic foundations prior to the war by acquiring their own farms or business. The others began their married lives during the trauma of the evacuation --- anticipating the unpredictable future of the community, a number of couples married immediately before they were evacuated. After spending their childhood, adolescence, and early adulthood in institutionalized ethnic communities in pre-war British Columbia, these older Nisei women had to establish their family lives under

difficult circumstances during and after the war.

The childhoods of the older Nisei women were, in general, arduous. The family labour of women and children was essential for small-scale farming which their Issei parents were practising in pre-war B.C. Recalling the farming that their parents had been engaged in, many respondents said, "everybody helped" or "everybody had to help." In particular, the eldest daughter in the family was obligated to help do household tasks as well as farm labour. Mrs. M described the hardships which she experienced as the eldest daughter in the family:

"I washed my younger sisters' diapers, when I was still nine years old. I went through all these hardships. Although everybody says that the oldest is lucky. It's not true!"

The overwhelming tasks imposed on the older daughters sometimes interfered with their schooling. Mrs. H is one of the unlucky daughters who could be found in many Japanese farm families in pre-war B.C. She explained why she did not attain higher education by saying,

"We could not finish school. The older one had to help and look after little ones at even exam times."

The educational background of the older Nisei women is, in fact, lower than that of their middle and younger counterparts. The formal education of the majority of older cohort Nisei women (seven out of nine) ended at Grade 8. Besides the prevalent Japanese notion that female education was unnecessary, economic discrimination in pre-war B.C. discouraged these women's aspirations of obtaining higher education. Mrs. M recalled:

"I was going to a business college. I remember after I graduated from the public school, I wanted to take business courses. But, there was no business college in Haney, so I went to New Westminster. Working as a school girl, I was taking a business course. But, then, I came back to Haney for a holiday. There was Mr. Yamada who was a pioneer of Haney. He said, "I don't know why you are taking a business course, because you won't get any jobs." --- So much discrimination... I was just going to high school. But, this man, young man I knew, he graduated from UBC, and he couldn't get a job. He had to drive a milk truck. So, when I heard this, well (I thought), "What am I doing?" So, I came back home. And next winter, I went to a sewing school in Vancouver."

During the search for employment, the older Nisei women experienced institutional discrimination on the basis of their race and gender. They were concentrated in low-paid, low-status and female-type occupations, such as cannery workers, dress-makers and domestic workers. Despite her relatively higher educational background compared to other older Nisei women (Grade 10 plus one year of vocational schooling in business college), Mrs. O nevertheless ended up working as a domestic helper because of the severe discrimination in pre-war B.C. She recalled:

"Not so many places opened for Japanese. See, I applied to the B.C. telephone to be a telephone operator. I knew the man in the top of the company --- in the authority. And I spoke to him, but he said, "Sorry, but we don't hire Japanese." That's what it was like, you know. Before the war, we couldn't get into too many different professions."

I, however, encountered one adventurous woman who succeeded in such discriminatory social circumstances by operating her own business, like the Japanese male pioneers did. Mrs. K opened a confectionary store in Vancouver with her younger sister. She enthusiastically explained that she and her sister started to run their small business in order to avoid being exploited by the

unfair labour system in pre-war B.C.:

"Unless you can get it (the store), you have to go to *zyochyuu-san*, house maid for rich people. Even if you are university graduates, you can't be a nurse or doctor... many other things. That's too bad. A lot of young people were smart, graduating and want to be a nurse. But, they don't let you go to nursing school."

Interviewer "That's why you decided to have your own store?"

"Yes. My sister, she was 19. She graduated from high school. She was the only one who got a Canadian Medal from Canadian government. She said, "I don't want to go to do just housework. You work, work and work, and you get only \$10 a month. No!" She asked daddy to borrow about \$300. Sure, we were gonna do it!"

In terms of cultural experience, the older cohort was influenced by the traditional Japanese culture more than the other two younger cohorts. Their early socialization was completed in pre-war Japanese communities, which were based on Japanese language, customs and practices controlled by their immigrant parents. Their traditional immigrant parents continued to influence older Nisei women's lives even after they reached their adulthood. The majority of marriages among the older cohort were arranged by their parents according to the traditional Japanese custom. Some older Nisei women were married to Issei males who naturally held strong Japanese cultural values. This indicates that their adulthood was also influenced by their ethnic culture, which was transformed by their immigrant parents and husbands. Some older Nisei women actually recognized Japaneseness in themselves. One respondent, Mrs. M said, "I'm more like Issei."

The strong influence of Japanese culture on the older Nisei women was clearly reflected in their ability to speak Japanese.

These women are generally more fluent in Japanese than the other two cohorts. Most of them could be regarded as bilingual. For instance, before starting the interview, some of older women asked me whether the interview would be conducted in Japanese or English. Although most parts of the interviews were carried out in English, many older women actually started to tell their stories in Japanese at some point in our conversations.

Spending an extensive period of their lives in pre-war B.C. communities, the older Nisei women, in general, seem to have internalized their ethnic culture to a great extent. In terms of educational background, these women had little opportunity to attain high education beyond compulsory schooling because of the economic situation of their immigrant parents. In addition, discriminatory social circumstances discouraged some women who were able and willing to attain higher education. After completing their schooling, these older Nisei women were allocated to marginalized occupations in British Columbia, such as cannery workers, dress-makers, domestic servants or helpers on the farms. The older Nisei women experienced the evacuation at the family building phase of their life cycle. During the war, many of them participated in an sugar beet farming as essential labourers, while raising their small children.

5-4. The Middle Cohort

This age cohort experienced the evacuation during their adolescence. After spending more or less similar childhoods to

those of the older Nisei women in pre-war B.C., the majority of Nisei women in the middle cohort group were in the middle of high school at the time of the evacuation. While the older Nisei women were evacuated with their husbands (and children), the Nisei women of this cohort spent the war-years and the immediate post-war years with their parents and siblings. During and after the war, these Nisei daughters, in their adolescence, had to make a great financial contribution in order to help their Issei parents.

The evacuation, therefore, terminated secondary school for this cohort, and destroyed their future prospects. In spite of these women's desire for high school education, they had to work for their families, who were having financial difficulties. For the families who relocated to Manitoba for the sugar beet projects, it was necessary to have the maximum number of labourers possible in order to earn enough income. Nisei daughters who were in their late teens were essential workers in their families, so that they were expected to be engaged in full-time farming, rather than to continue their education. Mrs S explained:

"The older ones had to work. They couldn't go to school, you know. In order to make enough money, my dad had to have large acreage. Otherwise, if it was small acreage, it wasn't (enough)."

It was the manipulations of the British Columbia Security Commission that reduced the possibility of these Nisei children obtaining high school education. The BCSC, which was responsible for administering the necessary social welfare programs for the evacuees, arranged to pay the grade school education costs for the evacuee families, but not the expenses of high school education.

To give high school education to these Nisei children was an expense as well as a drain on labour, which many evacuee families could not afford. Knowing the need for labour in the sugar-beet industry, it was convenient for the Commission to ignore this age group's continued schooling. Subsequently, the BCSC did not make arrangements with local high schools to accept Japanese students. Some women mentioned that during the war, many high schools refused Japanese students. One respondent, Mrs. T exclaimed:

"Our high school won't take us over 16. Under 16, they had to. We were supposed to go on the sugar beets. They wanted us to do sugar beets. So, they won't let us go to school!"

It was not only in the sugar beet projects but also in internment camps that the educational opportunities for the middle cohort were suppressed. Due to the lack of facilities in camps, further education for this age group was terminated. Mrs. K refers to the availability of education in camps and analyzed its different effects on Nisei of the different age cohorts.

"Depending on what age you were, when you were evacuated. Because if you were still in elementary level, it wasn't that difficult. But if you were at a high school level or university age, there was nothing available for these people. And they all got education much later, when they all settled down... Let's say, in Ontario or other parts of the country. And they got educated."

Educational opportunities for the middle cohort Nisei women in the post-war period were, however, very scarce because of the financial difficulties that their families were facing. Thinking about their futures, more Nisei men seem to have gone back to school after the war. Although none of my respondents who belong to the middle age cohort had completed high school, many of them

mentioned that their brothers or husbands actually went back to school after the war. This is probably because Issei parents or/and Nisei women themselves did not consider female education as important as that for men, so young Nisei daughters continued to work for their families. Consequently, the termination of these women's education resulted in the reduction of their mobility in the post-war period. During the interview, many Nisei women in the middle cohort group regretted not attaining a high school diploma. Talking about why she started working in a sewing factory in immediate post-war years, Mrs B expressed her dilemma:

"We didn't have the ability to do anything else at that point, because I didn't go beyond Grade 10. And if you want to get into secretarial work or anything, you have to take commercial courses. That was what I was going to do --- to get a typing and all that. Everything went down in a dream, because we were evacuated and I didn't go back (to school). We couldn't afford!"

The evacuation also affected marriage practices among this cohort. First of all, the average age among marriages of the middle cohort Nisei women is higher (25.3 years old) than that among the older women (22.0 years old). This is probably because young single Nisei women in immediate post-war years carried a significant share of the burden to support their family by being engaged in paid work. While contributing to the rebuilding of their families' lives, the middle cohort Nisei women seem to have delayed their marriages.

Secondly, the prevailing practice of arranged marriage among the older cohort disappeared for the middle cohort. In fact, none of respondents who belong to the middle or younger cohort married

through the services of a go-between. Most of them met their husband at social events, such as dances and meetings organized by the Nisei youth club called "Niseiits", and they went through a Canadian style courtship. This change in the marriage pattern reflects the weakened power of the Issei parents over their Nisei children after the evacuation. As discussed earlier, the dependent relationship between the Issei and Nisei was reversed by the evacuation. It seemed that the Nisei children still respected the authority of their parents in the family. For example, some respondents mentioned that they had a go-between for formality, in order to compromise with their traditional parents who were still wishing to maintain their old practices. We can see however that the power or control of the Issei over their unmarried children was eroded after the evacuation.

In terms of cultural background, the middle cohort Nisei women, who experienced the breakdown of their segregated ethnic communities as well as the traditional family structure during their adolescence, became more liberated from the influence of their ethnic culture compared with their older counterparts. Regarding educational background, the Nisei women of the middle cohort have slightly more education than the older Nisei women. Most of this, however, was accomplished in British Columbia. The opportunity to pursue further education for these women was terminated by the evacuation, hence most did not complete their high school education. During the war, these women worked on the sugar beet farms as essential labourers for their families.

Table 2. Sociodemographic Characteristics of Three Cohorts

	Older	Cohort Middle	Younger
Birth	1910's	1920's	1930's
The Stage of Life Cycle at the Time of the Evacuation	married	adolescent	childhood
Average Education (Meads)	Grade 8	Grade 10-11	Grade 12
Work Experience Prior to the War in BC*		N/A	N/A
Domestic work	11%		
Dress-making	22%		
Fishery or vegetable cannery workers	67%		
farming	44%		
Others	11%		
Marriage Pattern			
Arranged marriage	78%	0%	0%
Non-arranged marriage	22%	100%	100%
Post-marriage Living Arrangement			
Nuclear	67%	44%	75%
Extended	33%	56%	25%
Number of Children			
0	0%	11%	20%
1-2	11%	22%	0%
3+	89%	67%	80%
Current Marital Status			
Single (never-married)	0%	0%	20%
Married	33%	78%	60%
Widow	67%	22%	20%
Average Ability to Speak Japanese**			
	Fluent	little to moderate	little

* Those figures include plural answers. Many women who were seasonal workers in cannery factories were being engaged in farming.

* This ranking is based on the interviewer's subjective judgement.

5-5. The Younger Cohort

The Nisei women of the younger cohort were still in their childhood at the time of the evacuation. They left their segregated ethnic communities at a very early stage of their life and spent their adolescence in the general community and socialized less with other Japanese Canadians. The internalization of the Japanese culture among this cohort group, therefore, can be regarded as weaker than that among the older and the middle cohort.

Because the younger Nisei women were in their elementary school years during the war, the obligation to commit themselves to sugar beet farming, or to supplement family income as wage earners, was not imposed on them. They took the responsibility for taking care of younger siblings, rather than being essential labourers on farms. Mrs. T talked about her childhood in the sugar beet farm:

"I was about 11. I helped to do a little hoeing and look after my sisters, so they could work. You can't leave them in the house. My mother and father took all of us. I used to look after them on the field."

In contrast to their older and middle counterparts who recalled their evacuation experiences as bitter memories, the younger Nisei women tended to mention relatively comfortable childhoods on the sugar beet farms or in camps. While their older sisters and brothers were working on the farm, in the city, or in the bush camps, these Nisei children could continue to go to school and associate with other children. Although many of the younger Nisei women mentioned their personal experiences of discrimination in schools, their childhood and adolescence were protected from the direct effects of the evacuation.

The majority of the younger Nisei women, who entered secondary school after the war managed to obtain a high school diploma. In addition, some of them took business courses in vocational schools. Later, when these younger women started to attend high school in the late 1940s, the financial situation of Japanese families was more stable. Their families, therefore, could afford to provide these women a chance to attain higher education beyond grade school. In contrast to their middle cohort counterparts who had to leave school and work for their families during and immediately after the war, the younger Nisei women had the advantage of pursuing high school education in the post-war period.

CHAPTER 6
DATA ANALYSES: THE WORK EXPERIENCES OF NISEI WOMEN

The older, middle and younger Nisei women have had distinct, but certainly related, experiences in the labour force. Their working lives have been shaped by a labour system which tends to marginalize minority women to the periphery of the economic structure. Experiencing the combination of gender and racial subordination, the work experience of Nisei women was concentrated in a limited set of occupations constituting a segregated labour market for minority women.

In this chapter, I discuss the occupational concentration among Nisei women by examining the patterns of labour market incorporation of the three cohorts. The main purpose of such a discussion is to analyze the structural mechanisms which construct and maintain sex and race/ethnic segregation in the labour market. Through an analysis of the factors and processes by which Nisei women in each cohort were initiated into specific occupation of categories, I examine how the political, economic and social systems have functioned to produce the inferior position of minority women in the work force.

The discussion traces the labour history of Nisei women in Manitoba by examining three main historical periods: (1). The World War Period (1942-1945); (2). The Immediate Post-War Period (1945-1950); and (3). The Contemporary Period (1950 to present). An historical perspective is essential for the discussion, because occupational concentration is formed in a specific historical context including the political and economic climate specific to

that area. Nisei women in Manitoba, in fact, became concentrated in different sets of occupations in those three different time periods. Thus, I analyze the formation of the occupational concentration in each period separately in order to specify the different combination of factors operating in different time periods.

6-1. The World War II Period (1942-1945)

The World War II period was a time when the Japanese Canadian community experienced various forms of racial oppression legitimated by political institutions. Obtaining extraordinary political power with the application of the War Measures Act, the federal government deprived every Japanese Canadian of basic civil rights and evacuated them from their flourishing communities in the west coast of British Columbia. Powerless Japanese evacuees were, furthermore, utilized as cheap and convenient labourers in various projects organized by the government as parts of the evacuation program. The Sugar Beet Project and the Domestic Servant Program in which Manitoba Nisei women were involved are two good examples of such political and economic exploitation. This section discusses the establishment process as well as the content of those projects through the examination of Nisei women's war-time experiences.

6-1-1. The Sugar Beet Project:

Older Nisei women in the Manitoba fields

The Creation of the Project. The sugar beet project was organized

as a part of the evacuation program by the British Columbia Security Commission (BCSC)²⁵. According to the basic evacuation policies of the federal government, the Commission had few major concerns: (1). the smooth proceeding of the evacuation process, (2). the minimization of the government expenditures, (3). the maximization of the evacuees' labour, and (4). the consent and cooperation of the local government (Shimpo,1975). Family relocation of the evacuees to the sugar beet farms in Manitoba and Alberta fell in line with those policies. Afraid of family separation, the evacuees themselves would volunteer to join the project which guaranteed the family unity, thus minimizing the upheaval inherent in the evacuation process. From the economic point of view, it was expected that this project would lead to family self-sufficiency, thus reducing government costs. Furthermore, this labour supply was filling a labour shortage in the industry, thus making it easy to obtain the consent of local governments.

The economic demand for the evacuee labour in the Manitoba

²⁵. As discussed in Chapter 5, the British Columbia Security Commission (BCSC) was established as a federal agency shortly after the federal government announced the total evacuation of Japanese Canadians from the west coast B.C. The commission was responsible for organizing the actual evacuation process and transferring all designated persons out of the strategic area. The federal government provided the Security Commission with extraordinary powers to execute the evacuation order by issuing a series of Orders-in-Councils.

sugar beet industry was, in fact, the essential element for the realization of the project. It was the Manitoba Sugar Beet Company that initiated the project by showing their interest in using evacuees in order to alleviate the extreme farm labour shortage (Dion,1991). Under the wartime circumstances, the federal government appealed for maximum domestic sugar production. However, the potential growth of the sugar industry in Manitoba, which was newly established in the late 1930s, was confronted with the serious problem of a labour shortage (Dion,1991). At this time, many farmers were willing to experiment with sugar beets since they were guaranteed sale by the Manitoba Sugar Beet Company and the refinery in Fort Garry. For the Sugar Beet Company, assigning evacuee labourers to potential growers seemed to be an ideal solution.

