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side of the river' that had constituted 'a sacred place in her mind', and the remainder of the story describes her disillusionment with 'the other side', an allegory likening the impoverishment of life after marriage to that of the mind after marriage.

This shifting emphasis in time-frames during the female life was reflected in the widespread admission within and outside of China that women after marriage so often lost interest in the revolution or gave revolutionary activities less time and attention. It was as if peasant daughters of the revolution outgrew the revolution and moved on much as daughters did of their natal families. Thus women's experience of the separation of the present from the future rather than sequential movement from one to the other contrasted with the continuity, certainty and commitment envisaged by males via the concept of heaven. And it was this contrast that may have transformed women into ambivalent strangers less inclined to believe in or *will* a better future. This nearness and concern for the common future was also mediated by a detachment generated by their unique experience of the future, which made them feel less of a commitment 'to these important things of men's affairs'. Although daughters may have most immediately felt both remoteness and nearness in their families of birth and marriage in spatial terms as a result of their physical movement, it may have been their conceptualization of time that became a more significant gender-specific marker in the long term, differentiating female from male experiences and images of the revolution.

Living the revolutionary rhetoric, characterized by a substitution of rhetoric for female experience, by a discrepancy between representation and experience and by an inherently flawed rhetoric, may have contributed to a many-layered rhetorical defeat. Despite enormous efforts by the revolutionary government in China to introduce a new rhetoric of female equality and to establish new androgynous categories reducing gender difference and hierarchy between comrades, revolutionary successors and workers (perhaps unmatched by any other government), the very experience of women estranged them from the rhetoric and reduced its efficacy in reaching its desired ends. If the revolutionary period could be said to be marked by a discrepancy between (albeit flawed) revolutionary rhetoric and female living, it was only during the more recent reform period that events were to detonate the rhetoric itself in favour of experience and focusing on living.

PART III

Not the Moon

Gendered Difference and Reflection: Women of Reform

What then is the image of modern woman?' *Women of China*, 1984
Difficult or Not, to be a Woman?' *Women of China*, 1992.(1)

With the onset of Reform in the late 1970s, a single nation-wide image of women in blue receded to be replaced by a plurality of female images in the China of the 1980s and 1990s. In the first decade of reform visitors to China were frequently surprised by the variety of colour, style and fabric, the array of jewellery, cosmetics and hairstyles and the interest in fashion that contributed to the emergence not only of the 'young and modern miss' but also of the 'smarter older woman' and not only in the cities. Nowadays any crowded shopping street reveals the availability of a wide range of goods to fashion the female body and furnish the home, both increasing evidence of mass consumption and individual consumer choice. In shops and on market stalls, a plethora of popular magazines are devoted to fashion, beauty and life-style; above, the billboard images are overwhelmingly female portraying wide-eyed and smiling women not as producers but as retailers or customers in the company of washing machine, cooking pot, watch, television and toothpaste or cosmetics. Alongside, on billboards advocating family planning, attractive baby girls are shown cherished between parents and smiling as befits the desired single child. The poster presence of females of all ages in the absence of their male peers is important, intentional and of rhetorical significance.

In the first instance, the new era of Reform, as of Revolution, was greeted as a new age 'creating unprecedented opportunities for women to explore their potential'. It is by now well known that the overall aim of the Reforms of the past fifteen years has been to transform China rapidly into a powerful and modern nation-state by reforming and

developing all sectors of the economy, altering the balance between plan and market, production and consumption and public and private forms of resource allocation. To this end, policy programmes have emphasized the importance of education, professionalism, skills, scientific and technical knowledge, profitability, the operation of economic incentives and the demands and interests of the consumer. In formulating and implementing the reforms, the government also frequently refers to women as 'half of heaven' or 'one of two hands' again deeming them as necessary to the success of reform and of revolution. Policy statements not only commonly began with the injunction that reform and development would only succeed if women participated, but also that women needed the opportunities provided by the new reforms in order to become truly equal. If such injunctions continued to sound familiar, there was also a marked and contrasting characteristic of Reform distinguishing it from Revolution and that was the gradual and increasingly open acknowledgement that the rhetoric of equality did not match with female experience of inequality either in the past during revolutionary years or now in reform.

This discrepancy between rhetoric and experience was retrospectively seen to be a major characteristic of the Revolution. In a personal interview reported in Honig and Hershatter, a teacher could ask but a few years into Reform, what the point had been of teaching ideals that were totally divorced from female experience during the Revolution?

> We were taught that women and men were equal, that women could do what men could do. And then it took the entire Cultural Revolution, and almost ten more years after that, to realize that reality was totally different. What was the point of teaching us ideals which had no relation to reality?[2]

At about the same time a poem entitled 'Four Questions' published in 1983 in the *Renmin Ribao* (People's Daily) cartoon supplement repeatedly juxtaposed the differing qualities of the rhetoric and experience:

> Times have changed,
> Men and Women are equal.
> Then why, in a certain production brigade,
> Are men and women not treated equally?
> They get different pay for the same work.
> So men and women are different.
>
> Times have changed,
> Men and women are equal.
> Then why in a certain factory
> That is recruiting workers are they not treated equally?
> If a man is hired the terms are flexible,
> If a woman is hired the terms are strict.
>
> Times have changed,
> Men and women are equal.
> Then why in a certain family
> Do they respect boys and look down on girls?
> If a baby boy is born the mother is happy,
> If a baby girl is born she does not like it.
>
> Times have changed,
> Men and women are equal.
> Then why is it that when a certain school
> Admits students they are not treated equally?
> To admit women they look at the score,
> To admit men the score can go down.
>
> Times have changed,
> Men and women are equal.
> It is natural to have both men and women.
> The old feudal thinking
> Must be eliminated to the core!'[3]

Again in interviews, a number of women have spoken of the alienation that many Chinese women had begun to feel as a result of the rift between the government's official policy of equality and 'the day-to-day reality'.[4] During the first years of reform, 'day-to-day reality' was increasingly and openly characterized by discriminatory actions against women, and state policies too were marked by an increasing and open acknowledgement of all forms of female discrimination. This more explicit acknowledgement of discrimination in both female experience and policy was a direct result of the greater incidence of female infanticide, which was almost single-handedly responsible for detonating the rhetoric of equality.[5]

Female infanticide

The billboard image of the cherished girl infant was increasingly at odds with the experience of many daughters, for a recurring trend in the Reform era has been continuing daughter discrimination and death, due not so much to the economic reforms, although these have strengthened the household as the most important units of production and consumption, as to the one-child family policy which, introduced in 1978–79, was to reinforce anew the age-old secondary status of daughters. With the introduction of the one-child family policy, the sex

of the single child became a very important question: 'the question of having boys or girls is a common social problem that at present faces most families.'[6] In 1981 a survey from Hebei province had revealed that 95 per cent of the population wanted two or more children of which one at least was to be a boy, and if only one child was to be permitted then a mere 2.2 per cent wanted a daughter.[7] Surveys and my own interviews in Beijing in 1983 revealed that parents of single daughters were more reluctant to support the policy, took longer to sign the single-child family certificate and constituted a majority of the couples defying the policy and proceeding with out-of-plan births.[8] In rural areas, this son preference was so marked that there were reports of female infanticide. The practice was not uncommon before 1949 and since that time there had been occasional reports in the media of female infanticide, and the figures obtained from some localities on the sex ratios at birth or in the first year after birth had produced some puzzling results.

However, the first serious suggestion that female infanticide might be a factor to be reckoned with came in a research report on population forecasts based on detailed data gathered in 1978 from three counties in Zhejiang province, which suggested that the lower proportion of females born in 1978 should attract attention since this reflected the 'recurrence in recent years in some places of abandoning and killing infants, for the most part girls'.[9] In 1980 it was noticeable that the new Marriage Law continued to incorporate prohibitions against infanticide even though reference to other traditional practices that were thought to be no longer relevant had been dropped. By 1981 however, it came as something of a surprise to most observers within and outside of China when female infanticide became the subject of emotive headlines in the Chinese press.

At the end of 1981, the national youth newspaper ran the headlines 'Save Our Baby Girls' because it deemed it necessary to draw attention to the numbers of baby girls abandoned and the sharp increase in female infanticide which had occurred in China in the 1980s.[10] Once reports in the media indicated that the first years of the new decade had been marked by a sharp increase in female infanticide, the government charged the Women's Federation with ascertaining the scale of the problem of female infanticide throughout China. It initiated a nation-wide survey designed to investigate and document cases of female infanticide and other forms of discrimination against female infants and their mothers. In inland Anhui province, where the history of infanticide had given rise to large numbers of unmarried men over the age of 40 years, there was now reported to be a disproportionate number of newborn and young female infants who had died in the last few years. In some areas the ratio of female to male infants had dropped

to a low 1:5, in one production team more than forty baby girls had been drowned in 1980 and 1981, and in another brigade, of the eight babies born in the first quarter of 1982, the three boys survived, three girls were drowned and a further two had been abandoned. Further comparisons with nearby villages had revealed that these patterns were not unique. In one of the counties, the percentage of male over female infants had risen from 3.2 to 5.8 per cent within one year, so that in 1980 the percentage of males born was 53 per cent compared to 46 per cent male. In another county, the problem was shown to be yet more serious, for the percentage of males born had risen from 112.6 to 116.4 per cent between 1980 and 1981 so that in 1981 the percentage of males born was 58.2 per cent compared to 41.8 per cent female.

The national newspaper *Renmin Ribao* (People's Daily) published these results of the Women's Federation survey and drew attention to them in order to emphasize that the intolerable behaviour of drowning and forsaking baby girls 'is still rampant in some rural areas' and 'a major problem worthy of serious attention'.[11] There were also reports in the media from Henan, Hebei and Hunan provinces, where maltreatment and deaths of female infants occurred on a fairly large scale. In these inland provinces, the sex ratios of the newly born children showed a higher proportion of males, frequently as high as 111 or 113 to every 100 females. These figures above the national average of 108.5:100 estimated by the State Statistical Bureau in 1981 did seem to suggest a degree of female infanticide, female neglect or at least under-registration of female infants.[12] The system of registration did not itself take account of babies dying within three days of birth, and in cases of acute disappointment, the registration of a baby girl did signify that the parents were relenting and accepting the child. However, most demographers within and outside of China agree that any tendency to under-register female infants could only exaggerate and certainly not alone account for the higher ratio of males to females among the new-born in some regions.

The nation-wide survey conducted by the Women's Federation not only suggested that female infanticide was an increasing problem, but also suggested that there was a whole range of less tangible, but nonetheless serious, forms of prejudice and discrimination against female infants which could not be quantified. For instance, the results of their surveys in two rural communes on the outskirts of Beijing revealed that, while there had been no cases of female infanticide or untoward maternal deaths, a strong preference for sons still existed and was sometimes explicitly or symbolically reflected in patterns of behaviour surrounding the birth of the first child. The birth of a son might be the occasion of much rejoicing by parents and their kin, with the mother enjoying special foods and the son the focus of joyful celebrations and chat.

In contrast, there had been occasions in these communes where

disappointed relatives had precipitately left the hospital on hearing that the new-born infant was a girl so that there were no celebrations and no special food. Grandparents were particularly likely to show their disappointment and there had been instances in one commune where the grandmother had taken a little time to be reconciled sufficiently to order milk for her baby granddaughter and special food for the mother. In another suburban commune, the worst case of prejudice against the mother of a baby girl uncovered by the Federation during its recent investigation concerned a typist in the commune office. While she had been pregnant, a fortune-teller had predicted the baby would be a boy and expectations surrounding the birth were high. Once a girl was born however, relations between the mother and the disappointed mother-in-law, who felt extremely let down, rapidly deteriorated.[13]

In the circumstances of the single-child family policy, the birth of a daughter could give rise to open tension within a family by setting husband against wife and mother-in-law against daughter-in-law. Such cases were not confined to the countryside, but also were reported to exist among city workers and cadres' families. In the delivery room in a large city hospital in the north-east of China, there were instances where parents refused to accept that they had given birth to a daughter, so convinced were they that the hospital had made a mistake; where husbands were said to have fainted with worry prior to the birth, so anxious were they about the sex of their first born; where voluntary abortions took place on the mistaken advice of the fortune-teller that the expected baby was a girl; and where mothers were verbally abused on the birth of their daughters. At another hospital, the degree of post-partum complications was found to be significantly higher among mothers of daughters and this was attributed to their fall in spirits immediately after birth.[14]

Following on from investigation into infant female discrimination and death, the Women's Federation embarked on an intensive campaign to persuade the population that it was as good to have a girl as a boy. This was probably the most extensive campaign in China's history to upgrade the value of daughters, as there has been little previous or sustained attention given to investigating and redefining attitudes towards daughters. In the early 1980s, women's organizations published a number of pamphlets designed to show that girls were the equal of boys and daughters as valuable as sons and that it was demeaning to women of all ages to discriminate against female infants. In one important pamphlet, entitled 'It's as Good to have a Girl as a Boy', the Beijing Women's Federation explained that it was the current wave of violence against female infants and mothers of female daughters that had made it necessary for them to publish such a pamphlet:

> The question of how to regard having a boy or a girl is an important part of socialist morality and not to be ignored. These materials on the sameness of boys and girls and on protecting women and female infants should be widely studied to promote feudal education and to teach people about the legal system. They set out to convince people that boys and girls are equal and that we should oppose actions which harm women and which lead to loss of life.[15]

In many regions the Women's Federation had also found there to be an absence of knowledge of the law so that infanticide was not necessarily conceived of as a criminal offence. To counter such ignorance the Women's Federation initiated an educational campaign to convince families that females did not determine the sex of a child and that daughters could participate in economic and political activities on a basis equal to sons, to the advantage both of themselves and of their households. If daughters were seen to care for their parents more attentively and satisfactorily than sons, and if sons-in-law could be persuaded to marry into their wives' households, then daughters could also remain as permanent members of their parents' households and their value henceforth be equally recognized. Although it was recognized long ago that virilocal marriage caused girls to be conceived of as poor forms of long-term investment, the government has sometimes suggested in the past that the recruitment of the groom to the bride's household in a form of uxorilocal marriage might be one means of promoting the equality of daughters. It did so again, but in the circumstances of the single-child family, it is much less likely that peasant parents of single daughters will voluntarily give up their only son.

The booklets and pamphlets published in the early 1980s were full of stories in which grandparents were won round first to accept and then to welcome their granddaughters, in which disappointed parents accepted their daughters and reluctant husbands eventually supported wives who were mothers of new-born daughters against the opposition of other members of the family. Posters in the streets on the commune and factory walls advocating the one-child family almost all uniformly depicted infant girls as the single child alongside her smiling mother or parents. Cartoons illustrated the long-range problems that would result if daughters were devalued and infanticide occurred. In one, ten fond mothers watched proudly as ten sons play; years later, ten fond mothers were seen searching far and wide for ten daughters-in-law. Much of this literature and the visual materials was also aimed at women, who were not only the victims but also themselves frequently colluded in the violence against infant girls. As the Beijing Women's Federation emphasizes in the introduction to its booklet, 'It's as good to have a girl as a boy':

> We also hope that young women who give birth to girls will not feel a loss of self-esteem, will value their own rights and life, will rely on various organisations and will struggle resolutely against backward, ignorant ideas, and stand up for their own rights.[16]

Although much publicity has been given to the neglect, abuse and death of infant daughters and their mothers, the scale of such practices may never be fully known. It is my own view that while the disappointment and the lesser expression of this disappointment at the birth of a daughter was certainly widespread, female infanticide was most likely to occur in families where the birth of a daughter marked the end of the family line and in poorer inland regions of China where there was a tradition of infancticide, so that it was consequently scarcely thought of as a crime. Although it has been argued by some that female infanticide might still have been practised during the years of revolution, there is no doubt that the attention it received in the media and from the state in the early 1980s suggested that there had been a marked increase in violence against daughters. As with so many practices in China, it is difficult to ascertain the scale of their incidence, but in the case of female infanticide, as important as ascertaining the extent of its practice is the recognition of its importance as a watershed redefining the relationship between the rhetoric of equality and female experience. As several mortified and perplexed mothers of daughters from Anhui province wrote to a national newspaper in March 1983: 'We simply cannot understand why thirty-two years after China's liberation, we women are still weighted down by such backward feudal concepts ... We long for a second liberation.'[17]

Indeed, if parents were at all prepared to forfeit the lives of their daughters in favour of sons, nobody could pretend that the rhetoric of equality accurately reflected the experience of women. There is no doubt also that it was the incidence of the visible and more extreme forms of violence against daughters that led to new investigations into the experience of women and a new interest in all forms of discrimination against women. As one of the vice-presidents of the Women's Federation explained in an unusually strong-worded statement in September 1983, it conceived of infanticide and violence as 'only the visible manifestation of the invisible patriarchal partiality that persists in spite of all the rules and laws written since liberation incorporating political and economic equality'.[18] Ironically, it was the visible and extreme forms of violence that led to more open recognition of the degree of discrimination suffered by women that had not been possible to acknowledge when discrimination against women was largely and officially disguised by the prevailing rhetoric of equality.

It is no accident then that in the early years of reform and of

disillusionment with rhetoric, women's experience of sexual discrimination in education, employment and politics received more attention than at any time during the entire revolution. This is not just because of the legacy of the revolution that had left the experience of women lagging behind the rhetoric of equality, but because many of the new reforms themselves led to further discrimination against women and exacerbated their secondary position. As the gap between the rhetoric of equality and experience of inequality widened and was increasingly acknowledged, there was a shift in the focus of attention from rhetoric and images of equality to experience and problems of discrimination. A number of bodies including the Women's Federation, social scientists at the Academy of Social Sciences and other groups of women scholars all became newly interested in understanding the multi-faceted dimensions of women's lives based on investigation of their experiences. The validation of women's experience as a topic for research and field investigation was brought about by the revival of sociology and anthropology as academic disciplines. Using their own distinctive techniques of field research, social scientists set out to investigate lives as opposed to rhetoric in a variety of social settings and in relation to a number of social problems, many of which drew attention to the special difficulties experienced by women during the early years of reform. Their discussions and research particularly focused attention on the split between the rhetoric of equality and women's working lives.

Urban working lives

One of the main characteristics of revolutionary rhetoric was the practical and symbolic importance attached to work, especially for women, for whom it also provided a measure of emancipation, liberation or equality. During the revolution women had expanded their economic roles in society with the result that almost all women between the ages of 16 and 60 years were economically active in some form of employment. As in any other society, the measures of women's participation in production very much depended on what definitions of work, employment and production were utilized, but even allowing for the usual factors that lead to the undercounting or underestimation of female labour in agriculture and informal sectors, it was estimated that on the eve of reform, the economic activity rate of women in China was higher than in any other Asian society. In China several years into reform it was estimated that women made up almost 40 per cent of the total labour force and that the female participation rate was rising[19] (see Table 1). In 1987, national statistics suggested that women continued to constitute a significant portion of the measurable work force in most sectors, making up 40 per cent of those employed in commerce, industry,

Table 1 Employment of women in 1982 and 1990 (in 10,000)

	1982	1990	No. increased	Rate of increase (%)
No. of employed women	22,784	29,101	6,317	28
Professional/technical	1,012	1,556	544	54
Department/ Organisation Leaders	84	130	46	55
Clerical	166	289	123	74
Commerce	432	909	477	110
Service	551	801	250	45
Farming	17,566	21,901	4,335	19
Factory	2,953	3,501	548	19
Other	20	14	-6	-30

Source: The Report of the People's Republic of China on the Implementation of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, Beijing, China, 1994.

the public service, the professions and in education[20] (see Table 2). By 1990 in the fields of health care, sports and social welfare, the proportion of female employees surpassed 50 per cent and in public utilities and commerce, the proportion had risen to more than 45 per cent. Although the opportunities for women in employment seem to have expanded and become more various during the reform years,[21] the nature and conditions of that employment had undergone substantial changes and not all to women's benefit.

Work could no longer be represented rhetorically as an androgynous activity overlapping male and female categories of worker and conditions of work, for the openly acknowledged degree of discrimination against female workers drew attention to the increasingly differentiated experience of male and female workers that was undermining notions of sameness and equality characteristic of the androgynous worker in revolutionary rhetoric. Although revolutionary rhetoric had long negated the sexual division of labour in which working women had predominated in the lesser skilled, the lighter though not necessarily less physically demanding jobs and the least specialized, mechanized and well-paid sectors of the Chinese economy, it was not until the reform period that practices of discrimination penalizing women workers reached such proportions that their experience of discrimination eroded the rhetoric itself. This erosion largely came about as the result of enterprise reform in which state, co-operative and private enterprises assumed primary responsibility for the recruitment and organization of

Table 2 Female employment by occupation 1992

Form of employment	Total	Female	% Female
All occupations	147,919501	55,855797	38
Farming, forestry, fishing	8,179148	2,906107	36
Industry, mining	66,214336	27,413712	41
Geological	1,000865	243,903	24
Construction	10,359421	2,087009	20
Transportation, communications	8,188727	2,027527	25
Commerce	19,463842	8,735789	45
Housing, public services	4,397427	1,993673	45
Health, welfare	4,209342	2,268890	54
Education, culture	12,129680	4,648748	39
Scientific, technical	1,592200	547,423	34
Finance, insurance	2,229375	830,945	37
Party, government	9,961138	2,152073	22

Source: The Report of the People's Republic of China on the Implementation of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, Beijing, China, 1994.

their labour force alongside the procurement of their own resources and markets. They became accountable for their own profits and losses with new controls over the disposal of profits which, while permitting the enterprises more autonomy, also made enterprises more vulnerable to market forces. This vulnerability disadvantaged the female labour force in a number of important respects.

The most serious problem to emerge in the past ten years has been the reluctance of employers in the state sector to recruit and retain women workers. In cities and towns, new and greater discriminatory practices derive directly from the contraction of the state sector employment and the costs of employing working women. There has been a decline in the privileged state sector of employment in which workers earn higher wages, have more fringe benefits including health insurance and greater opportunities to acquire training in new skills. In 1987 it was estimated that women constituted a third of the labour force in state-owned enterprises, and in light industries, the textiles and food processing up to 90 per cent of the workforce may be women.[22] The proportion of the female labour force employed in state sector enterprises has declined largely because of the contractions in the state labour force and the introduction of contract work. Recent reports and surveys suggest that enterprises may either directly refuse to accept women assigned to the enterprise or unit or individually refuse them by

artificially raising entry requirements for women recruits. In a survey conducted by the All-China Federation of Trade Unions of 660 factories with 15,000 workers, only 5.3 per cent of the employers indicated that they were willing to have women in positions that could be filled by men or women; of the 89 textile mills surveyed, 75 per cent said they preferred to hire males; and in the 66 financial enterprises and 77 commercial enterprises women recruits were required to gain 12 to 13 points more in the entrance tests.[23] These practices appeared to affect women graduates in particular, a high proportion of whom continue to have great difficulty in finding employment. Of those awaiting employment in 1986, an estimated 61.5 per cent were women and in 1992, 70 per cent of the young people awaiting employment in urban areas were women.[24] As you might expect, given the difficulties in defining and counting the unemployed, there is some variation in these estimates. More recently the Women's Federation has suggested that the proportion of women among unemployed youth is slightly lower at 57 per cent.[25]

Women employees have been the first to have their employment contracted or terminated in enterprises engaged in some reorganization or streamlining of staff. Surveys by the Women's Research Centre and the China Managerial Science Academy in 34 enterprises in eight provinces confirmed that the percentage of women who have been made redundant has been higher than their proportion in the workforce. It is estimated that 70 per cent of all workers losing their employment as a result of job rationalization are women and it is anticipated by some that of the 20 million workers who will lose their jobs, as many as 15 million will be women.[26] There is also the problem of underemployment for women workers in the 2 to 3 million factories and enterprises not in full production; women have usually been the first to be laid off, either part-time or temporarily by urban enterprises contracting their labour force either due to efficiency measures and restructuring or economic strictures.

Married women workers, older women and women with young children are particularly at risk from dismissal. Although all the evidence suggests that women preferred a maximum of six months paid maternity-leave in the interests of retaining their income, skills and promotion prospects, there have been reports recently of enterprises encouraging women to take a long, sometimes up to seven years, maternity-leave at 50 to 75 per cent of the pay in order to save on the costs of benefits and providing nursing and child-care services.[27] Some enterprises have provided home-based work to offset the cost of providing nurseries and other services for mothers of young children. Women workers are now also encouraged to retire earlier, in some cases up to 20 years less than the official retirement age for women or

at the age of 40 years. There is also some evidence to suggest that a disproportionate number of older women workers in state factories aged between 40 and 45 years may be at greater risk from the termination of their contracts at a younger age than male workers. A survey of more than 400 enterprises in Shanghai in 1989 showed that 6 per cent of women workers (of whom 80 per cent were between 24 and 40 years) were forced to stay at home either because the enterprises had all the workers it needed or did not have enough work for its labour force. One factory had a policy that when there is not enough work to do, women over 45 had to go home.[28] Nationally, a survey of 660 enterprises showed that only 5.3 per cent of directors wanted to take on women workers,[29] and in Shanghai a survey of more than 100 large and medium-sized enterprises showed that 92 per cent of the directors preferred to dismiss female workers because there were more of them than male workers. The directors said that if the decision was up to them they would discharge one fifth of their women workers and in contemporary China it is the directors who are increasingly likely to make such decisions.[30]

One of the main reasons why women are discriminated against is the high costs of providing for maternity leave, child care and other related benefits. The importance of these was reiterated in new special regulations for the protection of labouring women issued in 1988 updating those first issued in 1950[31] (see Appendix 1). The costs of pregnancy, childbirth and breast-feeding were estimated in one survey to cost an enterprise more than Y1,259 per worker; another survey showed that a male worker could earn Y10,600 more than his female counterpart who was pregnant and involved in childbearing and caring over the same two-year period.[32] There was also the cost of providing nurseries and other services. Since the reforms, these costs have to be borne by the enterprise, and they are reluctant to accept the higher costs and lower profits involved in employing female workers. Several measures are under consideration to solve these problems. There has been some considerable effort to persuade the population that reproduction has a social value and that its costs should therefore be borne by society and not just by the individual work units. Experiments have been conducted in cities whereby each worker contributes for example Y20 per year to a city-wide fund for meeting such costs; these have been successful and are expected to be more widely emulated in the future. The Trade Union movements would like to see a nationwide tax levied for this purpose, but they also acknowledge that to organize such a nation-wide solution in the absence of full-scale national social security reform has its difficulties. At the present time, such measures have not yet succeeded in stemming the discrimination against employing women in the state sector. In contrast, women are predominantly employed in

the plethora of new private and smaller enterprises that are less likely to protect their labour or safeguard their maternal benefits.

In cities and towns women predominate in the services, the textile, the food-processing and other light industries and perform the least mechanized, the more repetitive and lower-paid jobs. From the mid-1950s the collective sector of the urban economy consisted mainly of small street or neighbourhood factories with a subsidiary and secondary place to the state sector that was reflected in the lower levels of wages, fewer fringe benefits and the absence of political and social status associated with employment in the state sector. Due to the informal origins of most of these enterprises, the labour processes and types of products, women formed a very high proportion of the workforce of this sector. The reforms have expanded the number of collectively and privately-owned small street, neighbourhood and individually operated enterprises many times over. Many of the enterprises already established have been expanded and managed by new owners, and many new enterprises have been established by units, families or individuals and run by company managers, groups of workers or household heads.

