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**THE OFFICIAL CONSTRUCTION OF
FEMALE SEXUALITY AND GENDER
IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
1949–1959**

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PHD IN MODERN CHINESE HISTORY**

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ABSTRACT

Issues of sexuality as expounded in the Chinese official press of the 1950s can be taken as an important indicator of the changing perception of female gender in the early People's Republic. This thesis explores the assumptions and attitudes concerning sexuality conveyed in the official media, and places particular emphasis on the projection of female attributes and responsibilities in sexual relationships. It analyses the different biological and social constructions of sexuality, and the means by which biologically determined sexual differences were inscribed with specific gender characteristics. In so doing, it offers a view of female gender not attainable from the study of women in other contexts in the same period. Simultaneously, the focus on the official media permits examination of the nature of the state's interests in sponsoring public discussion about sex-related issues.

Official journals and educational materials on love, marriage and the family projected new norms and expectations of women's sexual behaviour which served both didactic and exhortatory functions. Norms expounded for women as fiancée, wife and mother, as represented in these materials, established a new conjugal relationship in which, ideally, both man and wife contributed in equal measure to marital and family stability and satisfaction. The new norms also suggested that women were attributed with certain biological characteristics which identified them as 'natural' providers of their husbands' needs and as principle mediators of marital harmony. Any female violation of the new sexual norms was interpreted as the generator and signifier of suffering, sickness and moral chaos. Women, therefore, were assigned primary responsibility for maintaining moral and social order. On this basis, it can be argued that female sexual conduct was appropriated by the state as an agent of moral and social order, in which the needs and interests of the male predominated over those of the female.

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My research on aspects of sexuality and gender in China began when I was working in the Centre of Asian and African Studies, El Colegio de Mexico, Mexico City. While collecting materials for a paper on the construction of love in China in the 1980s, I quickly realised that the official press contained much more abundant material on sex-related issues than I had anticipated. Moreover, the representation of women that emerged from these materials contrasted sharply with the general characteristics of female gender constructs in other areas of the official discourse. My first thanks, therefore, go to my colleagues in El Colegio de Mexico, and in particular to Flora Botton Beja, for encouraging me to take this first step in what was to become a major work of research. I also wish to thank André Quésnel and Dora Rapold for their inspired suggestions about issues of gender and sexuality, and my student, Asención Benitez, for helping me clarify many ideas about women and the family in China.

On my return to the UK to take up a post in the Polytechnic of Central London, I decided to investigate further the sources of the 1980s discourse. I spent a long, but fascinating summer looking through the 1950s issues of *Zhongguo funü* and *Zhongguo qingnian*, in order to gain some idea of the general themes that might have informed the later discourse. So rich and varied were the materials, however, that it was clear that an analysis of the 1950s alone would be a rewarding exercise in itself.

That I have been able to undertake such a study has in large part due to the help and support I have received from friends and colleagues. My initial thanks go to my supervisor, Dr. Elisabeth Croll, of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, whose initial interest in the topic encouraged me to register it as a PhD, and whose advice and guidance throughout its different stages have been invaluable. Thanks also go to my colleagues in the Chinese Section of the PCL, to the Research

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ONE

INTRODUCTION

The publication of articles about sex-related issues in the official media in 1949 marked a new stage in the Chinese Communist Party's approach to marriage and family reform and women's emancipation. Since its early years, the Communist Party had given consistent attention to the general ideological, social, and economic requirements of women's emancipation. (1) Questions relating to sex, however, were not included within the customary definition of 'woman-work' (*funü gongzuo*) -- the concept developed by the Party to refer to its policies about and work with women. (2) With few exceptions, issues concerning sexuality had been absent from official discussions and publications about women.

The degree of attention given sex-related issues after 1949 was, in contrast, striking. Almost every issue of *Zhongguo funü* and *Zhongguo qingnian* between the years 1950 and 1956 contained some article, often accompanied by readers' letters, about a particular aspect of sexuality, whether linked to requirements of hygiene and health, or to sexual fears and expectations of married life. (3) Written by doctors, legal specialists, adolescents, young wives and mothers, these articles provided a regular forum for public discussion about a wide range of gender and sex-related questions. A glance at the contents of a few magazines indicates some of the themes addressed. An issue of *Zhongguo qingnian* in mid-1950 contained several relevant articles, such as 'Uphold and implement the Marriage Law' (*Yonghu hunyin fa, shixian hunyin fa*), 'Help young people to resolve their marriage problems' (*Bangzhu qingnian jiejie hunyin wenti*), 'Establish a correct perspective of love' (*Jianli zhengque de lian'ai guan*), and 'About my view of love' (*Tantan wode lian'ai guan*). (4) By the mid-1950s, titles began to

move away from references to the new Marriage Law and identify new concerns, common among which were fears and anxieties about the meanings attached to different forms of sexual behaviour, such as 'The hymen and love' (Chunümo yu aiqing), or 'Talking about the age of marriage from the physiological point of view' (Cong shengli shang tan jiehun nianling). (5) Others addressed the moral implications of sexual relationships outside the framework of marriage, as in a debate carried in a number of consecutive issues of *Zhongguo funü* in 1956 initiated by an article entitled 'Why did our marriage breakdown?' (Women fufu guanxi weishenmo polie?). (6)

These materials have been unexplored in the literature on women in China as a source for the construction of sexuality and gender. (7) In examining them, this study explores the themes through which attitudes towards and assumptions about sexuality were conveyed, putting particular emphasis on the projection of women's responsibilities and attributes in sexual relationships. It analyses the different biological and social representations of sexuality, and the areas, or topics, in which biologically determined sexual differences were inscribed with specific gender characteristics. In so doing, it seeks to assess the significance of the various representations of female sexuality contained in the materials of the 1950s for the meanings attached to female gender.

The study of sexuality in the social sciences and history

In recent decades, the 'essentialist' view of sexuality as a universal and natural force, the control of which is necessary to social morality and order has been successfully challenged by the argument that sexuality is a social practice, subject to different interpretations and meanings depending on social and cultural determination. (8) In anthropology, the view of sexuality as a social and cultural construct emerged out of the realisation that eurocentric values about sexual behaviour could not explain the

variety of beliefs and practices found elsewhere. The naturalistic bias according to which sex and gender were explained could not account for evident cultural differences in the construction and organisation of sex and gender notions. Research into the different cultural representations of sexuality followed, and with it the development of notions of sexual symbolism -- sexual meanings -- and the way in which they affected and were affected by the social context which contained them. (9) Work on initiation rituals, on the ways in which the human body is viewed, and on the importance of controlling female sexuality for the integrity of the group, has made important contributions to understanding the sources and processes of the construction of sexuality in different societies. (10) Sociological inquiry, in contrast, has been more interested in examining the social processes in which gender identity, or sex and gender role, and notions of masculinity and femininity, are acquired. (11)

In historical studies of the last two decades, the most influential theoretician of sexuality has been Michel Foucault, who in his *Introduction to The History of Sexuality* argued that the history of sexuality in western societies should be understood in terms of the elicitation of sex through the creation of discourses -- the extension of power through the production of knowledge -- of sex, rather than in terms of the coercive repression of natural urges. (12) Widely referred to in subsequent works on sexuality, Foucault has nevertheless been criticised for failing to identify the agencies of power in his system, and for neglecting the effects of the historical discourse on sexuality for the construction of gender differences. (13) Other studies, many of which have emerged out of women's history and gender studies, and are often associated with psychoanalytic approaches, have applied Foucault's approach to the analysis of the processes in which different interpretations of sexuality and its related institutions of law, the medical profession, marriage, and the family have contributed to the generation of gender differences and the gender inequalities inscribed in them. In his survey of sexuality over the past two hundred years, Jeffrey Weeks, for

example, traced the historical development of sexual identities and their effects on gender perceptions, with a view to identifying the various social, moral and political forces which have moulded our definitions of sexuality. He demonstrated how the interaction between different agencies, such as the state and the medical profession, functioned to regulate sexual behaviour by 'labelling a whole spectrum of sexual behaviours as deviant'. (14) Donzelot examined the development of the 'psy' professions and the 'political technologies' that invested the body to facilitate the policing of social and familial behaviour. (15) Barbara Ehrenreich and Deidre English examined the historical impact of the professionalisation of knowledge about women's bodies on the representation of women, and Elaine Showalter analysed the ways in which culturally determined ideas about femininity and female sexuality have historically shaped views and treatment of mental disorders in women. (16) These writers, to name but a few of those acknowledged in this study, share a common rejection of the view of sex as an autonomous force which has to be disciplined in the name of social stability. (17) They focus on the generation of different discourses -- sets of representational practices -- as modes of mediating sexual and gender behaviour. As a result of such contributions, sexuality is now widely recognised as a legitimate and distinct area of intellectual inquiry. It is also generally accepted that analysis of sexuality as a cultural and historical construct is essential to our understanding of the gender organisation of society.

Sexuality in Chinese studies

Sexuality does not yet form a distinct component of historical and social studies on China. For non-Chinese scholars, this may, in part, be the result of the limitations on conducting field work in China. Data compiled on the basis of first-hand observation and information has been collected in brief visits, often arranged in

response to political and bureaucratic requirements rather than to the needs of intellectual inquiry. First-hand information has been restricted to limited personal contacts and friendships. Even if scholars had so desired, therefore, examination of such a complex and culturally specific area of social practice has effectively been beyond reach.

Linguistic and conceptual difficulties may also have functioned to restrict intellectual interest in sexuality in China. There is no word in Chinese for sexuality as a 'thing in itself': as a concept referring to a series of representational practices which are central to the construction of the self and to the gender organisation of society. (18) Words that refer to sex in contemporary mainland Chinese suggest a view of sex as a collection of discrete biological and eroticised acts. Terms such as '*xing xingwei*' (sexual behaviour), '*xing jiaose*' (sex role), '*xingyu*' (sexual desire), '*liangxing guanxi*' (heterosexual relationships), for example, all indicate specific modalities of sexual practice, associated with acts rather than identities. (19)

The few historical studies in Chinese that touch on sex-related issues are circumscribed by the above conceptual limitations. Works such as Wang Yunwu's *Zhongguo funü shi* (History of Chinese Women), and *Zhongguo funü shi lunwen ji* (Collected Essays on the History of Chinese Women) both make references to women's sexual oppression in sections on marriage and concubinage. (20) A number of the histories of the women's movement in China include appraisals of the 'feudal' marriage system and its effects on the struggle for women's emancipation. (21) *Zhongguo changji shi* (History of Chinese Prostitution), and *Zhongguo tongxinglian shi lu* (Historical Records of Homosexuality in China) as their titles suggest, approach issues of sexuality more directly. (22) A more recent work entitled "*Xing*" *zai gudai Zhongguo* ("Sex" in Ancient China) surveys the major characteristics of China's sexual tradition. (23) However, these studies are limited by a view of sex as a series of attitudes and behaviours that have been permitted or denied expression at different moments of China's history. None of them analyse the history of sexuality as a distinctive area of

social practice and representation, subject to specific, and changing, cultural determinations.

Similarly in English, few works contain scholarly accounts of sexual practice and gender organisation in classical China. H.S. Levy's work on footbinding contains important materials on the signification of a particular aspect of traditional views of sexuality, and John Byron's *Portrait of a Chinese Paradise* provides a survey of the erotica of the late Qing period. (24) Vivien W. Ng's analysis of the rape laws of Qing China suggests that the control of sexual behaviour constituted an aspect of the government's attempt to promote the cult of chastity and female virtue. (25) Charlotte Furth has examined Ming and Qing views of women and female sexuality through medical theories about menstruation, pregnancy and childbirth, and Bret Hinsch's recent work, *Passions of the Cut Sleeve*, offers an historical analysis of the 'male homosexual tradition' in China. (26) Robert Van Gulik's seminal *Sexual Life in Ancient China*, however, remains the only substantial scholarly work published to date on the history of sexuality in China. (27)

For the modern and contemporary periods, increasing numbers of papers have been published in recent years in the People's Republic of China on sex-related topics. Often carried out on the basis of regional surveys, these contain important data about marriage and divorce rates among different age groups, changes in the age of puberty, adolescent sexual behaviour, and pre-marital sex. (28) Very few of these, however, go beyond the quantitative evaluation of specific acts and attitudes, to draw out the implications of changing sexual practices for the organisation of gender relations. (29)

Western analyses of sexuality in contemporary China are virtually non-existent. The only serious analysis of sexuality in contemporary China which treats it as an aspect of gender identity is *Personal Voices* by Emily Honig and Gail Hershatter. (30) Based on a detailed survey of official and popular journals for women and young people published in the 1980s, this work describes the different representations of women in sexual and gender

relationships as an aspect of the ways in which the social changes in the 1980s affected the status of Chinese women. Other studies about women, the family and youth in China make little more than passing reference to sex-related issues. Judith Stacey's *Patriarchy and Socialist Revolution in China*, and Beverley Hooper's study of Chinese youth, both comment on the 'puritanical' characteristics of Chinese approaches to sexuality. (31) On the same note, Margery Wolf has suggested that this might be indicative of women's lack of interest in sex, bred of centuries of being forced into sexual relationships with total strangers. (32) In her autobiographical account, *Black Country Girl in Red China*, Esther Cheo Ying supports this view in her description of the reluctant sexual response of a colleague of hers to her husband's advances. (33) She also, however, suggests that extra-marital sexual relationships were 'more easy-going during the pre-civil war period', and only became more constrained under the pressures of war and scarcity during the 1940s, when despite the sexual licence of a number of prominent Party leaders, Party members were 'ordered to tighten up their morals and told to study Lenin's glass of water theory.' (34) By the mid-1950s, once the 'more relaxed atmosphere immediately after Liberation' had come to an end, extra-marital affairs were again being treated as an 'ideological problem'. (35) In contrast, William Hinton, Jonathan Spence, and more recently Lloyd Eastman have all suggested that if not mediated by official interpretations, popular approaches to sex at the village level in China were often down-to-earth and crude. (36) Rural informants have partially substantiated this view by revealing that extra-marital, if not pre-marital sexual liaisons were treated as commonplace, as evidenced by popular songs and ballads sung by married women. (37) Leaving aside the question of the empirical and sociological value of the above comments, the interpretations of sexuality associated with them are necessarily fragmentary. They also point to concerns with social practice and conduct which transcend the purpose of the present analysis.

The dearth of western works on gender and sexuality in China is

somewhat mitigated by the now considerable number of scholarly works on women, marriage and the family, undertaken in a variety of disciplines and from a variety of perspectives. The local and national studies of marriage and related family institutions carried out on the basis of first-hand inquiry in the Republican period contain rich background materials, as do the autobiographical and biographical accounts of Chinese women. (38) The documentary studies of the aims and procedures adopted to implement the laws on marriage and divorce, produced by C. K. Yang and M. J. Meijer, also provide excellent secondary data. (39) The studies of rural and urban life by Martin King Whyte and William Parish, and the comprehensive analyses of changes in marriage and family structures and functions undertaken by Elisabeth Croll, Delia Davin, Kay Ann Johnson, Judith Stacey, and Margery Wolf, to name but some of the more recent contributors, have all provided invaluable contextual material to the present study. (40) While helpful for historical and contextual purposes, none of these works, however, address the issues of sexuality examined in the following chapters.

The linguistic and conceptual complexities of studying sexuality in China provoke a series of questions. Given the absence of the concept 'sexuality' in standard Chinese, to what extent does the analytical use of it artificially circumscribe the scope of the field of observation by cutting off the subjects of our inquiry from the wider social framework to which they belong? Is it possible to apply such a culturally loaded concept to the analysis of sexual representations and meanings of a different cultural context without falling into the dangers of distortion? On the other hand, would sole reliance on the Chinese concepts force the analysis into a fruitless relativism? While acknowledging the validity of these doubts, the use of the term 'sexuality' in this study was initially dictated by the textual realities of the Chinese publications, and the requirements for their analysis. The often detailed discussions about sex -- whether as an instinctual biological response or as a technique to improve married life -- contained in the materials of the 1950s cannot be

explained as aspects of kin structures, marriage reform or eugenic interest. The term 'sexuality' conveniently categorises the enormous variety of sex-related issues that were publicised during the 1950s, and provides a theoretical construct appropriate to distinguishing the present area of inquiry from others concerning gender and women. (41)

The official construction of sexuality in China

An enormous amount has been written about sexuality in China since the early 1980s. Women's writings have begun to examine issues of sexuality in ways that represent a radical departure from the premises of the 1950s discourse. Literature and films have begun to adopt approaches to the representation of sexuality which acknowledge it as a distinctive component of self-identity. In contrast to the heavily didactic emphasis on correct attitudes to sexual matters apparent in the 1950s discourse, official interest since the early 1980s has shifted somewhat to include the experiential aspects of sexuality. Nevertheless, official commentaries about sex-related issues in recent years confirm the prevalence of the major themes of the 1950s. Many of the essentialist assumptions apparent in the 1950s discourse continue to exercise considerable influence. The biological arguments underlying the construction of female gender seem to be as uncritically maintained as before. The use of science to lend legitimacy to fundamentally hierarchical gender relationships is still a notable feature of official recommendations about sex-related issues.

Although publication of articles about sex-related issues continued throughout the early 1960s, they served to repeat the messages of the 1950s discourse. It was not until the official journals renewed publication after the years of enforced silence of the Cultural Revolution, that its themes were recuperated and amplified to form the basis for the more diverse discussions of

the 1980s. (42) In the few references made to it in secondary materials, the discourse of the 1950s is therefore treated as little more than the precursor of the later, less unified discourse of the 1980s. (43) Its tone of moral concern was still apparent more than three decades later, and its didacticism, though diluted, remained a salient characteristic. However, the concerns of the 1950s discourse on sexuality did more than establish the premises defining the questions asked in the debates of the later period. As the principal referent for the 1980s debates, the 1950s discourse overdetermined the topics selected for discussion as well as the mode of their presentation. The views upheld in the 1950s continue to influence the representations of the contemporary discourse. Elucidating the discursive concerns of the 1950s, therefore, not only offers a view of female gender unattainable from the study of women in other contexts in the same period. It indicates the point of departure for the study of sexuality in China in the 1980s, and identifies some of the major perceptions and preoccupations informing contemporary representations of sexuality in China.