Before starting the actual operation of the project, the Security Commission had to, first, receive the approval from the Manitoba government and, second, facilitate the matching process of evacuee families to Manitoba farmers. In order to obtain the consent of the provincial government, the BCSC officially promised not only to supervise the physical movement of the evacuees within the project but also to take a responsibility for relief, medical and educational service for the evacuees (Dion,1991). Knowing the economic benefits of evacuee labour for the province's sugar beet industry, the Manitoba government agreed with the temporary relocation of the Japanese people after receiving assurance that the BCSC would restrict those labourers to the sugar beet farmers

in Manitoba²⁶. At the same time, the province tried to maintain a distance from any processes of the actual operation of the project.

The second task of the BCSC was to facilitate the matching process with the cooperation of the sugar beet industry. According to the original plan, the sugar beet company was to canvass sympathetic farmers who could provide reasonable housing facilities for the evacuee families prior to their arrival (Dion,1991). This process which was significant for the welfare of the evacuees was, however, ignored due to the pragmatic motivation of the BCSC and the industry. The BCSC had to meet a tight schedule for the swift and total evacuation of the Japanese people. The industry needed to receive evacuees before the agricultural season began. As a result, the relocation of evacuee families began without proper arrangement between the BCSC and the industry. Some farmers were not canvassed. Housing facilities on the farms were not organized. This ill-prepared resettlement process produced a tremendous amount of hardship for the evacuee families.

The sugar beet project was obviously an economic exploitation of Japanese evacuee labour. The primary concern of the political as well as economic institutions was the utilization of the convenient labour force, rather than the welfare of the evacuees. The BCSC, having the authority to determine the movement of

²⁶. Prior to the relocation of the Japanese evacuees to Manitoba, the BCSC promised not only to prevent the movements of the evacuees from the sugar beet farms but also to remove them once the war-time emergency was over.

Japanese evacuees, incorporated them into marginal jobs in response to the demand of the labour market. Seasonal farm work based on contracts with landlords is so low-paid and physically demanding that it cannot attract ordinary labour force who have other occupational choices. The Alberta sugar beet industry which had already started its production before the war had been heavily depended on cheap Hungarian immigrant labour prior to the relocation of Japanese evacuees, but it was facing labour shortage because those immigrants had begun to seek better employment as they stayed longer in Canada (Shimpo,1975). Promoting and using the powerlessness of Japanese evacuees, the government and industry, however, could force Japanese Canadians in to such a disadvantaged sector of the economic structure.

Older Nisei Women: the Content of the Project. Interview data vividly illustrate exploitation and oppression that evacuee labourers experienced in the project. The administrative arrangement of the project with the industry was poorly organized, so that Japanese families who were relocated to Manitoba had to endure inhuman living conditions on the farms. Although the industry received great benefits from Japanese labourers in the industry²⁷, the evacuees suffered financial difficulty as well as physical hardships.

Although every single person relocated to the Manitoba Sugar

²⁷. Production of Manitoba Sugar Beet Industry rose to 23% of Canada's sugar beet production between 1941 and 1943 from 11.5% in 1940 due to the contribution of Japanese labourers (Dion,1991).

Beet Project was a victim of extreme political and economic exploitation, the older Nisei women probably experienced the most harrowing physical and mental hardships. Under the harsh environment in the Manitoba fields, those women, who were mothers with small children, had to carry a triple burden on their shoulders: they were essential labourers in the fields, caretakers of small children, and housekeepers in ill-constructed housing. Although the middle cohort Nisei women, who were adolescents during the war, had to help their parents with agricultural work, they were fairly free from family responsibilities. The younger cohort women were still primary school children, as a result they were not involved in physical labour. Hence, the following examination of the sugar beet project focuses on the older Nisei women.

According to my data, the very first experience of older Nisei women in Manitoba symbolized their future in the project. On arrival at the C.N. station in Winnipeg, the evacuee families were taken to the old Immigration Hall to wait until the farmers could take their workers. Some respondents talked about unpleasant experience in the Immigration Hall and described the crowded floors, an inadequate supply of beds and meals, and the separation of men from their families. In addition, the placement process of Japanese families to each farmer reminded them that they were not ordinary workers who would voluntarily work for the particular employers. The immigration Hall was like an old slave market. Farmers came to pick up families which would best suit their needs. Thus, some young families with fewer workers and more dependents

had to wait for a longer time before being taken. One of the older Nisei women, Mrs. C recalled with disgust that her family had to stay in the Immigration Hall for several days, because no farmer wanted to take her family, because there were no potential workers except for her husband.

Living conditions on the farms were substandard. Due to ill-prepared arrangements between the BCSC and the industry, the responsibility for proper living conditions were left to the farmers. Due to a lack of building supplies and a shortage of time, farmers could not build new accommodations. As a result, many families were allocated to existing small shacks which were not winterized. As the following comment of Mrs. M illustrates, many families had to endure harsh conditions in poorly prepared housing.

"There was no insulation. So, it was very cold in winter time. In a winter time, all beds, sheets and futon, all stuck to the wall --- all frozen. Oh, yes! That was frozen! We had to take our baby under our arms, you know. To make them warm with our bodies..., because it was so cold. We pull the futon, it tears, because it was just ice along side of wall. That was how cold it was. I don't know how they survive every time I think of the babies.

Besides poor housing conditions, the inaccessibility of drinkable water was a serious problem. This caused a physical as well as psychological hardship for older women who were often responsible for this task. Mrs. H. described it this way:

"It was tough. There was no running water or anything. So we used to melt the snow in a big tub to wash dishes, clothes and everything. We used to get drinking water from the well. Here in Manitoba, water is so reddish colour. It was not suitable for drinking. We used to put water in the sand in the very big barrel. We put

through it, it comes a little bit cleaner."

While enduring these poor living conditions, the evacuees had to commit themselves to the physically demanding field work. Before mechanization, sugar beet farming was labour intensive. On the average, 70 -80 hours of labour was required to cultivate one acre of beets (Dion, 1991). Farm work in the large scale Manitoba fields was very hard even for men who had had agricultural experience in BC. Nisei women of the older cohort, however, worked on the farm beside their husbands. During the interviews, women often recalled their labour experiences as being very arduous and often mentioned associated memories of child care tasks that they had while being in the field.

"We planted sugar beet seed. When plants come out that much, we started hoeing. And my baby was only a four month old. And I used to --- oh, yeh, line was one mile long --- I used to put her in *Kago* (a basket) at the beginning (of the line), and we hoed and went to other end, we came back and I used to feed her. It took me about 2 or 3 hours to hoe one row. --- We had a hard time. It was really hard... What else can we say? We just had to work... And, then came to the harvesting, the beets are that big. I could not even chop it... You have to chop the top of it. I could not chop it. That was big!." (Mrs. C)

The evacuee families also suffered financial difficulty. Wages were too low to allow for self sufficiency even with the maximum involvement of the entire family. Although the BCSC expected the evacuees to live off their savings during the winter months, many families found this to be impossible. A few managed to do so in the first year by spending their small savings from B.C. or additional employment outside the industry.

In an attempt to reduce the government expenditure on relief,

the BCSC provided some evacuees with seasonal winter employment outside the farm industry. Despite this arrangement, 23% of the families in Manitoba received government relief in June 1943 (Dion, 1991). In particular, the older Nisei women's families, i.e., families of young married couples with several infants, were more likely to require financial assistance from the government, because it was difficult for those parents to leave their families and take seasonal employment. Mrs. M, who was raising three small children during the war, explained the situation of her family who lived on the government relief.

Interviewer: Did your family earn enough money out of farming?

Oh, no! I got some money from the government. But only \$14 a month, you know. For one family. My brother did (get a job), because he didn't have a wife. But I was married with children, so he (her husband) stayed home. So we got a \$14 a month. It's hard to live on that, you know."

In these extremely difficult conditions, older Nisei women, who were mothers of small children at that time, struggled to perform multiple tasks. In the first instance, they were engaged in physically demanding farm work which even adult males found hard. They were also responsible for taking care of small children and housekeeping tasks which were extremely time consuming and physically exhausting, given the poor housing conditions. Recalling those days in the project, many older women expressed surprise at their own endurance by saying "I don't know how I managed all those things." One woman honestly confessed that it was so hard to go through those difficult years that she

contemplated suicide. However, those women, including this respondent, strove to make a living with incredible perseverance while providing comfort and security for their families.

6-1-2. The Domestic Servant Program:

Middle cohort Nisei women in domestic service

Entry of the Middle Cohort to Domestic Service. While helping their parents with the sugar beet farming, the middle cohort of Nisei women, who were young single daughters at that time, worked as domestic servants in Winnipeg during the winter. As the following statement of Mrs. T indicates, the majority of the middle cohort women (six out of seven in my sample²⁸) were involved in the domestic work in order to relieve the financial difficulties of their families.

Interviewer: Could your family earn enough money to make a living (by being engaged in sugar beet farming?)

Yes. But not very much. Just enough to live on. And summer time... in between harvesting, my brothers went to work in a bush camp. I came to Winnipeg to do housework. --- Every year. One month during summer and the all winter. So, that would be from November to April.

Some people might have had more money. But my family didn't. I think a lot of families didn't have money. So children who were able to work might be working on the farm in summer and then working in the city all winter.

I think that's just automatically whoever was able to work just went to work. It was just --- we had to. I think my mother would have wanted me to stay home. But there was no money. Everybody worked, you know.

²⁸. There are nine middle cohort women in my sample. However, two of them spent the war time in internment camps in interior B.C., so that seven women were in Manitoba during the war.

The involvement of the middle cohort Nisei women in domestic work was initiated by the BCSC as the domestic servant program. According to Dion (1991), this program was initiated in order to reduce the maintenance cost of the government for the evacuation program. The Commission's original intention was to avoid evacuees' occupational and geographical movement from the beet farms in rural Manitoba. However, they had to moderate their policy in an attempt to reduce government expenditures. The BCSC allowed individuals, not families, to leave the fields for seasonal employment. As a result, many families ended up sending out adolescent children, i.e., the middle cohort of Nisei women and men, to work in other industries. As the Commission had the authority to determine the movement of the Japanese evacuees, the BCSC placed Japanese females in domestic service in Winnipeg, and provided male workers with jobs in the lumber industry in Northern Manitoba or in Ontario.

It was the very specific demand of the labour market that determined the occupational opportunities for the middle cohort. The BCSC designed the domestic servant program because of the existing desire of affluent Winnipeggers to hire cheap domestic workers. In response to the Commission's request to the city of Winnipeg for the cooperation in the evacuation program, the city council agreed to receive temporary domestic workers into the city (Dion, 1991). Reflecting the need of the local labour market as well as the negative public sentiment towards Japanese evacuees, the city tactfully tried to filter the movement of evacuees. In

such a circumstance, the BCSC designed the Domestic Employment Program which aimed to bring only young female evacuees into the city specifically to work as domestic servants.

Once the program was established with the agreement of the city council, the actual placement of Japanese domestics was carried out by the hand of the Young Women's Christian Association (Y.W.C.A.). This organization, which consisted of affluent female volunteers, had been historically involved in recruiting immigrant domestics to the province in order to meet their own class interest in securing cheap domestic labour (Leslies, 1974; Barber, 1987). Considering the experience of Y.W.C.A., the Security Commission asked the organization to operate the domestic employment program for the Japanese evacuees (Dion, 1991). In response to that request, the Y.W.C.A. became involved in the program as an employment coordinator. The Y.W.C.A. took applications from prospective employers and domestic workers, interviewed both sides, and assigned Japanese girls to Winnipeg employers.

Interestingly, the political mechanism which established the Domestic Employment Program for Japanese female evacuees during the war resembles the current problematic practice by the Canadian government that import third world domestic workers who are tied to this specific job through restrictive work permit. As discussed in Chapter 3, Canada has devised its immigration mechanisms to allow female domestics from third world countries to enter Canada with temporary status in order to meet the increasing demand for cheap domestic workers. In both cases of Japanese domestics during the

war and third world domestic workers on temporary working visa, the government promote and use powerlessness of minority women with an aim of incorporating them into the marginal jobs which cannot be filled with native Canadian or landed immigrant labour. Lacking political and electoral rights and freedom, both Japanese female evacuees and those women on temporary work permits have been trapped in domestic service which is the most undesirable and exploitable occupation in the modern labour system.

Middle Cohort Women: the Content of the domestic work. Interviews with the middle cohort Nisei women who were involved in domestic service illustrated oppressive working conditions in Winnipeg households. As discussed in Chapter 3, domestic work is one of the most degrading and demeaning occupations, which only offer low social status, low wages, and unfavourable working conditions. Lacking freedom to attain other jobs, middle cohort Nisei women had to endure those undesirable situations.

The wages of Japanese domestics were low. Despite the involvement of YWCA into the recruitment process, the wage for each domestic was not standardized. The amount of payment that women recalled varied from one person to another, but many women described their wage in a similar tone by saying "very little," "very bad," or "horrible." Although some domestics seem to have managed to send some money to their families, others did not get paid enough to do so. However, the Nisei daughters accepted these work arrangements in part because the expenses of their families

were reduced. Mrs. T explained her situation:

"I went to housework and, you know, there was no shortage of food. We didn't get paid very much, but at least we got fed.

So then, our family didn't have to spend the money on our food. See, we survived all right by going (to live-in work)."

Working conditions of Japanese domestics were unpleasant and stressful. Working hours were long and unlimited. In addition, the private and work aspects of their lives were not distinguishable. Domestics were expected to be available anytime they were needed. The following comments illustrate the trapped situation of live-in domestics.

"Housework, there isn't hours. You live there. If you are needed, you just... I mean, you don't continuously do hard work or anything, but you have to be there."

"There is no time limit. You have to do all day constantly. It is difficult, you have to do everyday... something to do."

In extreme cases, the employers did not provide required days off to their domestic workers. Mrs. I stated:

"In some places, they expected you work all the time... work really hard... just like a slave.

For some reasons, they (employers) were entertaining and they had a lot of work in the house, you know. So, they expected girls to work everyday. Even when their time-off comes, they just wanted you to work, you know."

Besides the physical constraint of long hours of work, Japanese domestics experienced psychological stress due to a lack of freedom and close supervision. In contrast with other types of jobs where employees can enjoy a certain distance from their employers, domestic workers carry out their tasks under the close

supervision of demanding employers (Arat-Cok,1989; Katzman,1978). The comment of Mrs. R illustrates the stressful working environment that domestic workers experienced in the private households.

"They were very strict. They have things you got to do in their way, because they have different ideas about things. And then, watching things... certain way you got to do it.

That is why I said to myself, '(they are) watching you.' When I was not, (they were going to say) 'Oh, you didn't do right' or things like that."

As literature on domestic work constantly observes the relationship between employer and domestic workers was often asymmetric. Comments of middle cohort Nisei women imply that employers displayed their authoritative and superior status by treating their workers strictly as "servants." Segregation of space and activity between domestics and family members was clearly indicated. Often, uniforms for domestics were used to symbolize their status as servants. Sensing those subtle expressions of employers who attempted to create asymmetric relationship with their employees, Japanese domestics internalized their low status and role as "servants" and had to behave according to expectations of their employers. The comment of Mrs. R illustrates the circumstance in which traditional master-servant relationships was created.

"We weren't allowed to be in the living room with the family. We were just... I would served dinner or whatever. My place was in the kitchen and in my room. -- We were treated like a domestic help. You just work. You don't sit in the living room with them or anything."

Interviewer: Were you told that you shouldn't sit in the living room?

"Uh... No. I think you feel it. I used to wear uniform. I had a black dress and white apron."

My data reveal that the asymmetric relationship between employer and employee was created not only in the strict working environment but also in the family like atmosphere of the household. Some respondents described their employers as "nice" or "friendly", treating them as members of the family. In these households, domestic workers were allowed to eat meals with their employers, or sometimes taken out on family outings, or given gifts on special occasions. Closer employer-employee ties in family-like environments seem to indicate less asymmetric relationships. However, these environments, in fact, reflected paternalistic elements in their relationships. In particular, Japanese domestics, who were fairly young at that time, were treated as daughters who were supposed to be submissive and acquiescent in the patriarchal household. In other words, close ties with Japanese domestics created an opportunity for their employers to control their employees in a totalitarian manner.