The current expansion of textiles, high technology, handicrafts, light and service industries ensures that a high proportion of new workers recruited into such enterprises are women and not just in cities and towns but also in smaller townships and larger villages. In November 1988 it was reported that 35 million women were employed in the fast-developing township and village enterprises and made up 41.2 per cent of the 80 million or so workers in these industries.[33] In these enterprises, especially the smaller enterprises operating with low profit margins in a competitive market, there are frequent complaints that there is no concept of a minimum wage in China or laws preventing arbitrary increases in working hours, summary punishment or dismissal of workers and that the supervision of existing labour protection regulations is lax.[34] Where the labour process is fast, fragmented and repetitive, with payment calculated according to piece-work, there is evidence to suggest that women work for longer lower-paid hours, conditions of work are cramped and there are few provisions for the implementation of new and improved labour-protection regulations. In 1989 a national survey found that about half of the country's enterprises and units investigated did not implement the women's labour-protection laws and regulations effectively. More than 44 per cent of the surveyed factories did not reduce the heavy work of pregnant women or take them off night-shift. Although in 90 per cent of the factories, women received their full wages during maternity leave, their bonuses and other benefits were not guaranteed, leading to a decrease in income by one third.[35]

Women have also constituted a high proportion of the new casual

labour force, much of it migrant, contracted to produce electronics, textiles, clothing and automobile components and other light industrial goods primarily, but not only, for the export market. These factories may be financed by foreign investment, make use of imported raw materials and assemble foreign parts, but the labour is Chinese and a high proportion of that 'sweated' labour force are women. Various estimates from informal sources suggest that up to 80 per cent of the labour force in the foreign or joint foreign–Chinese enterprises is made up of young single women whose health and safety may be jeopardized. Those thought to be particularly at risk include young women who are migrant workers from the rural areas in small manufacturing enterprises, many of which are funded from Hong Kong or Taiwan where workers are likely to be forced to work overtime, sometimes between 12 and 16 hours daily, and on piece-work payment. After surveying 914 foreign-funded enterprises, the all-China Federation of Trade Unions released a report in summer 1994 on the 'appalling working conditions' that women suffer despite their 'increasingly vital role in foreign-funded enterprises'. The survey found that women were hired and fired at will, had no legal contracts, did not receive equal pay and that many enterprises paid no attention to labour-protection regulations safeguarding women's health or safety. In view of the harassment of female workers, the report recommended that women, without channels to voice their complaints, should form women workers organizations which were 'badly needed to safeguard their rights and interests'.[36] Recently during a visit to Beijing, I heard of a meeting of women's provincial representatives at the national Women's Federation to discuss the recent spate of factory fires in which numbers of women had lost their lives.

After an interval of nearly thirty years, urban residents in the past decade have again been permitted to set up their own individual or family-based enterprises to make available a wide range of small goods, foods and services to urban inhabitants. Many of these individual- or family-based enterprises are managed and operated by women who take advantage of neighbourhood employment, flexibility of working hours and some individual control over the labour process. According to the Chinese Individual Women Workers' Association, the number of individual traders with licences has reached 21 million from 13 million households, and 5 million of these are women mostly with licences for hairdressing, sewing, commerce, handicrafts and household services.[37] There is no government department charged with the supervision of the employment of labour in privately-owned enterprises. Although home-based work has been a permanent feature of some rural villages, it is a newer phenomenon in the cities, where now many women may expect to work at home rather than in factories or enterprises as a result of expansion in the putting-out or contracting out of work to

women in their own homes. For those outside of established units of employment, that is those in small-scale neighbourhood, household or individual enterprises where the labour process is unregulated and unsupervised, the insecurity and isolation must be deemed considerable in an urban economy where the status of the unit of employment is still an important source of benefits and social security. There is some evidence that female entrepreneurs or heads of individual enterprises may have difficulty in gaining access to raw materials, credit, technology and markets. Recently a spokesperson from the newly-formed Female Entrepreneurs' Association stated that its members received little support in their economic activities.[38] At the same time as some of the most successful urban individual enterprises are managed by women often earning tens of thousands of yuan per year, female workers in family-based urban enterprises may become de facto employees of the male head of the household with all the attendant disadvantages deriving from the structure of familial authority reproduced in production.

Rural working lives

In the rural areas of China, where around 70 to 80 per cent of the female population lives, agriculture is still the main source of employment for women (see Table 3), although the proportion of women exclusively or predominantly engaged in field cultivation is declining as a result of changes in the organization of agricultural production during the economic reforms. The government introduced a number of new economic policies including the rural production responsibility system, the diversification and expansion of agricultural and nonagricultural on- and off-farm economic activities and the establishment of a rural market. Each of these reforms had wide implications for the location and the range of peasant women's on- and off-farm activities, the organization of peasant women's labour, the sexual division of labour and forms of resourcing and remuneration. One of the most important dimensions of the recent rural reforms that directly affected the location of peasant women's economic activities was the decline of the collective and the emergence of the peasant household as the dominant unit of production with new responsibilities and new demands on its material and labour resources. The peasant household now takes primary responsibility for agricultural production from the acquisition of inputs to the processing, transporting and marketing of the product. The peasant household has become an increasingly complex and autnomous economic unit demanding new skills in production and resource management of its members, including women, to maintain it as a diverse economic unit responsible for production, processing and marketing. Rural women both benefit from and are penalized by the new economic

Table 3 Employment composition of China's working women 1990

Form of employment	% of women in occupation
Professionals	5.35
Government, party, organization officials	0.45
Clerks	0.98
Commerce, business	3.12
Service personnel	2.75
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries	75.26
Industry, transport	12.03
Other	0.05
Total	100.00

Source: The Report of the People's Republic of China on the Implementation of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, Beijing, China, 1994.

reforms with the well-being of women now primarily dependent on regional location, the labour and material resources of the household of which they are members, and the distribution of resources and rewards within that household.

The most important repercussion of changes in the organization of agricultural production during the economic reforms has been the reduction in the number of opportunities for women in field cultivation. It is estimated that, since the introduction of the rural economic reforms, the agricultural field labour force has been reduced by a third. Nationally at the outset of reform it was estimated that eventually the numbers of people engaged in agriculture would be reduced by about two-thirds, giving rise to surplus labour of some 200 million persons.[39] At the same time, the President of the National Women's Federation identified lack of employment for peasant women as one of the major problems facing Chinese women in the 1980s.[40] Finding employment for this surplus labour and developing new income-generating activities within the rural economy has thus become an important urgent problem for the present government and led to the recent expansion of on- and off-farm activities in rural areas and the migration of millions to towns and cities. The government has encouraged the peasant household to diversify its operations and expand its commodity economy to include animal husbandry, cash cropping, handicraft, industrial and commercial activities. Thus peasant households have expanded their range of on-

farm activities to include the raising of pigs, poultry, and other animals, fish farming, fruit farming, and the expansion of small industries and services for which resources, labour and markets are required. Rural fairs and markets have been re-established so that goods, foods, local handicrafts and daily necessities produced locally can be exchanged and procured for wider distribution and export. At present it is estimated that women account for one third of the total of the 14 million rural self-employed.[41] Increasingly, rural farm workers are also encouraged to move outside of agriculture and into an extended range of off-farm activities including a new range of rural industries producing goods for the local, national and foreign markets and providing services in townships, towns and cities. All these developments have broadened the scope of women's income-generating activities both on and off the household farm.

On the farm, the majority of peasant women cultivate land and undertake a variety of economic activities ranging from vegetable production, the raising of livestock and the production of handicraft goods to the provision of services for their local community. It is one of the characteristics of domestic production that its scale of operation is predominantly determined by the household's access to female labour, given that occupations such as cultivating vegetables, tending livestock and producing handicrafts have traditionally been performed by the women of peasant households. At the outset of the rural reforms, the most important farm resource, land, was distributed to peasant households on a per capita basis and there have been some reports that women did not receive the same quantity or quality of land as their male counterparts, although in only one case of my many field studies was this so. The establishment and expansion of most other on-farm activities including livestock-raising require that peasant women have access to a number of resources including credit, raw materials and machinery for production and processing. All of these are still scarce in much of rural China, although recent data from rural villages suggest that it may be more difficult for peasant women who have little education or connections within or outside the village to obtain formal access to credit and other resources. Although certain types of sideline activities such as livestock-raising are traditionally undertaken by the peasant women of the household, the gender-typing of on- and off-farm economic activities is variable and much depends on the range and type of economic activities available within any one region. The gender-typing of some activities such as field cultivation, fruit farming, fisheries, forestry and many other activities may be either male- or female-typed economic activities depending on the range of alternative economic activities. Common patterns in the sexual division of labour in rural areas are several. Where there are no or few off-farm activities, males

tend to undertake field cultivation and women other on-farm activities such as livestock raising, handicraft or small-scale food processing.

In the expansion or diversification of on- and off-farm activities of the post-reform peasant household, jobs tend to be gender-typed although definitions vary according to the number and range of economic activities available within the region. For instance, depending on the type of non-agricultural and other employment available, it may be either the men or women farmers who leave the fields to be recruited into non-agricultural occupations, leaving the other on the farm. In these circumstances a new division of labour seems to be established: not that between skilled and unskilled or lighter and heavier jobs within agriculture as before, but between agriculture and non-agricultural occupations and it is commonly the women and especially married women who are left in agriculture. Where there are a number of off-farm activities into which males are predominantly recruited, women undertake most of the field cultivation and sidelines. Peasant households exhibiting this pattern are commonly referred to as 'half-side families' where males reside away from the household, which is, for all practical purposes, female-headed and operated. Women who are to all intents and purposes the head of their household due to the absence or incapacity of their male counterpart may well suffer discrimination.

This is likely to be an increasingly important question given the scale of male migration, seasonal, temporary or permanent, that has recently occurred, especially from the poorer regions where the villages have become largely feminized at least for a portion of the year. It has never been clear what the proportions of female-managed households are in rural China and whether they have suffered any discrimination in the distribution of resources. This is a question that I have often been asked, given the degree of discrimination experienced by female-headed households in other agricultural societies. Recently in my own investigation of female poverty in south-west China, I was particularly interested in the circumstances of female-operated households which were referred to as female-'managed' rather than female-'headed' households. In Guangxi Autonomous Region, the investigation of their conditions by the provincial Women's Federation was an important initiative, for it is one of the first instances that I know of in which female-managed households have become a matter for official and specific concern. There it is estimated that a high proportion – 23 per cent of the households and 2.02 million households out of the 3.3 million or 61 per cent of poorer households – are female-managed in that the men are either absent or labour-weak. They were considered to be unduly disadvantaged not so much in terms of inputs, information and markets as due to the heavier demands on female labour.

Now that the peasant household is once again the dominant unit of

production, the degree of independence and autonomy accruing to peasant women will be very much dependent on the sexual division of labour and their relation to the male household head. It is likely that the more separate the location of their labour and the greater their visibility as producers, the more individual their rewards and bargaining power within and outside of households are. It is also likely that their claim on resources within and outside of the household is very much dependent on the sexual division of labour and the visibility of their separate inputs. The rapid growth and diversification into on- and off-farm economic activities of the post-reform peasant household has had repercussions not only for the sexual division of labour but also for the intensity of and demand for female labour. One of the main means by which a peasant household could immediately maximize its labour power in order to rapidly expand its economic activities was to intensify demands on family and especially female and child labour. Although the economic reforms have altered the ways in which farmers structure their working day, many peasant women recognize that although they have greater control over production processes and more flexibility, their daily routine is even more demanding than before the reforms. In particular the diversification of on- and off-farm activities, the responsibility for procuring production inputs and arranging for the disposal or sale of farm products have taken more time than previously.

There may be more water, more fuel and more fodder to be collected now that their sideline activities have expanded, and there is also a worsening shortage of fodder and fuel reported in many rural regions, which means travelling longer distances for supplies. Marketing may also entail several hours of walking several times a day to dispose of the farm's produce.

In regions where all members of households are employed outside of agriculture, women who have moved into full-time waged labour off the farm may still be required to cultivate the fields and raise domestic livestock as part-time farmers labouring after work or on their days off. One of the ways in which a peasant household can recruit additional labour is via marriage and the recruitment of daughters-in-law. The demand for a daughter-in-law's labour has lowered the age of marriage and increased the expenses of marriage, many of which have led to reports of the sale and abuse of young peasant women. The demand for child labour in the countryside is one of the main reasons why female children are more likely to be spasmodic in their attendance at school and be withdrawn from education earlier than their brothers. In turn, one of the serious side-effects of the high rates of illiteracy and education drop-out rate among peasant girls is that entry into extension training schemes frequently have a literacy or educational requirement and, in turn, access to credit often requires prior attendance in training schemes.

Off the farm the main new sources of employment have been the expanded township and village industries with the proportion of rural women employed in any one of these industries very much depending on the type of enterprises with the number of women employed rising sharply in textile, light and clean industries. Recently it has been estimated that by the end of 1992, China's rural enterprises had employed more than 100 million persons, among whom more than 40 per cent were women producing 65 per cent of total output value in food, clothing, knitting, toy, electronics, traditional handicraft and service industries.[42] The female workforce in rural industries may be made up of women of all ages if they are within commuting distance of the village. If the enterprises are some distance, it is more likely to be made up of young unmarried girls who work and live away from their villages for short periods of time. Girls may acquire a specialized skill, and their wages plus bonuses are likely to be slightly higher than incomes from agricultural production. However, the skills they acquire may not be transferable, the conditions in which they work may fall short of acceptable standards in that they may work long hours for piece-work under physical conditions that may be to the long-term detriment of their health. Where there is surplus labour and there are few local opportunities for young women to find employment in the village or nearby township, they may become part of the expanding mobile labour force often migrating long distances from interior to coastal provinces, from the north to the southern provinces and to the larger cities in order to find employment. The fortunate of the urban 'floating' population, often numbering tens of thousands, may find employment in manufacturing or in the service sectors of the city including domestic service.

The recruitment of rural maids into city households became an increasingly popular response to China's most pressing rural employment and urban service problems. In December 1983 this privatized service sector was formally legitimized by the establishment of new channels for the recruitment and training of maids first in Beijing and later in other cities. In Beijing, when I conducted interviews with maids in November 1984, it was estimated that their number had trebled since 1966 and by February 1984 it was estimated that there were upwards of 30,000 maids employed in the households of Beijing alone.[43] The practice spread to other main cities and by the 1990s the scale of their movement is such that it is very difficult to estimate their numbers, but they must reach more than a million in all the largest cities. There are well-trodden trails that rural women take between Sichuan and Anhui provinces and Beijing or between Zhejiang, Henan and Shandong and Shanghai, Nanjing and Wuhan. Most village women follow friends and relatives either on their own initative or via agencies

organized by the Women's Federation and other bodies. Some village women are forced by poverty and lack of employment to move; others, on their own admission, are lured by the city lights and opportunities and, away from their families, the control of their own wages and spending. Some stay but a short period, others leave on marriage and some return to or remain in city households for many years. One maid of my acquaintance has already resided in the household of one of my friends for the past thirteen years. She first returned to her village in Shanxi to get married and then brought her husband back to the Beijing household where she has since resided and where her son was born. It is not just city parents of small children who have employed maids to ease the child-care problem; increasingly older couples employ a maid to care for them in their old age. A series of interviews in households with maids also revealed there to be a third category of households in which resident grandmothers used their pensions to employ maids to relieve them of family pressure to care for grandchildren – in order that they themselves might enjoy their retirement and new-found opportunities for leisure activities! Relations between maid and family can be mediated by neighbourhood service agencies run by the Women's Federation that have been established to monitor standards of employment and work, thus providing a safety net for rural girls at risk in a new urban environment far from home.

Many young rural women begin their urban careers as maids and then go on to find employment in more lucrative retail and service outlets, but these are frequently likely to be on a short-term contractual basis with all the potential risks inherent in such a position. There are many reports of exploitation and sexual harassment of such young women, both those employed and those stranded without employment, with young girls and women turning to prostitution, which has become a commonly observed and reported feature in the cities and towns of China. In fact, an important new area of official concern has been the increase in levels of violence against women. Both the government and the women's organizations have drawn attention to the physical abuse of women by men and there have been more cases of rape and discussions of rape reported in the newspaper than ever before with the struggle of women to bring accusations of rape and pursue the offenders through the legal system more openly documented. There has been a rise in the abduction of women and children either for adoption, as brides or in organized prostitution, with public trials of the offenders and sentences heavier than normal to deter others from following their example. Mobile rural women often return to their village to marry, and the problem of reintegration back into the countryside has been cited as one of the causes of the high suicide rate among young married women in the countryside.[44] Others marry in the towns and leave the countryside for good. Most begin with this fantasy. Their rags-to-riches dream was recently dramatized in a popular television series called 'Sisters from the Outside', which highlighted the ups and downs of country girls who had gone to work in a Shenzhen factory just across the border from Hong Kong.

In city and countryside the demands on the domestic and public labour of women remain considerable and may be rising rather than declining. In 1990 in their work alone it was estimated that 87 per cent of working women were physical labourers, and of every 100 working women, 75 are farmers, 12 are workers and only 6–7 in non-manual technical cadre or office work and 5–6 in service and trade (see Table 3). It is noticeable that despite years of official exhortation and encouragement for women to become technicians, clerks and officials, women fill only 6 per cent or so of these occupations.[45] Where women have conspicuously entered into new jobs hitherto occupied by men and in the many professions where women are increasingly employed and better represented than in most societies, they continued to be disadvantaged in terms of remuneration, pensions rights and promotion prospects. According to a survey on the social status of women in China, in 1990 an urban male worker received Y193.15 per month compared to female workers who earned an average of Y149.60.[46]

There is clear evidence that women are less likely to be promoted into managerial positions and the predominance of men in the leadership, managerial or administrative hierarchies, whether based on technical and professional skill or political attributes, can be easily observed and documented. Moreover, only 12 per cent of the heads of government, Party and people's organizations, enterprises and institutions are female. In political institutions and organizations, women have most obviously not entered into formal positions of decision-making in proportion to their representation either in production or in the population as a whole. One of the most striking impressions of any official visitor to China continues in the 1980s and 1990s to be the predominance of men in the leadership committees at all administrative levels of the government and the Party. It is reported that there are 8.7 million women leaders making up a third of China's total officials[47], although many of these will be the designated women's representative on various committees. Of the members of the National People's Congress, women make up 21 per cent and of its Standing Committee, the highest organ of state power in China, women make up 12–16 per cent of the members, while approximately 10 per cent of Standing Committee members of the Chinese People's Political Consultation Conference (made up of representatives of the Communist Party, democratic parties and mass organizations) are women.[48] Even after constant campaigns to increase the number of women members, they make up approximately

13 per cent of Party membership. At all administrative levels from the ministries, provinces, cities, counties and townships, it was reported in 1990 that women made up approximately 7 per cent of the cadres.[49] In the past few years these low proportions have been constantly acknowledged in the press with attention drawn to the continuing discrimination which women face in gaining access to employment and power.

Overall it is difficult to weigh up the repercussions of the economic reforms for the employment of women, for they are very mixed. Although it can be argued that women have generally shared in the increased income and standards of living of the majority of even the poorest households, differentials have risen in the past ten years, widening the gap between the richest of new women entrepreneurs and the categories of peasant women most at risk, including the young mobile unemployed peasant girls and women in poor health or those who are otherwise incapacitated and without full labour power. Initially observers and analysts were divided as to whether they emphasized the new opportunities that reform offered to women or the new forms of discrimination that were likely to cost them dearly. Several years into reform, it is not difficult to observe that with reform have come new opportunities, choices and expectations alongside increased discrimination, penalty and disappointment. It was recently admitted in *Women of China* that while many women were 'joyously grasping their opportunities, hundred and thousands of other women feel that challenge and crises are inevitable'.[50] As disappointment and penalty increasingly and more openly marked the experience of women, discrimination became not only a social phenomenon worthy of research, but also the subject of new policy initiatives. The first of these initiatives was to re-emphasize female self-improvement or the importance of encouraging women to take advantage of all the opportunities available for them and so give less cause for discrimination by acquiring an education, skills and vocational training alongside their male peers.

Educating women

As with each new decade of revolutionary development in China when women were encouraged to acquire education and skills in order that they maximize their participation in the workforce on a basis equal to men, so with reform and modernization, women were also encouraged to make a greater and more skilled contribution to production by increasing their managerial, productive and technical skills and their productivity in a new range of enterprises. In particular, women have been encouraged to raise the levels of their education and acquire new skills. It has been widely reported in recent years that female education and training shows much improvement compared to the past, and

Table 4 Women's education status, 1990

Level	% of Women graduates	% of Women enrolled	% Increase over 1980
Post-graduates	20	25	+13.0
Colleges and universities	33	34	+10.3
Secondary technical		43	+5.5
Secondary normal		55	+29.0
Technical		38	
Ordinary middle	42	43	+3.5
Junior middle	43	44	
Senior middle	39	39	
Secondary vocational	44	39	+13.9
Primary schools		47	+2.0
School age entrance rota		96	+4.2

Source: The Report of the People's Republic of China on the Implementation of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, Beijing, China, 1994.

national figures in all sectors of education for 1992 show an increase over 1985.[51] (See Table 4.) However, it is also officially admitted that they have not participated or benefited to the same degree as their male peers. In a number of my own interviews in 1990 in Beijing at various levels of administration within Chinese ministries and other official bodies reponsible for formulating and implementing gender components of state policies and programmes, it was quite clear that for some years they all had thought that the single most important problem, priority and policy had to do with the education of women. This was not only perceived to be the priority of the State Education Commission but was of direct concern to other official bodies, the Women's Federation and those concerned with research. The main problems identified were the high illiteracy rates among young women of rural areas, lower female enrolment and attendance rates and high female drop-out rates in primary schools leading to low proportions of female students in higher levels of education. Alike, however, they all drew attention to the link between education and economic opportunity and income for women.

Women have entered higher education in greater numbers, but they are still represented nowhere near to the proportion of their numbers in the relevant age-groups. Presently the demand for higher and tertiary education outstrips supply and, now that the educational system has again become highly selective, competition for places is fierce. During

the revolution, the numbers of students entering higher education increased from 20 per cent in 1949 to 25 per cent in 1980, with women making up 34 per cent of university undergraduates and 25 per cent of graduates in 1992.[52] Figures available for attendance at technical and vocational training courses show that female students generally accounted for some 30 per cent of the students, and it is generally estimated that women students currently account for one third of the total enrolments in institutions of higher education. There are wide variations between the major cities, Beijing (45 per cent), Shanghai (47 per cent) and Tianjin (51 per cent) and the inland provinces.[53] In Hubei province 29 per cent of students are female and in poor and remote regions even fewer of the students are women. There are also wide variations between disciplines with relatively few female students in science and technology (24.7 per cent) compared to medicine (53 per cent), teacher training (42 per cent) and foreign languages (53 per cent).[54] Despite uniform entrance examinations and rules instituting equality of opportunity, there have been frequent reports of higher education institutes discriminating against women students by demanding higher scores in the entrance examinations in order to limit their numbers. However the problem might be said to start much earlier, for at all schooling levels there are reported still to be more male than female students.

The State Education Commission has reported that the proportion of pupils enrolling in primary school has risen from 10 per cent in 1949 to 95 per cent in 1988,[55] but in 1992 of the pupils enrolled in primary school 47 per cent were female and in junior middle schools 44 per cent were female; in secondary technical schools, technical schools and secondary vocational schools girls account for 39, 38 and 38 per cent respectively.[56] However, at the primary school level, the most important entry point, field work suggests that enrolment rates are not the same as attendance rates and there is considerable evidence that the spasmodic attendance, drop-out and non-attendance rates of young girls are higher than for males of the same age cohorts. In 1988 the State Education Commission estimated that of the 2.79 million school age children not in school the previous year, 2.25 million or 81 per cent were girls, and in addition girls accounted for 70–80 per cent of the 3.69 million pupils who seldom attended school.[57] Although there have been campaigns to reduce illiteracy, it is estimated that 32 per cent of the female population and 13 per cent of the male population is still illiterate and that women make up 70 per cent of the illiterate and semi-literate in China today.[58] (See Table 5.) What is especially worrying to the government is that although the proportions are lower among females in the younger age-groups, they are still high,[59] which suggests that short-term gains from primary education are often lost, and indeed

Table 5 Illiteracy and semi-literacy among females, 1990, by age

	15–24	25–34	35–44	45+	Total
Percentage of population illiterate	6	9	18	52	22
Percentage of female population illiterate	9	15	29	72	32
Reduction in percentage of female illiterates in Population over 1982	-9	-23	-21	-16	-17
Female percentage of illiterates	73	78	74	68	70

Source: The Report of the People's Republic of China on the Implementation of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, Beijing, China, 1994.

it is my own impression in villages that children had to be in school for at least three to four years for there to be long-term and useful literacy and that a higher proportion of girls than boys in many poor regions of China seldom had such an advantage.

Since 1988 much of the attention given to improving education standards of women has been concentrated on reducing the young and middle-aged illiterates by several million each year with the introduction of a number of measures to popularize the advantages of literacy and encourage women to attend long-term literacy classes. Government agencies plan that there should be a shown correlation between education and the acquisition of skills and between education and income so as to illustrate the advantages of literacy. The government has also imposed new sanctions against those not sending girls to school and against those employing child labour as part of the new measures to legally prescribe compulsory primary education. It is also planned to make special funds available to aid female education by establishing a wider range of local schools such as winter, seasonal and evening schools or schools with day-care centres for younger siblings and distance learning for women in remote areas, concentrated classes for busy and travelling women and segregated classes where appropriate for some minority nationalities. National figures showing declining female illiteracy suggest that generally it is not so difficult to persuade parents of the benefits of literacy or of sending their children to primary school, but it has been much more difficult to persuade rural parents that the advantages of long-term education for girls is the same as that for boys.

In the countryside, because of the temporary stay of daughters and new economic policies encouraging the expansion of family-income generating activities, some parents have shown themselves to be even more reluctant to send their daughters to school than before and the

drop-out rate for girl pupils, even at primary school level, is now reported to be rather higher than in the past. In poorer rural areas girls may not attend school, and if they do, their attendance is not at all uniform; they frequently start school at a later age and it is estimated that 70 per cent of all those students who drop out are female. That girls are still seen to have less claim on the familial resources is important given that the costs of education have to be mostly and increasingly met by peasant families whose incomes are no longer rising to meet the increasing costs of agricultural and other inputs. The problems of resourcing education in villages in the face of reduced state allocations have not been solved in many regions, and there remains a heavy reliance placed on donations, fees and levies at the household and village level. The cost of schooling for households is rising and already prohibitive in some poor rural regions, which will continue to be disadvantaged by a policy heavily reliant on local resources. In these circumstances daughters are less likely to have a claim on scarce family resources so long as any investment in daughters will be lost to another family on marriage.

During the reform years, as in the past, much of the emphasis on the importance of education for girls and women had to do with their self-improvement or their acquisition of basic educational and vocational skills in order that they enter the workplace on an equal footing with their male peers. However, the emphasis on the female experience of education and the reporting and official validation of that experience, just as for employment, has emphasized that women alone cannot solve the problem of discrimination; rather, any solution also requires new societal attitudes towards women. It was this shift in emphasis from the responsibilities of women to those of society which led to the separation out of women workers' and more general female-specific problems, needs and interests and the formulation of female-specific demands or women's rights to protect these needs and interests. Indeed, the first decade of reform ended with the formulation of a new law solely devoted to the definition and protection of women's rights for the first time in China's history.

