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THE HOUSEHOLD DIVISION OF LABOR
IN HOKKAIDO, JAPAN

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By

Deborah Lynn Moore, B.A., M.A.

* * * * *

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1996

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1996
To the Women in My Family, especially
Martha Ellen Williams
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FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Anthropology

Anthropology of Japan
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Political Economy of Women
Family Organization
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CHAPTER I

Introduction

This research focuses on women's role in the family, familial and gender ideology. It explores the inner-workings of the family, including inequalities, negotiation, and resistance, pertaining to the division of labor within households in the Hokkaido Region of Japan. The primary question posed by this research is what is the present-day household division of labor in Hokkaido, how is it different as well as similar to the rest of Japan, and how are these differences and similarities reflected in the family. The intra-household processes of labor distribution, resource allocation and its consequences are analyzed from the point of view of women. These women live and work in households consisting of husbands, children, and sometimes including parents and/or in-laws. Rather than focusing on women as a universal, homogeneous grouping, the study encompasses gender as a relational concept. It centers on women who are analyzed in terms of economic standing, life-cycle stage, personal life history, and age. Additionally, Hokkaido has a very different history from the other islands of Japan such as, Honshuu, Shikoku and Kyuushu. These historical differences are reflected in the views of the Hokkaido people as related to
family relationships and ideology. As Bailey (1991:5) has asserted, regional variations and distinctions are critical in understanding Japanese society. Thus, researchers of Japanese culture should consider regional differences before simply overgeneralizing from one area of Japan to another.

Academic scholarship, particularly in the United States and in Europe, but also in Japan, has focused on wage work and the conditions of paid labor done outside the home by Japanese women in urban areas in Honshuu. This is especially true in the case of large cities such as Tokyo and Osaka (e.g., Roberts 1994; Osawa 1992; Takenaka 1991; Molony 1991; Carney & O'Kelly 1990; Kondo 1990; Saso 1990; Fujita 1989; Upham 1987; Ito 1986; Matsumoto 1976). As Kim (1992:157) has already noted, very little academic attention has been devoted to the nature of women’s work in the context of the urban family. However, without detailed studies of women’s unpaid labor within the household, the key social setting of the family as an important realm for research is ignored. As a result, social and gender processes which occur in the home are ignored or simply assumed without any analysis. A few studies in Japanese and in English have sought to address this oversight in targeting the household for study (Shooji 1992; Okamura 1990; Bernstein 1991, 1983; Imamura 1987). Still, there is acknowledgement that the sexual division of labor in the household and the household economy are among the most
neglected areas in Japanese studies and within the social sciences (Ueno 1994; Osawa 1992).

The Importance of Women's Economic Contribution in the Household

Those who wish to better understand the shape of Japanese society in the 21st century should focus on the changing role of women and the family as the most dynamic sector of the population (Nagy 1991). Japanese women make important contributions to their families and to society through their work in and in relation to the household. Within the household in Hokkaido, there are many services women provide in addition to controlling the distribution and allocation of income and resources in the household. Women are involved in the reproduction of the work force, the education and training of children, and social networking, especially through hobbies, and "study circles." They also provide maintenance and enhancement of social status and decision-making in economic and personal family matters (Kim 1993:74-76). At the national level, the ability of Japanese women to frugally use, allocate, and save money within the household economy is of great importance globally by contributing to the health and viability of the Japanese economy. At the level of the individual household, the income that women earn and their skill in managing this income and other household resources is critical to the survival of households in Japan.
Additionally, women are active agents, as well as part of a family, who at times have their own interests and who act to protect and further these interests (Lamphere 1992:70). The family is an important feature in the lives of Japanese women. However, there is no felicitious assumption made in this research that the interests of women are always and "naturally" subsumed or subordinated within the interests of the household and/or those of the husband. However, at times these interests may well intersect and overlap as well as conflict. The economic contributions of men and women to the household economy tend to be viewed differently by others and by the women themselves which may work to women's disadvantage. As Dywer and Bruce (1988:5) argue, women subsidize both individual households and the national economies in four distinct ways: through their underemployment, their unemployment, their willingness to go in and out of the labor market, and their low wages. Additionally, the reproductive work of women in the home underwrites the capitalist economy of Japan through raising and preparing the next generation's labor force.

Other critical elements within this research were the perceptions of women regarding themselves and their own work and life prospects, as well as how society and family life both constrains and affords them opportunities.
Theoretical Considerations

This dissertation makes the argument that in order to accurately understand Japanese society, the lives of Japanese women must be fully comprehended. This places gender, which is taken for granted as an unexamined though integral part of our everyday life, at the heart of the research and analytical process. As Tamanoi (1990) has stated, focusing on Japanese women will address the "gaps" in the anthropological record of Japan which has not paid due attention to women and their voices. In doing so, new ways of looking at the household and family will have to be reconsidered. New theories and methodologies will have to be constructed which better mesh with more current knowledge and information. In order to accomplish that, the centrality of the household is an area essential to most Japanese women. Household experiences from birth to death greatly shape their lives. Additionally, families are critical social sites where both continuity between old practices and new ones are maintained to preserve the fabric of society. At the same time, within the family changes are occurring that have affected Japanese society and will continue to do so in the future.

In order to fully explicate the household division of labor, three theoretical issues are critical within anthropology. The following discussion in this section will center on these three issues including: the public/private
model of the household, the conceptualization of the family, and the concept of patriarchy.

I. Public/Domestic Models of the Household in Anthropology

As Agarwal (1988) suggests, the household cannot be treated as a private entity separable from the context in which it is embedded. The intimate household experiences of life are structured by wider social relations. Thus, intra-household relationships and their dynamics occur within historical, socio-economic and political contexts. Also, the individual household and the wider structures and processes of society are linked. Treating women as completely, individuated and separable entities in the Western model ignores the processes within the household of which they are a part. This research is focused on the household division of labor and the analytical separation between household unpaid labor and paid labor is recognized. However, many women whom I interviewed expressed the idea that there is an experienced seamlessness between work done inside the home and paid work done outside the home. Within their daily life, they do not think about the fact that they have work to do inside the house and work to do outside the house in a dichotomous way.

As Dwyer and Bruce (1988:2-11) have argued, the household economy has been treated historically within anthropology as a single, homogenous unit. This practice eliminated the
analysis of resistance, negotiation, reformation and transformation which occur in the household setting. This meant that gender processes and dynamics were viewed as separate from the household. It obscured the fact that different individuals (women, men and children) within the same household have differential access to power, influence, and resources. A key factor in changing the dynamics of the household are experiences outside the family which allow women to see themselves in different ways, to recognize their problems in the family, and empower them to confront and transform those aspects of the family that they believe need to change (Dwyer and Bruce 1988). The people who live together in a household, particularly the husband and wife, do not live in a protected womb of harmonious bliss unaffected by economic, political, and historical influences. Instead the household reflects and is a reflection of the wider sociocultural history in Japan.

This debate over the public and domestic spheres has raged for many years in Western academic thought. However, this issue is still a current, relevant one among scholars of Japan, and hence in this research it is included as such. Iwamura, Kunishige, Tanaka, Tomiie, and Yamamoto (1992:48) have argued that this dichotomy is not necessarily problematic for women in Japan. They asserted that women have taken for granted that men should be in the public sphere, and women
should be at home in the domestic sphere. Women have advantages and responsibilities in the home such as managing the household and family budget. For a different point of view, Imai (1994) argues that the birth of the concept of the public and the domestic has been traced to the time of the Industrial Revolution in the West. However, in Japan, this dichotomy has a much longer history. For example, Imai (1994), has recently traced this ideology of public/domestic back to the 1600s and 1700s in Japan. She argues that even as early as the 12th century, Japan was influenced by Confucian writings which advocated that women work and reside in the home at all times. The idea of women staying and working in the home was common in Japan by the 18th century. The core of Imai's argument is that the Japanese had established the domestic and public dichotomy and the accompanying division of labor before becoming an industrialized society. Hence the popular phrase, otoko wa soto, onna wa uchi meaning men outside and women inside (Imai 1994:48). She postulates that the lengthy history of this arrangement is one reason for the stubborn intractability of the gendered division of labor in Japan.

Within anthropology, to effectively discuss the public and domestic dichotomy, one must detail the history and conception of this model. If one traces the beginning of the critique of anthropology as androcentric, and the growth of
interest within anthropology in the study of gender and the household, we can look at two classic works *Women, Culture and Society* (Rosaldo and Lamphere 1974) and *Toward an Anthropology of Women* (Reiter 1975). Reiter criticized the androcentric bias in anthropology, explored women's status in many different societies and provided explanatory models to attempt to understand women's roles cross-culturally. As Rosaldo and Lamphere (1974) argued, there was a pervasive, universal, asymmetry between the sexes. Furthermore, the activities of males as opposed to females were recognized as predominantly more important. Greater authority and value was given to the roles and activities of men. Rosaldo explained this sexual asymmetry in power and authority by arguing that women are usually associated with the domestic (those activities that are organized around mothers and their children), and men are associated with the public (referring to those activities that occur outside mother-child groups).

Women are kept busy with child-rearing, thus freeing men to form other associations that are defined as having to do with the "real" interests of society. Rosaldo argued that it was this link between women's role in reproduction (that women everywhere give birth) and their domestic orientation that was said to account for universal subordination. Thus, it was the work of women in taking care of the daily vissicitudes of life that accounted for men's greater freedom to hold more power
and authority in all societies. The idea that women were universally subordinate because of their connection with the world of the household (defined as the "domestic world") was an early attempt to deal with a general lack of theoretical models within the "subfield" of gender studies in Anthropology.

An early attempt to deal with the "domestic world" of production was made by Marshall Sahlins in his 1972 work, *Stone Age Economics*. Sahlins focused on the materialistic and economic functions of the household. He viewed the household as a kind of "petite economy" with its foundation resting on the family composition of husband and wife combining the two essential social elements of production (Sahlins 1972: 78,79). Sahlins envisioned the household as a rather idealized place concerning the dispensation of household goods, assets and services. He argued, quoting Lewis H. Morgan, that the domestic economy was a kind of "communism in living" in that each member of the household received the necessities of life according to their abilities and needs. Unfortunately, because of his view that the pooling of resources in the household minimizes the "differentiation of the parts in favor of the coherence of the whole," Sahlins did not address intra-household processes based on gender, age and regional distinctions.

Another influential contribution during this early time
period was Ernestine Friedl 1975 work, *Women and Men: An Anthropologist's View*. She argued that there is great diversity in the roles of women within the family, and that women who are mothers are not the only people associated with the domestic sphere as caretakers of children in many cultures. She suggested that rather than asking how economic, political, or religious activities of women are compatible with child-bearing and child-rearing tasks, it would more advantageous to first investigate how adult women use their energies to accomplish economic tasks and to acquire necessary subsistence. Once this has been determined, then one can inquire as to how child-bearing and childcare is tailored to meet the requirements of these basic functional tasks (Friedl 1975:9). Along with Rosaldo and Lamphere (1974) and Reiter (1975), she effectively argued that there had not been enough data collected from and about women and that most data within anthropology was interpreted from an androcentric point of view (Friedl 1975:6).

Lamphere (1992) argued that the public/domestic dichotomy was difficult to apply in 1974. Further, what is considered "domestic" has public ramifications, such as the arrangement of marriages which in most societies has political and economic significance. In many cultures, especially those with an indigenous band or tribal structure, the separation between the household and public life is nonsensical. This is
because household production was simultaneously public, economic and political. This has been clearly pointed out by Leacock (1978) in her review of the literature on the Iroquois during the 17th and 18th century. Of course, Japanese scholars have also made a similar argument regarding Japan before the Meiji Period and the advent of capitalism. That is, that the household in Japan was both a place of production and reproduction (Uno 1991).

Many scholars have argued that prior to the Meiji Period women who held "commoner" status had more egalitarian relationships within the household and family than women of the upper classes. Ueno (1987), Uno (1991), Lebra (1984), Smith and Wiswell (1982), Kondo (1990) and Molony (1991) suggest that the Meiji Civil Code legitimated and instituted for all Japanese the practices of the samurai and wealthy merchant households. These practices included the preference of succession through primogeniture and male over female heirs through many regions of Japan which were legalized in the Meiji Civil Code, Article 970. Smith (1983) suggested that in the Meiji Period women were formally relegated to a subordinate position according to Neo-Confucian ideology which had been previously and predominantly practiced in the samurai class. Smith and Wiswell (1982) in discussing the villagers of Suye, noted that rural women had a more cavalier attitude toward matters of love, marriage, ie structure, duties in the
household, premarital sexuality, divorce, and infidelity in marriage.

Specifically in Japan, ie has usually been defined as a household or family. However, within this definition is embedded the concept that the household is a corporate unit which extends throughout time and holds in perpetuity common property and assets. The concept of household tends to include a somewhat wider framework than the Western concept of family which implies a more narrow view of a nuclear family, including a husband, wife and children. As Hendry (1989:22) argues, the ideology of the ie does not happily translate as "family" in Western terms. She suggests that the whole notion of translating ie in terms of family and household was done only in order to explain Japanese behavior in a comparative context. Yoshizumi (1995: 186) argues that the term ie connotes a family group, as well as a household, that is carried forth from generation to generation. It includes both ancestors and descendants, and is a conceptual and abstract family that continues even when all existing family members have died. Thus, while keeping these important distinctions in mind, within this research household, family, and ie are used interchangeably, with a warning to the reader that these terms are not exactly synonymous. However, the usage of ie in this way follows other Japanese scholars such as Moore (1990), Hendry (1989) and Imai (1995 Doctoral Dissertation).
This difficulty in defining *ie* in Western terms using Western theoretical models is pointed out by Bernstein (1983). She has argued that another problem with the application of the dichotomous model of the public/domestic applied to households in Japan, is that the categories of "woman" and "mother" do not overlap in the same way in Japan as they do in Western society. Women in other societies may not be exclusively defined as mothers and child-rearers in terms of their status and cultural value. She argues that this is because gender is culturally constructed and roles based upon gender are "sociohistorical conventions of deportment arbitrarily attributed to males and females" (Bernstein 1991: 2).

The model of the domestic and public dichotomy is grounded in Western intellectual history, and in a philosophical tradition which dates from the Hellenic Period in Greece. However, it became more widely accepted in the 19th century in Western philosophy. Problematically, the experiences of individuals in Western culture frequently do not dovetail with the experiences of others in different cultures, of others who lived in the past and of others who have a different socio-political history. As Lamphere (1992) has recently argued, new forms of analysis have discarded the domestic/public "trap" arguing that it is too constraining. More recent approaches in gender and household studies have
sought to take the context of history into account looking at how the lives of women changed in tandem with, for example, the transformative nature of capitalism. Also, women are now being analyzed in terms of age, class, race, ethnicity and kinship. There may exist several kinds of inequality within the household, as well as within society: between men and women, between older women and younger women, between unmarried women, widowed women and married women, between men and women of different classes. According to Lamphere, there is interest in how inequality gets reproduced through marriage, through the family and through household labor relationships. Therefore, through the examination of the intra-workings of the household, anthropologists can produce a more layered, contextualized portrait of Japanese society as a whole. This research attempts to portray Japanese women and their household relationships in this way. Thus, the public/domestic household dichotomy must be viewed as an initial, pioneering stage by anthropologists in attempting to theorize women's roles cross-culturally.

II. The conceptualization of the family in Anthropology.

Because household interests, work interests, and family interests converge, overlap, and conflict at different times in the lives of individual women, one must fully explicate the nature and conceptualization of the family. One of the seminal contributions to define and understand the concept of
the family was made by Friedrich Engels in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884). Engels' work was largely based on the ideas of the anthropologist L.H. Morgan who wrote *Ancient Society* (1877). Generally, Engels discussed the relationship between the emergence of private property, the monogamous family and the domestic and sexual subservience of the wife. He applied Morgan's arguments to contemporary marriage and family formation in the capitalist state. Engels made early contributions to ideas about the status and role of women and marriage. He argued that the structure of the family and the roles of women and men varied depending on the historical context, class structure, and the organizational level of the state or community.

More recently, Mitchell (1984) and Rubin (1975) have challenged the status and place of Western concepts regarding the family. They demonstrated the historical, ethnic and class variation of kinship systems, residence arrangements, economic aspects of the household and ideologies of family life. Thorne (1982) has asserted that rethinking the concept of the family from Engels' original theory of women's oppression in the family, has allowed a more critical perspective on ways of viewing the household. She questioned the elevation of the Western-based, modern family form as "the family," rejected theories of biological determinism, and de-emphasized functional aspects of the family. According to
Thorne (1982) and Collier, Rosaldo, and Yanagisako (1982), the family contains a much more complex series of contradictory relationships. These include nurturing and supportive ones, as well as those encompassing conflict and violence. The household can also serve as a site of resistance and negotiation, but families also collude in the system. Families and individuals inevitably participate in their own oppressions, buying into and perpetuating hegemonic ideologies. They do so even as they try to struggle against those oppressions and against those ideologies as part of the dialectical process.

Illustrating the problem of conceptualizing the family in universal terms, Chie Nakane in her 1970 work, *Kazoku no koozoo (The Structure of the Japanese Family)* pointed out the distinctions in family terminology. She argued that the terms of "stem family," "elementary," and "joint or extended" family should be used more carefully when applied to Japan. The term "stem family" is used most accurately in the case of a family which consists of at least two couples living in the same household with the relationship of parent and child. However, in Japan, the "stem family" or *chokkei kazoku* typically has included three generations (e.g., grandparents, their oldest son and his wife, and their grandchildren) and clearly reflects the concept of lineality. The term "extended family" has a wider meaning and application and could include a
household where, e.g., a set of grandparents, their oldest son and his wife and a younger son and his wife live together. However, this case does not normally apply in Japan. Additionally, the stem family concept could include the extended family arrangement, but it is not the equivalent of extended family in meaning. Hence, "stem family," a more recently derived term, more clearly expresses the concept of lineality within the family, and is more accurately used in the case of Japan (Nakane 1970: 34,35).

Other scholars such as Patei (1988), have also objected to any general, homogeneous portrayal of the family in household studies. They have asserted that the family can be a strong source of support and comfort in many ethnic groups. However, acknowledging the potential of the family as supportive and nurturing on the one hand in certain situations, and oppressive and gender stereotyping on the other, are not necessarily mutually exclusive positions. Rather, it is exactly this dialectical relationship which creates the tension that characterizes many households.

Takie Lebra (1984) argued that in Japan, prior to industrialization housewifery was looked upon as an occupation in its own right. It was not simply confined to one's own home, but extended to the public domain. However, housewifery is not only devalued in Western countries, but this devaluation of work in the domestic sector has now occurred in
Saso (1990) has argued that Japanese households are too matriarchal and that roles in the household should be better integrated with the husband and wife having a greater sharing in parenting. She suggests that husbands should work less hours outside the home and contribute more to domestic work. She asserted that this would help women in redefining their commitments. This is the case because Japanese women are socialized to make sacrifices because they, unlike Japanese men, define their primary commitments in terms of the family and household. They do so despite the fact that many married women participate in the labor force.

Delphy (1984) viewed the household as a hierarchical system where subordinates work unpaid for a head and are in return economically maintained by him. For Delphy, dependency and work are key aspects of the family as a social relationship. She argues that the reason why household labor is not considered to be productive and is not considered as "real work" is because it is done in the home for free; it is not paid for nor exchanged monetarily. It is because of this that women's work in the household is rendered invisible and hence, unexamined. This position reflects an extremely materialistic and Western-based view of the household relationships. Delphy's argument centers upon Western concepts involving monetary renumeration as the only kind of compensation. However, much of the work that family members
do for each other may not be based on this monetary compensation. There is emotional work and nurturing work which cannot be reduced to monetary values.

Kuhn (1978) asserted that the relations of domestic labor are very different from the relations of capitalist production. This is because the wife is in a position of economic subordination with respect to the husband who through the marriage contract becomes the controller of her labor power. While domestic labor is both socially useful labor and necessary for the maintenance of society, it appears as part of the personal relations (rather than the economic relations) between two people. For Kuhn, household labor remains at the heart of both class and sex oppression. According to Kuhn, even if the wife controls the husband's paycheck and the household finances, as is the case in Japan, being a housewife may make the woman economically vulnerable.

Some scholars such as Sacks (1979) have argued that the subordinate status of women is based on the cultural construction of patriarchal ideology and sexist cultural themes (i.e., stereotypes). These stereotypes are manifested by household and familial roles. They are animated by the economic class that individual women occupy in capitalist societies. Cultural constructions are buttressed by economic and social processes which have institutionalized motherhood and reified stereotypical roles of women (Fujita 1989).
Additionally, Sacks argues that class and gender interact as capitalism transforms the experiences of women in the family and household. Upper-class women can afford to have a wet-nurse, a nanny, a governess, expensive day-care, or an in-home cook or helper. Their experiences as mothers include choices and options which are very different from those of women dependent on wage-labor who can afford none of these amenities. Thus, class differences alter the institutionalized role of motherhood within society as well as women's role in the household.

These general conceptualizations of the family must take into account the variation in the organization of families as illustrated regionally and geographically. Ueno (1987) asserted that the ie system in Japan was established and invented by the Meiji government based on the patrilineal family system of the *samurai* class. Divorce was made more stigmatizing and more difficult to obtain for upper class women though the law allowed a man to divorce his wife at any time. For the ordinary people however, divorce was relatively common for both men and women (Cornell 1990; Walthall 1991; Smith and Wiswell 1982).

The legal basis of the *ie* was established through the 1898 Civil Code of Japan. This code included many facets of *ie* ideology. Gubbins argued in his 1897 translation of the Civil Code that the *ie* was a product of the influence of
Chinese Confucianist thought and feudalism. However, Gubbins quoted N. Hoozumi, a noted Japanese scholar, as arguing that ancestor worship was the foundation of the Japanese family system (Gubbins 1897:IV). Gubbins further suggested that authority was vested in the head of the family as distinguished from the parent. In Volume II, Section II of the Civil Code, Code numbers 746 through 751, the rights and duties of the head of the family and the members of the family are clearly delineated. The head of the family was given power and authority over other family members. For example, for marriages and adoptions the consent of the head of the family had to be obtained (Code 750). However, the family head was also obligated to support all the members of that family (Code 747). There are specific and complex laws of succession, of adoption, for inheritance of property and rules regarding the observance of religious rites for both Shintoo and Buddhist rituals. Thus, the ideas embedded in the Civil Code which legally established the ie permeated every aspect of Japanese life.

Interestingly, it was within the Meiji Civil Code that women actually received their legally delegated managerial responsibilities in the household. That is, according to the Civil Code, Volume II, Sub-section II, regarding the system established by law for the regulation of property, Code 804 stated that with regard to daily household matters, a wife is
regarded as her husband's agent. Thus, women had a legal claim to the management of household affairs and could legally establish their own domain. Of course, the institution of household head was abolished in the new Civil Code. The new Civil Code introduced many new features such as equal heir inheritance among siblings. Of course, in more recent times women have taken greater control of household management, as well as family and economic issues and are active agents in their own right.

However, it is important to note that the present-day nuclear family is a fairly recent development. There is great variation throughout history and spatially regarding the form of the family. Takie Lebra (1984) has reinforced this point of view and suggested a Japanese-centered concept for household and family research in Japan. She has argued that the family of orientation and family of procreation might be useful for analyzing the American family in cases where there is mutual exclusivity, but they are quite difficult to apply to Japanese families. Her comments illustrate the difficulties in the application of any universal concept of the family. This perspective subverts the reductionist and ethnocentric argument that "women's oppression" is simply rooted in the family through the roles of wife and mother.

This research will show that households are places of empowerment, negotiation, resistance and oppression.
Furthermore, I argue that women's experiences in the household are affected by age, class, and ideology, as well as by their personal life history and experiences. Women's roles and thinking regarding the household and family are different and varied. They cannot be easily collapsed into simplistic views of housewife as victimized and oppressed and husband as dominating and controlling. The daily realities of women's lives in households in Japan are much more complex and much more interesting than that simple portrait would have allowed.

III. The Concept of Patriarchy

Another theoretical consideration regards the concept of patriarchy, its usefulness in household studies, and its relationship to capitalism. This issue continues to be one of the most highly contested areas within scholarly thought. When the concept was initially used, it was used as an analytical device to identify the nature of political relations and power relations between men, younger men and women. It was conceived as a way to explain the dominance of older men over younger men and women. As defined more recently by Walby (1990), patriarchy is a system of social structures and practices where men dominate, oppress and exploit women. Yet, Walby rejects the idea that every individual man occupies a dominant position and every women a subordinate one. She has argued that in particular situations, class and economic positions may supercede gender
distinctions. She has recognized the complex reality that men and women do not exist in monolithic roles. They are subject to variation and constraints based not only on gender but on class, age, culture, and ethnicity.

Walby has suggested that patriarchy as a conceptualized system can be seen at different levels of society. In the household, it is manifested in patriarchal production relations where the women's labor is expropriated by her husband. A woman may receive only her maintenance for her labor; in this case housewives are the producing class, while the husband is the expropriating class. Patriarchal structures involve relations within waged labor which exclude women from the higher paying jobs and more interesting work. It segregates them into the lower paying and less challenging jobs. The state sometimes shares capitalist interests in the form of revenue to the state and jobs created for workers.

With these concepts regarding patriarchal structures in place, the Japanese government extends systematic bias toward patriarchal interests in its policies and actions. At other times, the government acts to protect the rights of women (Upham 1987). Japanese women have been successful in some litigious proceedings related, for example, to sexual harassment. However, the wage discrepancy between males and females generally has been increasing since the mid-1970s. It was greater in 1982 than it had been in 1972 (Carney and
O'Kelly 1990). Companies have also changed hiring patterns, refusing to hire highly educated women or hiring women only as part-time or temporary employees (Ito 1986). Japanese employers may also promote women at a slower rate than men to discourage long tenure (Upham 1987). In these specific cases, women as a group are chosen and retained as a source of cheap labor on a part-time basis. At the same time, they are fulfilling household labor requirements on a full-time basis with both patriarchal and capitalist interests converging. Patriarchal cultural institutions help encourage and disseminate stereotypical representations of women in many different areas, such as in education, media, movies and literature. These are powerful ideological weapons which work to influence the way women perceive themselves and their work in the household, as well as how others perceive them and their work.

A different point of view is presented by Saso (1990), regarding the application of patriarchy to household studies of Japan. She has suggested that patriarchy as a power principle in the Japanese home is not applicable as it is elsewhere. This is because in Japan it is the wives who have control over financial and household matters, i.e., women control the family budget and economic decisions. However, the concept of patriarchy is not only applicable in the home, but "patriarchies" are culturally constructed, shaped and
modified through time and specific context. For example, patriarchal interests have varied depending upon historical context. They are not monolithic nor unchanging nor do they fall into neat dichotomies of the "public/domestic" spheres.

In contrast to Saso, Takie Lebra (1984) has convincingly argued that aspects of the Japanese patriarchy co-exist along with the wife's monopoly of household rights and duties, including the control of the household budget. She argues that patriarchy is not incompatible, but rather interlocked with a domestic matriarchy in Japan. More simply, the existence of matriarchy does not preclude the existence of patriarchy with which it operates in tandem. Tamanoi (1990) has argued that a view which stereotypes Japanese women as matriarchs in the home obscures the fact that the exclusiveness of female responsibility in the household can easily become oppressive. While some women express their contentment with their role in the home, others express their loneliness and frustration.

Thus, the concept of patriarchy can be a useful theoretical device to better understand the position of Japanese women. It can help explain the specific articulation between Japanese women's dominance in the household, the effects of that dominance in other areas of women's lives, as well as the domination of men in matters outside the house. In this specific research, the concept will be utilized to
better understand how these different strands of dominance and oppression are interwoven. It will be applied to analyze the ramifications of this dialectical relationship in Japanese households, as well as in Japanese society.

Therefore, within this research, the theoretical contributions to anthropology will be: (1) The presentation of Japanese women as active agents within a household, with their own voices, and within a particular socio-historical context. Analytical attention will be given to their various situations based on their age, individual history, region in which they live, urban/rural distinctions and class. My research will show that there are generational differences between women and their views and practice of household roles. It will also clearly illuminate the variation in the household division of labor between rural and urban areas. (2) The placement of families as an important dynamic arena for analysis. In this research, households are viewed as critical social sites and the basis of society, rather than relegating families to an unexamined "domestic" sphere.

Research Setting

The research participants are largely from the urban area of Sapporo (including the Sapporo suburb of Hiroshima-cho) and also from Shibetsu, a small town located some 350 miles north of Sapporo. Hokkaido is the second largest and northernmost island of Japan. It is separated from Honshu (the main
island of Japan) by the Tsugaru Straits and faces the Sea of Japan to the west, the Sea of Okhotsk to the north, and the Pacific Ocean to the South. Approximately 70% of the population of Hokkaido has become concentrated in big cities such as Sapporo, Asahikawa and Hakodate (Sejiyama 1994). The total population of Hokkaido as of October 1, 1990 was 5,644,000 and accounts for 4.6% of Japan's total population (approximately 123,611,000). The average size of a household in Hokkaido, as measured in 1990, is 2.73 people which represents a 0.37 decrease from the 1980 average of 3.1 people. Hokkaido is located within the southern limits of the sub-arctic zone with snow beginning in late October and continuing through late April every year. There is a continuous snow cover from mid-November until early April. Hokkaido's biggest industries are those of agriculture, forestry, dairy farming and fishing. Hokkaido is the largest food supplier in Japan with the average area of land managed by one farm household in Hokkaido of 13.0 hectares. As for dairy farming, Hokkaido milk production accounts for approximately 39% of the national total. The main agricultural crops in Hokkaido are wheat, sugar beets, potatoes, soybeans, rice and Adzuki beans. Until about 1955, coal mining was the major industry in Hokkaido, but with the rapid change in energy supplies and use, one coal mine after another was forced to close. There are only 21 coal mines in
operation in Hokkaido at present, and most of these are underground mines. Historically, the main industries in Hokkaido have been those which process locally available natural resources.

The labor force in Hokkaido includes approximately 4,460,000 people over 15 years of age; 2,745,000 of whom are included in the labor force with 2,625,000 of them employed and 119,000 unemployed. The majority of those employed work in cities with 12.6% of the work force employed in the primary industries (compared to the national average of 9.3%), 23.5% in secondary industries (much lower than the national average of 33.1%) and 63.9% in tertiary industries (higher than the national average of 57.6%). The average monthly salary of a steadily employed worker in Hokkaido in 1990 was 336,310 yen (approximately $3,400). The average monthly salary for men is about 418,256 yen (approximately $4,200), and for women 205,321 yen (approximately $2,100) or about 50% of the average salary for men. (Information from Hokkaido Prefectural Government.)