Sexuality is a key site of the construction of gender differences, and, by extension, of the gender hierarchies inscribed in them. However it may be defined, the concept of sexuality concerns definitions of male and female, and of masculinity and femininity. Sexual norms and restrictions, whether they take the form of taboos or of moral injunctions, make statements about gender and gender relationships. As Sherry Ortner and Harriet Whitehead wrote in the introduction to *Sexual Meanings*, 'no matter what the idiom or cultural domain, [sexual meanings] structure, prescribe, or create attitudes and conduct with respect to intragender and intergender relations.' (44) The particular meaning attached to woman as a social category in sexually implicated relationships and contexts -- whether in adolescence or courtship, as a girlfriend or fiancée, as a wife or adulteress -- was not synonymous with that given to women as workers, farmers, scientists or administrators. The representation of the physical and moral responses and responsibilities expected

of women in sexual relationships, or in the gender relationships in which female sexuality was either implicitly or explicitly invoked, gave a specific meaning to female gender not found in other idealised representations of women. The focus of this study, therefore, is not on the biological construction of sexuality, nor on the processes of socialisation through which the meanings attached to femininity, womanhood and female sexuality were learnt, but on the particular representation of female gender -- of the meaning attached to the category woman -- that emanated from the discourse about sex-related issues.

Historical analyses of gender and sexuality have suggested that sexuality may often be treated as a 'target for social intervention and organisation.' (45) It can be identified as a key area of social practice permitting surveillance and control over individual persons. For such a purpose, sexuality is unique among the various aspects of social practice, precisely because it touches on experiences, projections and practices which are usually assumed to be removed from social view. It grants access to the body, to the identification of forces motivating and defining individual behaviour and thought, and through this it grants access to regulation of fertility and population. As Foucault argued in his *Introduction to The History of Sexuality*, public discussion of sexuality may in itself be a mode of eliciting and regulating sexual conduct to conform to certain moral standards, whether these are defined by formal centres of state power or by lay professional sectors. (46) Discourses on sexuality can therefore function as powerful apparatuses facilitating control over beliefs and practices which are central both to individual and social practice.

The appearance of sex-related issues in public debate in the 1950s did not, in itself, indicate attitudes of sexual tolerance. Rather, the interest in sexuality in the official publications of the 1950s corresponded to the state's interests in mediating and controlling sexual behaviour. The state had access to what Weeks has called both formal and informal mechanisms of regulating sexual behaviour. The Marriage Law of 1950 represented the

application of the state's legal institutions in the formal mediation of sexual behaviour. The political sanctions backing the official recommendations about sexual behaviour, used for example to exert pressure on young people in choosing a marriage partner, could also be thought of as formal mechanisms. (47) Officially sponsored discussion, however, functioned more as an informal means of regulating sexuality, since it operated more through the projection of norms than the use of political power. The editorials of journals such as *Zhongguo qingnian* and *Zhongguo funü* represented the views of formal state organisations under the leadership of the Communist Party. (48) The values they encouraged were ultimately backed by formal political power. Nevertheless, the discussions they encouraged were not synonymous with political or legal power; through such discussion, control was exercised, as Weeks put it in reviewing Foucault's conceptualisation of sexuality, 'not through denial or prohibition, but through "production", through imposing a grid of definition on the possibilities of the body....not in the traditional model of sovereignty (that is negatively "thou shall not") but through administering and fostering life.' (49)

Seen from this perspective, analysis of the official discussion about sexuality in China acquires an important dimension which is not immediately apparent. The official discussion about sexuality marked the nexus of knowledge and power -- the texts, themes and representational practices through which knowledge was produced, and controlled -- as a means of legitimising certain values, practices and their exponents. (50) Borrowing from Foucault's conceptualisation, it constituted a discourse, constructed as an aspect of party-state power to extend control over areas of personal experience which, in the words of Wang Wenbin, a prominent writer on such issues, had hitherto been 'shrouded in mystery' and 'shameful secrecy'. (51) The development of an official discourse of sexuality testified to the deployment of state power over a particular aspect of individual behaviour, not via methods of overt repression - although these were employed as

well - but via indirect control through the creation of uniform standards of sexual behaviour. (52)

The official discourse of sexuality in ideological and social context

The immediate context for the formulation of the official discourse of sexuality was the new Marriage Law of 1950 and the principles of marital and sexual behaviour associated with it. (53) The model of conjugal marriage on which the Marriage Law was based represented a radical departure from the Confucian marriage system and from the customary perceptions of marital and familial morality inscribed in it. Even if in its initial implementation, the new law had only limited success in encouraging new attitudes and practices in marriage arrangements, the social and gender values embodied in it, and particularly those concerning women's rights in marital and familial affairs, heralded the destruction of the system of arranged marriage. (54) However conservative the response to it, the Marriage Law provided a formal institutional basis for the transformation of marriage practices. Promulgated through the media, women's organisations and the education system, the law received extensive coverage, not only as the expression of new principles of marriage but, by implication, of sexual behaviour.

In its general construction of 'appropriate' sexual behaviour, the discourse of sexuality conformed to the main principles of the new model of free-choice marriage (*hunyin ziyou*), and the relationships and practices associated with it. Indeed, as noted above, one main purpose of state intervention in sex-related matters was to ensure that young people be educated in the principles of 'sexual morality' (*xing daode*) considered necessary for the successful popularisation of free-choice marriage. New attitudes towards sexual behaviour were presented as an indispensable component of the process of ideological change

promoted by the strategy for marriage reform. (55) The normative standards of sexual behaviour which the discourse represented both emanated from and reinforced the requirements of free-choice marriage. Practices and values which contradicted the sexual principles on which the new model of marriage was defined - either from a conservative and 'feudal' (*fengjian*) or an immoral and 'bourgeois' (*zichanjiefi*) standpoint - were explicitly condemned on grounds ranging from venal interest to physical harm. The view of appropriate sexual behaviour upheld by the discourse was thus entirely bounded by the assumptions and principles on which the new model of marriage was based.

The 'monogamous system of marriage' (*yi fu yi qi zhi*) was inscribed in the Marriage Law as the only legal form of marriage. It was interpreted as the indispensable condition for eliminating the feudal system of bigamy and concubinage. As a form of sexual and gender relations, it was given an almost absolute validity, which as one commentator explained, was 'dictated not only by the physiological differences between the sexes, but also by the perpetuation of the race.' (56) As a sexual relationship, monogamy was therefore projected as rooted in nature. As a social relationship, it was defined as the foundation of the new socialist family, and therefore of the basic unit of society for, as the same commentator noted, 'Even in communist society, we cannot conceive of any objective basis or necessity for eliminating the family.' (57) By extension, it became a synonym for normative sexual relations according to which, as sexual partners, a man and a woman were bound to each other for life. In the terms of the official discourse, the monogamous union thus acquired the connotation of an exclusive and indissoluble tie, which as this study shows, had particular significance for women. The main thrust of the discourse on sexuality, as many an article indicated, was to educate young people preparing for marriage in the 'correct' (*zhengque*) attitudes towards love and sexual behaviour. Titles such as 'How to correctly treat problems of love', 'We should also establish correct moral qualities in marriage and family life', or *How to Correctly Treat Problems of*

Love, Marriage and the Family, conveyed concerns shared by a number of commentators about the widespread lack of experience about sexual and emotional matters among young people. (58) Indeed, some commentators saw this as a real threat to the successful implementation of the new model of marriage:

Some young people exercise their independence in marrying, only to ask for divorce shortly afterwards, which one has to consider is a drawback. But it is very difficult for young people, particularly young women, who have only just been liberated from the fetters of the feudal system, to avoid. Because even though they all oppose feudal marriage and demand freedom of marriage, they previously lived in a society long subject to the feudal system of marriage. Many people, therefore, on gaining freedom of marriage, were not yet skilled in settling their own marriage and in selecting their own partner. With their innocence and their passion, many of them easily lost their capacity to make distinctions and their self-control, giving rise to the so-called situation of making light of marriage. (59)

The official discourse on sexuality did not aim to identify the extent and variation of different sexual behaviours and values, nor the various socio-economic, regional and ethnic factors affecting sexual behaviour. As indicated above, it was explicitly oriented to inculcating the norms of sexual morality considered appropriate to the restructuring of gender and sexual relations implied by the new Marriage Law. It thus set out to identify a range of key issues and problems, discussion of which was considered necessary to clarify or complement aspects of policy at any given moment. Discussion of some issues appeared to correspond neatly with the changing emphases of state policies in the broader sphere of social and economic transformation. For example, discussion about the ideological rights and wrongs of wearing patterned dresses coincided with the attempts to improve the status of the housewife under the pressure of increasing urban unemployment in the mid-1950s. (60) Condemnation of men as the

guilty party in cases of marital conflict similarly coincided with the early campaigns to popularise the Marriage Law, when defence of women's rights against 'feudal' abuse was a priority in 'woman-work'. Other issues appeared more spontaneously in response to events as they occurred, and to requests for advice from readers. For example, articles about masturbation and sexual excess followed no discernible chronological or ideological rhythm. In general quantitative terms, more articles appeared on a greater variety of sex-related issues during the mid-1950s, coinciding with the brief and doomed period of intellectual liberalisation during the Hundred Flowers movement. Prior to this, and in particular until 1953, attention tended to focus on the information and knowledge perceived to be necessary to popularise the law on marriage. Subsequent to 1957, and in particular as the economic policies associated with the Great Leap Forward began to be publicised, the boundaries of the discourse were redrawn to exclude those references which seemed tangential to the major tasks of participation in production. (61)

The political and chronological characteristics associated with different moments of the discourse indicate that, despite the regular recurrence of certain central themes -- marriage or women's hygiene, for instance -- the 1950s should not necessarily be treated as a homogenous period of analysis. The policy modifications concerning the publicisation of the Marriage Law which occurred in 1953, for example, suggest quite different approaches to the treatment of a particular issue. However, the social and political context of the discourse exhibited a certain coherence until the radical changes in central policy ushered in by the Great Leap Forward. The notion of a '1950s' discourse, therefore, should be understood to refer to the principal representations and meanings produced by the discourse as a whole, rather than to its specific aspects.

As was the case with 'woman-work' in general, the Party's policy priorities in economic, social and political affairs often predominated over considerations of sexual equality in the representations of women and female sexuality in the People's

Republic of China. (62) Despite the Party's ideological and legal commitment to sexual equality, the images of women in sexually-implicated relationships were frequently modified according to the shifting emphases of central policies in ways which seemed inconsistent with the struggle for sexual equality. The representation of women as self-sacrificing fiancées and wives during the Korean War, or as diligent domestic managers during the unemployment crisis of the mid-1950s were two prominent examples. (63)

The goal of sexual equality nevertheless constituted a major referent for the construction of sexuality, particularly in the early years after 1949. The redefinition of marriage in the 1950 Marriage Law as a relationship between equal partners projected free-choice marriage as one of the structural elements sustaining sexual equality. (64) Until a series of intense month-long ideological campaigns brought an end to the initial radical phase of implementation of the Marriage Law in 1953, free-choice monogamous marriage was consistently presented as an indispensable means of upholding women's rights against feudal abuse. (65) In conjunction with this, the discourse on sexuality emphasized the need to destroy the 'feudal fetters' (*fengjian fengsuo*) that continued to restrict women in their marital relationships. For example, women were encouraged to reexamine their own responses to their husbands' demands and practices. (66) They were asked to evaluate the relative importance of their sexual and affective life alongside other aspects of their married life, and were asked to think about what sexual equality meant in marriage. (67)

To what extent, therefore, and in what precise ways, did the discourse on sexuality substantiate, modify or elaborate the gender constructs associated with sexual equality? How did the construction of women and female gender in the discourse on sexuality correspond with the ideology of sexual equality? One purpose of this study is to assess how the representations of female sexuality, as influenced by central policy formulations, modulated the significance of the term sexual equality as enshrined in the law and upheld by the Party. Other works have

shown how political, economic and social requirements during the 1950s were instrumental in shaping views about women and sexual equality. (68) In focusing on the construction of female sexuality, this work differs substantially from these. Firstly, it identifies an official discourse of sexuality in which gender differences are constructed. In other words, it does not assume the nature and definition of the social category 'woman', but seeks to discover specific techniques and representations in which gender differentiation was constructed. Secondly, in analysing the discourse of sexuality, it raises a number of new issues, as well as examining familiar issues from a new perspective. In particular it looks at the official discourse's elicitation of female sexuality and gender as an agent of state definitions of morality and order.

An important factor permitting the state's intervention in the articulation of the procedures and criteria according to which sexual choices were made was the redefinition of the relationship between public and private. Indeed, the intervention of the state in the construction of sexuality was facilitated as soon as marital concerns were removed from their prevalent association with the private (*siren*) domain. As one commentator put it in 1956, 'We must regard marriage not as a problem of enjoyment of "private life", but as a "cell" of the entire cause of revolution, as something important to the interests of society as a whole.' (69). The challenge to the assumption that marriage was a private concern of the individual or domestic group was extended to all related areas of love and friendship, and, by implication, sexuality. (70)

The conceptualisation of sexuality as a social or public concern accorded with the view that the social was ideologically superior to the private and domestic. Decisions concerning the choice of partner, the timing of public appearance with a partner, or the kind of affective relationship it was appropriate to form with a partner prior to marriage were all considered to be matters of social as well as personal significance. Emphasis on the personal (*geren* or *siren*) aspects of emotional and sexual satisfaction was

interpreted as the negative expression of 'selfish desires.' (71) It was considered incompatible with commitment to the social good, and at times was even used interchangeably with harm to the collective interest. In the event of any conflict, therefore, 'private' interests had to be sacrificed. As one commentator clearly put it in an article entitled 'In the life of a revolutionary, is there no link between unhealthy tendencies and politics?....in cases of conflict between individual and collective interests, a revolutionary must subordinate the former to the latter.' (72) Conversely, the social orientation of matters of the heart was explained as a means of enriching personal happiness. As a commentator put it in a short article on 'Lofty Love',

Lofty love which develops through work and struggle fuses love for an individual person with love for the country, society and nation. This love is built not on appearance and physical attraction (*zhiti*) but on the glorious ideal of struggling for the construction of a new society. It makes people put even more energy into social construction, and as a result enriches their happiness in life. (73)

In a discussion about the ideological implications of constructing sexuality as a private sphere of experience and practice, Robert Padgug has suggested that the public/private dichotomy typical of western approaches to sexuality and society has prevented historians from seeing the 'interpenetration' between the different spheres. (74) In China as elsewhere, the conventional association of sexuality with the private and hidden long served to mystify sexuality, and to divest it of social meaning. As Wang Wenbin mentioned in introducing his book on *Knowledge about Sex* (*Xing de zhishi*), 'In the old society, most people thought of sex as obscene and shameful, and so it was not talked about. As a result, sex became clouded in mystery, so that ordinary young men and women still lack necessary knowledge about sex, even after marriage.' (75) Another writer has more recently suggested that together with the relegation of women to the domestic sphere, the

effect of denying women access to knowledge about sexuality was to legitimise male authority over female sexuality. (76)

The insistence that issues of love and marriage were of social importance in the Chinese discourse of the 1950s, therefore, granted the possibility of examining and assessing the meaning of sexuality, particularly female sexuality, in a radically new light. It attacked the legitimacy of the traditional system under which women's sexuality was controlled by the *jiazhang*, the male head of the domestic unit traditionally responsible for ensuring female adherence to the Confucian rules of propriety. It potentially facilitated discussion about the social significance and meaning of sexual and emotional matters, and challenged the values which had hitherto sustained the view of sex as a source of shame. The party and government's commitment to goals of women's emancipation and sexual equality was often explained with reference to the benefits of removing women from their traditional association with the domestic sphere. (77) Women were subsequently to enjoy access to a whole series of public rights, ranging from law to social labour, which would give them new powers of control over their own lives. Subsuming female gender and sexuality under the public sphere, therefore, also signalled the possibility of granting women an important lever of control over their own sexuality, and in particular over their sexual subordination within marriage. (78) In analysing the characteristics and general aims of the state's appropriation of sexuality, this study also, therefore, examines the effects of the redefinition of the private/public dichotomy about sexuality for the construction of female gender.