Women's rights

The increasing translation of the experience of discrimination into a plea for separate and legally-enshrined women's rights was the result of a growing demand by the Women's Federation that can be clearly seen in the reports and platforms of the four sequential national women's congresses held throughout the reform period. It is the deliberation of the national women's congresses, organized by the Women's Federation, that sets the direction of the women's movement for successive five-year

periods, much as does the Five Year Plan for China's economy. The Women's Federation has long concerned itself with the role and status of women, albeit with varying degrees of success. The Communist Party from its very beginnings nurtured the separate organization of women in line with its early recognition of the special oppression of women (in addition to the general oppression shared by men and women of the same class) and of the importance for women of having their own organizational network that could take up women's issues and from which they could negotiate for new rights and opportunities. In practice, the government has required that the Women's Federation fulfil twin goals: the first required it to act as a mechanism of the Party apparatus extending its influence among a female constituency in a bid to gain its support for state policies, and the second required it to act as a separate pressure-group encouraging women to take an active part in defining and asserting their own needs and demands. In practice too, the two goals were not always mutually supportive and by the later years of the Revolution it became clear that the women's organization had come to operate within a very narrow prescription.

As a mass organization created by the government, the Women's Federation had been more effective in soliciting women's support for government policies than in getting them changed to take account of women's needs and especially those needs that did not appear directly to contribute to the prior goals of increasing production and promoting economic development. Given that the rhetoric of equality so masked female experience of discrimination, perhaps the Women's Federation itself perceived no need to redefine or further take up the cause of women's rights. However, once the rhetoric of equality could no longer be seen to represent female experience, then the Women's Federation lost little opportunity in taking up the cause of women's rights. My own view is that the turning-point came following the reports of a sharp increase in female infanticide when the government charged the Women's Federation to investigate the scale of the problem of female infanticide on the grounds that 'it would be a gross dereliction of duty if they should let this problem take its own course and not concern themselves with it.' The Women's Federation took this new responsibility seriously and, in turn, it was this special responsibility that precipitated a change in the role of the Women's Federation, culminating in the eventual formulation of its demands for a special women's law enshrining a wide spectrum of women's rights.

If the platforms of the four congresses for women held since 1978 are examined in sequence, it is clear that, after 1978, there is a gradual increase of interest in women's rights in ensuing congresses, with greater pleas that society should recognize women's rights to education, employment, property and person, and it was these pleas that culminated in

the publication of a Women's Law in 1992. Twelve years earlier, at the Fourth National Congress held in 1978, the first for some twenty years, women had once more been exhorted to unite and forward their interests by encouraging the Communist Party to make work among women an important component of its work and to criticize the Party when it neglected women's interests.[60] At the Congress, a member of the Communist Party suggested to the Women's Federation that it should itself take more seriously the representation of women's special interests:

> The National Women's Federation and women's federations at provincial, municipal or autonomous regional level throughout the country should overcome the phenomenon of acting as a government organisation, forge close ties with the masses, gradually make themselves a mass organisation and become a better link between the Party and the masses of women. Women's organisations should do a good job carrying out investigation and study at the basic level and among the masses. Women's federations at various levels should be concerned about women's weal and woe and listen to their voices in order to really become a mouthpiece of the women's masses, an important representative of their interests and the home of women.[61]

The President of the National Women's Federation also urged women to speak out and assert their needs regardless of the consequences: 'In handling problems of immediate concern to women we should not fear giving offence or taking some risks, we must dare speak and be good at speaking in support of women.'[62] It seemed that the Women's Federation had the support of the government to speak out in favour of women's interests and, within carefully defined limits, it did so.

If the beginnings of a shift in rhetoric could be detected, there was also evidence of a continuing tension between the dual tasks of the Women's Federation to act both as a separate pressure group in defence of women's interests and as a mechanism for soliciting support for the Party and government. Indeed, the very definitions of the tasks of the Women's Federation as outlined at the Women's Congress in 1978 indicated that it should:

> resolutely implement the Party's general and specific policies and fully arouse enthusiasm among the broad masses of women, and how to mobilise the women to carry out the general task for the new period is the new problem for the women's movement.[63]

If the Women's Federation could and did speak out in defence of women's rights, it seemed that it was the Party that continued to decide which rights were legitimate and to circumscribe the independence of the Women's Federation. The single most important theme of the National Congress in 1978 was still that the new line of the Party was to be the fundamental line of the women's movement and that the central task of the Party was also the central task of the women's movement.[64]

Perhaps the contradictions between the rhetoric of independence for the Women's Federation on the one hand and adherence to the Party line on the other was best revealed in a much publicized speech made by the Secretary of the Communist Party Central Committee two years later in 1980 which stated that:

> all the organisations of the Women's Federation should bring into full play the role of women in *working independently under the leadership of the Party, and according to the Party's line, principles and policies* and give full play to women's merits on the basis of their specific characteristics [emphasis added].[65]

The main assumption underlying such a pronouncement was that the Women's Federation fully represented both the interests of the Party and of women. Furthermore, these were assumed to be one and the same. It is as if a bargain had been struck: in return for supporting women's rights, the government expected the support of the Women's Federation for all its general policies.

It was this assumption more than any other that had characterized the work of the Women's Federation during its revolutionary history and caused it to implement general Party policies first and only then to study, analyse and draw out the practical implications that recent policies may have had for women. It was clear from a variety of sources, reports, formal interviews and informal conversations that the Women's Federation perceived its prior role as being to publicize and elicit support for the new policies and only retrospectively did it begin to spell out some of the likely repercussions for women. So women were encouraged by their own organizations to support the responsibility system, expand domestic sidelines, undertake outwork, work in the co-operative and service sectors of the economy, take out single-child family certificates and abolish the betrothal gift and dowry as if these Party policies could only be of benefit to women. However, these benefits were increasingly to be questioned as the Women's Federation was charged by the government with investigating many of the more obvious experiences of discrimination.

In contrast to the 1978 Congress, the balance in responsibility and accountability can be seen to have shifted when speeches at the Fifth National Congress of Women in 1983 primarily emphasized the role of the Women's Federation in defending and protecting women and their interests rather than primarily soliciting support for Party and government policies.[66] In her report on the work of the Women's Federation

since the previous Congress, its President, Kang Keqing, spoke of the achievements of the past five years, but she equally emphasized the gender-specific demands of the Women's Federation and the necessity to strengthen its own organization, which would enable it to make and meet these demands. She called for the rights and interests of women and children to be protected:

> What demands attention is that remnant feudal ideas of regarding men as superior to women and traditional prejudices against women have re-emerged in recent years. For example, some localities and units have placed unreasonable demands and restrictions in recruiting or promoting women and women cadres. Some areas and units bluntly refuse to admit needed and qualified women; some neglect the labour protection of women in productive work. Parents interfering in their children's freedom of marriage, arranging marriage for money, marrying in order to extort money and other similar cases have become fairly commonplace.
>
> What is intolerable is the fact that some ugly phenomenon that had been wiped out long ago in new China have begun to recur. Criminal acts of drowning female infants, insulting women, persecuting mothers who gave birth to girls, and selling and harming women and children have occurred frequently. In some areas these have reached serious proportions.
>
> We women must unite with others in society and resolutely struggle against all acts harming women and children and vigorously help the public security and judicial organs crack down on these criminal activities ... and firmly protect the legitimate rights and interests of women and children.[67]

The main task of the Women's Federation in 1983 was defined as closely associating itself with women's interests in order that it might investigate, study and solve these problems. The proceedings of the Fifth Congress confirmed that the reappearance of infanticide and violence had done much to generate the gender-specific demands of the Women's Federation and to legitimize the open presentation of the Women's Federation in its role as defender and protector of women. In this, the Women's Federation had the full support of the state, thus fulfilling at least for the time being the prescription that the Women's Federation fully represented both the Party and women's interests and that these could be one and the same. Although there were no apparent conflicts between the two bodies voiced at the Congress, there were still some limits to the legitimacy of the Women's Federation's voice on many broader political and economic issues.

Similarly, at the Sixth National Congress in 1988, both representatives

of the state and of the Women's Federation stressed that the legitimate rights of women were still far from universally recognized.[68] The President of the Women's Federation called on the whole of society to adopt a more civilized and progressive attitude towards women and fight against sex discrimination in new joint efforts to safeguard women's equality with men in political, economic and cultural fields as well as in their social and family lives. Likewise the President of China at the opening ceremony, after paying a warm tribute to Chinese women calling them a 'great force for the country's construction and reform', also stressed that 'the government and the whole of society should show more concern for women and better safeguard their interests and condemn sex discrimination and maltreatment of women.'[69]

He reminded the delegates that for various historical reasons, prejudice against women still existed and maltreatment and abuse of children and women happened frequently: 'Those behaviours are intolerable and those who encroach on the rights of women and children should be punished.' This was an important statement by the President, for it shifted some of the responsibility for discrimination to others and not just to the failings of women, as had been one of the predominant themes previously. Subsequent to this conference, there were two important initatives that resulted from these repeated and increased calls for more attention to the separation out and protection of women's rights. The first was the establishment of a new Women's and Children's Work Co-ordination Committee by the State Council in March 1990 and the second was the promulgation of the new Law Protecting Women's Rights in 1992.

The creation of the Women's and Children's Work Co-ordination Committee at the highest administrative level was an important symbol of the new importance attached to reducing discrimination against women and a recognition that such problems could not be solved by such mass organizations as women's federations alone, since the issues related to politics, economics, culture and other fields and 'should be dealt with by the whole society'.[70] A women's and children's group was attached to the committee and a permanent office for the committee was established at the All-China Women's Federation, while most provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government also set up special organizations for women and children. Its central committee, consisting of representatives from all the leading ministries and relevant organizations, was to have as its main task that of 'coordinating issues relating to women and children that should be settled jointly by the governments and units concerned'. The establishment of this coordinating agency marked an important step in an administrative system characterized by strongly demarcated vertical lines of authority and responsibility that had made any

cooperation between Ministries difficult. It had also reduced the responsiblity of any one Ministry for gender issues, which then usually became the exclusive charge of the Women's Federation, not itself a Ministry but a mass organization. The name was later changed to the Women's and Children's Work Committee under the State Council in 1993 and its work so far has mostly involved researching regulations to protect women from abduction and prostitution, formulating laws to protect women's rights and the publicization and drawing up of this legislation. The second important initiative arising from the repeated and increasing calls for more attention to women's rights was the promulgation of a new women's law.

The Women's Law

The new law protecting the rights of women in 1992 (see Appendix 2) was the first law specifically defining a set of women's rights in China and was thus heralded as illustrating anew the importance attached by the government to women's rights and interests. Chen Muhua, Vice Chair of the National People's Congress Standing Committee and President of the All-China Women's Federation stated:

> The law on protection of women's rights and interests will produce a profound and far-reaching influence over China's efforts to protect women's rights and interests, raise the status of women, promote equality between men and women and arouse the support of women for socialist modernisation in an all-round way. It indicates China shows special concern for women and attaches great importance to women's rights and interests ...[71]

The Law set out the rights of women in political, economic, cultural and social life and with regard to property, marriage, divorce and the family. It protects the rights of women to life and health, outlawing infanticide, abuse or any form of abduction. When these lawful rights were infringed by others, women had the right to request and expect departments concerned to help remedy the infringement or to take legal proceedings with the people's court, and disciplinary action was to be taken against those who did not provide the requisite help. It has been stressed several times that 'the awakening of women to gender rights'[72] would be completely impossible without the strong support of China's laws and that 'more and more Chinese women will get accustomed to safeguarding their rights and interests through legal means.'[73] To accustom women to the idea of resorting to legal means, the promulgation of the law was followed by a month-long women's rights campaign to study and publicize the new law.

One of the very impressive features of the first revolutionary years

in the early 1950s was the attention paid to educating people in the new laws in publicity campaigns following on closely after their promulgation. But legal recourse in appropriate conditions had never been institutionalized in China; rather less accountable local cadres mediated disputes and dispensed judgements within the units or regions under their administration. What distinguishes the reform decade is the new interest in the role of law and the establishment of newly available and accessible legal institutions, and the Women's Federation has played its part in acquainting women with their legal rights and providing help in obtaining legal redress in the face of discrimination. From its experience in the early 1950s, the Women's Federation had learned that legislation in support of women's rights and education in support of the law was not enough; there also had to be back-up legal institutions, personnel and individual support available to women to aid them in the exercise of their rights. Indeed, experience had taught grassroot women's organizations that 'the rights and interests of women and children are best protected by enforcing the laws and regulations designed to help abused women and by acting as their legal advocates and helping them exercise these rights.'[74]

In support of the various general laws and regulations published at the onset of reform in the 1980s, one of the main aims of the Women's Federation had been to set up a network of legal centres to advise female victims of violence, collect evidence and pursue offenders through the courts. These centres had been set up at provincial, city and county administrative levels to which lawyers and legal workers, most of whom were women, had been recruited to provide legal counsel and allied services to women.[75] To sensitize women to the protection provided by the new laws and to the availability of legal services, short and concentrated publicity programmes had been instituted in many localities during 1983–84. Classes were held to enable women cadres to study the pertinent provisions of the constitution, the Marriage and other civil laws and to follow the procedural laws on criminal cases. Public forums were held on the laws and legal counselling centres were set up on street corners and in parks where legal advisors made themselves available to answer queries and investigate grievances. It was reported that the most common questions on which help was sought had to do with the inheritance of daughters, the legal rights of the elderly to receive support and matters to do with divorce procedures.[76]

Publicity and practical campaigns such as these provided an infrastructure for a new campaign in support of the new Women's Law. During this campaign it was reported that the cases brought to the notice of the Women's Federation in a single month totalled that usual for half a year. In one case reported in the media, the Women's Federation in Beijing received an unusual joint telegram from 118

women employees of a power station in far Heilongjiang province outlining their refusal to be charged double levies in the fundraising for the factory's new living quarters. Instead of turning to their husbands, relatives or some sympathetic factory leaders, they decided to base their case on Article 23 of the new Law which stated that 'Women should be equal with men in the allotment of housing and enjoyment of welfare benefits.' This was widely cited as an example of the ways in which 'women are awakening to this new "legal shelter" and more women have learned to resort to legal means instead of swallowing unfair treatment.'[77]

The new law was also the main subject of discussion at the Seventh National Congress of Women held in September 1993.[78] Of the nine main goals outlined by the Women's Federation for the 1990s, four referred directly to women's rights as individuals, in society, in employment and in marriage and the family. The remaining three advocated an increase in female participation in politics and education and improvements in their health and reduction in domestic labour. If the promulgation of a Women's Law constituted a shift towards recognizing the responsibilities of society for seeing that women's rights were protected, it also marked a milestone in the separation out of women's separate needs, interests and demands. The redefinition of women's roles and status could not be willed by women alone however much they improved themselves; the validity of their needs and interests had to be recognized by society. The increasing awareness and investigation of women's separate problems and needs in living and work during the early years of reform not only led to a new interest in women's rights but also gave birth to more academic but policy-linked women's studies.

Women's studies

The initiative for separating out women's studies from other studies was spearheaded by a number of social scientists and scholars in institutions of higher education who had become interested in researching women's problems and by the Women's Federation which, seeking to reaffirm its legitimacy in representing the interests of women, commissioned numbers of popular and local studies of women's history. In 1980 the Women's Federation had taken a decision to establish local archives and research centres to encourage its members to write histories of the women's movement in their region or unit. The separation out of women's studies as a separate category of social studies was very much based on the rationale that understanding the history of women, their special problems and conceptualizing women's issues was only possible if women were separated out from the generalized definition of men and the study of men. According to Wan Shanping, the term *Women's Studies*, introduced into China in a book review in *Studies of Social Sciences Abroad* of Shirai Atsushi's *Women's Studies and the History of Women's Movements*, was first seriously discussed at the first National Conference on Theoretical Studies of Women sponsored by the Women's Federation in late 1984.[79] Thus participants aimed at carrying out studies of women, researching women's problems theoretically and establishing various branches of women's studies in their specialized academic fields. In 1985 a women's committee attached to the Henan Institute of Futurology was set up and it led to the formal establishment of the Women's Studies Centre at Zhengzhou University in Henan in May 1987. It was the first special organization of women's studies in colleges, universities and institutes, and in the past few years the Research Centre at Zhengzhou has become an important academic base for Chinese women's studies and the centre of a nation-wide academic network in this field. It has compiled a women's studies series and essays and organized seminars and public lectures on women's studies.

In the past few years many other university discussion and research groups on women's problems have been established with a view to attracting broader attention to women's studies and women's problems. In March 1990 the Women's Studies Centre at Zhengzhou University organized a 'Workshop on Women's Participation and Development' to review women's studies and set up programmes for collecting systematic data on social attitudes towards women and female attitudes towards society for reference and for the long-term construction of a theoretical framework for women's studies.[80] Many other centres for women's studies have followed suit and have also collected data on women's experience and attitudes as a prelude to thinking about the problems of women both practically and conceptually. Although much of their new work in women's studies has reduced the influence of the Women's Federation and its domination of the discourse on gender issues, most of these new women's centres, institutes or societies work alongside the Women's Federation and are affiliated to it either because they were themselves initiated by the Women's Federation or because they took the decision that it was better to influence the organization from within. One of the most outspoken of the advocates for women's studies in China, Li Xiaojiang of Zhengzhou University, Henan, in critically analysing the Women's Federation has also paid tribute to its recognition of the importance of women's studies and to its establishment of women's institutes and research bodies in most cities and provinces. Attached to the Women's Federation, they have been encouraged to investigate and collect information about the experience of women in different fields and make this information publicly known via lecture, seminar and media report.

One of these research bodies, the Beijing Society of Women's Theory,

founded in 1985, is made up of cadres of the Beijing Women's Federation who believed that this organization should not only help women to solve actual problems they encounter in their daily lives, but probe into and study women's problems theoretically.[81] Its members were made up of experts and scholars of the social sciences and institutions of higher learning who were interested in women's studies and cadres of the Women's Federation who have been specializing in women's work for many years. In the first few years after this society was founded, it set about 'studying the reality'. It did extensive investigation and research on women from different backgrounds in Beijing, and the results provided a basis for policy and laws concerning women that were beginning to be formulated at that time. In 1990 the Beijing Society of Women's Theory co-operated with the Guangzhou Society of Women's Issues and the Departments of Social Work at the University of Hong Kong to set up a research project on 'Comparative Studies on Women's Employment in Beijing, Guangzhou and Hong Kong'. The project set out to observe the employment conditions, the employment ideas and the views about equality between men and women in Beijing and Guangzhou and compare these with the views of women in Hong Kong by studying different social systems and different stages of economic development of the three areas. Also in 1990 the society took part in a large-scale survey called 'Social Positions of Chinese Women' organised by the All China Women's Federation. This survey specifically targeted marriage and family, education levels, self-recognition and social identification, lifestyles and the health of women in Beijing. In 1991 this society, along with the Beijing Institute of Social Investigation, also organized a survey of young female entrepreneurs who worked in private enterprises or individually-managed establishments in the Beijing area, acquiring data that investigated women's new outlooks on employment and trends in female employment in the wake of reform and the Open-Door policy.

In one of my own interviews, Professor Tao Chun-fang, deputy-director of the Women's Studies Research Institute in China also affiliated to the Women's Federation, emphasized that the role of her institute was to offer theoretical justification for women's studies, to provide advice to legislative bodies and to incorporate a training and educational element into projects that will widely benefit women. Combinations of these goals can be seen in its main areas of interest and research. The Research Institute has recently published a number of books on women's history covering the previous hundred years and is now conducting new research on the history of women during the past forty years of the revolution. In 1991 its members had undertaken a survey of women's status in twenty-three provinces in order to have 'an objective view of women's social status undertaken by women themselves'. Much of this work covering women's employment, education, political participation, family, women's health, women's rights and social ideology has been published already in report and statistical forms. Recently the Research Institute for women has turned its attention to the provision of reproductive insurance by cities and units to cover women's maternity and other benefits, the payment of which has hindered their recruitment and promotion in many enterprises. Some of this work is the result of a comprehensive study of reproduction and women's health undertaken by the Research Institute, which began in 1992 and is an interesting example of the inputs which women's studies can make in widening both the multi-disciplinary and the practical policy interest of important gender issues. In this respect one very interesting input of women's studies has to do with reproduction and female health, which was previously the sole responsibility of medical bodies.

In April 1992, the Women's Studies Institute, with sponsorship from the Ford Foundation, held the first conference on reproduction and health where, as well as the usual number of expert panels addressing topics ranging from menstruation to menopause, birth to ageing and contraception to sexual relations, reference was made to women's studies and the investigation of women's health by women. At the conference cadres from women's study institutes from each province were commissioned to carry out their own investigations, discussions and studies of women's health and reproduction and were offered training in research methods. As a result there was a systematic investigation of women's health problems and a spread of information about women's health care with the establishment of consulting services or gynaecological clinics, which also served as local centres for women's studies. A follow-up conference was held in January 1994 at which the study groups presented their findings. Some of the groups in the more developed regions where primary health care is already available had devoted their attention to ageing and menopause, while less developed regions concentrated on preventive health, the establishment of clinics, means of transport to hospitals and the funding of health-care programmes for women and children.

One of the important findings was the widespread incidence of reproductive tract infections in the poor rural regions and the difficult relationships between women and doctors or gynaecologists, which led to delays in seeking treatment. This experiment in combining research, practical investigation and women's solidarity is seen to be an important precedent in both developing women's studies and meeting the practical needs and interests of women.[82] It is no accident that women's health is the mainstay of this precedent, as it is becoming one of the most important of women's problems needing investigation and is increasingly

seen as the prerequisite to the success of most other contemporary programmes to benefit women and especially poor women. This was brought home to both Dr Mary Anne Burriss of the Ford Foundation in Beijing, which has provided much of the sponsorship for the programme, and myself when we visited poor villages in the south-west province of Yunnan in 1991 to investigate women's health and health-care among other topics.

The Yunnan villages were nestled in forested mountains in the east of the province near the Guangxi border; some were only accessible by mud road in dry weather and then for the majority of villagers without a mule only by foot; others could only be reached by a foot track. The houses were mostly of yellow clay or mud with natural wood beams and thatch, picturesque on the outside, but so very poor and dark and sometimes chokingly dusty within. Because there was little in the way of furniture, bedding, clothes or food beyond the barest of essentials, it was usually a case of crouching or sitting on slabs of wood a few inches off the ground, which made this stay and these interviews one of the most physically taxing of my many field experiences. There was no drinking water in the vicinity of the villages for much of the year, when villagers had to trek four hours to and from the nearest source of water, sometimes twice a day. There was no electricity in the villages and some of the villagers were so poor that they could not even afford the sticks, paper or matches to light their way from house to house after dark. The villages were located in one of the poorest 273 counties of China, so defined because their per capita cash incomes, per capita grain supplies and per capita land allocations were among the lowest in China.

In common with other poor, remote and mountainous villages in this region, they lacked sufficient available flat arable land to provide for their grain supplies and spent much of their hard labour cultivating steep slopes for very low returns. In addition to cultivating grain, the fortunate women of the villages raised a few animals, which in the absence of alternative economic activities in the village assumed prime significance in determining the wealth, cash income and welfare of a peasant household. Animals were the most important single source of cash income; however, they were not plentiful and, given the high death rate among chickens and pigs, they consituted a scarce and vulnerable household resource dividing village households into three categories which were referred to as 'not poor', 'poor' and 'very poor'. The poor and very poor households of the village, the majority, had in common a low per capita arable land allocations, a shortage of grain and few animals and they frequently suffered a shortage of labour through premature death, physical illness or disability and mental incapacity. Indeed, the most important factors determining the income, well-being and welfare of individual households, in addition to land

allocations and the number of family members of labouring age, were the health and labour capacities of the male and female labourers. The very poorest households in the village had all suffered chronic disease, physical illness or disability, premature death or mental incapacity or had a high number of either elderly or young dependents. In a random sample of households, health profiles revealed that few households had escaped illness or death.

In household 1, consisting of five people, and 'not poor', the mother had suffered a serious illness some years before but had recovered in recent years. In household 2, with ten members , and 'not poor', there had been no serious illness in recent years. In household 3, with two people, and 'very poor', the widow was in a constant state of ill health with an eye problem. In household 4, with seven members, and 'not poor', two boys and a daughter had died: one son had died three days after birth from tetanus – he had been carried to hospital, which would not accept him once he was diagnosed as having tetanus; another son, 3 years old, died in hospital probably from pneumonia; the 7-year-old daughter also died from pneumonia, apparently 'very fast' before a doctor could be consulted. In household 5, with six people, and 'poor', one child of 2 years old had died rapidly within two days of falling ill with high fever; the husband had a persistent cough and was ill with frightening stomach cramps every two weeks during which 'he seemed to die'. In household 7, with four members, and 'very poor', one 2-year-old son had died from dysentery after a visit to the township hospital; the mother was mentally incapacitated and not in good health and one of the daughters was also mentally retarded. In household 8, with four people, and 'very poor', both parents were mentally incapacitated. Eight children had been born and five had died. This was not the only case in the village where such a high proportion of children in a single household had died. We learned of several others when we held what seemed to be one of the first meetings of village women to discuss reproduction and female health. Then we learned of the high incidence of debilitating reproductive tract infections among the women that did not even count as illness; the difficult conditions of home and hospital childbirth and the deaths of children; the desire of the younger women to limit the numbers of their children and their lack of knowledge of or availability of contraception; the expense of scarce paper making for difficulties in coping with menstruation and the absence of clinics and even medicines. It was said that the doctors were too poor to provide medicines, the villagers too poor to pay for them, and the village had no funds with which to provide a subsidy to pay for clinics or medicines. The village doctors had minimal training, difficulties in reading and writing and the hospitals demanded prohibitive cash deposits on arrival that deterred the villagers from making the arduous journey. Given that

the township hospital had but a stethoscope and thermometer, even villagers who had the stamina or the money were reluctant even in the most extreme circumstances to attend their local hospital – a situation that had led to the common association of hospital with death and the depressing health profiles both in households and of women.

It was this visit that gave an impetus to the further investigation of women's health and reproduction sponsored by the Ford Foundation. One of the hallmarks of the new women's studies has not only been its emphasis on investigating the experience of women and combining practical with theoretical concerns, but also its focus on both the social and the personal. At the present time, women in a variety of urban venues are coming together with increasing confidence in the value of solidarity to understand and study their condition. As Li Xiaojiang has forecast, every class of women has its own pressing issues so that 'within a certain number of years the issues that will be defined as "female" will be of every hue and shade and of unprecedented variety, and their boundaries will be difficult to establish.'[83] Retrospectively, however, the women that I have interviewed in the past few years identify the main legacy of the revolutionary years as the 'coming out of women into society'. This phenomenon used to be referred to as the 'revolution within a revolution', but now women's organizations and studies have broadened their brief to draw attention to a third revolution or that within the female person as necessary, not only in order to take advantage of the new social opportunities offered by reform, but in order that they benefit and become modern women.