Sapporo is the capital and largest city of Hokkaido with a population of about 1,757,296 (Sapporo City Hall population figure as of 1/6/95). However, this figure does not include the suburbs and outlying areas. If the outlying areas and suburbs are included in the population figure, the Sapporo metropolitan area includes about 2.5 million people. As
Tookyou National University Professor Sejiyama (Hokkaido Shinbun 1994) argued, Sapporo is actually an urban city-state. Sapporo has the authority to carry out welfare and urban planning on behalf of the Hokkaido prefectural government. Due to its population of over 500,000, it has been designated by the Japanese National Government as one of several autonomous cities in Japan. It is the eighth most concentrated population area in Japan. However, it is mainly a service oriented area with little manufacturing or industry. Within Sapporo and its suburbs about 50% of the population of Hokkaido live and work.

Hiroshima-cho is one of the suburbs of Sapporo; it is an affluent middle/upper class area which has grown in population from 8,022 people in 1965 to 53,228 in 1995 (Asahi Shinbun 6/1/95). In 1996, Hiroshima-cho will separate from Sapporo and become incorporated as a separate city called Kitahiroshima-cho. The growth of Hiroshima Town began in 1970 when Hiroshima was selected as the site of a new residential development by the Hokkaido Government. With the completion of this development as well as other private projects, the area has become a commuter town for people working in Sapporo. However, despite the growth in population, there still exists in this area more than 10,000 acres of forest. There is an abundance of public parks and golf courses providing plenty of space and activities to
support the middle and upper class lifestyle the people of Hiroshima enjoy.

When the name of Hiroshima is mentioned, one usually thinks of Hiroshima Prefecture in southern Japan. Actually, the town of Hiroshima was founded by settlers from Hiroshima Prefecture back in the late 1800's. Kyuzu Nakayama came to the area in 1873 and pioneered rice production in the town. Not long after that, Ikujiro Wada came to Hokkaido from Hiroshima Prefecture and laid the foundations for the town of the near future the population of Hiroshima will surpass 90,000.

Shibetsu is a small town with some service industries, a few businesses, and many small farmers. It is located in the center of the northern part of Hokkaido and is 192 kilometers north of Sapporo. The population of Shibetsu as of 1995 was about 30,000 and consists of both small city-dwellers and rural farmers. The Shibetsu Town Council is actively promoting tourism in Shibetsu using the catch phrase "Suffolk Land Shibetsu" coined to bring attention to the sheep-farming in the area (about 1000 head of 22 species of sheep from various countries are raised in Shibetsu). It is also attempting to promote itself as a main test site for high speed efficiency tires in order to increase employment opportunities for its residents. However, the major industries of this rural town are food processing and
lumbering. Dairy farming and stock farming are also carried out in this area including animals such as sheep, cattle, pigs, and chickens. Some rice is grown in the area, but mainly dry field farming is done along with dairy farming due to the cool weather.

Research Methodology

This study is the result of 1995 ethnographic research and questionnaire distribution from 74 middle class and upper class families in Hokkaido, Japan. This research was possible and participants were willing to allow me to interview them due to my affiliation with Hokkaido National University of Japan. The main purpose of the research was to determine how household labor and resources were actually allocated within Hokkaido families based on gender and age. With the above goal in mind, it was determined that the best way the research questions could be answered was through the use of a structured questionnaire and open-ended interviews with willing, voluntary participants. After already living in the Tohoku Region (a home-stay in the village of Yoneyama, near the city of Sendai; see Figure 1.1, number 52) of Japan for approximately one year in order to acquire cultural familiarity, better Japanese language skills, and conduct preliminary interviews, I focused on Hokkaido for my in-depth analysis during the six months period from February 1995 to the end of August 1995. My enrollment as a research student
at Hokkaido National University of Japan, one of Japan’s former imperial universities, provided official access to research sites. The members of my research group at that university introduced me to a number of voluntary informants. This situation provided a great opportunity for research since within anthropological studies on Japan, very little has been written regarding Hokkaido. This is especially true with respect to women and families in Hokkaido. As Bailey (1991) has argued, most research has been done on the main island of Honshuu, Kyuushu or Shikoku. According to Bailey, there has been no major anthropological research on the island of Hokkaido.

Site selection for the research was determined in consultation with my research group in Japan. In particular, Professor Hiroshi Sugimura and Dr. Osamu Aoki of Hokkaido National University helped me to decide that the main bulk of the research would be conducted in a middle/upper class suburban neighborhood. This area would be best suited to my needs because the women in this area would have the time and flexibility of schedule to allow them to talk with me. Aware of the fact that Hiroshima is a beddo taun, a commuter town, we decided to also take a small sampling from residents of the more urban area of Sapporo proper. We also took another small sample from the rural town of Shibetsu as a touchstone for our main work in Hiroshima. The location of Sendai is shown in
Figure 1.1 and the location of Hiroshima, Sapporo and Shibetsu are shown in Figure 1.2.

Due to the time constraints and busy schedules of Japanese people and their liking for simple, easy-to-circle answers to questionnaires, the questionnaire had to be carefully designed. It was necessary to construct it, not only with the purpose of gathering information relating to the inner-workings of the household, but the questions had to be precisely honed. This process was necessary so that participants could simply and quickly answer the survey while providing me with useful, good quality information. The process of questionnaire construction started during my one-year stay in Yoneyama. It took several months to complete with input from Hokkaido University faculty, graduate students and potential research informants. The final contents of the questionnaire consisted of 72 questions with the last 5 questions free-answer/open-ended type and the remainder a multiple choice (circle the best answer) type. The questionnaire, translated into English in Appendix A, asked for information relating to age, marital status, employment status, level of education, kind of schooling, number of years of education, number of children, husband's occupation and income, age when married, natal family history (including number of brothers and sisters, occupation of parents, rural or urban dwellers), yearly income, name of person who owns the
home and land, household task breakdown regarding who does what task, listing of spare time hobbies, monthly disposable income, questions regarding the status of women (whether or not the participants believed things had changed for women in Japan and how they had changed), questions regarding the relations between men and women in Japan and how they had or had not changed, and questions regarding ideology (i.e., the ideal man, the ideal husband, the ideal love, the ideal wife, and the ideal woman). Free answer questions related to women's experiences in their natal family, in their marriage, in the work place and whether or not they had experienced gender discrimination; what was their definition of equality and independence and what was necessary to achieve same; lastly, if they became widowed or divorced from their husband would they want to remarry and what would be their first consideration if they did decide to remarry. Thus, extensive and detailed information was obtained as a result of the considerable time and energy spent in questionnaire construction at the beginning of the research.

The next step involved setting up contacts with the local community center in Hiroshima and arranging to use their facilities and a member of their personnel in order to facilitate interviewing. We were able to use the Hiroshima community center as a kind of base of operations in which to interview women and also to contact women who might be
interested in being research participants. We then conducted interviews at the community center and at the homes of participants. This same methodology was used in Shibetsu using the local Shibetsu community center and officials who worked there in order to facilitate the contact and interviewing of willing participants.

A discussion of the idea of entering the field and exactly how I procured information can be briefly pursued at this point. It was decided that in order to ensure that interviews were of the best quality possible, it would be advisable to make sure that I had someone go along with me to the interviews. These individuals could help me with translation, if necessary. Thus, Dr. Osamu Aoki or Ms. Iwata (a Ph.D. graduate student at Hokkaido National University) assisted me in translation and interpretation. With the structured questionnaire, I could easily take notes and most translation was done at the interview site or shortly afterward. Detailed notes were typed by me on a word processor when I returned to the office at Hokkaido University. Most women, especially older women, were nervous about talking with a foreigner and the personal nature of the questions in the survey, so the use of a tape recorder or video machine was not recommended.

Editing and translation of the interviews into the text of this dissertation was mainly done by myself and Dr. Osamu
Aoki of Hokkaido National University. Both of us assert that the translations in this dissertation are of a high quality, and reflect the best possible rendering of Japanese into English. Problematically, as in the translation of any language into another, meanings are sometimes not exactly equivalent. Therefore, some editing is essential and at times, we had to choose a meaning, among many possible ones, which best suited the context of the situation. However, this kind of editing was kept to an absolute minimum, and done only when necessary. Yet, as Bernard (1994:365) argues, most narratives are modified to make them sound a bit more seamless than they actually were. He asserts that unexpurgated speech is somewhat difficult to read since it is full of false starts, run-ons, fragments and pauses. Of course, this process naturally presupposes the somewhat arbitrary nature of translation. Still, I argue that the final English narratives in this work, clearly express the thoughts, feelings and words of the Japanese women interviewed.

There was a general pattern in the interviews where, in the beginning, the respondents seemed a little reticent in speaking. However, as the interview progressed, they became more talkative. Usually ocha, green tea, or coffee and perhaps a sweet bean pastry or omochi, rice cake, were served in order to ease the tension. This was the case both at the community centers and at the homes of the women interviewed.
There was a gradual rapport and element of trust established as we discussed parts of their personal and familial life. Rather than simply answering the question in an short, yes or no fashion, many respondents started to volunteer statements and meaningful details of their lives.

Still, the amount of receptivity to questions shown by interviewees varied. The narratives I have chosen to present are from those women who were the most talkative and cooperative. I am consciously using this style of narrative because as Tamanoi (1991) has argued, it is necessary to do so if a researcher is to understand a group which has been muted and rendered invisible in the official records and history of their culture.

Thus, the presentation of this research mixes narratives with appropriate comments and discussions from relevant anthropological literature as well as from Japan scholars. This stylistic choice has not been made without considerable thought and purpose. As Bernard argues (1994:363), qualitative data analysis is very dependent upon the use of selected anecdotes and quotes from informants. These narratives can help readers to understand more clearly what it may have taken months for the researcher to discover. Further, as Berg (1995:227) has asserted, when ethnographic research is reported the findings are most clearly and accurately rendered when they are presented as a narrative,
and then followed by a separate analysis. Thus, content analysis of interview data and narratives can effectively be accomplished by interweaving quotes, discussion and analysis.

Research participants

A total of 74 questionnaires were disseminated with 51 from Hiroshima, 9 from Sapporo, and 14 from Shibetsu. All the names of participants have been changed to protect their individual privacy and to allow them to freely discuss personal household matters and information. The following three tables, organized by the respondent’s place of residence, provide information regarding my sample population.
Table 1.1—Description of 14 Shibetsu Interview Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>MARITAL STATUS</th>
<th>WAGE LABOR STATUS</th>
<th>FAMILY INCOME PER YEAR</th>
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Table 1.3—Description of 51 Hiroshima Interview Respondents

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<th>WAGE LABOR STATUS</th>
<th>FAMILY INCOME PER YEAR</th>
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To briefly summarize this information, it can be seen from the above tables that the women I interviewed ranged in age from 28 years to 78 years with the majority of women falling into the 40 to 55 year age range. Most of the women were married (65 of the 74 women respondents were married), or had been widowed (7), one woman was divorced (a rather rare case in Japan though recently becoming more common, especially in Hokkaido), and one woman was single. Economic status varied from an upper-middle class income of 1000 to 1200 man yen (approximately $100,000 to $120,000) per year or higher to a lower-middle class income of 200 to 300 man yen (approximately $20,000 to $30,000) per year. Twenty-eight women fell into the higher income level with eight women in the lower income level of $20,000 to $30,000 per year and under. The remaining thirty-eight women were in the middle income range of 400 man yen to 800 man yen (approximately $40,000 to $80,000) per year.

Education levels of respondents varied from completion of Junior High School (8 women) only, to those participants with a four-year university degree or higher (7 women) with the remainder (59 women) graduating from high school or a 2-year community college. Most respondents were full-time housewives since their marriage (34) or part-time workers outside the home (21). Some women who worked on farms along with their husbands, described themselves as the actual farm managers
(6), since their husbands worked a variety of part-time jobs to supplement family income, therefore leaving the wife in charge of the farm. Nine questionnaire respondents were full-time workers outside the home and four women were retired from careers outside the home.

Thus, most of the women who participated in the research were members of nuclear families and solidly middle-income, ranging from the higher-end of upper-middle income to the lower-end of middle-income. These women shared many similar characteristics of social status including family income, husband’s occupation, property ownership, educational level and lifestyle. I will not argue in this dissertation that this sample is statistically representative. However, the information and words of the women interviewed communicate clearly important aspects of their lives in households in Japan, the nature of their work, their economic status, and their ideology related to family and gender in a late-industrial capitalistic society. Though these middle-class women lived in mostly nuclear families, they still did various labor to benefit and maintain traditional, extended-kin networks, especially with respect to their natal families. As one informant told me,

"I love to cook and particularly I love to cook for my mother and take her delicious things to eat. I continue to do this though I am now 48 years old, and even though my husband and I always argue about it because he says I should be making
delicious things for his family to eat and take over to their house. He says this because he is the choonan (the oldest son), and he is still too tied to his family, particularly to his mother."

As Imai (1995) has argued in her doctoral dissertation, while most Japanese studies have focused on the ie inheritance system as patrilineal, it is actually, in practice, ambilineal. This patrilineal stereotype has blinded scholars to regional variation in the modes of Japanese inheritance (such as ambilineal inheritance in the Tohoku Region and in particular a preference for eldest daughter succession in this region; youngest child succession in the Kyuushuu region; and selective succession in the southwest region of Japan). I further argue in this dissertation that this type of focus on men and patrilineal inheritance without due attention to the significant regional variation which exists throughout Japan, has obscured the realities of the life of women in Japanese families. These realities include strong ties and on-going relationships with their respective natal families regardless of the tradition of the patriarchal ie system.

Additionally, Japanese women today have fewer children than women did 50 years ago. For example, from a special series in the Asahi Shinbun (2/28/95) marking 50 years after the Second World War, older people spoke nostalgically of the time when there were sixteen people in their family. Many of these senior citizens stated that now there are only three
members in their families. In 1925, the average number of children in a Japanese household was five; in 1947, the number was 4.54; in 1960, 2.00 children was the average; and as of 1993, the average number of children born to a Japanese couple was 1.46 (Asahi Shinbun 2/29/95). Though these women have fewer children than their grandmothers did, they still exercise considerable power in the household. They make decisions on family issues which may involve the household division of tasks, kinship relations, children's education, buying of property and cars, and management of the family budget without much interference from their husbands. Most women in my survey consulted their husbands on major purchases (such as a home or car purchase) however, final decisions generally rested with the wife.

Views regarding Japanese women and the role of Japanese women in the family have changed greatly depending on the historical context. One can trace the different gender and familial ideologies (as was done in the Asahi Shinbun, 3/5/95), through one of the most popular and most representative of the Japanese women's magazines, Shufu no Tomo (Housewife's Friend) from 1948 to 1995 by examining their cover stories for those respective years: April 1948 Cover Title - "Jiyuu Kekkon e no kitai." (My expectation is for freedom in marriage.)
May 1951 Cover Title - "Sanji seigen to shokugyoo fujin." (Working women and controlling childbirth.)

June 1958 Cover Title - "Denka Seikatsu Maihoomu no yume." (My dream is my own home and a lifestyle with electrical appliances.)

April 1973 Cover Title - "Arata na Ryoosai Kenbo." (The New Good Wife and Wise Mother.)

July 1978 Cover Title - "Datsu sengyoo shufu ron." (A Discussion regarding breaking away from the full-time housewife role.)

March 1987 Cover Title - "Kyaria Misesu." (Women with careers.)

February 1995 Cover Title - "Jibun ga kagayaku tame ni." (My own feeling is for myself in order to make myself radiant.)

As can be seen from this list, the historical context is critical to understanding the different images of women. In 1948, soon after the war, women were hopeful that they would have a freedom within marriage that they felt they had not experienced in the past. In this era in Japan, it was a time of new laws regarding women's right to vote and the official abolition of the ie system. As one 65 year old respondent told me with respect to this time right after the war,

"I was a teacher not too long after the war, and I remember that there were many young teachers at that time. There
was a strong teacher's union started then and all the teachers belonged to it - even executives were union members. That was a very good time for me, a very good time for women because it was a nice atmosphere for equality. Before that, people used to think that women teachers were just decorations, but after the war that changed. People began to take us seriously as teachers after that."

As urbanization and industrial capitalism began to take a stronger hold in Japan, women wanted to limit the number of children to which they gave birth. In 1951, as consumerism began in earnest in Japan, women dreamed of having an easier life filled with work-saving electrical appliances in a home of their own. In the early 1970's, women sought to re-define and justify their roles within the family using the ideas of the Meiji Period where women were viewed as "good wives and wise mothers." In the newspaper article related to this 1973 Cover Article, the role of women as housewives was being questioned as Japanese society was also affected by the women's rights and civil rights movements in American and Europe. However, by 1978, women in Japan were actively debating and seriously examining the idea of breaking away from the full-time housewife role. In the late 1980's, the focus is on the career women, how to define what a career woman is and what does it mean for the family and society. Lastly, in 1995, the focus is on self-improvement and self-development, but this concept so familiar to Westerners, is
predictably re-defined to fit Japanese ideology. That is, the view of the women interviewed in this magazine, and the view of many women that I interviewed is that if they make themselves "radiant," i.e., if they improve themselves, then the lives of their children and family members will also improve.

Much as Iwao (1993) has argued, Japanese women and Japanese people in general take a long-term view of society and of human relations. Many women in my research sample expressed to me the idea that gradual improvement will occur in society if they persevere in improving themselves and bettering the lives of their children. Thus, women and families are inextricably woven into the fabric of Japanese capitalist society reflecting historical views, ideologies and images. They are contributing to future historical changes and perceptions that will continue to re-shape and maintain Japanese society. In this way, in order to better understand the future of Japanese society as a whole, the family necessarily occupies an important place in the research.

Chapter-by-Chapter Outline
Chapter I: Introduction. The importance of women's economic contribution to the household is detailed. Theoretical considerations regarding anthropological research
and conceptualization of the family and household, the usefulness of the concept of patriarchy in household studies, Japan studies and gender studies are considered. Research methodology, including a discussion of the construction and content of the questionnaire, interview methodology, site selection and kinds of data collected are elucidated. A picture of research participants is detailed with respect to age, economic class, marital status and general characteristics and historical images of Japanese women as conveyed through Japanese newspaper articles and magazine articles.

Chapter II: History of Hokkaido. The history of Hokkaido as distinct from that of the main island of Honshuu and the rest of Japan is presented. A brief discussion of the Ainu, the indigenous inhabitants of Hokkaido, as related to the developmental history of Hokkaido is reviewed. The view of Hokkaido as the frontier of Japan and Japanese colonization efforts in Hokkaido is outlined. The reasons for the unique historical development of Hokkaido as differentiated from the rest of Japan will be traced. This presentation will include Hokkaido’s development as a frontier area of Japan, early American influence in Hokkaido, and the lack of development of intensive rice farming. Early pioneering efforts in Hokkaido
of foreigners in tandem with Japanese and the Japanese
government will be detailed as well as Hokkaido’s more recent
development. A critical assessment of these early American
and Japanese historical relationships is presented.

Chapter III: History of the Sexual Division of Labor in
Japan. A discussion of women’s labor inside the household and
within the family as well as outside the household set in an
historical context is presented. A discussion of the social
and economic transformations that occurred during the Meiji
period as the historical setting for women’s labor is
detailed.

Chapter IV: Focus on Hokkaido Families, women, and the
household economy. In this section, results of the
questionnaire are detailed with respect to the following
topics:
(a) How families in Hokkaido differ and are similar to other
areas of Japan relative to ideology, views of family, family
responsibility, child care, care of the elderly, and views of
women; (b) How families in Hokkaido are changing.
Discussion of women’s views regarding the changes that are
occurring in general and with respect to their own situation;
(c) Discussion of the household economic issues that affect
Hokkaido families; who makes the major financial decisions, who allocates the financial resources in the family, who decides on the family's major purchases, and in whose name is the home and property of the family registered; (d) Discussion of the ways in which issues in the household reflect the authority and power within relationships in the family.

Chapter V: Vignettes of Japanese women. Detailed case studies are presented of 23 of the women interviewed in this research.

Chapter VI: Conclusions

APPENDIX: A. Maps

B. Questionnaire in English

Bibliography
CHAPTER II

History and Development of Hokkaido

This research makes the argument that the role of women and women in the family cannot be framed based on gender alone, but other factors are important in the analysis of the household. These other variables are age, economic position, and the region in which they live. This chapter will detail the history of Hokkaido in order to provide a better understanding of the differences which exist in this region compared to the rest of Japan. This work reflects the idea that regional differences in Japan are important. However, it is necessary to recognize that at the same time as differences are presented, a balanced view regarding differences and similarities between the Hokkaido Region and the rest of Japan is recognized. Specifically, Hokkaido is a part of Japan and shares many similar characteristics with the other islands, yet regional distinctions are important.

The historical context and development of Hokkaido has been somewhat different from the main island of Honshuu and has affected the perceptions of those Japanese living in Hokkaido. Many Hokkaido residents view the region as a less traditional and less conservative area of Japan. Some of the Hokkaido women who responded to my interviews stated that
Hokkaido is more like America in its ideology and lifestyle. They expressed the idea that they felt more free and less constrained than those Japanese living in more traditionally conservative areas, such as the Tohoku Region or the areas of Kyoto or Nagoya. Therefore, it is worthwhile to better explore the history of Hokkaido in order to further understand Hokkaido families and the roles of women in these families.

Evidence of early occupation by tribal groups, dating to approximately 8,000 years ago, in Hokkaido has been found in the southern area of the island near the city of present-day Hakodate. It is hypothesized that tribes from the north, from the island of Sakhalin and eastern Siberia, and tribes from the south, from Honshuu, occupied and inter-married on the island producing groups of "hairy" and "non-hairy" Ainu (Plutschow 1991).

According to Takakura (1960), Japanese records indicated that in 1514 C.E. the Kakizaki family ruled the area of Hokkaido. This is the date that Takakura uses to establish the beginning of colonization activities in Hokkaido as well as the first time that Japanese immigrants in this area were united. However, relationships between mainland Japanese and the native inhabitants of this region (the Ainu) extended further back in history. An ancient term for Hokkaido, Watarishima, meaning the "island across the water" appeared as far back in Japanese records (in the Chronicle of the Empress
Saimei) as 654-661 C.E. If Takakura’s argument is correct, then one can trace the influence of the Japanese government in Hokkaido to the seventh century. This is evidenced by the fact that as early as 659 C.E. Abe no Omi established a government outpost at Shiribeshi.

During the Heian Period (794-1192 C.E.) the control of the Japanese central government began to dissipate, and Hokkaido was turned over to the control of the Abe family who ruled the area independently. For example, at this time there was no more tribute paid to Kyooto from the Hokkaido area. There are no records to show precisely when mainlander Japanese began to migrate to Hokkaido. However, based on reports in 1688 from a crew exploring the shores of the Ishikari River (a large river in Hokkaido), there were a number of castaways from the mainland who had married indigenous inhabitants of Hokkaido and settled down to live there. Other early mainlander Japanese who came to Hokkaido consisted of those who came to trade, fish, establish farms and those who were exiled from the main island of Honshuu for various offenses. These early Japanese settlers were few in number and it is assumed by Takakura that they were completely assimilated into the native Ainu society. Later on, Japanese mainlanders would come to Hokkaido due to war, poverty, and famine, which accompanied the civil war throughout most of the mainland of Honshuu. Even later, similar to early settlers
who moved West to the frontier regions of America, Japanese mainlanders came to Hokkaido in order to secure new opportunities such as land ownership which was not possible for them on the other islands of Japan. These later migrants built forts and established their own advanced state of social organization which Takakura defined as a feudal style (Takakura 1960).

As the numbers of mainlanders expanded, clashes between Japanese migrants and native Ainu occurred. Most of the early Japanese migrants were in the fishing and hunting trades and therefore, actively competed with native Ainu. The first of these clashes occurred in 1456 when a village blacksmith of Kajimura (the present-day Hakodate) had a disagreement with a Ainu chief and murdered him. In retaliation, the angered Ainu killed most of the Japanese in this small village. At this time, the Ainu were quite successful in driving most of the immigrants out of their home bases or killing them. Gradually though, the Kakizaki family regained a foothold in Hokkaido and unified the Japanese living on the island in order to stand against the native Ainu and eventually to totally suppress them. In 1550, treaties were made between the Ainu and the Japanese as the Japanese offered the natives gifts and other overtures of reconciliation. From this date the Japanese policy toward the Ainu became one of alternating positions of reconciliation and conquest (Edmonds 1985).
It was in 1799 that direct and permanent control of the Bakufu, the central government of Japan headed by the Shogun, was established over the island of Hokkaido constructing a magistrate and military headquarters in Hakodate. The reasons for this were twofold: the first was to prevent Russian control of the island since Russia was actively attempting to expand its own land holdings at this time and second, the Japanese government decided that the exploitation of the natural resources of Hokkaido would give a needed boost to the Japanese treasury. Thus, Hokkaido, meaning the "northern sea road," was the official name given in 1869 to this island which had previously been called Ezo or Yezo which meant "the land of the barbarians" (Edmonds 1985).

Hakodate is one of the oldest cities in Hokkaido and was the main trading port for konbu seaweed which was shipped to Osaka and Nagasaki. Generally, Hokkaido was the major processing area for fishing, in particular for sardines and herring, which were exported in salt barrels or crushed for use as fertilizer. Early attempts at rice farming failed in Hokkaido due to the inclimate, harsh weather, and at this time most food other than fish had to be shipped from the main island of Honshuu. Life in this period could be profitable for migrating Japanese who came to Hokkaido, but life was also difficult and risky. In 1624 and 1658, small pox epidemics occurred and in 1702 and 1703 flooding destroyed many villages
in Hokkaido. Also, the Ainu again rebelled in 1668 with the central government in Edo being forced to supply troops to quell the rebellion. In 1779, there was a tax revolt by 500 fisherman against the unequal taxation and unequal distribution of fishing licenses; they also complained about exploitative and poor work conditions (Plutschow 1991). By the time of the Meiji Government in 1868, about 58,000 Japanese lived mostly along the coast of Hokkaido and were involved in fishing while the remainder of the island was populated by about 15,000 Ainu aborigines (Edmonds 1985).

Most of the early settlers of Hokkaido were only those mainland Japanese who were extremely poor and of these most did not come to Hokkaido willingly. It was not until the late 1880s that a large number of farmers began to filter into Hokkaido. This was only because of the severe economic conditions due to the government’s stringent fiscal policy which forced Japanese villagers without land to leave for any place where they could locate adequate land to farm.

As briefly mentioned earlier in this chapter, a critical factor in the development of Hokkaido was the fact that early attempts at rice farming failed due to the intensely cold weather. At this time most food other than fish had to be shipped from the main island of Honshuu. This is historically important because without the intensive cooperative style of farming that rice farming necessitates, village hierarchies
and complex development of interdependent social relations did not develop in the same way and to the same degree that they did in other areas of Japan. More clearly, as Moore (1990:37) has argued, the intensive nature of rice farming has special requirements. These include a constant supply of water and in areas such as Nakada Township in the Tohoku Region, the control of water through irrigation and the development of new irrigation systems brought about new relationships between individuals, between villages and with the natural environment. Within villages, social relations developed in great complexity with respect to the formation of hierarchies and interdependency throughout the rice-growing areas of Japan due to the necessity of ensuring adequate water supply, so that the delicate rice grains would prosper and ensure abundant harvests. In contrast, in Hokkaido by the end of the Edo Period, in order to prevent famines, farmers curtailed their attempts to grow rice (though they would continue to try with weather-resistant strains of rice developed by the late 19th and early 20th centuries). They started to plant crops that could better endure the severe climate (Plutschow 1991).

The beginning of Japanese and American relations is generally traced to 1854 when Commodore Perry signed the Kanagawa Treaty with the shogunate. This treaty opened two Japanese ports to trade and one of these ports was in Hokkaido, the port city of Hakodate. Western influence from
Russia had been significant in Hokkaido, but with the signing of the treaty in 1854 influence from the United States as well as Russia escalated. This influence was experienced primarily through trade, but also through religious missionary work which was extensive in Hokkaido. Historically, in Japan, strict anti-Christian laws had been in effect since 1615 which had served to protect Japan from undue Western influence. These laws had only allowed Christian clergy entrance into Japan in order to serve foreign diplomats, traders, sailors and visitors. For example, as late as 1865, a group of Japanese Christians were located in Nagasaki and summarily rounded up and exiled. Western missionary zeal gradually broke through the legal barriers and missionaries attempted to spread the message of Christian religious doctrine to the Japanese. They took a more active role in proselytizing. However, the anti-Christian laws were revoked on February 19, 1873, and government officials could no longer legally interfere in a direct way in Christian missionary activity (Plutschow 1991).

Russian Orthodox missions were established in Hakodate, and developed a strong presence evidenced by the Khristos Church of Hakodate which still exists today. The Catholic influence had begun much earlier by the Jesuits and Franciscans on Honshuu in the 16th and 17th centuries. At this time, just a few Catholic priests from Europe had
converted approximately 300,000 Japanese to Catholicism in less than 100 years. In 1859, a Catholic missionary, Mermet de Cachon, arrived at Hakodate for the first time. At this mission, cattle breeding was begun with Holstein stock along with attempts to begin the production of milk, cream and butter. However, by the 18th century the Catholics were not the only Christian presence in Japan as Protestants too came to Japan to take advantage of the newly opened ports in order to spread the Christian doctrine (Plutschow 1991). These early missionaries were forced to study both the Japanese language and the people simultaneously.

The Anglican Church in Hakodate was opened in 1874 and with this church an important advocate for the native Ainu came to Hokkaido. John Batchelor was appointed a lay missionary in 1879 to work for the "salvation" of both the Japanese and the Ainu. However, Batchelor early on decided to concentrate on the Ainu and it is said that more than 1,000 Ainu were baptized before Batchelor left Japan. Batchelor published the first Ainu dictionary with a total of approximately 20,000 words. In June 1889, the first edition of this dictionary, the "Ainu-Japanese-English Dictionary" was published by the Hokkaido Prefectural Office. In 1892, Batchelor also established a charity medical clinic in Sapporo next to his own home. Ainu patients were treated without charge. Also, lodging and food were given to those who were
the most needy. Batchelor paid the cost of the clinic from the contributions he received from lecture tours he gave throughout Honshuu and from the sale of his books and dictionary (Hokkaido Prefectural Government 1968).