Those elements are evident in Mrs Z's case. Her employer treated her like a part of family by letting her eat with them and giving her birthday presents. She said they made her eat with them even when they had guests, although she would have much rather eaten by herself. She appreciated their desire to include her in the family, but interestingly this family eliminated her day-offs by asking her for favours many times. Unable to maintain a business-like relationships in family-like atmosphere, Mrs. Z could not turn down her employer's request, so she often worked through

a week without a day-off.

Interview data also suggest that these domestic workers responded to their situation by assuming a submissive role. The idea was to create a good impression by acting obediently in well-mannered ways. Such intention seems to have had its origin in Nisei women's desire to obtain good image or reputation of Japanese domestics and ultimately Japanese evacuees as a whole. The powerlessness of those domestics made them docile and acquiescent workers. As the following comment suggests, Japanese domestics, consciously or unconsciously, tried to fit in the image of the ideal servant.

"I think a lot of families were enjoying having *nihonjin* (Japanese) girls. We didn't complain. We were pleasant in a house. None of us gave anybody any troubles."

In summary, during the war, the middle cohort had to endure low-wage and low-status domestic jobs because of the political restrictions imposed upon them. Although some women described the positive aspects of their work experience in private households (they could learn the way of life among the dominant groups in society,) these women left their jobs as soon as restrictions were lifted after the war. The Japanese families who had been frozen in the sugar beet project also moved out in order to find better places to live and work in the city. Release from war time oppression, however, did not solve all of their problems. As discussed below, Nisei women were again streamed into a gender and racially segregated system, this time in an industrial settings.

6-2. The Immediate Post-War Period (1945-1950)

The immediate post-war period covers the years when Japanese Canadians gradually regained their civil rights²⁹, migrated into cities and began to re-establish their livelihood in urban settings. This period witnessed a significant shift in Japanese Canadian's economic activities from family-based agricultural production to individual wage labour in urban industries. At this transitional point, Japanese Canadians were confronted with discrimination in a labour market stratified according to racial, migrant and gender status. Experiencing systematized social discrimination in the labour market, Japanese workers could attain only cheap unskilled jobs. Japanese females, in particular, became heavily concentrated in the garment industry, which is generally recognized as one of the most exploitative areas of the labour market. This section examines the formation of this occupational concentration among Nisei women by identifying the factors which streamed them into the garment industry and discusses their working conditions.

6-2-1. The Concentration in the Garment Industry: Older and Middle cohorts in sewing factories

The formation of the concentration in the garment industry. In the

²⁹. The legislative restrictions imposed upon the Japanese Canadians were mostly lifted as the war ended. They regained the freedom of geographical mobility, engagement in private employment, and property ownership. The full political citizenship of Japanese Canadians finally materialized in 1949, when the restriction on their residency in B.C. was removed and the government passed a bill which enfranchised Canadian citizens of Japanese origins.

immediate post-war period, most of the Nisei women in both older and middle cohorts became wage earners with the majority of them involved in the needle trades. The older Nisei, who were raising small children in those years, worked as machine operators in the garment factories or, in some cases, did sewing jobs at home in order to support their growing families. Nisei women of the middle cohort, who had worked as seasonal domestic workers during the war, also moved to factory jobs in the garment industry as the war ended³⁰. In my sample, 8 older women out of 9 and 8 middle cohort women out of 9 were in the labour force and 75% of those (12 out of 16) were in the garment industry³¹.

This heavy concentration of Nisei women in the garment industry was established by a combination of several factors. The first factor which streamed Nisei women into the garment industry was the job segregation in the labour system which tended to confine minority women to a limited set of occupations. The racial discrimination against Japanese Canadians in Winnipeg was extremely intense during those immediate post-war years. The only jobs which the Japanese were offered were low-wage and low-status positions

³⁰. In this period, the younger cohort women were not yet entering into the labour force. Being in their adolescence, this cohort was in the process of completing their high school education which neither their older and middle counterparts could acquire.

³¹. The details of four Nisei women who were in other industries were the following. Only one middle cohort woman was working outside of the garment industry as a domestic worker. One older woman was helping her husband in his business by doing clerical work. Another woman was working in a cannery factory in Alberta before moving to Winnipeg.

which could not attract other local workers. As one woman said, "At that time, they hired (Japanese) people to do work that other people wouldn't have done." Although this structural barrier narrowed job opportunities of Japanese males as well, they had more options than their female counterparts. While several industries absorbed Japanese males, the garment industry, which always absorbed cheap immigrant or minority female labour, was the only one where Nisei women found jobs.

It was, in fact, two sewing factories that took the initiative to hire Japanese women at a time when most other city's employers still refused to accept Japanese workers. For a while, West Garment Co. and United Garment Co. were the only two firms which gave jobs to Japanese women (Manitoba Japanese Canadian Citizens Association, 1988). Mrs. C., who was one of the early migrants to Winnipeg, explained how she found a job at that time:

"There were only two places in Winnipeg that were hiring Japanese. This was the second one. I went there to look for a job and they gave it to me right away. --- It was not difficult, because we knew which factories hired Japanese, so I just went there."

Other sewing factories soon followed the practice of those two precursors. It was natural that the industry swiftly incorporated Japanese women who, having no other job opportunities, worked hard and obediently for low wages which the industry offered.

The second factor which led Nisei women to the garment industry was the strong labour demand in this particular industry. The economic structure of Winnipeg, which had the third largest garment industry in Canada, opened up opportunities for Japanese

workers in this specific field. The timing of their entry into the labour market coincided with the peak of labour demand in the industry. Throughout 1940s, the Winnipeg garment industry was booming due to a great demand for war supplies and subsequent growth of consumer power among civilians in the post-war years. In 1946, the industry experienced the peak of its growth. In this single year, 14 new firms were established in Winnipeg (Hastile, 1974). This trend spawned an enormous demand for new factory workers³². Because the industry could not fill their demand solely with East European immigrant women whose cheap labour had been previously supporting the rapid growth of the industry³³, the owners of the sewing factories welcomed the influx of Japanese labour despite the prevailing social prejudice towards Japanese migrants in the city.

Thirdly, the lack of educational qualifications and useful work experiences among Nisei women in general was also a significant factor which functioned to concentrate Nisei women in the garment industry. As discussed in Chapter 6, most older and middle cohort Nisei women did not have an opportunity to attain or complete high school education. In addition, these women who were mostly from rural BC did not have previous work experience in urban industries. In pre-war BC, most of the older Nisei women were

³². According to one estimate (Lepp, et al. 1987), the number of employees in the industry in the mid-40s doubled within five years.

³³. Prior to entry of Japanese women, factory workers in the Winnipeg garment industry were predominantly East European immigrant women (Mochoruck and Webber, 1987).

involved in the agricultural work in their parents', husbands' or other Japanese families' farms. In some cases, women were working in the city, but the only available jobs were domestic work or dress-making jobs in small stores. As for the middle cohort women, their only work experience was also domestic work in Winnipeg households during the war. Without good educational backgrounds or useful industrial skills, Nisei women had limited job options, when they entered the urban labour force in the immediate post-war period³⁴.

The fourth factor which drew Nisei women into the garment industry was the use of informal networks for locating jobs. As indicated in the above comment of Mrs. C who said there were very few firms hiring Japanese women, everybody in the Japanese community knew where they should go to find a job through information from other Japanese women who had previously been in the city. The initial entry of early migrants in the garment industry created an occupational concentration among subsequent migrants. Knowing that hostility and discrimination existed in the labour market, women followed the pathways already paved by others. Women looked for a job in the sewing factory, because "everybody" in the community was working there. Even when women were looking for a job without using direct connections, they automatically

³⁴. Although the lack of educational qualification was one factor which eliminated occupational options of Nisei women, the discriminatory labour practice was more crucial element in the occupational marginalization of Nisei women. This is indicated by the fact that the general labour system indiscriminately excluded all Nisei women including the few who had higher educational backgrounds.

assumed that the garment factories were the places to go for work. The operation of social networks in their ethnic community excluded Nisei women from knowledge about other job opportunities and concentrated them in this specific industry.

The fifth factor of Nisei women concentration in the garment industry was occupational socialization for Japanese females. Prior to Nisei women's entry into the Winnipeg labour market in the post-war period, the pathway to this particular occupation had been established through occupational socialization within their community. Among Japanese Canadians, there was a prevalent notion which defined sewing as "women's work." Before and during the war, many Nisei girls went to sewing schools or took private dress-making lessons. This was because Issei parents, thinking "all girls had to know how to sew before they get married," made their daughters learn how to sew, rather than encouraging them to attain higher education. Having good sewing skills was not only the necessary qualification for housewife candidates but also one of few potential female careers. In pre-war B.C. where job options for Japanese were extremely limited, being a dress-maker was the only attainable job for women besides domestic work. Raised in such an environment, most Nisei women were naturally directed to the sewing industry when they began to look for a job. For example, Mrs.H said;

"I could have looked for something else... Hard to say, though. Sewing --- most Japanese people do sewing. We never thought about going to restaurant to work or things like that. Sewing is the only work for women, we thought. That's the way I thought."

As discussed above, the occupational concentration of older and middle cohort Nisei women in the garment industry was established by the combination of several factors. First of all, the gender and racially stratified labour system limited job options for Nisei women. Secondly, the strong labour demand in the garment industry provided employment for Japanese women who were willing to work even in the lowest-paying jobs. Thirdly, the lack of work experiences in urban industries and educational qualification among Nisei women functioned to lead them into these low-status and low-wage job. Fourthly, the use of informal networks for locating jobs created an occupational concentration among Nisei women by excluding them from knowledge about other job opportunities. Fifthly, prevailing occupational socialization for Japanese females directed Nisei women to the sewing jobs which were considered as typical women's work in their community.

Working conditions in the garment factories. As discussed in Chapter 3, the garment industry is considered as one of the most exploitative sectors within the labour system. The clothing trade is, by nature, a highly unstable, competitive, and labour intensive industry where profits are made by suppressing labour costs. As many socio-historical studies indicate, this low-wage industry has historically depended on a cheap labour force of the marginalized immigrant women. These women, who have been excluded from other occupational opportunities, have worked in dreadful working conditions for extremely poor wages. Conversations with the older

and middle cohort Nisei women who were absorbed in this lower section of an industrial economy vividly demonstrated the exploited situation of garment workers.

Nisei women mentioned unpleasant and hazardous conditions at their work places. Most factories in Winnipeg were located in buildings which had previously been constructed as warehouses. The utilization of those buildings was beneficial for entrepreneurs who wanted to reduce expenditures, but it was disastrous for workers. The structure of those buildings was unsuitable for the needs of manufacturing. Ventilation was very poor, so that rooms filled with press machines and irons became extremely hot. The working area was crowded and very noisy with the disturbing sound of the sewing machines. Washroom and dining facilities were often inadequate and unsanitary.

Mrs. A: "The factory was very hot sometimes, because they had a big press there. Especially, when you are in up -- - we were on the fifth floor. Now, they have an air conditioner in all the factories, but at that time, they didn't. Very very hot! That was the thing. Very difficult."

Mrs.Y: "At that time, I just looked at the factories. Then I saw the factory machine goes. Because I wasn't just used to that kind of work. I am just doing sewing at home, you know. But, the machine goes "Uweeeeen," you know. How people go though that!"

Mrs.T: "It's such a awful atmosphere to work, huh? Factories --- You talk about sweatshops... Those days, there were really sweatshops. --- The conditions of the factory... it was the first time I ever saw cockroaches. There were just full of them, because it was an old building. The workers bring their own lunch and they don't clean it up. They throw it into the garbage, so bugs are coming. So dirty! That the most factories were, you know. Nowadays, they have an air-conditioning and everything, but those places were very hot! --- Really a sweatshop."

It was not only working conditions in the poor facilities but also the work environment in a competitive atmosphere that was unpleasant and stressful. In order to make a reasonable amount of money within the piece work system, people had to work at a frantic pace. As one respondent stated, "Everybody was working, working, working and working like crazy trying to get to make money." Under such pressure, workers became competitive towards each other instead of socializing. The isolation of mechanized factory work became even more severe because of the competition created in the piece work system. Although such a competitive atmosphere was beneficial for employers who were eager to raise the productivity of their employees, it created a great amount of stress among workers. Many women expressed their hatred of the "unusual" atmosphere in the factories:

Mrs. HH: "I just don't like piece work. I don't know how to say. That changes persons..."

Mrs. T: "I didn't want to do piece work. I don't like that type of competition. Because when you do piece work, people get kind of greedy --- and some of the girls got treated so badly, you know. Men throw things at them and hurry up and this and that, you know."

As indicated in the above comment of Mrs.T, slow workers were sometimes verbally abused by other workers or bosses who were stressed out in the competitive working environment.

Hard work at a hectic pace, however, did not bring Nisei women large pay-checks. To begin with, the piece rate was very low. To make matters worse, employers arbitrarily reduced the rate when employees were earning too much. A couple of respondents referred to the deceitful actions of their employers. When Mrs.H was

telling how bad her wages were, she claimed:

"Every time I was making a good money, they cut the price! Oh, gosh!

That's what they were doing. If you get done so much, they make a lot of cut back from the price. I think so, because I noticed..."

Despite the various problems imposed upon garment workers, Nisei women stayed in the industry. In the first place, they were in a vulnerable situation, since they had nowhere else to go within the discriminatory labour market. In addition, their income was urgently needed to support their families. These women, who were determined to rebuild their livelihoods from scratch, were willing to work hard even in exploitative situations. Their willingness to obtain social acceptance as good, peaceful, and non-threatening citizens made them even more exploitable. In order to build positive images of their community, Nisei women worked loyally and subordinately in the garment industry which "generously" gave them employment. Having no other job opportunities and also desiring to achieve a positive reputation, these women accepted low wages and dreadful working conditions in the industry.

The situation, however, has changed since 1950 when the younger cohort Nisei women entered labour force. As the Japanese workers built their reputation as good workers and citizens, the labour market became more open. In the following chapter, we see that Nisei women's concentration in the garment industry ended and the occupational structure became more diversified.

6-3. The Contemporary Period (1950-present)

In the contemporary period (1950-the present), Japanese Canadians, in general, have made substantial economic and social gains. This period has witnessed a drastic shift in the occupational structure of their community from one consisting of un- or semi-skilled blue-collar jobs to one containing various kinds of white-collar jobs, including professional occupations. This transition was associated with a demographic change in the generational structure of the Japanese Canadian community. In the early years of this period, the Issei, who could not attain up-ward occupational mobility in the post-war years, retired from the work force. Shortly after that, their grandchildren, the Sansei entered the labour market with relatively high educational backgrounds, and achieved prominent social and economic success.

In those years, the occupational activities of the second generation became diversified reflecting the cohort differences in their mobility. While most of the older cohort women remained in factory jobs in the garment industry, middle cohort women experienced upward mobility through marriage: they could leave factory jobs when they began to build their own families and enjoyed the privilege of being able to stay home³⁵. In the meantime, younger Nisei women, who entered into the labour force in

³⁵. As discussed in Chapter 8, not only the middle cohort but also the younger cohort withdrew from the labour force for child rearing. I also will discuss factors that explain why the middle cohort women as well as the younger cohort could leave their jobs after having children, even though their older counterparts had to stay in the labour force throughout the post-war period in the following chapter.

the early years of this period, obtained clerical jobs in offices. Aiming to examine this diversification of the occupational structure of Nisei women, this section analyzes the factors that provided younger Nisei women with an opportunity to move up to the clerical work which their older and middle counterparts could not obtain in the previous periods.

**6-3-1. Diversification of the Occupational Structure:
Younger Nisei Women's Entry into the Clerical Work**

The extension of occupational fields of Nisei women into clerical jobs began in the beginning of the contemporary period. This new trend was created mainly by younger cohort women who appeared in the labour force in early 1950'. In contrast to their older and middle counterparts who were concentrated in factory jobs, the younger cohort women began to work as office workers without ever experiencing any manual labour in their working lives. Although a few older and middle cohort Nisei women moved into the clerical jobs in this period, the younger cohort have been a core part of this trend. In my sample, 80% of younger cohort women (four out of five) have worked as an office workers compared to 22% of older and 33% of middle cohort women.

Two factors should be pointed out to explain why younger cohort Nisei women especially could attain clerical jobs. The first factor is their relatively good educational background. Although none of the younger cohort women in my sample obtained a university degree, 80% of them completed their high school education, and 40% of them managed to go to business school

Table 3. Working Experiences of Three Cohorts

	Older	<u>Cohort</u> Middle	Younger
<u>World War Period</u>			
Working in the sugar beet project	67%	11%	
Working as domestics*		67%	
Attending school			100%
Being in internment camps	33%	22%	(20%)
<u>Immediate Post-War Period</u>			
Working in the garment industry	56%	78%	
Working in other industries	11%		
Working as domestics		11%	
Attending school	11%	11%	80%
Others	22%		
<u>Contemporary Period**</u>			
Working in the garment industry	56%		20%
Working in other industries		11%	
Working in service sectors	11%	11%	
Working in offices	22%	33%	60%
Becoming Full-time housewives, never returned to the labour force	11%	33%	(20%)
Others		11%	20%

* Most of the women who were working as domestics were also involved in sugar beet farming.