The redefinition of the relationship between private/domestic and public spheres of life projected a parallel, if partial, restructuring of the relationship between the individual subject and the state. Under the dynastic system, intra-family relationships were axiomatically represented as being a microcosmic version of those of the government and people, of society as a whole. Indeed, the view of the family as the basic unit of social, political and economic order was central to the

Confucian understanding of social stability, as the saying 'Wishing to order well their States, they first regulated their families' indicated. (79) According to this view, the family was ideally projected as the principal moral mediator of individual behaviour. 'Self-cultivation' was required for the sake not of individual achievement and recognition, but of family, group and state order. Family morality was premised on individual respect for and conformity to a set of hierarchically arranged kin and affinal relationships which the family head, the *jiazhang*, was legally empowered to regulate and sanction. (80) Moral behaviour was thus defined as conforming to the group-oriented responsibilities signified by the individual's position in the family's internal hierarchy. While the concept of the self was certainly associated with conscious awareness, reason and the capacity to make moral judgements, the notion of individual autonomy detached from group interest, or of rights to make choices that were incompatible with family interest, lay outside such a formulation. As Mark Elvin put it, 'the person was what he or she was as the node of a multiplicity of specifically defined social relationships.' (81)

The conceptualisation of the individual -- of individual rights and responsibilities -- which formed part of the CCP's cultural legacy was therefore bounded by the moral obligations engendered by the group orientation of traditional family structures. (82) This view was clearly influential in the interpretation of the self which informed the CCP's treatment of marriage and sex-related issues. In the discourse of the 1950s, however, the family no longer appeared as the pivot of the individual's relationship to the state; the individual's relationship to the state was no longer mediated by the family, as under the Confucian system. Moral authority was no longer to be identified with the family or its male head, the *jiazhang*. The boundaries of the individual person's responsibilities were redrawn, not in order to free him or her from the obligation to conform to collective requirements, but to redirect their attachments, energies and commitments away from the family to serve the goals of the new

state. (83) Personal choices were to be bounded by the ideological and moral values of the new norms of sexuality projected in the discourse. They were to be made according to moral criteria defined by agents external to both the individual subject and the family. The state thus emerged as the moral guide of sexual behaviour, which as this study shows, had specific gender implications for the representation of sexual propriety.

Derivations of the official construction of sexuality

In 1949, on its assumption of state power, the Communist Party brought with it a conceptualisation of 'woman-work' that had been shaped by the exigencies of war as much as by ideological principle. It had also been guided by an awareness of the potential of the women's movement for consolidating power and for enhancing the economic and political capacity of the CCP. Under the siege conditions of the Jiangxi Soviet and the Yan'an base area, approaches to woman-work had focused on ways to mobilise women to support the military struggle, either as soldiers, or more commonly, as rear-guard support in productive and manufacturing activities. (84) While in formal terms, free-choice marriage and freedom of divorce were upheld as key principles of CCP policy towards women, ratified by the laws of the Jiangxi and Yan'an periods, evidence suggests that they were very imperfectly implemented. (85) Conservative attitudes towards women among the rural populations of the liberated areas further hindered systematic consideration of the tasks required to free women from subjection to the 'domination by men' (*nanzi de zhipei*). (86) Coinciding with the CCP's orthodox Marxist view that women's emancipation lay in participation in social production, these limitations diminished the potential attention given women's specific needs and requirements, unless these could be integrated into the broad definition of the tasks of social transformation. Many publications suggested that woman-work was important largely

because it contributed to the general goals of national liberation. (87) Others suggested that pursuit of free-choice marriage at the cost of other aspects of social reform would provoke serious conflicts between couples and within family groups and would disrupt the social and political unity needed to sustain the war effort. (88)

In such conditions, the pursuit of free-choice marriage could easily be associated with the 'erroneous' tendency to separate woman-work from the principal requirements of social transformation. As the writer Ding Ling discovered in Yan'an, when she was harshly condemned for criticising the Party's negligence towards the needs of women's emancipation, the CCP's commitment to the women's movement was defined within very tightly circumscribed limits. (89) While in theoretical terms, therefore, the principle of free-choice marriage received the full backing of communist ideology, in practice it was often subordinated to other, more general considerations. In an atmosphere which proscribed suggestions that woman-work might deserve independent attention, and which condemned those who criticised the Party's male bias for their 'narrow' feminism, it was perhaps hardly surprising that the potentially sensitive area of sexual relations and responses -- at least vis-à-vis marriage -- was absent from CCP discourse on women, youth and sexual equality.

The materials on sex-related issues that started appearing in the press in the early 1950s accordingly had few direct precedents to serve as points of reference. The influence of cultural tradition, therefore, was prominent not primarily in the topics selected for debate, but in the approaches used to examine specific issues. The *yin-yang* conceptualisation of male-female sexual difference, discussed in detail by Robert Van Gulik, was particularly significant in shaping contemporary perceptions of sexual harmony, balance and moderation. (90) It was also just as important in contributing to the more sinister and harmful aspects of female sexuality projected by the discourse. Frequent parallels were found in the discourse between the representation of women and the dark and potentially dangerous characteristics of *yin* forces.

Indeed, one component of the lexical terms used for the female genitalia is *yin*. (91) The cultural association between *yin* and the female may help to explain some of the more negative representations of women in sexual relationships that did not conform to the values of the official discourse.

Another aspect of the cultural legacy informing the construction of the 1950s discourse was the classical *lienu* tradition, according to which women were honoured for sexual chastity, loyalty to their betrothed and their husbands and filiality to their parents-in-law. (92) Virtuous women whose houses were decorated with tablets testifying to their chastity brought respect and honour to the entire household. Conversely, women who violated Confucian values of sexual morality were often severely penalised, and their relatives became the object of social humiliation and ostracism. (93) As the *Biographies of Virtuous Woman* testified, physical beauty and expressions of femininity in dress and comportment were treated with suspicion; feminine beauty was potentially a sign of immorality and vulgarity, and a source a danger to men. (94) Resonances of these views were not uncommon in the discourse of the 1950s: images of women who were interested in their appearance, who wore high-heeled shoes or permed their hair were frequently used to introduce stories about the dangers of bourgeois morals. (95)

Self-sacrifice was a recurring theme in China's cultural and moral tradition. Linked to the group orientation of the moral responsibilities to which the individual person was traditionally subject, notions of selflessness and self-denial were commonly projected as superior moral virtues which had universal validity. They continued to serve a valuable ideological purpose in the collectively-oriented rhetoric of the CCP. However, when identified with women's sexual conduct, the concept of self-denial had a particular significance. The normative expectations of female chastity and loyalty central to the *lienu* tradition sometimes demanded specific and extreme forms of self-sacrifice, including self-mutilation and suicide. (96) One corollary, persuasively argued by Tien Ju-k'ang, was that women's self-denial

became the symbol of general moral standards of purity, courage and self-sacrifice, particularly at moments of extreme moral and social crisis. (97)

The dominant Confucian moral ideology therefore projected on to women a vital function in the preservation of general moral standards. Female chastity -- women's sexual self-denial -- was, in effect, identified as the standard by which sexual behaviour and morality in general were judged. Female sexuality, whatever its expression, had to be controlled to prevent domestic and social chaos. While, as the following chapters show, many such notions about the dangers of female sexuality were condemned by the official discourse, the projection of women as the principal agents of sexual morality and responsibility continued to be operative in a number of contexts. Women were subject to a differentiated set of norms, expectations and sanctions in sexual behaviour which converged in requirements of sexual self-restraint. The double standard inherent in the Confucian principle of female chastity was implicitly reinterpreted according to a gender specific notion of female responsibility for the maintenance of moral standards. The practices of moral control and intervention that the CCP inherited from its Confucian past were associated with the values of an economic and ideological system that it was intent on destroying. The practices themselves, however, were to be useful in the CCP's extension of power after 1949.

The traditional emphasis on the moral orientation of female sexuality and self-denial converged with traditional views about the relationship between the individual and the group to produce a conceptualisation of the person or the self which tended to exclude notions of individuation. That love or marriage might refer to an individualised sphere of experience of desire and intimacy, not to be conflated with consideration for the group, was not, and could not be included within this view. This meant that the western liberal notion of the personal to denote a sphere of practice which was identified with individual identity and freedom did not form any significant part of the ideological and

cultural perspective informing the CCP's view of women. (98)

Despite the echoes of the slogans of the May Fourth period calling for 'freedom of love', and 'freedom of marriage', the individualistic bias of many of the May Fourth publicists on women was explicitly repudiated by the CCP in its programme for the women's movement. Indeed, as indicated above, the notion of individual (*siren*) enjoyment or interest was invariably opposed to the 'public' or 'collective' (*jiti*) interest precisely because it was, *ipso facto*, associated with selfishness, vulgarity and promiscuity. Liberal concepts of women's emancipation influenced by the feminist tendencies of the May Fourth period were unfamiliar and irrelevant to the majority of the population. They were considered potentially divisive, particularly during the revolutionary period when, as pointed out above, unity of political purpose was to be given top priority. When associated with marriage and sexuality, they were also considered to be morally contentious, as the CCP's condemnation of Ding Ling indicated. Criticised in 1942 for her 'narrow feminist outlook' in pointing out the shortcomings of Party policy towards women, Ding Ling was later further condemned for her unorthodox sexual behaviour in having cohabited with a man before marriage. (99) As with the representation of selflessness and sexual propriety, the moral emphasis of the discourse against the projection of desires and pleasures which could be construed as 'individualistic' invoked women as the principal standard of sexual order. The absence of the individualised self as a category of analysis in the discourse of sexuality therefore had particular significance for the construction of female gender.

Despite the Party's condemnation of the individualistic tendencies of western liberal notions of women's rights, western ideas were nevertheless instrumental in contributing to the urban focus of the discourse. As writers about women and marriage reform in China have pointed out, the social forces out of which the new model of conjugal marriage emerged were principally urban. (100) Prior to 1949, free-choice marriage was practised by a small urban minority committed to western ideas of emancipation. The

importance attached to it during the May Fourth period was limited, for, as Croll has pointed out, it was far from representing a formal, institutional alternative to the dominant model of parental arrangement. (101) Many of the difficulties encountered in attempting to popularise the new law after 1949 were a consequence of the hostility provoked by the implications of the urban bias of the model. The insensitivity of the local representatives of the Women's Federation and the Youth League in campaigning for the new model was often noted in the journals of the time, and was not infrequently considered to be one of the principal barriers to its successful implementation. (102) Despite official claims to uphold and transform the interests of the rural population; the tensions with the latter created by the urban orientation of the new model of marriage limited its effectiveness.

Given its relation to the new model of marriage, the official discourse on sexuality of the 1950s was, therefore, dominated by urban values and practices. Indeed, the standards of sexual morality considered consistent with the new tasks of social construction seemed to presuppose access to the educational and social opportunities emerging in the urban districts. For example, the frequent warnings to young people against confusing friendship with love assumed possibilities of social contact between the sexes that were often considered morally outrageous in the villages and small towns. (103) The images used to denote immoral behaviour in adulterous relationships invariably referred to urban practices, as did the advice about appearance, hairstyles and contraceptives. The idealised relations and values of the official discourse on sexuality therefore corresponded with practices that had little immediate meaning for its rural audience. As one informant from a peasant family in Shandong commented, there was little point in telling people about the 'oughts and ought nots' (*yinggai bu yinggai zuo shenmo*) of falling in love when most people's ideas about marriage centred not on love but on basic material security. (104) While it is not the purpose of this study to analyse the relationship between the cultural representations

of the discourse on sexuality and everyday practice, it does examine the ways in which the urban bias of the discourse modulated the projection of appropriate sexual behaviour.

The CCP's cultural legacy and its eclectic approach to western ideas coincided with the precedent set by the Soviet Union in marriage and family reform. The Soviet view of sexual morality, particularly as associated with Stalin, emphasized the social and moral commitments of the revolutionary individual in a way that could be easily assimilated into the cultural and ideological values informing the CCP's discourse. Repeated references in the Chinese media emphasized the success of Soviet achievements in transforming popular notions of personal and family morality. Short stories glorifying Soviet socialist morality were translated into Chinese and printed in the pages of *Zhongguo funu*,^{and} reports of visits to Soviet kindergartens and talks with Soviet teachers all conveyed a similar message. (105)

As Minister of Social Welfare in the new Soviet republic, Alexandra Kollontai remains the only major political figure of a socialist state to have formulated a comprehensive argument in favour of including sexuality on the agenda of women's emancipation. Accused of using such views to justify her own sexual indulgences, as well as of provoking 'exploitative and irresponsible sexuality', Kollontai was publicly censured and removed from office in the Bolshevik government. (106) The liberalising elements of the early decrees passed under Lenin and the family code of 1926 were increasingly overridden by the restrictive morality of Stalin's codes, and by 1936, harsh restrictions on abortion and divorce had been restored, penalties for homosexuality had been reintroduced and 'mistaking infatuation for love' had become a punishable offence. (107) Policy towards the family witnessed similar revisions. The view of the family as a source of oppression and a barrier to progressive change embodied in the early legislation was replaced by a new conservatism. The family was henceforth to be described as a 'microcosm of the new socialist society', and marital stability became the order of the day. (108) Within this context, efforts to incorporate sexuality

into the discussion about sexual equality were condemned, on the grounds that they led to sexual promiscuity and revolutionary degeneration. (109)

The notion of sexuality as a key site of women's emancipation was as much anathema to the exponents of China's discourse on women in the 1950s as to those of Stalin's family codes. Cultural legacy and Soviet precedent together encouraged a discourse about sexuality in which the social orientation of the construction of personhood was clearly privileged over notions of individual identity and experience. As noted above, marriage was to be regarded not as a 'problem of the enjoyment of "private life", but as a "cell" of the entire cause of the revolution, as something important to the interests of society as a whole.' (110) Indeed, as following chapters show, the social and political significance attributed to mate selection, or to the kind of activities enjoyed during courtship, for example, seemed to preclude the inclusion of personal pleasure and desire as legitimate components of the discourse. While this emphasis applied to both men and women in the discourse of the 1950s, the history of women's subordination to group and family interests in sex-related matters gave it a specific modality in the representation of female sexuality and gender. This study analyses the effect of such values on the discourse's portrayal of women's responsibilities and duties in sexually-implicated relationships.

Themes and boundaries of the official discourse of sexuality

The term 'official discourse' used in this study covers the range of concepts, beliefs and practices addressed by state organs and their publications through which sexual attitudes and behaviours were modulated and organised in the service of objectives determined by formal bodies of political power. It refers to all those texts which emanated from or supported the views about sex-related matters expressed by organs of the Chinese government and

Party apparatus. The state's intervention in issues of sexuality through its official discourse signified a deliberate attempt to define the limits of individual, and particularly female behaviour in ways that were at once more homogeneous and more powerful than before. The purpose was to use all the ideological and educational means possible to create a uniform standard of sexual behaviour. The new state could aim to do this precisely because of the extent of its control over the media, schools and political structures. The official construction of sexuality therefore demonstrated the state's interest in maintaining the surveillance formerly exercised by the Confucian state and its representative in the family, the *jiazhang*, over individual, and particularly women's sexual behaviour. (111)

The specific content and production of the information about sex selected for publication in the organs of the All China Democratic Women's Federation (ACDWF) and the Communist Youth League (CYL) depended on editorial identification of what was appropriate and correct in sexual behaviour at any given time. The editorial boards of *Zhongguo funü* and *Zhongguo qingnian* had the power and responsibility to select and transmit relevant themes for debate. In determining the parameters of the public discourse, and in legitimising selected items of information and knowledge, they became, in effect, the state-appointed ideological and moral overseers of sexual behaviour. As the agents of the state's construction of new sexual standards, they granted the Party and state apparatus the possibility of intervening in the articulation of sexual relationships as part of the broad process of planned social change.

The themes identified for discussion in *Zhongguo funü* and *Zhongguo qingnian* demonstrated a chronological and thematic convergence which was often striking. The same articles were not infrequently reproduced in the publications of unrelated organisations. For example, an article written by members of the law department of Peking University about divorce appeared concurrently in *Zhongguo funü* and in a book on questions of divorce published by the Legal Publishing House. (112) Similarly, a

letter written by a young woman about the dangers of deciding to marry someone on initial impressions was printed in *Zhongguo qingnian* and in a book published in Zhengzhou on problems of marriage and love. (113) Debates published to review different views about a particular problem were not infrequently carried by a number of different publications. One example was a discussion about divorce initiated by an article in the *People's Daily* which was carried in *Zhongguo funü*, *Faxue*, and in a book published in the same year. (114)

As occurred in other areas of official debate, the main content and boundaries of the discourse on sexuality were determined in response to central policy. The similarity in content across different journals at any one time was, therefore, the result of their concurrent response to changes in state policy, rather than of any systematic plan guiding the selection of topics. However, this overall framework determining the general topics selected for publication often concealed considerable variety. For example, articles about breast-binding or masturbation seemed to appear in response to readers' requests for advice about issues which had little bearing on state policy. (115) Although the principal aim of the 1950s discourse on sexuality was to mould sexual behaviour through privileging specific values and practices, some aspects of the discourse, therefore, and in particular those which were of secondary importance, at least in quantitative terms, appeared to suggest a relatively *ad hoc* response to changing conditions.

The relatively improvised character of some of the articles and comments about sex-related issues, however, did not contradict the norms projected by the discourse. Rather, they represented a kind of limited spontaneity within an overall strategy, packaged and presented to conform to the principles of sexual morality subscribed to by Party and state agencies. (116) On the few occasions that journalistic comments did not conform to this strategy, some criticism or modification was made immediately after the appearance of the offending article. An example of this was an editorial reprimand of a journalist in *Zhongguo qingnian* who, in writing a two-part interview with a labour heroine, had

expressed more interest in describing the size of her feet than her contribution to the revolution. (117) The editor suggested that this indicated a somewhat flippant attitude which diminished the revolutionary spirit of the interview. (118)

With few exceptions, most articles about sexual matters had a pedagogical or didactic purpose to provide educational information and to modulate attitudes and behaviour along lines of 'socialist morality'. This purpose was clearly expressed in a speech given by Deng Yingchao, a vice-president of the ACDWF, in late 1952. (119)

Socialist love, marriage and family life do not develop naturally, even though the victory of the socialist revolution has established a basis for it. This is because the remnants of feudal and capitalist influence persist more stubbornly in sexual relationships, family life and social customs than anywhere else. We must therefore take conscious steps to carry out education to get rid of all moral attitudes and ideas which are not proletarian. Only if we undertake this over a prolonged period, on a broad scale and in depth, will communist morality be able to grow.