During this time period, the Japanese were interested in importing Western technology rather than exporting Hokkaido's natural resources. The average Japanese had no real need for foreign products and relied on the Confucian principles of self-sufficiency. At this time, Japan was still converting from a rice economy to a money economy. For example, personal income was still measured in rice and the money circulating from a small amount of internal trade was too little to sustain extensive foreign trade. Thus, initially the Japanese authorities did all they could to limit foreign trade. There were few Japanese merchants who were given the right to deal with foreigners and also restricted access to the currency of other countries. Trading lists from this time period show that Hokkaido's early foreign trade was dependent on China. Therefore, a Hakodate-Shanghai shipping route developed and supplied China with Hokkaido timber, fish and agricultural products that were not readily available in China. Animal hides and furs were also traded due to the popular demand in the cities of Europe.

The use of foreigners was not novel in Hokkaido as precedents for this occurred during the Tokugawa regime. The
Meiji government also used foreigners as a way to obtain Western knowledge and technology. The uniqueness of this situation in Hokkaido was not the use of foreigners, but that most of the foreigners were American. Many of these early residents were traders, seamen and hunters as well as some scholars and teachers. These foreign influences permeated Hokkaido through religion, education, agriculture, mining and farming. This is because the Japanese government through the Kaitakushi (Commission of Colonization) actively sought American expertise to aid in the development of Hokkaido. As Fujita (1994) has argued, the engineers and developmental specialists from the American group of experts played a far more significant role than any other group of foreigners, not only because of their large number in Hokkaido but also because they were given positions of power and influence in the Kaitakushi. Thus, Fujita (1994:10) suggests that these foreign influences "left a distinctively American imprint on the history of Hokkaido."

The Deputy Governor of the Kaitakushi in 1870, Kiyotaka Kuroda, was sent to the U.S.A. in 1871 to find an appropriate person who would be an advisor to the Japanese government regarding the Hokkaido development project. In America, Kuroda was granted an audience with President Grant at which time Kuroda requested the President to recommend a qualified person to assist Japan in its endeavors to develop Hokkaido.
President Grant recommended Horace Capron, then Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture (Hokkaido Prefectural Government 1968).

Upon Capron's arrival at his post, he set up government farms in Tokyo which later were moved and became experimental farming stations in Hokkaido. These early government farms specialized in producing Western hybrids of apples, grapes, strawberries and vegetables as well as flax and beets. On another one of these government farms dairy farming and pasturing was carried out. Based on Capron's recommendations, the Japanese government decided to introduce Western agricultural techniques to Hokkaido as a basis for future development and ordered seeds, seedlings, cattle and agricultural tools and equipment. The government also invited many American engineers to work for Capron. Capron was involved in the early selection of places suitable for Tonden-hei (farm-soldiers or soldier-settlers) whom the government was actively recruiting in order to facilitate the settling of Hokkaido. This Tonden-hei system was a system of agrarian militia started in early 1875 which attempted to lure members of the disbanded samurai, who needed a new means of living, into serving the Japanese government in Hokkaido. Under the tonden-hei system, which lasted twenty-five years, men between the ages of 18 and 35 (only ex-samurai were recruited until 1890) were organized into regiments, battalions, and
companies. They were given military training in the winter when they were not engaged in farming. In exchange for this service, the family of the recruit was given the money to go to Hokkaido, farming tools, a house, household furnishings, and enough provisions for three-years. These early farmer-soldiers worked as pioneers in settling land, making roads and building villages, but their lives and those of their families were strictly controlled as in military life (Fujita 1994). This was quite different from the American ideas of frontier spirit and development which were based on the free and independent pioneer farmer.

In order to establish dairy farming in Hokkaido, Capron arranged to bring Edwin Dun from America. Dun consented to bring short-horned cattle and sheep to Japan, and was placed in charge of cattle breeding at one of the government farms. Dun also gave lectures and on the spot training to students who were anxious to settle in Hokkaido. Dun taught everything from how to use western-style agricultural tools to basic Western style agricultural techniques. Thus, Dun is given credit as the first foreigner who introduced modern agricultural and dairy farming methods based on American and European technology to Japan (Hokkaido Prefectural Government 1968).

At the request of the Kaitakushi, an American mining expert, Benjamin Lyman, was invited to Japan in 1872. His
main purpose in coming to Hokkaido was the opening of underground resources, in particularly he was to investigate the possibility of coal mines, oil fields, deposits of useful minerals and places where water power could be utilized. At this time, there were no clear maps of geological areas or mineral veins and the construction of these maps was Lyman’s main priority. In 1877, a coal mine was opened at Horonai and engineers were invited from America in order to facilitate coal mining and to help construct a railway which was to go from Horonai to Sapporo. Thus, in this way the mining and railway businesses were first started in Hokkaido. Lyman’s reports on the geology of Hokkaido were translated into Japanese and published in 1877 by the Japanese government and were entitled, "General Geology of Hokkaido, by Benjamin Smith Lyman" (Hokkaido Prefectural Government 1968).

In the area of education, foreign influence was significant through the founding of the Sapporo Agricultural School on September 8, 1876, which would later become Hokkaido National University. The Japanese government decided to hire three American teachers to work at this university and William Clark was chosen as one of these early foreign teachers. Clark eventually became the vice-president and chief of the school farm, teaching the students agriculture, botany and English. Clark’s most famous speech was given on the morning of his departure at the end of his contract with Hokkaido
National University as he left Sapporo in 1877. As he rode his horse out of sight he called out to his students, "Boys, be ambitious" and then rode away. These words so affected his students that in a prominent place at Hokkaido National University there stands a granite monument with the words, "Boys, be ambitious!" and Clark's profile in bronze.

However, as Fujita (1994) has argued, not all went well with these foreigners who lived and worked in Hokkaido. It would be a misrepresentation to portray these relationships between Americans and Japanese in a completely harmonious way. Views of historical reality can be quite multifarious and not surprisingly, cultural prejudices and misunderstandings abounded. For example, Capron's ethnocentricism was clear when, although he appreciated the aesthetics of Japanese crafts, landscape techniques and architecture, he referred to Japan as "semi-barbarous" and that it was deficient in nearly all the conveniences of civilized life. In clothing, he viewed all Japanese as "nearly naked, both male and female" and referred to one of the main staples of Japanese cooking, daikon, as a "great worthless fibrous turnip radish" (Fujita 1994: 20-21). Capron believed that it was his duty to introduce Western civilization to Japan, and it was his opinion that Japanese culture could not withstand the power and innate superiority of Western culture.
The Japanese, too, had serious misgivings regarding Americans especially with respect to the rudeness and arrogance which they perceived on the part of the American experts. Special considerations were given to the Americans. Because the Japanese were the hosts and as a result of Japanese views of politeness, Americans were encouraged to present their positions in their own language, while Japanese translators had to make do with their limited English vocabulary and little knowledge of proper grammar and syntax in order to explain the position of the Kaitakushi. As a result, because of the short and carefully constructed responses to American inquiries, Americans viewed the Japanese as abrupt and rude while the Japanese viewed the Americans as insolent and contemptuous toward the Japanese people and government. Members of the Kaitakushi complained bitterly that in negotiations over various issues the Americans would explode with anger and behave like spoiled children. Also, the Japanese did not have the same faith in language as most Americans did, as the Japanese placed just as much emphasis on what was not said as what was said (Fujita 1994).

With respect to the adoption of Western vegetable crops, fruits and dairy products, it took the Japanese many years to become accustomed to their taste and varieties. For a very long time even after the introduction of Western agricultural methods and farm products, settlers in Hokkaido found it less
troublesome to cultivate and sell traditional crops as best they could. Also, as discussed earlier, for the Japanese people, rice is the basic and critical food and although expensive imports of rice continued, early settlers, despite failure after failure, continued to attempt to grow rice. Though rice growing did not develop in the same way as it did on Honshu and the other islands of Japan by the late nineteenth century and early 20th century, quick-maturing and frost-resistance varieties of rice were developed. This was an important factor in encouraging migration to Hokkaido. One Japanese official commented on the American agricultural education given to Japanese students that the education had been "peculiar" in that they learned about foreign crops irrelevant to Japan, but not about rice-planting or new strains of rice which was the most important issue for the Japanese (Fujita 1994).

Differences in wealth were observed by early foreigners in Hokkaido who noted that the poor lived in houses that were built of low quality materials with roofs that were thatched with reeds and bark. These roofs blew off in times of severe storms, while the wealthy lived in elegant homes with beautiful Japanese-style decorations and furnishings. The homes of the owners of prosperous trading companies had beautiful flower beds with lovely verandahs and well tended gardens (Plutschow 1991). Thus, the Americans advised the
Japanese government to construct houses that would better protect Hokkaido settlers from the severe winters. Americans encouraged them to build American and Russian-type houses for militia families, but the Japanese residents disliked these new homes because they did not fit the Japanese lifestyle. For example, residents complained that the wooden floors were too cold compared to the Japanese style tatami floors. Western style high-back chairs, high tables and beds were simply considered uncomfortable and not adaptive to Japanese culture. While undoubtedly American advisers left an indelible mark on the development and culture of Hokkaido, the gap between the idealistic views and suggestions of the Americans and the actual conditions and indigenous values remained wide. The Meiji government endeavored to develop Hokkaido for nationalistic purposes and not in accordance with individualistic notions of Americans regarding free-spirited settlers. Thus, rather than view the foreign influence of America in Hokkaido as a controlled adaptation of Western technology and knowledge to Japanese culture, it was rather a mixture of Japanese habits and customs. It involved some transfer of Western knowledge and technology, limited financial resources of the Japanese government and an assortment of successes and failures (Fujita 1994).

It is also important to note in detailing the foreign influence in Hokkaido that for the early Japanese settlers it
was their own traditions and culture, not American expertise in technology and American values, that were the source of strength and endurance that enabled them to cope with the difficult environment that Hokkaido presented. In Hokkaido, it was necessary to sometimes change or modify traditional Japanese customs and this new knowledge and experience was mixed with old customs. It is this unique legacy which affected the Hokkaido people and their view that Hokkaido is a freer, less constricted place to live.

In summary, as stated at the beginning of this chapter, Hokkaido shares many similarities and characteristics with the rest of Japan, but it also has a somewhat different developmental history. This fact makes it more comparable in many ways to the urban areas of Tookyoo and Osaka rather than to an area such as the Toohoku Region. I argue in this dissertation that Hokkaido is somewhat different in the views of many of its residents for the following reasons; first, Hokkaido developed as a frontier area with many mainland Japanese who owned no property and had little money coming to Hokkaido to improve their standard of living or in order to simply survive. Second, the intense style of rice farming that occurs in many areas of Japan did not develop in Hokkaido due to the harshness of the climate. As a result, the intense and complex social relationships based on interdependency within villages did not develop to the same degree as it did
in the intensive rice-growing areas of Japan. Third, there was a great amount of foreign influence, especially American influence, through missionaries, technological experts, educators, and traders, as well as a relatively large American residential foreign community. This made Hokkaido more cosmopolitan than some other areas of Japan and is reflected in their ideology throughout this research. Thus, perhaps for all or several of these reasons, Hokkaido is a region outside traditional studies of Japan. However, because it is an area in which there has not been much academic research, a better understanding of this region can significantly contribute to a more comprehensive treatment of Japanese society.
CHAPTER III

History of the Sexual Division of Labor in Japan

As far back in Japanese history as the Heian Period (C.E. 794-1185), Japan saw the solidifying of the state and the rise of powerful ruling families. During this period Japanese women played an important role in the creation of aesthetics and in politics within the aristocratic class. Many of these upper class women were educated and accomplished as evidenced by the production of some of the best known literary works of this period, e.g., Murasaki Shikibu (C.E. 970-1140), the author of *The Tale of Genji*. Another famous woman writer was Sei-Shonagon, who compiled *The Pillow Book* which chronicled court life in Japan during the 10th century. Also, it has been argued that the Heian period was one of fluid relationships between the sexes which has been described as *ren‘aishugi* or "free love" (Rodd 1991).

In the Kamakura Period (CE 1185-1333), women maintained some property rights and continued to hold important roles in society. However, the growth of feudalism in the Muromachi Period (C.E. 1338-1550) and the emergence of the *samurai* ethic for women and men of the upper classes precipitated women’s loss of inheritance and property rights. Women, too, were considered *samurai* and in many cases were fierce and warlike.
The full development of feudalism occurred in Japan during the Tokugawa Period (C.E. 1600-1868). The most influential literature pertaining to the roles of women was the "onna daigaku" (greater learning for women) written in 1672 by Kaibara Ekken, a man who advocated neo-Confucian morals. This book stressed the important aspects for women to cultivate in their own character, such as female subservience, with ultimate control over children not given to the mothers but belonging to men as family patriarchs (Niwa 1993). Sievers (1983) suggests that the eventual consolidation of feudal institutions during the Tokugawa Period is related to the decline in the position of women with respect to inheritance and property ownership which eventually led to the subordinate status of women exemplified more recently in the Meiji Civil Code of 1868.

However, Dunn (1972) has argued that women who lived in the Tokugawa Period played a considerable role in the running of shops and trading concerns, even managing entire business concerns, including customers and clients, when husbands (the legal property owners) were out of town or otherwise unavailable. Even in businesses that had a paid manager, clerks, and other assistants, the wife and daughters of the household had authority in running the business.

In the Tokugawa Period, in aristocratic as well as warrior households, the official wife or highest ranking lady
at the court handled all household affairs and the same was true of the households of non-aristocratic classes, such as farmers, merchants, artisans, and entertainers. Married women in these households were responsible for the general management of the household as well as the supply of food and clothing. The household was the primary unit of production and reproduction during the medieval period of Japan (Wakita 1993). However, during the Edo Period, women were not expected to play the principal role in child care (Niwa 1993).

Lebra (1993) has argued that it was not until the 1870s that Japanese officials challenged the long standing practice in Japan of concubinage which was institutionalized particularly among the ruling class. It was during this same time that prostitution came under attack by early women’s rights groups in Japan. Legally, the law of monogamy replaced that of concubinage, however the practice of concubinage was not terminated but simply transformed into a secret practice for men and women of the upper classes. For non-aristocratic women, such as Japanese peasant women, historically in Japan female labor was especially valued. Women worked extensively in rice-paddies along with men as well as performing important duties in the household (Nishikawa 1995).

In the social and economic transformation that occurred during the Meiji Period, gender interests were at the very center of the struggles reshaping class and sex-based
hierarchies. As Kondo (1991) has argued, the Meiji Civil Code of 1898 instituted at the level of national law a subordinate status for women. It legitimated a male-centered household in an attempt to revive and extend to all Japanese a family form characteristic of the elite samurai upper class. Lebra (1984), Bernstein (1991) and Ueno (1987) suggest that the patriarchal family system known as the ie system was only traditional for the aristocratic, samurai class but was extended to include commoners through the Meiji Civil Code. As Uno (1991) argues, among ordinary people, shominso, men and women, helped one another and worked together which nurtured a mentality differing from that of the samurai class. However, at this time, the 19th century nuclear family became the pillar of the state and the Japanese government viewed women as crucially important because they could stabilize and shape the character of the household, thereby affecting the form and future of the state. The stereotypical image of an all-sacrificing, devoted wife and mother in a nuclear family was created and solidified in Japan during the Meiji period (Sievers 1983). The role of motherhood became institutionalized and privileged over a more traditional household role which combined work and residence. In the past, this had facilitated women's participation in productive, not only reproductive labor (Uno 1991).
Women and Wage Labor

Japanese women dominated the Meiji work force where they constituted an average of 60% of Japan’s industrial labor force from 1894 to 1912. Many young women worked in textile mills and mines in order to help their family during times of economic necessity (Tsurumi 1986). By 1914, Japan dominated the world cotton manufacturing market and managed to maintain that position until just before World War II.

The Meiji government encouraged young women (some as young as 11 or 12) to join the labor force for the benefit of the country and to aid their family economically. Women did weaving and worked at home doing sewing piece work to help their families survive; peasant women hired out as day laborers on farms. Divorced and widowed women worked on farms, did piece work at home, or worked as servants in order to survive because of economic hardship (Cornell 1990).

The state supported gender ideology perpetuated during the Meiji Period regarding the role of women and a benevolent family structure meeting all the needs of these women, denied the lifecourse realities of divorce, death and other economic hardships. Connections to family and family-like structures remained strong even though the settings in which the work of women changed, as Meiji women (single, married, divorced, and widowed) worked in coal mines, match factories and textile mills (Muramatsu 1983). Women who worked in coal mines in
Western Japan from 1915 to 1918 worked long hours like men (12 hours per day), but received less payment. Their wages were paid by the day, no days off were given so that when women had to rest they were not paid. Female coal miners lived and worked along with men. The relationship between these men and women was informal since marriages were seldom performed until after children had become older. When life became too difficult, frequently couples would separate, leaving mothers and their children to support themselves as best they could (Nishkawa 1995).

During the Meiji Period, young women in the textile industry helped fuel Japan's industrial development. The nature of their work was disguised as they were not called workers but "daughters" or "students" spending time before marriage in earning income. Then, as now, capitalist employers and state officials justified the lower wages paid to the female work force by its characterization as part-time or temporary and citing women's lack of commitment to the workplace (Upham 1987).

From the mid-1800's to present-day Japan, low pay for work that women perform has a long-standing history. Women's low wages during the Meiji Period in the textile mills were further lowered by a number of devices owners used to encourage productivity. Additionally, recruiter's fees, fees for the worker's transportation to the mill, and room and
board were all deducted from a worker's wage resulting in the scenario of workers owing their employers money.

The average workday in Japan's textile industry from the 1880's to 1900 was 12 to 13 hours, broken only by two 15 minute meal periods (Garon 1987). Work in these textile mills was physically exhausting while workers who made mistakes were berated and harassed. The most severe physical toll of this work was reflected in the women's health. Lung disease was an industry-wide problem as a result of long hours, inadequate food, and a working environment conducive to the development of tuberculosis. Tuberculosis was endemic to the industry by 1900, and was easily spread via crowded sleeping rooms (30 to 40 women to a room) and shared bedding in the dormitories. Approximately 25% of all female workers contracted tuberculosis (Sievers 1983). No severance payment or other assistance to these workers or to their families was given.

Garon (1987) argues that suicide was a fairly common occurrence as an acceptable way out of an intolerable situation or as an implied protest against the mill owners and/or parents who placed female workers there. Marshall (1967) has argued that the high percentage of women in factory jobs was conducive to paternalistic labor policies in at least two ways. On the one hand the need to convince family heads to permit their daughters to come from the farms to the cities led companies to provide dormitory housing and other
paternalistic benefits. On the other hand, Japanese women, long accustomed to listening to family heads and being relegated to a subordinate role in society in general, were if anything, even more responsive than male workers to appeals for obedience and diligence couched in traditional language (Marshall 1967).

Molony (1991) has stated that Japanese workers in the cotton textile industry of pre-World War II suffered a pervasive invisibility. When they are not generally overlooked, they are pitied as passive victims incapable of acting on their own initiatives. When instances of activism are so obvious they cannot be ignored as when silk reelers carried out a major strike in 1885, they are dismissed as unique, aberrant events confirming the conventional view of Japanese women as passive (Molony 1991:218). Molony further discussed that these views of women as passive and short-term workers has endured due to their resonance with stereotyped images of women in Japan.

Young women on the farm in the 1920s played a major role in initiating and implementing the economic decision to leave their family and go to the city to work; they often left home against parental wishes (Molony 1991). Many of these young women believed that they could better serve the economic interests of the family by working in the factories. The fact that they made the decision to enter the mills on their own
belies their depiction as hapless pawns. After entering the factory and finding disappointing conditions, they frequently made the decision to transfer to another factory. Additionally, in the silk reeling industry when women workers found situations not to their liking, they learned to use more effective, collective action. They organized boycotts, walkouts, and strikes - actions which became common in the textile industry from 1885 and they had successes. One of the earliest strikes in modern Japan's industrial sector was most effective. It occurred in 1885 when the owners of the Amemiya Silk Filature in Kofu attempted to lower piece work rates while elongating the workday by a half-hour (from 14 hours). Over 100 women left work in protest and went to a nearby Buddhist temple where they stayed until their demands were met. The piecework rates were not lowered and the length of the work-day remained the same (Tsurumi 1986; Molony 1991).

However, women not only worked in textile mills, they worked in department stores, on buses, in airplane services, at gasoline-filling stations, in radio stations, in amusement parks, on the stage and on the screen, in small handicraft shops, in domestic service as maids, and in public restaurants.

In fact, it wasn't until the full development of heavy industry in the 1920s and 1930s that there were more men than women in the Japanese paid labor force. It was in this period
that a full-time permanent industrial labor force became part of Japanese society (Carney and O'Kelly 1990).

Additionally, these historical struggles during the Meiji Period revolving around women's labor manifest a dialectical relationship evidenced by both the repressive and reformist initiatives of the state. While later in the Meiji Period the State promoted the ideology of "good wife and wise mother" manifesting patriarchal interests, it also colluded with the capitalist owners of the textile mills. The government ignored documented cases of agents in the silk-reeling industry seeking out poor farm families who needed income and misrepresenting the pay and conditions of women's employment in the mills. The government knew this was a common practice through its first comprehensive survey, Shokko Jijo (the conduct of factory workers) completed in 1903. Eventually, there was a factory law protecting workers instituted in 1911 (Garon 1987). These conflicts occurred within a framework of ideological assumptions which reinforced the false idea that female participation in wage labor in Japan was peripheral rather than essential to the Japanese economy.

Molony (1991) has asserted that most of the young textile workers expressed a desire to work. She discussed a questionnaire done by researchers in 1927 where most female workers cited economic reasons for wanting to work in the mills; 17.2% wanted to earn money for personal use, such as
self-support or for their trousseaux, and 69.9% wished to contribute actively to family finances. Many young women were very interested in the money offered in order to buy decent clothes and the opportunity to continue their education in factory-operated schools, i.e., corridor schools. Farm life was far from idyllic, characterized by long hours and hard work, so that it is not difficult to understand that many young women wanted an opportunity to get away from the difficulties of farm-life. Though most women chose to work at the mills, women were still considered a source of cheap labor, as these worker’s wages were extremely low. While many companies promised more money, Japanese female textile workers received about one-tenth of the wages of a contemporary New England female textile worker. Thus, Japanese women have historically been a source of cheap labor, as well as a very relevant and crucial dimension of the Japanese labor process.

Chimoto (1995) has argued that a sizeable percentage of these textile workers were married. Some of the older married women had positions of some power such as those of managerial and supervisory jobs, but the problem of managing household labor and full-time employment outside the home proved too much for many of them and they quit. However, some members of management in the silk-reeling industry recognized that companies were the losers when skilled female workers left jobs due to marriage or childbirth. Therefore, some of the
earliest in-factory child-care was established by the Tokyo Spinning Company in 1894. Some companies, such as the Kanegafuchi Spinning Company established factory nurseries in 1902. Pregnancy leave was established by this company as well as an in-factory midwife with whom pregnant women could consult and from whom women could receive medical care and advice.

In the present wage labor market, Takenaka (1992) argues that the expansion of a flow-type labor market and the increasing use of part-time female labor are closely related. The dominant view which exists in Japan that these two current trends should be interpreted not as an expansion of unstable employment targeted at women, but as an increase in job options for women is characteristic of the late 1980s.

Takenaka (1992) asserts that the government sponsored "Research Group for Work in the Year 2000 Plan" has stated that very few women part-time workers are dissatisfied with their low wages which explains the increased number of women who are choosing to work part-time. A survey by the Management and Coordination Agency's Statistics Bureau concluded in 1987 that 57.8% of non-working women said they wanted to have a part-time job, while only 14.2% wished to work full-time as permanent employees. However, this is because of the fact that part-time work is the only work open to middle-aged women. Because of the severe conditions of
full-time work, women are placed in the position of choosing jobs with short hours which allow them to balance the demands of the household and their job. Thus, Takenaka argues that the supply-demand balance discussion is underlain by the assumption that men and women are interchangeable as suppliers of labor which is unrealistic because women workers are not given many options. The most serious flaw in the supply-demand balance theory is that job segregation is taken for granted in the Japanese labor market. In this way meritocratic management, which does not include gender differences, only perpetuates and reinforces the gendered division of labor.

Takenaka (1992) has suggested that another trend in thinking which has occurred more recently in Japan is in the shift of the concept of equality from the individual level to the household level. In a survey report of the Economic Planning Agency’s General Planning Bureau conducted by the Social Development Research Institute, it is stated that degrees of inequality should be judged on the basis of household earnings. The wage differential was a serious problem around 1955 because the gap was considerable among heads of households (based on primarily male worker’s wages). There is no notion of women’s right to work as a basic human right nor is there any hint of the principle of equal pay for an equal job. While governmental policy regarding the female
workforce for the 21st century argued that women should not remain a supplemental and peripheral labor force, the policies in effect will give only a few women a full opportunity to exercise their work talents. The majority of women will continue to be viewed as part of the supplemental labor force.

**Women's Labor in the Family and Household**

In order to properly discuss the household economy, one must consider the variation in form, meaning and nature of the family and household work in Japan. In Japan, a woman's role in the family is said to involve fulfilling responsibilities: to her husband, to the perpetuity of the household, to motherhood and children, to her in-laws, to her work (inside and outside the home) and to society (Saso 1990; Lebra 1984; Bernstein 1983). However, to conceptualize the idea of the family cross-culturally has proven problematic.

In pre-industrial Japan the workplace and home were one, where women labored at a variety of productive and reproductive tasks, e.g., as artisans and merchants in household enterprises. Men participated actively in housework and childrearing (Bernstein 1991). After the Meiji Restoration (1868), and the emergence of new specialized institutions men and children were removed from the household for long hours, leaving middle-class women alone in twentieth-century Japan. Lower class women were also affected in that their energy was taxed more than ever in their efforts to
obtain adequate income and to maintain a decent home life (Molony 1991).

Gender and class issues converge in the implementation of the Meiji Civil Code as manifested in the fact that the role of women in a legally subordinated position became legitimated. It was extended to women of all classes, while the status of men (of all classes) was enhanced in tangible ways. Specifically, the male household head was invested with all property rights, which passed from one household head to another, not to the spouse. Women were not considered fully adult persons according to the Code because the permission of the household head was necessary in order for women to take legal action (Sievers 1991). In the family, adultery was sufficient grounds for divorce only in the wife’s case. Wives could divorce husbands, but only in cases where the husband had actually been legally punished for his offense (Kondo 1990; Smith 1983). In summary, the Meiji Civil Code of 1898 institutionalized and legalized a conservative, patriarchal form of the samurai family in Japan which was in contradiction to the historically more egalitarian status of women in the family lives of most Japanese (Bernstein 1991; Walthall 1991; Ueno 1987; Sugiyama Lebra 1984; Smith and Wiswell 1982).

A somewhat different point of view is advanced by Toshitani (1994) who argued that the ie of the Meiji family
law is nothing more than a new version of the family registration system. Therefore, the law was not just a simple model of the *ie* system of the *samurai*. The customs upon which the laws were based were actually a number of precedents from the practical administration of the family register. According to Toshitani, the household was considered as a group, that was commanded by the household head and whose authority and existence was maintained through succession to the leadership of the house. Marriages were also under patriarchal control and were usually arranged with the goals of improving the status of the *ie*. Toshitani argued that it was simply important to institutionalize this system because control over the labor of the family and the concentration of family property in the household head maintained the security of the economic activities of the *ie*. It was argued that the household had to be hierarchical and authoritarian to maintain relations in the household. Thus, it was in the Meiji Civil Code that the order of the *ie* was instituted as a legal entity of rights and duties.

Since the Meiji Period, women have been socialized and schooled in the familial ideology of the mother and wife who works only at home and that of a husband who works only in the paid labor force outside the home. This familial ideology of the "Good wife, wise mother," referred to a woman who served the state interests by taking good care of her husband and
raising her children in a wise way. This idea is, in part, based on Confucian ideology which restricted the activity of women to the household (Niwa 1993). Familial and gender ideology, as culturally constructed, are important components in understanding how women view themselves, as well as how women are viewed, and affects how they allocate resources and labor tasks within the home. Young women are still required to take courses in home-economics (e.g., cooking, sewing, dressmaking) as part of the school curriculum (Hendry 1989), which socializes women in stereotyped roles of the ideal wife and mother. In turn, this socialization has further polarized and rigidified the sexual division of labor inside the household and in the paid labor force (Uno 1991; Fujita 1989).

Within this historical context, how did the household division of labor in Japan become so polarized with women only managing the household and doing all the family nurturing work? Chimoto (1995) has argued that married women who had the full burden of housework, family responsibilities, and work outside the home, first made the transition from full-time wage laborer and full-time housewife by quitting factory jobs and doing in-home piecework, naishoku. This was possible because as Japan became industrialized the wages of men rose and women became systematically excluded from these high salary jobs. The wages of women declined to the point where, as a percentage of men's wages, they were considered to be so
low that they were only supplementary to the household economy and were insufficient to be considered the family's main source of income. Thus, the percentage of contribution that women made to the household economy in the form of wages became less and less. In these circumstances, women who were in a position to be able to afford to stay home on a full-time basis chose to do so, rather than struggle to maintain a job and do all the household and family work.

Chimoto has further argued that in order for a wife to be a full-time housewife, it was necessary for the husband's income to meet household expenses adequately. Among the lower urban class, it was only after the start of the 20th century that members of the lower class living in the city started to form households. Supporting a household in the city in the late 1800's in Japan was no easy matter as many lower-class Japanese lived in flop-houses and in slums as evidenced by newspaper articles of that time period. In Japan's early industrialization period of the 1870s and 1880s, men worked as rickshaw or cart pullers, as day laborers, entertainers, rag-pickers and beggars. Wives did in-home piecework such as making fans, stripping reeds, or splitting bamboo slats for lanterns as well as small extra jobs such as repairing matchboxes. Chimoto estimates that 70% of these low income married women had some kind of additional work besides their household work.
As these factory jobs began to pay better wages, many factory workers started to settle down in the city. The modern-day nuclear family consisting of the husband, wife, and two children became increasingly more common since few extended families existed in the city. When the husband's salary reached a certain level, the wife could do lower-paying side work in the home, care for her children, and do the housework. This phenomena was found mostly in large urban areas such as Tookyoo because it is in these areas that the proportion of the head of the households' income was particularly high. Shortages in family income were made up by loans (frequently from family members of the wife), pawning, bartering and withdrawing money from savings. By the 1920s the employment rate among wives declined to 44%. At this time, there was a new middle-class norm which frowned upon wives being employed outside the household. By the 1920s and 1930s, the husband's income had exceeded expenses preparing the way for the appearance of the full-time housewife among factory workers as well as among government officials, company employees and teachers. Thus, the fact that families could now meet their expenses on the wages of the husband alone contributed significantly to establishing a gender-based division of labor in the home noted in the phrase, "Men at work, women in the home," which became the new norm in many worker's households (Chimoto 1995: 61). This was the
evolution of the development of the full-time housewife which occurred in tandem with the rise of the middle class in the early stages of industrialization. It was accompanied by a more rigid gendered division of labor in the household in Japan.