** Some women changed their jobs during this period, but only the most current jobs are included in this figure.

afterwards. As discussed in chapter 6, the younger cohort women could complete their secondary education during the immediate post-war years, in contrast to their older and middle counterparts who could not afford to continue their education. Their better educational background made it possible for the younger cohort women to find positions outside of factory jobs.

The entry of younger Nisei women's into the clerical occupation, however, would not have been realized without a second factor; that is, a diminishing discriminatory attitude in the labour market towards Japanese workers. Obvious racial discrimination, which had previously restricted Japanese workers to factory jobs, had been weakened by 1950 when the younger cohort began to enter the labour market. In such favourable circumstances, these women could fully take advantage of their educational background and attain clerical jobs. The following comment of Mrs.D illustrates how the changing social atmosphere affected job opportunities of the younger cohort. Comparing her own situation to her sister-in-law who is a middle cohort Nisei women, Mrs.D said,

"More things were opened to us by that time. I remember my sister-in-law was saying that when she was looking for a job, there were only factory jobs and things like that, you know. There were only places that you were able to earn the living. They didn't hire Japanese in the offices or anything like that. But, that's all changed, so..."

It is important to note that the weakening of discrimination in the labour market was the primary factor of Nisei women's occupational mobility. Although educational background was a

significant element for up-ward mobility, it was not useful until Japanese workers were treated fairly in the market place. For example, a few older and middle cohort Nisei women with high school education were able to acquire clerical jobs in the contemporary period, although these women had been indiscriminately absorbed into the garment industry in the immediate post-war period³⁶. Observing the change in social atmosphere, those women realized the possibility of moving out of factory jobs by taking advantage of their educational background. As Mrs.K who happened to have better education than other older and middle cohort women said, "I figured out with my high school education, I should be able to do something better."

Upward occupational mobility among Nisei women, however, did not proceed beyond the so-called pink-collar job³⁷. Overcoming racial discrimination, they were still trapped in a reality of systematic gender discrimination in society. Occupational socialization for the younger cohort Nisei women took place in the 1940' when there was a strong notion of woman's occupations. Career options for women were limited to a narrow set of occupations, such as office work, teaching, or nursing. For those younger Nisei women whose families could not afford to give them

³⁶. In my sample, two older and two middle cohort women had high school diplomas. All of them, except one who became a full-time housewife after leaving the factory job in the garment industry, attained a clerical job in the contemporary period.

³⁷. In my sample, there is only one woman who obtained an university degree and pursued a professional career. Mrs. T was a lab technician and later became a teacher at the community college.

university education (especially to their female children), a clerical job was the most desirable career, since other types of female occupations were not attainable. Thus, they were naturally geared to this specific women's job while they were still in high school. In fact, some of them took some technical courses in high school in order to acquire practical skills for office work. A couple of them went to "business school" which provided the specific vocational training for the clerical job with many female high school graduates. As Mrs.M said, "That was a popular thing. Most girls went to business school, unless people who could go to university."

Although office work tends to be a dead-end job for female workers, Nisei women found great satisfaction with this newly attained status. Working in an office was "a dream" for those women who had been confined to factory work or who had seen their mothers or sisters in this type of employment. In contrast to the negative image of factory work, office work was considered a clean and graceful job, especially for women. This was clearly indicated in the comments of Nisei women who held clerical jobs. Those women joyfully told me how they liked their job.

Mrs.D: "All I wanted to do was working in an office. I was very pleased just to work in an office."

Mrs.O: "I enjoyed the business atmosphere. I love to meet people, answer the phone and type. I like office work very much."

Mrs.M: "I was happy with where I was."

6-4. Summary

The labour history of Nisei women examined in this chapter illustrated an overlap of Nisei women's work experience with that of many other minority women. Experiencing the combination of gender and racial subordination, Nisei women became concentrated in a limited set of occupations constituting a segregated labour market for minority women, such as contractual agricultural work, domestic service, and un- or semi-skilled jobs in garment factories. The detailed historical analysis of Nisei women's labour experience furthermore revealed that such an occupational concentration was formed in a specific historical context including the political, economic and social climate specific to that area. During the Second World War, the evacuation of Japanese Canadians by the federal government resulted in the creation of a powerless pool of labour. The government then utilized the labour of Nisei women in the Sugar Beet Project and the Domestic Servant Program. In the immediate post-war years, systematized social and economic discrimination confined them to one of the most marginalized sectors in the industrial economy, i.e., the needle trade. In the contemporary period, declining social prejudice toward Japanese population allowed some Nisei women move into clerical jobs, but it was evident that their mobility was still limited by their status as women.

The close examination of the labour experience of Nisei women also illuminated a complex aspect of their occupational concentration. My data clearly indicated that different cohorts of

Nisei women have had distinct experiences in the labour force. Thus there is a marked difference between the general trend of the labour history of Nisei women as a whole and that of each cohort. As discussed above, the involvement in the domestic servant program during the war was limited to middle cohort women. Although both older and middle cohorts participated in the sugar beet project, older women, who had to take care of their growing families, experienced more severe physical and psychological hardships in the Manitoba fields. The occupational concentration in the garment industry during the immediate post-war period contained older and middle cohorts, but not younger Nisei women. On the other hand, the extension of occupational fields of Nisei women into clerical jobs in the contemporary years was mainly due to the entry of younger Nisei women into the labour force. This complex picture of the labour history of Nisei women indicates that they are not a homogeneous group. Although all of the three cohorts shared a disadvantageous structural position as minority women, they experienced it differently.

CHAPTER 7
DATA ANALYSIS: THE INTERPLAY OF WORK AND FAMILY

This chapter focuses on the interrelationship between Nisei women's wage labour and their domestic labour. Through the analysis of the perceptions of Nisei women about their work experience as well as their family experience, I shall analyze how the family relations of these women shaped their wage work outside the home, and also how their labour-force participation affected their domestic roles. Furthermore, I will examine how their ethnic families have functioned for Nisei women --- whether they have been the locus of gender oppression or they have functioned as the site of cultural resistance in a racist society.

We begin our analysis with the examination of the pattern of labour-force participation among Nisei women. In analyzing why Nisei women entered into the work force, I again refer to cohort differences and look further into the relationships between cohort, social class and wage work. In the second section, I examine the effects of gender role ideology on Nisei women's employment by focusing on women's own perceptions about their wage labour as well as the family dynamics which intervene in women's decision making about their labour force participation. Cohort differences in women's perceptions and family dynamics are also examined. In the third section, I discuss the emerging contradiction between gender ideology and the reality of women's employment by focusing on Nisei women's double day of labour. After illustrating the content of their working days, we discuss women's strategies to deal with this contradiction. In the fourth section, we examine the functions of

Nisei women's ethnic families by focusing on their unique domestic experiences as minority women.

7-1. The Orientation of Nisei Women to Wage Work
:Necessity or Desire

As discussed in Chapter 3, many feminist scholars point out that minority women have always participated in wage labour to a much higher degree than their non-minority counterparts. Minority fathers and husbands, who tend to be marginalized to low-paid jobs, cannot support their families with their income. Thus, the wage earning of wives or daughters in minority families becomes an economic necessity. My data on Nisei women, however, indicate a slightly more complex picture of the process of Nisei women's entry into the labour market. There is a cohort difference in the pattern of labour-force participation among Nisei women. While the orientation of the older Nisei women to wage work is identical with the general pattern of labour participation of minority women who work for economic necessity, some Nisei women in the middle and younger cohort became involved in wage work under less restrictive economic circumstances. They started working because of a personal desire for employment, not necessarily because of financial pressure. We shall now discuss such a difference in the orientation to wage work among different cohort groups of Nisei women.

The determinants of Nisei women's participation in the labour force vary with the historical timing of their entry into labour market. In the immediate post-war period (1945-1950), Japanese

Canadian families needed as many sources of income as possible in order to rebuild their lives after the evacuation. Facing severe occupational discrimination against the Japanese evacuees in the Winnipeg labour market, Issei fathers and Nisei husbands had a difficult time attaining good jobs and earning enough money to support their families. Thus, older and middle cohort Nisei women, who had reached the eligible age for employment by that time, began to participate in the labour force in order to contribute to their family finances. Having small children, older Nisei women had to work outside the home in an attempt to raise their growing families during those difficult years. Mrs. M, who already had two children by the end of the war, explained why she started working after her family migrated into Winnipeg from rural Manitoba where her family had been engaged in sugar beet farming:

"Those days, husbands' wages were not too good. We helped. We left everything in B.C. Everything was taken away from us. So, we had to help our husbands and we did everything we can do to help family grow up, things like that. --- *Nihohjin wa* (Japanese people), they don't just stay at home."

The middle cohort Nisei women who were young single daughters in the family also had to assist their Issei parents by engaging in paid work. The income of these Nisei daughters was, in fact, essential to support their families in those immediate post-war years. Mrs. K, who was an essential wage earner in her family, reported,

"Whatever I earned, I gave it to my mother. I just kept enough money for my bus-fare to work and for my lunch. Otherwise, my brother and I had to give my mother money to live. Until the time I got married, I had no money on my own."

While the majority of the older cohort stayed in the labour force throughout the post-war period, some Nisei women in the middle and younger cohort groups left their jobs after having children. There are two major factors that explain this phenomena. The first factor is the different historical timing of early parenthood among different Nisei cohorts. Older Nisei women, who had already been in the child rearing phase prior to their migration to Winnipeg, had to keep working on a full-time basis to get their families established in the middle of the resettlement process, while middle and younger cohort women, who married after the resettlement, could achieve relatively stable family finances prior to parenthood to allow them to be full-time mothers after the birth of their children. The second factor is a difference in husbands' post-war socio-economic mobility between the older cohort and the middle as well as younger cohorts. In contrast to older Nisei males who could not attain up-ward social mobility, Nisei males of the middle and younger cohorts were more likely to achieve better economic status³⁸. Although older Nisei women had to work in order to support their working-class families, middle and younger cohort Nisei women, being in better off family financial situations, could afford to realize the "ideal womanhood" which was being generated in the dominant society. Mrs. S described:

³⁸. The difference in socio-economic mobility is more evident between husbands of older and younger Nisei women. Since husbands of younger Nisei women, who tended to be much younger than those of older Nisei women, had opportunities to pursue higher education in the immediate post-war years, they could attain semi-professional occupations or managerial positions in a company.

"I think a lot of people didn't work in those days. All women who had children didn't go to work. --- I think it was just in our heads that we were mothers now, so we stayed home to look after the children. That was our life."

During the 1960s and 1970s, some Nisei women in the middle and younger cohort groups returned to the labour market, when their child care tasks started to be eased. In contrast to the labour participation of older Nisei mothers whose wage earnings had been an economic necessity, the return of these middle and younger Nisei mothers into the labour market was caused by their personal desire for employment. Mrs. T who once became a full-time housewife exclaimed,

"You need stimulation. You are just talking to the kids all the time. I used to do a lot of volunteer work even then. But, I just felt I wanted to work."

Experiencing the isolation and boredom of domesticity, some women sought personal satisfaction as well as independence from the household by working outside of the home. Mrs. D explained her personal motivation to work;

"I needed to do something other than just sit home and be a housewife. Because at that point, my children were growing up. And I felt that I could contribute, too. I have a lot of secretarial skills and it feels good to be independent and to earn your own salary."

The pattern of Nisei women's involvement in wage work reflected two major types of female labour participation: Working-class women who became engaged in paid work outside the home in response to financial pressures, and women in better off families who participated in the labour force not only for economic benefits but also for their personal satisfaction. Throughout the post-war

period, most of the older Nisei women worked in order to secure enough income for their families. On the other hand, the many middle and most younger Nisei women, who could afford to become full-time mothers during early parenthood, re-entered the labour market during the 1960s and 1970s because of their personal desire for employment. Different social class backgrounds of different cohort groups differentiated the ways that Nisei women participated in the work force. Differentiations related to cohorts, social class and also occupational status appear in the further discussion of Nisei women's experiences in this chapter.

7-2. Ideological Constraints on Working Women

As discussed in Chapter 3, much research indicates that women's participation in the labour force does not result in the immediate gain of women's status either in the family or in the labour system. The pervasive gender ideology, which defines women's primary domestic role, functions to conceal change in a balance of domestic power in double-wage families. Furthermore, the appropriated women's domestic roles impose many restrictions on women's wage earning activities outside the home. We shall now see, first, how gender role ideology influenced the way that Nisei women themselves perceived their paid labour and then how it distorted the reality of women's increasing economic independence and power in their households. Then, we will discuss how their domestic responsibilities limited Nisei women's productive activities outside the home by focusing on the role of husbands who

intervened in Nisei women's decision making about their labour force participation.

**7-2-1. Nisei Women's Perception of Wage Work
:An Extension of Domestic Roles or An Optional Activity**

My data indicate that there is a cohort difference in the way in which Nisei women perceived their wage work. Because of their different economic and occupational circumstances, different cohort groups of Nisei women defined and valued their productive activity outside the home quite differently.

Older Nisei women and some middle cohort women, whose wage work was an economic necessity for the maintenance of their working-class families, perceived their wage work as an extension of their domestic roles of taking care of their children. For these Nisei women, who were raising their families in working-class conditions, it was necessary not only to maintain their households as care takers, but also to provide economic materials to their children as wage earners. They defined their productive activities outside the home as one of their domestic responsibilities involved in raising their families. This domestic centred definition of wage work among older and some middle cohort Nisei women was shaped in relation to the social recognition of their occupations. As Harley (1990) points out in her discussion about Black women in United States, working class jobs which are generally low-paid and low-status, undermine the meaning of paid work, while enlarging the importance of women's domestic status. Likewise, older and some middle cohort Nisei women who could not leave factory jobs tended

to perceive their wage labour in relation to their domestic responsibilities, instead of valuing it as an independent activity from the household.

These Nisei women often emphasized their maternal motivations for their participation in the labour force. Although the majority of them admitted to gaining personal benefits from working experiences, Nisei women who were once working mothers claimed that they worked for the sake of the children. These women emphasized this point by stating that their income was spent on their children and not on themselves. The common responses to the question of the way women spent their wages were: "That was always for the children," or "For family or for kids." Women viewed their wage work as a part of their lives which was supposed to be devoted to their families and children. The comment of Mrs. M embodies this belief of working mothers. When I asked her whether she spent her income for herself, she proudly answered,

"No. I used to dress my kids nice. I made up all kinds of dress, coats, hats... I made everything. I spent it all on them!"

Despite the fact that older Nisei women and some women in the middle cohort had to work for their families and children, there was conflict between the ideals of motherhood and the reality of the economic necessity of their wage labour. Many Nisei working mothers who could not stay home with their small children experienced guilt because of a sense of incompetence in their core role as a mother. They thought that they could not provide enough attention to their children as a full-time mother would be able to

do. Although they attempted to resolve this conflict by defining their wage work as a part of their domestic responsibilities, they could not help being caught by this dilemma between the ideal and the reality. The following quotation from the interview with Mrs. Y illustrates such an emotional conflict experienced by working mothers:

"More or less, kids might be complaining that they were neglected. I bet, that's what they think now. They don't tell me, but I am sure they think that. I see that my grandchildren --- actually, they are spoiled. But, you know, what parents are. What they didn't get, they try to get for your children.

Sometimes, I feel bad about it. But, I think.... You know, there must have been a way I could have done a lot better. But, actually, to get a little extra is to get them extra. You know, to give them extra money, I had to work.

The only thing is I may have been able to give more time to the kids. That's one thing I do regret. I didn't have enough time for kids."

As implied in the above comments of Mrs. Y, women tended to undervalue their financial contributions as wage earners despite the fact that their wages were essential for survival. They perceived their income as supplementary to their husbands' "main" income. No matter how significant their incomes were for family maintenance, women described their financial contributions as secondary by saying it was for providing "extra" for their families or "helping out" with their family finances. This implies that their husband's incomes were always defined as essential. Despite the economic necessity of double wages in the working-class families, the symbolic meaning of the conventional gender role definition of the male breadwinner was sustained in the

consciousness of these working women.

Furthermore, the older and some middle cohort Nisei women in working-class families explicitly expressed their attachment to the patriarchal power structure of the internal family. Some women showed their acceptance of male authority and power as household heads by describing their husbands as a "boss" or a "master of the house." In order to be regarded as a good wife or mother by others, these women seemed to feel or behave according to traditional standards or ideology which was taken as natural and usual in their community. Sometimes they had to let others know about their continual acceptance of such socially defined notions. Older Nisei women, who tended to be more submerged in their ethnic network or kinship than other cohorts, seemed to be more conscious of the culturally defined gender ideology and how others in their community perceived them. The comment of Mrs. M, who had been very active in the community, indicates such a consciousness of working women within the ethnic community. When I asked her whether she felt independent because of her working experience outside the home, she answered in quiet tones,

"Not really. Because, you know, in Japan, you still depend on your husband, when he is still alive. He is, what you say, *Daikokubashira* (mainstay). So, he was the boss."