The didactic function of the discourse on sexuality was to transmit a uniform set of standards, or norms, for sexual behaviour that were to apply to men, and particularly women, of all social groups. Through a process of selection and elimination of topics for discussion, the discourse privileged a particular view of 'correct' sexual behaviour. It projected exemplars of behaviour that negated or affirmed specific values and practices, and provided explanations for gender attributes of femininity and masculinity which were to provide the basis for shared assumptions about sexual behaviour. 'Correct' attitudes towards love and sex were encouraged by a process of identification, approval and marginalisation of a range of different attitudes and practices. Attributing health and happiness to certain kinds of behaviour, and misery and chaos to others, served as a means of delimiting the spaces and possibilities available for legitimate sexual expression. By disseminating certain kinds of knowledge and not others, and by selectively attributing scientific authority to

particular practices and not others, the various components of the discourse of sexuality contributed to defining the boundaries of what constituted 'correct' sexual behaviour in any specified context.

The official construction of sexuality was therefore explicitly oriented to mediating the behaviour, experience and self-representations of all men and women. It was directed towards bringing the practice of sexual and gender relations in everyday life nearer to the idealised relations of the dominant official discourse. Corresponding to the general features of the Party's programme of social and economic transformation, the discourse disseminated a standard view of sexuality which, in attempting to replace the dominant sexual norms of the 'old society' with others consistent with 'socialist morality' (*shehuizhuyi daode*), was intelligible and accessible to ordinary men and women. By replacing the shared assumptions and values of the past, the discourse was constructed to transform the basic cultural grid of definitions about sexuality through which individuals mediated their own experience.

Techniques of the official discourse of sexuality

The production of the 1950s discourse of sexuality deployed a number of techniques, among which the use of models was one of the most distinctive. Models were a familiar didactic form in China, and were extensively used by the Communist Party as a technique for disseminating new ideas and practices. (120) Role models publicised in the press represented ideal states of behaviour to which ordinary people should aspire. They were often constructed for the purpose of emulation. However, as Croll has pointed out, role models were also used to indicate real problems of choice and decision. Description of them often followed a detailed sequence from 'real to ideal' states of behaviour, 'revealing a certain concern with contemporary practical problems' which could not be

equated with a purely didactic interest. (121) Models, therefore, were used both as discrete examples of a particular mode of behaviour, illustrating some moral or ideological principle, and to guide readers through a range of possible actions in order to equip them to make rational and 'correct' decisions. This suggests that as part of the didactic process, models were used not simply for the purpose of emulation, but to transform attitudes and practices through a more internal process of affecting individual men and women's construction of self -- their representation of their selves.

If the models used in the discourse represented different normative aspects of sexual behaviour, together they projected a uniform view of what constituted appropriate sexuality. Indeed, underlying the entire discourse of sexuality was the assumption that there was one single definition of appropriate sexuality that accorded with the values of the monogamous system of marriage. The comprehensive articulation of an official and nation-wide discourse on sexuality in effect signified the elimination of difference, and the extension of a uniform view of 'correct' moral and sexual behaviour. The construction of an official discourse indicated that the same normative standards of sexual behaviour applied to everyone.

One of the devices which the architects of the discourse created to disseminate this view was to present sexual issues as moral ones. A tone of moral surveillance permeated all the different components of the discourse on sexuality: factual information, admonitions against certain forms of conduct, ideological and health education. Advice to young girls, for example, about how to behave with boys in public, or about appropriate appearance, was bounded by the idea that any statement or sign of sexuality was, *ipso facto*, a moral issue. An article written during the 'prettification' campaign in 1955 -- part of the attempt to boost the image of the housewife -- drew attention to this in claiming that women were often so reluctant to don colourful clothes, even on festive occasions, that they had to be persuaded to do so by the leadership. The writer suggested that the reasons for this

reluctance were primarily psychological, and were based on fear about being criticised as bourgeois, or for trying to pick up a man. (122) However, as another commentator warned, it would be wrong for a woman to enjoy nice clothes 'in order to satisfy a man's bourgeois life style'. (123) Advice to readers about the appropriate use of contraception, for example, or about appropriate courting activities, was circumscribed by the same assumption. Normative sexual behaviour as defined in the discourse was synonymous with moral, or ideologically correct behaviour. This in turn functioned as a means of consolidating the status of monogamous marriage as the only acceptable context for sexual activity. Sexual activity outside this context, was by the same token, condemned as illicit behaviour, the effects of which were to produce unhappiness and pain. The notion of a single model of appropriate sexuality was therefore synonymous with a unitary view of sexual morality. What Foucault called 'peripheral sexualities' -- sexual behaviour that could not be included within the terms of the discourse -- were identified as 'abnormal' (bu zhengchang) or deviant, inasmuch as they disturbed the unity of this view. (124) They were marginalised, or absented, from the discourse as the unwanted precursors of immorality, social chaos and individual suffering.

Medical authority was often used to lend legitimacy to moral arguments concerning appropriate sexual activity. As chapter three shows, medical arguments concerning the optimum physiological condition for childbirth, for example, were used to support arguments against pre-marital sex. Medical authority was also deployed in determining the appropriate age for marriage. (125) The influence of the medical profession -- a branch of the state -- over sexuality corresponded to the development of new medical and welfare techniques in the 1950s to treat sex-related issues, pregnancy and childbirth. (126) Professional concern for the health of babies, for example, -- on whose livelihood the future of socialism depended -- could effectively legitimise medical jurisdiction over questions of marriage and sexual intercourse. (127) Whether applied in articles written by doctors,

teachers, lawyers or youth workers, the use of moral and medical authority in sex-related matters therefore functioned as a means of controlling sexual behaviour.

A further mechanism of control deployed in the discourse on sexuality was the suggestion that acceptable sexual behaviour was susceptible to rational decision and conscious transformation. Indeed, the norms of the new discourse represented a rational mode of behaviour and practice. As chapter three argues, the purpose of much of the discussion about adolescent sexuality was to persuade young people of the desirability and the possibility of restraining their instinctual urges. The guidelines to young wives about how to respond to the sexual demands of their husbands, or to older women having to confront the infidelities of their husbands were invariably couched in terms that demanded the application of reason as the condition for marital stability. Irrational or emotional behaviour, in contrast, was represented as the source of conflict and misery.

The oppositional contrasts between morality and immorality, rationality and irrationality, in the discourse of the 1950s signified the construction of meaning through internal differentiation. As Joan Scott argued in introducing the ways gender is found in history, 'Fixed oppositions conceal the heterogeneity of either category, the extent to which the terms presented as oppositional are interdependent -- that is, derive their meaning from internally established contrast rather than from some inherent or pure antithesis.' (128) The concept of morality -- associated with marriage and monogamy -- was defined both by what it included and what was excluded from it; in identifying positive forms of behaviour, it simultaneously isolated those considered unacceptable to the terms of the discourse.

This oppositional arrangement was central to the structuring and presentation of arguments in the texts examined for this study. Texts were constructed around the use of oppositions, often indicated in the use of conjunctions marking contrasts between sentences and paragraphs. A frequent stylistic device was to begin an article on a positive note, as, for example in the suggestion

that it is 'quite natural for young people to be interested in sex', only to follow it up with a negative comment prefaced by the conjunction 'however', as in 'however, young people are too inexperienced to become sexually involved.' Another example might be 'There is nothing wrong with wearing brightly coloured clothes, but if worn to please men.....' (129) The effect of such textual contrasts was to identify the idea first noted as the object of criticism or warning, and then subordinate it to the values of the dominant term. As such, it was an important device in conveying the unitary purpose of the discourse.

Another rhetorical technique which corresponded to the dominant values of the discourse on sexuality was the use of euphemism, encouraged on the one hand by customary reluctance to name sexual acts, and on the other by the contemporary antipathy to the idea that sexuality was a unique component of individual identity. The most common euphemisms suggested a distancing from the erotic connotations of sexuality, as well as confirmation of the idea that sexual activity be restricted to the marital relationship. For example, '*nan-nü guanxi*' (male-female relationships), '*liangxing guanxi*' (relationship between the sexes) were both standard words for sexual intercourse. '*Fangshi*' (affairs of the house) referred to sexual intercourse between a man and his wife. The 'first night of the honeymoon' indicated loss of virginity, the clear implication being that this should only occur after marriage. Ideological categories were also used euphemistically to refer to sex-related issues. '*Sixiang wenti*' (ideological problems) was a common way of indicating the unacceptability of sexual behaviour that did not conform to the norms of the discourse. In her book *Black Country Girl in Red China*, Esther Cheo Ying cites the example of a young woman whose 'ideological problems' consisted of being discovered in bed with a friend of her husband's, for which she had to undergo three weeks of reform through labour. Esther Cheo Ying also relates her own experience of political euphemism. After a few walks with a young man who had offered to help improve her 'political level', she found to her embarrassment that not only was this taken as a sign of amorous

commitment, but when she rejected his advances was criticised by the authorities for being promiscuous. (130)

The use of euphemism, however, did not exclude precision and detail. Biological aspects of sexuality were sometimes described with a meticulous detail which was strangely at odds with the constraints on the use of language elsewhere. In contrast, the texts contained no references to the emotional and erotic aspects of sexuality. In the absence of textual consideration for the instrumentality of the emotions in sex-related issues, sexuality was constructed as a collection of acts that had no bearing on subjective responses and self-representations.

Judging from the variety and frequency of readers' letters published in their correspondence columns, periodicals such as *Zhongguo funü* and *Zhongguo qingnian* were extensively read, particularly in the urban areas. They were consulted for the advice they contained and for their 'news value'. They were also read as a source of information about policy on a variety of issues that affected the day-to-day affairs of their readership. However, it is difficult to form any precise estimation of the popularity of these journals in the 1950s. It is even more difficult to form any accurate assessment of the success of the discourse in modulating views and practices of sexuality. Informants have indicated that many views and values upheld by the discourse corresponded to common practice. Even in cases where their everyday practice clearly contradicted the terms of the dominant discourse, informants have still claimed those terms as their own. For example, the tolerance shown the not uncommon occurrence of extra-marital affairs noted by a number of informants is not necessarily considered incompatible with the idea that sexual involvement outside marriage is wrong. (131)

Whatever the precise relationship between everyday practice and the idealised relations of the dominant discourse, it may therefore be reasonably argued that there were a number of points of concurrence between the two. (132) The latter could inform the former precisely because of its dominance in the institutions and agencies which mediated sexual behaviour. The focus of this study,

however, is on the construction of the discourse on sexuality rather than on the social effects of its distribution. The analysis of the nature of the relationship between official discourse and ordinary practice must await another study.

The terms of analysis

Two interrelated concepts form the starting point for the current study: first, the conceptualisation of sexuality as a social and not a biological construct, the precise meaning of which is subject to historical and cultural determination, and second, that discourses about sexuality and gender construct women and men with different characteristics and attributes. It is not the purpose of this study to evaluate the biological arguments about the extent to which differences in sexual behaviour, such as levels in aggressiveness and passivity, are the result of naturalised differences. Rather, it focuses on the way in which sexuality was constructed by representatives of official state organs, and the implications of this for the meaning attributed to the category of 'woman'.

Many of the theoretical formulations developed in the social sciences and history in recent years have been indispensable to the analysis contained in this study. First of all, a particular debt is acknowledged to Foucault, whose conceptualisation of discourse to denote the representational processes by which power is created through knowledge has provided one of the main theoretical premises of this work. (133) His related idea that the publicisation of sexuality as a topic of open debate may function historically as a means of control rather than as a sign of permissiveness is also central to this study. Weeks' examination of the discursive processes in which moral significance has become attached to sexuality in our own culture has enriched the analysis of the links between sexuality, morality and ideology in the Chinese discourse. (134) Donzelot's analysis of the historical

proliferation of the political technologies of surveillance over the family has informed the interpretation of the intervention of the medical and legal professions, as well as the official media, in issues of sexuality. (135)

There is one major difference, however, which limits the extent to which these theoretical insights can be applied. The nature of state control in China, characterised by the centralised command structure of the new communist government, gives the issue of agency and power in the construction of the discourse on sexuality a distinctive meaning not applicable to the work of any of the above historians. Foucault suggested that behind the explosion of discourses on sexuality since the eighteenth century there was no 'single unifying strategy, valid for the whole of society.' (136) In contrast, the Chinese discourse of the 1950s signified the application of conscious, centralised power in the formulation of a strategy of sexuality that would fit in with and support state policy of social and economic construction. (137)

Approaches to the study of the official construction of sexuality in China

The main primary sources used for this study come from the official press -- periodicals, newspapers, pamphlets, manuals and books -- and in particular from two national periodicals: *Zhongguo funü*, (Chinese Women, called *Xin zhongguo funü* until 1956), and *Zhongguo qingnian* (Chinese Youth). Published under the auspices of the All China Democratic Women's Federation and the Communist Youth League respectively, the editorial boards of these two periodicals were responsible for defining the parameters within which discussion about sex-related issues took place. In the terms used in the sections above, they functioned as agents of the state in defining the discourse on sexuality. The sex-related issues publicised in the national daily newspapers were neither as prolific nor as detailed as those found in the journals of the

period. Relevant information from *Renmin ribao* and *Guangming ribao*, therefore, has contributed little more than complementary material to the present study.

The materials published in the official press can be divided according to their content, aim and authorship. The first, and in view of the didactic purpose of the official discourse arguably the major category, included editorial comments and statements, pronouncements by Party functionaries, and articles and short stories by well-known writers, academics, and doctors published to disseminate some moral or ideological message. Generally exhortatory in tone, these materials often contained detailed advice about how to behave in situations of potential tension and conflict, such as pre-marital and extra-marital relationships, in which some moral choice was required.

A related, but distinct category made extensive use of role models or ideals for the purposes of emulation. Projected through autobiographical histories, interviews, and descriptive and biographical profiles, the presentation of such models, as mentioned above, had the explicit aim of representing types of exemplary behaviour in specified moral and social dilemmas. They were to familiarise readers with what was projected as being the 'correct' response in any given situation, but the sequence in which the experiences of models were related, as Croll has pointed out, often indicated areas of considerable social conflict. (138) Indeed, their publication may have indicated the continuing influence of the practices and attitudes they sought to discourage. (139) In themselves, however, they did not indicate the prevalence or extent of any particular problem.

Letters to the editor in the correspondence columns of the periodicals formed another important category of the materials. Single letters were often published to air some particular grievance or anxiety, or to ask for advice about what to do in a given situation. Generally including some biographical details about age, sex and occupation, they provide a rich source of data about the possible variations in attitudes and expectations of sexual behaviour according to social context. One interesting

feature of these letters was their extreme variation: some indicated attitudes and practices which were clearly inconsistent with the values of the discourse, while others, in contrast, seemed to have been written by its most faithful exponents. Given the dominant didactic purpose of many of the materials used for this study, it is possible that some letters were written by the editors of the periodicals. In general, however, letters provided a means of familiarising readers with different approaches to resolving conflict.

Letters also contributed to extensive debates, often opened with reference to an issue introduced by an editorial statement or exemplified by a case history. The discursive mode of these debates invariably followed a set sequence: exposition of a problem either through a case history or a reader's letter, examination of the different responses to the problem through publication of readers' letters, editorial summary of the moral and ideological merits of the different views expressed, and a final editorial comment indicating the appropriate attitude and action to adopt. Such debates often continued for several months, particularly during the more flexible ideological atmosphere of 1956. For example, one debate which focused on the question of moral responsibility in adultery continued for seven consecutive issues of *Zhongguo qingnian* before the editorial conclusion. (140) As with the individual letters, these discussions shed light on the range of variations in day-to-day practice, and therefore the possible interests that distinguished everyday behaviour from the idealised relationships of the official discourse.

One difficulty in assessing the content of these letters concerns the criteria governing their selection. That they were selected to illustrate some particular issue, and to indicate the kind of response considered morally appropriate has already been mentioned. What other issues, however, were addressed to the editors of the periodicals that were not merited with publication? In what way did these other issues relate to the values represented by the official discourse? The extent of particular beliefs or practices -- their representativeness -- was doubtless

one of the considerations behind the editorial choice of themes for discussions. However, the focus here is on the internal values of the official discourse and their meaning for the perception of women. The question of the representative value of these letters is not, therefore, as problematic as it would be if the focus were on the interrelationship between the discourse and other modes of social and sexual practice.

A final category of the materials contained educational information. It provided a kind of sex education in the biological aspects of sexuality and their related physiological systems: human sexual development, reproduction, sexual hygiene, sexual intercourse, and menstruation. Some of these materials were published in response to the questions, doubts and fears expressed in readers' letters. Others were more directly clinical in that they made no reference to the social context of a particular issue. The medical advice contained in these materials was often oriented towards dispelling 'feudal' fears, about contraception and menstruation for example, on the grounds of their unscientificity. In this sense, medical authority was used to lend scientific legitimacy to moral exhortations to behave in particular ways. Thus the scientific references of the medical information contained in these materials conveyed a dual message in which science and morality were interlinked.

The scope of the present study

This study is devoted to the representation of female sexuality at different stages of biological and social development, and in sexually implicated relationships. It examines the gender characteristics associated with the various aspects of sexuality discussed in the official materials of the 1950s, and seeks to identify the ways in which the representation of female gender -- the category 'woman' -- was overdetermined by the biological and moral concerns of the construction of sexuality.

The starting point for doing this is an analysis of the meanings given to sexuality in the texts which addressed it as a natural physiological phenomenon. Chapter two examines the biological assumptions of this approach, and argues that nature and scientific authority were invoked to support a view of female sexuality that was dependent on the powerful male drive and the requirements of healthy reproduction. Notions of autonomy were inimical to the relational and functional emphases of the construction of female sexuality. Chapter three attempts to identify the discursive objectives of using nature and science to support gender specific views of healthy development during adolescence. It examines the themes that were explicitly addressed to an adolescent audience, and looks at how the biological interpretation of sexual differences was applied to definitions of 'sexual hygiene' during adolescence. Official advice emphasized self-control and vigilance in sexual matters as the condition of adolescent health. In analysing the sanctions that accompanied such advice, this chapter seeks to clarify the meaning of healthy development associated with adolescents' initiation as sexual beings.