At the same time that the sexual division of labor became more polarized, Lebra (1984) argues that the 1980's contraction of the housewife role and denigration of its status has caused some Japanese women to decide that the formerly structured reward system, that is, her long-range investment as wife and mother, may not pay off in the way she assumed it would. She may not be supported by her children when she is older, and her children may not adequately appreciate her sacrifices and devotion in the household. Additionally, Tamanoi (1990) and Shooji (1992) have argued that many women are experiencing frustration due to the isolation of staying at home, the alienation of individuals within the society, and the growing complexities inherent in nuclear family and personal life.

While the boundaries of the sexual division of labor continue to shift with men doing more or less of the household labor while women work more often outside the home, women continue to do work that is defined stereotypically as "women's work." As Ito (1986) has argued, women are typically given menial assignments including clerical or
support duties such as filing and retrieving documents or placing and conveying notes for male co-workers. Additionally, many of their "unofficial" employment responsibilities parallel tasks traditionally identified as "women's work" inside the home, such as washing desks down, daily scrubbing and bleaching of ashtrays (though, ironically, women were forbidden to smoke), cleaning automatic tea dispensers, boiling water, preparing tea, and washing dirty tea cups. Clearly, women's work in the household parallels their paid wage-labor work in specific ways that men's wage work does not. In this way, women are bound by a gendered division of labor which arose in the household, but permeated the workplace and has now become ossified within Japanese society generally.

Therefore, the history of the sexual division of labor within Japan directly engaged issues involving the rise of the middle class and the industrialization of Japan, the institutionalization of the role of the full-time housewife, gender and familial ideology, as well as low wages and the continued occupational segregation of women workers. All of these strands contributed to form the present-day entrenched household division of labor in Japanese society.
CHAPTER IV

Focus on Hokkaido Families: Women and the Household Economy

In Chapter two, the history of Hokkaido was detailed as distinct from that of the rest of Japan, but how are those historical differences manifested in the household division of labor in Hokkaido? In the analysis of questionnaire responses, it is not my intention to portray a homogeneous picture of a "typical Japanese family." To do so, would obscure the fact that different family members have differential access to resources and power. These differences within the household are affected by age, gender and rural or urban area distinctions.

Regional variations are significant in Japan and affect various aspects of human life. For example, S. Izumi, C. Ogyuu, K. Sugiyama, H. Tomoeda and N. Nagashima have documented regional variation throughout the eight main regions of Japan (excluding the Hokkaido region) including Toohoku, Hokuriku, Kantoo, Chuubu, Kinki, Chuugoku, Shikoku, and Kyuushuu, in their 1984 work, "Regional Differences in Japanese Rural Culture." This regional variation included differences in language, in inheritance and succession patterns, in funeral rituals, in wedding ceremonies and where pregnant women deliver their first child. Imai-Thurn has
further documented this regional variation in her 1995 dissertation regarding succession and inheritance in Japan.

Additionally, based on my own research, there is regional variation in terms of economic variables. For example, from the *Kenmin Keizai Keisan Nenpoo (1995)* Keizai Kikakucho - Annual Report on Prefectural Accounts, 1995, Economic Research Institute and from *Hitori Atari Kenmen Shotoku Heisei 4 - Prefectural Income per Capita 1992*, I found the following information. In terms of savings per capital as of March 1993, the average amount of savings per individual in Tookyoo was approximately 618.8 man en (about $62,000). The Tookyoo area was ranked number one in Japan based on this variable. However, the Hokkaido region was ranked 38th within Japan with average savings per capita of 321.8 man en (about $33,000). The average savings of an individual based on all prefectures throughout Japan was 423.8 man en ($42,000). Thus, Hokkaido is placed in the lower end of the economic spectrum as argued in Chapter 1.

From the same sources cited above, regional economic variation can be shown by an examination of average prefectural (taxable) income per capita. In examining the Hokkaido region, it falls within the range of less than 270 man en and greater than 240 man en for a one year period. Thus, Hokkaido falls within the same economic range of the Toohooku Region, the Shikoku region and the Kyuushuu region.
This can be compared to the Tookyoo region, Chuubu region (especially, Aichi Prefecture), and the Kinki Region (especially, Oosaka) where the average is above 330 man en. However, it must be remembered that this is only taxable income and represents only one economic variable. Additionally, in the Japanese tax system there are many deductions which greatly limit the amount of income which is subject to taxes.

The Household Division of Labor in Hokkaido

The sexual division of labor in Japan since the end of the Meiji Period has allowed men to pursue, unfettered by household or childcare concerns, full-time careers to facilitate the economic success that Japan has achieved. As discussed in Chapter 3, when industrialization in Japan proceeded, the expansion of wage labor activity split the former unity of production and reproduction in the household to a greater degree. As "women's work" in the home became more privatized and appeared to be unrelated to "productive" work, i.e., productive work became defined in the capitalist economy as wage labor, their work in the home became defined as "unpaid". At the same time, housewifery was not devalued in Japan, as it was in the United States. It was considered more important than ever and was supported by the state emphasizing the all-important role of "good wife and wise mother."
The definition of "women’s work" which emerged from the Meiji period assigned work inside the household strictly to women as their natural and primary role. This role became the defining reality for women representing their "true identity" (Miyake 1991:244). As Gelb and Palley (1994) have argued, it is the household division of labor, including child care and elderly care responsibilities, and the primacy of these household roles for women only, that created a society in which women are looked upon mainly as part-time, replacement workers. Even if women want to work full-time, they are placed in a position of second-class regarding employment with prestigious companies providing high salaries, good benefits and privileged positions.

However, in present-day Hokkaido, what is the range of variation in the household division of labor? First, in order to adequately portray the stability of the rural area of Shibetsu, the population figures are considered. I examined the population census for Shibetsu from 1920 to 1990, and obtained the population figure for 1995 from the Asahi Shinbun, 12/15/95. It was found that the Shibetsu area had a very stable population which evidenced little significant overall change with the population total basically the same in 1995 as it was in 1920. These figures are as follows:
Table 4.1.—The Population of Shibetsu, Japan from 1920-1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>POPULATION</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>POPULATION</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>23,638</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>38,951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>24,071</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>36,502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>28,101</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>33,044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>30,603</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>30,028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>29,931</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>28,920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>35,554</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>27,719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>37,356</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>25,754</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In 1960, in the area of Shibetsu the percent of employed persons, 15 years of age and over, working in agriculture was 58.7%: in 1970 it was 42.4%, in 1980 it was 27.2% and in 1990 it was 23.7%. Thus, while the number of people employed in farming has dropped over the last thirty-five years, Shibetsu is still a relatively stable rural community. It was established in 1902 as Shibetsu-mura (Shibetsu-village) and in 1915 was incorporated as Shibetsu-cho. In 1954, Shibetsu-shi (the city of Shibetsu) was formed through the coming together of Shibetsu-cho, Kanishibetsu-mura, Tayoro-mura, and
Onnebetsu-mura. It is within this community of the present-day city of Shibetsu that women who received the most help with household work lived. In this area, while 57.1% of my fourteen Shibetsu interview respondents received no assistance from family members with housework, 42.9% of the women interviewed in Shibetsu did receive help with household labor. However, this aid came not always from husbands, but by means of stem family members who frequently lived in the same household or close-by. For example, household assistance was received from the wife's parents, from the husband's parents, from the oyomesan (the daughter-in-law), and of course, occasionally from husbands also. As one 43-year old interview participant from Shibetsu said, regarding the advantages of living in extended families and her perception that the nuclear family arrangement was the preferred lifestyle of most Americans,

"I cannot understand why Americans like to live separate from parents. I think it is good to live together. Why not? My husband's mother does most of the cooking, washing and indoor household work and I work outside on the farm, which I love to do best."

Thus, for some women in Shibetsu, living with in-laws or one's own parents, is not considered a hardship. It is a convenient and expedient lifestyle that can be used to one's own advantage through the sharing of household labor and child
care tasks. In this way, their own freedom and opportunities are enhanced.

This picture is vastly different from the one older respondents painted about life as a young Japanese oyomesan many years ago. As Ms. Yamaguti, a 59-year old grandmother from Shibetsu said,

"Most young women don’t know about the days long ago in Japan when being a young bride, especially on a farm, was terrible, for every young bride it was terrible back then, but we didn’t question anything; we just accepted our fate."

And Ms. Moriyama, 78, also from Shibetsu stated,

"A long time ago in Japan, a young oyomesan couldn’t go out much, they had to stay and work on the farm all the time. I remember when I used to go to women’s club meetings, the new oyomesan on a farm, was like being a slave."

Thus, historically, for many women who married and worked in farm households, accepting the lot of the much put-upon new bride was received without question.

When we examine household labor, we can also consider age as a factor in determining who received help within the household setting. In Shibetsu, of the 42.9% of women in my sample who did receive help with household tasks, most were in the age range of 35 to 44 years and had part-time or full-time jobs outside the home. Conversely, of the 57.1% of women who received no help in the household, most were in the 45 to 78
year age range and had been full-time housewives since marriage. As one of these 63 year old women from Sapporo noted,

"I've always done all the household work since I was a young bride. I had a job before I got married, but when I married, my husband wanted me to quit. In my experience, that's what women did - we had to do the housework, my husband and other people expected us to do it."

Sapporo was established in 1884 as Sapporo-ku (Sapporo-ward) and in 1922 became Sapporo-shi. From 1941 to 1967, many small communities merged with the city of Sapporo as follows: 1941 - Maruyama-cho merged with Sapporo; 1950 - Shiroishi-mura merged with Sapporo; 1955 - Kotoni-cho, Sapporo-mura, and Shimoro-mura were incorporated into the city of Sapporo; 1961 - Toyohira-cho became incorporated in Sapporo and lastly in 1967, Teine-cho became a part of the city of Sapporo. In the urban area of Sapporo, 66.6% of the nine women interviewed said they received no help with household labor (with the exception of their husband's taking out the trash and tending the outside yard). Of the remaining percentage (33.3%) of women who did receive some help with household tasks, most have full-time or part-time jobs and are in the age-range of twenty-eight to forty-six years old. In these cases, help came mostly from the husbands who, in particular, were helpful in childcare, checking children's homework, keeping children
entertained, and taking children to various functions, such as school and doctor's appointments. These women who received help tended to view their marriages as partnerships with the husband providing more than a paycheck. They felt that husbands should contribute to the overall welfare of the household and children. As one 34 year old woman commented,

"I view my marriage as a 50/50 partnership - it is definitely 50/50 in the house and outside the house. I believe that since 1949, when women received the right to vote, the household duties are not as rigid as they were a long time ago. Men and women should both contribute to the household in every way - they both should be responsible."

However, some wives who don't receive any help in the household, believe that since the husband contributes economically to the household and works outside the home, a wife's duty is to do everything inside the home. As Mrs. Tanaka, 50, comments,

"Since my husband works outside the home, I do everything inside the home. I do all the childcare and all the house work. My husband will do the gardening and some of the outside work, but the inside work is my responsibility. Actually, I have no special talents to do things outside the home, and I consider my husband to be the president of this house. However, as I recall, when I was married about two years and didn't yet have children, I wanted to go to work, but my husband said no. Now, I think that if I worked part-time I wouldn't get that much money and it would only be used for a dress or to buy something extra and
in that case, I couldn’t ask for my husband’s help. I have evaluated the situation more closely now, and I feel it is not worth it to work outside the home."

Thus, the husband’s refusal to do household work, and his not sharing in the responsibility for the children and overall welfare of the family is excused because he must bring home the paycheck. In many Japanese families, this economic necessity overshadows any other responsibility a husband may have. Many women accept this reasoning and in turn, make the same economically-based argument for their husband’s lack of attention to their children and to family responsibilities.

For many women who can afford to do so, staying home makes sense in terms of the household division of labor and economically. If one is in charge of all the household labor and cannot ask her husband to help out, then the salary must be high enough to justify that sacrifice. Many of these full-time housewives do not stay home blindly without thinking. They have considered their alternatives and decided that it is simply not justifiable for them to do all the work in the house and earn only (what they consider) a meager salary. To be able to choose to stay home and be a full-time housewife in Japan is now considered a rather luxurious lifestyle.

In the 1980’s, housewives had been denigrated, much as they had in the U.S., in favor of the "career woman". As Ueno
(1994) has argued based on her research, more women now want to become full-time housewives. She asserted that full-time housewives are a privileged group of people whose husbands make a high salary and can afford the luxury of having a wife who does not work outside the home. These housewives have their own activities, hobbies and interests. Yet, Ueno argues that this will become a problematic issue in the future because there will be fewer and fewer women who can afford to stay at home. This is the case, as the number of men in the economic class who can actually afford to have their wives stay at home on a full-time basis, is declining.

According to Nagai (1992:67-75) and her research of 200 households in Sapporo, there are two groups of women who work outside the home and do household work as well. The first group is one which involves full-time working women and the second group is one which includes women who work part-time. Her research sought to find out how wives who work outside the home manage their household work and their outside work. The two groups of full-time working women and part-time working women respectively have different views and different methods of doing their work. The full-time working women tend to reduce their overall time in doing housework but still do the childcare. The part-time working women tend to continue to spend the same amount of time in household labor, but split labor into "can delay work" and "can't delay work."
Additionally, part-time women workers have a strong ideological identification with the role of housewife, and feel that even if their husband does nothing in the household, it is okay.

Hiroshima-mura was established in 1894. In 1968, it became Hiroshima-cho and as mentioned in Chapter 1, in 1996 Hiroshima will become Kitahiroshima-shi (the city of Kitahiroshima). Hiroshima was once a rural, agrarian community which has undergone recent and dramatic urbanization. This is illustrated by the fact that as recently as 1960, 68.0% of employed persons, 15 years of age and over, were involved in farming. By 1970, this percentage had dropped to 33.4% and by 1980, the figure had dropped to 7.5%. Finally, by 1990, the percentage of employed persons, 15 years of age and over, who were involved in farming had sunk to 4.3%. Nowadays, the majority of people living in Hiroshima are employed in the service industry (31.0%) and in the wholesale and retail industry (22.0%), with a smaller percentage (9.3%) involved in the transportation and communication fields (Figures from Kokusei-choosa hookoku 1960-1990). Thus, the rapid transformation of Hiroshima from a farming community to an urban community is illustrated. In an analysis of the population census figures for the Hiroshima area, the dramatic population growth due to the effects of industrialization and urbanization can be shown as follows:
Table 4.2.—The Population of Hiroshima, Japan from 1920-1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>POPULATION</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>POPULATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>4,539</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>7,564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>4,254</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>8,022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>3,986</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>9,746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>4,279</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>22,264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>4,023</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>34,148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>6,110</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>40,853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>6,994</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>47,758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>7,717</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>53,536</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Thus, it can be seen that from 1920 to 1995, the population of Hiroshima has increased dramatically reflecting Japan’s overall economic growth. This is particularly striking from 1970 to 1975 and continuing through 1995, with new families and individuals moving into this area and commuting to the urban area of Sapporo. This trend has made Hiroshima a kind of affluent suburb for those working in Sapporo, as already discussed in Chapter 1. The Hiroshima area is ranked second within the region of Hokkaido, which included 243 cities, towns and villages, in terms of (taxable) income per capita (from Kojinbetsu shotoku shihyoo 1993,
110

shichooson zeimu kenkyuuukai - Individual Income Index Per Capita 1993). This demonstrates the area’s overall economic position in Hokkaido.

Perhaps not to surprisingly, it is in one of the rather privileged middle-class suburbs of Hiroshima where women received the least help with household tasks. In this affluent suburb, 72.5% of the fifty-one women surveyed in this study received no help in doing household work (with the exception of their husbands taking out the garbage and tending the outdoor garden). Approximately 25.5% receive help from their husband frequently in helping with childcare. While these percentages cut across age groups (with younger women receiving more help than older women in the household), a more important factor was whether or not the wife was employed. Most of the women who received help in the household had full-time or part-time jobs. One 36-year old woman in Hiroshima working part-time with a small child stated,

"I always told my husband before we ever got married that if he wasn’t understanding and helpful then I would not marry him – I am very strict when it comes to that. A husband and wife should be responsible for all aspects of the family, including the children."

Thus, many women who actually received help in the household actively insisted that they needed their husband’s help and cooperation.
However, other women did not expect their husband to help them in the house and while they resented it, they could not envision their husband changing in any significant way. A 60-year old full-time Hiroshima housewife comments,

"My husband is 65 years old now and he will not change. He does not work in this house. He is like a typical salaryman who leaves early in the morning and gets home late. He drinks a lot of sake and smokes in the house and that is all. However, I have hope for my son because when I am sick, he will help me out whereas my husband doesn't help me, even if I am sick."

In Japan's advanced capitalist economy, women are drawn into social production in various ways dependent on the needs of the Japanese economy and in consideration of their own familial and individual situations. The woman in the upper-middle class and middle-class economic strata provide personal services on a full-time basis to their husband and to other family members. For women at the lower end of the middle-class economic strata, working is a necessity in order to survive. As one part-time 61 year-old working woman explained,

"I've always had to work all my life. I remember after I finished junior high school, I wanted to enter high school to continue studying, but when it came time for school to start in the Spring, my parents said no, it was necessary for me to get a job as a sales clerk to earn money. My family was just too poor and they needed my salary. I
still remember clearly how at that time I cried and cried. There were nine children in my family and it was impossible. Since that time, I have had to work because my husband was a coal miner and I needed to work part-time. Without money you just can't live."

Therefore, many women cannot afford the luxury of staying home on a full-time basis in Japan's high-cost-of-living consumer-oriented society.

Still, many women who are full-time housewives do not necessarily consider themselves dependent as one 46 year-old full time Hiroshima housewife comments,

"Working women are not the only women who can be independent. When I receive money from my husband and put it in my hesokuri (personal savings), I feel I can have my economic independence in that way. In my opinion, there are two kinds of independence, that is economic independence and mental (seishin) independence and both are necessary for women's independence. Of course, the most basic independence is economic independence, but there are different ways of going about that not only working outside the home."

Therefore, in contrast to pictures that have been painted of Japanese full-time housewives as completely self-effacing and totally devoted to husband and family (such as in Imamura's 1987 study of a Tokyo suburb), many of the women in my study feel that they can be independent within the family. This is the case though the meaning of independence may be re-shaped
to fit their own individual circumstances, philosophies, and family situations.

However, some scholars in Japan, such as Okamura (1990:24-35), have argued that it is, in fact, working women, not full-time housewives, who will eventually change the household division-of-labor. In one of the most detailed and comprehensive arguments regarding the sexual division of labor, Okamura asserted that Japanese society is now going through a transition away from the gendered division of labor. The causes of this transition are as follows:

(1) The employment rates for married women have been going up.

(2) One-parent (single-mother) households are increasing.

(3) Japan has become an aging society. (Those individuals over 65 will make up more than one-fourth of the population in Japan by the 2020.)

(4) Husbands are frequently separated from their families because they are working in a different place.

Okamura envisioned two separate models that defined the sexual division of labor in Japanese society.

(1) Fixed society model - In this model, men typically work outside the house and women work as full-time housewives inside the home.
(2) Flexible society model - The difference of gender is not necessarily a consideration of who does what work. Within this model there are two main types in Japan:

(2a) Both husband and wife work and share the household labor.

(2b) If the wife works outside the home and the husband works inside the home it is acceptable. Any arrangement is okay as long as it meets the needs of the family.

Okamura argued that the movement in Japan from a gendered division of labor society to a cooperative division of labor society can be traced historically. She postulated that the transition of women's labor has encompassed 3 stages:

1st Stage 1963-1967 Women's labor power became critically important in Japan. The development of Japan as an economic power relied on this cheap labor. Women are working outside the home but still are responsible for all household labor without question.
2nd Stage 1972-1977 Development of Child Care policies and the growth in demand for child care facilities. Women began to question the traditional household division of labor.

3rd Stage 1980’s New action programs regarding gender equality instituted by the government. The equal opportunity law was passed by the government. While the flexible model of household labor was not realized, the goal of a more flexible model was made more clear.

She further argued that the pattern for Japanese women of quitting work after marriage, staying at home until the children are older and then returning to the workforce, usually in part-time jobs, is now in the second stage. That is, in cases where the husband and wife are both working, husbands are now helping out more with household labor although they are helping with child care more than with the actual housework. She also stated that the husband’s participation in household work is greater with a higher level of education and is dependent on his occupation and other factors (i.e., public workers tend to help wives more than private company employees; other important factors are how
long is the husband’s commuting time, does he have the skills to do household labor, and what kind of ideology does the husband have with respect to household labor). She believes that these influences have affected the household division of labor where the woman does not necessarily work outside the home.

Okamura argued that in households where the husband and wife have equality there are certain characteristics that existed:

1. The wife continued to work without stopping when marriage occurred.
2. Her labor conditions were good.
3. Her husband’s labor time was relatively short so that he was able to return home everyday at an early time.
4. She had a strong will to continue to work, her husband supported her and they had a cooperative lifestyle.
5. When the wife requested help, her requests had the power to convince the husband to help, and both wife and husband respected each other’s requests.

Okamura also asserted that in the younger generation, the consciousness of men and women was higher. Younger women are choosing the companies where they can be promoted and are selecting the occupations within which women are promotable.
In the younger generation, there are fewer men who are totally devoted to their work, and these men are returning to the household and family. Also, among the young the single lifestyle has become more popular with many women who don’t want to marry.

She concluded that the main reasons for change in Japanese families will be as follows:

1. The growing equality in occupations and in the household division of labor between men and women.
2. Changing ideology regarding the household division of labor, especially among the young.
3. Diversification of the types of domestic equality.
4. The growth of individualism within the family.

To summarize, Okamura argued that the family structure is being shaped by working women and these changes depend on lifestyle, occupation, the ideology of marriage and upon the household division of labor. If the flexible model of the household division of labor becomes the preferred one in Japan, it may well end the discrimination that women have endured in the household. She asserted that this is the way to the new egalitarian family.

Additionally, unlike the women that Imamura (1987) surveyed, who were content to put up with their husband’s lack of participation in family affairs, the new philosophy in Japan, especially among younger women, is that wives will no
longer tolerate a husband who does not take an active part in family social life. My research confirms some of these arguments, as many women whom I interviewed expressed this same idea, i.e., they wanted husbands who would place family considerations and concerns as a priority in their life. This idea will be a major impetus for further change in the household division of labor in Japanese families.

Marital Relationships in Hokkaido

Hosoya (1994) argued that in Hokkaido, some women are no longer content with the idea that according to the old adage, the best husband is one who is absent, but turns over his paycheck to his wife. The notion became entrenched and popular, she asserted, because of the lack of equality and freedom that women experienced traditionally in marriage in Japan. She postulated, based on her 1994 survey regarding the consciousness of Hokkaido women, that women in Hokkaido are much more aware of this problem. Her arguments is based on the fact that an overwhelming percentage of women in every age group stated that they feel there is not yet equality in marriage as follows:

20 to 29 year age group -

40.5% - there is not yet equality in marriage
26.8% - there is equality in marriage
30 to 39 year age group -
40.2% - there is not yet equality in marriage
20.9% - there is equality in marriage

40 to 49 year age group -
41.6% - there is not yet equality in marriage
31.6% - there is equality in marriage

50 to 59 year age group -
49.2% - there is not yet equality in marriage
20.7% - there is equality in marriage

60 years old and above -
36.2% - there is not yet equality in marriage
23.1% - there is equality in marriage

She argued that this is one of the main reasons that young women are resisting marriage in Japan because the state of marriage has yet to include equality for women. Hosoya’s survey results dovetailed with my own research, where the overwhelming majority of women stated that while an egalitarian marriage was something to strive for, in practice, equality in marriage and in the household was far away. As one 55 year-old informant told me,

"Maybe women have made some gains outside the home in equality, but inside the house, there is not much talk about sexual equality or women’s independence."

As Hosoya stated, though the egalitarian marriage is a popular idea, it has not yet been realized in most marriages in Japan.
Along with this popular ideology of an egalitarian marriage, within the three areas of research (urban Sapporo, rural Shibetsu, and the suburb of Hiroshima), ren'ai kekkon (love marriages) prevailed as opposed to omiai kekkon (arranged marriages). Percentages of love marriages were surprisingly similar for all three areas; approximately 68.6% of women surveyed in Hiroshima town had love marriages, while in Sapporo it was 67% and in Shibetsu, the percentage was 69%. However, despite the prevalence of love marriages in these three areas, status and economic considerations are also important in Japanese marriages, especially for women. This is similar to the argument of Engels (1985)(1884) in discussing marital relationships in the middle class in Europe. For example, in the Yomiuri Shinbun (7/24/95), in a newspaper survey of 500 men and women who answered the question, "what kind of man/woman do you want to marry," the two most common answers given by women were "a man with a high education and a man with a high income." The most common answer that men gave in answer to the question was "a woman that would put the household first."

Women who had arranged marriages well remember the experience as Ms. Moriyama, 78, related,

"My parents arranged my marriage, but I made the final decision. When my husband came to my house the first time, I didn’t even look at his face. I looked only at the floor. But, my parents were
kind, they wanted me to marry a teacher because in my mother’s family, many of her (mother’s) brothers and sisters were teachers, and my parents felt that my husband wouldn’t do any bad things to me, like have affairs or do a lot of drinking. My marriage was arranged by a nakoodo, a matchmaker, and I have been lucky because my husband has always been kind and I have done as I pleased."

In breaking away from some of these traditional practices related to marriage, according to a newspaper survey done by the Asahi Shinbun (9/27/94), at the same time that love marriages are so popular in Japan, 58% of women who marry are now choosing to keep their own family name, rather than taking the name of the husband. Some women argued that conditions of marriage have changed for women, as Ms. Yokoi, a 30 year-old Hiroshima farmer’s wife stated,

"I know that for a farmer’s wife things used to be different in Japan. Parents arranged the marriages and women didn’t have much of a choice. But nowadays, the woman decides herself if she will marry and her decision depends on the husband’s personality. These days women won’t marry if the personality of the husband-to-be is not good - we don’t have to marry if we don’t want to!"

But, have conditions within marriages in Japan totally changed, and are women completely satisfied with the state of marriage? According to the Asahi Shinbun (5/28/95), women still have many complaints about marriage and about marital relationships. In an article entitled, "I can’t return home
at midnight - why," a 41 year-old housewife relates her frustrations. She stated,

"I work with the P.T.A. and after the P.T.A. meeting, I had a union meeting. After the union meeting, I went out with some girlfriends to eat and drink. It is a Saturday night and I look at my watch and it is 1:00 a.m. so I go home. My husband said to me, 'why are you so late - I'm angry.' I told him that he is always late when he goes out eating and drinking. Sometimes he doesn't get home until 2:30 a.m. or 4:00 a.m. Why is it okay for you and not for me? My husband answered me, 'It's different for men and women, when you have a big salary and earn enough money so that you can give me money, then you can play too.' I thought to myself, so after all, it is economic power that is important to him."

However, women also realize the importance of economic power in marriage, as one farmer's wife relates in an Hokkaido Shinbun (1/16/95) article. She stated that, "A long time ago farmers did not pay a salary for their wives' work, but now many farming wives think unpaid labor is bad, and I want a fair estimate of my labor." The article suggested that the idea of pay for farm women's labor is becoming more popular throughout Hokkaido. This newspaper survey of 400 women living in Nemuro (a famous dairy area in Hokkaido) stated that 57% of the women received a salary from the farm business. In this area of Hokkaido, women were no longer content to accept the idea that their labor is unpaid labor. They expected and
received a fair share of the farm profits for the work that they performed.

Women and Household Resources Allocation and Management

Within Japanese families, most married women manage and control the household money and budget. While they control and make decisions regarding important economic decisions and purchases, my research asked the question in whose name are the major assets of the household, such as the land and house, legally recorded. In analyzing the results of my research and my interview responses regarding in whose name a married couple's property and house is in, I found that most women admitted that the vast majority of all their property in rural Sapporo, in the suburban area of Hiroshima, and in urban Shibetsu was legally recorded in the husband's name alone. Specifically, in Sapporo 78% of the property that married couples owned was actually registered in the husband's name only. The exceptions to this were several cases where the land was in the wife's name and the home was in the husband's name, and another case where the home was in the wife's name and the land was in the husband's and wife's name. Many of the women felt that this was the normal, ordinary way of doing things in Japan. They described the fact that all property was in the husband's name as an old traditional Japanese "custom."
In rural Shibetsu, 86% of the land and houses of married couples was registered in the husband's name (or in the event that the husband was the choonan, i.e., the oldest son, the land and the house was registered in the husband's father's or grandfather's name). Exceptions to this generality were cases where the home was in both the husband's and wife's name and another case where the land was in the husband's name and the home was in the wife's name.

It is in the suburb of Hiroshima where the highest percentage of property was in the name of the husband only with 98% of all land and homes registered in the husband's name. Some women had seriously tried to have the property deeded in their name also, but met with disappointing results, as one 65-year old woman related,

"About 20 years ago, I remember that when the construction company employee asked the name of the owner of this house (she and her husband's house) my husband didn't even consult me, he just said it was in his name. The construction company employee and my husband just ignored (mushi-sita) me, eye-to-eye they made the decision together without considering me. I was so angry, but I felt, at that time, I couldn't do anything about it. No one thought about having property in the wife's name also. Most women just thought that whatever is my husband's property is also mine."

Other women felt it wasn't necessary to have the land and property legally recorded in their name because, as one 48
year-old woman stated, "I don't need the house and property in my name because divorce rates in Japan are pretty low." Other women stated that only if they worked at a paid labor job outside the home, could they justify having the home and property in their own name. Indeed, one of the rare exceptions in Hiroshima to the general practice of having both the land and house in the husband's name was one such case where the wife had been working for several years before marriage. Mrs. Suzuki, 49, of Hiroshima relates the details,

"When my husband and I were married, my husband had no savings, but I had been working for a while, and I had saved quite a bit of money. It was this savings that we used to buy the land for this house. Therefore, it is in my name."