Compared to working-class women who tended to define their wage work as an extension of their domestic responsibilities, some middle and younger Nisei women, who returned to the labour force due to their desire for employment, valued it as a separate activity from the domestic domain. These women recognized that

their income-producing activities provided a sense of independence and self-esteem to them as individual persons. This is because these women generally could attain more socially valued occupations, such as clerical jobs in offices, so that they could see their status in the work place as a source of self-perception. They regarded their wage work as more than a mere means of earning money for their families.

Nisei women who worked as secretaries or even sales persons often mentioned that they enjoyed their jobs, and talked explicitly about the positive effects of wage work on their personal feelings and situations. The statement of Mrs. D indicates that Nisei women who worked in a middle class occupations valued their wage work as a significant source of self-esteem. Although she still emphasized that she contributed to her family finances by earning money, it is clear that she worked mainly for her own personal satisfaction, rather than for the collective benefit of her family. When I asked why she went back to work after her children became older, Mrs. D answered:

"That was important to me to have my own --- not that my husband was not generous --- he was very generous. But I wanted to feel independent and to earn your own salary. I can go out and earn my own money. It wasn't for just for myself, it would go to all the whole family. But I felt I was contributing and that made me feel very good about myself.

I felt very independent and I felt very good that I can help family. I enjoyed the work, too.

I am better person, because, you see, I think when you are home all the time and you have nothing but children to look after this and that. I think you miss so much... You feel that... I don't know what it is... You feel better about yourself, I think. You are talking with

adults and you do something you enjoy other than housework or talking to children. You are working with adults on the same level --- working with your peers, really. You feel so good about yourself. You feel like you are doing something worthwhile. You put your eight hours a day and when you come home and then, you have time to deal with your family and your home life. Maybe, because I have an outlet, kind of thing, you see rather than being at home all the time. I think so --- definitely, absolutely, when you were working. I enjoyed working."

The greater degree of accessibility to personal material resources for these Nisei women in better off families and better occupations is another significant factor which allowed these women to detach themselves from their families more than their working-class counterparts. When the family financial situations moved beyond working-class survival, the household budget seemed to shift from every wage earner pooling his or her income into one pot for the family to the wives reserving portions of their income as their own money. In other words, the middle-class working women could gain more resource control and financial independence by having money which they could call their own. This increase in individual financial resources provided emotional independence to those Nisei women, and permitted a certain degree of separation from the domestic domain. The comment of Mrs. O clearly illustrates such a relationship between the availability of working women's personal finances and their psychological independence.

Interviewer: Did you feel independent because you were working?

"I didn't feel independent, then. (When she was working in a sewing factory to support her family during and immediate after the war.) But, after my daughter finished high school, I went to work, too, you know. I was a secretary for the real estate company. I had

better money then than before, so I didn't keep all the money (in a family budget.) I saved a lot (for her self).

Interviewer: So, at that time, could you spend money for yourself?

Yes. I put so much into our pot for monthly expense and I saved some. I felt freer to do things with the money, because I had something for my mother... I felt freer to do it and I think I felt independent. But during the war, we were struggling. We had little money. Naturally, every nickel that came in, it went into one pot. We had to take our expenses out of it."

Although working meant gaining a sense of independence and self-esteem to younger and some middle cohort Nisei women in middle-class families, these women still defined their wage work as an optional activity: they would participate in the labour force, if it did not interfere with their domestic responsibilities. Despite their recognition of the positive attributes of employment, they still perceived their domestic roles as their primary responsibility to which they had to give priority over the personal desire for employment. The ideology that defines a man's core role as "breadwinner" and a woman's as "housekeeper" was sedimented in the consciousness of these women who were aware of the benefits of their wage work. The conventional gender role definition is taken as natural and unquestioned in society, especially for middle-class families who could be maintained by the single income of the husbands. These women, therefore, were allowed to seek personal satisfaction from their working experiences, if they fulfilled household duties as wives and mothers, first. The comment of Mrs. D indicates the optional aspect of middle class women's employment:

"If it (work) will interfere too much with my schedule, and I found that things were not working as well, because I was home too late or whatever, if the kind of work I had was too demanding, then, I don't think that I would've been able to continue (to work), because my husband said, "If the work got too demanding, if you felt that you are putting too much demand on your work and not enough on your family, then, you have to figure that maybe that wasn't a job for you." Because we didn't want the children and family to suffer, because you see, it wasn't an actual matter that I needed to work. I wanted to work for my own. I wanted to feel good about myself. If my family suffer, then, of course not."

My data on Nisei women indicate two distinct patterns of how working Nisei women perceived their paid work outside the home. The older and some middle cohort Nisei women, whose wages were economically necessary for the maintenance of their working-families, saw their income-producing activity as an extension of their domestic responsibilities to raise their families. These women, who were in low-status occupations, seemed to undervalue their wage work as a mere means of earning a living. These working women, furthermore, could not gain a sense of financial and emotional independence, because the severe economic situation in their working-class families did not allow them to have personal economic resources which they could use freely. Being submerged in the ethnic or kinship network, older Nisei women were more likely to be conscious of what others thought of them, so that they continuously accepted the culturally defined power structure of the internal family.

Some middle cohort and younger Nisei women, who were in more socially valued occupations, viewed their wage work as a source of self-esteem and emotional independence. Personal satisfaction from

paid work for these women was greater than that for working-class women, also because they could reserve portions of their income as personal resources which they could call their own. Despite their recognition of the personal benefits of employment, these women still accepted the social notion that the female core role was as a wife and mother. They, thus, viewed their wage work as an optional activity which was allowed based on the premise that it would not interfere with their domestic responsibilities.

Despite a cohort difference in Nisei women's perception of their wage labour, the basic attitude appears to be identical in both groups: Women constantly defined their involvement in the paid labour-force in relation to their "primary" domestic roles. Regardless of their occupational and class status, the conventional gender role ideology was deeply rooted in the consciousness of Nisei women of all cohorts, so that they saw their employment as being of secondary importance to their domestic responsibilities. As a result, they tended to neglect or sacrifice the positive attributes of their employment, such as increasing economic independence or access to material resources with which they could challenge the conventional male authority in the household.

7-2-2. The gender role restrictions on Nisei women's wage work

My data indicate that the symbolic meaning attached to the conventional gender ideology functions not only to hinder the transformation of domestic power in double-worker families but also to maintain women's lower-status in the labour system by imposing

various restrictions on their wage-earning activities outside the home. No matter how significant their wage work was for their family situations or for women's personal satisfaction, Nisei women's paid work always had to be arranged to avoid conflicts with their domestic responsibilities. The examination of how Nisei women's wage work was actually obstructed reveals the significance of the family dynamics in controlling women's consciousness as well as their labour power. Husbands of Nisei women consciously influenced Nisei women's decision making related to their employment by reinforcing the social notion of "appropriate" roles as wives and mothers.

In several middle and younger Nisei women's families which could be maintained by the single income of husbands, a woman's desire for employment was often suppressed by her husband's interference. As discussed earlier, some middle and younger Nisei women who became housewives experienced a strong desire to be involved in paid work outside the home because of the isolation and boredom which they experienced in their domestic lives. The husbands of these restless women, however, intervened in their wives' decision making process in an attempt to maintain the conventional power relations and the domestic division of labour in their households by emphasizing their competence in the core role as a provider. Mrs. T commented,

"Well, I thought I could work, but my husband said that I shouldn't go back to work, because he was earning enough. Well, it's not just money counts, you know. He said I should go out to volunteer work. So, that's what I did."

Because of the idealized belief about women's domestic role, these women felt obligated to give priority to their responsibilities as a wife or mother than to their personal desire for employment, so that some women ended up remaining in the domestic sphere.

In the case of some middle and younger Nisei women who became involved in paid work after obtaining "permission" from their husbands, the notion of women's primary domestic roles restricted access to better paying and higher status positions which some of them could have attained. Under the pressure of their husbands who continuously reminded them of the significance of women's domestic duties, Nisei women had to give priority to the flexibility or convenience of the job, rather than to its responsibilities or benefits. Attempting to accomplish their domestic responsibilities as a wife and mother, women tended to avoid jobs which required deep commitments or devotion. The comment of Mrs. D, who has been working as a secretary for the provincial government, illustrates this restriction for women's career improvement:

Interviewer: Did you want to get a better position or better job?

"No. You see that's another thing. I made sure, when I worked, I wasn't going to be ambitious. Because when you are too ambitious, your position changes and it's more demanding. See, I don't want jobs which is going to be more demanding, because to me, as I said, my family and husband came first. So I wanted the job that I could do and enjoy and yet wouldn't have made hard for my family. This is why I didn't want job that have too much promotion or to be in upper... because it would take... I didn't want that. That was important to me."

The experience of Mrs. K is another example of the vulnerability of women's career improvement. After raising two

children, she attained a clerical job in a small office with the assistance of her sister-in-law. When she found out about that job opportunity, she had to convince her husband, who did not like her idea to go back to work, by promising him that she would successfully carry on her domestic duties while working. Mrs. K who used to work in a sewing factory prior to the birth of her first child energetically described how she enjoyed working in the office as a secretary. However, when she became pregnant with her third child after a few years, she had to give up her enjoyable career according to the original agreement with her husband who demanded her first priority be to the family.

Even the paid work of older and some middle cohort Nisei women whose earnings were an economic necessity for their families faced many restrictions. Conversations with these women revealed that their working-class husbands also attempted to control wives' income-producing activities by emphasizing the importance of women's domestic responsibilities. The situation of Mrs. H is a good example. Her husband was not opposed to her employment, because her wages were significant for the family. However, he demanded satisfactory domestic services from Mrs. H and did not allow her to work regular hours like other ordinary factory workers. In order to reduce tension with her husband, she ended up working in exploitative working conditions. She stated:

"My husband didn't want me to work in the union shop, because union shop, you have to work by hours. He want me to come back earlier, so I went to work in non-union shop. It didn't pay much and hours were short, too. But, that's what I worked for."

Interviewer: Your husband didn't want you to work outside?

"No. He wanted me be home before him to cook supper. He likes money (laughs), but he doesn't want... My husband always didn't want me to go long hours --- overtime.

Off course, men --- they don't want to come to empty house ---winter time, especially."

For older and some middle cohort Nisei women who had continued to work while raising small children, their responsibility for child care became a major factor which restricted their occupational choice. Arrangements for matching their work to child care made working conditions of those women even worse. Some working mothers became engaged in home-based work, such as dress-making or glove sewing which were usually lower-paying than factory jobs. Another choice for these women was to take the night shift job in factories. Two respondents claimed that they worked at night in the sewing factories, so that they could take care of their small children and do housework during the day. One woman said, "We needed money, you know. This was the only way I could go to work. It worked well that way."

Child care responsibilities of some women who still went out to work lowered their status as employees in their work place. They rushed back home from work thinking about their children waiting for them, so that they could not do overtime work, even if it was desirable or necessary to improve their working conditions or the relationships with their employers. Mrs. H expressed her dilemma between the pressure of overtime work in the factory and her desire to go home early for her children.

"They (sewing factories) did overtime, then. I didn't like it. Children were waiting. We had to come home by time. --- They don't like it, if you don't (work overtime.) Other get better work --- those who work harder and work overtime. That's what I didn't like, you know. If you can't, you can't!"

Nisei women's wage-earning activities outside the home were subjected to many restrictions from domestic and family demands. The primary responsibility of women was defined as fulfilling their domestic roles successfully, so that women's paid work outside the home was expected to be arranged in a fashion which did not interfere with their duties within the household. It was particularly interesting to see the role of husbands in influencing Nisei women's decision making about their employment. As for some middle and younger Nisei women, whose family finances could be maintained by the single income of husbands, their access to paid work itself was sometimes cut off by their husbands intervention. If these women were allowed to be engaged in paid work, their desire for better jobs was suppressed because of their husbands explicit pressure or their own self-control. Even older and some middle cohort Nisei women whose wages were an economic necessity for their families had husbands who continued to assume and demand domestic services, and pressured them to seek jobs which were compatible with their domestic responsibilities. As a result, these women, who did not have many career choices, were further marginalized in to more exploitative jobs.

The social notion of appropriate female and male roles functioned to restrict wage work of Nisei women of all cohorts, regardless of differences in their occupational status and social

class among themselves. Their husbands, whether they were competent in the core role as the "breadwinner" or not, constantly reinforced the legitimacy of women's domestic duties, thus imposing various restrictions on their wives' employment. At the same time, Nisei women, internalizing idealized beliefs about motherhood, accepted social expectations as well as husbands explicit requests and gave every priority to their domestic responsibilities over their productive activities outside the home. Therefore, Nisei women were prevented from assuming full-time and regular positions or attaining better jobs, or even insisting on their desire for labour-force participation.

7-3. The Contradictions between Women's Wage Work and Domestic Role

As discussed in Chapter 3, much research points out that women's involvement in wage labour does not necessarily change the distribution of domestic tasks. Working women continue to perform the majority of household tasks and child care without receiving significant domestic help from male family members. Despite the drastic increase in women's labour-force participation, the fundamental gender role definitions which allocate domestic obligations to women have not changed. As a result of this contradiction between cultural myths about women's domestic roles and the reality of their employment, many women end up having a double day of labour at home and at work.

My data on Nisei women confirm the findings of numerous other studies. Despite their labour-force participation outside the

home, Nisei women continued to carry on domestic responsibilities and experienced the overload of double labour. Information based on conversational talk with Nisei women provides a detailed and vivid description of women's hectic working days. Furthermore, it reveals how Nisei women themselves viewed and reacted to the gap between traditional gender role definitions and the actual role transformation that occurred with women's employment. In this section, we examine, first, the real content of Nisei women's double day of labour and, then, discuss these women's strategies to deal with the contradiction of their double loads.

7-3-1. The Content of Nisei women's double day of labour

Consistent with the findings of many studies, the labour participation of my informants did not reduce their responsibilities in the household. Despite their financial contributions and time devoted to paid work outside the home, working Nisei women continued to perform most of the household chores, while their fathers, brothers and husbands did not carry an equal load. As reflected in the examination of their perception of wage work, Nisei women continuously accepted their primary domestic responsibility regardless of their class and occupational status. Internalizing the social notion of "women's duty" as a wife and mother, working women of every cohort ended up taking responsibility for both wage labour and domestic roles. As a result, all working Nisei women experienced the pressure of the double day of labour: their working days were occupied solely with

the time spent at work and the time spent on household tasks, so that they did not have enough time for their own personal relaxation and leisure. As one respondent muttered, "Women's work is never ending."

The pressure of the double day of labour on Nisei women started from the very beginning of their work history. As working daughters in the families, young single Nisei women were obligated to assume domestic responsibilities which were not imposed on their brothers. While living with their parents during the immediate post-war years, the middle and younger Nisei women who participated in the work-force had to share household tasks with their mothers who were working outside the home. Ms. M was one of those busy working daughters. Being an only daughter in her family, she was obligated to take on a large amount of the domestic responsibilities in place of her working mother.

"When we were all working, you all go out at different times in the morning --- go to work and come home. I usually, --- because I was the first one at home ---, so I cooked. My mother sometimes worked late --- overtime (in a sewing factory.)

You are the only daughter, you know. All the others could do whatever. Mother isn't home... Cooking... you know. My God! I was always sad, because I had a friend whose mother stayed home. So they go home and supper is ready. Don't have to worry about cooking or whatever... could do whatever they want.

That's the way they are, you know. It's expected for daughters.

Interviewer: Didn't you make your brothers to help you?

They are treated like Gods. In most families, you know, boys don't do much.

While the middle and younger Nisei women were experiencing the

double day of labour as working daughters in the immediate post-war years, the older Nisei women were taking triple roles as wage earners, housekeepers, and mothers. These older Nisei women had to participate in paid work outside the home in order to support their growing families. In the meantime, they also had to perform household chores which were very time-consuming at the time when domestic appliances were not yet widely available. In addition, the responsibility of child care was on their shoulders. Mrs. M who had raised three children as a working mother recalled those days:

"We had to work and look after our family --- not like nowadays, families are lucky. Nowadays, some parents work, but still they can drive, you know --- luxury.

We didn't have a time to think. We had to look after ourselves and worry about what to do next. We just had to keep on working. Yes, it was hard. But, then we were younger. We wonder how we did it, because there was no washing machines, no freezers...