'The four selfs'

The Sixth National Women's Congress had first officially promoted women's 'self-development', which has been defined as 'the strengthening of the principles of women's four selfs – self-respect, self-confidence, self-reliance and self-improvement'.[84] Other phrases referred to at the Congress and in its associated literature refer to self-esteem, self-awareness, self-possession and self-love. What is new is not so much the notions of esteem, improvement, awareness, reliance, confidence and respect but their self-referential qualities. The shift in importance to the self that is also female and merits separate definition, discussion and deference is new. Instead of the 'we' of the factory, farm or family unit, there is the 'I' of the woman and a recognizable process of attempted or preliminary exploration or discovery as to who she is or who she might become in a new Chinese society. Now women are perceived as already having entered the social but at the cost of sacrificing something of their selves for socialism, the Chinese state, the urban enterprise or the rural collective, quite apart from their families, husbands and

children. Currently then, it is their own self-strengthening that has become an important platform. The new emphasis on self-referential qualities has drawn attention to the distinctive qualities attributable to the female self or the feminine and to their difference from the male or masculine. The emphasis and reflections on gender distinction and difference grows out of the explicit rejection of the previous revolutionary 'masculinization of the female', 'female man' or 'super-women's masculinization' and marks the separation out of the female from the previous generalized androgynous definition of comrade or worker of predominantly masculine or male image. As Li Xiaojiang, like so many other women, has noted in retrospect, they knew they were women, but they knew less the difference between themselves and men.[85]

The Reform period is thus marked by a new interest in the image and presentation of the feminine, focusing first on physical appearance and adornment. This is not surprising given that one of the most important characteristics distinguishing reform from revolution is the new interest in consumption, in consumer goods and in their style, colour, material and brand name, all of which have generated a new phenomenon – consumer desire. Eyes, and not just those on the advertising billboards, are firmly fixed on consumer objects to do with fashioning the individual and furnishing the home. Shopping has not only become a serious recreation and a sociable exercise with much noisy consultation; the new interest in commodities and lifestyles has brought about a new relation between people and things, so that persons have become classified not so much by their class background or 'work' or occupation as previously, as by the possession of objects or their evaluation, so that identity has become associated with lifestyle rather than class label. Adorning the body and the home has drawn attention to the persons and their immediate environments in a proliferation of style statements that is born of income generation and generates a sense of individual, family and gender difference. The desired and different qualities of the feminine are outwardly symbolized by choice of colour, style and fashion. One of the most noticeable features of recent years to long-time observers, and symbolic of wider shifts, has been the near disappearance of the uniform blue garb of the revolution and the subsequent and sudden swings in fashion. Gone are the days when I noticed the individual and stylish twist of the hairgrip that served to differentiate the modern young Shanghai 'miss' from her peers. Despite an interval of more than ten years, the visitor to China today is still taken aback by the great variety of and sudden shifts in fashionable colour, style and fabric. The all-pervasive interest in fashion is evident in crowded shop and market-place and the emergence of the fashionable young. Older women too are determined not to be omitted and are also seen to be 'eager to beautify themselves'.[86] Magazines now

have at least some, if not all, pages devoted to fashion and the fashion show is now a routine event. In addition to dressing fashionably, there is a great interest in make-up, skin care, jewellery, cosmetics and hairstyle, all accentuating the enhancement of physical appearance that is the new attribute of women who 'know how to be women'.

For role models too, the relation of working women to consumption is as important as their productive roles. In a new trend, the adornment of the role models may be as fully described in detailed terms of dress and other fashion accessories as their other attributes. An interesting example can be cited of the description of one such model in which the commentator also draws attention to the novelty of this apprehension.

> When I went to the Shenzhen Daily Use Goods Factory to gather material, I found sitting in the office a dignified, beautiful young woman. Her hairdo was done quite tastefully, two gleaming earrings adorned her earlobes, a glittering necklace hung from her neck, suspended from her wrist was an exquisite small golden bracelet, and encircling the ring finger of her right hand was a conspicuous golden ring. Ah, one look and I realised that it was Fan Liying, deputy to the provincial People's Congress and provincial model worker.
>
> I could not help feeling stunned. So many stories about her tumbled about in my brain ... Originally she was an embroiderer ... her fingers were covered with needle marks ... two years ago, she happily took over the post of cashier, giving up her monthly income of about ¥300 without complaint and earning only a little more than 100 yuan ... and in the past two years has not made the slightest error ...
>
> Yet I simply didn't quite believe my own eyes when I saw her. As if she saw my astonishment, she smiled gently, revealing shallow dimples, and said 'I am a twenty-three-year-old woman, and of course I like to dress up.'
>
> Suddenly I understood. Model workers of the 1980s are good at creating wealth, and they also understand how to enjoy it. This is probably the charm of our times.
>
> A model woman worker dressed in gold and jade? The way some people see it, perhaps this is a great outrage. In their eyes, a model worker who fits the image should be covered with grease and dirt, dressed in blue and black.
>
> But nowadays in the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone, model workers no longer have that old appearance. There, the wage system has been reformed, and anyone who works hard has a higher income. Naturally, the income of model workers is higher than that of most and they live better lives than most. Not only do they dress in suits and leather shoes, they also have money to buy gold and jade. So why be astonished that model women workers are dressed in gold and jade? Rather we should say that if model workers live better lives than most, they will have greater appeal and will encourage more people to work diligently. If model workers only get 'a suit of blue and black' for their work, I'm afraid no one will want to be a model. From the changes in the style of dress of this model woman worker, we can catch a glimpse of the economic development of our nation and the change in people's concept of consumption![87]

The adoption of new fashions, make-up and jewellery by women is not only part of a new interest in consumption; it also marks a new emphasis on the feminine or female as separate and different from masculine or male.

Uniquely female

This interest in and new reflection on gender difference can be seen as a reaction against the enforced female appropriation of a male-defined world during the revolution when women are now seen to have responded to the call of the Communist Party to a point where they lost a sense of their female selves in the pursuit of gender sameness with a consequent loss of image, demeanour and perceptions distinctive to women and different from the male other. In emphasizing sexual difference rather than the sameness of revolution, attention had to be drawn to the qualities unique to women and female. In my own recent interviews, the quality that women most often thought to be uniquely female was 'softness', which together with nurturing qualities contributed to their uniquely female capacity for caring. However much attention might shift to definitions of the female self and the process of becoming a woman, it is also the case that definitions of the female take as their reference point the male other and separation from or 'othering' in defining of the female self. Although meanings are so often born of contrasts, with self-definition mainly resting on othering or demarcation from the other, the search for what is different and distinctive from the masculine does not start with questioning assumptions about the masculine so much as with the identification of 'woman's own perceptual world', 'women's own outlook and world' and 'inner qualities unique to women'. There has been a number of articles expressing the growing view that there is a peculiarly female perception of the 'natural world' that extends say from sexuality to tourism. For instance one article, entitled 'Women are the Natural Masters of the Perceptual World', argued that there are peculiarly female perceptions

based on women's distinctive and different perception of nature and a rich perceptual world transcending and enriching male language and logic:

> I suddenly came to realise that the happiness derived from the perception of beautiful things is a true happiness in real life, a satisfaction, and confirms the perceptual world. Females are not as dull, shrivelled and abstract as males, who pretend to be serious all the time ... How can women protect their original clear rich and moving perceptual world?

Having established that women had a stronger claim to a superior natural pleasure, the writer goes on to translate this claim into a stronger claim for female sexual pleasure. The writer reveals that, although it was not until very late that she realized that the pleasure of sexual life not only belonged to men, she now thought that one of 'the happiest things in life is no doubt sexual pleasure for women'. Indeed, she thought:

> The female's longing for pleasure sometimes is stronger than the male's. However because of various reasons, mainly social reasons it seems, the females' strong desire and need for this pleasure have been depressed and hurt or even buried under social traditions that centered on men for thousands of years. They were crushed by various erroneous concepts, thoughts, customs and norms, which have caused many females to lose their chances in life, not knowing they should realise or demand to realise their own natural instincts. It seems that in the female's sexual pleasure, the rational is also mixed with perceptual ... The rational is not those concepts, thoughts, language and standards that can be recognised ... it has become one with the perceptual. Therefore they can get that unexplainable feeling and pleasure. Men can get their warmest and most delightful life in sexual contact with females ... [88]

The pursuit of contrasts in gender perception has led to some interesting reflections on gender difference. In one article, the author reflects on the different approaches distinguishing male and female tourists: the men rush round, with cameras, wanting to tour all the sights at rapid speed while women lingered taking in intensively the small, the hidden and the incidental at a more leisured pace. This contrast thought the author reflected and distinguished more generally female from male qualities:

> Nature has bestowed different gifts upon men and women. Men are usually impatient. For instance, when getting on a bus they tend to elbow their way on, although they know everyone can have a seat. But women usually receive their gifts by lowering their heads.
>
> Women are not like men, who seem to hunt hard after mountains and rivers. Compared with men's shining eyes, they usually half close their eyes to enjoy the scenery. Men value form, but women stress content ...
>
> Men with education have created the phrase 'touring the scenic spots'. They play politics and war, so certainly they can do a good job of sightseeing mountains and rivers. Women with no education often have no chance to enjoy scenic spots, so they can only take it as a blessing when they can view green mountains and trees from their windows.[89]

Some women have even been heard to say (perversely?) that they wanted a girl not a boy child because of her capacity to appreciate the natural, emotion and experience:

> A girl is more sensitive, has more capacity to feel everything – happiness, sorrow, all the sentiments. A girl can appreciate new experiences much more than boys. So the world is always a new world for her. That's why I want my baby to be a girl.[90]

Not surprisingly perhaps, the search for difference has once again led to an emphasis on those qualities thought to be traditionally and uniquely female such as gentleness, refinement, restraint, modesty, shyness and reserve or attributes, all requiring some degree of restraint if not submission in deportment and demeanour. Indeed, the rejection of sameness and pursuit of difference has led to an appreciation and cultivation of images based on the traditional definition of the feminine so clearly reminiscent of the first section of this book. However the search for what is female-specific cannot be seen merely as a reiteration of past qualities, for a prevalent theme of the new literature on female attributes includes female self-sufficiency and independence of person.

Independently female

Female independence now has a much wider definition than the notion of economic independence so commonly heralded during the revolution. Now it is something more that is advocated or an independence of personality and spirit that is now seen to have been previously inhibited in women by a 'spiritual footbinding' that 'deformed our souls'. Unfortunately, as one article stressed, 'many women do not know how to be women' in that, in limiting their horizons to appearance and adornment, they do not realize that independence of personality plus charm

and elegance is the most seductive combination appealing to men and the most appropriate for the new society. 'Keep to this road' says the author 'and be true women.'[91] Noteworthy is the example of five young women students who, on establishing a successful campus candle-lit café, were irked when they were dubbed as 'the five warrior attendants'. They would have much preferred to be known as the 'five golden flowers', a more feminine image, although they also wanted to be appreciated for their 'strong determination' of which they were inordinately proud.[92] The most powerful and popular metaphor for the acquisition of a new feminine independence is that captured by the phrase 'not the moon'.

The phrase 'not the moon' was first used in a contemporary play to denote the realization of the heroine that she need not depend on the light of another, as does the moon, to make herself shine. The metaphor was afterwards adopted widely both to criticize women's dependence on men's reflective light and to advocate female self-reliance in developing 'their own brilliance'. Many writings including a television series have taken up this theme. An article in *Women's World* in 1985 entitled 'Woman is not the Moon' exhorted women to treasure this phrase:

> Woman is not the moon. It is true, woman is not an appendange of a man. As a member of society she has independent qualities; she has all the behaviour, morality, intelligence and ability of a human being. She can work and be creative ...
>
> Women is not the moon. She must rely on herself to shine. These are words that many pioneers of the women's liberation movement, valiant women, and heroines have inscribed with their their own actions, tears and blood. Let us treasure these words, remember them, and act on them. Hopefully each person can find her own path in life and develop her own brilliance.

The author argued that what most obviously stands in the way of female independence and individual shining-brightness is the continuing influence of old ideas subordinating woman to man:

> They believe that as women, we don't have to be strong. They think that as long as one finds a good husband to depend on, it will be enough to just live out one's days. Old ideas such as 'Woman is one of man's ribs,' 'If a woman does not have a husband, her body does not have an owner,' etc., still influence some people. Many believe that man is the supporter of the family; the only thing that a woman can do is help him at home as a virtuous wife and good mother; getting ahead is something for men to do. History and present circumstances make many of us women comrades oppressed and constrained. This makes it impossible for us to display our talents, intelligence and creativity. We just become men's servants and their burden.[93]

If women have been encouraged to be independent, they also find themselves, in their own words, 'burdened by the wide rivers and high mountains' of contrasting social or male expectations of women. Women in Beijing I have talked to about recent policies towards women had strong views on the subject of independence. One 40-year-old university teacher thought that independence for women should be stressed, because from her experience as a teacher most young women were not sure about their own ideas unless applauded and were very dependent on their families and others for validation and approbation. An older woman I also interviewed instantly came up with her definition of the modern woman as 'one who plans her life without reference to men' at all stages of her life be it dressing to catch, competing for or living with and keeping her man. But she also simultaneously added that she was 'not being very realistic'. Continuing and current male expectations of women are perhaps most visibly displayed in male definitions of preferred or desirable marriage partners. According to one recent account, the desired female personality could not have more accurately reflected traditional virtues:

> The increasingly fierce competition in modern society pressures men more and more. They need a warm and harmonious family life, and want to find a life partner who is beautiful, gentle and kind-hearted. She should be both a virtuous wife and good mother – the traditional charm of Oriental woman, very womanly.[94]

In a recent city survey, male images of an ideal wife were reported to be of one 'who is beautiful, tall, healthy, soft, kind, well-mannered, loyal, virtuous and one who is skilled in domestic crafts (e.g. sewing, cooking and so forth) and can take care of children'.[95]

Much discussion centres around the conflict between socially approved qualities of 'virtuous wives and good mothers' and the ideal of the newly independent modern woman. A popular television series entitled *Women are not the Moon* centered on this female dilemma. The heroine, a beautiful young woman, is torn between pursuing a career 'after hard training' in the city as a fashion designer with 'a grand future in front of her' and marriage to a long-time sweetheart and now well-known entrepreneur who wants to marry her but keep her at home 'like a good wife'. The heroine however, believing that a woman is 'not the moon' and can shine without reflection from men, knows that she need not depend on a man, and thus she finally says goodbye to her young man in favour of pursuing her career – an ending that aroused much discussion among young viewers informally and in the

press. Such tensions between the ideal of independence held out to women in their own literature and social expectations still surrounding female attributes and roles is most evident in interviews, letters and short stories written by older young women or older single daughters after the age of around 30 years.

Older 'single' women

Given their professional status it is just such older single daughters who have the potential for leading independent lives, but this they are not permitted to do formally or informally. These single women are often referred to as *da guniang* (big daughter or big girl), which reflects the importance still attached to marriage in becoming a woman or an adult. From their mid-twenties, these young women come under pressure to be married and it is their difficulties in finding husbands or men who will have them that has brought their plight to public attention. They find themselves in an anomalous position. Officially, the older single woman has no existence separate from or independent of her family. For instance, she cannot have a registration separate from her parents' household and therefore has no individual right to separate housing or other benefits. The young women themselves say they not only come under pressure to marry from others, but they themselves say they feel 'incomplete', 'without a future' or lacking self-determination without a marriage partner. One short story illustrates the plight voiced again and again by such older daughters. Entitled *Hopes Worn Away*, it charts the feelings of an unmarried woman whose hopes for a married future had little by little worn slowly away so that at 30 years of age, she described herself as 'old, shrivelled, dying' as she plucked up the courage to stare in the mirror and look at the 'shell of her body' or 'the sad remains of her life'. 'I'd made a fairy tale for myself but now found that I'd entered a nightmare, with me as the fairy tale's old hag – an old hag that everyone called "Old Maid". I felt a chill spreading over me.'[96]

An older woman in her late thirties thought that gossip was the worst feature of a single life. 'If you're different,' she said, 'there can be a lot of gossip and you're different if you're not married, especially if you are of a certain age. People start asking "What's wrong?" as if there is something peculiar about the single state.'[97] One older single woman described what women like her go through, 'day in and day out':

> I still have strong desires in my heart. But I hate the prejudice that I have to suffer. I don't know if I can put up with it for ever. As a single woman in China, it is very hard to stand up. There are three kinds of us – the unmarried, the divorced, and the widowed. It's hard for all of us, but the worst is to be unmarried. Once you're over thirty – and I am – people think there is something strange about you if you're not married. They think you have bad relationships, that you're not friendly, or are eccentric. If you work in an office as I do, if one day you talk with a man, immediately there is gossip that you want to marry him ...
>
> Married people keep wanting to give advice to you – they mean well but they make you very uncomfortable. They say, tomorrow, I'll bring a boy. Every day they ask have you a boyfriend yet? What aren't you married? Why don't you like this boy, this man?
>
> It makes an unmarried woman like me very tired of this problem ... Some people; decide in the end, they'll take any man – not because she really loves him, but to get rid of all this rubbish and the questions that go on and on. If you live in this society, it's easier to be married, no matter to whom.[98]

Indeed the status of lone woman still carries with it such difficulties that most daughters are said to 'want to marry even if they have no desire' because marriage still gave them the best chance of social recognition as a person.

If it was far easier for women to get married rather than not, it is also, many felt, easier for them to stay married rather than divorce. Divorced women too find it difficult to obtain housing or receive any individual respect for their newly single status. Although the new Marriage Law of 1980 made divorce easier to obtain, and the divorce rate has increased, especially in the cities, the divorced woman still finds that, although she might be treated as more adult in that she has been married, she is also a lone female without rights or status. In 1992 a woman journalist, herself divorced, reported on her talks with other divorced women and her surprise to find that they were still far more interested in men's position, achievement and other material conditions rather than their own. She felt quite indignant that these women were without sufficient self-respect and could only think of depending on men.[99]

The trauma associated with divorce is certainly the theme of many a short story and in accounts of divorce in the media over the past ten years. It is one of the most common topics of discussion in the media and in conversation in the cities. My own interviews in 1994 with several women who were divorced and struggling to bring up their daughters after a tumultuous parting suggested that their situation was not a happy one. They were in educational occupations and fortunate that their housing was secure although sometimes hard won, but they also mostly found it a very lonely state in which to survive socially and

emotionally. They thought it was much more common to look for love outside of marriage or alongside marriage, and I was certainly surprised to hear of the number of extra-marital liaisons that seemed to be an accepted or even preferred solution to the common lack of or end of love in marriage and certainly those so attached did not experience the loneliness felt by lone women in their thirties and forties.

This trend is confirmed by the popularity of Shen Rong's short story, entitled *Divorce, Why bother?* or *Too lazy to divorce*, in which the material and emotional cost of divorce was deemed so great as to suggest alternative solutions. An older woman, a social scientist, twice married herself, proffered the opinion that she knew of 'no women happy in marriage'. Given all the changes in recent years, she thought it had been difficult for any relationship to survive such 'twists and turns'. Although divorce was much talked about in Beijing, she thought that most 'just let it go' and led their separate lives as far as possible. She herself had managed to swap a four-roomed flat for two flats of two rooms each on separate floors of the same building which allowed her and her husband to live separately – although sharing a housemaid, they ate together. In this way women had fought to acquire some independence without the trauma of divorce, and given that the status of a lone woman, be she unmarried, divorced or widowed, has never been recognized as independent and worthy of individual esteem, this had seemed to be a sensible solution to some in towns and cities. In the countryside too movement to new places by both men and women may well offer something of a similar solution. However, although the marriage relationship may be seen by all to be still a most desirable state for women, falling in love is increasingly seen to be at some cost to female independence.

Love and the female self

With marriage still a well-nigh universal goal, there is much evidence of a new and prevailing idealization of romantic love in contemporary Chinese literature with more than 500 magazines focusing on romance, love, dating and marriage. Recently though, the literature on women's independence has suggested that women are most likely to lose their personal independence in love: it is both the most desirable and the most vulnerable of states. Young women, in dreaming of love and romance, are said 'to get carried away' and 'give up everything to someone'. To use a now common Western phrase, 'women love too much,' and in doing so in China they are similarly seen to lose something of themselves 'as a kind of surrender'. In a recent short story, one young woman muses: 'I thought to myself: love is such a simple word, but no one escapes it. When a person's life really begins, when they become mature, they all search for it and make sacrifices for it.'[100] In an interview, another young woman more ruefully commented:

> When we love a man, we do everything for him, but we lose ourselves in the process. Love becomes a trap for women. It's not the same for men. They get a lot from a relationship. Whether or not one is married we women should never lose touch with our own needs never forget about ourselves.

So intense is the experience of merging one self with another in love and romance, that the literature is also full of references to the devastating anguish of lost love. A 28-year-old city woman summed up the feelings of her gender and age cohort when she noted that, because dating was a monumental experience, getting over the loss of a loved one was very difficult: 'You put everything into it. So that the other person becomes your life. For him to leave you when you are involved with him is crushing. It is an abandonment that is difficult to get over.'[101] The intensity of attachment and magic of romance is such that it seems to be difficult to sustain such an attachment following marriage with its daily routines and domestic life. The first few years of marriage are commonly thought to be the most difficult for a couple to traverse and their common lack of success in doing so happily is one of the reasons why marriage is often referred to as 'the grave of love'. One personal history after another illustrates that the risk of losing one's identity by being entirely preoccupied with another is a major characteristic of romantic involvement in contemporary China.

This preoccupation of young woman with male other is seen also to transfer itself to mother with child. A 38-year-old knitting-mill technician writes 'My love for my daughter surpasses my love for myself' and another mother writes 'to bring up a son, a sixth-grade pupil, I'm willing to sacrifice myself.'[102] A woman manager of a shirt factory office concluded with a heavy heart that 'women around the age of 40 are almost oblivious of themselves,'[103] such are their emotional investments in their families. In such cases not only were women seen to lose their identity and their dreams for themselves, but the children were also seen to be denied their own identities as they became dependent on and lived out their mother's dreams. Thus, in relation to both men and children, women have been increasingly exhorted not to lose their independent sense of their own needs and interests and to 'not surrender the female self' by wholly identifying with or receiving validation from another. As one young woman emphasized, their sense of value derives from the love of another: 'When you are really loved by one person, you can discover your own value.'[104] Frequent reference to notions of dependence on and validation of another and abandonment and incompleteness without another have worried counsellors newly charged

with attempting to help the modern young. As one counsellor with experience of listening to young women's problems has said: 'Compared to a man, a woman must have more psychological preparation to venture into society alone ... In a strange world a woman tends to look for a shelter.'[105]

It was this search for shelter, she thought, that reflected the difficulty women had with the concept of independence. Unusually too, she also had a message for parents of daughters, admonishing them not to forget to tell their young daughters to 'Keep true to yourself no matter how rough life's road is.' This was an unusual message, for rarely at any time in China's history has it been suggested to parents that they might have a social responsibility to strengthen the independence, self-confidence or self-esteem of their daughters.

Female socialization

Although in the aftermath of the upsurge in reports of infanticide in the early 1980s, the Women's Federation had embarked on an intensive campaign to persuade parents that it was as good to have a girl as a boy, there has been little attention given to the socialization of girls or to the experience and lives of daughters during the revolution or in the 1980s and 1990s. This lack of attention to the socialization of daughters is an important omission given the evidence from cross-cultural studies, which show again and again that the most important prerequisite to redefinition of women's roles and status is self-esteem and that the origins of this self-esteem lies in their experience as daughters. There are the beginnings of such an acknowledgement and the development of such an interest in China, but it is still very small. An article written in *Zhongguo Funu* in 1985 was unusual in drawing attention to parental responsibility for early female socialization and to the importance of this socialization for becoming a woman with self-esteem:

> People often sigh at the feelings of inferiority of some grown women, and blame them for lacking self-confidence. It never occurs to them that much of this sense of inferiority is formed in childhood. This is mainly because parents do not understand how to cultivate a girl's self-confidence. So, in order to train strong self-confident women appropriate to a new era, it is necessary to begin in childhood.
>
> If parents pay attention to educating their girl children in self-confidence, giving them more encouragement, more support, more help, more opportunities to temper themselves, and help them to form a strong, brave character, then after they grow up they will be able to fully develop their own abilities and shoulder the heavy task of constructing the 'Four Modernizations'. Conversely, if parents impose on their girl children the concept that 'males are worthy of respect and females are inferior,' this will cause them to form a sense of inferiority and a weak and timid character. It will limit them in giving full reign to their intelligence, ability, and wisdom, constrain their creativity, strangle their enterprising spirit and cause them to become weak people.
>
> At present, many parents have not yet become conscious of the importance of fostering the self-confidence of girl children. Some even unconsciously undermine their self-confidence. For example, some girls are bright, like to study and have high aspirations, but their parents don't encourage them and even say that girls have low intelligence, that no matter how hard they work it will be a futile effort, and that they are better off doing more housework instead. Aside from doing housework, girls very seldom have the chance to temper themselves in other ways. Thus a difference is created in the abilities of boys and girls, which in turn becomes a reason for deprecating girls. Then there are some parents who often say in front of their girl children that girls are not as good as boys, causing the girls to feel they are second-class citizens from birth. The result is that in all respects they become careful and cautious, and are always shrinking back. With all of this, how could a girl's newly sprouted self-confidence not come under attack?
>
> People often praise boys for their spirit of striving hard, seeking to outdo others, and swearing not to stop until they reach their goal. But this spirit, this self-confidence, this self-strengthening and courage, are by no means innate in their minds. They are the result of social education, and more important parental education. When a boy is easily upset and cries, his parents often say, 'Why are you crying? Men don't cry.' When boys retreat in the face of difficulties, parents often say, 'Be brave – it's not like a boy to shrink back.' This talk, these exclamations, are a form of education and encouragement. They bolster the courage and confidence of boys. If girls were given the same treatment, I firmly believe that a spirit of confidence and steadfast bravery would take root and sprout in the virgin soil of their pure souls.[106]

So far in China there is much less attention given to early differences fostered between girls and boys and much more emphasis given to physical, emotional and intellectual differences apparent at the onset of puberty. However, it is hoped that increasing attention will be given to the early socialization of daughters at a time when the fate of daughters is attracting more attention than at any time during recent history in

China. In particular, two phenomena drawing attention to daughters both resulting from the single-child family programme may have repercussions for the self-perceptions of young daughters. The first is the large numbers of daughters who are denied their lives at or before birth because they cannot substitute for sons and the second is the unusual experience of single daughters as the focus of parental expectations, who might be said to be newly substituting for sons. Both categories of daughters might be said to be 'missing'.