However, another younger woman (32 years old) living in Hiroshima stated,

"All of our property and assets are in my husband's name. We (my husband and I) don't think about what is my property and what is his property. Still, I do recall my husband saying once that in fact, all the property is his."

At the same time that very few women legally had land or homes deeded to them, within all three areas of research, women controlled the household budget and consulted their husbands only on major purchases such as an automobile or a home. Controlling the finances and allocating financial
resources is an important responsibility within the house, and many Japanese women are well aware of the power that it gives them in the household. As one 49 year-old woman from Hiroshima stated,

"It is really important for women’s independence that they manage the finances and have access to money. In my mother’s and father’s house, my father managed the finances and decided exactly how much should be spent on groceries, etc. It was terrible for my mother; she couldn’t be independent because she always had to wait for my father to give her money. Without control of the family finances, you can’t be independent - it’s a necessity."

Another woman stated that even in the event she wants to make a large purchase, "If I want a new car, I decide which one I want to buy by myself. I make and decide on all the purchases in this household." And another woman related, "In Japan, it is a woman’s right to control the budget and decide on household purchases; men don’t question it, they just accept it as normal." Therefore, many women in Hokkaido lead seemingly contradictory lives. They controlled the family financial resources and recognized that they have economic power in the home, but outside their own house, with respect to legal ownership of the most valuable assets of the household, women chose to allow their husbands to maintain complete ownership and control.
Thus, in the important area of resource allocation, ownership, and management, it is as Scott (1990:52) has argued. When women exercise power "behind the scenes," while, of course, it is a form of real power, it is also a "political concession." That is, if a women's power must be exercised behind a "veil of proprieties," it serves to validate the official position of men as the holders of the "real power" when it comes to important and significant issues. It is a recognition, although a covert one, that men are the people with the economic power, authority, and control outside the house. This idea works to trivialize the economic power of women in the household.

Women, Men and Childcare

In considering the question of equality in marriage and in the household division of labor, the question of childcare repeatedly arose. As Buckley (1994) has argued, it is simply not reasonable for women to carry the full burden of childcare, elderly care and household work by themselves. However, Shooji (1985) has stated that until recently most people in Japan have not questioned the idea that women, and women only, perform childcare. Shooji (1985) in great detail, problematized this assumption and considered this question from the viewpoint of women's equality. She states that, of course, women give birth to children and that is natural. However, raising children to adulthood is not natural for
women anymore than it is natural for men; it is a social act for which society also has a responsibility and duty. Raising children is a worthwhile and important job, but why should only women be responsible for that job? She continued her argument that even if raising children is worthwhile work, she questioned that Japanese society actually holds women, who are full-time housewives raising children, in high esteem.

The core of her argument revolved around the idea that the key to woman's equality in the household is help with childcare through society sponsored, good-quality, reasonably priced and adequate number of day care centers. At present in Japan, the cost of good quality childcare is too high. Many women want to work full-time, but most are forced to work only part-time due to inadequate day care facilities. She argued that unless a woman has a good paying job with good labor conditions (such as a full-time public employees), the average woman simply cannot use the childcare system in Japan because of its expense and because the times of operation are not adequate.

Shooji (1985) contended that demand for good quality day care is high in Japan, and this fact reflects the idea that thinking about maternity has changed. Even though the birthrate is low in Japan (in 1992 a Japanese woman of child-bearing age would be expected to bear 1.53 children in her lifetime), more and more children are entering the day care
system every year. The idea that raising children is not just a private responsibility, but also a public responsibility has spread. It also means that when both parents are working and raising the children together, childcare is a necessity. However, even if a woman is able to stay at home on a full-time basis with her children, good quality day care nurseries could be a buffer against the isolation and frustration that many women feel in raising their children. Hence, an excellent, efficient day care system could stem the rise in child abuse in Japan. She completely dismissed the argument that when women work their children become delinquent; she stated there is no proof for that in Japan. Further, within their own household, women can and do experience serious problems in taking care of their own children. Shooji based her argument, in part, on a 1981 Prime Minister’s Office Survey that compared countries internationally evaluating the answer to the question, "Is raising children a pleasure?" The results were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percentage (of women who find it a pleasure)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>76.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>70.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>48.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
She argued that childcare is not perceived as pleasurable in Japan, but that daycare centers could help remedy that perception. Within Japan’s advanced capitalist society, most people in large cities live in nuclear families and women do not have the support of family members as they once had. She also argued that the pattern of Japanese working women quitting their jobs in order to raise children will change as more women are able to continue to work after having a child. This they can do, if good quality daycare is available. While the total number of daycare centers has increased, there are still serious problems with the hours of service and with adequate care for small infants.

In 1980 and 1981 with the growth in demand for daycare centers, Japan saw the rise in the number of *Bebii Hoteru* (baby hotels). Baby hotels came about as a result of women needing a place to leave their small children when government sponsored daycare facilities were full. The baby hotel phenomenon began to spread and became particularly popular for their night-time service. However, conditions were so bad it became a social nightmare; in many cases, the baby hotel was nothing more than a dirty room in an apartment in a busy, urban district of large Japanese cities. Since the baby hotel scandal, baby hotels have subsided in popularity and daycare facilities have improved. However, the demand for daycare
still outstrips the supply and the present average services of a daycare facility do not meet the needs of many parents.

Shooji (1985) concluded that in order to facilitate equality in marriage, there are four conditions that must first be met:

1. Child care facilities must be improved both in the quantity and in the quality.
2. Paid maternity leave (ikuji kyuugyoo) must be instituted with mandated fines and penalties for those companies that do not comply.
3. The household division of labor and the ideology regarding traditional male/female roles must change.
4. Labor hours for Japanese employees must be reduced, especially for private company employees.

Shooji (1985) asserted that this would be the way to install equality in marriage in Japan. If this is accomplished, perhaps more young women would not be so resistant to the idea of marriage and to having children, as they are presently throughout Japan.

Shinotsuka (1994:95-119) detailed the history of the struggle to obtain good quality childcare in Japan. The granting of maternity leave to public employees occurred in 1972, with the opening of the first publicly funded day-care center for infants under the age of one occurring in 1975. She argued that when the Child Care Leave Law was passed in
May 1991 (effective in April 1992), it was the government's intention to deal with the problem of child raising which made it possible for married woman to work. The government supported women working part-time because of the labor shortage which had arisen in Japan. Additionally, the government hoped that they could do something to end the falling birth rate in Japan (the fertility rate in Japan in 1992 was 1.5%). However, in 1991, only 20% of Japanese companies had introduced any form of child-care leave; in 1992, only 21.9% of those companies with over thirty employees had actually instituted this policy of childcare leave. As Buckley (1994) argued, companies prefer to have the ability to substitute cheaper, non-unionized part-time female workers for male full-time workers wherever possible. Therefore, adequate day-care systems have not been a priority for business or for the government.

However, what about the childcare system in Sapporo? According to a 1995 survey done by Futamata, in which 346 women were interviewed regarding the daycare needs of Sapporo, the most commonly cited problem was the cost of daycare; second, they stated that Sapporo needs to have facilities to take care of children when they are sick with a minor ailment such as a cold or fever; and third, the Sapporo daycare system needs facilities that have longer hours of operation. There are three types of daycare facilities in Hokkaido; the first
type is a government authorized system, the second is a partially government sponsored system and the third is a non-governmental sponsored system (the baby hotels, as already discussed, fell into this third group). Within the Sapporo city 1994 budget, approximately 1.4% of the total city budget was spent on daycare and of the entire social welfare budget approximately 9.35% was spent on daycare systems.

Daycare systems in Hokkaido use a complicated application to determine acceptance into the government sponsored and subsidized systems. Income, among other factors, will determine how much a parent will pay for daycare services. The other factors may be how long a child has been on a waiting list, how many children are in the family, is the applicant a single mother or single father, and do the parents have any health problems or handicaps that make daycare essential. The system awards points based on these variables and then applicants are placed on a waiting list or admitted to the system. In 1994, there were a total of 157 daycare facilities in metropolitan Sapporo with the number of children in the government authorized systems at 12,516. This number includes 4,424 children under the age of three, 2,462 children at 3 years of age and 5,650 children at 4 years old and over. Ordinary hours of operation are 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. which makes most of these facilities impossible to use by company employees who generally work longer hours. Of the 157 daycare
centers in Sapporo, only ten facilities extend their hours of operation from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. or from 7:30 a.m. until 6:30 p.m.; these extended hour facilities have the total capacity to care for about 230 children. Two facilities will extend their hours from 7:30 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. and these facilities have a total capacity for 30 children. Two daycare facilities in Sapporo operate from 2:00 p.m. until 12:00 midnight with the ability to care for a total of 30 children. Additionally, of the 157 daycare establishments, only seven will accept infants (i.e., from 57 days until 1 year old) and these facilities can care for approximately 52 infants. Thus, of the 157 facilities in Sapporo the vast majority that do not extend their hours and do not accept infants are simply not usable for many women who may want to work full-time or even in the case of full-time housewives who simply need or want a break from child-care responsibilities. (Information from Sapporo-shi Minsegyoku Hoikubu - Sapporo city government, Bureau of Welfare, Department of Childcare.)

More specifically, in the suburb of Hiroshima, there are seven governmental subsidized daycare facilities and six that are not subsidized by the government. Six of the government subsidized facilities are open from 7:40 a.m. until 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and are considered extended hour facilities with 505 children enrolled in this system. The other facility is open only from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.
with a capacity to care for fifty children. Of the six facilities that are not subsidized by the government, the hours of operation and number of children enrolled is not actually known nor recorded by the city government.

In Shibetsu, there are fourteen government subsidized facilities and one facility which is not subsidized. The general operational hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, with three facilities open from 8:00 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. on Saturday. The total number of children within this system in Shibetsu is 530.

Many of my informants vehemently complained about the childcare system in Hokkaido, as one 46 year-old mother from Hiroshima with one son noted,

"It used to be that women were forced to leave work when they became pregnant, but the law changed so women don't have to leave. Even so, the biggest problem is still daycare. If you have a small child or infant, it is so difficult to work. Daycare facilities are few, hours are insufficient, and it is so difficult to get your child into a good facility without waiting for a long time. Without a good daycare system to be truly independent, a woman almost has to be single. I tried to work when I had my son, but I couldn't - it was impossible."

Another 55 year-old woman stated, "Daycare for children is a big problem in Hokkaido. Hokkaido needs better daycare facilities."
Some women have complaints about the conditions of women's labor and lack of responsiveness of husbands when children are sick. As Ms. Osawa, 36, from Hiroshima, stated,

"I think that many men don't cooperate that much with women out in the work world. My women friends who work at private companies can't go to work if their kids are sick, even if the sickness is only a cold or fever. Their husbands won't stay home from work to help out, so women must stay home. Then, the women have problems where they work. I think women's labor conditions are bad."

Other women have specific solutions to deal with the lack of adequate daycare facilities, as one 46 year-old woman noted,

"If we can't have good organized daycare in Japan, then maybe we should try to organize neighborhood daycare, then people not working could help the women who are working. I think this is a necessity in place of adequate daycare."

Another 34 year-old woman's option to organized daycare was to request the aid of parents and grandparents. As she stated, "Since daycare facilities are so scarce in Hokkaido, it is necessary to have one's parents or grandparents help with children if you want to or need to work outside the home." Thus, women in Hokkaido, must adapt to poor childcare conditions in order to pursue their own particular interests and economic needs. As Buckley (1994) has noted, equal access to child-care leave has become a key demand of women's groups.
Groups like the Equal Access Child-care League have attempted to increase their efforts on a national basis in order to have fathers become involved in the raising of children.

Women, the Family and Ideology

As Henrietta Moore (1988:15,16) has argued, the value in analyzing of gender roles is in the delineating of the expectations and values which different cultures correlate with being a man or a woman. We can look at the ideology behind the different social roles that men and women have and then compare them with the actuality of their daily lives and practices. It is in the analysis of how men and women are socially constructed and how these constructions affect their social roles and activities, that the pivotal role of gender becomes apparent.

For example, are the ideas regarding the traditional division of labor changing in Japan? According to the Asahi Shinbun (3/20/95) in an article entitled, "Nowadays, it is natural for men to do housework," the history of the household division of labor between a 71-year old husband and wife is detailed from the point of view of the man. Mr. Matsushita related that when he was younger he wanted to help his wife in the house, specifically he wanted to do the cooking and laundry. However, when he helped with these tasks, others in the neighborhood said he was pitiful and told him that a real man does not do household work, but depends on his wife to do
it. Because of his male pride, he stopped helping her. However, in past years with the economic depression in Japan, the pub that he manages brought in much less money, and he began to come home late every night. His wife’s mood became dark and she started to work part-time to help out with the finances. So he decided to, once again, help her out in the household. He thought that though he was not skilled in housework, it didn’t matter because the most important thing was his heart and feelings about it (i.e., that he wanted to help). He began to help his wife and didn’t worry about keeping up appearances for other people. He does the laundry, hangs and takes down clothes, folds clothes, does the cooking and the shopping. Day-by-day he is becoming a housework expert. His wife is thankful for his help and this is the most harmonious time for their relationship. His wife tells him that her life is "like heaven." Each week when he meets with some of his old friends, they discuss this problem of helping one’s wife with the household work. At this time, a new thought occurred to him and he told his friends, "you know, household work is not just ‘women’s work’ but human being’s work." Now, he says his wife seems to be more youthful and happier and so is he. She doesn’t even complain anymore that he is bringing home less money.

However, more specifically, do women in Hokkaido have a higher awareness of the difficult labor conditions that women
endure in doing both household labor and working outside the home? In a 1994 survey conducted in Hokkaido and in the rest of Japan by the Hokkaido Shinbun (Hokkaido Newspaper), Hirota (1994) suggested that, in fact, women in Hokkaido do have a higher consciousness of the difficult conditions within the household and in the workplace. In an article entitled, "The household and workplace environment is not ready, so women must quit their jobs when they marry," Hirota stated that in answer to the question that asked, "Is it easy for women to work inside the house and have an outside job too," 34.9% of women surveyed in Hokkaido and 28.7% of men surveyed in Hokkaido answered that it was not easy. However, in comparing these answers from the Hokkaido population to the rest of the responses from Japan, only 25.9% of women answered that it was difficult for women to work in the household and work outside the house. Approximately 17.8% of the men answered that it was difficult. Hirota argued that the meaning of this recent survey is that women and men in Hokkaido do have a better awareness of the bad labor conditions with which women must contend. Also, in Hokkaido in particular, the structural base is different, i.e., the industrial base is weak, but the service base is strong. Therefore, women must sometimes work at night in the bar area of Susukino or in sales, thus economic and labor conditions are particularly difficult for women in Hokkaido. Another article in the Hokkai Times,
5/26/95, predicted that in the future only 50% of wives will be doing the housework and cooking by themselves based on a Hokkaido Survey regarding the future household division of labor.

As many scholars (Kondo 1990; Bernstein 1991) have argued, traditional concepts regarding the ideal woman as gentle and sweet (yasashii) and the ideal man as strong and serious continue to exist in Japan and have limited the roles of both sexes. But to what extent do these gender stereotypes persist in Hokkaido? The results of my questionnaire regarding ideology suggested that gender stereotypes regarding the ideal wife and woman and the ideal man and husband are not so strong in present-day Shibetsu and Sapporo. In Sapporo, the responses regarding the ideal man and husband were the same with the majority of women stating that their ideal would be a kind and gentle man or husband, rather than a strong man or husband. For the ideal woman, the majority responded that she should be smart while the ideal wife should be kind and gentle. However, with respect to thinking regarding the traditional division of labor (i.e., that men should work outside the house and women should do all the household labor, childcare and manage the household budget), it still persisted. Approximately 66.6% of my respondents stated that it is a woman's duty to manage the household, children, and budget, while it is a man's duty to work outside the home.
In Shibetsu, most women responded that the ideal woman should be "hiroi" (generous, broad-minded), and that the ideal man should also be generous and broad-minded. Thus, the ideal wife and husband should have the same qualities, i.e., generosity and broad-mindedness. However, again with respect to the household division of labor, women overwhelmingly (71%) stated that it was a wife’s duty to perform the household labor, childcare work and manage the budget; while it was a husband’s duty to work outside the home in the paid labor market.

Again, it is Hiroshima that proved to be the most conservative area in the ideology regarding gender. The most common response regarding the ideal woman and the ideal wife was that she should be "yasashii" and the ideal man should be strong. However, the ideal husband should also be "yasashii." Additionally, Hiroshima respondents stated overwhelmingly (78.4%) that women should do the household labor, childcare work and manage the household finances. Approximately 72.6% of my respondents in Hiroshima felt that men only should work outside the house. Thus, with respect to the division of household labor in Hiroshima, as in Sapporo and Shibetsu, the traditional views regarding women’s primary obligation to do the household labor and childcare prevailed.

Still, the fact that ideal men and women were thought of in the same terms in Shibetsu is significant. As Ishii-Kuntz
(1993) argued, according to a 1982 Office of the Prime Minister Survey in all Japan, ideal women were considered to be sweet and gentle homemakers and ideal men were considered to be strong and authoritarian, as well as responsible workers. The fact that in Shibetsu in 1995, the dominant ideology regarding women was that they should be generous and broadminded rather than only gentle, suggests that some stereotypical thinking has abated. However, in a contradictory manner, the fact that women overwhelmingly stated that men should have the provider role and women the homemaker role suggests that the cyclic, generational pattern of gender stereotypes in the family, which have affected the household division of labor and the expectations that society has regarding the roles of women, persisted in Hokkaido.

As Cixous and Clement (1986) suggested, both men and women are bound by an "ideological theater" where many of the representations, images, and myths constantly transform and change everyone's limits of imagination regarding gender roles. At the same time, our own ideas may be limited and invalidated before we have a chance to actually conceptualize them in concrete terms. In Hokkaido, some of the representations and images regarding men and women have changed and will continue to evolve, while other concepts concerning the traditional division of labor in the household presently appear to be quite entrenched.
CHAPTER V

Vignettes of Hokkaido Women: 23 Detailed Case Studies

In the preceding chapters, I have presented a picture of the questionnaire respondents in terms of several variables, such as age, economic status, and educational background. As an additional facet of this research, I present life history accounts of many of the women I interviewed in order to further understand the reality and diversity of the lives of women in Hokkaido. Fortunately, for this research, most of the seventy-four questionnaire respondents were willing to share important aspects of their personal and familial life with me.

In this chapter, I have included twenty-three of these personal narratives. These life stories should be viewed as "identifiable and unique constructions of the individual women" (Patei 1988:8). Yet, at the same time gender, age and class issues are revealed by their stories as they detail aspects of their life in a patriarchal society. This represents an attempt to portray women in a more fine-grained and detailed way (Lamphere 1992:75). Thus, in this chapter women are given a voice which supplies additional insights into their experiences and feelings toward their family, husbands, children and Japanese society. As Bailey

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(1991:x, xi) has noted, to include the testimony of women gives additional meaning and humanity to the percentages, generalizations, statistics and analysis of social science research and provides an important part of the research. Finally, as Tamanoi (1991:813) has argued, I am acutely aware of the fact that these narratives are presented by an anthropologist who is an outsider with respect to Japanese society. However, anthropologists can listen and record the voices of these women as they describe in their own language and in their own way, their own personal experiences.

These stories were generally prompted by the five free answer style questions in Part 4, the last section, of the questionnaire (the English translation of the questionnaire is included in Appendix B). Toward the end of the interview, the woman I interviewed became more relaxed, and began to trust me with some of the more personal and more revealing details of their life. As these woman spoke about their experiences, many experienced deep emotional reactions. Occasionally, their voices would shake with emotion, tears and anger. In this chapter, I consciously attempt to convey these stories with as much of that emotional content as possible. It is my hope that readers can experience these narratives not only as elucidating insights of people from another culture but that, for a moment, they can understand in a visceral way, the depth of feeling that my interview respondents expressed.
Why were these particular twenty-three narrative accounts chosen to relate in this research? These accounts were some of the most interesting and vivid accounts of women's lives that I collected. As anthropologists well know, not all informants are the same in detailing their life experiences. The narratives chosen were from those women who were particularly comfortable with me, and with whom I established a meaningful level of rapport, as we went through the interview process together. As for the groupings I established in this chapter (such as marriage, farm women, grandmothers, education, household labor, wage labor, widows, and women and their natal families), they generally represent a convergence of the subjects in which I was most interested and the quality and amount of material that I collected. Yet, some categories seemed to establish themselves. Those areas such as widows, grandmothers, education, farm women, and women discussing their natal families had not necessarily been so clearly an interest to me initially as was marriage, the household division of labor and wage labor. However, these other issues arose because questionnaire respondents spoke quite strongly and effectively regarding these topics. I learned from them how important these subjects were in Japan. It is in recognition of their feelings and how they enlightened me which, in the final analysis, dictated my grouping these topics as I have.
Hokkaido Women on Marriage

"It seemed like a good idea to marry."

Mrs. Kimura, 54, who was known as the person who basically managed the local Community Center, lived in the suburbs with her husband and 6 children and outlined the following story,

"My father was adopted and only received a low level of education, but the other children in his family were sent to the university, but my father had to become a sheet metal worker; he made many stoves. My mother was bushi (a member of the aristocracy), but we didn't have much money and she made kimonos for geisha. At that time, it was a great embarrassment for my family, but my father divorced my mother and I had two older sisters and one older brother; I was the youngest. I remember my mother so clearly because since we were poor, when my mother sold a kimono she always gave me special quality white rice. I remember her as very kind to me. However, my father remarried soon after that and my mother went to Kyoto, even though she was born in Hakodate (Hokkaido). We heard that she married a man in Kyoto but that he was an alcoholic. Perhaps, I have a half-sister in Kyoto. But, my brother and sisters had to stay with my father and his new wife. At this time, my father and his wife became so strict with me and my brother and sisters. It was all so embarrassing, so I hated to go to school and I didn’t want to participate in sports or school activities. Then, when my father and his wife had other children she treated me even more differently. I noticed that the amount of food that I received was different and life became very difficult for me. After I graduated from high school, I went to work at a company
that made medicine for animals in Sapporo; this was about 36 or 37 years ago. This is where I met my husband because he was a salesman for this company. I recall that he was very slim like a horse. Because he reminded me of a horse, I bought a carrot with lots of leaves at a department store and gave it to him as a present. This was the beginning of our friendship and he was only a friend because I already had a boyfriend.

Anyway, about one month later my husband asked me for a date. Then about one year later he asked me to marry him and I did. He is a good man and I thought it seemed like a good idea to marry and move away from my family because my father's wife treated me so strictly. We had six children together, but my first four children were all girls. My husband's mother told me that I must continue to have children until I had a boy, which I thought was feudal thinking. I thought that if I had only three children it would be okay, but my husband became discouraged at only girls. So, I continued to have children and my fifth and sixth children were boys. I raised my boys to be strong and my girls to be yasashii (gentle), but I also told them that to work outside the home is good. I think that if I was younger and had fewer children I would have had a career outside the home.

Now, I work full-time as a clerk, but I do so because my husband became sick, so he had to stop being a salesman at the animal medicine company and now he drives a taxi. However, I don't complain about his low salary. My husband always says he wanted more money to buy me things, but he doesn't need more money for himself.

Of course, my husband does nothing in the household except on Sunday he does some
cooking. Life with my husband can be very difficult because he always tells me what to do and you should do this and that. Also, he tells me that I shouldn’t disagree with him. He always expects that I make separate dishes for him when I cook a meal. He expects special treatment because in his family the males got special treatment. Now, I enjoy my friends and I like working but even in the workplace, if women have an opinion many times the men just don’t listen.

Many times I wanted to say my opinion, but they don’t want to hear it. For me, at this time of my life, a comfortable relationship would be the most important thing. If not that, then I prefer that my husband is healthy but gone. I like to spend lots of time with my friends. Since I had cancer a few years ago, I have become strong, but I especially enjoy my friends."

"If you are not married, then you can be independent, but if you are married, it is just not possible."

Katoo-san is a 50 year full-time worker and housewife who stated that,

"My family came from Sendai and I was born in Sapporo. I’ve lived here in the suburbs for about 17 years. My father was a public employee and I had three sisters and one brother. My marriage was a love marriage and I was about 24 and my husband was 27 when we got married.

Actually, I was a housewife only until I was about 40 years old. Then I started working as a hospital helper, and I returned to school to become an associate nurse. In September of 1994, I began full-time employment as a nurse. Between my husband and I we have a high
income in the range of above $120,000 per year.

I don’t even think about having the property and everything in my name, I don’t need it. I have always done and still do all the household work. I feel embarrassed to say such a thing these days, but my husband has no time and I like things neat. With my hospital schedule, it is difficult, but my husband puts up with it. Sometimes I must work a split-shift, and occasionally I must work at night.

I think when my children were smaller, they helped me out a little around the house. However, I gave both my sons and my daughter the same kinds of tasks to do. My youngest son especially likes to cook. I think that things have changed for women in Japan because now women have higher status within companies. When women marry, they can keep their job and be promoted. A long time ago men were very kibishii (stern) but, in particular, young men have become more gentle.

Also, recently in Japan, some men work in the house as a ‘house husband,’ and I heard that there is even a house husband in this neighborhood. Many men like to do cooking. Although, I think that if a woman works full-time like me, she shouldn’t have to do all the household work, in practice, it is very difficult to do. So I think if women choose to work, then they are also responsible for the house-work, too. As far as managing the household finances, I want to manage the money myself. However, I think there is discrimination in the household because as women you are expected to do all the childcare and housework, even if it is not fair. Men are not expected to be responsible for that. I remember that in my family when I was young, my brother was sent to the
university, but my parents would not send me and my sisters. It was a shame because I really wanted to study. I know that in the workplace, women have to do the extra work, like getting tea and food, but a long time ago, we didn't question such things; it just seemed natural.

With respect to independence, if you have not married, then you can be independent, but if you are married then it is not possible. Things are different for single and married women. I have an image of single, independent, career women that are on their own. I know that many nurses are single and some want to marry and some do not want to marry. But, they say it is difficult to do so with their schedule.

"There are two kinds of independence, there is independence within marriage and independence if a woman is single."

Watanabe-san is a quiet-spoken 45 year old full-time housewife whose home is picapica (bright, shining) and immaculately clean. She provided the following information,

"My family came to Hokkaido from the main island of Honshuu as colonist farmers, and I was born in Hakodate. My father was a public employee, and my mother made kimonos by request in our home. My husband is also a public employee for the Hokkaido government, and he must travel around a lot. Every two years he moves because he plans dams. So, we live separately with my husband returning home on the weekends. We met through omiai (an arranged introduction through friends or through a matchmaker) because my mother knew his oldest sister very well."
My husband’s parents stay with my husband’s older brother and his sisters on a rotation basis because they require round-the-clock nursing due to their illnesses. In housework, I do basically all of it. I feel responsible to do everything because my husband turns over his paycheck to me. I feel that I am basically on my own in Sapporo. Well, I don’t think that women should work the same as a man, but it depends on the economic conditions. Sometimes a family needs the money and the wife has to work outside the home. But, in my case, I have always been a full-time housewife. In marriage, a housewife contributes fifty percent of the work that supports the family.

That is why I think that there are two kinds of independence. There is independence in marriage and independence if a woman is single. They are different kinds of independence because the conditions are different.

I think that if I became divorced or a widow, I would first think about my economic situation because I don’t want to depend on my children. Then, I think I might remarry, but it depends on the man and my own feelings. My husband is gone so much that I always tell my son that he must be like the father of the house, but I give both my son and daughter household work to do. I do think that there is a double standard with respect to men and women in Japan. If my husband died and I remarried after a year, the neighborhood would talk about me. But, if I died, and my husband remarried after a year, everyone would say it was a good thing. Therefore, there isn’t equality in Japan yet."
"My husband treats me as an equal in our marriage or I would not have married him."

Osawa-san is a 34 year-old housewife and part-time apartment manager with two children and related her story,

"I was born in Hokkaido and my family did part-time farming and my father was a public employee. I have lived in these suburbs for about six years since my husband and I married; it was a love marriage. I worked as a buyer at a department store before my children were born but now I work part-time as an apartment manager. My husband works for a housing construction company. Right now, working part-time I can only make about $200 per month, but it helps a little. We live in an apartment, but we don't know what we will do about buying a house. This is because I am choojo (eldest daughter) and my husband is choonan (eldest son) so it is difficult.

My family lives very close to my apartment, and I can keep in close contact with my mother and my family; they help me out a lot. I am a lot closer to my family than my husband's family, even though he is the oldest son. I do most of the housework because my husband has no time. He works such long hours, so it is impossible for him to help me with housework or with the children. However, when he has a weekend off, he helps with the shopping. I also have some time for hobbies. I belong to a ceramic art circle and also a reading books to children circle.

Actually, I think that women's status has only changed a little from 20 years ago. Also, I have seen that men do not cooperate that much with women out in the workplace. So, I think that women's status in Japan is not good. Also, we do not have good daycare in Japan, thus
women's labor conditions are very bad. I know that there is not equality for women in Japan right now.

I believe that children should be raised the same whether they are boys or girls. But, I remember so clearly in my family when I was young, I experienced discrimination. My father said to me that junior college was good enough for me because I was a woman. He told me I didn't need to go to a four year university. My husband is very different from my father; he treats me as an equal, or I would never have married him.

There is also discrimination against women in the workplace because they are not promoted at the same speed that men are. I think that two of the important conditions for women's independence and equality are that society must change and women must think about themselves and their abilities in a positive way. Of course, having your own money is important, but that alone is not enough to be independent. I hate the talk of independence, independence, independence, on television all the time because it is just hypocrisy - it is not true in Japan yet.

One area I see change in is marriage because women are not as willing to put up with a bad marriage these days. People are no longer ashamed that they are divorced and they don't want to just gaman (endure or bear up) anymore. Especially, in Hokkaido this is true. Divorce rates in Hokkaido are among the highest in Japan because of the different history here, and because we are more like America without so many old customs. There are many people divorced in Sapporo. Also, many women don't want to marry and even if they don't want to they are not embarrassed. They will even go on television shows and omiai television programs (programs on which men and women
are introduced). In that way, I see that in marriage there have been changes, especially here in Hokkaido."