Chapter four looks at the representation of sexual propriety for young people prior to marriage. For this constituency, discussion of sex-related topics provided a kind of preparation for the inevitable event of marriage. In contrast with adolescents, it was considered legitimate for this category to enter into affective and potentially sexual relationships. Nevertheless, official advice contained stringent warnings -- and sanctions -- against active sexual involvement. The use of ideological categories and female exemplars to identify appropriate sexual behaviour had particular implications for the representation of women's responsibilities prior to marriage. This chapter therefore focuses on the model of sexual propriety considered consistent with 'communist morality', and the gender differences inscribed in it.

Chapter five analyses the representation of female sexuality and gender that was associated with the only relationship - monogamous marriage - in which sexual activity was considered

legitimate. The sexual behaviour ideally expected of wives was identified with the biological structures of female sexuality on the one hand, and certain responsibilities to the husband on the other. Failure to conform to the norms of sexual behaviour required in the name of marital harmony was projected as a principal source of marital tension. As chapter six shows, women's lack of respect for the boundaries implied by the gender constructs of wifehood was similarly represented as a source of marital instability. Chapter six therefore examines the gender characteristics which paralleled the sexual responses associated with wifehood. Chapter seven looks at the representation of women who transgressed the sexual boundaries established by wifehood. In so far as their behaviour violated the characteristics of female sexuality associated with the official discourse, such women were represented either as powerless victims or as the precursors of destruction and suffering. Attributing harm to female deviance functioned as a mode of confirming the norms upheld by the discourse.

The brief final chapter draws together the various representations of female sexuality in a composite exposition of the meanings attached to the category woman as a sexual being. It assesses the significance of the discourse's fundamentally asymmetrical view of sexuality for the principles of sexual equality to which the government and Party were committed. In so doing, one major argument is advanced. Appropriate female sexuality and the gender constructs identified with it were projected as the condition ensuring marital, family, and therefore social stability. Marital and family harmony were predicated on female conformity to the sexual standards defined in the discourse. Family stability -- despite the state's apparent aims to transform the family as a natural unit -- was vital to the success of the CCP's programme of social and economic transformation. By implication, women's failure to exercise restraint of the self in sexual matters was associated with fears about the dissolution of familial and social relations. Female transgression of the sexual boundaries established by the

discourse threatened disorder and disruption. Through its moral associations, and supported by scientific authority, control of female sexuality, mediated by female surveillance of the self, therefore emerged as the key to ensuring that the family served the state's interests of socialist construction.

TWO

THE SCIENTIFIC CONSTRUCTION OF SEXUALITY

Accounts of the physical aspects of sex and sexuality constituted a numerically minor, but nevertheless vital component of the 1950s discourse of sexuality. The biological explanations of sexuality contained in the official materials of the 1950s signified the increasing medicalisation of sexuality to permit control over matters of reproduction and sexual behaviour. (1) One aspect of this was the use of medical authority to legitimise fixed gender distinctions between male and female sexuality. Female sexuality was defined either by its reproductive purpose or in relation to the active male drive. The characterisation of female sexuality as passive and responsive excluded notions of female autonomy. Despite its representation as a harmonious balance between equals, the sexual relationship between male and female was therefore fundamentally asymmetrical. Sanctions in support of sexual moderation urged sexual abstinence at specific moments of the female cycle on the grounds that the alternative would impair physical and reproductive health. In so far as medical advice effectively denied women legitimate sexual expression in contexts that were dissociated from reproductive concerns and male interests, such sanctions served to confirm the asymmetry between male and female.

Biological accounts of sexual development and sexual difference detailed the physiological aspects of reproduction, the physical aetiology of sexual desire, the biological bases of male-female differences in sexual activity, and the causes and effects of specific sexual difficulties, to construct a view of sex as a set of natural characteristics governing the construction of sexual and gender behaviour. Backed by the weight of scientific authority, gender distinctions emerged as biologically determined

structures, any deviation from which was physically abnormal and potentially harmful. (2) The aim of this chapter is to analyse the various biological explanations of sex and sexual difference -- the ways in which sexual distinctions were legitimised by science -- contained in the publications of the 1950s, and to examine the implications of these for the representation of women's sexual and gender attributes.

Explanations of sex and sexual development

The influential *Xing de zhishi* (Knowledge about Sex) written by Wang Wenbin, a professor of the Cooperative Medical Institute, was published in 1956 to give young people a 'correct understanding of sex' (*zhengque liaojie xing de zhishi*) as a basis for approaching 'questions of love, marriage and the family' (*lian'ai, hunyin yu jiating wenti*). (3) Apparently the only book of its kind to be published between 1949 and 1976, and banned during the Cultural Revolution decade, it exemplified the general approach used to discuss the clinical aspects of sex in articles printed in journals such as *Zhongguo funü*. (4) A number of articles made references to Wang's work prior to its publication, and some that appeared in *Zhongguo qingnian* and *Zhongguo funü* like 'Tan xing shenghuo' (Talking about sex life) and 'Guanyu xing zhishi de jige wenti' (Some questions about knowledge about sex) were explicitly based on the arguments contained in his book. (5) The publicity given his book immediately around the time of its publication quickly died down, and by the late 'fifties, as public discussion of sexual matters diminished, Wang's book ceased to be mentioned. (6)

Wang's acknowledgement of the 'French and German doctors of the mid-nineteenth century [who] conducted sexological research' (*xingxue yanjiu*), and of the recent appearance of sexology as a specialist discipline in the West indicate that he was aware of western medical approaches to sex. (7) It is known that the works

of Havelock Ellis were disseminated in China during the May Fourth period, and it is probable that various aspects of western views about sex and sexual development may have filtered to China through Soviet sources. (8) If the lack of relevant references in the 1950s materials make precision about Wang's sources impossible, the general context for his discussion was nevertheless clear. Lenin's condemnation of Freud's works as 'ignorant and stupid' (*wuzhi, benzhuo*), and no more than a passing fashion (*shimao*), and of 'a young Viennese female comrade's' small pamphlets about sex as 'such a waste' (*duomo langfei*) indicated the general tenor for approaches to Freudian interpretations of sexuality. (9) Not unsurprisingly, the view that sex might be an important aspect of individual identity and emotional experience was given scant consideration. Again, Lenin's views about the social importance of sexual matters were quoted to give appropriate ideological underpinning to the discussion about the biological aspects of sex: 'Sex and the family question are in no way private matters for the individual person, but are matters of immense social significance.' (10)

Presented as the product of scientific research about sexual structures and functions, reproductive biology and reproductive diseases, *Xing de zhishi* reads like a conventional lesson in human biology. Explanations and definitions of sex, sexual development and function, and male-female differentiation start out by tracing the evolution from cellular division to sexual differentiation in animals. A brief discussion concerning the major differences between animal and human sexuality is then followed by an examination of the reproductive structure and function of the male and the female, complete with diagrams. A section on the relationship between the different stages of sexual and emotional development contains advice about the correct approach to adopt to the different stages of 'sexual maturity, love, marriage and the family', much along the lines of its contemporaries in the West. (11) Subsequent sections then look at issues concerning sexual hygiene and male-female differences in sexual practice and desire. One on 'sexual hygiene in adolescence' combines

description of the biological causes of menstruation and female breast development, seminal emission and masturbation with advice about the measures to be taken to ensure healthy growth in adolescence. 'Sex life after marriage and sexual hygiene' gives particular attention to male-female differences in levels of sexual desire, and details the kind of approach to sexual matters required of a couple in order to attain 'sexual harmony' (*xing shenghuo hexie*). The final sections of the book summarise common sexual ailments and difficulties, and the ways to treat them, before concluding with a survey of the causes of infertility, and advice about contraception and abortion.

Fundamental to the representation of human sexuality exemplified by Wang's work was the view of sex as a 'natural instinct' (*ziran benxing*) or a physiological 'reflex' (*fanshe*), a biological impulse to 'assure the existence of the race' (*baozheng zhongzu de shengcun*). (12) 'Interest (*xingqu*) and the requirement (*yaoqiu*) for sex are the natural (*ziran*) results of biological development.' (13)

As male and female approach a certain age, the body's complex hormones begin to develop their function; the endocrine organs which directly control growth are the testes in the male and the ovary in the female. Apart from producing different growth in the male and female, these hormones also encourage the growth of the requirement for sex (*yaoqiu*). At the same time, the ideology and psychology of both male and female undergo changes, [producing] the requirement (*yaoqiu*) for love and sexual desire (*xingyu*). During infancy, since the gonads have not yet developed, there is no sexual urge, and in old age, as the gonads shrink, so the sex urge diminishes. (14)

As a biological impulse alone, however, the 'sex urge' was considered little different from the base instinct of animals. 'If man and woman come together for the sake of sexual satisfaction alone, they are [the same as] common animals of the lower order (*diji*).' (15) However, 'humans are the highest order of animals whose aim in life is never the simple satisfaction of instinctive desires, but is the search for beauty and happiness (*meihao*) in

life.' (16) Furthermore, in contrast with animals, the neurological and sensory basis of sexual excitement (*xing de xingfen*) in humans is subject to the influence of subjective 'psychological' (*jingshen*) factors, which can both stimulate and 'control' (*yizhi*) 'sexual excitement' (*xing de xingfen*). (17) While, therefore, as in western sexological analyses of what was commonly called the sexual instinct, sexuality was thought of as a 'complex natural process which underlay a diversity of social experiences', it was also projected as an aspect of experience and socialisation subject to regulation. (18)

Sexual differentiation emerged with the evolution of the forms of propagation of living organisms; it is the result of organic evolution and development... its purpose was the propagation... of the race... [But] apart from their biological instincts, humans possess thought, language and feeling... The question of sex therefore is not simply a physiological phenomenon, for it is also an important aspect of social phenomena. (19)

Sex and reproduction

An article on 'Some questions about sexual knowledge' (*Guanyu xing zhishi de jige wenti*) in *Zhongguo qingnian* suggested that since 'sexual intercourse is the means by which mankind propagates itself, therefore (*suoyi*), in appropriate measure, it is not harmful to health.' (20) Sexual intercourse, according to this view, was acceptable - at least in physical terms - precisely because of its reproductive function. Sexual activity was legitimised by its reproductive purpose.

This view was echoed in a variety of ways in different references to sex. In general terms, the duration of sexual desire was commonly described as more or less concurrent with the duration of an individual's reproductive capacity. Hence, 'in infancy, since the gonads have not yet developed, there is no sexual urge, and in old age, as the gonads shrink, so the sex urge diminishes.' (21)

Any possible damage to their procreative function was treated as reason to warn women against sexual intercourse. Medical experts advised women to refrain from sexual intercourse during menstruation and pregnancy on the grounds that the body's reduced defences at such moments increased the possibility of uterine and vaginal infection, and therefore of infertility. (22) Some women expressed fears that using a condom in intercourse caused inflammation of the uterus, a possible subtext of which was that sexual intercourse engaged in for non-reproductive purposes was considered improper and even physically damaging. (23) While the imputed dangers of contraception were criticised as 'unscientific' by exponents of contraception and birth control, reproductive and eugenic concerns about sexuality were explicit in the Marriage Law of 1950. Alongside the identification of impotence as grounds to withhold the right to marriage, individuals with hereditary diseases and mental disorders 'or any other disease which is regarded by medical science as rendering a person unfit for marriage' were legally barred from marrying. (24) Sterility was not mentioned in the Marriage Law as grounds for divorce and restricting marriage. However, requirements that young people have a medical examination (*hun qian jiankang jiancha*) prior to marriage, to ensure the proper functioning of the reproductive organs, indicated that any impairment to reproductive capacity could potentially be interpreted as reason to advise against marriage. (25) Since sexual activity in the 1950s was considered morally and legally acceptable only within the context of the marital relationship, the logical consequence was to effectively deny legitimate opportunities for sexual activity to men and women with 'physical defects' that made them 'unfit for marriage' and reproduction.

The disapproval of non-reproductive sex implicit in the above views was reiterated in advice about the use of contraceptives during 1955 and 1956. Despite the questioning of the link between sex and reproduction represented by the introduction of birth control techniques, contraceptive methods were not recommended to question the priority attached to reproductive sex. Rather, they

were recommended principally for women who had already had children, as the examples of women who wrote about their experiences revealed. A typical instance was of one Wu Yi, who described how using contraceptive methods had enabled her to control her fertility after the birth of three children. (26) That information and access to contraceptives was not readily available to women who did not have children was apparent in a letter about marital problems written to *Zhongguo funü* by a young school teacher in Henan. She wrote that because she did not want to disrupt her work and studies by having a baby, she resorted to inventing excuses to explain to her husband why she could not see him (and therefore sleep with him) at the weekends. (27) An editorial about birth control methods published in another issue of the same journal was unequivocal in its disapproval of the use of contraceptives for non-reproductive purposes. (28) It suggested that 'of course, there are some men and women who, for the sake of idle pleasures, are unwilling to take on the responsibility of having children; such people should be educated in socialist morals, to make them understand that bringing up children is a parental responsibility, and is also every citizen's duty to the state.' Using contraceptives for such 'improper' purposes was the 'consequence of the irrational marriage system of the old society and of the influence of the corrupt ideology of the bourgeoisie.' (29)

The legitimization of sexual activity by reference to its reproductive function was a central component of the 1950s discourse, inasmuch as it defined what was sexually 'natural', and, by extension, what was socially and morally appropriate. As Deng Yingchao, quoting Lenin, indicated, love, marriage and reproduction were almost organically connected. 'The natural result of a man and woman loving each other, marrying, and setting up a home is the birth of a new life - a child.' (30)

Sexual activity was therefore fundamentally legitimised by its reproductive function. Natural sexual practice was defined with reference to its eventual expression in procreation. This did not, however, exclude the view that sex could enrich a couple's marital

relationship. Nor did it signify that the sole aim of sexuality was reproduction. Indeed, young people were told that 'a good sex life can deepen the love between a couple and consolidate their relationship.' (31) Or, as the redoubtable Wang put it, 'a harmonious sex life not only brings a new element into a couple's life but also invariably deepens their relationship. If however, a couple has difficulties in sorting out their sex life, then this may affect their love and create discord in their relationship.' (32) Even more explicit in distinguishing sexual activity from reproduction was the following:

There are also people who, because the wife does not bring children into the world, think this is a reason for divorce. This is unreasonable. The birth of children is the result of marriage between a man and a woman and is not a necessary condition for love between husband and wife, nor does the fact that there are no children mean that one cannot have marital life. This is not at all the same as having a physical defect and not being able to have sexual intercourse. (33)

Judith Stacey has used this document from a divorce case to argue that 'new democratic morality linked sexuality not with procreation, but with felicitous marital relationships and, thereby, with the construction of socialism.' (34) However, coinciding with the campaign to boost the image of the housewife and the introduction of birth control policies during conditions of rising unemployment in the mid-1950s, the rejection of infertility as legitimate grounds for marital separation did not question the identification of reproduction as the fundamental and natural purpose of sex. Comments about the desirability of a 'good sex life' -- publicised only during this brief period of the mid-1950s -- were more in response to the official emphasis on preserving family and marital harmony for purposes of economic and social stability, than to any reassessment of the basic meaning of sexuality. Moreover, the appearance of comments about the benefits of sexual harmony for married life alongside articles insisting that women's 'first' and 'natural' duty to society was to bear children suggests that a 'good sex life' and procreation were

treated as complementary -- rather than contrasting -- aspects of a single state. (35)

While, as later sections show, the concept of sexuality was by no means totally interchangeable with procreation, the view that the two naturally went together underlay many of the assumptions about sexuality upheld by the discourse. From the point of view of the individual, sexual satisfaction might be seen as a matter of personal and marital happiness, but this was not incompatible with a meaning of sexuality which was constructed in terms of reproduction. This had particular implications for the representation of women, for it legitimised arguments supporting the biological determination of women's sexual and gender attributes. As later sections will show, the understanding of women's 'natural' aptitudes and characteristics upheld by the discourse of the 1950s arose from a view of female sexuality which did not fundamentally question the link between sexuality and reproduction. Maintaining a kind of natural equivalence between women's reproductive role and their sexual attributes served to define the physical and moral parameters for the appropriate expression of female sexuality. The desire to reproduce was projected as a biologically determined aspect of female sexuality. (36) In turn, the biologically determined capacity to bear children determined the main characteristics of women's sexual desires and needs. Women whose sexual behaviour questioned the predominance of women's reproductive role were, as we shall see, treated as immoral or unnatural. The link maintained between female sexuality and women's reproductive role was therefore fundamental to the construction of gender distinctions in sexuality.

The fusion of sexuality with procreation also defined the boundaries between perceptions of normal and abnormal sexuality. The idea that the 'cohabitation of man and woman' was biologically determined, and 'would survive until the end of the human race' confirmed heterosexuality as the only 'normal' sexuality. (37) Even though no mention of homosexuality was found in the materials of the 1950s, it was, and continues to be, widely cast as a

biological abnormality or an illness. As one of the few comments found about lesbianism in modern China put it, 'not to marry because [one is] lesbian violates nature (*tianran*) and harms women's health.' (38) Indeed, the silence about an aspect of sexuality well known to have been common at earlier periods of China's history in itself lent support to the idea of a single natural sexuality. (39)

Sexuality and desire: male and female differences

At first glance, the view of sexuality which accompanied the biological explanations of sexual development projected a notion of harmonious balance and complementarity between male and female. Governed by physiological differences, sexuality was constructed as a bounded harmony of opposites, similar to that projected by earlier western sexologists. (40) This was immediately apparent in the terminology used to describe the relationship between male and female. Echoing ideas deeply embedded in classical culture, the sexual balance between men and women was popularly described as the 'mutual support of the *yin* and *yang*'. 'Male is *yang*' (*nanzi wei yang*), strong and active; 'female is *yin*' (*nüzi wei yin*), yielding and passive. (41) The action of the one on the other was described as strengthening both women and men, through the absorption of the semen by the vagina, and of female mucus by the penis. (42) Despite the 'unscientific' basis of such views, use of the *yin-yang* conceptualisation in the discourse of the 1950s indicated a continuing attachment to the notion of sexual harmony.