Missing girls

As the first decade of reform has drawn to a close, there has been increasing attention given to the phenomenon of missing girls, largely because of the rising discrepancy in sex ratios at birth. By mid-decade, trends in sex ratios at birth were estimated to be in excess of 110:100, which is 4 points above the international norm of 106:100. The 1990 census, according to both Chinese and foreign demographers, eliminated any doubt that sex ratios were high and rising in excess of 112:100; that ratios were higher for rural than urban areas and for poor or densely populated provinces such as Guangxi, Zhejiang Anhui Henan, Hunan, Shandong and Sichuan; and that ratios for higher parity births reached anywhere between 125 and 132 or even 149.4 if the first born was a girl.[107] All the evidence suggested a large and a growing number of missing baby girls. The latest figures released in China suggest that the problem is increasing as a result of pre-natal screening. The ratio in one city in Shandong province is estimated to have reached 163.8:100, which is higher than the norm reported for the surrounding rural areas which was estimated to be 144.6:100.[108] Altogether in China, the numbers of girls missing are reported to be in the millions, with foreign demographers persistently estimating that the numbers missing amount to around 40 million and one Chinese source estimating that this figure will rise to some 70 million by the end of the century.[109]

Explaining the causes of the imbalance in China's sex ratios and large numbers of missing girls has become the subject of many a demographic and social enquiry both within and outside of China. These enquiries commonly consider four hypotheses and their conclusions show some congruence. The first of the hypotheses is that female births are hidden by their parents either temporarily or permanently. There is certainly evidence of local instances of serious under-reporting or non-registration in order to evade penalties and to permit a second birth. Additionally, instances of temporary or permanent adoption by a friend or by family members would also raise the reported sex ratios of births. There is evidence that under-reporting of female

births twice exceeded that of male births in most years between 1983 and 1988, and Chinese demographers have estimated that this factor accounts for at least half to three quarters of the shortfall in sex ratios.

This explanation implies though that the sex ratio of children at subsequent ages would fall to normal as the previously hidden or adopted children are enumerated in later population census and surveys.

While this was the main working supposition throughout the late 1980s, the 1990 census cast doubt on the degree to which under-enumeration or under-registration of females could have occurred during the previous years. Now Chinese demographers are inclined to concur that under-reporting can by no means wholly account for the higher than normal sex ratios, mainly because there has been little if any re-emergence of girls into the cohorts born in the last half decade. In their view this factor implies that, unless they have been concealed with a tenacity that is hard to imagine, they may never have been born or survived birth. The hypothesis based on under-reporting thus appears much weaker than it did several years ago. Another explanation is that female infanticide has increased either at birth at the hands of birth attendants or parents or some time later due to family neglect. Statistical and anecdotal evidence quoted in the Chinese press and in personal interviews and conversations suggests that infanticide, child sale and premature death of females has continued in many regions of China, giving reason to suppose that girls have less chance of surviving than do their male counterparts. However, there is general agreement that female infanticide is not likely now to be the main cause of the imbalance in sex ratios at birth, mainly because unwanted baby girls are more likely to be abandoned and placed in orphanages for adoption or to be aborted before birth.

Presently the most discussed and likely explanation for imbalanced sex ratios has to do with pre-selective abortion, for it has become increasingly possible for parents to determine the sex of the foetus and for the pregnant woman to undergo an abortion if she is bearing a girl. Improvements in medical technology in the 1980s have been responsible for the development and spread of various pre-natal sex-identification techniques, so that the now widespread availability of ultrasound B machines has made it technically feasible for sex-selective abortion to take place in many regions in China. In 1979 the first Chinese-made ultrasound B machine was produced; in 1982 a large volume of imported and Chinese-made ultrasound B machines began to enter the Chinese market; in 1987 the number of ultrasound B machines used in hospitals and clinics was estimated to exceed 13,000, that is, about six per county or enough to supply every county and many townships in China. A large number of the ultrasound machines were put in place for purposes of disease diagnosis, monitoring of pregnancy and checks on IUD

placement. It is estimated that China now has a capacity of producing over 10,000 ultrasound machines per year, or enough to provide every county in China with four more machines every year, so that clinics and family planning centres at county and most township levels increasingly have ultrasound machines advanced enough to be used for pre-natal sex identification. Surveys show that ultrasound machines have been widely available in China since 1985, and widespread pre-natal screening for birth defects has meant that ultra-sound machines and technologies, such as amniocentesis, have become widely available and are used to determine the gender of the pregnancy in the period around 15 to 25 weeks after conception.

While government policy forbids the use of any of these technologies for ante-natal sex determination, their widespread availability makes real the possibility of misuse by officials open to bribes, the levy of fees to finance an otherwise under-funded local health service and the promotion of many forms of private and semi-private medical practices to supplement incomes an attractive option. Strong son preference, gifts and bribes make backdoor options more likely and the deployment of pre-arranged informal or unwritten signs such as a smile for a son and a frown for a daughter would suggest that the central government may have difficulty implementing regulations against the use of gender-determination technology. Despite government ruling against sex determination of the foetus, this explanation has the wide support of Chinese demographers and media, and what lends weight to this hypothesis is that even where birth surveillance is high, as in urban hospitals, medical records also show a high sex ratio, suggesting that numbers of women had undergone pre-natal sex identification.

Daughter discrimination, observed and recounted, has been an ongoing feature of my own field studies for many years. In addition to the features of household surveys I have outlined in Section 2 of this book, there are several memories that have haunted me on my many trips to China in the 1980s. For years many of those who have but casually crossed my path in taxi and train, not to mention colleagues and friends, have had stories and anecdotes of having seen or knowing somebody who has seen an abandoned and/or dead baby girl. For many years I have heard of the sale of baby girls and the under-registration of baby girls, depriving them of official record and facilities, but latterly in December 1992 the magnitude of the problem became more explicit with the publication of reports in *Nongmin Ribao* (Farmers' Daily), which estimated that there were 37 million more men than women in the population, and that by the year 2000, 70 million bachelors would be roaming China's countryside looking for wives.[110] Moreover, within the space of one week's stay in Beijing in March 1993, I had a number of telling exchanges and experiences. A colleague told

of the orphanages almost exclusively caring for baby girls and disabled baby boys; another colleague was offered a baby girl for Y2000, a sum that was voluntarily reduced by the parents to Y500 upon his refusal to purchase; it was rumoured that, at an airport where three adopted girls and one boy were leaving the country, the boy apparently had to be dressed in girls clothes to distract an angry crowd; my hotel in Beijing was being used as a transit point by large numbers of Canadian parents adopting Chinese babies – all girls; the Chinese papers from the international seminar on China's 1990 census confirmed the widespread availability of ultrasound technology permitting pre-natal sex-selective abortion; and *China Daily* in that week ran the headline, 'More boys than girls – but no problem.'[111] It is particularly noticeable that any discussion of ensuing or potential problems has centred on the likely shortage of wives, problems of men unable to marry and fears for future social stability. What has not been defined as a problem, or even considered, is the possibility that the presence of such extreme discrimination and its widespread reports might affect the self-perceptions, self-images and self-esteem of China's surviving daughters.

It does not just have to be imagined how young girls might respond to reports that girls were missing in large numbers merely because of their sex. There are not the monograph-length autobiographical accounts featured in Part 1 of this study that documented the damage of close personal and familial experiences of discrimination, but there are shorter vignettes that suggest that girls continue to be fully cognizant of their secondariness and vulnerability to son preference. In one short account of her life so far, one very young schoolgirl wrote of how her birth had not only been unwelcome but also, she thought, the cause of her parents' estrangement and her mother's subsequent death:

[redacted]

> Mother, have you ever considered what would happen when you treat me so? Whenever I get bad marks, I dare not show them to you since if you know, I will be beaten and scolded. What is most terrible is that it wounds my self-respect!
>
> I understand that you cherish high aspirations for me and want me to become a college student and a very intelligent girl. I can confidently say that I am a child who is eager to outdo others, and I will study very hard and try every way to make myself an outstanding person even though I might not be a very clever girl.
>
> The night is still quiet and, bending over the desk, I don't feel a bit sleepy, for I really have a lot to say to you. Mother, please trust your daughter so as to help her better![114]

The craving for mothers' affection of several of these young daughters is highly reminiscent of the personal narratives of the early decades of the century quoted in Part I.

A few daughters, feeling pressurized to achieve, have given up on their parents and left home, making 'runaway' or 'vagabond' girls a feature of newspaper reports for the first time since the early decades of the century. Then girls ran away from home in their attempt to further their education; now girls are running away primarily to escape from the pressures to achieve educationally. In 1993, the Women's Studies Forum drew attention to the phenomenon of vagrant girls as a problem 'not to be overlooked'.[115] At about the same time, *Zhongguo Qingnian* (China Youth) also reported on the experience of six girls who had all run away from their families.[116] In a manner reminiscent of the first decades of the century, the newspaper published letters from the daughters explaining their reasons for running away and the replies of their parents. In all the cases featured in the newspapers, including the national daily newspaper, *People's Daily*, the daughters had been only children who could no longer tolerate the pressure to achieve and to live up to parental expectations. In turn, the parents admitted that in retrospect the pressures they had placed on their daughters may have been unnecessarily high. The city parents of one 15-year-old girl runaway were both geologists who had spent the best years of their youth in the countryside during the Cultural Revolution. They later admitted that they had transferred their dreams to their daughter, whom they had named 'making wonders'. According to their daughter's letter published in one of the papers, their expectations had had a detrimental effect: 'I used to swear to study hard and bring honour ... But your autocratic education and indiscriminate physical punishment made me really lose confidence in myself.'[117]

She began to fail her exams and continually fall short of her parents' requirements, resorting to altering her report cards and returning home later and later. In the face of increasing criticism and warnings and fearing her deceptions would be found out, she decided to run away: 'It's better for me to leave home and try to hew out my path in life in the outside world than stay at home offending my parents.'
In reply, her parents admitted that:

> Aching regret has been gnawing at our hearts for the whole year since our only child went away. But it all comes too late. We had the child when we were both 30. We ambitiously designed what we felt to be a bright future for our daughter: key high school, renowned university ... We wanted her to achieve much more than we did ... We kept adding pressure on her. Whenever she was fond of playing and showed reluctance in study, we would scold her or beat her.

What is also interesting about so many of these cases is the role that peers or friends of the daughters' play as confidantes and advisors to the girls and as mediators between daughters and parents. It is friends who keep contact with the girls by posting letters and mediating between parent and girl by explaining to parents the predicaments of their daughters. When Beijing children were asked in a recent survey in whom they would confide, most said they would go to their friends. Their fathers ranked only fourth and their mothers fifth, with teachers not even in the top ten.[118] In the new defiance of age-old intergenerational bonds, it is peer groups who provide more suppport and it is such surveys, together with these newspapers stories of runaway girls, that have caused many to fear for future relations between older and younger generations: 'This disturbing trend may signal that the traditional relationships that have for centuries bound Chinese youth with their parents and rest of society may be loosening.'[119]

It is not just the traditional bonds between the generations that are observed to be loosening as old juxtaposes with the new, as Chinese juxtaposes with the West and the traditional juxtaposes with the modern; within the same generation tension between expectations and female choices make for ambiguity in lifestyle, attitudes and emotions.

Ambiguous women

Young women, especially, feel themselves to be hovering within a plurality of expectations originating from a variety of sources including state, family and male, so that the identification of 'proper' or 'appropriate' female behaviour and priorities seems difficult in the absence of a single rhetoric defining proper female needs and interests appropriate to a modern woman. Indeed, confusion is the prevalent theme

> Mother died. Since then, Granny and I have depended on each other for survival and every day I fear to lose her ...[112]

Another very young girl in less extreme circumstances wrote of how it felt when her mother seemed to prefer and privilege her brother:

> My mom, no matter what happened, always considered my elder brother first and ignored me. At the table, she kept putting food into my brother's bowl and not mine, as if I were not her own child. This made me very unhappy. Except that he is a boy, my brother was nothing special. People often say that men and women each hold up half the sky. Mom would see sooner or later that I would grow up better than he, I thought. One day when I got home after school, I opened the newspaper and saw a cartoon. It showed a balance scale with a boy sitting high up on the left side, holding various fruits and foods in his arms, while a little girl was sitting listlessly on the other side being beaten and scolded by her parents. Under the cartoon the words said: 'Don't regard men as superior to women.' As I looked at it, I thought of myself and felt I was just like that little girl. I cut the cartoon out of the newspaper and put it on the wall so Mom would see it.[113]

When young girls were asked to draw their families in one of my own field exercises conducted in schools over the past few years, those with brothers, admittedly a small sample and mostly rural, thought that their parents preferred their brothers to themselves. However, where daughters were single children, a phenomenon usually confined to the cities, their experience of family life might be quite different.

Single-child daughters

More than any other policy, it is the single-child family policy that has been responsible for the differing familial values attached to sons and daughters in contemporary China although there is a major difference in urban and rural households. Whereas in rural families the secondariness of daughters has been exacerbated in that they cannot substitute for sons, in urban areas, the picture is somewhat the reverse. There has never been the same degree of daughter discrimination evident in the cities largely because of the widespread availability of pensions and other economic factors that lay less stress on the importance of sons for economic reasons. Couples usually set up new households on marriage and later elderly parents may just as easily reside with a daughter as with a son. Indeed, some city parents would argue that a daughter's care for her elderly parents is likely to be more solicitous than that of a son. In larger cities, with the widespread stricter implementation of

the one-child family policy, the majority of households have only one child and in these circumstances there is evidence to suggest that one-child daughters have become as important as sons and may even have become more important than at any time in the past, given their new status as substitute sons. City parents have thus invested in their only child regardless of whether it is a boy or a girl. In field investigations of household accounts several years ago, it was quite clear that the portion of family income devoted to the single child, boy or girl, was rising, whether for special foods, toys, clothes, recreation or education. In fact, meeting children's needs has become one of the fastest expanding consumer sectors in recent years. My own interviews with parents of single children some years ago also suggested an overwhelming interest in their education. This was not only fostered by the state in the interests of raising a 'quality child', but also parents, members of the previous generation 'lost' during the Cultural Revolution, were quite openly making up for their own deprivations. With this new-found interest and with new-found means, the single child has become the focus of expectations of two sets of grandparents and one set of parents. For single-child girls this is something of a new phenomenon and it has led to stresses and strains in family relations, with girls unable to withstand the presssures and in extreme circumstances even running away from home.

One small daughter in grade six primary school wrote a letter to her mother in which she tried to convey to her the negative effects of the high expectations she demanded of her daughter:

> The night is so quiet. I have been bending over the desk for five hours, writing mechanically, the extra homework that you required me to do. Rubbing my sleepy eyes, looking at the endless subjects and those inexplicable problems, I have no way out but write you this letter to tell you what is on my mind![114]

What is on her mind is that her mother has had ambitions for her from the time she was born: 'You often say to me "Clumsy birds have to start flying early – come on, do thirty applied problems" ... Rewards and punishments are set out clearly; your words are an "imperial edict" to which I dare not object.'

If she makes mistakes, her mother cannot control her temper and gives her a heavy slap in the face:

> Mother you may scold me and beat me as you please, for why on earth am I so foolish as not to be able to live up to your expectations! ... Mother, how wonderful it would be if you use the energy it takes to beat me, to help me with my lessons and homework!

in present-day representations of women and in the written and spoken words of women themselves. Tension and confusion is openly expressed again and again in the numerous short stories published in the past ten years in China. So far there have been three volumes on contemporary Chinese women writers translated and published in English and the stories in each depict very clearly trends in the changing representations of modern woman in China over the past ten years. The first volume, published in 1982, illuminated some of the hitherto hidden areas of women's lives, which were represented as more complex than in previous revolutionary decades, both in their presentation of their selves and of others.[120] In these stories the reader was newly treated to more than just a description of a sequence of events, which was usually secondary to the importance of the stream of consciousness or interior dialogue of the women characters as they think and verbally rationalize their choices or lack of options in working out the priorities of their young or middle-aged lives and in particular the conflicting demands of love, marriage or children with career. Most of these of stories, of which Shen Rong's *At Middle Age* is an example, belong to the genre of wound literature or scar literature in that they focus on expressing social problems of political movements that caused great suffering.

In the second volume the influence of important events and characteristics of society fades into the background and it is the conflict and tension within female minds that are narrated.[121] The stories are of fragmented disorderly lives, with the emphasis on the inconsequential as a device to question the meaning and worth of female lives lived in all their ambiguity and ambivalence. In one very popular short story, *Blue Sky and Green Sea*, the author Liu Suola portrays female characters who display outward confidence but are hiding hearts full of paradoxes, juxtaposing contradictory outward and inward feelings or thoughts robbing them of vital energy. To emphasize this point, the young woman author also writes in an unusually ambiguous tangled style of writing with constant repetititon and confusion said 'to mirror the characters' own depressed and confused mind'.

It is the complexity of life's choices, dilemmas and problems in the everyday of late-reform China that feature in the third volume of short stories published in 1993.[122] They feature one woman's moving tale of stifled aspirations in the countryside; another's exhausting day as a factory worker; another's frustrations at bringing up a child in the consumer age and the anxieties of a successful Shanghai businesswoman. The majority of the heroines are shown moving beyond the quest for male protection to develop a sense of their own worth as women. In one short story, entitled *Black Forest*, a young woman who recognizes her own abilities and the large gap between her and her husband, resolutely breaks out from her ailing marriage to start a new

life. Labelled 'the new realism', the stories lay stress not only on woman's own search for self-worth within the everyday but also on her own desire to exert some control over her own destiny.

Tension and confusion are also expressed by women directly in their own letters published in the media. In a similar period of rapid social change several decades earlier, when there were also few patterns and cues guiding new behaviour in education, employment, courtship and marriage, daughters especially looked to the new media for help in establishing models for becoming new and modern women. As did the younger generations in the early decades of this century, young women in recent years have also turned to magazines and newspapers for some form of guidance in resolving tensions and reducing confusion. Since 1980 the number of popular magazines and newspapers has mushroomed, with most giving women the opportunity to seek advice on a wide range of social and individual problems generating confusion. In one of my recent interviews, one woman editor of the 'Family and Society' section of *Zhongguo Funu Bao* (Chinese Women's News) outlined the main issues raised in the letters of her correspondents. She thought that a majority of the letters were to do with legal issues or the protection of women's rights and interests, particularly pertaining to family disputes in which they as daughters, daughters-in-law, wives or widows felt discriminated against. Many of the letters had to do with affairs of the heart, particularly with relationships outside of marriage and the problems of divorce including the division of property.

In rural magazines, the editor of *Rural Women* thought that more than half of the problems had to do with requesting information in order to generate income and reduce poverty, with the remaining number divided equally between issues to do with the law and the exercise of their rights in family and marriage. Common problems in the latter category included the opposition of parents to the man of a woman's choice and the refusal of a man to marry a woman after having had sexual relations with her. A subject of both letter and discussion were the problems, including harassment from managers and other men, that young rural women might face as migrants to the cities and special economic zones. Many young village women perceived a dilemma: they wanted to leave the boredom of the villages for the bright lights but they did not want to travel to the confusion of the unknown urban world far from the protection of family and friends.

One novel medium for providing advice and guidance, and one which has received much publicity, has been the establishment of telephone hotlines, which have become fashionable in the cities as sources of advice for women and young persons 'troubled by the confusion of choice in China's changing society'.[123]

A women's hotline in Beijing was set up in September 1991 by a

retired newspaper editor who, in the process of studying women's issues, realized that women needed more direct help in alleviating the 'life-confusions and worries' that the changes of the reform era had brought. She thought this was largely because this generation of women 'shoulders the burdens of society and family while strongly desiring emotional compensation'. The hotline promised to do its best for callers who 'pour out their secret sorrows'and it has been so successful that it is said to 'link a society full of problems and grievances'. During the first seven months of its operation, it was reported that more than 80 per cent of the calls were from women with two thirds from callers less than 30 years old.

The main problems were to do with marriage and love (44.6 per cent), maternal and child-care (18.8 per cent), sex problems (6.4 per cent) and human relationships (8.5 per cent). In marriage and love the main questions focused on problems to do with communication within the marriage relationship, affairs, divorce and the sharing of domestic labour. Maternal and child-care problems included contraception, birth, nutrition and correcting child misbehaviour. A report on the hotline has noted that it is quite clear from the questions to do with sex that while some women are now making their 'own claims for sexual life', others are still worrying about and wanting to know the physical signs of 'lost chastity'. Overall, according to the report, most of the requests for advice confirmed that, 'although great changes have taken place in Reform China, the influence of traditional values is still very powerful.' The interviews with the counsellors also suggested that they primarily saw themselves as providing support for women 'caught between tradition and opportunity' and enabling them 'to make independent decisions' for which many women 'still need special help to realise their own strengths and destinies'.

In interviews conducted in the summer of 1994, city women of all but the youngest age cohorts felt themselves ambiguously drawn in several directions at once and confessed to some confusion in these times of rapid change and without clear directions or models to follow. Older women felt they had lived through so many changes in their own lifetimes or twisted and turned in so many different directions. The oldest woman I interviewed had been educated in a Catholic convent school and university before 1949; she had studied and worked at the Academy of Social Sciences since the early 1950s, observing and participating in political movements for socialist education including the anti-Rightist campaign, the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution; she had since studied in England and North America and returned to Beijing to retire and translate and write on feminist themes in English and Chinese literature; she had married twice, divorced once, lived separately now and her two children, educated in Chinese

schools, now studied abroad. No wonder, on her recent return to China after an absence of several years, she said she felt like Rip van Winkle!

Several younger women in their early to mid forties too had lived several lives including Red Guard, *Xiaxiang* or sent-down-to-the-countryside-youth, university student in Beijing and student abroad. One woman whom I have known for several years went from riding horseback on the Mongolian steppes to Harvard University, Massachusetts within the space of a few years. She had been fortunate in that one of her classmates sharing her Mongolian tent had studied English and taught her all she knew, which was enough to gain her entrance to university in Beijing when competitive entrance exams were reinstated. She went on to work for a foreign agency and study international relations at Harvard. For her too, in her own words, 'life and marriage had been cooked up somewhere in this process,' leaving her now newly divorced as a new mother struggling to bring up her school-age daughter previously cared for by her mother-in-law. When I asked her if she would talk about how the modern woman might feel in China today, she replied without a pause – 'Very confused! How can you not be confused?'

Women in their twenties and thirties also admitted to some confusion as to where their priorities lay in the new China – itself ambivalent about its own developing priorities. Should they place the demands of work before or after those of their families or more precisely how could they best juggle the demands of both in these times of piece-work, inflation and uncertainty to the benefit of themselves and their families? There is some ambivalence surrounding the status of the strong independent successful career woman, with the single woman deemed less than successful. In this respect, the women of Taiwan, seeming to combine an alluring femininity and family care with careers, were much more admired than the career women of Hong Kong with their shoulder pads! Again young students in higher education feared that they would neither obtain a good job nor make a good marriage: if they put off one they might lose it all together. Most women felt that only as school students bent on their studies had they escaped the dilemmas of their times. These stories are of privileged women; other young women in other places would have talked of the new choices and the conflict, tension or at least ambivalence involved in making life-choices – perhaps choosing city over village, work rather than school, self- or service- rather than state- or factory-employment or long-term careers over short-term contracting of their labour or even the more lucrative contracting of their bodies given that one of the most observable of changes in the 1990s over the 1980s has been the growing number of bar girls and prostitutes in cities in pursuit of the consumer dream. The visibility of such young women walking the streets and the

escalators in smart hotels and in bars was my single most important new observation during a recent trip to Beijing in the summer of 1994. In 1994, each age cohort had very different expectations, and expressed very different ideas, reservations and fears about themselves, their own generation and younger or older cohorts, but in common they seemed to be searching for cues, guidance and models in making sense of the new opportunities for women's social and self-expression in cosmopolitan China of the 1990s.

Cosmopolitan daughters

Perhaps it is the search for opportunity, independent strength or worth and control of their destiny in becoming a modern Chinese woman that are common to the plethora of images and dinstinctions in living. In the search for images and qualities that are female as opposed to male, modern as opposed to traditional and Chinese as opposed to Western, much of the contemporary attempt to reflect on and newly chart the uncharted territory of Reform also recalls similar female attempts during Republican and Revolutionary eras. Just as for the daughters discussed in Parts I and II who searched for and took advantage of new opportunities for education and occupation, so women in reform have found and taken advantage of the new opportunities for education and occupation not only in greater numbers but also with greater variation. If there is one trend that subsumes the major changes for women during the reform era, it is the appropriation of the new opportunities to become educated for and employed in a variety of occupations, making for a new independence in living. The trickle of new opportunities in the Republican era and the river of new opportunities in the Revolution has become the sea during Reform years. A popular saying, *xia hai* or going out or down to the sea, currently in vogue to refer to taking up new business opportunities or 'leaping into the tide of private business' might be expanded to embrace more than just business opportunities:

> Some say that the sea symbolises an immense realm, and going to the sea is an action that incites bold people. Some say that there are more chances of harvest in the sea than on the land. People watch the sea from the shore with some desire, some fear and some mystery. The waves are turbulent, so there may not be plain sailing ahead. Yet many women are among these sea-goers.[124]

Just as some of the early modern women in Republican times became successful in the professions and business and others ended up as 'fallen leaves in an autumn wind', so with new opportunities have come new

risks for today's younger generation of women. The number of opportunities has surely risen but the new opportunities of reform rhetoric have not been lived by all: 'These times have made Chinese women's lives sweet and sour. For some their jobs are less secure sometimes and their opportunities fewer, but for others, their futures are more promising and are of their own choosing.'[125] To continue the seaside analogy, some venture into the water boldly and some more timidly, some may swim, some may flounder, but even if the experience of sailing is not smooth the important point is that the sea of opportunity is present.

Although it is difficult during the Reform era to identify a single rhetorical definition of the modern Chinese woman, the many exhortations and expectations of women advocate a strength, independence and adornment that are uniquely female. Model women want not to be five golden warriors but five golden flowers, albeit determined and independent. In Republican times, modern women also searched for sources of strength via education and employment to flower and be independent of their families. Rather than be uniquely female, however, they saw themselves as becoming more like male others or at least taking on masculine characteristics of strength and independence. During the revolution, the modern Chinese woman was exhorted to be physically strong and economically active like her male peers primarily by entering the androgynous category of work. Now, in a shift to concern with the personal, individual and gender qualities, women are exhorted to be strong, independent of spirit and uniquely female, not depending on or reflecting the light of male others. Yet despite this new rhetoric, women are still by their admission influenced by male desires and preferences, especially in love and marriage choices, and daughters who are not married feel incomplete and far from strong and independent in their single status.

While overlapping gender categories are rejected, definitions of female still very much take the qualities of the male other as the yardstick in identifying different and uniquely female characteristics. If men are assumed to be strong and independent then in becoming separate and different, women have been tempted to adopt opposite or female qualities traditionally associated with femaleness and femininity. Both among men, but also among women on their own admission, 'traditional beliefs also run deep.' From the turn of the century during Republican and Revolution and now Reform, even the most strong and independent of women be they pioneers, models or entrepreneurs find themselves succumbing to customary thoughts and practices in public, in the domestic and within themselves as they shape their identities to please very mixed societal, familial and specifically male expectations.

Central to becoming a modern woman throughout the twentieth century and symbolic of so much more has been the adoption of

'modern' dress. In the early decades of the century it might be Western dress or at least mixed Chinese-Western dress and in a few cases male attire; during the Revolution it was the unisex blue trouser suit that was *de rigueur*; and during the Reform era the Western fashion garment various in style, colour and fabric took Chinese women by storm, so speedy, general and changeable has been its adoption by the younger women throughout so much of China.

More generally, if the association of the modern with Western, albeit often both indirect and limited in influence, characterized the Republican era and the explicit and planned dissociation or closing of China to Western influence characterized the years of Revolution, then the overlapping of the 'modern' of socialism with both global consumption and mainly Western influence has distinguished recent years of Reform. As in the early decades of the twentieth century, in the interests of becoming global but retaining what distinguishes Chinese, there has been a continuing official attempt to separate the import of Western culture from Western goods so as to be both modern and Chinese. Thus in China today in the pursuit of both internationalism and cultural specificity, it is politically correct to speak of 'socialism with Chinese characteristics'. So it might be argued that there is a serious attempt to evolve a feminism with Chinese characteristics, femininity with Chinese characteristics or even fashion with Chinese characteristics. Now within women's studies in China, it is common to emphasize the specifically Chinese socio-political context of contemporary Chinese feminism and demarcate its differences from Western feminism.