Specifically, in Japan marriage has been viewed as a way to perpetuate the family line. When a spouse was chosen, the most important considerations were the interests of the family, rather than the feelings or emotions of the people involved. Marriages were typically arranged by matchmakers and family members. When a woman married, she left her natal family, and became a member of her husband’s household. She was registered in her husband’s family register, and her family name was changed to that of her husband’s family. In Western terms, marriage is viewed as a way of creating a new family based on individual love. However, in Japan, marriage did not mean that the couple was creating a new family. A married woman actually became a part of her husband’s family; she entered his household not just literally but also in legal terms. With this entrance, the husband’s family took priority over the wife’s own family. The role of the dutiful daughter-in-law within a familial context was the most important consideration for a wife. In this role, she was expected to serve both her husband and her husband’s parents and provide children, especially male children, for that house.

It is important to note that in Japan in 1995, marriage is still legally approved in this same manner. That is, when a couple decides to marry in Japan, they must go to the
municipal office in the area in which the husband or wife resides, fill out a marriage license form and submit it to the municipal office. A wedding ceremony is not a legal requirement; it is a social consideration. A couple is legally married in Japan when the couple has registered under one family name, either that of the husband or the wife, usually that of the husband. It is this registration upon which legal inheritance rights and claims to insurance coverage are based. Although the family system was abolished after the end of the Second World War, the system of the family register has been continued under the Civil Code, Article 750 (Yoshizumi 1995:193). The family register also contains information regarding two generations, the wife and husband and their respective unmarried children.

However, since the end of the Second World War and the influence of Western thinking and ideology, the dominant ideological view related to marriage has changed considerably, especially among the young. The view that is now most prominent is one which places emphasis on the emotional attachment between the two people involved. As mentioned in Chapter 4, love marriages were the most common type of marriages in this research, although there were still couples who relied on introductions through groups or through third parties. However, even in these cases, love is an important component along with economic and educational considerations.
In many cases, relatives, friends and neighbors play the role of the traditional *nakoodo* (matchmaker), and then couples decide for themselves whether they want to continue the relationship.

Because of the historical roots of marriage in Japan, most Western feminist scholars have traditionally considered Japanese marriage practices as particularly oppressive for women. This has been the case even though views about marriage and the marriage relationship have recently changed greatly for Japanese people, as my research has supported. In recent years, more and more women have demanded and obtained more meaningful relationships with their husbands. Younger women are less content to accept a situation where the husband is working from the early morning hours until midnight. Thus, in Japan, marriage can no longer be accurately viewed as simply a place of women's oppression in the Western model.

As Lamphere (1992:71) has stated, most Western anthropologists have argued that gender oppression and inequality is rooted in marriage and in the family. Yet, Patei (1988:153) has presented a different picture of women and marriage. She has asserted that for many women whose life in their parents home has become intolerable, marriage can be an escape route rather than an oppression. My research has supported this view. While for some women in Japan marriage may be a place of dominance by a husband, for other women
marriage is viewed as representing a state where greater empowerment and freedom is possible. In this view, marriage and the household is opened up to a variety of possibilities and analysis, rather than a unilateral and unexamined argument that it is only a place of subordination for women.

_Hokkaido Farm Women on Life on the Farm_

"I Want to be a Farmer."

Suzuki-san is a 35-year old farmer with three young children and related the following story,

"When I graduated from high school, I went to an agricultural school because I wanted to become a farmer. But, I am a woman, so I had to learn many agricultural techniques by myself. The main reason for this is that my parents would not accept me as the farm manager. However, if I was a man I would have been accepted. So, this was a case of sexual discrimination.

At that time, I didn’t want to marry, but my parents wanted me to marry early because I am the oldest of four sisters. But, each year I said I wanted to be an independent human being and farm manager, but if a single woman is a farmer and manager then she is not accepted. I said to my parents, 'I want to be a farmer' and they then said to me, 'Get out, leave our house.' So, I left my ie and went to Sri Lanka and worked with an organization like the Peace Corp for three years. This is how I learned dairy farming techniques in Sri Lanka. I met my husband there; we fell in love, and returned to Japan. I was married at the age of 29 and we were married in Iwata Prefecture. My husband and I leased my parents farm and together we do the farming. We have about 5 hectares of..."
land and raise carrots, asparagus and radishes. But, these days, the role of farmers and a farmer’s wife has changed because farmer’s wives had to become very smart because they have three roles as producers, consumers, and as managers. So, I think the wife of a salary man has perhaps only one role. Maybe in the past Japanese farm wives only had one role, but now things have changed."

"Our farm is like a business that we manage as equal partners."

Yokoi-san is a young 30-year old mother and wife with three small children.

"My family is a farming family who came to Hokkaido from the main island of Honshuu. But I was born in Hokkaido, and so was my husband. I fell in love with my husband when I was 22 years old, and we married at that time. I was introduced to my husband by a mutual friend. My family lives close to me, and I am still very close to my own family. My husband and I have about 7.5 hectares and we raise daikon (a type of radish), cabbage, beets, and pumpkins.

I think that the most important thing for women’s independence is the husband’s cooperation. I also think that younger people help each other out (within marriage) more than older couples do. I know many older people who still think in old-fashioned ways. But, I have friends who are in their twenties and their husbands help them in the house a lot. I have one girlfriend whose husband cleans the bathtub while she watches television. Things are different for farm wives nowadays. At least here in Hokkaido they are different."
"Nowadays, a farmer's wife is not a slave, not a drudge."

Matsu-san is a 34-year old wife and mother who shares farm duties with her husband and family.

"My husband and I raise rice, potatoes, and cabbage. Although my husband is the oldest son in his family, I and my children live separate from my husband and his parents. This is because I don't get along well with my husband's parents. Also because my children's school is very far away. So this way everything works out well.

I know that a long time ago women, especially farm wives, were not treated well in Japan; they were not even treated like human beings. But, now a farmer's wife is not a slave. If the husband doesn't understand this, then nowadays the woman won't marry him. I think that couples in the 20 year old age range are even more aware of the issues of equality and independence for women. Also, I want to do farm management and when my children get a little older I want to do the same work as my husband, with my husband."

"Farm wives have lots of freedom - a lot more than a salaryman's wife.

Yamagishi-san is a 43 year-old farm manager who is married with no children who related the following story,

"I was 22 years old when I met and married my husband. We met in a men and women's group and we fell in love. In my natal family there were six children and I was the youngest child. I only finished junior high school because we had lots of work to do on the farm. My husband's parents live with us on our farm. He works mostly construction and
at other jobs when we are not so busy on the farm; so, most of the time I am the farm manager. We have about eight hectares of land which is land we inherited from my husband’s grandfather. This land is still in the grandfather’s name.

In the summer and when the farm is busy, my husband’s mother does most of the cooking, washing, and indoor work. I work outside most of the time and I love it. My hobby is mostly playing pachinko; I absolutely love to play. My husband pays the bills and manages the household budgets because I don’t want to do it. To me it is just bothersome work. I think that everyone in the family should work together to take care of the older people in the family; it should not be only the wife’s responsibility.

About twenty years ago or more, it seemed so natural for women just to work inside and men to work outside. Women’s eyes were ‘straight ahead’ and they didn’t have a broad vision; they didn’t see any other alternatives. Now things are different, especially on farms. Most of the time farm husbands are working on construction or at other jobs and many wives are managing and controlling the farm. In this area, farm wives have lots of freedom, much more than a wife of a salaryman. Of course, I feel really free because I have no children. For women to be independent, money is the most important thing, but it is also important to have a sweet and understanding boyfriend or husband. I fell in love with my husband, and I am very happy with him. It was great to fall in love.”

These farm women who lived in Hokkaido and whom I interviewed, in contrast to Tohoku farm wives who saw themselves as "a wife for a farmer" and as "under the thumb of
a dominating mother-in-law with long hours of work and enduring the drudgery of farm life" (Bailey 1991:147), argued that they felt empowered by their roles on the farm. They viewed themselves as not only wives, but they expressed the idea that they had a partnership in the farm business with their husband.

This picture of Hokkaido farm women can also be compared with that of Bernstein's 1983 six-month study of a farm woman and her family who lived in the rural area of the southern island of Shikoku. Bernstein's picture of "Haruko" was one of a Japanese woman who was overworked, controlled by and afraid of her mother-in-law. She was also dominated and physically abused by her husband who was the eldest son in his family (Bernstein 1983:48-57). Haruko's natal family was also problematic as her own father was physically abusive to Haruko's mother. However, the women I interviewed may or may not live with or even in a close proximity to their husband's parents. This is the case even if their husband is the oldest son in the family. If they decided they could not get along with the husband's parents, then separate residences were established. They actively and successfully resisted the traditional role of the dominated and subjugated farm wife. They asserted that they and their husbands are sharing both the work on the farm and the work that must be done in the family. These women did not envy the wives of salarymen, but
rather felt that they had freedoms and opportunities that the wives of salarymen did not. Conversely, for those women who did live with the parents of their husband, they felt that it was an acceptable arrangement. If a wife's in-laws are cooperative and helpful, then they argued that they were given more free-time and greater freedom. Thus, a complex picture is presented of specifically how women can be empowered through their role in the family, even in farm families. This has notoriously been an area where Japanese women have been unilaterally portrayed as victims in most social science research.

**Hokkaido Grandmothers Speak-out**

"I'm a mother, one more time."

Sugimura-san is a 60-year old grandmother and lives with her only son, his wife and three grandchildren and eloquently expressed the following story in a historical perspective,

"I was born on November 19, 1935 in a small village near Sapporo and my father was a fish merchant. Until I was 16, I lived in this small village and I only finished junior high school. I left my village and went to Chitose for a while after the war and worked there in a restaurant. I saw so many foreigners at that time, so many different colors of people, white, brown and black. Also, there were many prostitutes that were at the airport because of the American servicemen. My grandfather lived in Shibetsu (northern Hokkaido), but my ancestors came to Hokkaido from the south, i.e., Shikoku and from the Kansai area. They spoke another dialect, the
Hogen dialect. I remember my family was always so strict with money.

Well, I was married at 19 and had only the one child, a son. My husband was employed by a private company as an explosives technician and worked on dam construction. He died 16 years ago in an explosion. I didn’t want to marry again after that.

My son is a newspaper salesman and my daughter-in-law works at a bank as a clerk. I watch my son’s three children, one in the fifth grade, one in the second grade and a small baby. I have taken on the role of mother one more time. Since my son’s wife works outside the house, I must be the mother. But, I have never had any trouble with my son’s wife from the beginning. We talk over any problems or issues and we have good communication between us.

Eleven years ago I received treatment for breast cancer but I don’t worry about it; I have no free time to worry. The work that I do in my house is that I manage everything. I help make decisions about all the big purchases that my son and his wife make, such as a car. I also contribute money to help pay for the big items. They always consult me before they make a large purchase. I don’t think I want to marry again because if I marry again my pension (from my husband’s company) will be lowered. Also, I have much more vitality and energy than most men my age.

Economically, I want to continue to receive my husband’s pension because old age welfare is uncertain in Japan. And, of course, most men I have met just didn’t appeal to me. Actually, you know, I have been married three times. The first time I was married to a young man from a rich family and because I was from a poor family, his parents forced him to
divorce me. The second time I married a Korean that I met in Chitose, but I was so fooled by him. He wanted me to go back to Korea with him even though I thought he wanted to stay in Japan, so I divorced him. And the third time I married my son’s father, and he was killed in the accident. I was introduced to other men after my husband died, but I became very strong after my husband died. I was left all alone to manage everything and I grew to like my life. I don’t think I need a weak man in my life now. I don’t really like salarymen or lawyers and I don’t need male companionship. For me, I don’t need to fall in love again.

Even though I live with my son, our lives are separate, I let my son and his wife have separate lives. I am the general manager and banker in this house and all of the property is in my name. I make loans to them if they need money with no interest; in this house, we have no problems over money.

A long time ago in my family, I was the only child so my parents were very strict, but I raised my son differently. When I was young, people told me it was important for men to go to school (important for the country), but women didn’t need so much schooling because they would become brides and mothers, but men must get jobs.

When I was in my forties I was very adventurous, and I traveled to the mountains many times. For women in Japan, things are much better now, much, much better. Most of the changes in Japan have been good; these are good times in Japan. But in 1945, when I was 10 years old, times in Japan were terrible. Young people in Japan today do not know that kind of poverty or bad time. Even before the war, times were very bad. At that time, it seemed to me that money was always being paid out but
very little money was coming in. But, now, in this neighborhood, people have money. People have more education, and I think that in Hokkaido especially it is a freer place for women.

Nowadays, a lot of women don't even want to get married and those that do marry are waiting later and later. These young women are so superficial because they only think about how their body looks or how their hair looks or about money. They are selfish, only thinking of themselves. I think that life is an education and these women haven't learned enough about life yet to understand what marriage is all about. Though there is a saying that women and nylons became stronger after the war, I think that there are few truly independent women today."

"A husband’s duty in the family is everything, not just working outside the home at a job."

Suzuki-san is 65 years old, retired, but still active in volunteer work and in her hobbies.

"There were four children in my family, I have two younger sisters and one younger brother. I was the oldest child. We were all born in Hakodate (famous port city in Hokkaido). I don't think there was any real difference in how my parents treated me and how they treated my brother. But, in Japanese society, before World War II, there were very strong stereotypes for men and women. I think this was because militarism was so strong at that time. At that time, stereotypes included the idea that men must always be strong and women must always be gentle. Also, the idea that women must not play a lead role, but they should only stay in the background as support, was a strong idea. They told us that women should protect
the house when the men went to war, but this had the effect of making women stronger.

Of course, after the war, women could vote, it became the law. Before the war, boys and girls were separated in school and at that time if you wanted to teach, a woman received her teaching certificate at a woman's school. I would say that at that time about half of men and women only went to middle school and the other half went on to high school. Then, after you graduated from high school, everyone went to Tokyo by bus in order to find work.

My parents were highly educated even by today's standards. My father graduated from Waseda and was a very educated man for that time. My mother had a college degree from a women's college. But, my father died very young at the age of 44 and after that my mother went to work full-time as a public employee. My mother became a single mother at that time. If my father had lived, I know that all four of us children would have gone to the university.

As I reflect back upon my life, I think I had a lot of old-fashioned ways of thinking, but after I was married about 10 years, I went back to work as a teacher. On the other hand, I was from Hakodate, and in Japan that area was considered especially progressive. Of course, Hokkaido in general was thought about like that, but Hakodate was considered so to an even greater extent. But, many women I have known, were raised to be very dependent and this was a form of discrimination because they could never make their own decisions. Women always had to ask their husbands about everything, so they were limited in that way.
When I think about women's equality, I think that men and women have to have a better understanding of each other. This process has to begin in the home. It must begin with the parents and then after that it must be continued through the schools. For example, when my son was younger, he used to consult his father on important issues more than he consulted me. However, I told him that actually he should talk to his mother just as much as he talked to his father. My son remembered that because even now he talks to me more than his father.

I remember when I met my husband he was the chief of the school and I was a young teacher. At that time, there were not many women teachers. We fell in love at that school and decided among ourselves that we would marry. Even at that time, I thought a husband's duty in the family is everything, he should be involved in the family, not just working at a job. Women have to feel that their independence is important and that feeling has to be strong.

A long time ago, men and women led separate lives and it wasn't good. My husband and I do many things together like shopping, going to the movies and taking trips. I think that if I became a widow, I would not remarry because men in that age group (65 years old and above) are usually old-fashioned in their thinking. I don't want that kind of man, so I probably would not marry."

"It was a great feeling to fall in love - it's part of human life and human life is a pleasure."

Moriyama-san is a 78 year-old, spry-looking grandmother with four children, who related the following story to me,
"My parents managed and owned a Japanese style motel in Asahikawa. Also, they owned a construction business. I had four brothers and five sisters in my family, and I was the oldest child. Well, two of my brothers and sisters have died so far but all of us stayed in Hokkaido. I guess you could say that I went to a very exclusive all-women's school which was like a women's college. My family was relatively rich because at that time only about one in twenty women could afford to go to that school. All of my sisters went to the same school, and the boys went to a 4 year university.

It was from this special school that I received my teaching certification. However, I didn’t really think I wanted to be a teacher. Before I married, Asahikawa was a big city with many cultural activities. After I married, I moved to the country and we lived on my husband's small salary. He was an elementary school teacher. When I had my omiai I decided on my own that I would marry. The marriage was all arranged by a matchmaker. I remember when my parents died, I had no inheritance rights, even though I was the oldest daughter. I didn’t even think about an inheritance. The land could not be divided and I just never thought about all the cash and other things. I just accepted that the oldest male child (my younger brother) would inherit everything. At that time, it seemed natural.

Well, I married and I had four children. I had three girls first, and I thought I must have done something bad so the kamisama (a god) gave me only girls. My whole life I have always been a housewife. I manage all the household finances and do all the household work. I go shopping by myself and I take care of my father-in-law. I hope that I can always live in my own house though, I
don’t want to depend on my children. I have a small personal savings account, but actually, all the money in this house is my money. Lately, my husband is helping me out a little more which is good because as you get older, well, you get tired, so I need help. My ideal man would be a man that could cook. That would be very helpful and useful. I am very busy and active because I have hobbies like volunteer work and Japanese style singing. The best thing about working is that I get to make lots of new friends. My husband was kind and basically, I did as I pleased. It is necessary for women to make their own decisions because many women in Japan cannot make decisions; they can’t think for themselves because of historical discrimination. The most important thing for women is freedom. If my husband died, I don’t think I would remarry at my age, but it was a great feeling to fall in love, it’s part of human life and human life is a pleasure. I believe that I raised my children all the same. But, my oldest daughter really wanted to go to a 4 year university. I felt I could not afford to send all three daughters to a university because of the expense. Therefore, only the son went to a 4 year university. The oldest daughter really begged to go to a 4 year university, but I have no regrets about my decision. All three of my daughters are married and are housewives; all had love marriages and made their own decisions about who they wanted to marry.

I think things have changed a lot for women in Japan, especially in my age-group. A long time ago older women didn’t go out much, they had to stay in the house, but now older women can get out of the house. They can do volunteer work, take group trips, and arrange their own activities. Before when I was young, women had to ask their husbands and even had to ask their husband’s parents for
permission to go out. Back then to be an oyomesan, a bride, especially on a farm, was like being a slave. But, now, I think that most older women are free. Of course, women have a more broad view than men because men have such narrow worlds. Wives have many meetings and friends, but men have only the world of the workplace and their friends are workplace friends. When they retire, women have to try to understand that men have these narrow perspectives."

"Having enough money to support your lifestyle is the most important thing for women."

Nakamura-san was born in 1935 in a small farming village, and lived there until she was 18 years old.

"My father was a rice farmer and also raised watermelon; he was a member of the Agriculture Cooperative. There were five children in my family, three daughters and two boys; I am choojo (eldest daughter). My mother died when I was five years old and my grandmother took over and raised me. I only went to junior high school. My father wanted to re-marry because he was only 35 years old when he became a widower, but he didn't. However, he played around with women and eventually he sold the farm and spent all that money on women and drinking.

When my grandmother died at 70 years of age, I was 18 and I moved to Sapporo and became a maid. I worked at the old Sapporo Station as a clerk and maid from the age of 18 until I was 25 years old. I worked for about 13 different people and did babysitting too. Well, I did omiai at the age of 25 and on my first time, I married that person. My husband had been through 30 omiai, but he wanted to marry me. I was so nervous during that first meeting; I can still remember it so clearly. While my first daughter
died (stillborn), I eventually had three children, two sons and one daughter. When I met my husband, he worked at Hokkaido Yamaha (motorcycle company), but since 1972 he has managed his own store and my oldest son works with his father. Everyday my son and husband call me to tell me what time they will be home. Therefore, I must always stay at home because they might call.

Actually, I wanted to work outside the home after marriage, but my husband always told me the children would become delinquent. But, I know that he was afraid I would have an affair; he is so jealous. He always goes with me, everywhere I go, he goes. He is 65 years old now and does not work in this house at all. But when I am sick, my son will help me. My husband only eats, sleeps and complains.

I think that there is a generation gap because a long time ago in Japan, women thought they must conform to a man's meirei (orders). It was a time of bowing to men, but I think if I got a divorce, I would never remarry. However, if my husband was divorced he would be pitiful on his own. Men just don't do well on their own so they usually want to marry soon after they are widowed or divorced. A long time ago the laws were different and divorce for women was difficult because if you became divorced, the husband got all the property and money and even the children. Now, according to the law, the wife must receive at least half of the estate. This was very important because having enough money to support your lifestyle is the most important thing for women. Sometimes you cannot think about whether you love or hate marriage because marriage is also about economics. My husband and I grew up together, but in marriage there are lots of uninteresting times.
Today, women in most houses control the money, but a long time ago they didn't. I remember that many women didn't know how much money their husband had because the husband managed all the money. Then, when the economy in Japan began to improve and there were salaryman, then more women started to manage the money. I think that women's role began to improve after the war, along with the economy. Even if women have a lower status outside the house it is okay because they have much higher status than men inside the house, so it balances out.

Criticism of younger women by older women and by Japanese society generally has a long history in Japan. As Tamanoi (1991:803) has noted, since the Meiji Period, women in the upper and middle classes who were married and had children have historically frowned on any deviation from the exclusivity of women's responsibility to marry and devote themselves to raising children. Older women deeply recognize that younger women are resisting the very roles that once gave meaning and value to their own lives and they feel threatened and resentful of these "selfish" younger women.

However, in Japan today there are more opportunities for women to work and pursue careers, giving them greater freedom especially when it relates to economic issues. White (1992:6) has argued that Japanese women have become more free with respect to choosing where and under what terms they will work, while men have become more and more trapped in the very institutions that they have erected. She asserted that
it is men in Japanese society that are the ones to be pitied. They are constrained in their work outside the home and dependent upon their wives inside the home. This picture of Japanese women as completely free-wheeling in the home and outside the home, while containing some merit and may be true for some Japanese women, is an overly simplistic one. While women are freer to work, most of the jobs available to them are only part-time with low wages and few benefits. Additionally, even though women may work outside the home, they are still the main person responsible for the household labor as well.

As Kim (1993:73) has suggested, and my research has supported, women can be quite calculating in their estimation of the economic advantages and disadvantages of marriage for good reasons. Attributes of possible male marriage candidates are closely evaluated and then decisions are made or rejected even though couples may be in love. In Japan, there can be real economic advantages to marriage and to staying married. For these women who have obtained these advantages, the fact that marriage is for the most part deemed to be "not interesting" or even if the husband is said to be jealous or insecure, these considerations do not carry the same weight as the economic ones. Thus, it is not a case of gender and familial ideology alone which affects women, but it is an economic reality that is reflected in the income of single
women who are mothers in the Hokkaido region. According to the Hokkaido Public Welfare Juvenile League (*Hokkaido Minseeiin Jidooin Renmei*) and their "1994 Report on the Present State of Life and Income of Single Mothers in Hokkaido," single and divorced mothers, as a group, have the lowest income in the region. Of those individuals with an income of less than $20,000 to $30,000 per year (200 - 300 man yen) 81.9% of them are single or divorced women with children. Even more surprising, considering the overall affluence of Japanese society, is that over half of these single and divorced mothers fall into the category of having an annual income of less than $10,000 to $20,000 per year (100 - 200 man yen). This annual income must be placed in the proper context of recognizing that Japan is an extraordinarily expensive place in which to live. The cost of living may be twice what it is in the United States. Another fact to consider is that Japanese women, as a group, only earn about 57.6% (Brinton 1993:8), of what the average Japanese male worker earns. An interesting comparison of single and divorced mothers to single and divorced fathers was made by the Hokkaido National University Department of Education, Social Welfare Section, which showed that gender is the major variable affecting income. For example, single and divorced men with children who have an annual income of less than $20,000 per year represented approximately 0% of the 1000 people surveyed; yet,
single and divorced women with children who had an annual income of less than $20,000 per year represented 32.5% of this same group. More surprising, of these same groups who had an annual income of less than $30,000 per year, divorced and single men represented only 11.8% of the surveyed group, while divorced and single women with children represented 48.4% of this group (July 1993 Kyooiku Fukushi Kenkyuu, Volume 2, pages 16, 18 - Professor Hiroshi Sugimura and Dr. Osamu Aoki). Thus, whether to marry or not depends on many factors such as economic ones as well as emotional ones. Many younger Japanese women are resisting many of the roles their older counterparts accepted, but that does not necessarily mean that they are selfish or self-centered. Rather, with more options available and provided that they can support themselves on their own income, they do not feel the need or pressure to marry.

Hokkaido Women on Education

"I could only finish junior high school because my parents were so poor."

Goto-san is 61, lives with her husband in Hiroshima and teaches traditional Japanese dance on a part-time basis at the local community center. She provided a poignant story of class inequality and gender ideology as she related her story.

"My father and mother came to Hokkaido from Akita Prefecture (northern Honshuu) and they were farmers, but they
were extremely poor. I only finished junior high school because they were so poor. There were nine children in my family, three boys and six girls. They are all still living and healthy.

I married when I was 21 and my husband was 23; it was a love marriage. My husband worked in the coal mines, but now he is retired. When my children were young, I suffered so much because we didn’t have much money and my husband did such dangerous work. There were many accidents in which eight or nine people were killed. It was a terrible time for me. I work part-time teaching odori, and I usually make about five to nine hundred dollars per month. However, our annual income has always been low (in the $20,000 to $30,000 range), but I made my own happiness. I did all the childcare and household labor when the children were young because my husband worked so hard at such a dangerous job. However, since he has retired my husband does help me out a little. I am happy now because I have my own salary and my own time.

I think that relations between men and women have changed some but mostly among the young. I have such an old fashioned way of thinking that women should be in the home because that is the way it was a long time ago. However, I advised my daughter to be sure to have some skills in order to get a job in case she ever got divorced. You need a good head if you become divorced. My whole life I longed to be a beautiful woman because I believed I was ugly. In fact, if I am given another life after I die, I hope I will be a woman again but this time, I want to be a truly beautiful woman."
Nishi-san is a 48 year old full-time housewife with three children and related the following,

"My husband is an executive with a construction company, and I have always been a full-time housewife since I married. My parents were so old-fashioned, but at that time I didn't understand. Of course, now, I, too, am old-fashioned in my thinking. My mother always told me that women should stay in the home for the sake of the children. She thought and I think so too, that the life of a career woman doesn't look so interesting. Maybe if you had talked to me ten years ago, I would have spoken differently, but now I have become conservative in my thinking.

I think with children it is very difficult to work in Japan, but when I was younger I remember that there were times when I wanted to work outside the home. Now, I really don't want a job outside the house. When it snows here in Hokkaido, and my husband goes to work, I feel sorry for him because he must go out. But, if you talk to young people, their feelings would be different. But, I definitely think that in working outside the home, women should have equality in pay. However, I believe that women have not yet, attained equality in Japan.

I remember when I was young, my parents told me that studying wasn’t good for girls. I think that if I was divorced or became a widow, I’d really like to study. I would particularly like to study English; I always wanted to study English - maybe someday I will have the chance."
In Japan, education has historically been a serious matter, especially for males. As Gelb and Palley (1994:10) have noted, it has only been in recent years that education has become more important for women. Before this time, companies had insisted on hiring female graduates of high school and junior colleges rather than women who had graduated from a 4 year university. This is because it was felt that women with only high school or junior college were "more expendable" in the labor market. This practice has been supported by the educational system because the majority of women in Japan still attend junior and community colleges or colleges of lesser prestige. For example, in 1989, 24% of women high school graduates went on to attend junior colleges while only 13.7% attended a 4-year university. At this same time, only 1.7% of men went to junior colleges while 34.1% of male students went to 4-year universities. Even for women who do attend a university, many are enrolled in women's colleges (which have been historically considered as less prestigious) with few women attending the very prestigious national universities that are a necessity for career success and higher salaries. Women in Japan tend to major in such areas that have been traditionally viewed as "women's studies," such as literature, home economics or education. Therefore, due to their educational background and their overall labor-force participation, women workers in Japan struggle with a large
wage gap relative to men. In the 1980s and 1990s, this gap has ranged from 50% to 60% which makes it one of the highest among the industrialized nations (Brinton 1993:8).

Fujimura-Fanselow and Kameda (1994:64,65) have argued that the educational system in Japan is totally out of touch with the reality of women’s lives today and will continue to be so in the years to come. While the Ministry of Education controls education in Japan, they have not exercised that authority toward providing gender equality in education. However, groups like the League of Japanese Lawyers have endeavored to investigate and expose sex discrimination in textbooks and in course curriculum. Thus, education in Japan remains a contested area where women must struggle to enter the famous national universities. Even after graduation from these universities, they face a labor market where conditions are at present not favorable for female college graduates. As a recent newspaper article related, women college graduates face discrimination in employment as good jobs are very scarce in Japan. Most companies prefer to hire male college graduates first (Asahi Shinbun, July 9, 1995).
Hokkaido Women on Household Labor

"Housework is the most important and valuable work in society."

Hiyashi-san is a young full-time housewife (32) who lived in the suburbs of Sapporo with her husband, her young child and her mother-in-law.

"I was married when I was 28 and after that I quit working. I worked servicing computers. Actually, my mother worked outside the home since I was a small child and I decided that I wanted to stay home for my children. It doesn’t bother me that I don’t have my own income and that all our property and assets are in my husband’s name. My husband and I don’t think about what is my property and what is his property. But, I do recall, that my husband did say that, in fact, everything is his.

He doesn’t really have the time to help me out in the house very much, but he does play with the baby sometimes. I don’t really have time right now for hobbies, but I do have some play time and I like to go drinking at a famous bar area in Sapporo, which is called Susukino.

However, I know that the work that I do is the most important and valuable work in society, and that my work is more important than the work that people do outside the home. When I think of a career woman, my image is of a independent, unmarried woman. When I think about my daughter and what I want for her, of course, I want a good education for her. But, if I had a boy, I would put back a little more money for his education. But, when I say this to my husband, he always says that the amount should be the same."
"A husband and wife's duty in the house is the same which includes housework and childcare because the family is the most important thing in life."

Kitayama-san is a young 35-year old housewife with two children who also works part time.

"My family came to Hokkaido from Nara ken (Southern Honshuu) and my husband's family came from the Tohoku Region. I have lived in Hokkaido all my life. My marriage was a love marriage as my husband worked as a municipal employee and I worked at a bank branch office and both workplaces were in the same building. That is how we met.