An analysis of the gender distinctions in explanations of sexual desire, however, indicates that the relationship between *yin* and *yang* was characterised more by asymmetry than by complementarity. Female sexuality was defined principally in relation to masculinity, rather than as an autonomous aspect of individuated experience. Male (*yang*) desire was associated with sudden and powerful excitement, expressed in words like '*chongdong*' and

'xingfen'. Female (*yin*) desire, on the rare occasions that it was mentioned, was characterised as gentle and responsive. (43) In the male, the genital focus of sexual desire produced a natural and spontaneous force, a kind of instinctual urge, 'that was easily aroused and satisfied'. (44) The active physiological basis of the male response meant that 'on reaching sexual maturity, men naturally and frequently feel sexual excitement' (*xing de chongdong*). (45) The female, in contrast, was passive and reluctant, and 'even if she feels some sexual desire (*yixie xing de yuwang*), it is for the most part very slight (*weiruo*). It is not as strong as in the male.' (46)

The differences between male and female sexual response were in the first instance attributed to physiological distinctions in the location of desire prior to and leading up to orgasm. Male desire was described as concentrated in the sexual organs, and, on arousal, produced an 'immediate requirement for sexual intercourse' (*like you xingjiao de yaoqiu*). Male orgasm was reached within a few minutes, and was followed by a rapid diminution of desire. (47) Female desire was more 'complex and generalised' (*fuza he guangfan*) because of the structure and function of the female organs. Female arousal was therefore a gradual process which had to be patiently encouraged by the male with 'verbal endearments and embraces'. (48)

In contrast to the basically physiological aetiology of male desire, which was 'easily excitable and satisfied', female desire was described as dependent on a number of factors, such as 'physique, environment, age of marriage and sexual experience in marriage' as well as on biology. (49) The most important factor in determining the characteristics of female desire, however, was the active male. In its presence and its absence, female desire was constructed in relation to, and in response to the male. While biology dictated the essentially passive and slow nature of female desire, its full expression depended on the consideration, care and sensitivity of the male. By the same token, excessive demands on the part of the male could alienate the female and result in lack of desire or frigidity. (50) Men were therefore urged to

restrain their demands in order to secure the appropriate degree of responsiveness in their wives.

To make sex life harmonious, both partners... should be willing every time they have sex. Men should be particularly aware, and the kind of 'male chauvinist ideology' of thinking 'only I need to be respected' should be criticised. Many men think that their wives should obey them, and some women think that they should respond whenever their husbands want to have sex. If the husband forces his wife too much, she will lose her interest in sex... In general, the main reason for lack of sexual harmony is that the man is too demanding. (51)

A statistical survey quoted by Wang Wenbin showed that only a minority of women experienced orgasm every time they had intercourse, and more than 50% only rarely did. (52). While this was considered normal and consistent with the passive nature of female sexuality, it was also explained as the consequence of the male's lack of consideration for his partner. (53) In extreme cases, a man's 'rash' (*maoshi*) behaviour could make sexual intercourse painful or uncomfortable for the woman. It could also produce vaginal spasms (*yindao jingluan*) in the woman, preventing penetration altogether. (54) And 'if a man forces his wife too much, she will lose her interest in sex altogether.' (55) Prolonged lack of sexual satisfaction was considered a widespread cause of female frigidity. (56) Men were therefore urged to control the 'excessive carnal desire' (*zongyu guodu*) they naturally felt 'after marriage' in order to elicit a positive response from their wives. (57) Men were told not to treat their wives as 'sex objects', and were encouraged to be considerate towards their wives' needs and responses, particularly in the formative early stages of marriage, to 'avoid making [them] worried and scared'. (58)

Men should not be too hurried: they often make the mistake of thinking that it is better to be active at the beginning, to give the partner satisfaction, but in fact the opposite is often the case. In general, in the early stages of intercourse, a man should stay calm

(*baochi pingjing*) and his movements should be slow. This increases his partner's desire (*xinggan*) and enables her to reach orgasm earlier. It also helps coordination. A man can also stop if he feels that he is about to ejaculate, and then continue. (59)

Women, for their part, were urged to eradicate 'incorrect ideas' (*cuowu de kanfa*) about sex, such as thinking that 'sexual desire was something only for men', or that sex was 'base' (*beixia*) and 'shameful' (*xiuchi*). (60) They were encouraged 'get rid of the ideological fetters' holding them to the view of sex as a 'duty to be fulfilled involuntarily, against their own wishes' (... *ba [xing guanxi] dangzuo jin yiwu, shen bu you ji, pobudeyi*). (61)

The dependent nature of female sexuality signified that the notion of sexual harmony projected by the discourse was not synonymous with a complementarity between equivalents or equals. Rather, it suggested an asymmetrical relationship dominated by the male, and a view of normative sexuality principally defined by the male drive. Male initiative was answered by female response; male action defined the parameters of female response. The male orgasm was spontaneous; the female orgasm had to be nurtured by the man. Without adequate consideration from the partner, women would at most feel only 'slight' (*weiruo*) excitement, or none at all. (62) The overactive male urge could provoke 'resentment and anger' (*huihen*) in women, and lead to marital estrangement. Conversely, a man could increase his wife's pleasure by showing understanding and cooperation. (63) The projection of mutual orgasm as the highest expression of sexual harmony thus indicated little more than the man's success in controlling his own and encouraging his wife's sexual pleasure. While women were urged to get rid of the 'ideological fetters' preventing them from feeling sexual desire, the male standard implicit in this view of sexuality suggested that women's enjoyment of or antipathy towards sexual relations were almost entirely dependent on male action. Women's desire had to be awakened and satisfied by their husbands with patience, self-restraint and consideration. A woman's realisation of sexual desire was therefore nurtured and mediated by the man. Her orgasm

appeared as the orientation of her sexuality to the dominant male drive; left to her own devices, she had little chance of experiencing or realising any autonomous sexual pleasure. As Theodore H. Van de Velde, writing in 1928, suggested, the husband was seen as the 'sexual educator and guide through whom the woman is educated to full proficiency in love.' (64) Later sections of this work show that this view of female sexuality was closely linked to normative expectations of women's selflessness -- of female self-denial for the sake of the dominant male -- in sexually-implicated relationships.

Occasional allusions to the specificities of female pleasure modified the overriding male bias of this view of sexuality. A reference to the clitoris as 'the most sensitive part of the female genitalia' gave implicit recognition to its place in the physiological structure of female pleasure, independent of male initiative. (65) Acknowledgement of autonomous female pleasure was similarly implicit in the description of a woman, who after years of sexual frustration in a marriage to a man ten years her senior, decided to have a clitorectomy, to curb her own desire. (66) Furthermore, attacks on the 'feudal and individualistic' attitudes of men who treated women as sexual objects for their own use implied a defense of women's right to assert her own control over her sexuality. However, such references did not fundamentally alter the view of normative female sexuality as dependent on male initiative. Consistent with the view that female sexuality was at root defined by its reproductive purpose, expressions of female desire that were removed from either male or reproductive controls lay outside the parameters of sexual propriety upheld by the discourse. Indeed, women's sexual activity at moments of the female cycle that did not respond to male or reproductive demands was considered physically damaging to women's reproductive capacity. As later sections will show, active female sexuality which diverged from the normative model was invariably associated with moral degeneration or with physical and reproductive impairment.

Sexual moderation and the dangers of excess

Experts argued that an unsatisfactory sexual relationship could make a woman totally estranged from her husband. Indeed, the interest in women's sexuality apparent in the 1950s in part responded to the view that a 'perfunctory' sex life could have damaging effects on a harmonious marital relationship and therefore interfere with work. (67) The notion of a 'good sex life' was accordingly described in ways that seemed to identify it as a health giving and potentially eugenic measure, in much the same way as was advocated for the post-war housewife in the West. (68) It was also associated with a bounded notion of moderation, according to which male and female were variously enjoined to observe certain limits in the name of mental and physical health. As chapter five argues, healthy sex was thought to increase women's satisfaction in married and family life, and thereby their contribution to society.

Associated with the idea of 'appropriate sexual intercourse' (*shidang de xingjiao*), moderation was initially defined in quantitative terms. While, in general, it was recognised that 'couples want to have more sex in the first few months after marriage', the average frequency recommended for the married couple was once or twice a week. (69) With advancing age, 'sexual desire diminishes', reducing recommended frequency to once every one or two weeks. (70) The principle of moderation was clearly broken if after sexual intercourse one or other partner showed signs of fatigue or lethargy. (71)

The benefits of moderation were principally described with reference to men. Sanctions in support of moderation invoked the harmful physiological and mental consequences of sexual excess. In an article on the benefits of contraception, men were warned that excessive intercourse and ejaculation would result in a reduction of their sperm count, 'and even a total disappearance of sperm,' and would provoke 'nervous and physical exhaustion from which recovery was not easy' (*bu yi huifu*). (72) It depleted a man's 'life energy' (*shenghuoli*, literally 'viability') early on in

life, and destroyed his capacity to engage in 'prolonged labour'. (73) Readers of *Zhongguo qingnian* were told that too much sex excited the nervous system, and caused 'insomnia, over-vivid dreaming, amnesia, lethargy, headaches, heart palpitations and loss of appetite'. (74) More seriously, it could provoke 'premature and delayed ejaculation', and 'impair sexual capacity and cause impotence'. (75)

The dangers of excess were traditionally associated with the loss of semen, long considered the 'source not only of [a man's] health but of his very life.' (76) Masturbation was accordingly considered a particularly destructive waste of energy, since, in traditional terms, it was interpreted as the loss of vital essence without any compensatory acquisition of the equivalent amount of *yin* essence from a woman. (77) While not presented in exactly the same way in the official materials of the 1950s, related notions concerning the debilitating effects of 'excessive spending of semen' (*jingye de guoduo xiaohao*) nevertheless informed the more 'scientific' views of the 1950s commentators. (78) The frequency and condemnatory tone of references to masturbation suggested that, as a form of sexual excess, it was considered to be even worse than excessive sexual intercourse. A list of dire consequences, similar to those that followed sexual excess, warned young men against 'bad habits' (*huai xiguan*), which if practiced frequently could cause various physical and mental disorders, including premature ejaculation and impotence. (79) One case history cited by Wang suggested that the practice of masturbation to satisfy sexual need during courtship could have disastrous effects. It could put such extreme psychological pressure on a young man, that he would find himself not only unable to get an erection but suffering from 'nervous debilitation' (*shenjing shuairuo*). (80) Men who masturbated 'invariably know that it is wrong... so every time they do it they become confused, anxious and tense, remorseful, self-incriminatory and frightened, [which] either partially or completely destroys the functioning of their nervous system.' (81)

Even though expert opinion recognised that practised in moderation, masturbation was not permanently damaging, the above

references to its harmful effects indicated a continuing attachment to traditional views about the loss of vital energy. Suggestions that immoderate ejaculation could shorten a man's life might be rejected as without scientific foundation, but this did not in itself question the assumption that the preservation of semen was conducive to physical and mental health. (82) Indeed, various methods were advocated to help men to control ejaculation, either to overcome premature ejaculation or to stop masturbating. Rest and psychological treatment could be complemented by 'shortwave diathermatic methods, hydrotherapy and [the use of] natural springs.' (83) If the result of an overlong foreskin, premature ejaculation could be cured by circumcision. (84) If caused by over-indulgence, then young men were urged to preserve their strength through channelling their drive into what Martha Vicinus has called a 'limited energy system' by avoiding 'wearing tight underpants, reading novels, watching films and fantasizing'. (85)

The importance the Chinese discourse of sexuality attached to moderation was embedded in a specific cultural framework that borrowed from traditional cosmological and medical principles concerning the *yin-yang* duality. However, sanctions in support of sexual moderation also indicated certain eugenic considerations. Lawrence Stone has suggested that one of the reasons for advocating sexual moderation during the Early Modern period in Europe was the 'widespread and persistent medical theory that the constitutional characteristics of the child were determined by the physical condition of the parents at the moment of conception.' (86) The belief that unhealthy or 'sexually exhausted fathers and/or sexually abused wives were likely to produce weakly children' favoured a view of the optimum moment for intercourse, 'when both man and woman were in full sexual vigour, as well as being rested, sober, and free from mental worries.' (87) As we have seen, men -- thought the 'most responsible' for sexual excess -- were advised to abstain from sexual activity if tired, lethargic or sick. (88) They were warned about the potentially harmful effects of copulating under the influence of stimulants such as

'coffee, alcohol and romantic novels', the remedy for which was to sleep in separate beds. (89) As in traditional medical opinion, ejaculation under the influence of alcohol was thought to be particularly damaging, for if conception were to occur, this would severely impair the development of the foetus. (90) Men were also urged to exercise self-control during their wives' pregnancy. Abstinence was recommended for the first three months and last two months of pregnancy, because intercourse during these periods could 'disturb the development of the foetus and provoke miscarriage'. (91) If intercourse took place in the intervening months, special care should be taken to minimise movement during intercourse, and women who were 'prone to miscarriage or premature childbirth' were advised to refrain from sex altogether during pregnancy. (92)

Sex and 'sexual hygiene' in menstruation and pregnancy

The passive nature of women's sexuality as represented in the 1950s discourse would appear, at first glance, to preclude identification of it as a source of physical and psychological harm. However, as in its traditional conceptualisation, particularly prevalent during the Qing dynasty, female sexuality was considered potentially damaging and dangerous in a number of respects, foremost among which were those associated with the supposedly depleting effects of menstruation and pregnancy. (93) Recommendations to observe periods of sexual abstinence in the name of protecting female health and fertility therefore functioned as sanctions in support of sexual moderation.

Medical opinion during the 1950s taught that women were particularly vulnerable to disease because of their reproductive function. This view was confirmed by contemporary advice, contained in many articles, cautioning women against indulging in sexual intercourse during menstruation. Vigorous movement during intercourse increased the blood flow and caused vaginal and

uterine inflammation because of exposure of the vagina to bacterial infection. (94) And if bacteria, or 'dirty things' (*zang dongxi*) entered the uterus, fertility could be severely impaired. (95) Inflammation of the 'internal reproductive organs' (*nei shengzhi qiguan*) as a result of sexual contact during the menstrual period made intercourse painful for the woman, and in time could destroy her interest in 'affairs of the bedroom' (*fangshi*). (96) Couples were therefore urged to 'control themselves' and 'strictly abstain from sex' during the woman's menstrual period. (97) Furthermore, the physical harm that could result from sexual activity during menstruation meant that it was 'totally wrong' (*jiduan cuowude*) to have sex during the menstrual period as a means of avoiding pregnancy. (98) Even when the need for family planning was accepted after the government's first birth-limitation campaign in 1956, medical theories of the physical harm and possible infertility caused by sexual contact during menstruation proscribed recognition of the 'safe period' as a convenient birth control measure.