There is an attempt to define a culturally-specific Chinese womanhood with references to her Chinese, often traditional, qualities that differentiate her from her Western sisters, and contemporary fashion-shows predominantly combine both Chinese and Western stylistic features in a single garment.[126] However, for each successive generation anew, the pursuit of the 'modern' has been less nuanced or culturally specific in intent. A survey of new role models among children in Beijing revealed that the people they now respect are from film and popular music shows mostly derived from outside of China.[127] When young schoolgirls in one of my recent research exercises were asked to draw their families now and themselves in twenty years time, the majority illustrated their families in the company of the centrally-placed television sets and portrayed their grown selves as Western-clad singers and dancers with short skirts and microphones and rich in the company of consumer durables ranging from a car to television sets. What exercises such as these, undertaken in both urban or rural locations, suggest is that more than any other factor it is is the global mass media, much of it originating outside of China, that is important in defining female models for becoming a modern woman. Official rhetoric might

continue to have a hand in shaping a hybrid or ambiguous Chinese-Western image for today's modern Chinese women, women of most ages might experience tension and confusion in meeting a pluralism of mixed Chinese and Western expectations, but more than ever before China's youngest daughters expect to assume a cosmopolitan culture.

FAXED

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29th ?
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25th - Susan

FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

Total number of pages inc. this cover sheet:__

TO:	Susan O'Sullivan, US Dept. of State	**FAX:** +1 202-647-1677
FR:	Phyllis L. Chang	**TEL:**
DATE:	May 23, 1998	
RE:	Women's Issues Roundtable	

Susan,

Glad we had a chance to catch up, even if only briefly. I am leaving tomorrow morning for a project visit and must attend part of the trial procedure seminar today, so I won't be able to get you as much information as I had hoped. But here are some suggestions for women activists—and great people—whom would be excellent for a roundtable. If a roundtable is to be held, which I think would be very interesting, my one very strong plea is **to include Chinese who do not speak English** (this problem can be reasonably overcome with the topnotch interpreters that the Presidential delegation will certainly have). At similar events in the past, only Chinese who speak good English have been chosen. As you can imagine, this distorts the pool of candidates and you really miss some of the best people.

I have sent by express mail a small package with a couple of misc. English articles on women's issues in China, as well as Chinese materials from some of the organizations we talked about.

Hope these are of some help or inspiration!

Best,

Phyllis

Phyllis - W-F
mrs. Sasser
Bob Dewitt
and ice writes
mm / Tate
Interest to Phyllis

K 86 10
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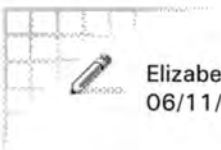

Elizabeth R. Newman
06/11/98 11:42:28 AM

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To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message

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Subject: RESEND - NO CHANGES 6-11-98 Remarks on China in the National Interest

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release June 11, 1998

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
ON U.S.-CHINA RELATIONS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

National Geographic Society
Washington, D.C.

10:32 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, President Fahey. I don't know what to say about starting the day with this apparition. (Laughter.) But it's probably good practice for our line of work. (Laughter.) I try to read every issue of the National Geographic, and I will certainly look forward to that one.

Chairman Grosvenor, members of Congress, members of the administration, and members of previous administrations who are here and others who care about the national security and national interests of the United States. First let me, once again, thank the National Geographic Society for its hospitality, and for the very important work that has done for so long now.

As all of you know, I will go to China in two weeks time. It will be the first state visit by an American President this decade. I'm going because I think it's the right thing to do for our country. Today I want to talk with you about our relationship with China and how it fits into our broader concerns for the world of the 21st century and our concerns, in particular, for developments in Asia. That relationship will in large measure help to determine whether the new century is one of security, peace, and prosperity for the American people.

Let me say that, all of you know the dimensions, but I think it is worth repeating a few of the facts about China. It is already the world's most populous nation; it will increase by the size of America's current population every 20 years. It's vast territory borders 15 countries. It has one of the fastest growing economies on Earth. It holds a permanent seat on the National Security Council of the United Nations. Over the past 25 years, it has entered a period of profound change, emerging from isolation, turning a closed economy into an engine for growth, increasing cooperation with the rest of the world, raising the standard of living for hundreds of millions

of its citizens.

The role China chooses to play in preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction are encouraging it in combatting or ignoring international crime and drug trafficking; in protecting or degrading the environment; in tearing down or building up trade barriers; in respecting or abusing human rights; in resolving difficult situations in Asia from the Indian subcontinent to the Korean Peninsula or aggravating them. The role China chooses to play will powerfully shape the next century.

A stable, open, prosperous China that assumes its responsibilities for building a more peaceful world is clearly and profoundly in our interests. On that point all Americans agree. But as we all know, there is serious disagreement over how best to encourage the emergence of that kind of China, and how to handle our differences, especially over human rights, in the meantime.

Some Americans believe we should try to isolate and contain China because of its undemocratic system and human rights violation, and in order to retard its capacity to become America's next great enemy. Some believe increased commercial dealings alone will inevitably lead to a more open, more democratic China.

We have chosen a different course that I believe to be both principled and pragmatic: expanding our areas of cooperation with China while dealing forthrightly with our differences. This policy is supported by our key democratic allies in Asia, Japan, South Korea, Australia, Thailand, the Philippines. It has recently been publicly endorsed by a number of distinguished religious leaders, including Reverend Billy Graham and the Dalai Lama. My trip has been recently supported by political opponents of the current Chinese government, including most recently, Wang Dan.

There is a reason for this. Seeking to isolate China is clearly unworkable. Even our friends and allies around the world do not support us -- or would not support us in that. We would succeed instead in isolating ourselves and our own policy.

Most important, choosing isolation over engagement would not make the world safer. It would make it more dangerous. It would undermine rather than strengthen our efforts to foster stability in Asia. It would eliminate, not facilitate cooperation on issues relating to mass destruction. It would hinder, not help the cause of democracy and human rights in China. It would set back, not step up worldwide efforts to protect the environment. It would cut off, not open up one of the world's most important markets. It would encourage the Chinese to turn inward and to act in opposition to our interests and values.

Consider the areas that matter most to America's peace, prosperity and security, and ask yourselves, would our interests and ideals be better served by advancing our work with, or isolating ourselves from China.

First, think about our interests in a stable Asia, an interest that China shares. The nuclear threats -- excuse me -- the nuclear tests by India and Pakistan are a threat to the stability we seek. They risk a terrible outcome. A miscalculation between two adversaries with large armies would be bad. A miscalculation between two adversaries with nuclear weapons could be catastrophic. These tests were all the more unfortunate because they divert precious resources from countries with unlimited potential.

India is a very great nation, soon to be not only the world's most populous democracy, but its most populous country. It is home to the world's largest middle class already and a remarkable culture that taught the modern world the power of nonviolence. For 50 years Pakistan has been a vibrant Islamic state, and is today a robust democracy. It is important for the world to recognize the remarkable contributions both these countries have made and will continue to make to the community of nations if they can proceed along the path of peace.

It is important for the world to recognize that both India and Pakistan have security concerns that are legitimate. But it is equally important for India and Pakistan to recognize that developing weapons of mass destruction is the wrong way to define their greatness, to protect their security, or to advance their concerns.

I believe that we now have a self-defeating, dangerous, and costly course underway. I believe that this course, if continued, not moderated and ultimately changed, will make both the people of Indian and the people of Pakistan poorer, not richer, and less, not more, secure. Resolving this requires us to cooperate with China.

Last week, China chaired a meeting of the permanent members of the U.N. Security Council to forge a common strategy for moving India and Pakistan back from the nuclear arms race edge. It has condemned both countries for conducting nuclear tests. It has joined us in urging them to conduct no more tests, to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, to avoid deploying or testing missiles, to tone down the rhetoric, to work to resolve their differences including over Kashmir through dialogue. Because of its history with both countries, China must be a part of any ultimate resolution of this matter.

On the Korean Peninsula, China has become a force for peace and stability, helping us to convince North Korea to freeze its dangerous nuclear program, playing a constructive role in the four-party peace talks. And China has been a helpful partner in international efforts to stabilize the Asian financial crisis. In resisting the temptation to devalue its currency, China has seen that its own interests lie in preventing another round of competitive devaluations that would have severely damaged prospects for regional recovery. It has also contributed to the rescue packages for affected economies.

Now, for each of these problems we should ask ourselves, are we better off working with China or without it? When I travel to China this month, I will work with President Jiang to advance our Asian security agenda, keeping the pressure on India and Pakistan to curb their nuclear arms race and to commence a dialogue; using the strength of our economies and our influence to bolster Asian economies battered by the economic crisis; and discussing steps we can take to advance peace and security on the Korean Peninsula. I will encourage President Jiang to pursue the cross-strait discussion the PRC recently resumed with Taiwan, and where we have already seen a reduction in tensions.

Second, stopping the spread of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons is clearly one of our most urgent security challenges. As a nuclear power with increasingly sophisticated industrial and technological capabilities, China can choose either to be a part of the problem or a part of the solution.

For years, China stood outside the international arms control regime. In the last decade it has joined the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological Weapons Convention, and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, each with clear rules, reporting requirements and inspection systems. In the past, China has been a major exporter of sophisticated weapons-related technologies. That is why in virtually all our high-level contacts with China's leadership, and in my summit meeting with President Jiang last October, nonproliferation has been high on the agenda.

Had we been trying to isolate China rather than work with it, would China have agreed to stop assistance to Iran for its nuclear program,? To terminate its assistance to unsafeguarded nuclear facilities such as those in Pakistan? To tighten its export control system, to sell no more anti-ship cruise missiles to Iran? These vital decisions were all in our interest, and they clearly were the fruit of our engagement.

I will continue to press China on proliferation. I will seek stronger controls on the sale of missiles, missile technology, dual-use products, and chemical and biological weapons. I will argue that it is in China's interest, because the spread of weapons and technologies would increasingly destabilize areas near China's own borders.

Third, the United States has a profound stake in combatting international organized crime and drug trafficking. International criminal syndicates threaten to undermine confidence in new but fragile market democracies. They bilk people out of billions of dollars and bring violence and despair to our schools and neighborhoods. These are problems from which none of us are isolated and which, as I said at the United Nations a few days ago, no nation is so big it can fight alone.

With a land mass spanning from Russia in the north to Vietnam and Thailand in the south, from India and

Pakistan in the west to Korea and Japan in the east, China has become a transshipment point for drugs and the proceeds of illegal activities. Last month a special liaison group that President Jiang and I established brought together leading Chinese and American law enforcement officials to step up our cooperation against organized crime, alien smuggling, and counterfeiting.

Next month the Drug Enforcement Agency of the United States will open an office in Beijing. Here, too, pursuing practical cooperation with China is making a difference for America's future.

Fourth, China and the United States share the same global environment, an interest in preserving it for this and future generations. China is experiencing an environmental crisis perhaps greater than any other nation in history at a comparable stage of its development. Every substantial body of water in China is polluted. In many places, water is in short supply. Respiratory illness is the number one health problem for China's people because of air pollution.

Early in the next century, China will surpass the United States as the world's largest emitter of greenhouse gases, which are dangerously warming our planet. This matters profoundly to the American people, because what comes out of a smokestack or goes into a river in China can do grievous harm beyond its borders. It is a fool's errand to believe that we can deal with our present and future global environmental challenges without strong cooperation with China.

A year ago, the Vice President launched a dialogue with the Chinese on the environment to help them pursue growth and protect the environment at the same time. I have to tell you that this is one of the central challenges we face -- convincing all developing nations, but especially China, and other very large ones, that it is actually possible to grow their economies in the 21st century without following the pattern of energy use and environmental damages that characterize economic growth in this century. And we need all the help we can to make that case.

In Beijing, I will explore with President Jiang how American clean energy technology can help to improve air quality and bring electricity to more of China's rural residents. We will discuss innovative tools for financing clean energy development that were established under the Kyoto climate change agreement.

Fifth, America clearly benefits from an increasingly free, fair and open global trading system. Over the past six years, trade has generated more than one-third of the remarkable economic growth we have enjoyed. If we are to continue generating 20 percent of the world's wealth with just four percent of its population, we must continue to trade with the other 96 percent of the people with whom we share this small planet.

One in every four people is Chinese. And China boasts a growth rate that has averaged 10 percent for the past 20 years. Over the next 20 years, it is projected that the developing economies will grow at three times the rate of the already developed economies. It is manifestly, therefore, in our interest to bring the Chinese people more and more fully into the global trading system to get the benefits and share the responsibilities of emerging economic prosperity.

Already China is one of the fastest growing markets for our goods and services. As we look into the next century, it will clearly support hundreds of thousands of jobs all across our country. But access to China's markets also remains restricted for many of our companies and products. What is the best way to level the playing field? We could erect trade barriers. We could deny China the normal trading status we give to so many other countries with whom we have significant disagreements. But that would only penalize our consumers, invite retaliation from China on $13 billion in United States exports, and create a self-defeating cycle of protectionism that the world has seen before.

Or we can continue to press China to open its markets -- it's goods markets, its services markets, its agricultural markets -- as it engages in sweeping economic reform. We can work toward China's admission to the WTO on commercially meaningful terms, where it will be subject to international rules of free and fair trade. And we can renew normal trade treatment for China, as every President has done since 1980, strengthening

instead of undermining our economic relationship.

In each of these crucial areas, working with China is the best way to advance our interests. But we also know that how China evolves inside its borders will influence how it acts beyond them. We, therefore, have a profound interest in encouraging China to embrace the ideals upon which our nation was founded and which have now been universally embraced -- the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; to debate, dissent, associate and worship without state interference. These ideas are now the birthright of people everywhere, a part of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. They are part of the fabric of all truly free societies.

We have a fundamental difference with China's leadership over this. The question we Americans must answer is not whether we support human rights in China -- surely, all of us do -- but, rather, what is the best way to advance them. By integrating China into the community of nations and the global economy, helping its leadership understand that greater freedom profoundly serves China's interests, and standing up for our principles, we can most effectively serve the cause of democracy and human rights within China.

Over time, the more we bring China into the world the more the world will bring freedom to China. China's remarkable economic growth is making China more and more dependent on other nations for investment, for markets, for energy, for ideas. These ties increase the need for the stronger rule of law, openness, and accountability. And they carry with them powerful agents of change -- fax machines and photocopiers, computers and the Internet. Over the past decade the number of mobile phones has jumped from 50,000 to more than 13 million in China, and China is heading from about 400,000 Internet accounts last year to more than 20 million early in the next century. Already, one in five residents in Beijing has access to satellite transmissions. Some of the American satellites China sends into space beam CNN and other independent sources of news and ideas into China.

The licensing of American commercial satellite launches on Chinese rockets was approved by President Reagan, begun by President Bush, continued under my administration, for the simple reason that the demand for American satellites far out-strips America's launch capacity, and because others, including Russian and European nations, can do this job at much less cost.

It is important for every American to understand that there are strict safeguards, including a Department of Defense plan for each launch, to prevent any assistance to China's missile programs. Licensing these launches allows us to meet the demand for American satellites and helps people on every continent share ideas, information, and images, through television, cell phones, and pagers. In the case of China, the policy also furthers our efforts to stop the spread of missile technology by providing China incentives to observe nonproliferation agreements. This policy clearly has served our national interests.

Over time, I believe China's leaders must accept freedom's progress because China can only reach its full potential if its people are free to reach theirs.

In the Information Age, the wealth of any nation, including China, lies in its people -- in their capacity to create, to communicate, to innovate. The Chinese people must have the freedom to speak, to publish, to associate, to worship without fear of reprisal. Only then will China reach its full potential for growth and greatness.

I have told President Jiang that when it comes to human rights and religious freedom, China remains on the wrong side of history. Unlike some, I do not believe increased commercial dealings alone will inevitably lead to greater openness and freedom. We must work to speed history's course. Complacency or silence would run counter to everything we stand for as Americans. It would deny those fighting for human rights and religious freedom inside China the outside support that is a source of strength and comfort. Indeed, one of the most important benefits of our engagement with China is that it gives us an effective means to urge China's leaders publicly and privately to change course.

Our message remains strong and constant: Do not arrest people for their political beliefs. Release those

who are in jail for that reason. Renounce coercive population control practices. Resume your dialogue with the Dalai Lama. Allow people to worship when, where, and how they choose. And recognize that our relationship simply cannot reach its full potential so long as Chinese people are denied fundamental human rights.

In support of that message, we are strengthening Radio Free Asia. We are working with China to expand the rule of law and civil society programs in China so that rights already on the books there can become rights in reality.

This principled, pragmatic approach has produced significant results, although still far from enough. Over the past year, China has released from jail two prominent dissidents -- Wei Jingsheng and Wang Dan -- and Catholic Bishop Zeng. It announced its intention to sign the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which will subject China's human rights practices to regular scrutiny by independent international observers. President Jiang received a delegation of prominent American religious leaders and invited them to visit Tibet.

Seeking to isolate China will not free one more political dissident, will not open one more church to those who wish to worship, will do nothing to encourage China to live by the laws it has written. Instead, it will limit our ability to advance human rights and religious and political freedom.

When I travel to China I will take part in an official greeting ceremony in front of the Great Hall of the People, across from Tiananmen Square. I will do so because that is where the Chinese government receives visiting heads of state and government, including President Chirac of France and, most recently, Prime Minister Netanyahu of Israel. Some have suggested I should refuse to take part in this traditional ceremony, that somehow going there would absolve the Chinese government of its responsibility for the terrible killings at Tiananmen Square nine years ago, or indicate that America is no longer concerned about such conduct. They are wrong.

Protocol and honoring a nation's traditional practices should not be confused with principle. China's leaders, as I have repeatedly said, can only move beyond the events of June 1989, when they recognize the reality that what the government did was wrong. Sooner or later they must do that. And, perhaps even more important, they must change course on this fundamentally important issue.

In my meetings with President Jiang and other Chinese leaders, and in my discussions with the Chinese people I will press ahead on human rights and religious freedom, urging that China follow through on its intention to sign the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, that it release more individuals in prison for expressing their opinions, that it take concrete steps to preserve Tibet's cultural, linguistic, and religious heritage.

We do not ignore the value of symbols. But, in the end, if the choice is between making a symbolic point and making a real difference, I choose to make the difference. And when it comes to advancing human rights and religious freedom, dealing directly and speaking honestly to the Chinese is clearly the best way to make a difference.

China has known more millennia than the United States has known centuries. But for more than 220 years, we have been conducting a great experiment in democracy. We must never lose confidence in the power of American experience or the strength of our example. The more we share our ideas with the world, the more the world will come to share the ideals that animate America. And they will become the aspirations of people everywhere.

I should also say we should never lose sight of the fact that we have never succeeded in perfectly realizing our ideals here at home. That calls for a little bit of humility and continued efforts on our part on the home front.

China will choose its own destiny, but we can influence that choice by making the right choice ourselves -- working with China where we can, dealing directly with our differences where we must. Bringing China into the community of nations rather than trying to shut it out is plainly the best way to advance both our interests and our values. It is the best way to encourage China to follow the path of stability, openness, nonaggression; to

embrace free markets, political pluralism, the rule of law; to join us in building a stable international order where free people can make the most of their lives and give vent to their children's dreams.

That kind of China, rather than one turned inward and confrontational, is profoundly in our interests. That kind of China can help to shape a 21st century that is the most peaceful and prosperous era the world has ever known.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

END 11:00 A.M. EDT

Message Sent To:_____

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06/18/98 03:39:00 PM

Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message

cc:
Subject: 1998-06-18 President's Remarks to Religious Leaders

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release June 18, 1998

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO RELIGIOUS LEADERS

The Roosevelt Room

3:08 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Madam Secretary, to the members of Congress who are here and the religious leaders, especially to Rabbi Schneier, Archbishop McCarrick, Reverend Argue. I thank all of you for your devotion to religious liberty and to the proposition that America's advocacy of freedom should, indeed must, include our advocacy of religious liberty.

I'd like to say a special word of thanks to John Shattuck, our Assistant Secretary of State, who has worked so hard to promote human rights around the world, and whom I hope will soon be moving on to other important responsibilities for the United States. John, thank you very, very much for doing a great job. (Applause.) Sandy Berger and Madeleine and I rely on you a lot and we hope you'll have another good run soon.

I'd also like to say a special word of appreciation to Reverend Argue, Archbishop McCarrick and Rabbi Schneier for leading a delegation to China on a mission that grew out of my meeting with President Jiang last fall. In their discussions with Chinese government leaders and religious groups of all kinds, they were our forceful advocates for religious liberty. Their visit helped to make

the Chinese people aware of the fundamental importance of this issue, not simply to the American government, but to the American people.

We have just met to discuss their trip and I have received from them a very impressive report of their activities, replete with their specific recommendations about where we go from here. And their insights will certainly have a big influence on my activities and conversations as I prepare to embark for China.

I also want to thank all the religious leaders who have joined us here today who have been part of our advisory process. We welcome the recent release from prison of two key Chinese religious leaders -- Gao Feng and Bishop Zeng Jingmu, as well as China's announcement that it intends to sign the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, with its guarantees of freedom of thought and religion. But Chinese Christians, Muslims, and Buddhists remain imprisoned for their religious activities, including in Tibet, and other believers face harassment.

Therefore, when in China, I will speak as clearly as I can about human rights and religious freedom. Our message is clear: we in the United States believe that all governments everywhere should ensure fundamental rights, including the right of people to worship when and where they choose. We believe that China should resume talks with the Dalai Lama. We believe that prisoners of conscience should be released.

I am convinced that dealing directly with the Chinese on these issues is the best way to make a difference, and making a difference is in the end what matters. I am also convinced, as I

told President Jiang here both privately and in our press conference, that China will be more stable, will grow stronger, will acquire more influence in the world in direct proportion to the extent to which it recognizes liberties of all kinds and especially religious liberty. (Applause.)

Of course, we all know that the freedom to follow one's personal beliefs, to worship as one chooses, is at the core of what it means to be an American. It is in the very first amendment to the Constitution. It is at the forefront of the Bill of Rights. Men and women fleeing religious persecutions helped to found our country. They still arrive every year, of every conceivable faith, from every point in the world, to seek this freedom.

Our churches, synagogues, mosques, temples, and other houses of worship are centers of vibrant community life and vital community service. We have always been vigilant in protecting our own religious freedoms, for we know that an attack on any group imperils all. Dr. Martin Luther King once said that "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." It clearly applies to the principle of religious liberty.

And we know now that if we want the kind of world for our children that we are laboring so hard to build for the 21st century -- for this one in particular -- (laughter) -- Exhibit A -- (laughter) -- our struggle for liberty cannot end at our borders. There are many countries, far too many, where religious believers still suffer in darkness, where governments ban religious practices or force an officially sanctioned creed on non-believers; people are harassed, imprisoned, tortured, sometimes even executed for daring to live by their beliefs.

On the other hand, we know that when religious diversity is respected, it fosters a sense of community and solidarity. Religious hatred fuels violence, as we have seen too often. So we promote both religious freedom and religious tolerance. They are two sides of the same coin, each necessary for the other's success.

Secretary Albright and I, as she said so eloquently, have made promotion of religious freedom around the world a top priority. I have had extensive discussions on the subject with President Yeltsin, as all of you know, and with other world leaders. State Department officials here and overseas now give greater attention to religious persecution and other religious liberty issues than ever before. We have a high-level advisory committee on which many of you serve, and I thank you for the work you have done.

Now Secretary Albright is creating a new position, a Senior Advisor for International Religious Freedom, to make sure that religious liberty concerns get high and close attention in our foreign policy. And I am pleased to announce the appointment today of the gentleman to my right, Dr. Robert Seiple, to the job. As President of World Vision United States, he has applied skill and determination to World Vision's faith-based struggle against poverty in more than 100 countries. To this position he brings a genuinely unusual combination of deep personal faith, sweeping global perspective, the toughness and determination of a Marine Vietnam veteran, and an extraordinary proven capacity for leadership. He is here with his family and in a moment I want to ask him to say a few words. But we thank you for your willingness to serve. (Applause.)

Let me just say one word about how we should continue to pursue this cause. I have been deeply touched that as the presence of these members of Congress shows, there is a universal determination I think in our country among all our decisionmakers to advance the cause of religious liberty. It crosses party, it crosses region, it crosses philosophy, it crosses different religious faiths. There is some difference of opinion about how we can best proceed.

My belief is that we have to be both principled and resourceful. We need to be doing what works. We need to be dedicated to achieving results. And therefore I hope that Congress

will not only express its strong support and give us the tools to do the job, but leave us as much flexibility as possible to advance the cause of religious freedom consistent with what can be done and how it can best be done nation by nation. America is not strengthened in fighting for religious liberty or in fighting against religious persecution by laws that are so rigid a President's hands are tied.

As we intensify our efforts to promote religious liberty, I know we can count on the support of people of faith all over this country.

Abraham Lincoln, whose determination to defend our liberty cost him his life, once said, "The fight must go on. The cause of liberty must not be surrendered at the end of one, or even 100, defeats." Many of you in this room have been part of those defeats. But at the end of all of them there lies ultimate victory. That is what we must believe, that is the reality we must create.

Again, let me thank you all and now ask Dr. Seiple to come forward to make a few remarks. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

END 3:17 P.M. EDT

Message Sent To: _____

30TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

The New York Times

September 6, 1995, Wednesday, Late Edition - Final

HRC - Beijing

SECTION: Section A; Page 1; Column 3; Foreign Desk

LENGTH: 1177 words

HEADLINE: HILLARY CLINTON, IN CHINA, DETAILS ABUSE OF WOMEN

BYLINE: By PATRICK E. TYLER

DATELINE: BEIJING, Sept. 5

BODY:

Speaking more forcefully on human rights than any American dignitary has on Chinese soil, Hillary Rodham Clinton catalogued a devastating litany of abuse that has afflicted women around the world today and criticized China for seeking to limit free and open discussion of women's issues here.

"It is time for us to say here in Beijing, and the world to hear, that it is no longer acceptable to discuss women's rights as separate from human rights," Mrs. Clinton told the Fourth World Conference on Women assembled here.

"It is a violation of human rights when babies are denied food, or drowned, or suffocated, or their spines broken, simply because they are born girls," Mrs. Clinton said, or "when women and girls are sold into slavery or prostitution for human greed.

"It is a violation of human rights when women are doused with gasoline, set on fire and burned to death because their marriage dowries are deemed too small" she continued, or "when thousands of women are raped in their own communities and when thousands of women are subjected to rape as a tactic or prize of war."

While her comments concerned abuses that have taken place around the world -- the burning of brides occurs in India for example, and rape has most recently been a tactic of war in Bosnia -- her words took on a special resonance here in China, where the Administration has muted its public criticism of human rights abuses and is struggling to patch up frayed political relations.

China has been widely criticized for forcing women to be sterilized or have abortions as part of its policy of one child per family, and there are wide reports of female infanticide by parents who want a son.