I think a lot of Nisei --- I am sure older Nisei --- we had to bring our family and we worked at the same time. Quite often, husband are Japanese born, so they didn't come to the kitchen."

The lives of these working mothers in the immediate post-war years were incredibly hectic. Recalling those years, many women said that they did not know how they had managed their two jobs at home and at work. The description of a typical working day of Mrs M, who was raising her small children while working in the sewing factory, indicates the kinds of hardships that these older Nisei women were having.

"I used to get up at five o'clock in the morning to do *takitsuke* (prepare for meals) --- cut the wood and made fire in the stove and cook breakfast. Then, I got

children up to make them eat breakfast. At the same time, I made lunch for everybody. I went to work at seven o'clock. During the lunch time, I went shopping for supper. I did a lot of overtime work, too. After coming back home, I began to prepare supper, and did dish washing. I made clothing for children at night. --- When I recall that time, I don't know how I made it."

Working Nisei mothers, regardless of cohort differences, experienced the most intense double day of labour when they were parenting young children. Mrs. D exclaimed,

"It is very busy part of your life, when your children are young and you both have jobs to do --- both parents are working. That's a very busy life."

A concern for the welfare of children became a psychological constrain on working mothers. While they were working, their minds were occupied with their children at home. The comment of Mrs. A illustrates such a concern of working mothers. She said,

"(In the morning,) I had to tell children all instructions and write them down. I made notes and left them on (the table). Sometimes, when I get to work, (I say,) 'Oh! I forgot to tell them!' I had to phone. I phoned during lunch time to make sure everything was alright."

Another woman, Mrs. H also recalled,

"While I was working, I worry myself and sick, sometimes. How kids are doing at home... Those kinds of things used to worry me. But, thanks God! Those kids turned out to be O.K.!"

In order to accomplish their housework, many Nisei women who worked outside the home spent their weekends carrying out their domestic responsibilities which could not be completed during the week. Cleaning, washing, shopping and baking were common chores that could be done during the weekend. After their double day of labour throughout the week, working Nisei women did not have time

for relaxation even on the weekends. Mrs. D described her typical weekends spent on household tasks:

"It was very busy, absolutely. When the weekend came, you had to go grocery shopping and had cleaning to do. You had to do extra-cooking, because you had to plan your meals, right? You can cook a lot on weekends, so you can freeze it. Buy everything, and cook everything, and you just freeze everything, you know. Then you shut it in the microwave! (Laughs)"

Having two jobs at home and at work, working Nisei women experienced considerable overwork. The description of their double day of labour precisely reflects the contradiction between the conventional gender role division and the reality of women's involvement into wage labour. One consequent question emerges upon this analysis: "How did those women perceive and deal with such a contradiction?" We shall now turn our discussion into this question.

7-3-2. Nisei women's adaptive strategies for the double day of labour

My data indicate that there are two major patterns of how working Nisei women perceived their double loads of domestic responsibilities and wage work: Some women, who tended to belong to the older cohort, accepted it without having serious doubts about their duties as a wife and mother, while others, who were more likely to be middle and younger cohorts, implicitly and sometimes explicitly questioned these expectations as they were aware of the contradiction between traditional gender role definition and the

way actual role of woman was shifting³⁹.

Women in the first group, who tended to be the older cohort, internalized and valued the traditional sex role ideology, so that they did not tend to question the conventional domestic division of labour in any serious manner. Despite their involvement in the paid labour force, these women continuously accepted their full-time responsibility as a housekeeper and mother. Talking about the lack of assistance from their husbands in household maintenance, many Nisei women, regardless of cohort differences, mentioned the nature of the "Japanese" male. However, the older women, who seemed to be more attached to their ethnic culture, tended to take husbands attitudes for granted as one aspect of their ethnicity, while middle and younger cohorts appeared to be more reluctant to accept it. When I asked one of the older Nisei women, Mrs. M, whether her husband helped her, she responded,

"He is from Japan, you see. *Otoko wa daidokoroni ikumonjanai* (Men should not entre into the kitchen). -- Old style. He still had that."

Despite the pressure of the double day of labour on

³⁹. The relationship between cohorts and the pattern of women's attitudes towards their double labour was not as clear as that with the pattern of labour-force participation (Section 8-1.) or with the pattern of women's perceptions about wage work (Section 8-2.). Older Nisei women, who tended to be more attached to their ethnic culture, seemed to value traditional male authority and women's status as obedient wives more than their middle and younger counterparts, who were exposed to new egalitarian ideas that were spread in the 1960's and 1970's while they were at younger ages with flexible attitudes. However, the relationships between cohorts, ethnicity, and the influence of egalitarianism needs further investigation before being discussed in a definite tone. Therefore, I do not identify the pattern of Nisei women's reaction to their double day of labour with cohort differences, even though I suggest the potential relationships in the discussion.

themselves, older working Nisei women were more likely to affirm the male core role as a breadwinner and respected their husbands' devotion to their wage earning activities outside the household. During the interview with Mrs. M, she proudly talked about how studious her husband was, mentioning his persistent attitude to obtain an electric technician certificate for his career. Her husband could afford to take night courses in the immediate post-war years, because she was taking care of the family including three children and supplementing the family income by working in a sewing factory. However, Mrs. M praised her husband who devoted himself to the success of his business, rather than complaining about his frequent absence from home.

Comments of some Nisei women reflected their satisfaction in taking monopolistic charge in the household. In contrast to other social spheres which are generally controlled by males, the household is the domain over which women can have relatively strong control. By being entirely responsible for domestic tasks without encountering interference by their husbands, women could enjoy the privilege of control over domestic matters, and also could achieve a sense of accomplishment. When I asked whether her husband contributed to housework, Mrs. K, who had been extremely busy carrying out domestic tasks as well as office work for her husband's business, proudly responded:

"No, he didn't help. He was so busy with his job. The house was just all mine. So, before he died, he always said, "You are the one who all did (many things) for the kids, because I didn't do anything."

In contrast, other women, who tended to be middle and younger

cohort Nisei women, became conscious of the unfairness of the patriarchal ideology which allocated the entire range of domestic responsibilities to working women. Because of the pressure of the double day of labour or exposure to the egalitarian ideas spread in the general community, these women thought that their husbands should give them domestic assistance, even though it seemed that they never expected an equal share. When they expressed their expectations explicitly, tension or conflict emerged in their relationship with their husbands who expected to receive the conventional amount of personal services and care from their working wives.

In order to reduce or manage marital tension or conflict, women often had to compromise, or sometime completely abandon, their expectations towards male family members. Many of those unsatisfied women seem to have dealt with their frustration toward their husbands' uncooperative attitudes by convincing themselves to accept it as the way men are, rather than continuously making an effort to bring change in the conventional attitudes or practices. Mrs. R said, "I figured out that was too much hassle --- to show how to do it (show how to do housework to her husband.)" Talking about the inability of their husbands to manage household tasks, many women expressed their disappointment by saying "That's the way they (men) were brought up." Many working women ended up doing housework, because it was easier for them to do it by themselves, rather than to keep asking their husbands who were not willing to help. As one respondent exclaimed, "It never helped."

Nisei women can be sorted into two groups which have different perceptions and reactions towards their double day of labour. Some Nisei women, more likely the older cohort, accepted their double loads of domestic responsibilities and wage work without questioning the conventional gender role ideology. These women tended to interpret the gender role division as one aspect of their ethnicity and viewed it as an unchangeable fact of life. In addition, some of them seemed even to be satisfied with taking complete or some charge in the domestic sphere, which provided them with a sense of privilege and accomplishment as wives and mothers.

On the other hand, other Nisei women, generally members of the middle and younger cohorts, were more or less conscious of the unfairness of the double burden on working women, and expected certain changes in the distribution of domestic responsibilities. Even though these women never demanded that their husbands assume an equal share of the housework, this shift in role expectations among working women became a cause of tension with their husbands who wished to continue to receive services and care from their working wives. Women were the ones who had to sacrifice themselves in order to avoid or reduce marital conflict. They ended up by compromising or abandoning their desire to obtain domestic help from their husbands.

7-4. The Functions of the Ethnic Family

As discussed in chapter 3, black feminists who attempt to conceptualize the experience of minority women's live argue that

racial/ethnic women have different family experiences from those of non-minority women. Emphasizing the impact of racial oppression on gender relations between minority women and men and also the significance of the extended family networks within minority populations, they claim that the racial/ethnic family has functioned as a site for shelter and for cultural resistance for minority women, rather than as a source of gender oppression.

Although the discussion in the previous sections of this chapter illustrated many similarities in Nisei women's family experiences to those of non-minority women, my data indicate that the ethnic families of Nisei women certainly had unique functions, providing material as well as psychological resources for those women. However, it is also certain that their ethnic families also had negative effects that created the basis of gender oppression unique to their community. In this section, I discuss such unique functions of Nisei women's ethnic families⁴⁰. First, I focus on the material support which Nisei women received from extended-family relationships, and discuss its positive and negative effects. Then, I look at the psychological functions of Nisei

⁴⁰. In terms of the functions of Nisei women's ethnic families, my data reveal no cohort difference. As indicated in the figure 1 (page15), there is no significant difference in post-marital living arrangements among three cohorts. This means that the extended kin relationships were significant for all cohort groups in a same degree. In similar to the findings in Yanagisako's (1985) study on Japanese American families, Nisei women seemed to be very conscious of the ethnicity in their family relations regardless of their cohort status. Although older cohort tended to be more "Japanese" in a general sense, all Nisei women appeared to define their family as Japanese or Japanese-Canadian in contrast with their view of Canadian families.

women's ethnic families.

**7-4-1. Domestic Help from the Extended Kin Relationships:
Its positive and negative effects**

Unlike the prevailing nuclear family structure in the dominant society, the domestic sphere of minority families encompasses a large private network based on extended kin relationships. As discussed in Chapter 3, the literature on ethnic families suggests two contradictory functions of their strong kin connections. Some research emphasizes the positive aspect by showing that working minority women often receive services or support from their kinship networks in order to manage their double loads of wage labour and domestic responsibilities. Some other research emphasizes the negative effects of ethnic families by suggesting that the close-knit kin relationships function to segregate conjugal roles and slow down trends toward equal relationships between wife and husband.

My data on working Nisei women reflect both positive and negative aspects of the extended kin relationships: Nisei women benefitted from their kin connections by obtaining domestic help from other females in the network, but they also suffered external pressure from community surveillance, which supported traditional gender divisions among community members. We shall now discuss the positive and negative effects of the domestic support system in the Nisei women's kinship networks, while examining its content.

The most common domestic assistance that my respondents received was from their own mothers or mother-in-laws who resided

with them. As a total, eight out of twenty-three women lived with their own parents (two women) or parents-in-law (six women). During Nisei women's working hours, their mothers or mothers-in-law took charge of child care, and also carried out other domestic chores, such as cooking and cleaning. Although one might expect that living in an extended family would make working women free from domestic responsibilities, Nisei women who lived with their mothers or mothers-in-law were not exempt from doing housework. These women still spoke of their busy evenings and weekends which were spent performing housework. However, Nisei women with small children would have been unable to participate in the paid labour force without receiving child care assistance from their mothers or mother-in-laws.

Another significant source of domestic help for working Nisei women was their daughters. Many women mentioned that their female children reduced their domestic responsibilities by looking after younger siblings and helping with certain housework, such as shopping, cleaning and cooking. Just as they themselves had been expected to carry out certain domestic tasks in their parents households, Nisei women expected their daughters, but not their sons, to contribute to the household. Ironically, the system which reduce the heavy load of working mothers functioned to reproduce gender divisions among the next generation. The statement of Mrs. A embodies this mechanism of the repetition of gender socialization:

"I have four daughters. (She has one son.) They agreed, when I started going to work, they would help. So all of

my girls --- they were very good. My oldest daughter, when I came home, she had supper cooked. And on the weekend, I would do the washing. I would do the vacuuming and changing the sheets on the beds. They all had charges to do --- look after the kitchen. Something they had to do. They couldn't go out or do anything else until they finished the task. When my oldest daughter finished her school and went to work, my next daughter took over things, you see. So when girls got married, they knew how to cook and they knew how to clean, which is sort of good."

As the above comment shows, supporting system obviously functioned to retain the conventional gender role division not only among the next generation but also in the relationship between Nisei women and their husbands. Domestic help from other female kin resulted in the reduction of the immediate necessity of male involvement in the domestic sphere. It provided husbands with an excuse to be exempt from the responsibility of sharing household chores with their working wives. The statement of Mrs. T embodies this negative consequence of the availability of domestic assistance from other women in the household:

"Nowadays, Sansei and all the third generation, their husbands help --- change diapers. My husband never did that. I think because his father and mother lived with us, so he figured that his mother could help, so he never did. Same as his father. He never did anything. He went to work and came home and read papers, you know --- Japanese newspapers. It's typical of Japanese men.

You know what? Because there are two women in the house, he never learned to do it. That was a problem. Maybe, I should have told him to do it."

By receiving domestic help from female members in the family, Nisei women themselves also came to consider the assistance of male family members unnecessary. Mrs. A whose four daughters contributed to housework to a great extent responded to my question

whether she had thought her husband should help her saying;

"Well, you know, girls were at home. There were so many. There were four girls. So he never had to do anything, because there were so many of them!"

It was not only the practicality of the available domestic support but also the structural constraint of close-knit kinship networks that retained the traditional domestic division of labour among the Nisei couples. The appearance of traditional Issei parent-in-laws in Nisei women's households functioned to maintain and reinforce conventional gender role divisions between Nisei women and their husbands. Issei immigrant parents brought feudalistic family values which defined hierarchical relationships between males and females as well as parents and children. They, intentionally and unintentionally, imposed pressure on younger generations to maintain their original cultural values and practices. Under such external pressure, Nisei women who lived with their parent-in-laws were forced to continue to fulfil the culturally defined female roles as wife, mother and daughter-in-law successfully. Comments of some Nisei women implied that they could not explicitly ask for their husbands' domestic help in the presence of parent-in-laws. In the extreme case of Mrs.M, her mother-in-law did not allow her son to do "female" tasks in the household, while making sure that her daughter-in-law was completing her duties as a wife to her son. Talking about the undrinkable quality of water in rural Manitoba, Mrs.M said that carrying water from the well or melting snow during the winter was always her responsibility in the family. She explained,

"I did it all by myself, because my mother-in-law didn't let him (her husband) do it... My mother-in-law made sure that I did it and that he didn't do it."

As the above comment of Mrs. M indicates, the "surveillance" of the ethnic family and community tended to impose pressure on Nisei women to live as ideal Japanese women who were supposed to be hard working wives, good mothers and obedient daughter-in-laws.

The close-knit kinship networks among the Japanese Canadians had both positive and negative effects on the situation of working Nisei women. Domestic help from other female kin made it possible for Nisei women, especially for those who had small children, to become engaged in wage labour. Although working wives or mothers were basically responsible for the majority of housework, their domestic tasks were eased relatively by attaining services and support from their ethnic kinship networks. On the other hand, the extended family structure of some Nisei households functioned to retain the traditional sexual division of labour in a relationship between Nisei wives and husbands. First of all, the availability of domestic services from other female kin reduced the urgent necessity of assistance from male family members. Secondly, the older generation in the extended family, e.g., co-resided parent-in-laws seemed to slow down potential role changes between working Nisei women and their husbands by imposing traditional Japanese standards of gender behaviour on Nisei couples.

**7-4-2. The psychological function of the Nisei women's family
: Source of self-pride and locus of psychological strains**

As examination of the Nisei women's perceptions of their

family shows the complex and contradictory aspects of their family experiences. Women were psychologically dependent on their families that provided them with a sense of self-pride which they could not obtain from their work outside the home. At the same time, they experienced intensive psychological strains within their large and complex extended family structure, especially from the relationships with their mother-in-laws.

For Nisei women who experienced the trauma of social discrimination at the time of evacuation, their ethnic family has been the site of cultural resistance. Being deprived of everything during the war, these women highly valued their accomplishment in re-establishing their ethnic family and community during the post-war period. It is often said within their community that Japanese Canadians, both women and men, devoted themselves to achieving better living standards after the war. This was an attempt to prove themselves by obtaining social recognition as successful and good citizens. As for Nisei women specifically, their reproductive activities, which produced and maintained good and healthy families under difficult circumstances during and after the war, was a form of resistance to social oppression. Many women were proud of their success in building up comfortable family lives despite their bitter evacuation experience, which had destroyed the prospects of their future. Mrs. T was a Nisei woman with these sentiments. In response to the question which asked what were the achievements she had accomplished in her life, she said,

"Well, I say, healthy family, husband and children. Good looking (family)... We became comfortable from nothing.

Everything was taken away from us, but we have something now. We have a community that is strong. So, I think that I had something to do with that. I have been a part of it."