Admonitions against sex during specified periods of pregnancy and after childbirth consolidated the representation of women in the category of what Charlotte Furth has called the 'not-quite-well'. (99) Medical opinion expounded the view that during the first three and the last month or two of pregnancy, sexual intercourse caused miscarriage; early on in pregnancy, by provoking uterine contractions and disturbing the development of the foetus, and after seven months, by 'filling the uterus with blood and [thereby] putting pressure on it'. (100) An additional reason for recommending abstention in the last month of pregnancy was to 'avoid bacterial infection'. (101) Women who were prone to miscarriage or premature delivery were advised to abstain from sex altogether for the entire duration of pregnancy. (102) After delivery, women were advised to abstain for the 'month' of confinement (*yuezi*) -- the experts in fact recommended up to seven weeks -- to enable the 'womb to return to normal' (*huifu zhengchang*) without running the risk of provoking uterine haemorrhaging. (103) The 'month' of confinement (*zuo yuezi*), during

which the man was 'not permitted to stay in the woman's room', was, in fact, one of the few popular traditions developed 'on the basis of the Chinese people's experience' which was explicitly upheld by the experts. (104)

Medical counsel in favour of sexual abstinence during menstruation and pregnancy corresponded to the common assumption that it was unlikely to be practiced during those periods on the grounds that it was unclean. (105) One interpretation of this preference would refer to considerations of health and hygiene, which in the conditions of poverty and deprivation in which most women lived during the 1950s, constituted a recurrent theme in official discussion about sexual issues. Advice about 'sexual hygiene' (*xing shenghuo weisheng*) occupied not inconsiderable space in the pages of *Zhongguo funü*. It was considered particularly important for women since, as Wang Wenbin frankly put it, 'because of the structure and proximity of the different female organs, and because of the discharge which accumulates and produces an unpleasant odour', 'sexual hygiene' was particularly important for women. (106) Women were advised to wash each day in warm boiled water, twice a day during menstruation and the morning after intercourse. (107) During menstruation women should take care not to let water enter the vagina because of the latter's vulnerability to bacterial infection. The towel and basin used by women should be kept separate and should never be shared with other people in order to avoid transmitting any infection. (108) Sitting on cold ground, getting wet, and washing in cold water were also to be avoided, as should swimming and strenuous physical work. (109) To further persuade readers of the benefits of 'sexual hygiene', a number of stories related the experiences of model midwives who had contributed to eliminating unhygienic methods of parturition and neo-natal care. (110)

A related interpretation would suggest that the danger of sex during menstruation and pregnancy responded to reproductive and eugenic concerns. Sex during specified moments of the female cycle was to be foregone in the name of female fertility and foetal growth. Women were warned not to get angry during menstruation,

for this might provoke changes in the body which would impair fertility, and, as demonstrated above, conception under the effects of alcohol was thought to damage foetal development. (111) The reward to women for controlling their emotions and appetites was the birth of healthy offspring. Sanctions in support of female moderation assured good health to all women -- and the children thereof -- who followed medical advice about 'sexual hygiene'. Failure to do so would result in physical difficulties in the form of impaired fertility or miscarriage. As in traditional views about the moral and physical value for the child of women's 'foetal education' (*taí jiáo*), medicine thus identified women, through their sexuality, as the key figures in preserving their own and their unborn child's health, and, by extension, marital and family harmony. (112)

A third explanation for the repeated cautions against the negative physical consequences of sexual intercourse during menstruation and gestation would correspond to the identification of the latter as a kind of sickness, despite denials by the medical experts. (113) As Charlotte Furth has argued, 'menstruation, gestation and childbirth subjected women to more or less serious depletions of blood', an essential part of women's vital essence, which, according to traditional medical theory, made them 'chronically susceptible to the disorders accompanying such bodily loss.' (114) Similarly in the materials of the 1950s, the loss of menstrual blood was considered to diminish women's defences against sickness; because of their vulnerability at certain moments of the cycle, women were condemned by nature to the dangers of disease. Moreover, the dividing line between vulnerability to disease and disease itself was very narrow. Sexual intercourse was considered harmful in all but the lightest of sicknesses. (115) As the above references would indicate, sexual intercourse could therefore destroy the distinction altogether by inflicting on women irreparable physical damage, in the form of haemorrhage and permanent infertility. In Furth's words, 'women exposed to this model of female health and disease would recognise female gender as implying a choice between negative sexual power

and socially acceptable weakness.' (116)

An even less benign interpretation would locate the insistence on sexual abstinence more within the context of traditional fears of the polluting powers of female essences and sexuality. Indeed, Wang testified to the persistence of such views when he suggested that the lack of adequate attention to hygiene and cleanliness during menstruation was commonly the result of traditional notions that menstruation was 'filthy' and 'shameful' (*wuhui, jianbude ren*). (117) Emily Ahern, writing about women in southern China, described the power and danger associated with menstrual blood and post-partum fluids. Menstrual blood and post-partum discharge were believed to be a single substance which accumulated in a woman's body during pregnancy and continued to flow for about a month after childbirth. (118) The inauspicious presence of these unclean substances in social contexts governed by male authority was thought to threaten the 'stability and integrity of the body and the family'. (119) As sanctions in support of sexual moderation, periods of prohibition at certain moments of the female cycle were therefore recommended in the name of preserving social and familial order. Margery Wolf also pointed to the danger associated with women: 'Their menstrual secretions, if handled improperly, could cause men to sicken, gods to turn away in disgust, and families to decline into poverty.' (120) Sexual intercourse during menstruation and in the month after childbirth could thus contaminate the male by bringing him into contact with the female's dangerous *yin* essences.

The distinction between the polluting power of menstrual and post-partum fluids and the dangers of female sexuality is not easy to draw. While in writing about medieval Europe, for example, Edward Shorter has suggested that it was male fear of the 'demonic' qualities of female sexuality rather than of menstrual blood *per se* that lay behind notions of the evil properties of menstrual blood, the two would seem to be inseparable in the Chinese context. (121) Injunctions against sexual intercourse during menstruation and pregnancy in the materials of the 1950s were, as we have seen, explained in terms of women's health and

reproductive powers. However, another explanation, supported by popular tradition, would suggest that the projected harm of sex during menstruation referred equally to the dangers of female sexual excess at moments considered 'dirty' and therefore potentially damaging to the male, and damaging to women's fertility. Despite Ahern's argument that it was sexual intercourse rather than female sexuality that was considered ritually polluting, the warnings against female sexual activity during menstruation would suggest that when combined with threatening *yin* substances, and when removed from its reproductive purpose, female sexuality acquired connotations of danger. (122) This view would be consistent with the examples in Chinese history, popular culture and literature which testified to the potential harm of excessive manifestations of women's sexuality. The *Water Margin*, for example, describes how the sexual cravings of Wu Song's sister-in-law, Golden Lotus, pushed her to commit adultery and to poison her husband. (123) The story of Yang Guifei indicates how men were thought to come to an evil end if possessed by women's beauty. (124) Echoing the idea that excessive *yin* essence would deplete male energy, a biography in the *Lienü zhuan* similarly indicated that too much sexual contact with women could bring death to a man. (125) And, as Ning Lao T'ai-t'ai commented in *A Daughter of Han*, a woman who had just had intercourse with her husband was considered unclean and should not go near those afflicted with smallpox lest she 'blight the children'. (126)

Anthropological research about sexuality and gender has inspired the suggestion that menstrual blood may symbolise the instinctive and natural expression of female sexuality, which, because uncontrolled, is considered antithetical to cultural standards of behaviour, and therefore to male authority. (127) As we have seen, the Chinese discourse of the 1950s defined female sexuality largely with reference to the male standard of penetration and initiative. Female sexuality was essentially dependent and reactive. As an aspect of female sexuality, menstruation was not subject to male control and desire, nor was it dependent on the powerful male drive. In this interpretation, one might speculate

that menstrual blood represented an aspect of autonomous and uncontrolled sexuality, a female sexuality that was unresponsive to male restraints. Advice to women to refrain from stimulants such as alcohol and spicy foods during menstruation could therefore be seen as precautionary measures to restrain the expression of desire during potentially dangerous moments. (128) By the same token, the provision of detailed advice about female hygiene during the menstrual period might be interpreted as an attempt to exercise control over a potentially threatening aspect of female sexuality.

To imply from the above arguments that the 1950s representation of sexual intercourse during menstruation was simply a reworking of an old theme would not be entirely appropriate. The old notion that women's genitalia and their emissions were harmful to men was absent from the official materials. Men's potency was no longer evoked as the principal object of vulnerability in sexual relations, except when the excessive demands of the male drive threatened to deplete male energy. However, obvious links with traditional medical theories about sexual practice were retained. Warnings of the harm that would affect women as a result of sexual intercourse during menstruation, gestation and after childbirth served to remind women that their sexuality was still first and foremost defined by their reproductive function.

Chinese medical opinion about sexual development and behaviour in the 1950s was premised on a single uniform view of heterosexual reproductive sexuality from which any deviation was considered biologically abnormal. Homosexuality was not mentioned. Despite one reference to the hymen being broken in play, the notion of child sexuality was not recognised; as mentioned above, expert

opinion argued that since the reproductive organs were not fully developed in infancy, children did not experience sexual desire. (129) Even celibacy was considered 'abnormal' (*bu zhengchang*) since 'marriage was a natural biological demand' (*jiehun shi yige ren shengli/shang ziran de yaoqiu*'. (130)

Conceptualised primarily with reference to the overpowering force of the male urge -- what Weeks described as 'a driving, instinctual force, whose characteristics are built into the biology of the human animal' -- the norm of sexuality projected an asymmetrical complementarity between male penetration and ejaculation and female responsiveness carefully monitored to serve the interests of reproduction. (131) According to this model of sexuality the male urge had to be controlled to avoid alienating the woman, and yet women's desire had to be awakened by the man. As in western views of sexuality a few decades ago, 'female sexuality was seen as having no independent existence of its own'. (132) It was only acknowledged in a relational context which subordinated it to the overpowering male urge. The medical authorities therefore lent their weight to constructing a view of women's sexuality which was defined by its reproductive purpose and dependency on the male drive. Sex during menstruation was unacceptable to this definition since it symbolised women's active intervention in the normative model of reproductive sexuality and female responsiveness to male demands.

Views about sexual moderation and menstruation expounded in the materials of the 1950s were consistent with this model of sexuality. Professional opinion of the 1950s maintained that sexual activity during menstruation was harmful because of its effects on women's reproductive capacity. Having sexual intercourse when her 'defences (*dikangli*) were reduced' could damage a woman's capacity to fulfil her first and 'natural duty' (*tianran yiwu*) to society -- to give birth to offspring. (133) Menstrual and reproductive disorders were therefore logically represented as the consequence of women's refusal to conform to the normative standards of female sexuality. (134) The dangers of excess in the male were identified with the failure to control the

innate force of the sex drive. In women, in contrast, they were associated with engaging in medically injurious sexual intercourse, and thereby with violating the boundaries both of reproductive sexuality and of male control of women's sexual responses. A possible corollary was that removed^{from} procreative meaning if engaged in during menstruation, sex acquired potentially destructive properties that threatened both women's fertility and men's sexual supremacy.

As noted above, strictures on women to abstain from sex during moments of the cycle when they were normally unable to conceive were legitimised by scientific wisdom about the dangers for reproduction of exposing the vagina to bacteria. Sexual intercourse was only appropriate during fertile moments of the cycle. The reduction of the sperm count in excessive ejaculation diminished male fertility and potency. Ejaculation therefore had to be regulated and timed to coincide with the woman's cycle, and as we have seen, should never be permitted to endanger the health of future offspring.

In so far as the medical arguments concerning sexuality were used to back up the social and moral perspectives of the official discourse, the 'medicalisation' of sexuality indicated the legitimisation of non-scientific controls and sanctions over sexual behaviour. Because of its claims to scientific objectivity, it provided authoritative backing to the political and social interests defining appropriate sexual conduct. The inclusion of issues of sexuality -- particularly of reproduction and female hygiene -- under the clinical gaze of the medical experts therefore represented a specific instance of official intervention to control sexual behaviour. In this sense, the medicalisation of sexuality could be seen as a distinct but linked aspect of the politicisation of sexuality.

While a major motive behind this process may have been to break the hold of traditional 'feudal' and patriarchal interests over reproduction, it was not to do so in order to question traditional gender constructs of male domination and female subordination. The physiological distinctions between male and female outlined in the

1950s discourse dictated gender differences of sexual response, emotion and attitude. The conflation of sex with gender in this view aimed to control sexual and gender practice through demanding conformity to the new norm of sexuality on the grounds that it was biologically dictated. Women were to behave 'naturally' in a certain way because their physiological and reproductive structure determined it. Gender differences were thus removed from the sphere of social and cultural construction and subjected to the legitimising power of science. And in appropriating the right to define the physiological aspects of gender difference, science upheld a series of gender inequalities that served to perpetuate male authority. While gender ideology could be modified in other areas of social practice, as was the case in China in the 1950s, the biological view of sexuality made certain assumptions about gender impervious to change. As the following chapters show, the biological arguments concerning sexual difference served to legitimise a model of asymmetrical gender relations, according to which the representation of the female, far from being associated with notions of autonomy and equality, was dominated by gender requirements of responsiveness to the male. As Charlotte Furth put it in writing about concepts of pregnancy and childbirth in the Qing dynasty, 'as interpreters of biological fact, the medical authorities therefore had a privileged role in the transmission of views of women's subordination as a natural human condition.' (135)

THREE

ATTITUDES TO ADOLESCENCE

In the social and political conditions of the newly established People's Republic, the question of how to channel young people's energies in the service of the nation's progress resulted in assiduous attention given by state agencies to issues of youth development. Officially sponsored discussion about adolescence could be seen as state recognition that the new opportunities available to young people were creating demands and practices that had to be mediated and controlled in the interests of their own, and society's, well-being. Official publication of articles about adolescent sexuality and behaviour therefore signified the construction of adolescence as a vehicle for state intervention in controlling youth development.

Advice contained in official publications about the sexual and emotional aspects of young people's development projected adolescence as a period of preparation for adulthood and reproduction. Official materials introduced young people to issues concerning sexuality and reproduction, the correct understanding of which was considered indispensable to their healthy development. In this sense, adolescence signified young people's initiation as sexual beings.

Advice to adolescents about matters of sexual hygiene and general health was premised on the principles of control and conservation of bodily and mental strength. The active expression of sexual interest was stringently prohibited on the grounds that premature sexual involvement would dissipate young people's energies. Boys and girls alike were instructed to direct their developing physical and psychological energies away from sexual concerns to intellectual and political ones. While the publication of articles about health, hygiene and sexual development signified that young

people's concern with such matters was considered legitimate, sexual self-restraint was demanded as the condition of health and strength in adult life. (1) Given the discourse's prohibitions on sexual involvement during adolescence, sanctions in support of control and vigilance focused on the single person, whether male or female, rather than on the relationship between two people of the opposite sex. The gender distinctions that emerged in the representation of adolescent conduct corresponded to the sexual differences upheld by the biological account of sexuality.

This chapter examines the issues identified as concerns for adolescents in the discourse of the 1950s. It analyses the gender characteristics inscribed in the advice offered young people, and attempts to clarify the gender implications of constructing adolescence as a preparation for healthy adulthood. In so doing it attempts to elucidate the state's general objectives in exercising surveillance over adolescent behaviour.

Adolescence defined

The term '*qingnian*' (youth) traditionally referred to males between the ages of sixteen or seventeen and thirty. By the late Qing dynasty, it was used less to designate age than the increasing independence of sons from paternal discipline and the period when men first experienced heterosexual relations, either with servants or prostitutes. (2) The term was traditionally not applied to girls at all, because early marriage was normally concurrent with physical and sexual maturity. (3)

The stipulation of a legal minimum age for marriage in the Marriage Law of 1950 prolonged the time between childhood (*younian*) or puberty (*fayu shiqi*) and marriage when young people were sexually mature but had no legitimate outlet for their sexual energies. (4) Despite the fact that women continued to marry young, particularly in the rural areas, delaying the age of marriage and sexual activity -- the term marriage was often used as a synonym

for sexual intercourse -- after puberty highlighted adolescence as a potential social problem. Wang Wenbin concurred with this view in his definition of the major characteristics of adolescence. He suggested that the physiological and sexual changes occurring in adolescence created interests in young people which, if not properly channelled and restrained, could lead to morally and sexually undesirable consequences.

Adolescence defines the period between thirteen and eighteen years of age, and is characterised by continuing physical growth and the rapid development of the reproductive system. With this a feeling of admiration for the opposite sex arises. This kind of feeling between the two sexes is natural, since it has a biological foundation. Inevitably, it gradually gives rise to the requirement for love and marriage. It is not appropriate for young people to fall in love too early, because this period is of great importance for studying. Of course, people keep on studying until old age; studying has no limit. But adolescence is a period for laying foundations, and falling in love too early is bound to disperse one's energy and impair one's studies. However, this is not to say that young people of the opposite sex should not engage in appropriate contact and friendship. On the contrary, during this period, they should participate extensively in social activities and make friends with members of both sexes. (5)

Defined in these terms, adolescence was seen as a time when the speed and extent of the physiological and psychological changes affecting young people demanded vigilance, caution, and the adoption of a 'proper and serious' attitude to sexual issues, in order to establish the healthy foundations for adult life. (6) Adolescence was a time when young people should form a correct understanding of sexual matters, and of the desirable balance between the social, intellectual and emotional aspects of life as a condition for making successful choices in courtship and marriage. Adolescence was thus represented as a period of socialisation of young people as sexual and gendered beings in anticipation of the later 'inevitable' (*biran*) business of marriage. (7)

While the above definition represented adolescence as a period of

potential difficulty for all young people, regardless of gender, a number of indications suggested that it was considered 'more of a problem' for girls. (8) Puberty in girls started at the age of thirteen or fourteen, about two years earlier than in boys. (9) Because of the differences in their physiological and psychological development, and in particular because of the hormonal changes that occurred during menstruation, adolescent daughters were considered 'more difficult' to deal with than adolescent sons. (10) Warnings to girls to avoid 'fluctuations of emotion' (*qingxu bodong*) and 'psychological tension, excitement or depression' (*jingshen jinzhang, xingfen huo yiyu*) during menstruation suggested that puberty in girls was responsible for an emotional sensitivity that did not affect boys. (11) Indeed, according to an authority published in *Zhongguo funü* in 1954, teenage girls 'become interested in everything that corresponds to their sexual development' (*he xing de chengshu shi xiangfuhe de*), whether this be appearance (*waimao*) or boys, and as a result become 'extremely unpredictable and irritable' (*feichang bu zhengchang he jizao*). (12)

The state and the construction of adolescence

In the old society most people thought that sex was obscene and shameful, and so avoided talking about it. Even those who wanted to find out about such things didn't dare ask. And when children and young people came across or raised questions about sex they invariably were given incorrect or perfunctory answers. So sexual matters became shrouded in mystery, so that ordinary young men and women lacked adequate knowledge about sex even after marriage. This not only created tensions and misunderstandings between a couple but also impaired sexual satisfaction. It even affected young couples' health... So helping young people to gain a proper understanding of matters to do with sex, love, marriage and the family is imperative. (13)

The state's provision^{of} a kind of informal sex education in the form analysed in the following sections signified an attack on conventional notions of sexual morality. The often detailed information and advice for adolescents contained in official journals could be interpreted as an attempt to destroy taboos and erode myths, whether about menstrual blood or the powers of semen. The very detail of instructions about how and where to wash clothes stained with menstrual blood, for example, could be construed as a conscious attack on the taboos of the past. (14) Girls were encouraged not to be embar^rassed about mentioning their menstrual problems, nor to avoid doing so because of misplaced ideas about sexual equality. (15) Boys were praised for writing to youth magazines to express their anxieties about masturbation. (16) Parents, and mothers in particular, were asked to shed their embarrassment about talking about sex in order to provide the help and advice their adolescent children needed. As Wang Wenbin put it at the end of a section on 'Sexual maturity, love, marriage and the family' (Xing chengshu, aiqing, hunyin yu jiating), 'Let us emphasize the function of the family in showing concern for the development and growth of children and in educating them, for this not only increases the happiness of the family; it is also a vital duty to the state and the revolution.' (17)