China's reaction was uncertain tonight. Beijing's relations with Washington have been strained by a summer of tumult over the visit to the United States in June by the president of Taiwan, Lee Teng-hui.

Mrs. Clinton's gravity and directness seemed to please both Democratic and Republican members of the United States delegation here, and thus the speech may trump the political disputes that have plagued both Mrs. Clinton's decision to travel here and the Administration's approach to China.

She delivered her remarks after joining hundreds of delegates in a morning workshop on "women and health security."

Addressing the full conference in the afternoon, Mrs. Clinton expanded on a theme that Pakistan's Prime Minister, Benazir Bhutto, raised on Monday when she told the delegates that violence against women thrives when there is a "crisis of silence and acquiescence."

As Mrs. Clinton recited her litany from the podium, many delegates applauded, some cheered and others pounded the tables.

Continuing with references to domestic violence, genital mutilation, coercive abortions and sterilizations, Mrs. Clinton told the delegates from more than 180 countries, "If there is one message that echoes forth from this conference, let it be that human rights are women's rights and women's rights are human rights, once and for all."

A senior Administration official traveling with Mrs. Clinton was at pains after the address to explain that it did not mark a return to a more vocal confrontation with China over its poor human rights record. In recent months, Washington has sought to tone down its public remarks on human rights abuses in favor of a more private dialogue that had few results.

"There is nothing in her speech that in any way deviates from our approach on China," the official said, "or on our desire to get the relationship stabilized and to get some momentum going. This is a United Nations conference and she was speaking out on a global problem."

One of the Democratic Congresswomen here, Carolyn B. Maloney of New York, said she believed that Mrs. Clinton spoke from personal conviction after she became acquainted firsthand with some problems of women in the third world on a tour of Pakistan and India earlier this year.

"I think she spoke from the heart and she spoke with great power," Ms. Maloney said.

Representative Christopher H. Smith, Republican of New Jersey, who had called on Mrs. Clinton to speak out against "barbaric and egregious" human rights abuses in China during this trip, said he was satisfied to a great extent with her speech, but believed she could have been even more specific in criticizing China's abuses. He called her speech "eloquent" and praised her for "raising the issue" in China.

Still, the impact of the speech seemed to reverberate through the hall.

"She talked so eloquently about human rights, and I thought it was very effective, because all of the women here will know that the wife of the President of the United States also thinks about these things," said Maria Kamm, a delegate from Tanzania and member of Parliament there.

In the section of her speech aimed most directly at China, Mrs. Clinton seemed to betray frustration over China's intolerance for dissenting views.

A number of delegates, including exiles from Tibet and leaders from Taiwan, were denied visas to attend this meeting and a parallel gathering of private

women's organizations.

"Freedom means the right of people to assemble, organize, and debate openly," Mrs. Clinton admonished her Chinese hosts. "It means respecting the views of those who may disagree with the views of their governments. It means not taking citizens away from their loved ones and jailing them, mistreating them, or denying them their freedom or dignity because of peaceful expression of their ideas and opinions."

Ordinary Chinese citizens did not see or hear Mrs. Clinton's speech, which was blacked out on official radio and television. There are 5,000 Chinese delegates, all selected by the Communist Party and all with strong ties to the party or the Government. Others were restricted from even coming near the conference site. Their news was limited to a carefully scripted menu, featuring a blizzard of ethusiastic propaganda on the enormous progrss of Chinese women under the party's guidance.

The senior party official in attendance today, Chen Muhua, refused later to take any questions on the speech. "I'm sorry, I'm very busy," she said. The official Chinese press was under instructions to ignore Mrs. Clinton's remarks until an official reaction had been considered.

Afterward, Mrs. Clinton said she hoped the Chinese had gotten the message of her speech. "I think it is important that all governments which in any way infringe on human rights know that this conference takes a strong stand and that this conference is trying to move toward the realization of human rights," she told a news conference.

She said President Clinton's goal is to remain "engaged" with China in a broad and comprehensive relationship, but added, "we are trying to have an honest relationship."

"To me, it was important to express how I felt and to do so as clearly as I could," she said.

Thousands of Chinese women who were interested in attending these sessions simply had no opportunity to apply or gain access to the gathering.

GRAPHIC: Photos: Hillary Rodham Clinton speaking at a panel on women's health and security in Beijing yesterday before addressing the full assembly, where her pointed address evoked cheers, applause and pounding on tables. (Associated Press)(pg. A10)

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: September 6, 1995

29TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

The New York Times

September 11, 1995, Monday, Late Edition - Final

SECTION: Section A; Page 8; Column 1; Foreign Desk

LENGTH: 1099 words

HEADLINE: As Women Meet, China Bars Chinese

BYLINE: By PATRICK E. TYLER

DATELINE: BEIJING, Sept. 10

BODY:

As the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women was approaching, China's Ministry of Public Security made Wang Zhihong an irresistible offer.

She could have a rare, extended visit with her ailing husband, the pro-democracy dissident Chen Ziming, on one condition: that she enter Beijing No. 2 Prison, where he is serving a 13-year sentence.

For Ms. Wang, it wasn't even a close call.

"Ms. Wang is in prison; how could she refuse?" one of her friends said this weekend.

In this way, China's security apparatus got another educated, free-thinking Chinese woman off the streets of Beijing.

A determined advocate of human rights and democracy in China, Ms. Wang is not the kind of woman China's Communist Party leaders wanted to expose to the women of the world gathered here.

With thousands of dissidents jailed or under house arrest this month and with security around the conference extremely tight, the most striking thing about the United Nations conference, which is entering its final week here, is how sealed off it is from the rest of China, where nearly a quarter of the world's women live.

"The only connection between this conference and China is that if the conference runs smoothly, it is good for China, it helps our international reputation," said a 56-year-old scientist at China's Academy of Sciences. "Chinese television has been telling us how foreigners are very pleased with our hospitality."

China's reputation might not have been well served had Ms. Wang been free to speak out this month. In June, her husband was thrown back in jail after a year of medical parole that was won largely because of pressure from President Clinton and more than 50 members of the Senate.

Since then she has appealed to the United Nations for help. Had she tried to show up at the gates of the conference, it would have been deeply embarrassing to China.

Even for women able to pay attention to the conference, China's censors have blacked out most of the substantive news. It is impossible to obtain a draft of the "Platform for Action," which is freely available as an official United Nations document inside the hall.

The document, when approved, will spell out a bill of rights for women in language that could become an influential standard for all governments.

But the debate, at times so eloquent inside the hall, is swallowed by a gulf of enforced silence outside.

Shortwave broadcasts from the Voice of America and the British Broadcasting Corporation reach only a limited audience of intellectuals. CNN, which is carrying daily special reports on the conference, is becoming less available in China because of new controls.

This weekend, as Beijingers were enjoying cool, sunny weather and a Moon Festival holiday, few women strolling or bicycling through the city admitted to any knowledge about the fundamental rights this conference is seeking to enshrine for women in matters of sex and health and child-bearing, power and politics, labor and economics.

And many of them did not even know that Hillary Rodham Clinton was here last week to deliver a forceful address equating women's rights with human rights.

"Hillary Clinton was here in Beijing?" a young woman who works at a Beijing television station asked in surprise. "I haven't heard anything. I guess she must have said something bad about China, otherwise she would have been on Chinese TV."

But in dozens of conversations, the curiosity and interest of Chinese women in the conference was palpable.

Though few can attend -- and even fewer can hear -- the speeches that ring through the halls of the sealed convention center site, the issues that are being debated in the United Nations forum seem important to Chinese women, which makes their isolation all the more poignant.

For 16-year-old Fang Na, a music student at Beijing No. 3 Normal College, discrimination against women in China's job market is an issue in her life.

"When a female university graduate goes looking for a job, she meets a lot of obstacles that the men do not have," she said.

There is a Chinese delegation to this women's conference, led by Chen Muhua, a Communist Party stalwart. Its members are carefully selected party loyalists chosen for their enthusiasm to defend the party line.

For 61-year-old Guo Ruiyun, an illiterate vendor selling sodas under a circular umbrella, girls' access to education is an issue she relates to. Growing up in poverty in the mountains north of Beijing, Mrs. Guo never attended primary school.

While her four children in Beijing all have attended universities, millions of girls in poor regions of China are kept at home to work while boys are more

likely to go to school.

If China's political system ever opens up to allow women to run for office, Mrs. Guo said, "I would be very glad for them to participate in politics."

Wang Zhe, age 23, is a senior in hydraulic engineering at Qinghua University and after she and two of her classmates dismounted their bicycles to speak to a reporter, a plainclothes policeman walked up and pointed a shoulder bag with a videocamera lens opening at its base in their direction.

Ms. Wang, not oblivious to the intrusion, prefaced her remarks by saying, "I am very proud of China to be the host of this conference."

"Of course I would like to attend or participate," she continued. "Maybe it is a kind of sadness for ordinary Chinese women that they cannot participate."

As she spoke, four other plainclothes policemen, who are assigned to follow foreign reporters for the duration of the conference, positioned themselves to observe and record casual contact with ordinary Chinese.

Down the street from Mrs. Guo's stand, Jiang Sufang, 28, was busy repairing shoes on her cobbler's bench.

"I really don't know much about this women's conference," she said, "but actually, if I had the opportunity, I would really like to go and see it, but we are not allowed to go there."

Asked how she knew she was barred from the conference area, she said, "No one told us, but right now we can tell that the law is very strict and many of my friends who do business on the street have been forced to go home."

Ms. Jiang has a single child, a 2-year-old daughter, and would like to have another child, like many Chinese women who feel the pressure of Chinese tradition to bear a son. She had not heard that Mrs. Clinton, in her speech, criticized the practice of forced abortion and forced sterilization in China's family planning program.

Thinking this over for a moment, Mrs. Jiang just smiled and said, "Not bad."

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: September 11, 1995

28TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

The New York Times

September 15, 1995, Friday, Late Edition - Final

SECTION: Section A; Page 1; Column 1; Foreign Desk

LENGTH: 996 words

HEADLINE: FORUM ON WOMEN AGREES ON GOALS

BYLINE: By PATRICK E. TYLER

DATELINE: BEIJING, Friday, Sept. 15

BODY:

The Fourth World Conference on Women reached agreement early this morning on a wide-ranging declaration calling on world governments to raise the economic circumstances of women, protect them from increasing levels of violence and improve the status of girls throughout the world.

The "platform for action" is to be presented for ratification later today, and the vote is expected to be unanimous. Some states, including the Vatican and other countries with large Muslim or Roman Catholic populations, may register objections to specific sections.

The completion of the document brings to an end 10 days of debate on issues such as how to free women from poverty with new forms of credit, how to raise girls' education level and how to insure women's rights, including equal inheritance.

In the morning hours, women groaned, cheered and applauded through the final arguments in an atmosphere largely free of rancor. An Iranian slapped an Irish delegate on the back after they had gone head to head in a daylong negotiating session over sexual rights. Both seemed to like the outcome.

While document will not bind countries to action, delegates say it gives the issues new visibility among governments and international agencies, and can serve as a template for national policies and legislation.

After a series of key compromises on language relating to sexual rights and cultural and religious differences, delegates from 185 countries debated final sticking points until 4:45 A.M.

"We have a platform," said Patricia B. Licuanan, chairwoman of the final drafting meeting, which is to present the document later today.

"I promised we would be out of here before sunrise and I kept my promise," she said.

Chief among the final obstacles to consensus was whether "sexual orientation" should be included in the antidiscrimination clauses of the document.

But this language was jettisoned at 4:15 A.M. over the objection of more than 30 countries, including South Africa, whose delegation chief, Dr. Nkhosasna

Zuna said, "We shall promise ourselves and future generations that we shall not discriminate against anyone ever again."

The United States and Israel also spoke in favor of including sexual orientation.

In an era of tight domestic budgets in many countries, the conference failed to win sizable financial commitments from governments to pay for new programs for women, but it managed to elicit a large number of pledges to redirect national budgets.

"There is not much new money around," said Msgr. Diarmuid Martin, a Vatican representative here, "but the benefit of these conferences is that they focus the attention of everyone on how money ought to be spent and how it can be refocused."

India promised to raise the level of its investment in education with a focus on women and girls. Britain pledged to raise its child-care expenditures 20 percent. The United States is setting up a White House Council on Women and will step up attacks on domestic violence.

The conference ground to its conclusion with far less rancor than had been expected on the sensitive issues of contraception and abortion.

Thomas H. Kean, former Governor of New Jersey and the most prominent Republican on the 45-member delegation, said: "This is a document that guarantees the same rights for women that have long been enjoyed by men. I don't see why anyone would want to oppose it."

This conference on women, which follows meetings that began in Mexico City in 1975, was suffused with a sense of urgency by the rise of the number of women in poverty and the systemic rape and violence directed at women in the "ethnic cleansing" campaigns in the former Yugoslavia and in Rwanda.

In the document's opening declaration, the conference will seek to "insure women's equal access to economic resources including land, credit, science and technology, vocational training, information, communication and markets, as a means to further advancement and empowerment of women and girls."

China had hoped to be one of the greatest beneficiaries of this conference by virtue of Beijing's selection as its site. But instead, China's fears that pro-democracy and human rights campaigners among the delegates would set off a new outpouring of dissent against the Government led at times to heavy-handed and oppressive security measures.

It seemed for a time that the controversy over China's security assault on the delegates would mar the visit of Hillary Rodham Clinton, who delivered the most forceful address of the conference on human rights.

The greatest fear of many of the delegates was that they would have to debate once again the issues relating to women decided last year in Cairo at a United Nations conference on population and development.

At that conference, the Vatican and countries with large Muslim and Roman Catholic populations sought to defeat a clear statement of a woman's right to

regulate her fertility and reproductive health.

But in Beijing, the Cairo declarations became a benchmark that many states, including the Vatican and Iran, sought to maintain.

However, among the final sticking points early today was a footnote to the document that sought to subordinate some women's rights to national and religious customs. The footnote was finally rejected when a majority of delegations preferred to state the relationship between human rights and national custom in the document's preamble.

The preamble now states: "While the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgroud must be borne in mind, it is the duty of states, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms."

Ms. Licuanan, in a ruling as chairwoman, struck the final compromise of the night when, to satisfy the competing interests in the hall, she killed both the sexual orientation references and the sensitive footnote.

GRAPHIC: Photo: At a news conference yesterday, Iranian delegates at the conference on women stressed the need for noting cultural differences in the "platform for action" that was adopted at the United Nations meeting. (Associated Press) (pg. A3)

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: September 15, 1995

SCENESETTER: HONG KONG ROUND TABLE WITH DISTINGUISHED WOMEN

The roundtable will afford the First Lady a chance to discuss substantive issues with a small group of women who have each made a major contribution to Hong Kong in government, law, business, medicine and the arts. The meeting could consist of opening remarks from the First Lady and Mrs. Betty Tung, wife of Chief Executive C.H. Tung, followed by an open exchange while all are seated.

- Express thanks. Express pleasure at being back in Hong Kong for the first time since the 1980s. Many changes in this dynamic city.

- This Round Table is a chance to share information, experience and points of view to improve the lives of women around the world.

- Just saw China, where society is changing fast. Many women in and out of government are shaping change to improve jobs, education, and standards of living.

- Hong Kong is vibrant, rich in resources, a crossroads, a Chinese city where for generations different cultures have mingled and enriched all.

- You all play vital roles in Hong Kong's free society and open economy. Women here teach in Hong Kong's great universities and schools, practice medicine, lead political parties, protect the rule of law and fundamental freedoms, exercise Hong Kong's freedom of the press as journalists, run business large and small, and of course are volunteers and parents in this service-oriented and technologically advanced city. It is almost exactly one year after the reversion of Hong Kong to China. Most observers feel that the transition has gone smoothly and Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy has been preserved. Do you agree? What issues are sources of concern?

- What is your assessment of women's role in Hong Kong society? What is the role of the Equal Opportunity Commission?

- How are new, lesser-skilled immigrants from the Mainland incorporated into the mainstream of Hong Kong's society and economy?

- What role does Hong Kong play in improving the lives of people, especially women, on the Mainland?

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Personal Biodata

Christine Loh was born in Hong Kong and was educated in Hong Kong and England. She has an English law degree, became a commodities trader in 1980 for a multinational corporation, then took on various senior management positions before devoting herself to full-time politics in 1994.

Ms. Loh was appointed to the Legislative Council in 1992, and won direct election to the Legislative Council in 1995; her term ended with the dissolution on 30 June 1997. In her year off from the Legislative Council she continued her work in politics and the community, hosted a morning public affairs programme on HIT radio, and studied for a Masters of Law degree in Chinese Law at City University. She won direct election to the Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region from the Hong Kong Island geographical constituency in May 1998. She continues to serve as Chair of Citizens Party, established on 4 May 1997.

Ms. Loh writes extensively in local and international publications and is a leading advocate for the environment, equal opportunities, open government, human rights and the arts.

30TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

New Straits Times

August 1, 1996

SECTION: Pg. 1

LENGTH: 1711 words

HEADLINE: Women leaders can bring change

BYLINE: By Foong Wai Foong

BODY:

IT started with a television documentary on women leaders in the world. The project sought to answer the question: "What would the world be like if a woman were the President of the United States of America?" For the documentary, Laura Liswood, head of the Women's Leadership Project, interviewed women heads of state around the world. In the process, she wondered how these leaders would interact with each other if they were brought together in a forum. The Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies took up the idea and recently organised the International Women Leadership Forum (IWLF) in Stockholm, Sweden. The forum was attended by seven chiefs of state and heads of government along with over 100 women leaders from government, business, academia, science and non-governmental organisations from around the world. It was convened "to promote the effective exercise of leadership by women on the community, national and international levels". According to the President of Iceland Vigdis Finnbogadottir, who was also chairman at the Stockholm meeting, the purpose of the forum was not to address "women's agenda". Rather, "it will be devoted to the study of women as leaders, and will, in the process, strive to redefine leadership itself". Indeed, what would the world be like if women serve as leaders in government, business and the community? Many women in high political office today came to assume office out of circumstances and necessity, for example, upon the death of their husband or father. Just like in millions of families where women have to "hold up the sky" either because the men are away or are irresponsible, these women have risen to the occasion and are developing their own vision for the job. The fact remains: the emergence of women as leaders worldwide is an unstoppable movement. Women represent half of the world's population and women's rights are indeed human rights, and therefore must be respected and addressed in all development efforts. Having more women in leadership will definitely bring greater appreciation of women's sensitivities and situations than what we are experiencing now. In today's world, centrally-directed leadership is lagging far behind changes by grassroot, privately-driven movements such as voluntary and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). While it is true that women are still a minority in high positions in both the public and corporate sectors, there is already a critical mass built up in the middle and at the grassroots. The strength women have gathered at these levels is already changing the balance of power at home and in business and in time, it will be felt in other sectors. Of course, the perception of women in leadership is also generational. After serving as President of Iceland for 16 years, President Finnabogadottir is fond of saying that "small boys in Iceland think that only women can become President!" In deliberating on the changes the

world is going through today, a very strong message that came out of the discussion was the call to traditional leadership to allow for participation and involvement by members of the community. Christine Loh, legislative councillor from Hong Kong, expressed the people's wish to be involved in decisions affecting them, and the importance of leadership to address this aspiration. Having only less than 40 days to a possible end of her political career, Loh, an independently- elected candidate, is planning to launch a political party. She plans to involve members of her community in shaping the future of their political, economic and social lives. She advocates dialogue and partnership and urges belief in the process. What really amazed me throughout the meeting was each time a woman asserted the importance of women's involvement on an issue, she equally emphasised the importance of partnership with men. These messages of partnership echoed throughout the chamber of the Swedish Parliament and the City Hall, where the forum was held. I wonder, in meetings dominated by men, whether such emphasis is made on women's partnership, and why are women so careful to emphasise the need to get the men involved. I want to pose two questions. One, are we underestimating men, are we reassuring them that women are not going about alone, without them? Second, we know that the men sometimes (if not all times) want to do things without women, so why can't women go about without men on some issues? Perhaps what I saw at Stockholm was women leadership evolving. Or could it be a reflection of women's inclusive and accommodating nature, an important and valuable quality in an increasingly globalised world where greater diversity will come into play in human interaction, in the realm of political, economic and social arrangements? This inherent trait in a woman will perhaps make her a very suitable candidate for leadership in economically unequal, politically divergent, culturally different and linguistically incomprehensible groups of peoples. While all the women leaders agreed that women's agenda was important and there should be more women in public office to help shape the agenda, attention was focused on examining the changing nature of leadership, priorities for leadership and the forces transforming leadership. One of the most important messages from the forum was how leaders prepare their public educationally and emotionally for necessary change. The world is undergoing massive infrastructure shifts; political borders are becoming irrelevant due to the forces of globalisation, driven largely by telecommunication. Domestic economies are giving way to the single global marketplace. Countries, especially those in the West, are moving from industrial- to knowledge-driven. What strategies are needed to mobilise support for these changes and to help people and institutions adapt with a minimum of dislocation? What are the new players and communities that must be brought into this process and how can they be most effectively involved? How should leaders be measured and held accountable? Perhaps many of the leaders represented at the forum were from the public sector, including institutions, both international and voluntary. There is a very strong orientation towards solutions driven from a central leadership, if not authority. Some of us who came from the business sector like Patricia Aburdene, author of Megatrends for Women, and myself are strong advocates of bottom- up empowerment, entrepreneurship, and the importance of the individual to take leadership in his or her own hands. Aburdene, while commenting on the reliance on big corporations to generate economic opportunities, reported to the forum that in the US today, women-owned businesses are creating more jobs and employing more people than the Fortune 500 companies - a clear case of what self-reliance can do in a time of great economic shifts. She also highlighted the success of the Grameen Bank of Bangladesh which has provided billions of dollars in the form of micro loans to women in rural areas. These small loans have given these people a

way out of poverty. According to Aburdene, the Grameen Bank has achieved repayment rates as high as 97 per cent. The bank has confounded the perception that poor people are bad credit risks. The Grameen Bank example is hailed as a model of poverty-eradication and development. I was very disturbed by the insistence that central leadership (government and international institutions) should provide the lead and drive to solving today's social and economic problems. The story of a rising Asia, I asserted, was the story of millions of individuals who took leadership into their own hands, were open to ideas, put tremendous emphasis on education and worked hard to break out of poverty. It was hard work, education, entrepreneurship, and self-reliance that made the Asian story - there was no miracle. At a time of great infrastructure shift in the world today, self- reliance is the only strategy to help millions of people cope with the new world. New skills have to be learned to work with new technology, new attitudes have to be developed so that we can adjust and learn to cope with a multicultural world. Dependence on a central leadership to show the way is disastrous, as the central leadership in many cases is too burdened with political baggage to honestly face up to reality and effectively initiate change. Besides, some in the central leadership have become too remote and distant to know what is going on at the grassroots. It is far more efficient and effective to bring about changes through excellence and independence. One by one, people can bring about real changes without any perceptible pressure on the system. One message that came out very loud at the forum was how to bring back the nobility associated with public office. People, especially young people, perceive politicians as corrupt, controlling and self-serving. There was a resounding and passionate call among many women at the forum to bring back idealism, to celebrate and reshape our future on a more compassionate platform through public office. On the same note, Taiwan-based publisher Diane Ying made a plea to the media to expound on positive values - values that will empower, stories that will inspire, promote and advance human progress, instead of wasting sound bytes and columns dwelling on the negative and ugly. On the economic front, there was consensus that growth and development must not be confined to the material. There was a call to adopt a total approach to development. Loh from Hong Kong suggested a Quality of Life index to be adopted by the world to measure the progress of human development, replacing the traditional GDP approach. She said that perhaps adopting this index would also reduce the tension between a rising Asia and the sluggish western economies. Economic development is really not a contest. It is not only about GDP; it is about well-being. It is about human wellness, health, education, harmony of family and community. Foong Wai Fong is director of Transforma Sdn Bhd and the New Asia Forum. She was the Asian advisor for the forum in Stockholm.

GRAPHIC: Picture - Making a difference ... Some women leaders who have provided inspiring leadership. (STF) - Seven heads of State and government convened with more than 100 women leaders in Stockholm, Sweden, recently for a forum to promote the effective exercise of leadership by women at community, national and international levels. Foong Wai Foong reports.

31ST STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

South China Morning Post

May 18, 1996

SECTION: Pg. 5

LENGTH: 640 words

HEADLINE: Anson Chan calls for more women in politics

BYLINE: JANE MOIR

BODY:

The number of women in the political sphere is "much too low", Chief Secretary Anson Chan Fang On-sang told women's leaders yesterday.

Speaking at the International Women's Forum, she said about only 10 per cent of legislators were women: "(It's) much too low, but on a par with the House of Representatives in the United States, 11 per cent of whose members are female."

The proportion of women in the civil service was one in 10, she said, but noted the proportion shrank in the top levels.

"But the good news is that it is increasing very rapidly. And taking the public service and business together, women now account for over 20 per cent of the administrative and managerial grade in Hong Kong," she said.

"This is a comparatively high percentage in Asia, and as high as many developed economies in Europe."

But women's groups took the Chief Secretary's comments with a pinch of salt, asking what she planned to do about the low numbers.

Women Workers' Association co-ordinator Linda To Kit-lai asked: "Did she mention any ways to improve the situation?" Ms To urged the Chief Secretary to work to rectify the situation by encouraging child-care facilities and more retraining programmes for women.

"There's not a lot of support for women to enter politics," she said.

"Look at the district boards - although it's open to the general public, the number of women councillors are not that many," she said. Of the 373 district board members, only 37 are women.

Ms To said the Chief Secretary should encourage more community support for women.

On a broader note, the Chief Secretary also referred to the progress being made on Hong Kong's future as "so far so good".

"But agreement with the Chinese side on one piece of the jigsaw, for the

protection of individual rights and freedoms, has yet to be forthcoming," she said.

She referred to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which she hoped would be applied after the handover.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: May 19, 1996

Clinton Presidential Records
Digital Records Marker

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This marker identifies the place of a tabbed divider. Given our digitization capabilities, we are sometimes unable to adequately scan such dividers. The title from the original document is indicated below.

Divider Title: **BACKGROUND ON CHINA**

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
HONG KONG WOMEN'S ROUNDTABLE
HONG KONG, CHINA
JULY 3, 1998

- Thank you, Secretary Albright, for being here, and for that kind introduction. It is a great pleasure to be in Hong Kong with my husband, and to see firsthand the extraordinary changes taking place here and throughout China. I am also very pleased to have this opportunity to meet with such an extraordinary group of women – who have made such impressive contributions – both inside and outside of government – in forging a new Hong Kong. [I had the pleasure of meeting Anson Chan only a few weeks ago in Washington, D.C.]

- One of the great privileges of my position is having the opportunity to travel around the world, and to listen to the voices and experiences of women: women like yourselves who are playing such active roles in the political life of this city, and who are working to protect fundamental human rights, and expand opportunities -- for women and for all citizens.

- I have been in China only a short time – yet I've been overwhelmed by the intelligence and vitality and openness of the women I've spoken with – rural entrepreneurs; educators, lawyers, publishers, women's advocates. But no matter what country I'm in, I'm always struck by how women share the same concerns; face the same challenges; and need the same tools of opportunity: equal access to education; jobs; credit; and fundamental human rights. I look forward to continuing that conversation here this morning, with all of you.