In my natal family I am the oldest child, but I have a younger brother. My mother paints Ainu Dolls and my father is a carpenter. I work as a part-time helper at this community center. I help with older people, helping them take a bath in the portable bath and such. I make about $500 to $900 per month. But before this job, I had always been a housewife and mother.

My husband is still a public employee and all of our property is in his name. Actually, the land is in my husband's father's name. I didn't even think about having the property in my name. My husband has always been good about helping me out with housework; he helps with the childcare and with the shopping too. I think that women's status in the home is better than outside the home. In my experience, I see that labor conditions are very bad for women. People are not that understanding at work. If the children are sick and a mother cannot come to work, other people are inconvenienced and are not happy."
Many of my friends have this problem. But, among my friends, husbands seem to help them out a lot around the house.

I think that the husband’s and wife’s most important duty is the same and that is housework and childcare because the family is the most important thing. This is more important than working outside the home. I think that when I was young, my brother and I were treated basically the same. Actually, I didn’t help my parents that much in the house so I am not a very good cook. So, my husband does a lot of the cooking. I am very happy with my husband and his helping me in the household."

"These days I am embarrassed to say it, but my husband doesn’t help me out at all with the housework."

Takada-san is a 44 year old wife and mother with two children. She also works full-time at the local community center.

"My family came to Hokkaido from Miyagi-ken, but I have always lived in Shibetsu. My marriage was a love marriage, and we met in a group of men and women that did different activities together. I was 21 years old and my husband was 24 years old when we married. I am the youngest of six children, and my family was a farming family.

I have always had to work outside the home. I have had so many kinds of jobs; I have been a waitress, sold life insurance, and I was a clerk. When my husband and I were first married we were farmers together. But that didn’t work out, so we left the farm and moved here. Now, I work full-time as a home-helper for the aged and disabled and my husband is a car salesman."
Well, I am embarrassed to say this, in these days, but my husband doesn’t help me out around the house at all. He only takes out the garbage, but I have to prepare it for him. He used to help me out a little when the children were small, but now he does absolutely nothing. I do have a little free time and I have hobbies such as knitting and playing ping-pong.

Actually, I feel that things have not changed that much for women, but maybe among the young they have. I think that if I have another life, I would like to be a housewife in my next life. I always wanted to be one because it seemed like such a luxurious life. When I raised my children, I brought them up the same way because I remembered that in my family I was discriminated against because I was a woman. My father told me that boys go to college or to the university, but girls don’t need to go to the university or even to a college. I have four brothers and my father sent all of them to college, but he would not send me or my sister. I didn’t make that kind of difference with my son and daughter. Right now I really love my work, it is useful and has meaning for me. It is so important to have interesting and valuable work, not just for the money, but for the emotional reward.”

Household labor is real and valuable work which was a point that many women I interviewed made quite clear. While getting married and becoming a housewife is no longer the only option for women, it is still an important one. As mentioned in Chapter 1, in the 1970s and 1980s, as women began returning to the workplace in large numbers, the image of the career woman, who had both a full-time job and also took care of her
family, was a publicly supported model for women. This is when the rather redundant term "full-time housewife" became popular. According to Ueno (1994:32) this was also when the deprecating phrase "just a housewife" began to be frequently used. Because of these developments, many Japanese housewives became defensive about their role in the household and family as their own identities and values were threatened. However, as women returned to the workplace either as part-time or full-time workers, the difficult reality of their life became quite obvious. They were working outside the home, bringing home a salary, and yet all of the household labor still had to be done exclusively by them. Life had become more burdensome for them and the salary that they did bring home was small compared to that of their husband. While my research indicated that many women wanted to work at some point in their marriage, the reality of the situation soon dampened their enthusiasm.

Nowadays in Japan, the life of a full-time housewife is seen as a privileged one. Most of the women I interviewed had busy, meaningful lives. Although these housewives did not leave their home for a job everyday, they did leave their house in order to take part in hobbies, in local activities, volunteer work, study circles and networking with friends. For women who are housewives in Japan, it no longer means a full-time job with complete dedication to husband and
children. They occupy a privileged economic class where a housewife is able to stay home because her husband makes enough money to enable her to do so. Housewives in Japan are no longer denigrating the work that they do, but rather they recognize its value as essential and as underpinning Japanese society as a whole.

Hokkaido Women on Women’s Labor Conditions Outside the Home

"When I was working full-time, men got to do all the talking and go to the meetings and the women had to do the hard, boring work."

Suzuki-san is 49, married and has two children.

"Well, my mother was born here in Hokkaido but my father came from Kyoto in order to start a new business here. I was an only child and my mother died last year. She lived with me and my family until she died. I remember the times when I was a child; we were so poor. My mother ran a very, very, small restaurant, and my father was always starting new businesses which soon failed. I only finished high school, but I wanted to attend college. However, we didn’t have the money.

When I graduated from high school, I wanted to work for an insurance company because I was always so thin and weak and my teacher told me that working for an insurance company would be an easy job. I passed all the tests for employment, but because of my poor background the company refused to hire me. Then, the same thing happened to me when I applied at a bank. Investigators came and asked questions regarding my family of all my neighbors."
Because we were poor, the companies felt I was a bad risk being around a lot of money.

Well, finally I got a job at a large private company in the accounts payable department. I took over the jobs of other women in accounting when they left, so I eventually did the work of three people. I worked alone for three years doing everything myself, but I never got promoted or had any reward. However, I had to help train new employees, and the men always got promoted. The division chief was such a heavy smoker, and he always made me clean up his ashtrays and cigarettes. He never asked the men to do it. Still, he complained to me that I should clean up after him more often. He was always in meetings talking and smoking. That is why I think that men do the easy work, like going to meetings and talking, but women had to do the hard, boring work.

I was 25 years old when I married and we were introduced by friends, but we fell in love. My husband went to junior high school and then was a farmer for 4 years. After 4 years, he told his parents he wanted to go back to school and attend college. However, his parents were from the Meiji generation and felt that he should take over the farm since he was the oldest son. So, they refused to help him with his education. He had to work his way through college and finally he became a Physics Professor.

When I married, I became pregnant right away. It was truly a honeymoon baby. I quit my full-time job when I was about six months pregnant. When my children were in kindergarten, I studied computer programming and worked part-time doing computer programming from my home.
Now, I teach two days a week at a local *juku* (cram school). I manage everything in the house, all the finances and I have hobbies like tennis and I love to go to the movies.

I think that the status of women in Japan has not changed that much because even though more women are working outside the home, the jobs are not good. For example, recently when women students graduated from the university and tried to find employment, companies turned them down in favor of men. This is because there are few good jobs in Japan right now, and companies favor men in hiring. These days in Japan only part-time work is available, especially for women. I tell my daughter that if she gets a job working everyday be sure you get the same salary as the men; then if you need to hire someone to clean the house and take care of the children, you can do so. That way I think my daughter will have less stress and more satisfaction. I also think that housework is important and should be considered professional work by society.

One of the biggest problems for working women is that there is not adequate day care for children. The daycare facilities are small and inadequate. In order for women to be independent, we have to have better daycare facilities. Because when women and men work and the children become sick, women must take off but the men don’t have to. This puts women at a disadvantage, but if there were better day-care facilities then it would solve the problem. An alternative to daycare facilities, might be good neighborhood relations. If there were better neighborhood relations then people who were not working, could help supervise and watch children to help out the
mothers who must work outside the home. I think this is a necessity in place of organized daycare.

Also, I think that hobbies are very important for women, because if women are housewives only then it can get very lonely and alienating, especially if your husband works long hours. Through hobbies women get together and communicate with each other and share experiences and this is important. If something happened and my husband died or I became divorced, I don't want to depend on my children, they have their own life. So I might get lonely and probably I would want to remarry, if I met a good man. However, I would want another love marriage - I'd want to fall in love again."

"I know that when I am working and men ask me to get the food and do the cleaning up it is not right, but I just can't refuse these requests."

Ono-san is a 44 year old housewife and part-time worker outside the home with four children. She is also a rarity in this research as she is a graduate from a four year university.

"In my natal family, there were only two daughters, just me and my older sister. My mother was a pharmacist and graduated from a 4 year university, which was very unusual for that time. My father was a salaryman for a private company.

I got married the same year that I graduated from the university. We moved to Hokkaido from Tokyo about 15 years ago because my husband's work changed. He does geological surveys. I was 23 when I married and it was a love marriage. At
the time we met, I was working part-time and he was a college student; he came to the shop where I was working. When I got married, I didn't have a job at that time, and for most of my marriage, I have been a housewife. Now, I work part-time from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 with one hour for lunch. I pick up groceries and boxes and deliver them for people. I make about $700 per month from this work. Actually though, this work is more like full-time work because by the time I get home in the evening it is 6:20 p.m.

The kaoku (house) and the takuchi (land) are both in my husband's name. I never thought about that as an important issue. I manage the finances and expenses, but my husband and I together make the decisions on big purchases. I do most of the laundry, cooking, and cleaning, but my husband helps me out a lot with childcare and this is so helpful to me. I do have some free time but I wish I could have some more free time. Some of my hobbies are social dance classes, sign language for the deaf and I also take correspondence courses on social work. I will receive my certification soon, but I wonder how useful it will be. I think that each woman has to decide if she wants to work outside the home and that choice depends on her own conditions. For example, if her husband is willing to help her out a lot with housework or childcare, then the woman may find it easier to choose to work outside the home. Also, in many cases, the wife might have to work outside the home, and in that case the husband should be willing to do the same labor as the wife.

Actually, things have changed within the household for women and men. I see examples of this in the Japanese lifestyle. On Saturdays and Sundays, I see many men and women shopping together (many young couples); I used to
see none — only women shopping alone. Also at the local park, it used to be about 90% women and children that I saw there when my children were small, but now I see many men there too with small children.

I think that if I have another life after I die, I would like to be a woman again because of the experience of having children. I just loved my body when I was pregnant; I really loved it. I loved the changes that happened to my body at that time. I think if I was a man, I would be so fascinated at a woman’s body and the experience of pregnancy.

I have never had the experience of sexual discrimination in my family, but outside in the workplace, I have experienced this. At the workplace, women are always expected to get the tea, make the coffee, do the cleaning in the workplace, and get the food. Even though I know it is not right, I just can’t refuse these requests. I think that a person’s own sense of responsibility in everything they do is the most important thing. Of course, earning your own money is also important. Also, the husband’s cooperation is very important. In my case, my husband is much better at cooking and childcare than I am. So I guess, that makes me a bad mother.

But, I think that if my husband died or I became divorced, I would remarry. At that time I would not think about my children’s feelings, but I would think about my own happiness. My children would have their own lives. I would remarry because life is long, and love is very important to me in having a happy life. When my children are a little older, I would like to go back to college and study. I feel that these days women have more chances to get out and have hobbies. This provides more opportunities
to talk to other women. I believe that this promotes higher levels of awareness among women."

In Japan, as mentioned previously, women workers have high labor force participation until they are in the age range of 30 to 34 whereupon they marry and have children, then withdraw from the labor force. When the children become older, these women once again enter the wage labor market, usually as part-time workers. As Shinotsuka (1994: 95) has argued, American women broke out of this pattern in the 1970s, and began following the same pattern as male workers in America. American women do not necessarily leave the labor force when they marry and/or have children, but in Japan, marriage, childbirth and childrearing still greatly affect women’s participation in the labor force. This contributes to the perception that Japanese women only desire to or only need to work part-time. Actually, as many of my interview respondents stated and as I detailed in Chapter 4, labor conditions for women in Japan are not good especially with respect to childcare facilities. They are few in number with hours that are not always convenient for full-time working women. Yet, in 1991, there were 4.91 million part-time female workers in Japan and of these 85.5% were married, and within this group approximately 70% had children (Shinotsuka 1994:94-97). Many women simply felt that part-time work was the only work that was available to them and that a full-time career
was impossible due to the constraints of doing all the household labor as well as child care. Thus, their role as wives and mothers preempts any other roles to which they may have aspired because of the overwhelming, sole responsibility they feel that they have.

Widows of Hokkaido

"There is inequality in Japan between women, between woman that are widowed, single and those that are married - it is a serious problem."

Ogino-san is a 53 year old widow with one child and has basically supported herself for most of her adult life.

"My husband died about twenty years ago when I was about thirty-three years old. My son at that time was only about four years old. My mother's family came to Asahikawa, Hokkaido from the area of Sendai, but my father's family came from down south, from Shikoku.

My marriage was arranged and actually the marriage was decided when my husband and I were children. In my family I did not get along with my oldest brother's wife. So, at 22 I decided it was best to get married. I didn't even think about love at that time because the decision had been made such a long time ago. My husband worked on construction and also he worked as a taxi driver. For a while, I worked in an employment office, and I also worked at a sawing and lumbering company. But my education level is only junior high school, so working at a good job is difficult.
After my husband died, I worked at home making kimonos, and also as a teacher’s assistant at the local school.

Since 1979, I have been working here at this community center. I do all the cleaning, laundering, play games and service boilers with an income of about $1500 to $1900 per month. I work full-time from 9:00 to 5:00 p.m. After my husband died, I joined a single mother’s group, and it was very helpful for me. Also, I have been busy for the last 10 years helping to nurse my mother since she has not been well. When my husband was alive, he helped me out a lot with childcare. Even now my son helps me because we set the example when he was young. He loves women and is very kind and gentle. I think he is more like a woman maybe because his father died when he was so young. I have many hobbies such as flower growing, flower arranging and insect hatching (butterflies and beetles) because my son always liked it.

I think things have changed for women in Japan only on the surface, in reality things have not changed much. In the workplace, things have not changed much at all. Generally speaking, Japanese men are not broad-minded, their heart is not wide. Of course, a lot depends on the individual’s personality, but that has been my experience. From my perspective, I have always had to work. I feel I have lived a man’s life, therefore I envy the life of a housewife. So, I guess I think that if a woman works outside the home, then she should do all the household work too. She should also do the child-care, even if she works full-time.

I don’t think I will ever remarry because I have a child so it was difficult. My own child might have been treated differently by a new husband. Also, the new husband might be the oldest
son or my family and the new husband’s family might not get along. There were so many problems to consider. But, I always cry when there is an argument or disagreement, so I think I am not very strong. I love animals, especially cats and I think it widens a person’s heart when they are kind to animals and to other people.

Actually, I hope that I am not going to have another life; I don’t want to be born again. This life has been enough and what I have endured in this life was difficult. When I was young, there was lots of sexual discrimination in my family but I didn’t think about it at that time, it just seemed natural and proper. It was a way of life. Boys and girls were treated differently when I was a child, they had men’s work and women’s work and they were separated. Many times I wanted to help my brothers when I was little, but I wasn’t allowed. At dinner I remember that my father and brothers always got the most to eat and special treatment. But, my mother always ate the same amount as we small children did, even though she was an adult.

Also, in the workplace, there is discrimination because a man’s opinion is important and respected, but a woman’s opinion is not respected or accepted. In my experience, a woman’s opinion is not considered important. I think that working outside the home does not mean that you have equality. It would be better if there was more enjoyable work for women and that they would receive good pay for that work. Women should not have to do only the boring and repetitive jobs. We should not just have to work for the money alone but because work is interesting and meaningful. In my case, after 5:00 p.m., I am happy because work is finished for that day.
The worse problem for me has been the loneliness. Also, it has been a big problem because people watch me closely. This is because I am a widow and people always watch widows. So I think there is inequality between women, too, between widows and single women and married women. If a woman is a widow and men are nice to her, then other women dislike her. Then, other women don't help her with her work. They don't want to be friends with a widow. This is also a serious problem, this inequality among women.

I have been a widow for twenty years, and in that time I fell in love only one time. I fell in love by chance, but it was not accepted by society since he was a married man. It is difficult to be a woman and break the customs of society. However, I think it was good to experience that kind of love because it was part of the human experience. I say to myself, well, at least I had love once, even though it didn't work out. I had the experience of it, so it was good.

When my son falls in love and marries, I hope that he and his wife live not too far away and not too close. I hope that he will telephone me once each week. But, you know, even older people at this community center fall in love. The men here give flowers to their favorite women. The older women look in their compact mirrors, check their make-up and make themselves pretty for their favorite men. The only problem is that older men are scarce, so there are more women than men, therefore not all the older women can have a boyfriend.
"In Japan, everyone watches widows."

Kohata-san is 44 years old and a widow with two daughters.

"My husband died 4 years ago and my marriage was a love marriage. I met him on a JR train commuting back and forth from work, as he was a JR Company employee. I was 23 when I married him and he was 25 years old. My father also works in transportation, and I was the oldest sister in the family. I work full-time as a home helper for older people or for the disabled.

Well, all the property was in my husband's name, but I would advise my daughters to have their property in both names just for the sake of caution. Since my husband died, I have done everything. I work full-time, do all the housework, and raise the children. My children help me out quite a bit.

I think that generally the status of women hasn't changed that much recently. Especially, for widows it is very difficult in Japanese society. Everyone watches widows, and other women worry about their husbands and boyfriends. That's why I don't think I will re-marry because I was completely in love with my husband, and I have my two children. Also, it is difficult to remarry in a small town, especially if you are a widow. My husband always helped me out a lot with housework and childcare. But, I've seen that for some women, they think that housework and childcare is a women's territory and they don't want to share this responsibility. Because of this, I think women are actually stronger than men, especially emotionally."
"Rules for women who are widows and for men who are widowers are different."

Tsukino-san is a 67 year-old widow, mother and grandmother.

"About sixteen years ago my husband died and I have lived alone since that time. I have two children who are both married, and I have four grandchildren. Both my father and my husband worked for JR, so I guess you could say that we were a JR family.

When my husband died, I didn’t even think about remarriage, not even once. I live on my husband’s pension. In Japan, if my husband had lived and become 60 years old, then we would have received his full pension. However, since he died, I receive only 50% of his pension. I supported him all the years he worked for JR and now I only get one half of his pension; it is just not fair. I really don’t have much money on which to live.

I do have lots of free time and I enjoy my hobbies. I especially like my traditional Japanese dancing classes. I think that things have changed a lot between men and women and especially with respect to women. I think the changes are for the better. Absolutely! I remember when I was a child, my father was so very strict. I recall that he smiled at other women, but he never smiled at his own wife and family. That’s the way it was back then, men and women’s lives were separate; they went their separate ways. But, I never envied my husband’s life because they say that men have seven enemies when they work outside.

It is important for women to be able to make their own decisions and not to depend on your children too much. You
have to learn to think and do for yourself. Friends are also very important in life. Human relations between friends are more important than blood relations, especially as one gets older.

Regarding equality for women, I feel it hasn’t happened yet. For example, many widows and widowers want to help each other out. Women want to help out with cooking and men want to help out with gardening, etc. However, it is difficult because everyone in the surrounding area is looking at the widows. They think the relationship is a sexual one. People watch women more closely and the rules are different for women who are widows and for men who are widowers. Men are much freer to do as they wish, no one says anything. However, women are not so free because people watch and generally, there is prejudice against women, especially against widows. Therefore, widows have to be more careful in what they do, but I think we care too much about what other people think.

Really, I think I will never marry again. At my age I can live for myself now. I cook for myself and I don’t have to cook for anyone else. I like this way of life. My husband never did anything around the house. A long time ago, men did absolutely nothing in the house. There was an old Japanese saying that a husband shouldn’t lift anything heavier than a spoon inside the house. This is another reason I don’t think I will marry. Men in my age group think in old-fashioned ways, but my children are different. My son helps his wife out a lot and my daughter’s husband helps her out too.

Also, I think that women are freer in Hokkaido. When I go to visit my son in Tokyo, the older women in the
neighborhood tell me that I am different. They say I act in a more free fashion and I have different ideas. I am glad that Hokkaido doesn’t have some of the older traditions and customs that they have in Honshuu. Talking about this brings back so many memories. When I was in school and I was a young girl, my parents told me you don’t need an education, but you can study cooking, sewing, the tea ceremony, and flower arranging.

I can remember when I first married my husband, he was the oldest son in the family. I was a young bride and my husband’s parents lived with us. I had to do everything by myself, the laundry, the cooking, the cleaning; no one offered to help me. My husband didn’t help me either, all he did when he got home was rest and get into the bathtub first. A young bride was said to be like a cow or like a horse and cart to be worked like that. I had no time for play or fun. There were many sayings about young brides. One said that you shouldn’t give the new wife any delicious foods. I remember that one Fall my husband’s family said that to me, regarding special Fall foods that they had. I told them I wanted to leave that house, and they told me if I went out of that house, don’t come back. I had a terrible time then, but now my life is peaceful.”

As Endo (1995:29) has argued, the word for widow in Japanese is miboojin, and although it is commonly used, it has a negative connotation. The Chinese characters that are used to express this word have the meaning of "the one who is not yet dead." Endo asserted that the term used for men who are widowed, otoko yamome, does not carry such a prejudicial meaning. The implication of the word miboojin for women was
that the wife's husband has preceded her in death. Although she should have died along with him, she is still living; thus, the wife was a bad woman who has not yet died. This conception is rooted in the samurai ethic which postulated that a loyal soldier should be willing to follow his leader or master into death and be buried along with him. Thus, the wife should be willing to follow the head of the household into the grave.

However, the women I interviewed represented their widowed lifestyle in positive terms. They engaged in activities that they felt they could not have done while they were married. They had freedoms that were impossible to have within their specific marriages. These widows in Hokkaido did not necessarily express the idea that they wanted to remarry. To the contrary, they expressed a high degree of contentment with their present arrangement though several felt that economically they suffered as widows. They also resented a society and their own neighborhood for "watching" them, scrutinizing their behavior, and applying a double standard to male widowers and to widows. Still, most were satisfied and even happy with their state as a widow, and saw little need or advantage for remarriage.
Hokkaido Women on the Husband’s Family and the Natal Family

"The priority of the husband’s family is strong in Japan and it needs to change."

Machi-san is a 48 year old housewife with two children and her husband is a high school teacher. She detailed her story as follows,

"My family came to Hokkaido from Miyagi-ken (the northern part of Honshuu), and I was born here. My father owned a company that constructed electrical poles and lines. My mother was an executive with the company (but only in name).

I was introduced to my husband by my sister when he came to visit her because both my husband and my sister were teachers at the same school. There were 9 children in my family, 7 girls and 2 boys. I was 23 when I married, and it was a love marriage. I quit working when I married and became a housewife. I attended high school, but I wanted to study more and maybe someday I will.

As I said my family was very well-off financially, and so when I married my husband I felt I married into a lower class because my husband was a teacher and public employee. He didn’t have the money or status that my father did. In the house, I have always done most of the household work because my husband is busy working at school. However, I think he would like to help out if he had the time. Also, when the children were small, he really helped me out very well at that time.

I think I don’t really need a hesokuri because my husband turns over his paycheck to me. I manage all the household finances. Of course, I have
hobbies like tennis, the tea ceremony and crafts. When I raised my son and daughter, I tried to raise them with the same rights and privileges. But, because girls are physically different they should be raised a little bit different from boys. I know that in my family there is discrimination because when women marry they always know the feelings and personalities of the husband’s family very well. However, the children and the husband and wife don’t get a chance to spend time with the wife’s family. The husband’s family is always a priority. When my daughter marries, she has already said that her own family is going to be her priority, not the husband’s family. It isn’t fair that my parents and family have to suffer because of this old arrangement in Japan.

I think that the most important condition for women’s independence and equality is a husband’s independence from his family. My husband is the oldest son, so he always thinks his family should be the most important. He always thinks I should be cooking special things for his family. So my mother really suffers because of this arrangement. When women marry, they have to keep close to their own family. But, this attachment of men to their family and the priority of the man’s family is very strong in Japan, and it needs to change.

I think that if I became divorced or widowed, I would first think about the economics. I don’t know if it is so important to be married. When my husband retires (and it’s not that I hate my own husband), I am afraid that he will just sit around the house and want to hang around me. In my case, I have many friends and I prefer to be with them. I think it is not really necessary for my husband and I to live together because I am very social and I enjoy my friends, but my husband is not social at all."
"Before I married my husband, I told him that my family was important to me too."

Kawamura-san was a 46 year old housewife and part-time worker.

"There were five children in my family. I have an older sister and I am the second child. The third child is also a girl and the fourth and fifth are boys. My father was a pharmacist, but he never went to the university. He took an exam for pharmacists, and at that time he received a pharmacist certificate. He was always so stern. The girls were treated especially strict; we always had to answer clearly hai and had to do all the housework. However, my brothers were not treated so strictly and they only played.

My mother helped my father out in the pharmacy and store. He died very young about the same time that I married. Then, my mother became a pharmacist assistant through a certification from the pharmaceutical company. All five of us children graduated from high school, and went to work right away. I was 23 years old when I fell in love and married. I have been a housewife only for most of my marriage, but for the past five years I have worked part-time at a bread store from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. My income from this job is about $500 to $900 per month.

My husband works for JR, and he works a rotation schedule so sometimes he is very late. When the children were little, he was late frequently and he didn't help much with them. My household division of labor is that my husband works outside the house, and I do everything inside the house. I don't really have many hobbies, but I like go out with my workplace friends and bowl or
do karaoke (a kind of Japanese style of singing). I have never thought much about the concepts of independence or equality. I think these ideas have to do with the workplace. If men and women do the same work, then they should receive the same money. But, inside the house, I think in a conservative way. Inside the house, there is no talk of independence or equality, it is not necessary. In marriage, a couple can work out things together. If the wife works outside the home, then the husband should naturally help her out. It should be mutual cooperation. It used to be that women used to be housewives only, it was expected that women stay in the house. But, now men help out in the household and cooperate with their wife or she couldn’t work outside the home.

There are many articles in the newspaper about women’s equality and independence; everyday I read something about this issue. However, there is lots of discrimination in the workplace. In the bread store where I work, women and men do the exact same job, but the wage scales are different for women and men. Men receive a higher salary for the same work. Women where I work have asked about this, but the company executives don’t answer. They say if you have a complaint you can leave. In Japan, there is the law that women should receive equal pay for equal work, but in actual practice companies do not follow the law.

Also, I think that in marriage the wife’s family must be considered important also. I told my husband before we married that my family and my brothers and sisters were important to me. I told him that we must go and visit my family and my family must come to visit us. Of course, my husband’s family is also important, but my family is just as important. My husband agreed to this condition before we got married."
As mentioned previously, the traditional concept of the oyome (bride) is that not only does a woman become a man's wife, but marriage means that she is the bride in the husband's family. She essentially marries the husband's family. The expectations with this bride role were that she would take her husband's family name, have children for his household, care for his parents, take care of his family's grave, say prayers for his deceased family members, be buried in his family's grave, and in general, that his family will have complete priority over her own natal family in all areas. However, in this research, women were resentful and rejecting of this traditional arrangement. Many stated that they wanted no part of all the one-sided obligations and expectations attached to their role as a wife. They actively rejected the idea that the husband's family would take priority over their own. They took steps to ensure that though their husband maintained a strong attachment to his family, their own family was also considered of equal importance and value. Most of the women interviewed suggested that they continued to have important and strong connections to their natal family with their husband's encouragement or even in spite of their husband's resentment of this fact. They resisted attempts by their husband or by his family to minimize contact or consideration of the needs and obligations of their natal family.
For younger women in Japan, marriage no longer only represents the linkage of two families. Recently in Japan, it ideally implies a coming together of two people who love each other, and who are considered free and equal partners without one dominating the other. However, as Yoshizumi (1995:196) has argued, there are still numerous psychological and cultural, as well as legal, residues of the prewar family system. This hinders the attainment of a truly egalitarian relationship between marriage partners in Japan. Thus, marriage and the family remains an area in which change is occurring and provides an important focal point for further research.

This chapter has represented an attempt to record the daily occurrences and happenings in the lives of ordinary women who live in Hokkaido. In their own voices and with their own words, they provided insight into a wide range of topics, such as: marital relationships, the status of widows and older women, the priority of the husband's family, education, women's labor force conditions, and the intra-workings of the household. They also gave a clear historical context for many of the issues which were and continue to be important in the Japanese household.
CHAPTER VI

Conclusion

This research explored and analyzed women's role in the household division of labor and in familial relationships in Hokkaido. The dynamics and ideology of the family and within the family was found to be less conservative (i.e., less rigid with respect to the roles of women in the family and as regards the ideology pertaining to the roles of women) than other areas of Japan. Yet, the gendered household division of labor persisted and more closely mirrored mainstream Japan. However, in concluding, it would be an oversimplification to simply say that the majority of women interviewed received little help with household work. This is because the generality was amended by several variables such as: age, whether or not the wife worked, whether a wife worked full-time or part-time, the kind of job and the hours the husband worked each day, as well as rural and urban distinctions. Specifically, younger women tended to receive more household labor assistance from husbands. This was especially true if the wife worked full-time, and the husband was a public employee or had a job which required only an eight hour work day. Women in rural areas tended to receive more help in the house than did women who lived in urban Sapporo and in the
ideologically conservative suburbs of Hiroshima. This help was based, not necessarily on the husband's aid, but on the basis of family relationships where the wife's or husband's parents were able to give assistance in the home.

Though the research sample in Shibetsu was small, the question was posed as to why, in the rural area of Shibetsu, women received the most help with respect to household labor, i.e., 42.9% of women received help in the household in Shibetsu compared with the smallest percentage of women receiving help of 25.5% for women who lived in Hiroshima. As mentioned in Chapter 4, according to my research data, women of Shibetsu stated that they received help from stem family members. Based on this result from my research and considering the fact that Hiroshima had undergone rapid population growth due to industrialization and urbanization (as detailed in Chapter 4), I assumed that the number of nuclear families would be much higher in Hiroshima than in Shibetsu. Therefore, I concluded that the relatively small number of extended families in Hiroshima might be one factor in explaining the low percentage of women who received any help in the household. However, I had to answer the question as to whether or not the number of extended families in Shibetsu was actually higher than in Hiroshima? Thus, in order to further substantiate my conclusions, I compared figures in the 1990 Population Census of Japan regarding the
types of families and the number of different types of families in Shibetsu and Hiroshima, as follows:

Table 6.1.—The number of nuclear families, extended families and one-person households (as a percentage of all private households) in Shibetsu and Hiroshima in 1990.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NUCLEAR FAMILY</th>
<th>STEM FAMILY</th>
<th>1-PERSON HH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shibetsu</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiroshima</td>
<td>76.9</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: Kokusei-choosa hookoku 1990.