For many Nisei women who raised their children in a working-class milieu, the attainment of inter-generational mobility was a significant source of pride and satisfaction not possible from their dead-end type of paid work. Women viewed their wage work as means for providing higher educational opportunities for their children, and they enjoyed seeing upward social mobility in their next generation. Nisei women, who mostly could not move out of low-status jobs, valued their children's occupations more than their own work experiences. Mrs. K said,

"Kodomo o ichininmae ni shitakoto ga (Having raised my children into decent citizens,) it's very satisfactory for me. I'm very proud of that. *Yonintomo minna kooshoku ni tsuiterundakarane* (Everyone of four kids got high-status jobs.)"

The conversations with Nisei women, who talked proudly about the remarkable success of third and fourth generation Japanese within the community, indicated that the achievement of succeeding generations, rather than their own status in the society, was a better indication of their self-perceptions. Facing severe discrimination, Nisei women themselves did not have opportunities to prove their ability in society. These women, however, could regain a sense of pride in themselves by indicating the current success of their community as a whole. Mrs. M said,

"We didn't like to be said, 'Look at all Japanese. They are dumb' or whatever. We, Issei and Nisei parents, we always wanted to give the best whatever we could afford to our kids. So they can educate themselves and enjoyed the Canadian life. So that Japanese Sansei and Yonsei

are very successful. Even when we were poor, --- we then had nothing at the beginning, --- we always worked to see kids were having good life and good education. We tried the best we can. I don't think we had any regrets. And children are happy."

On the other hand, my data indicate that the ethnic extended family was also the locus of psychological strain for Nisei women. Wives of the first born sons who were culturally obligated to look after aging parents felt uncomfortable in the presence of their mother-in-laws in the household. Conversations with those Nisei women who lived with their mother-in-law reflected that there was underlying conflict between two generations in the family. According to the traditional Japanese family practice, a bride who was considered a newcomer to her husband's family had to endure many hardships and difficulties in order to become a recognized member of the household (Fukutake, 1976). This adjustment process was, at the same time, the transitional process of transferring domestic power from the older female family member to the younger one. The older woman, who had achieved a certain domestic status as a responsible housekeeper after long-term endurance, tended to make the younger woman uncomfortable by utilizing her domestic power. The frequently observed conflict between the mother-in-law and the wife in the Japanese family was, in a sense, female competition over the domestic status within the same household. The following comment of Mrs. M illustrate the same kind of domestic tension in Nisei women's families.

"Like in Japan, you know, the only thing I wasn't happy was living with mother-in-law. It was bad. I mean, even though... I guess, two women living together is no good. The reason why I started working was --- my baby was only

nine months old. And when we came to town, my mother-in-law was only 60 years old, I think. And I didn't want to work until she (her daughter) got to be one year old. But, she (her mother-in-law) said, 'if you are not going to go to work, I'll go to work.' That made me feel that 'I' had to go to work. I hated it, because I wanted to wait until she (her daughter) was one year old or older. That is only regret. Sometimes, I wonder, 'Gee, I didn't treat my kids right.' But, I tried my best, you know..."

In the above case of Mrs. M, her mother-in-law explicitly intervened with her decision making of how she would manage household matters, such as child rearing and labour participation. Mrs. M., as a daughter-in-law, had to follow her in-law's advices. It seemed that Nisei daughter-in-laws, having lower status in the family, were the ones who had to sacrifice themselves to resolve conflict in their extended families. The comment of Mrs. N who also lived with her mother-in-law implies the oppressive conditions present in extended families for Nisei daughter-in-laws.

"Friction, hah? But, I just kept my mouth shut! (Laughs.) Then, no trouble, hah? I watch Japanese videos. My sister says, 'Oh, same! --- Mother-in-law!' You know, it is same. --- It wasn't too bad... I used to it. For 22 years..."

7-5. Summary

This chapter examined the interrelationship between Nisei women's wage labour and their domestic work as well as the function of their ethnic families. The analysis of Nisei women's perceptions about their own work and family experiences indicated that pervasive gender ideology, which defines women's primary domestic responsibilities, functioned to limit their wage-earning

activities outside the home. Although there were differences in how women valued their wage work depending on their occupational and socio-economic backgrounds, the social notion of the appropriate women's domestic role made all Nisei women perceive their work outside the home as being of secondary importance and discouraged them from pursuing their careers. The symbolic meaning attached to the conventional gender ideology not only maintained women's lower-status in the labour system, but also intensified gender oppression at home. As the examination of Nisei women's typical working days illustrated, working women continued to perform the majority of household tasks and child care despite their involvement in wage work. This contradiction between the reality of their employment and cultural myths about women's domestic roles created working women's overload of double labour at home and at work.

Although Nisei women's family experiences are very similar to those of non-minority women, my data also indicated that their ethnic families had unique, complex and contradictory functions. The ethnic extended family has been both the site of cultural resistance and the locus of psychological strains. On one hand, their families were a significant source of psychological comfort which fostered strong self-perceptions and relief for the socially oppressed and neglected Nisei women. On the other hand, it was the institution which imposed psychological constraints on these women by creating unfair and stressful inter-generational conflicts on Nisei women's domestic lives.

CHAPTER 8 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This thesis has used both historical and ethnographic evidence to examine the work and family experiences of second generation Japanese Canadian women in Winnipeg. I especially wanted to find out about occupational concentration and social mobility among Nisei women as well as the interrelationship between Nisei women's wage work and their family roles. While the thesis focuses on women's experiences and perceptions, an attempt has also made to analyze the structural elements --- political, economic, social, and familial --- which constructed women's occupational concentration, suppressed their social mobility, and shaped their unique family experiences.

Before turning to the analysis of Nisei women's experiences, I discussed the theoretical framework for analyzing the structural position of minority women in general (Chapter 2). As mentioned in the very beginning of this thesis (Chapter 1), some feminist scholars have recently begun to pay attention to unique social experiences of minority women who face double oppression as women and also as racial-ethnic minorities. In examining minority women's work experience within historical and contemporary contexts, much research (e.g., Almquist, 1975; 1979; Ammot and Matthai, 1991; Glenn, 1982) points out that minority women experience a combination of racial and gender subordination which confines them to the lower status and lower paying jobs than either non-minority women or minority men. As a result, they have ended up being allocated to very limited and the most exploitable

occupations, such as domestic service and work in the garment industry. Scholars often argue that the capitalist economy, which creates and benefits from gender and race/ethnic segregation in the labour market, produces the highly disadvantaged status of minority women in its economic system. Some studies also pinpoint the role of political institutions in marginalizing minority women in the labour system. The presented case study, which proved and analyzed occupational concentration of Nisei women in the marginalized jobs, showed an example of how those social structures and institutional mechanisms function to incorporate minority women into the periphery of the economic structure.

In addition to the discussion of minority women's position in the labour system, black feminists (e.g., Caufield, 1978; Davis, 1983; Dill, 1988; Jones, 1985) discuss the uniqueness of minority women's domestic experiences. Recent feminist theorization has been concerned with the interwoven relationship between women's wage work labour and their domestic work. In analyzing the two interlocking system of capitalist relations in the public sphere and the patriarchal relations in the domestic sphere, many feminist scholars --- mainly socialist feminist theorists --- have considered the family as a significant source of women's oppression, where women's dependent and subordinate status is produced and maintained through the conventional division of labour based on the gender role ideology. However, black feminists claim that, for minority women, their family has been the least oppressive institution in a racist society. They argue that

minority women's reproductive activities, which function to maintain their culture and community in the hostile society, have been experienced as a form of resistance to racial oppression, rather than a form of exploitation by men. They also argue that the minority family, which often contains the large extended kin, functions as a support network providing minority women with material and social resources. Although black feminists emphasize the egalitarianism within black families, others --- particularly those who look at immigrant families, pinpoint negative aspects of the ethnic kin or community networks which tend to impose the culturally specific patriarchal ideology or traditions. This thesis, which attempted to examine Nisei women's domestic experiences, also discussed the complexity of functional aspects of the racial/ethnic family. As socialist-feminists argue, it is a locus of gender oppression. However, it also functions as the site of cultural resistance for minority women just as black feminists discuss.

As for the method of data collection (Chapter 3), in-depth interviewing was employed in order to investigate the work and family experience of Nisei women in Winnipeg. The semi-structured interviews, which mostly consisted of open-ended questions, were administered not only to obtain biographical information about Nisei women's work and family lives but also to explore these women's subjective perceptions of their own experiences. In order to obtain preliminary information about Nisei women's work and family experiences, which have rarely been documented in previous

studies, unstructured approach was the only and best way to collect data for this research. Because in-depth interviews allow for inquiry into women's subjective experiences, they provided the most desirable form of data for this research, which aimed to acquire an accurate and precise understanding of minority women's experiences and perceptions without producing erroneous assumptions about their situations. Twenty-three Nisei women were selected by snow-ball sampling and interviewed face to face by the author of this thesis according to semi-structured questionnaire. All interviews were recorded with a tape recorder. The content of transcribed interviews was analyzed in an attempt to examine the process and factors of occupational concentration of Nisei women, their social mobility, their family experiences, and the relationship between their domestic work and wage labour.

Although the original purpose of the research had been directed to analyze Nisei women as one specific group who shared the same structural position and personal experience of minority women, this thesis has come to highlight that Nisei women are not a homogeneous group. Three age cohorts --- the older, middle and younger cohorts --- had significantly different cultural and educational backgrounds, and have had distinct work and family experiences (Chapter 5). The significance of cohort differences became evident as the research proceeded. In tracing the life histories of twenty-three Nisei women, I recognized the evacuation, which caused the drastic transformation of Japanese Canadian communities as a whole, had different impacts on lives of Nisei

women who were in the different stages of the life cycle at that time. The older cohort, who were born in the 1910s, experienced the evacuation when they had started to establish their own family lives. These women, who spent an extensive period of their lives in segregated ethnic communities in pre-war B.C., were influenced by the traditional Japanese culture to a great extent and suffered from few opportunities to attain higher education beyond compulsory schooling. Because of their educational and cultural backgrounds as well as their family circumstances at the time of evacuation, older Nisei women experienced various disadvantages in the work place. During the war, many of them participated in physical labour on the sugar beet farms while raising small children. In the immediate post-war years, they became involved in low-paid factory jobs in the garment industry in order to support their growing families. Most of them continued to work in the industry without attaining better occupations until their retirement.

Middle cohort Nisei women, who were born in the 1920s, were in their adolescent years at the time of evacuation. The strongest impact of the evacuation on this cohort was the termination of secondary schooling which these women hoped to obtain. During the war, these young single women were engaged in sugar beet farming, while working as seasonal domestic workers in order to supplement their family finances. Similar to their older counterparts, middle cohort women started working in the sewing factories immediately after the war. However, these women were able to leave factory jobs when they started having children in the 1950s. Some middle

cohort women returned to the labour force later in their lives and attained better occupations in offices or the service industry.

Younger cohort Nisei women, who were born in the 1930s, experienced the war-time turmoil during their childhood and were affected by the evacuation the least among the three cohorts. In terms of educational background, most of the younger cohort obtained a high school diploma, because the financial situation of Japanese families became more or less stable by the time they started to attend secondary school around late 1940s. These women, who entered the labour force early 1950s with their high school education, could acquire clerical jobs in offices from the very beginning of their careers.

Despite occupational variations among three cohorts, an overview of Nisei women's labour history indicates that they have been heavily concentrated in a limited set of occupations constituting a segregated labour market for minority women (Chapter 6). Just as many other minority women, who have been confined to low status, low paying and demeaning jobs which cannot attract non-minority population, Nisei women have also been involved in unfavourable jobs, such as domestic service and un- or semi-skilled work in the garment industry. The analysis of the processes by which Nisei women in each cohort were initiated into these specific occupations has provided us with clear instances of how political, economic and social systems have functioned to construct a gender and racially stratified labour system.

Nisei women's involvement in domestic service and sugar beet

farming during the Second World War period (1942-1945) specifically illuminated the political mechanisms which used race and gender ideology to promote and legitimize the exploitation of minority women. The sugar beet project was an obvious political attempt to utilize Japanese labour who were deprived of basic civil rights and freedoms at the hands of the federal government as a supply of powerless and cheap labour. Although both male and female evacuees were victims of such an explicit political oppression, women experienced it very differently from their husbands or brothers. For instance, the detailed descriptions of war-time experiences of older Nisei women show that these women had to carry multiple burdens within the sugar beet project: they were essential labourer in the fields, caretakers of small children and housekeepers for their husbands. Although the project which allowed the maintenance of the family unity of Japanese evacuees appeared to be somewhat humanitarian, an underlying political intention seemed to be to utilize Japanese female labour both in the field and in the household. By relocating whole families to the project, the government could maximize the exploitation of Japanese population while shifting its welfare responsibilities for evacuees to women in each family.

The domestic servant program was another political program designed to utilize female evacuee labour. In response to the very specific demand in the local labour market in Winnipeg, the federal agency placed young single female evacuees in seasonal domestic work in an attempt to reduce government expenditures on the

evacuation program. In order to supplement their family finances which could not be maintained even with extreme hard work of whole family in the sugar beet fields, many middle cohort women, who had no right or freedom to choose occupations, had to take these undesirable and exploitative jobs, endure degrading social status as servants, and work silently in assigned work places. As many previous studies (e.g., Art-Koc, 1989; Barber, 1987; Calliste, 1989; Leslie, 1973) indicate, the involvement of the political institutions in marginalizing specific groups of minority women into domestic service has been a prominent phenomenon in Canadian history. Although the case of Nisei domestics during the war is slightly different from other cases in which the government intervened in the recruitment process of foreign domestic workers through immigration policy, the underlying intention is identical in all cases. Reflecting the interest of employers, the government has attempted to assist in securing and controlling the domestic labour force by utilizing its political power to restrict freedom and rights of minority women to acquire other occupational opportunities.

Nisei women's occupational concentration in the garment industry during the immediate post-war years (1945-1950) highlights the economic and social elements which produce and maintain the inferior position of minority women in the labour system. Even after being relieved from war-time political restrictions, older and middle cohort Nisei women, who began to enter the urban labour market in those years, had to face various economic and social

restrictions imposed upon their gender and racial status. As a result, they became heavily concentrated in the garment industry which is one of the most exploitative sectors in an industrial economy. Many studies (e.g., Coyle et al,1984; Davidson,1984; Gannage,1986; Waldinge,1986) have pointed out that clothing manufacturers have always utilized the most marginalized sector of the labour force, immigrant or minority women, who will accept the lowest possible wages, because their ability to survive in an extremely competitive industry depends on reducing costs, primarily wages.

The evidence in this study, however, suggested that there was the complex set of forces and factors operating to lead Nisei women into un- or semi-skilled jobs in the needle trade. The concentration was created not only by structural elements, such as the gender and racially segregated labour system which limited Nisei women's job options and the specific labour demand which existed in the local Winnipeg market for garment workers, but also by internal factors in relation to their ethnicity. For example, I found that prevailing occupational socialization of Japanese females directed Nisei women to sewing jobs which were considered as typical women's work in their ethnic community. The use of informal networks among community members for locating jobs also functioned to establish Nisei women's job concentration in the garment industry.

As Hanson and Pratt (1991) argue, the operation of ethnic networks to collect job information is a potential source of self-

segregation, but it is important to note that such an internal factor is shaped and promoted by structural forces. My data suggest that the use of informal networks among Nisei women was encouraged by structural elements, such as job discrimination against Japanese labour. Knowing that hostility and discrimination existed in the labour market, Nisei women seem to have wanted to work close to one another, so they became dependent on personal connections for locating jobs. On the other hand, the Winnipeg garment industry, which was desperate to secure cheap and good quality labour, utilized informal networks among Nisei women as a convenient method of the recruitment.

In the contemporary period (1950 to present), we have witnessed diversification of the occupational structure among Nisei women. Since the 1950s, the different cohort groups have become involved in different occupations. Younger Nisei women, who entered the labour force in early 1950s, attained clerical jobs in offices, while older cohort continued to work in the garment industry. In the meantime, middle cohort Nisei women experienced mobility through marriage; they left factory jobs for child-rearing, and some of them obtained better jobs in the service or clerical sectors when they came back to labour market.

Social mobility experienced by younger and some middle cohort Nisei women seems to indicate a declining significance of race as a source of job discrimination. On the other hand, the fact that their mobility did not proceed beyond so-called pink-collar jobs illuminates that gender is a more persistent, if not greater,

barrier that prevents Nisei women from obtaining higher level jobs. Younger and some middle cohort Nisei women, who benefitted from the weakening of racially-based social closure in the contemporary period, were directed to typical female occupations which offered little authority and few opportunities for promotion.

There is, in fact, considerable evidence which points to the prevalence of gender segregation over racial segregation in the labour system. In his statistical examination of gender- and racially based job segregation, Tomaskovic-Devey (1993) concludes that gender divisions are more widespread and deeply ingrained in the work place than racial divisions. Although his study itself does not examine the mechanism which produces women's disadvantage in the labour market, he suggests that the persistence of gender inequality in the work place has its fundamental source in household status hierarchies and divisions supported by prevailing gender role ideology.