- Some of you have blazed the trail of equal opportunity legislation – and are working to strengthen the rule of law;

- Others have worked tirelessly to make reversion a success – speaking out for Hong Kong's autonomy; for China upholding its commitments under the 1944 Joint Declaration – and the 1990 Basic Law; for preserving Hong Kong's civil liberties and fundamental freedoms.

- Some of you are leaders in the media – which is such a powerful tool for building and protecting democracy.

- Others are passionate advocates in areas like the environment (pollution is a major problem in Hong Kong).

- And everyone here is concerned with how to improve education (most kids grades 1-6 attend half sessions in school – because of overcrowding); how to expand housing (50% of people here live in extremely cramped public housing); and how to ensure progress in this period of transition.

- I'm looking forward to hearing each one of you talk about these and other challenges facing Hong Kong today – and the solutions you are seeking to meet those challenges. Because it is only by learning from each other -- particularly in this time of both great uncertainty and possibility – that we will be able to ensure that no one is left behind as we move forward into the 21st century.

- I know that a number of you have studied at American universities. And I hope you agree that those kinds of experiences are invaluable to deepening the friendship and understanding between our two countries. Just a few days ago, in Shanghai, I was very pleased to announce the creation of five new exchange programs between American and Chinese women – sponsored by USIS -- which will bring 50 Chinese women leaders to the United States next year.

- Before we begin this morning's discussion – there is one more question that I hope we can explore today: and that is: what are the conditions here in Hong Kong that have enabled so many women to gain such prominent places of leadership? What makes you such powerful role models throughout Asia? What lessons can we draw from your experiences, so that more women across China – and around the world, can be empowered? There's such a wealth of knowledge in this room. Let's start sharing it.

- [The First Lady Opens up the discussion.]

HRC

Roundtable Participants

BETTY TUNG

Mrs. Tung is the wife of Chief Executive Tung of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China. She was born and raised in Hong Kong. She attended Boston University's School of Nursing in 1955. She lived in New Jersey for over 12 years and, reportedly, returned somewhat reluctantly to Hong Kong. She has three children, at least two of whom are American citizens. Mrs. Tung is president of the Hong Kong Red Cross and the Hong Kong Community Chest. She has an interest in Japan and speaks Japanese. According to the Consulate, she is not likely to be an active participant in the discussion.

ANSON CHAN

Chan is Chief Secretary for Administration, HKSAR's second-highest ranking official and Hong Kong's top civil servant. She is the first ethnic Chinese and the first woman to oversee Hong Kong's civil service of approximately 200,000. She was a staunch supporter of Governor Chris Patten's democratic reforms and was, in fact, his publicly announced choice for Chief Executive. She is a popular, widely respected figure; Chief Executive Tung's 1996 decision to keep her on as Hong Kong's top civil servant boosted confidence in the reversion.

Chan joined the British civil service in 1962 at a time when discrimination against women was rampant. As she rose through the ranks she lobbied successfully for equal opportunities and benefits for women and, in the 1970s--as chair of the Association of Senior Female Government Officers--she persuaded the government to equalize fringe benefits for male and female workers.

She is a staunch supporter of Hong Kong's autonomy and spoke out earlier this year when comments were made in Beijing about the content of broadcasts on the public radio station, Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK). Chan argued forcefully that such comments were "inappropriate" and defended freedom of speech. She has also played a behind-the-scenes role on the Adaption of Laws Bill, which exempts certain PRC entities from HKSAR law, arguing that exemptions be kept to a minimum. In general, Chan is a staunch supporter of rule of law, human rights, civil liberties and Hong Kong autonomy; she is, however, cautious about the rapid promotion of democracy. Some describe her as very comfortable "being a mandarin." She consistently leads Hong Kong approval polls, ahead of Martin Lee and C.H. Tung. Chan was born in Shanghai in 1940 and earned her B.A. in literature at the University of Hong Kong. Her father was a well-known Nationalist general and her mother is a noted artist and calligrapher.

CHRISTINE LOH (LOW)

Loh is the founder and leader of the Citizen's Party, a pro-democracy group with a strong environmental interest. Although the Citizen's Party is tiny (only 100 members), Loh is a very influential figure in Hong Kong. She was a member of the pre-reversion legislature, where she established herself as an effective advocate on behalf of democracy, the environment, and gay, minority, and women's rights. She headed a campaign to change laws in the New Territories that prevented women from inheriting property. Recently, she has focused on environmental issues, strongly opposing further filling in of the harbor. She has also pushed the U.S. to enter into a cooperative program to protect the Pearl River Delta. Loh is a strong advocate of civil education and argues that political parties in Hong Kong have to be strengthened. Loh studied law at the University of Hull in Britain and made a fortune as a commodity trader before she was thirty. She is a popular Hong Kong figure and is viewed as highly articulate and committed. She won a tight race for the Legislature on Hong Kong island in May. Loh will likely be a particularly lively participant in the roundtable discussion.

DENISE YUE (YEW)

Yue is a protégé of Anson Chan's and is considered by many to be her most likely successor. She is currently Secretary of the Treasury, a post she has held since April 1998. Previously, she was Secretary for Trade and Industry of Hong Kong from 1995 to 1998. She is known for her in-depth expertise on trade matters and her tough negotiating skills. She is considered a staunch defender of Hong Kong's autonomy, especially as an independent trade and financial center. According to reports, she repeatedly asks that other countries treat Hong Kong as a reliable and autonomous trade partner. She holds a B.A. from the University of Hong Kong and a M.A. in public administration from Harvard. She is a strong, highly articulate personality.

ANNA WU

Wu, a lawyer, is head of the Hong Kong Consumer Council. She was an appointed member of the pre-reversion Legislative Council from 1992 to 1995. Wu is one of the prominent human rights activists in Hong Kong. She has called for the establishment of an independent Human Rights Commission to oversee the implementation of the Bill of Rights, extending the Convention of the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women to Hong Kong, and ending discrimination against homosexuals, minorities and women. Wu's tireless efforts to fight discriminatory practices contributed significantly to the establishment of the Equal Opportunities Commission in 1996. She is a graduate of the University of Hong Kong. She is married to Frank Ching, of the Far Eastern Economic Review. She will likely be among the most lively of the roundtable participants.

CHEUNG (Choong) MAN-YEE

Cheung is the Director of Broadcasting, Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK). She is known for being tough and independent. When suggestions were made in Beijing to limit the range of opinions voiced on RTHK and, essentially, turn it into a government mouthpiece, she fearlessly (and publicly) fought back. Since she became director of RTHK, the radio station has been revolutionized. According to the Consulate, it is now "the NPR of Hong Kong." Controversial figures are regularly invited on the program. Cheung, by all accounts, is an animated and lively personality. She is a native Hong Konger and received her B.A. from the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

FANNY CHEUNG Mui-ching

Cheung is chair of the Equal Opportunities Commission. She is the former dean and professor of psychiatry at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. She received her B.A. from the University of California at Berkeley and her Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota. She is the vice-chair of the New Life Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association and a member of the Queen Elizabeth Foundation for the Mentally Handicapped.

Biographies of Proposed First Lady Roundtable Participants

Audrey Eu: Eu was elected chairman of the Bar Association – the professional group representing Hong Kong's barristers -- in January 1997. She pledged that the association would continue its stand for the rule of law through the reversion and beyond. Maintaining close working connections with pro-democracy lawyers both locally and abroad, Eu enjoys great respect in the legal profession for her meticulous judgment, open-mindedness and liberal outlook. She strongly criticized the government's decision to rush through the Provisional Legislature the controversial adaptation of laws bill, which exempts Chinese state organs from some Hong Kong laws, arguing that the move would seriously undermine both local confidence and the rule of law. Eu is in her second consecutive one-year term heading the Bar Association.

Rosanna Wong: Wong, 46, Housing Authority Chief, and member of the executive council, dynamic graduate of the University of California at Davis, rides herd on one of Hong Kong's largest departments and stands out amidst much pressure as a spokesman for the government's housing policy. Active supporter of many charities including Mother's Choice. Honored three times by the British government for her innovative policies and civic achievements. Long-time director of the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups.

S:\FirstLady\EuWong bios
7/01/98 1730

* These I added at last minute. May not appear.

LENA CHI (CHEE) Hui-ling

Chi is the deputy law officer and newly named head of the Mutual Legal Assistance Unit of the Justice Department. A barrister-at-law, Chi started her civil service career in October 1974 as student physiotherapist in the Legal Department. She was promoted to Crown Counsel in 1986 and Deputy Principal Crown Counsel in charge of the Extradition and Treaties Unit in August 1994. She is considered a strong personality and a brilliant lawyer.

Key Points
First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton
Shanghai Women's Education and Training Center
June 30, 1998

- The government has launched a major drive to re-structure China's state-owned enterprises. Approximately 70% of the country's more than 100,000 government-owned companies lose money and losses are growing steadily.

- Women have borne the brunt of this restructuring, in part because they often work in peripheral services at the state-owned enterprises as cafeteria workers or janitorial staff.

- The unemployment rates for women will continue to grow over the next few years. It is estimated that 20 million additional workers will be laid-off by the year 2000.

- Shanghai is at the forefront of Chinese efforts to retrain female workers laid off as a result of the economic reforms.

- In Shanghai, where the textile industry was cut sharply, the Municipal Labor Bureau reported that as of the end of 1996 58% of laid-off workers were women.

- Older women were hardest hit--69% of laid-off workers were between the ages of 35 and 45.

- There is blatant discrimination against women on the basis of age and appearance. This discrimination is open—job ads often note age and appearance requirements.

- The Shanghai Women's Education and Training Center was established in 1993. It quickly realized that women's

lack of self-esteem was as much a barrier to reemployment as lack of education.

- The Women's Hotline at the Center was set-up in recognition of the serious depression and sense of helplessness that overwhelms women when they lose their jobs. It was the first hotline in China.

- The Center's focus on the psychological component of joblessness is reflected in its emphasis on "four strengthenings" -- strengthening self-respect, self-reliance, self-empowerment, and self-confidence.

- Since 1993, the school has trained 5000 women, 3000 of whom were laid off workers. The school has a success rate of 75% in placing graduates. Job placement is done by inviting companies to come to the school to interview prospective employees in an event similar to a job fair.

Background Paper: Shanghai Women's Education and Training Center

The Women's Education and Training Center is operated by the Shanghai Women's Federation. It began in 1986 as a school for leaders of women's committees, which are a feature of the socialist style of factory management and political organization. In 1991, the school went into the retraining field, training high school graduates who had failed their college entrance exams. This was the school's first venture in retraining and they had a 100 % success rate in places the graduates of their course training Chinese women to be English and Japanese secretaries. In 1993 the School began to deal with the problems of laid off workers as economic development increased and the economy began to shed surplus labor. This actually followed, or was possibly concurrent with, the establishment of the "Women's Hot Line" set up as a crisis management tool for women depressed over losing their job or, in general, finding themselves in difficult situations. The school and its President, Ms. Zhao Pinghe, the developer of the hot line, have received numerous awards and recognition for the hot line. Its business sponsor, the Welfare company, which makes women's health products, has also benefited commercially from the hot line.

The Center places a great deal of emphasis on the "four strengthenings" for women laid off as part of economic restructuring. These are strengthening self-respect, self-reliance, self-empowerment, and self-confidence. Women are encourages to go to the Center by the network of Women's Federation committees around the Shanghai area and are given counseling and testing to work on "the four strengthenings" and to determine their skills level for retraining. Courses are given in Fashion Design, Accounting, Flower Arranging, Home Skills, and Computers, although the latter is not emphasized since the school does not have the resources for a computer lab and must borrow computer time from a local university. The Fashion Design courses are particularly popular and utilize dummies to teach students modern tailoring techniques.

Since 1993, the school has trained 5000 women, of which 3000 were laid off workers. The school has had a success rate of 75% in placing its graduates. Job placement is done by inviting companies to come to the school to interview prospective employees, possibly like a "Job Fair" in America. Graduates take and pass a standardized test upon completion of their studies that qualifies them to receive a certificate guaranteeing an employer a certain level of competence.

The School is located about 25 minutes away from the Portman (15 minutes motorcade time) and, although in an old building, the scrubbed wood floors and white washed walls are rather charming and give a warm quality to the school. Access is via a somewhat dark staircase (69 steps) and the whole school is on one floor. It is very clear the School is operated directly by the Women's Federation, as opposed to being another facility used by them. The School President clearly is a stakeholder in the program, able to go on at length about the school and its programs. She is a very compassionate woman and particularly enthusiastic about the "four strengthenings" and improving the self image of laid-off women.

Ms. Zhao Pinghe, Executive Director, Shanghai Women's Educational and Training Center

Professor Zhao Pinghe was born on Jan. 12, 1944 in Shanghai. She graduated from Shanghai Normal University with a degree in mathematics in 1967. The timing of her graduation coincided with the Cultural Revolution. She experienced two years (August 1968-August 1970) of training at one of the army reclamation farms. In 1970, she was assigned as a teacher in Taopu Middle School in Taopu village, Jiading County. She was a mathematics teacher for 14 years (until 1984). In March 1983, she was elected the deputy-chief of Taopu Township Administration, and held this position until she was transferred to the Shanghai Women's Federation in August 1985 to serve as the Chief of Education Division of the Education and Propaganda Dept. In 1992, she was assigned to her current position as executive director of the Shanghai Women's Educational and Training Center and the School for Women's Leadership Development.

Professor Zhao is very interested in women's education. Although her major in university is mathematics, she received the title of "associate professor" in social science. She published some books and articles on women's education, and also founded the "Wei Er Fu" (Welfare) hotline which provides counseling and assistance to women in distress. The Shanghai Women's Educational and Training Center conducts vocational training courses for middle-aged women laid-off from factory jobs. In addition, Professor Zhao is one of the executive commissioners of the Shanghai Women's Federation, Deputy Secretary-General of Shanghai Women's Association. She has been elected as deputy to the current Xuhui District People's Congress.

1ST STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

SHOW: NBC NIGHTLY NEWS (6:30 PM ET)

July 1, 1997, Tuesday 10:32 AM

LENGTH: 471 words

HEADLINE: ASPIRING CHINESE GIRLS RECEIVE BETTER EDUCATION

BODY:
TOM BROKAW, co-anchor:

China has not been a friendly place for modern women, but that could be changing. The challenges are so great, everyone will have to pitch in, and with families limited to just one child, daughters are no longer automatically relegated to a secondary role. Come with me now to a Shanghai girl's school.

Shanghai Number Three Girls High School, a grind and a privilege. The week begins at 7 AM Monday; it won't end until late on Saturday. Ten-hour days in class, lots of homework, no time for television. Yet these young women, who all speak English, know a lot about America and its ways.

Unidentified Girl #1: I think our burden must be heavier than the American kids.

BROKAW: The United States fascinates them.

Unidentified Girl #2: I want to know what do American youngsters, the teen-agers--what are they interested in?

BROKAW: China is determined to catch up, and a well-ordered classroom is a place to begin. No frivolous teen-age behavior here.

Unidentified Girl #3: My mother country is the most important thing for me.

BROKAW: How many of you have brothers?

Girls: (In unison) No.

BROKAW: No brothers?

Girls: (In unison) We're only children.

BROKAW: You are all only children.

Unidentified Girl #4: It suits the Chinese situation, I think.

BROKAW: They're often called China's little princesses,' the products of one couple/one child family planning. Parents have pushed them into the best education that money can buy.

Unidentified Girl #5: Not everyone gets a chance to be well educated, so the government and the people of China make an effort to change the situation.

BROKAW: When it comes to Chinese politics, they are well drilled.

Unidentified Girl #6: I think we won't forget Deng Xiaoping, and we think highly of him.

Unidentified Girl #7: Yes, very. Yeah, we think highly of him.

Girl #6: He's really a very great man!

Do you agree?

Girls: (In unison) Yes!

BROKAW: Now their history books will reflect the changed status of Hong Kong. It's become a part of China, and these young women have big personal ambitions for China's future.

Unidentified Girl #8: I want to be a social worker.

Unidentified Girl #9: In the 21st century biology--biology and chemistry will be very useful and helpful.

Unidentified Girl #10: A diplomat.

BROKAW: A diplomat?

Girl #10: Yeah, because I want to see the world.

BROKAW: They're not shy about expressing their dreams.

Unidentified Girl #11: I like to be a reporter, maybe just like you.

BROKAW: Oh, is that right?

Girl #11: Yes, have interviews with different people, and I wish that maybe one day I can have an interview with Michael Jordan. Of course, he is my idol.

BROKAW: The key to shooting is one hand here.

Michael Jordan wasn't available, so off the bench. We only show the shots that go in.

There we go.

This is where the 21st century is taking shape for China. What many believe will be the Asian century, a new time for Chinese women prepared to take their place. China still has a long way when it comes to educating women. Seventy percent of the country's illiterates are women.

LANGUAGE: English

Memorandum

To: Evan Ryan
From: Pat Halley
Date: June 25, 1998
Re: POLITICAL / CULTURAL CONCERNS RAISED BY CG HK RE: ROUND TABLE

At the Consul General's request Sharon Kennedy Gill and I met today with he and other people assigned from the US mission to support the First Lady's HK visit.

The CG raised several concerns regarding the round table:

1. He does not feel comfortable with having open press at the event. He says having the press present throughout the discussion will hamper the free flow of ideas because some of the host country participants will be unused to such attention and are likely therefore to say little or nothing with the cameras present. He suggests this is a Chinese cultural phenomenon.

2. He thinks giving the round table, if its topics are indeed the role of women and children in society and women's political prominence in HK, such a high profile will be moving the US government into areas in which it has not expressed an interest to date. He was less than comfortable with that notion.

3. He has sought repeatedly to have Mrs. Toung "host" the event. He suggests she give the opening remarks, introduce the participants and welcome the First Lady and the Secretary of State. I told him our preference was that Mrs. Clinton serve as host and moderator, and that she would certainly pay due deference to Mrs. Toung, but he keeps coming back to this scenario.

4. The CG subsequently met with Anson Chan and according to the report of that meeting given me by Ann White, my control officer, Ms. Chan, unsolicited, raised exactly the same concerns.

5. The CG's recommendation, as I understand it is:

A) Let Mrs. Toung host the event, and have it made clear that we are there as her guests.

B) Limit the press coverage of the event to a still photo spray at the beginning or end of the discussion.

C) Consider the topics of discussion carefully so as not to imply that the US Government has a broader interest in women's issues in HK than it has expressed to date.

6. Given the above, I asked why these concerns had not been brought to our attention by State or NSC. His reply was that "I

guess they just haven't focused on it. We're a little closer to the situation here."

7. I request guidance on how to proceed. My personal recommendation would be that we explore through other channels the level of "cultural difficulty" such a forum with open press would engender; that we maintain our position that the First Lady is the host and moderator of the event; and that we use this opportunity to have the First Lady and the Secretary of State make it clear that the US Government does indeed have an interest in the role of women in HK political and civil life.

8. Please pass this information to the appropriate parties and advise me which course of action I should pursue.

United States' Consulate General
Hong Kong

From the Consul General

Friday, June 26, 1998

TO: White House – Melanne Verveer, First Lady's Chief of Staff

FROM: Richard Boucher, Consul General

SUBJECT: The First Lady's Events in Hong Kong

We are looking forward to scheduling a few additional events for the First Lady during the visit to Hong Kong next week. These events will be interesting and will help us, and the First Lady, understand some aspects of Hong Kong that are not frequently explored. We are committed to making these events work.

There are two or three questions which arise on which I wanted your best judgment, since they relate directly to the First Lady's goals for these meetings:

1) The format of the roundtable. Having thought about the proposals and checked with one or two Hong Kong women, including Anson Chan, whose reactions I trust, I believe that we face a choice between an on-camera, more-stilted event with some posturing, and a more private and balanced discussion.

   If we expect to have cameras rolling the whole time, we should invite a different crowd of people, people who are used to taking in public. In Hong Kong terms, that would include the two most popular women politicians, Emily Lau and Christine Loh, and the likelihood of debates and charges about other political issues in Hong Kong unrelated to the status of women. The end result is likely to be less candor and more posturing – but not an uninteresting event.

   Frankly, I would recommend press coverage at the top and a more private discussion –perhaps with the pencil press in attendance-- which I

believe would lead to a higher quality discussion of women's issues based on a variety of personal experiences.

For this reason, I attach a suggested list of participants for on-camera which includes the two politicians, Emily Lau and Christine Loh. If we go for a semi-private event off camera, I would suggest dropping Lau and Loh and adding two of the interesting and thoughtful women from our "first alternates" list, which is in our suggested order of preference.

2) Mrs. Tung, wife of the Chief Executive, wants to act as the First Lady's host in Hong Kong, and I have been asked, on behalf of the Chief Executive, whether she can host the roundtable. My initial reply was that she would not want to be responsible for the choices about attendance and format that we are making, and thus the request was difficult. Nonetheless, it would be useful if we can work her in as the nominal host: to welcome the First Lady and the Secretary, to introduce participants or ask them to introduce themselves, and then to turn to the First Lady for an introduction and first question. From that point on, the event could proceed as normal. This seems to be a way of giving her a role without negotiating the event with the Hong Kong government. (NOTE: We think Betty Tung has to be at the table. It would be noticed if the First Lady were to exclude Mrs. Tung from a hand-picked gathering of Hong Kong's leading women, especially since the First Lady will be going straight from the roundtable to the President's speech, which we understand Mrs. Tung will attend. End note.)

cc: Patrick Halley
Mort Engelberg
Susan Elliot

Withdrawal/Redaction Marker
Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. schedule	Schedule of First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton (partial) (1 page)	07/03/1998	b(7)(C), b(7)(E), b(7)(F), b(6)

COLLECTION:
Clinton Presidential Records
Firstl Lady's Office
Melanne Verveer
OA/Box Number: 20028

FOLDER TITLE:
China [2]

2013-0534-S
ry1650

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [a)(5) of the PRA]
P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.
PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).
RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

SCHEDULE FOR HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
FRIDAY, JULY 3, 1998
FINAL*

HONG KONG, CHINA

HONG KONG

LEAD ADVANCE:	PAT HALLEY	
	THE GRAND HYATT HOTEL	ROOM 3012
	9108-3793	CELL PHONE
	WHCA PAGER	# 5067
PRESS ADVANCE:	SHARON KENNEDY GILL	ROOM 2819
	9106-5580	CELL PHONE
	WHCA PAGER	# 5012
SITE ADVANCE:	BRENDA COSTELLO	ROOM 2502
	9106-5227	CELL PHONE
	WHCA PAGER	# 5024
SITE ADVANCE:	STEVE GRAHAM	ROOM 2801
	9106-5675	CELL PHONE
	WHCA PAGER	# 5059
SCHEDULER:	EVAN RYAN	
	202/456-6751	PHONE
	202/456-5340	FAX
	202/483-0383	HOME
	WHCA PAGER	#4223

PREV RON Grand Hyatt Hotel
Hong Kong, China

STAFF NOTE: Staff should gather on the 36th floor in the travelling staff office at 8:10 am.

[0013

8:15 am **DEPART** Grand Hyatt Hotel
EN ROUTE Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center
[drive time: 5 minutes]

(b)(6), (b)(7)c, (b)(7)e, (b)(7)f

8:20 am **ARRIVE** Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center

LOBBY GREETERS:
Roundtable participants

8:30 am-
10:00 am

HONG KONG WOMEN LEADERS' ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION
Phoenix Room B, Room 301b
Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center
Hold: Room 304
Phone: 2582-1596
Fax: n/a
Staff Hold: Room 304
POOL PRESS/WH PHOTO

FORMAT:
-The First Lady proceeds to her seat on stage.

-Mrs. Betty Tung makes welcoming remarks and introduces Secretary Albright.

NOTE: Mrs. Tung must depart for a prior engagement at this point.

-Secretary Albright makes brief remarks and introduces the First Lady.

-The First Lady makes brief remarks and opens the discussion.

-At the conclusion of the discussion, the First Lady makes brief remarks.

-The First Lady, Secretary Albright, and Carolyn Brehm, wife of the Consul General, exit left to VIP elevator to fifth floor.

-The First Lady, Secretary Albright, and Carolyn Brehm exit elevator proceeding left through service corridor, and proceed to POTUS hold.

PARTICIPANTS:
The First Lady
Secretary Madeleine Albright
Betty Tung, Spouse of Chief Executive C.H. Tung
Anson Chan, Chief Secretary of the Civil Service
Lena Chi, Mutual Legal Assistance Office, Department of Justice
Denise Yue, Treasury Secretary
Christine Loh, Legislator
Fanny Mui-Ching Cheing, Chairperson, Equal Opportunities Commission
Cheung Man Yee, Director of Broadcasting, RTHK
Anna Wu, Hong Kong Consumer Council
50 - 60 people in the audience

10:15 am-
11:15 am — **THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS: "BUILDING STABILITY IN ASIA FOR THE 21ST CENTURY"**
Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center
OPEN PRESS

11:20 am-
12:30 pm — **DOWN TIME**

12:45 pm-
1:30 pm — **GREET AMERICAN CONSULATE COMMUNITY w/POTUS**
Grand Foyer
Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center
CLOSED PRESS/WH PHOTO

FORMAT:
-The President and the First Lady, accompanied by Secretary Madeleine Albright, Congressman Edward Markey and Consul General Richard Boucher, are announced onto stage.

-Consul General Richard Boucher makes brief remarks and introduces Congressman Edward Markey.

-Congressman Edward Markey makes brief remarks and introduces the First Lady.

-The First Lady makes brief remarks and introduces the President.

-The President makes remarks, works a ropeline, and departs.

1:35 pm	**DEPART** Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center **VIA** Presidential Motorcade **EN ROUTE** TBD
1:45 pm- 2:45 pm	**OTR/LUNCH** w/POTUS
2:45 pm- 6:00 pm	**DOWN TIME**
6:15 pm- 7:25 pm	**STAR FERRY SUNSET CRUISE** w/POTUS Site TBD **PRESS TBD**
7:30 pm	**DEPART** Star Ferry **VIA** Presidential Motorcade **EN ROUTE** TBD
7:30 pm- 11:00 pm	**DOWN TIME** w/POTUS
11:05 pm	**DEPART** Down Time site **VIA** Presidential Motorcade **EN ROUTE** Chek Lap Kok International Airport [drive time: tbd]
11:45 pm	**ARRIVE** Chek Lap Kok International Airport
	GREETERS: C.H. Tung, Chief Executive Mrs. Betty Tung, Spouse Anson Chan, Chief Secretary, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Mrs. Lillian Wong, Director of Protocol Steven Cheng, A.D.C. Ma Yuzhen, Commissioner, Chinese MFA
12:00 am	**WHEELS UP** Chek Lap Kok International Airport **EN ROUTE** Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska [flight time: 9 hours, 30 minutes, -16 hours]
5:30 pm	**WHEELS DOWN** Elmendorf Air Force Base

7:30 pm	**WHEELS UP** Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska **EN ROUTE** Andrews Air Force Base [flight time: 6 hours, 30 minutes, +4 hours]
6:00 am	**WHEELS DOWN** Andrews Air Force Base
6:15 am	**DEPART** Andrews Air Force Base **VIA** Marine One **EN ROUTE** The White House [flight time: 10 minutes]
6:25 am	**ARRIVE** The White House
RON	Air Force One

WEATHER FORECAST FOR HONG KONG, CHINA: Periods of clouds & sunshine. High 86. Low 78.