It can be clearly seen that the number of stem families is considerable greater and the number of nuclear families is lower in the rural area of Shibetsu compared to the suburban area of Hiroshima. Thus, the narrative data derived from Shibetsu with its emphasis on stem family arrangements was supported by the statistical data. This was the case even though the research sample from Shibetsu was small. However, how does the percentage of nuclear families in Hiroshima and Shibetsu in the Hokkaido Region compare to all Japan? As of 1990, the percentage of nuclear families throughout Japan was 59.5% compared to Hiroshima’s 76.9% and Shibetsu’s 62.0% (Source: Kokusei-choosa hookoku 1990 - Population Census Report of 1990). Thus, both of these areas in Hokkaido had a
higher percentage of resident nuclear families than is common throughout the rest of Japan. Therefore, I can conclude from my research that another regional characteristic of Hokkaido is a higher percentage of nuclear families compared to the rest of Japan.

As has been argued throughout this research, rather than to view the family *per se* as oppressive for women, the specific conditions within the family were important for analysis and consideration. Through stem family arrangements, which were more common in Shibetsu, women received greater help with household labor in the important setting of the family.

Additionally, women in Hokkaido exhibited great diversity in their lifestyles and their experiences. Some women, after having given considerable thought to their role as a full-time housewife, expressed satisfaction with their position in the household. Being a housewife in Japan, especially in a middle-upper class neighborhood, has become a privilege and many enjoyed it as such. Other women expressed deep dissatisfaction and even resentment with their husband and his family. Many women vociferously complained about the effect of the traditional view that the husband’s family was placed as a priority above the wife’s own natal family. They argued that this was a constraining influence on women’s situation in the household. Most women maintained very close ties with
their own natal family members even in the face of opposition from their husbands. Additionally, love marriages prevailed in large numbers in this research. Yet, most women stated that equality in marriage, while a goal for which they could work, was still far away from actualization.

A sexual division of labor does not necessarily imply that there are inequalities and oppressions in the household. Inequalities are the result of particular kinds of household divisions of labor arrangements. More simply, it is not the content of household work which necessitates it as being labeled oppressive; there is nothing inherently oppressive about doing laundry or cooking a meal. Rather it is the specific conditions and aspects of that work which may render it so. Therefore, it becomes important to ask, within this research, what were the conditions and components involved whereupon the sexual division of labor in the household became unequal and oppressive. There are several conclusions arising from this research which I have argued are important factors in making the household division of labor oppressive for women:

1. The fact that women continue to do and are expected to do the majority of the household labor and childcare. This is the case regardless of their extenuating circumstances, i.e., even if they work part-time.
2. The lack of adequate, modestly priced child-care facilities which would enable women of all classes to have increased freedom to pursue other interests in addition to childrearing and housework.

3. The concentration of women in low wage part-time jobs based on the idea that women's income is secondary interlocked with the accompanying familial ideology that women's first and most important duty is to her husband and children. Specifically, this same view has not applied to men because the most important duty for men is not the care of the family and children, but rather it is mainly to bring home a pay-check.

4. The isolation of women in nuclear families as opposed to living in stem family arrangements. Women in nuclear families were viewed as the sole person responsible for the care of the children and the household. Women living in stem family arrangements tended to receive help in the household from other family members and looked to these same family members for aid in caring for children and the aged.
In this research, it was found that the status of women as supplementary income earners and as household workers is justified by the idea that men's more demanding and better-paid work makes them the main economic support of the household. As Ueno (1994:33,34) has argued, the current economic situation in Japan is rendering this a weak argument in the face of a highly competitive job market. Full-time jobs with large companies are few and thus, men are suffering a decreasing ability to provide a family wage high enough for their wives to be full-time housewives. What may become more common in the future in Japanese society is a family structure providing a home, food, economic and emotional sustenance which is provided by both the husband and wife. More and more women are being forced to take up paid employment to ensure their own and their families economic viability. This is evidenced by the growing participation of married women in the labor force in Japan. This is occurring not just in urban areas. Wives who worked in farm areas in Hokkaido, such as Nemuro (as mentioned in Chapter 4) demanded that they, too, receive a salary.

Paradoxically, in Japan, while women are acknowledged to be skilled in household management and finances, these skills are not rewarded outside the home. As Papanek and Schwede (1988:91) have argued in the case of Indonesian women, outside the home women are neither adequately rewarded nor highly
renumerated for their special abilities and skills. On the contrary, they seem to be penalized for these skills by being occupationally segregated in low paying part-time jobs. In general, they are held in low esteem in the workplace with their opinions seldom adhered to or even recognized. Women’s skills and household authority did not transcend the household, but was limited to the confines of the household. Thus, the work that women do in the home and the work that they do outside the home for a paid-wage are mutually interlocked. In Japan’s advanced capitalist society, women’s position as wife and mother places conditions and limitations on their wage labor activities. Women must make difficult choices and sacrifices which men do not have to consider. This, then, is the specific result of the tyranny of a gendered household division of labor and not the content of the household labor in the family per se.

But, what actually was a housewife within this research? It was not only a person who does the cooking, cleaning and childcare, it was also a person who dispensed daily 24-hour emotional nurturance as well as psychological support. Yet, for many women it was a rewarding and empowering role. Many women sought and achieved empowerment through the family at the same time family relationships changed. They struggled as active agents in the continuing process of social change which is occurring in the family.
Also, we can ask the important question as to what were the specific regional variations that were discovered in this research pertaining to Hokkaido families with the results as follows:

1. Women in Hokkaido had the perception that they enjoyed a relatively freer lifestyle than women who lived in other areas of Japan, and this ideology permeated the interviews. This view was supported by the many surveys quoted throughout this dissertation. They showed that people who lived in Hokkaido had more liberal views (defined as regards the roles of women, i.e., women were not so locked in to narrowly defined visions of the ideal mother and wife) with respect to the family and women's role in the family.

2. The relationships between family members was less cohesive rendering the centripetal force in the ie weaker than in other areas of Japan. This was due, as argued in Chapter 2, to the lack of complex, cohesive familial, and inter-village hierarchies which did not develop in the Hokkaido region as they did in the traditional rice growing areas of Honshuu. This was especially true in the suburban area
of Hiroshima where the number of nuclear families (as compared to extended families) was quite high especially compared to all Japan.

3. The industrial base is weak in Hokkaido and Hokkaido occupies a relatively low economic position compared with the rest of Japan (as shown in Chapter 4). Most jobs are to be found in the service and sales sectors, and overall salaries in Hokkaido are lower (as stated in Chapter 1) than throughout the rest of Japan; therefore, higher poverty rates in this region has to some extent facilitated the weaker condition of the ie.

Differential access to monetary resources in the household is a critical area in understanding the positions of women in the family, especially since the ramifications of these differences resonate throughout women's lives. Traditionally in Japan, since women marry into their husband's house and leave their own natal family, most of the family resources were spent on the development of sons in order to secure the parents' own long-term security. Many respondents discussed these differences in allocation of resources quite bitterly as related in Chapters 4 and 5 with respect to education. Many women made the point that parents were
willing to send sons to 4 year universities, but if daughters did not receive the same high level of education it was acceptable because they would marry into another family. Even today, most women in Japan do not attend the prestigious 4 year national universities, but rather go to community colleges or women’s colleges. These schools have less prestige, and thus provide less opportunities for good career advancement. This pattern of restricting the schooling and education of daughters in order to advance the schooling of sons is not unusual as reported by Greenhalgh (1988:40) in Taiwan. Thus, there exists generational discrimination where mothers and fathers invest more household resources in sons while justifying their behavior in various ways as evidenced in many of the research interviews.

Differential access and control of resources continues to favor men in the home because even though women control and manage the household economy, the most valuable assets of the ie (the land and house) are legally owned almost exclusively by men. As stated throughout Chapters 4 and 5, even when women were aware that they should have had shared legal ownership of property with their husband, most were unable to bring about this result. Husbands were simply unwilling to share ownership with their wives. Some women dismissed this issue as not important because divorce rates are low in Japan. Yet, they were unable to answer the question of why, if it was
such an unimportant issue, their husband's almost unanimously insisted that the property be legally registered in their own name. More simply, if it was not an important issue for husbands, why not let the property and house be deeded to the wives? In this case, women collaborate in the obfuscation of the issue of who holds the legal power over the most valuable of the household monetary resources. Additionally, as stated in Chapter 4, the largest percentage (98%) of husband ownership of property occurred in the ideologically conservative suburbs of Hiroshima in a somewhat rare case of ideology and practice dovetailing neatly. Therefore, while women were accorded power and autonomy in the household setting, the limitations of this power and autonomy are clearly bounded by the household. This conclusion resonates with the situation of women in other areas of the world such as Korea, where women operated autonomously with their own sense of power and authority in the household, but not outside the household (Kim 1993).

Though women exercise power primarily in the household, the household can be seen as a dynamic site for resistance and change. What occurs inside Japanese families will affect Japanese society and the economy of Japan at the national and global level. This is the case because as women expect and demand more from their families and from their husbands in terms of participation in family functions and emotional
support, the ramifications for Japanese society and the economic system could be significant. To meet these family demands, younger generation husbands may be forced to reassess their primary commitment to their work outside the home in favor of a greater commitment in time and energy to their wife and family. Few of the younger women in this research were satisfied with the minimal family attention that some husbands provided and demanded more from them. Men, too, are beginning to question the type of work-centered lifestyle idealized by the well-known salariman which has been accepted as the norm in Japan. As Yamaguchi (1995:250,252) has argued, some men are demanding that they work only a 40 hour week with Saturdays and Sundays off.

In Tokyo men have been campaigning to revise the Child Care Leave Law, which went into affect in 1992, in order that employees can be paid during the time they take child care leave. Then, men, too, can take time off when children are born. While these men represent a small minority in Japan presently, these groups have consistently grown in numbers and their activities are receiving greater coverage by the mass media. Some men have realized that their lives were restricted and dominated by values and norms associated with gendered views of men and women. However, they have rejected these views in order to better fulfill their own sense of values and needs (Yamaguchi 1995:253). If men began spending
less time pursuing company goals and stopped placing the company before any other consideration, Japan's place in the world's economy could be affected at some point in the future.

Looking into the 21st century, a decline of some 2,100,000 workers is forecast for Japan between 2000 and 2010 (Shinotsuka 1994:95). Perhaps at that time, the government's policy affecting men and women and critical family concerns may become more concrete in addressing issues like child care leave and more adequate extended-hour day care centers in Japan. Additional future trends in the family in Japan and Hokkaido could be as follows:

1. As more married women are entering the wage labor market, and as women demand more from husbands with respect to family care and maintenance, the gendered division of labor in the household will begin to break-down. The work that women and men do will become more similar.

2. While Hokkaido already has a high percentage of nuclear families (63.5%) compared to the rest of Japan (59.5%), this trend will probably continue in Hokkaido. Stem family arrangements will become more rare as capitalism continues to expand in Japan. This will no doubt happen as urbanization continues
in Hokkaido with the pivotal center of Sapporo drawing more and more people in from the surrounding countryside. Areas like Hiroshima will continue to experience rapid population growth due to its convenient location close to the urban center of Sapporo.

3. Parents may be more willing to invest a greater percentage of monetary household resources in daughters, since Japan has become a more affluent society with a higher standard of living. Also, since families are having fewer children, household resources may be more freely spent in higher education for daughters. Additionally, since stem family arrangements are more scarce throughout Hokkaido, parents may feel that it is not necessarily as beneficial for their long term security to invest the most household monetary resources mainly in sons. This may be the case since these parents may not be living with their sons in the future.

These future trends contrast with the historical trends related to the overall status of women in Japan which has historically, but not exclusively, been affected by the following:
1. Lesser access to the monetary household resources generally in the form of legal ownership of household property and in inheritance, but especially in the form of education. This was true most notably in the cases of families with limited economic resources where daughters were deprived of higher education in favor of sons.

2. Familial ideology in the form of socialization into narrow roles of reproductive and emotionally nurturing behavior which were considered appropriate for women only. These roles involved sacrifices and limitations which affected women primarily.

These two issues affected women's lives in limiting their training and preparation for the wage labor market. They ensured the perpetuation of occupational segregation in low wage and part-time work, thus fueling the idea that women's income is supplementary. However, women's role in the family as sole household manager and main child care provider was maintained.

Another important facet of this research has been the attempt to use the voices of Japanese women, as well as many Japanese newspaper articles and indigenous Japanese scholarly works as possible. This has been done in order to better
represent the context, position and feelings of Japanese women within Japanese society. As Fujimura-Fanselow (1995:xi-xiv) has noted, for each Japanese article translated into English, the Japanese publish 35 to 40 titles from the United States and Europe. In 1990, the Japanese published an estimated 4,000 titles in translation with more than 3,000 of these from English. However, the United States only published 82 translated works from Japanese during this same time period. She argued that articles that appear in Japanese magazines, newspapers and in scholarly journals are usually not available in English translation. Thus, there is a significant gap in what the Japanese are writing about and concerned with at home and what the world reads about abroad. This research has attempted to close this gap by translating pertinent works by Japanese scholars and by Japanese newspapers and magazines in order to better balance this disparity.

One of the reasons household studies are so important in anthropology is that there are many changes that are now confronting Japanese society. These are, an increase in nuclear families, more working mothers, an rapidly aging society where the life expectancy for a Japanese woman is 82 years, an urgent need for better daycare facilities, and women demanding more from their husbands and from society in general. All of these issues will both challenge, modify and constrain the situation of Japanese households. In this
research, I have attempted to understand the position of women through an examination of intra-household relationships, the dynamics within and the historical context in which it is embedded. Additionally, I have attempted to convey the individual and personal life histories of the women interviewed in the region of Hokkaido. While I have portrayed these individual women as unique and different, I have also attempted to relate their experiences in ways that other women can readily identify with them. In other words, along with T. Lebra (1992:118), I agree that difference and sameness do not have to be mutually exclusive. A balance between treating women as individual, active entities within and outside of a household setting, as well as an integral part of a household, society and family has been sought. This has been done in order to critique household studies which have treated the family in an over-arching, homogeneous way as a undifferentiated unit. Furthermore, as Rosenberger has argued (1992:2,3), the concept of an individual who exists with a static core unaffected by the people and context which surrounds that individual is firmly rooted in Western ideology and perceptions. Women in Japan were deeply involved in family issues and concerns, and it is within this important arena that my research was conducted. Special care was given in presenting women's lives within a specific context with
analytical attention given to those issues which affect their position in the household and family.

It is from within the household and family that dramatic changes in Japanese society will arise. It is through studies in these areas that social scientists can better assess the kinds of changes and the effects of these changes in Japan. While women are both constrained and empowered through various scenarios within the family, women are also struggling as active agents in an ongoing process of social change in order to bring about greater equality and to empower themselves in the household.
Figure 1.1. Map of Japan from Vital Statistics of Japan 1992, Volume 2.
Figure 1.2. Map of Hokkaido showing the locations of Hiroshima, Shibetsu and Sapporo from the "Handbook of All Japan Cities, Villages and Towns."
This research questionnaire and request for an interview concerns the present-day household roles and consciousness of women in the family in Hokkaido, Japan.

Introduction

I hope you are doing well. I am a graduate student at the Ohio State University in the United States. In Hiroshima and Shibetsu in Hokkaido, I am collecting data for the purpose of writing my dissertation. I would like to know more about the ways of life of Japanese women. I am particularly interested in the division of labor in the household, the thinking of housewives, and how these relate to the structure of Japanese society, culture and economy. I hope that this research will contribute to the recognition and improvement of women's position in Japan as well as the promotion of friendship and mutual understanding between the United States and Japan. Please give me your cooperation. All the data I receive from you will be kept confidential, and I hope is not too bothersome for you.

The way to answer:

Though there are some questions which must be filled in with concrete figures and contents, the majority of questions can be answered using a circle to enclose the number that is most suitable for your response from the choices available. However, in the case of the questions with an asterisk, please
answer only the questions which apply to you. With respect to the free answer questions, please write frankly your opinion. In this research, I am also hoping to have an interview with you. I will be very pleased and happy if you cooperate with me. Thank you.

Section 1 - Please answer the following questions concerning you and your family.

1. What is your present age?
   (1) 29 and below; (2) 30 to 39 (3) 40 to 49
   (4) 50 to 59 (5) 60 to 69 (6) 70 and above

2. Are you married?
   (1) Presently married (2) Was married
   (3) Not married

3. Presently, do your parents and/or married children live with you?
   (1) They live with me (2) They do not live with me

4. What is the present size of your family?
   (1) one person (2) two people (3) three people
   (4) four to five people (5) six people or more

4b. What is the present composition of your family? (For example, your husband and one child would equal two people.) Please respond in the following blank in this manner.

5. Concerning your present family, within which time period did your family come to Hokkaido?
(1) In the first half of the Meiji Period
(2) In the latter half of the Meiji Period
(3) In the Taishoo Period
(4) In the Showa Period - after the Second World War
(5) 1970 or later
(6) Before the Meiji Period

5b. So, then, from where and in what form did your family come to Hokkaido? (For example, did your family come by way of your father being a farmer/colonial soldier?) Please respond in the blank space in this manner.

6. How many years have you lived in Hiroshima (or Shibetsu or Sapporo)? Please respond as appropriate in the blank space.

7. In the case that you answered Question #2 that you are presently married or were married, please respond to the following question. Referring to that marriage, was it an arranged marriage or a so-called "love marriage?"
   (1) arranged marriage (2) love marriage
   (3) I wouldn't say either

8. Referring to that same marriage, how old were your when you married? At that time, how old was your husband? Please answer in the blank space provided.

9. Among your brothers and sisters, what was your birth order? (For example, were you the oldest female child,
second oldest, etc.) What kind of work did your parents do? Please answer in the blank space provided.

10. Relating to the same marriage, after you married, what kind of work did you do?
   
   (1) I am presently working outside the home and have always done so.
   
   (2) I had a wage labor job for a while, but now I have quit.
   
   (3) I didn’t have a wage labor job for a long time, but I am presently working.
   
   (4) I have never had a wage labor job.
   
   (5) Another answer

11. Where was your birthplace?

   (1) Within the city
   
   (2) In the town or village outskirts or the surrounding area.
   
   (3) Outside the district (If you choose this answer, please write specifically where in the blank space provided.)

12. What is the last year of school from which you graduated?

   (1) Junior High School
   
   (2) High School
   
   (3) A two-year community college or specialized school
   
   (4) A four-year university
   
   (5) Another answer (If you choose #5, please explain.)
13. Presently, are you working outside the home? (Please include self-employment.)
   (1) Presently employed.
   (2) Have been employed in the past.
   (3) I didn’t work for a long time, but I am presently working.
   (4) I have never worked outside the home.
   (5) Another answer

14. In the case that you have answered that you are working outside the home, please answer the following question. What is the form of your work?
   (1) Full-time (2) Part-time (3) Self-employed

15. In the case that you have answered that you are working outside the home, please answer the following question. What kind of work do you do?
   (1) Work of a technical nature (like a technician or professional expert).
   (2) Business related work.
   (3) Service related work.
   (4) Work in a factory or in manufacturing as a skilled worker, craftsman or the like.
   (5) Some other kind of work. (If you chose this answer, please write in the blank space provided the exact nature of your work.)
16. Provided that you are working presently, please answer the following question. Approximately how much money do you make in one month?
(1) $3000 per month or above (2) $2900 to $2500
(3) $2400 to $2000 (4) $1900 to $1500
(5) $1400 to $1000 (6) $ 900 to $ 500

17. Provided that you answered that you are married in Question #2, please answer the following question. Is your husband presently working?
(1) Presently working (2) Not presently working
So, then, within what kind of industry is your husband employed?
(1) Forestry/Fishing
(2) Construction/Mining
(3) Manufacturing/Factory
(4) Utility service
(5) Transportation and/or Communication Industry
(6) Wholesale or Retail industry
(7) Finance or Insurance industry
(8) Service industry
(9) Teacher, public employee
(10) Other (please explain.)
18. Regarding your household’s total yearly income, which of the following responses generally apply before tax is taken out?

(1) $120,000 per year and above
(2) $120,000 to $100,000 per year
(3) $100,000 to $80,000 per year
(4) $80,000 to $60,000 per year
(5) $60,000 to $40,000 per year
(6) $30,000 to $20,000 per year
(7) $20,000 per year and below.

19. Which of the following applies to your place of residence?

(1) Own my own house or condominium.
(2) Rent a company apartment, a company home or a public employee home.
(3) Live in low rent public housing which is sponsored and managed directly by the prefectural government of Hokkaido.
(4) Live in middle income public housing which is sponsored by the prefectural government, but is administered by a private company.
(5) Rent an apartment or condominium from a private company.
(6) Other (Please explain.)
20. Based on your answer in question #19, regarding the house or condominium that you rent, in whose name is it leased?
(1) Husband and myself (2) Husband only
(3) Myself only (4) Other (Please explain.)

21. If you own your house or property, in whose name is it deeded?
(1) Husband and myself (2) Husband only
(3) Myself only (4) Other (Please explain.)

22. To which social class do you think you belong?
(1) Upper class (2) Middle class
(3) Lower class (4) I don’t know

Section 2 - Please answer the following questions regarding the household division of labor between you and your family members.

23. In your household, who chiefly manages the budget?
(1) Wife (2) Husband
(3) Husband and Wife (4) Other (Please explain.)

24. In the case of making a big purchase or a large expense, who makes the decision?
(1) Wife only (2) Husband only
(3) Husband and wife (4) All household members
(5) Other

25. Who chiefly partitions out the household work?
(1) Wife (2) Husband
(3) Husband and wife (4) Other
26. Please respond to the following questions regarding who does the following jobs in your household.

Who generally does the shopping?
(1) Wife  (2) Husband
(3) Husband and wife  (4) Other

27. Who generally prepares the meals?
(1) Wife  (2) Husband
(3) Husband and wife  (4) Other

28. Who generally does the house cleaning?
(1) Wife  (2) Husband
(3) Husband and wife  (4) Other

29. Who generally does the laundry?
(1) Wife  (2) Husband
(3) Husband and wife  (4) Other

30. Who generally takes out the trash?
(1) Wife  (2) Husband
(3) Husband and wife  (4) Other

31. Who generally does the gardening?
(1) Wife  (2) Husband
(3) Husband and wife  (4) Other

32. Who mainly handles neighborhood relations?
(1) Wife  (2) Husband
(3) Husband and wife  (4) Other
33. Who checks the children's homework?
   (1) Wife  (2) Husband
   (3) Husband and wife  (4) Other

34. Who mainly performs the childcare?
   (1) Wife  (2) Husband
   (3) Husband and wife  (4) Other

35. In the case that you live with or have lived with a disabled or aged, infirmed person, who chiefly cared for that person?
   (1) Wife  (2) Husband
   (3) Husband and wife  (4) Other

37. Does your husband or has your husband helped you out a lot with household work?
   (1) He helps me out a lot or has helped me out a lot.
   (2) He helps me out a little or has helped me out a little.
   (3) He doesn't really help me out very much and hasn't helped me out very much in the past.
   (4) He doesn't really help me out at all and hasn't helped me out at all in the past.

38. When your husband has some time off, does he help you with housework?
   (1) He helps me out a lot or has helped me out a lot.
   (2) He helps me out a little or has helped me out a little.
(3) He doesn’t really help me very much and hasn’t helped me much in the past.
(4) He doesn’t really help me at all and hasn’t helped me at all in the past.

39. Has your husband changed recently with respect to helping you with household work?
(1) He has changed to the point that he helps me out a lot.
(2) He has changed to the point where he helps me out a little.
(3) He really hasn’t changed very much.
(4) He hasn’t changed and doesn’t help me out at all.

40. Do your children or others help you out with housework or have they helped you out in the past?
(1) They give me a lot of help or did so in the past.
(2) They give me a little help or did so in the past.
(3) They don’t give me much help and did not do so in the past.
(4) They don’t help me at all and did not do so in the past.
(5) My children are still small, so I cannot answer.

41. Do you have your own personal savings with which you are free to do as you like?
(1) Yes
(2) No
42. About how much money can you freely use, without worry, each month?
   (1) About $500 or above  (2) $400 to $300
   (3) $200 to $100        (4) $100 or less
   (5) Nothing

43. In your household, do you have free time to use as you please?
   (1) Yes, a lot       (2) A little   (3) Almost none

44. Do you want more free time?
   (1) Yes             (2) What I have now is fine.
   (3) I don’t need free time.

45. Presently, do you have enjoyable hobbies?
   (1) Yes             (2) No          (3) I don’t want any.

46. Presently, do you have hobbies such as being a member of a circle group at the community center?
   (1) Yes             (2) I used to    (3) No

Section 3 - Please answer the following questions regarding your thinking about men and women.

47. In recent years, generally speaking, do you think that the status of women has advanced?
   (1) I think so.    (2) I don’t think so.
   (3) Generally, I wouldn’t say.
   (4) I don’t know.
48. In recent years, generally speaking, do you think that men have been more cooperative with women?
   (1) I think so.     (2) I don’t think so.
   (3) Generally, I wouldn’t say.
   (4) I don’t know.

49. In recent years, generally speaking, do you think that the way of thinking regarding men working at a wage labor job and women working in the home has changed?
   (1) I think so.     (2) I don’t think so.
   (3) Generally, I wouldn’t say.
   (4) I don’t know.

50. Do you think that men and women should work in the same way?
   (1) I don’t think so now, but I think so in the future.
   (2) I think so now and in the future.
   (3) I don’t think so now nor in the future.
   (4) I don’t know.

51. In the case of working full-time, do you think that, generally speaking in the household, that women should be responsible for preparing meals?
   (1) I think so.
   (2) I don’t think so.
   (3) I don’t know.
52. In the case of working full-time, do you think that, generally speaking in the household, that women should be responsible for doing the laundry and cleaning the house?
   (1) I think so.
   (2) I don’t think so.
   (3) I don’t know.

53. Do you think women, in general, should be the chief individuals who perform childcare?
   (1) I think so.
   (2) I don’t think so.
   (3) I don’t know.

54. Do you think women, in general, should be the chief persons responsible for the household labor?
   (1) I think so.
   (2) I don’t think so.
   (3) I don’t know.

55. Do you think women, in general, should be the chief person who has the responsibility for managing the household budget?
   (1) I think so.
   (2) I don’t think so.
   (3) I don’t know.
56. Do you think people should be taught about household labor from the time they are children?
   (1) I think so.
   (2) I don't think so.
   (3) I don't know.

57. Do you think that men should be taught about household labor?
   (1) I think so.
   (2) I don't think so.
   (3) I don't know.

58. Do you think that within the family that women should be the chief person to take care of very old, infirmed family members, if that case should arise?
   (1) I think so.
   (2) I don't think so.
   (3) I don't know.

59. Please choose one among the following which you think best describes your husband (if you have no husband, please answer with respect to your father).
   (1) Strong   (2) Weak   (3) Gentle   (4) Strict
   (5) Broad-minded   (6) Narrow-minded
   (7) Clever   (8) Not clever   (9) Serious
   (10) Not serious   (11) I can't decide
60. Please choose one among the following which you think best describes yourself.

(1) Strong (2) Weak (3) Gentle (4) Strict
(5) Broad-minded (6) Narrow-minded
(7) Clever (8) Not clever (9) Serious
(10) Not serious (11) I can't decide

61. Please choose one among the following which you think best describes your ideal man.

(1) a rich man (2) a handsome man
(3) a smart man (4) a strong man
(5) a gentle man (6) a serious man
(7) a man who is a skilled cook
(8) other

62. Please choose one among the following which you think best describes the ideal woman.

(1) a rich woman (2) a pretty woman
(3) a smart woman (4) a strong woman
(5) a gentle woman (6) a serious woman
(7) a woman who is a skilled cook
(8) other
63. Please choose one among the following which you think best describes your ideal husband.
(1) a rich husband  (2) a handsome husband
(3) a smart husband  (4) a strong husband
(5) a gentle husband  (6) a serious husband
(7) a husband who is a skilled cook
(8) other

64. Please choose one among the following which you think best describes the ideal wife.
(1) a rich wife  (2) a pretty wife
(3) a strong wife  (4) a smart wife
(5) a gentle wife  (6) a serious wife
(7) a wife who is a skilled cook
(8) other

65. Please choose one among the following which you think best describes a husband’s duty.
(1) To manage the household finances.
(2) To do the household work and childcare.
(3) To work outside the home at a wage labor job.
(4) Other (Please explain.)
66. Please choose one among the following which you think best describes a wife's duty.
   (1) To manage the household finances.
   (2) To do the household work and childcare.
   (3) To work outside the home at a wage labor job.
   (4) Other (Please explain.)

67. If you have another life, would it be better to be a man or a woman?
   (1) A woman  (2) A man
   (3) Either one is good.

Section 4 - Please answer freely with respect to the following questions.

68. Do you think that boys and girls should be raised the same? If not, why not?

69. In your own personal family history, concerning the issue of equality between men and women, have you experienced sexual discrimination?
   (1) Yes  (2) No
   In the case that you answered yes, in what way?

70. In your own personal history outside the family, with respect to the issue of equality between men and women have you experienced sexual discrimination?
   (1) Yes  (2) No
   In the case that you answered yes, in what way?
71. What is your thinking on the most important condition for a woman's independence?

With the exception of having money, what is your thinking on the most important condition for women's independence?

Is money absolutely necessary for women's independence?

72. If your husband died or if you became divorced, when you think about remarriage, what would be your first concern or your first consideration.
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"Hataraki tuushi, wari ni awanu jinsei ka." (In human life, we continue to work without rest in one's whole life but the output is small?) February 28.

"Mago wa haha no yoro na jinsei iya." A grandchild said, "I would dislike the life of my mother." March 1.

"Heru shuusei ritsu nezuyoi kaku itsu sei." (Decreasing birth rate and deep-rooted stereotypical thinking are factors in small families.) March 2.

"Kodomo wa ima ya 'zeitaku hin' ka." (Are children a luxury item now?) March 3.

"Tekitoo na kyori tamotsu oyako." (The new trend is that a suitable distance between parent and child has increased.) March 4.

"Shufuuuzoo ga jidai o kawari." (As eras change, so do the stereotypes of housewives.) March 5.
"Ko o nagutta. Hahaoyagyoo mukanu." (I beat my child, so I am not suitable to be a mother.) March 9.

"Kawaru-nu Risoo ga umu kekkon nan." (The ideology of marriage is not changing.) March 15.

"Taito no hazu ga nagurare tsutuketa." (I expected equality but my husband continued to beat me.) March 17.

"Kensoo sutete onnatachi ga sasae auro." (Women throw away illusions and support each other.) March 18.

"Kosodate ga otokotachi o sodateru." (Men are raising children and so better understand women.) March 19.

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