The qualitative aspect of this thesis made it possible to illustrate the link between women's inferior positions in the labour market and patriarchal family relations legitimated by the conventional gender ideology (Chapter 7). My data indicated that Nisei women's labour market activities have been restricted through their domestic responsibilities, such as child bearing and rearing. Internalizing the social notion of the appropriate women's role as wife and mother, Nisei women defined their wage work as of secondary importance to their domestic responsibilities and put family life ahead of their career aspirations. On the other hand,

their husbands, who wanted to control home life, often intervened in Nisei women's decision making about their employment by invoking their beliefs about wife and mother's responsibilities. Because of this pervasive gender ideology which provided a sense of rewards as well as obligations, Nisei women tended to neglect or devalue the positive attributes of their employment, such as increased access to material resources and the gaining economic independence. As Bott (1968) noted, a considerable gap exists between working women's actual conditions and their perceptions thereof. The symbolic meanings attached to traditional gender roles concealed the change in a balance of domestic power and authority in double-wage families. As a result, working Nisei women accepted male authority in the family, continued to perform the majority of household tasks, and sacrificed possibilities of improving their positions in the labour system.

Although conventional gender ideology was deeply penetrated in the consciousness of Nisei women as a whole, women in different occupational and socio-economic circumstances had slightly different attitudes and perceptions about their employment and family lives. Older and some middle cohort women, who worked in the garment factory to maintain their working-class families, tended to undervalue their wage work as a mere means of earning living, and did not gain a sense of financial and emotional independence. Their working-class type of labour undermined the meaning of paid work and enlarged the importance of their domestic roles, so that these women defined their productive activities

outside the home as an extension of their domestic responsibilities to take care of their families. On the other hand, younger Nisei women and some middle cohort women, who could attain more socially valued occupations, recognized that their employment provided them a sense of independence and self-esteem as individual persons. Although these women still defined their wage work as an optional activity, in which they would participate if it would not interfere with their domestic responsibilities, they were certainly aware of the positive effects of their wage work which allowed women to detach themselves from their families. Obviously, the meaning women assign to their paid work should be understood within the context of their occupational and soci-economic circumstances.

The examination of the interplay of work and family on the lives of working Nisei women illustrates the usefulness of socialist feminist frameworks which consider the family as a source of women's oppression, where women's subordinate and dependent status is produced and maintained based on the conventional gender role ideology. However, the case study presented in this thesis also illuminates the inadequacy of such frameworks which overgeneralize women's experiences without contextualizing them within class and ethnic/race divisions. As reviewed above, cohort differences in women's perceptions about their wage work indicate that women's consciousness and experiences are formed by an interlocking structure of class and gender. Focusing on Nisei women's ethnicity, this thesis also highlights their unique family experiences which show the complex functions

of ethnic families.

Black feminists have argued that the ethnic family has positive aspects and this has been the case for Nisei women. The family has functioned as a site for shelter and resistance for Nisei women who experienced social denial and alienation as a minority in a racist society. The extended family, based on close-knit ethnic kin relationships, was a significant institution which provided Nisei women with domestic support to ease their double day of labour. Many working Nisei women relied on large kin and cultural networks for domestic help, such as child care. The exchange of material resources and services in the extended family was a form of mutual dependence between generations, which was necessary for minority members to survive in a discriminatory society. Domestic support from other kin members allowed some Nisei women to participate in paid work without access to public service, and made it possible for them to manage their double day of labour.

Ethnic family or community provided Nisei women with not only material, but also psychological resources. For many women who raised their children in a struggle against racial oppression, the economic and social success of their children and community as a whole was a very significant factor in their self-perceptions. The outcome of efforts to raise successful children and to foster their ethnic community was a great source of their pride and satisfaction to Nisei women. These women, who experienced social ostracism and economic hardships at the time of evacuation, could feel self-worth

and prove themselves to the society through the achievements of succeeding generations.

On the other hand, the ethnic family had negative aspects too: it created the ground of unique gender oppression for Nisei women. The evidence suggests that the extended ethnic family functioned to prevent positive changes in gender relations within Nisei women's households. Issei immigrant parents, who brought feudalistic family values defining hierarchal relations between male and female family members, intentionally or unintentionally imposed pressure on younger generations to maintain cultural values and practices. Because of the surveillance of their ethnic family and community, Nisei women were forced to continue to fulfil the culturally defined female roles as wife, mother and daughter-in-law successfully, and could not liberate their situations and liberalize attitudes regarding their relationships with their husbands. As Nagata (1984) clearly points out in her review of anthropological studies on different immigrant groups, the close-knit kin relationships in the ethnic community tend to function to retain traditional standards of gender role distinction.

The ethnic extended family was also a source of psychological strain for Nisei women. The frequently observed conflict between Nisei women and their mother-in-laws indicated that Nisei women experienced a tremendous amount of stress in their extended households where hierarchical relationships between older and younger family members were prominent. For those women who lived with their parent-in-laws, the family was not a place for comfort,

but a site of psychological stress caused by female competition over the status in the household.

To sum up, the ethnic extended family has had contradictory functions for Nisei women. It has been both the site of cultural resistance and the locus of gender oppression. On one hand, their family was a significant source of material and psychological resources which helped these women survive in a discriminatory society. On the other hand, it was the institution which created psychological constraints for women by imposing traditional gender role divisions and power relationships and by creating unfair and stressful situations in Nisei women's households. Rigid family structures also negated the potentially liberating consequences of Nisei women's labour force participation. The ethnic family was comfortable yet oppressive institution where these Nisei women found a way of finding values in their lives, but under disadvantageous conditions.

The conclusions presented in this thesis are tentative and exploratory since they are drawn from documentary research and interviews with a relatively small sample. In the absence of systematic quantitative data, dominant trends and patterns discussed here are hard to discern with confidence and credibility, and speculation must often exist in the analyses. However, careful examination of Nisei women's work and family experiences and their perceptions in this thesis provide revealing information about the complexity of minority women's lives, and point out the inadequacy of the current feminist theorization --- of both socialist and

black feminists ---- which tend to overgeneralize women's experiences and situations in their arguments. In analyzing the lived experiences of a very specific group of women --- second generation Japanese Canadian women in Winnipeg, the present research has illustrated how significant it is to consider women's situations by contextualizing them with ethnic and class divisions as well as in specific regional and historical situations. Cohort differences discussed in this thesis, for example, indicate that women cannot be treated as a homogeneous group, even though they belong to the same ethnic group and the same generational category. Because of the very different social and historical circumstance in which they found themselves at certain stages of the life cycle, the work experiences of older Nisei women differed from that of middle and younger cohort women. The dynamic interconnectedness of gender, race/ethnicity, and class, further, interacts with specific historical and regional contexts. I suggest that future research pay attention to the links among relations organized by these variables in conceptualizing women's experiences.

APPENDIX A: Introduction to the respondent

The purpose of this research is to examine the work experience of Second Generation Japanese Canadian Women in Manitoba after the evacuation of 1942. I am doing this research as a project for my thesis which is required for the Master's program in Sociology at the University of Manitoba.

I would like to ask you about what kind of life and work experience you had in your family and in the work place, how you saw your situations during and after the war, and how you went through those situation. I believe that this research can contribute to the understanding of the history of Japanese Canadians, whose social experience is very unique. In particular, it is important to know about Japanese women's experience and situations which have not been focused upon in previous research.

This interview is voluntary, so if you do not wish to continue the interview, you can stop it at any time. If you find that some questions are too personal or disturbing, you do not have to answer those questions. Also, this interview is completely confidential, so your name will never be used. All of your statements become anonymous.

I would like to tape your interview, because this is the best way to record exactly what you have said. The permission to tape is part of the consent form. You should know that the tape will be destroyed after the research is finished.

If you are interested in the outcome of this research, I will mail a summary of the report.

APPENDIX B: Consent Form

I agree to be interviewed on my work experience during and after the evacuation of 1942. I know this information will focus on my life experience as well as on my work experience in the family and in the work place.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that all information will be confidential. I agree to the use of a tape recorder.

I know that I can refuse to answer any specific questions and that I may terminate the interview at any time.

I feel that the project has been explained to my satisfaction, and I have been informed that the tape will be destroyed once the research report is written.

Signature of Respondent

Signature of Interviewer

Date

APPENDIX C: Questionnaire

Face Sheet (Identification Form)

Respondent Name:

Telephone number:

Sample Number:

Date of the Interview:

Place of the Interview:

Interviewer:

Sample Number:

First, would you tell me,

1. your birthday? year month day
2. Where were you born?
3. How many siblings do/did you have?
4. Which place within the family were you born?
.....
5. What kind of work did your father do before the evacuation?
.....
6. What kind of work did your mother do before the evacuation?
.....
7. At the time of evacuation, how old were you?
8. Then, were you
 - a. married.
 - b. unmarried, not in school.
 - c. in school. (which grade?)

IF b OR c, SKIP TO Q.14

9. When did you marry?
10. Did you marry your husband in an arranged marriage?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
11. Do you have any children?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

IF B, SKIP TO Q. 14

12. How many children do you have?
- a. 1
 - b. 2
 - c. 3
 - d. 4
 - e. more than 4
13. When and where were they born? (Check whether before, during or after the war.)
- 1st born
 - 2nd born
 - 3rd born
 - 4th born
14. Did you work before the war? (including unpaid work, such as helping farming or small business.)?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
- IF b, SKIP TO Q.16
15. What kind of work did you do?
-
16. At the time of Evacuation, where and with whom did you live?
-
17. How did the evacuation happen to your family?/ Would you tell me the process of the evacuation?
- * when
 - * situation
 - * work
 - * property
18. With whom did you come to Manitoba?
-
19. How did you/your family decide to come to Manitoba?
- * whose decision
 - * reasons

20. How was your family assigned to a sugar-beet farmer?
- * the situation when you arrived to Manitoba from B.C.
 - * where and what kind of farmers did you work for?
21. Could you tell me about the living conditions in the farm?
- * what kind of living and working arrangement did your family have with the farmer?
 - * what kind of work did you do?
 - * could your family earn enough money?
 - * if no, how did you manage the situation?
 - * what kind of relationship did you have with the farmer?
 - * what did you think about your situation and what happened to you at that time?/ what did you think the fact the evacuation happened to you?
22. How long had your family been engaged in sugar-beet farming?
- 22-1. Before the war (if applicable)
- 22-2. After the war
-
23. When did you get your first job after the evacuation (other than farming)?
-
24. What kind of job did you get? Where? What kind of working arrangement (full-time, part-time)?
-
25. Why did you start working at that time?
- * what for?
 - * whose decision or suggestion?
26. How did you find that job?
- * who gave the information, and how?
 - * any difficulties in finding the job?
 - * why that particular job?
27. How about other Japanese women? What kind of jobs did they get at that time? Were there many other Japanese at your work place?
-

28. Did somebody in your family (husband, father, mother, other siblings) acquire jobs at the same time?
If yes, who?

.....

29. Could you tell me the working conditions at that time?

- * how many hours and days
- * the content of work
- * wage
- * working circumstances -- the relationship with employers and other workers
- * did the content of the work or your status at the work place change over time?

30. Could you describe the typical day when you were working at that time?

- * what did you do at your spare time?
- * could you contact with your friends?
- * how did you feel about your situation?
- * how did you manage household tasks while you were working?
- * did somebody help you?
- * if no, did you think that your husband should help you?
- * did you have any children?
- * how old were they?
- * how did you take care of them while you were working?
- * did somebody help you?
- * if no, did you think that your husband should help you?
- * how did you feel about your situation?

31. How did you spend your income from that job?

- * did you have control over it?
- * for what was your income spent? (for family, children or yourself?)
- * did you feel independent because you were earning some money by yourself?
(only for a woman who was married,)
- * who control the family budget?
- * could you gain the control over the family budget due to your waged work?

32. How long had you been engaged in that job?

.....

33. Why did you leave that job?

.....

34. Did you become engaged in other jobs after that?

- a. Yes
- b. No

IF A, SKIP TO Q.36

35. Why did you stop working?

.....

SKIP TO Q. 55

36. Now, I would like to ask you a little detailed about your work experience. Your first job was,

(2nd job)

- a. what kind of job did you get after quitting your first job?
- b. when did you acquire it? where?
- c. what did that job involved?
- d. what kind of business or organization did you work for?
- e. how did you find that job? any difficulties in finding that job?
- f. why did you get that particular job?
- g. were there many other Japanese at that work place?
- h. how long did you work for that job?
- i. how were the relationships with employers and other workers?
- j. did the content of the job or your status at the work place change over time? if yes, how, when, why?
- k. why did you leave that job?

Did you become engaged in another job after this second (third, fourth) job?

If yes, go through the same questions a to k.

Q.37 to Q.45 are for a woman who was unmarried at the time of evacuation. For a woman who was married before the evacuation, skip to Q. 47.

37. When did you get married?

38. Did you get married to your husband with arranged marriage?
- a. Yes
 - b. No

39. After getting married, did you keep working outside of the family?
- a. Yes
 - b. No (why?)

IF b, SKIP TO Q. 55

40. Do you have any children?
- a. Yes
 - b. No

IF b, SKIP TO Q. 45

41. How many children do you have?
- a. 1
 - b. 2
 - c. 3
 - d. 4
 - e. more than 4

42. When and where were they born?
- 1st
 - 2nd
 - 3rd
 - 4th

43. After having children, did you work?
- a. Yes
 - b. No (why?)

IF B, SKIP TO Q.48

44. Could you describe the typical day when you were working while having children?

- * How did you manage household tasks while you were working?
- * Did somebody help you?
- * If no, did you think that your husband should help you?
- * How did you take care of them while your were working?
- * Did somebody help you?
- * If no, did you think that your husband should help you?

45. How did you spend your income when you were working outside of the family?

- * did you have control over it?
- * for what was your income spent? (for family, children or yourself?)
- * who control the family budget?
- * could you have the control over the family budget because of your paid work?

46. Why did you keep working?

.....

47. Would you have worked if your husbands had sufficient earnings to support family?

- a. Yes
- b. No

48. Why?

.....

49. Do you think that you have benefitted by engaging in paid work outside of the family? If yes, what were they?

.....

50. Do you think that there were negative outcomes of your work outside of the work? If yes, what were they?

.....

51. When you were working, did you want to get a better position at the work place or better job? If yes, why and how? Did you do something for that? If no, why?

.....

52. When you were working, did you have any disadvantages as a worker because you were a Japanese Canadian or because you were not Hakujin (visible minority)? If yes, what kind of disadvantages? How did you deal with them?

.....

53. When you were working, did you have any advantages because you were a Japanese Canadian or because you were not hakujin? If yes, what kind of advantages?

.....

54. When you were working, did you get unfair treatment at the work place because you were a woman? If yes, what kind of treatment? How did you deal with them?

.....

55. When you recall your experiences as a Japanese Canadian woman or visible minority, how did you think about your life? What do you think that you have achieved? What are you proud of?

.....

56. It is said that Japanese Canadians have achieved tremendous economic success after the war despite the experience of the Evacuation. Why do you think that Japanese Canadians could be so successful? What kind of effort was involved for that success?

.....

57. I would like to ask you about you and your relatives' educational, and occupational background. First, what is the highest level of education that you have completed?
58. What is the highest level of education that your husband has completed?
59. What is the highest level of education that your siblings have completed?
60. What is the highest level of education that your children have completed?

	57	58	59:	1	2	3	4,	60:	1	2	3	4	No
Schooling	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Elementary School													
Incomplete	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Complete	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Junior High School													
Incomplete	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Complete	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
High School													
Incomplete	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	
Complete	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	
Non-University (Voc/Tech, Nursing Schools)													
Incomplete	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	
Complete	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	
University													
Incomplete	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	
Diploma/Certificate (Hygienists)													
Bachelor's Degree...	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	
Medical Degree	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	
Master's Degree	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	
Doctorate	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	

61. In which occupation did your husband spend the longest amount of time? Could you tell me briefly about your husband's work experience?

.....

62. What are your children's occupations?

	1	2	3	4
a. being engaged in the wage labour	1	1	1	1
b. mainly responsible for housework	2	2	2	2
c. currently going to school or studying in some program	3	3	3	3
d. doing some volunteer work	4	4	4	4
f. other (please specify)				

63. What kind of work do they normally do? That is, what are their job titles?

1st

2nd

3rd

4th

64. What do those jobs involve? (Describe.)

1st

2nd

3rd

4th

65. What kind of business or organization do they work for?
What does their employer do or make? (Industry.)

1st

2nd

3rd

4th

66. If I will have further questions, may I call you back and talk to you again?

1. Yes
2. No

Thank you very much for your corporation.

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