Against conservative criticism that public discussion would encourage promiscuous behaviour amongst adolescents, the dissemination of information about sex-related issues was justified by its contribution to overcoming widespread ignorance about sexual matters, considered the cause of many problems that led to tension and conflict in married life. (18) Despite occasional comments suggesting that young people's interest in sex was quite normal and proper (*zhengchang*), the lack of any sex education meant that young people were given little encouragement to find out about a topic still widely thought of as morally offensive. (19) Nevertheless, a few outspoken individuals began to call for increased information and debate about issues considered essential to marital and family happiness. Well known for her candid views, Ding Ling, for example, in a speech given to

students at Qinghua University in May 1950 urged her audience to shed their embarrassment and begin to give serious attention to issues such as the meaning of love. She suggested that now that the struggle to obtain 'freedom to love' had been won, young people should look at the question of the appropriate attitude to love, of 'how to love'. (20) Experts and lay people alike attempted to persuade their audiences that discussion of such matters was not only acceptable but necessary in order to prepare young people for the complexities of later married life. As Wang Wenbin clearly indicated, the lack of knowledge about sexual matters (*xing de zhishi*) on the part of young people could provoke conflicts that might eventually 'destroy a marital relationship, creating unhappiness and misery for both the individual and the family.' (21) To want to find out about sexual matters was neither indecent nor wanton. On the contrary, it was quite natural and should be acknowledged as such. (22) Fear, it was acknowledged, had for too long prevented young people from asking the right kind of questions about matters that intimately affected their physical and psychological development. (23)

An explicit objective in eradicating ignorance about sex-related matters was to improve standards of health among young people. Information about cleanliness during menstruation was disseminated to introduce young women to new techniques of personal hygiene, just as advice to young men about how to treat such phenomena as seminal emission and masturbation was offered to safeguard their physical and mental development. Similarly, advice to school children to refrain from love affairs was given in the name of young people's welfare, and as following sections show, was particularly targeted at young girls as a means of guarding against manipulation and abuse by older men. (24)

In insisting on the social importance of a conventionally 'private' sphere of interest, the agents of the official discourse

of sexuality were opening the doors to a radical reassessment of the responses, needs and desires embraced by the meaning of sexuality. Introducing a hitherto taboo topic into public discussion potentially exposed it to widely varying interpretations and constructions that did not automatically conform to the norms of the official discourse. Indeed, the state took a calculated risk in opening up discussion about adolescent sexuality, for as occasional references indicated, there was no lack of alternative discourses, in film and literature for example, which represented other modes of sexual behaviour. (25)

However, the reassessment that took place was circumscribed from the start by the way in which it was shaped and channelled along lines determined by the state's political and professional agents. Far from being designed to bring sexuality into the realm of open-ended reflection, the state's redefinition of sexuality and adolescence aimed to liberate a socially useful force -- youth -- from its feudal fetters by reconstructing it as an instrument of the new socialist social and moral order. The concerns informing the official approach to adolescent sexuality indicated that it was to be no less subject to ideological and moral constraints than had been the case under the traditional feudal order; the difference was that socialist constraints were to replace feudal ones. In this sense, the decision to grant access to selected information about sex indicated a view of knowledge as an aspect of construction and control rather than of personal and collective enrichment. The provision of information about adolescent sexuality signified the transformation of a private sphere of knowledge into a public discourse for the purpose of moral and social order.

The state's purpose in constructing adolescence was therefore to provide a universally applicable model of physical and moral health in order to harness individual interests to the project of familial and social stability. The discourse's representation of adolescent problems excluded the notion of adolescence as a period of radical change with widely varying effects and meanings depending on individual experience. Individual readers might

identify with individual cases discussed in the media, but as far as the interests of the state were concerned, the personal experience related in case histories was useful only to the extent that it substantiated, or rejected, a particular view or argument. Individual or personal experience -- the formation of self-identity during adolescence -- was thus subsumed under a series of general propositions about adolescence which were constructed to serve science, morality and the social order rather than the individual. The construction of adolescence as a vehicle for state intervention in controlling youth development precluded the possibility, and desirability, of bringing individual differences in adolescent experience under public scrutiny. The specificities of adolescence as a period of sexual development were thus defined in the light of the requirements of the system to channel and control the development of young people.

The physiological issues of female adolescence

The physiological aspects of sexual development in adolescence were treated largely as the responsibility of the medical experts, such as Wang Wenbin. As chapter two indicated, his book, *Knowledge about Sex*, was apparently the only work of its kind to appear in the 1950s. However, selected areas of clinical concern were discussed with considerable candour in the press, and were very revealing about the attitudes towards adolescent sexuality upheld by the experts. Menstruation, breast development, seminal emission and masturbation were represented as the aspects of adolescent development which caused most concern and anxiety to young people. (26) Information and advice therefore focused on these areas.

Menstruation was introduced as a 'normal biological phenomenon' which required informed and serious attention. (27) The lack of

adequate preparation and knowledge about menstruation on the part of pubertal girls commonly resulted in anxiety and unease (*jiaolü he bu'an*). (28) Teachers and mothers were therefore advised to tell their daughters about menstruation before they reached puberty to convince them that there was no cause for fear or shame. (29) Information about menstruation contained in articles of the 1950s commonly covered its function in the reproductive system, the colour and amount of menstrual blood, its normal duration, and the symptoms commonly associated with it. One typical example, entitled 'When you first menstruate' (*Dang diyi ci lai yuejing de shihou*), took the form of a conversation between the mother of a young girl called Xiao Ling, who had just begun menstruating, and a doctor. (30) In an introductory passage, the mother describes the changes of mood she noticed in Xiao Ling: "'Xiao Ling's character has suddenly changed in the last six months. She has become rather taciturn, and doesn't mix much with her fellow students any more. She is a bit bashful, and when she sees people she is not as open as she used to be. She stoops a bit when she walks, and she insists on wearing long trousers and a thick shirt, and even though I tell her to put on a skirt and a thin top, she still doesn't do anything about it.'" In response to the mother's request for advice about how she should help her daughter, the doctor describes the physiological and psychological changes affecting young girls between the ages of about eleven and fifteen: in weight, height, the growth of pubic hair, breast development, the development of the ovaries and menstruation, and the accompanying feelings of shyness and embarrassment. She briefly mentions the menstrual irregularities that often occur and emphasizes the importance of menstrual hygiene. She also stresses the importance of mothers informing their daughters about menstruation in advance of its first appearance. In the last section, the doctor explains that Xiao Ling's obtuseness over clothing is the result of the psychological changes taking place in her, which make her embarrassed about her body and breast development. She advises girls to pay particular attention to their sleep, exercise and hygiene, and lists the kind of food

substances that help maintain a young girl's energy during this period of life.

Other articles about menstruation gave more detailed attention to menstrual hygiene. Diagrams of how to make menstrual pads were attached to one on 'Menstrual sickness and menstrual hygiene' (Yuejing bing he jingqi weisheng). (31) Details about how to wash menstrual pads and where to keep them were sometimes very specific, as was advice about how to wash the 'lower body' (*xiashen*) during the menstrual period. (32) Girls were also warned against swimming during menstruation, against 'heavy manual labour and strenuous exercise', and against 'activities like dancing and running' since excessive activity could produce irregularities in the flow of menstrual blood. (33) Drinking cold water, washing in cold water and eating cold foods during menstruation were considered to cause a heavy blood flow, and diarrhoea because of the sudden shock to the abdomen. (34) The weakening of the body's immunities against sickness during menstruation also made women vulnerable to colds and exhaustion. (35) Interpreted in terms of the *yin-yang* dualism, the absorption of cold *yin* essences during a weakened *yin* state increased the body's vulnerability to disease. Anger and 'emotional fluctuations', so young women were advised, were also bad during menstruation, for in exciting the nerves, sudden changes in emotional state could provoke unwanted alterations in the menstrual cycle. (36) Advice about how to protect health and hygiene thus focused on the potential dangers to the body that lack of attention might provoke. It also signified that adolescence was seen as a period of strengthening the body and the reproductive system in preparation for procreative sexuality in adulthood.

Medical opinion in the 1950s rejected the popular view of menstruation as a sickness, on the grounds that it was unscientific and influenced by traditional notions of shame and uncleanness. (37) Experts argued that irregularities in menstruation such as delayed menarch and amenorrhea were caused by a variety of dietary, environmental and psychological factors, rather than by any medical condition. (38) Nevertheless, as the

above descriptions indicate, warning women against a range of physical activities and emotional states unequivocally conveyed the message that menstruation put them in the category of the weak and feeble. The use of terms like '*shangkou*' or '*chuangshang*' (wound) to describe the effects on the uterus of the loss its 'inner membranes' (*neimo*) during the menstrual period imposed a sense of damage, pain and loss on the representation of menstruation. (39) And authoritative explanations of menstruation, such as the following, could leave young readers in little doubt about its debilitating properties.

[During menstruation] the body's defences against sickness are reduced, making it vulnerable to colds and other sicknesses... some of the defensive capacities of the reproductive organs are also weakened, making them vulnerable to bacteria which, if one is not careful about hygiene and protection, can easily provoke inflammation of the reproductive organs, causing menstrual sickness, and even impairing general health and fertility. (40)

That the monthly cycle made women more prone to emotional instability than men was a related notion that accompanied advice about 'menstrual hygiene'. Mood changes, emotional unpredictability and irritability were all considered common symptoms of the menstrual cycle. (41) The implication was, to use Charlotte Furth's words, that 'to be ruled by blood was to be subject to the rule of one's emotions'. (42) Warnings against getting angry, and against 'psychological tension, excitement or depression' were included in the experts' recommendations about how to prevent menstrual irregularities. (43) Advice to refrain from certain activities during menstruation clearly referred to preserving women's evenness of temperament as much as their physical health. Women's reproductive health therefore depended on the preservation of emotional stability as much as physical well-being. A regular cycle, free of emotional turbulence, was the condition of reproductive health and fertility. (44)

As with medical advice to abstain from sexual intercourse during menstruation, much of the information about menstruation was

explicitly geared to improving general levels of hygiene. The experts claimed that without access to education in basic hygiene, young women had not taken any notice of menstrual blood, or they had used rags which they never washed and which 'they threw away into a dark corner when they had finished with it.' (45) The consequences of this had been disastrous, in particular in spreading what were popularly known as 'the three many's' (*san duo*): sickness and disease, maintaining a high maternal and child mortality rate, and in preventing women from going to work. (46) In particular, it was commonly suggested that failure to wash properly during menstruation caused various uterine complaints, including inflammation and infection, which could have severely damaging effects on fertility. As a survey conducted amongst middle school students indicated, failure to give proper attention to menstrual hygiene could lead to irregular menstruation and to nervous complaints. (47)

The other main area of clinical advice given adolescent girls concerned breasts and breast development. As Esther Cheo Ying testified in her *Black Country Girl in Red China*, Chinese women whose breasts were even slightly prominent were regarded as immoral, except when they were breast-feeding, and they often went to great lengths to appear flat-chested by binding themselves with strong cotton cloth. (48) The attempt to appear slender and 'minute' (*xian*) was criticised as a reflection of outdated ideas that 'women were the accessory (*fushupin*) of men'. (49) Large breasts were not, as some people thought, a sign of 'immoral behaviour' (*zuofeng bu zhengpai*), and medical opinion warned that breast-binding was very damaging to normal breast development. (50) Mothers' timely advice was again recommended to encourage young girls to realise that breast development was neither shameful nor worrying. (51) Medical authority advised that excessive or insufficient breast development were both minor occurrences, so young girls had no reason to feel any particular anxiety. (52)

The physiological issues of male adolescence

Seminal emission and masturbation were the major topics of concern in discussion about male sexual development in adolescence.

Seminal emission and wet dreams were treated as the male equivalent of menstruation: 'Just as girls menstruate when they reach puberty so boys experience seminal emission, which may result in feelings of tiredness, but this is totally normal and harmless.' (53) It was described as a 'reflex' (*fanshexing*) response to the 'accumulation of sperm in the seminal vesicles' which 'after a long period, and stimulated by the external environment, in particularly sexual excitement and gradual physical stimulation' naturally finds an outlet in ejaculation. (54) Despite young men's worries that seminal emission had the effect of depleting their 'vital energy' (*yuanqi*) and harming sexual development, as an occasional phenomenon occurring once or twice a month, it was no cause for alarm. (55) Seminal emission induced by masturbation, however, was much more serious: 'masturbation may impede reproductive development' and in 'keeping the nerves in a state of excitement and tension', it gives rise to 'headaches, insomnia, lethargy and amnesia' as well as 'shortening life and impairing reproductive capacity.' (56) 'Bad habits' (*exi*) could also cause 'nervous debilitation' (*shenjing shuairuo*) and other nervous disorders. (57) The view put forward by some people that early marriage could 'cure' seminal emission and masturbation was not considered an adequate response to the problem; 'education in hygiene' (*weisheng jiaoyu*) and 'medical measures' (*yiliao cuoshi*), including circumcision if necessary, were the appropriate methods to help young men overcome the problem. (58) In tones reminiscent of those used in Victorian and Edwardian Britain to warn against 'evils of incontinence', young men were urged to lead a regulated life, to sleep and rise early, to avoid stimulants and wearing tight trousers, and to refrain from reading romantic literature. (59) They were told to do physical exercise as soon as they got up in the morning, and were given specific instructions to sleep on their side with one arm pinned underneath, under light

bed covers. (60)

With the exception of one passing reference, masturbation was not noted as an infantile practice in the materials of the 1950s. (61) It was mentioned only indirectly as a female practice, as the possible cause of breaking the hymen and of heavy menstruation. (62) The orientation of the articles on the topic clearly indicated that it was thought of mainly as a male phenomenon. The most explicit and detailed information about masturbation was contained in articles responding to young men's anxieties about their difficulties in exercising self-control. (63) Indeed, as indicated in chapter two, the concern and condemnation it provoked was precisely because it was identified as a male practice, the effects of which were thought to deplete the offender's 'vital energy', and therefore his chances of becoming 'a strong, manly man'. (64) Even if interest in sexual matters was a natural and biologically determined phenomenon, self-restraint was an indispensable requirement for boys' healthy physical and mental development.

The clinical advice offered to cope with the problems of adolescent development, and of masturbation in particular, depended on the deployment of negative sanctions to urge young men to exercise self-control. Just as precocious or excessive sexual intercourse would result in sterility, impotence, nervous disorders and the deadening of the senses, so masturbation would provoke a similar range of effects. As an expression of an uncontrollable physiological urge which had no constructive purpose, masturbation was therefore replete with hidden dangers that would manifest themselves later on in adulthood. (65) Poor attention to hygiene during menstruation was considered the result of ignorance, and possibly superstition. (66) In contrast, masturbation was treated as an act of self-indulgence, which was the consequence of failing to adopt the 'correct' attitude to sex and love, and of failing to control interest in the 'other sex' (*yixing*). (67) Masturbation was a morally reprehensible diversion of energies away from the appropriate activities of adolescence. The sanctions and advice of the medical experts thus supported a

strong moral message; professional concern legitimised medical intervention not only in the provision of basic knowledge, but in determining standards of sexual morality. The result was a model of physical and moral health in adolescence, constructed by positive reference to the standards upheld by the discourse, and by negative reference to the attitudes and practices it considered harmful and immoral. Much in the same way that Donzelot described when examining the mechanisms of sex education in Europe, self-control in the service of physical and moral well-being was therefore to be exercised through associating erotic ideas and acts 'with the representation of their possible consequences... By instituting such an education... in a collective and anonymous setting, one would defuse its disturbing charge and thus contain it until the age of normal reproduction; in this way, one could expect to obtain a healthy, vigorous, and disciplined sex.' (68)

The moral and social issues of adolescent sexuality

Alongside the clinical advice examined in the above section, the need for self-constraint as a prophylactic remedy for harmful sexual practices during adolescence was also represented as an ideological and moral responsibility. At its most direct and explicit, advice to young people told them that an 'exaggerated interest' in affective matters was wrong because it detracted attention from the main concern, the 'construction of socialism'. (69) A more lenient and sympathetic tone was discernible in suggestions that bringing sex-related concerns into the open was a positive contribution to eradicating 'bad habits'. (70) An unswerving message, however, ran through all the advice given to young people; any indication of wanting to extend the natural sexual interest of adolescence into active desire for the opposite sex was wrong. The adoption of a proper communist outlook on life, and a 'proper and serious' attitude to the other sex, would prevent young people from paying too much attention to

sexual desire, and would prevent them from embarking on potentially harmful practices before they were 'sexually mature'. (71) Adolescents were totally unprepared for emotional and sexual involvement; and even though young people understandably experienced the 'emotion of sexual love' (*xing'ai de qinggan*), their lack of experience and understanding made it totally inappropriate for them to indulge in sexual activity. (72) Youthful passions put young people in a vulnerable position, and if not guided by benevolent authority, they might well make choices they would later regret. Even idle fantasizing was negative and harmful. As Ding Ling -- whose tone in discussing such issues was considerably more lenient than most -- suggested, it was not just getting involved in love affairs, but more 'thinking about' love which was the main obstacle to concentrating on studies. (73) The references to the dangers of reading romantic novels, watching films and fantasizing would suggest that such advice was not entirely abstract. Such materials were represented as inviting an alternative approach to sexual matters which was inconsistent with the norms of the official discourse. By implication, they constituted another discourse of sexuality which threatened the successful propagation and implementation of the official recommendations.

Accompanying all the advice given young people about how to channel their interests and energies away from sexual and emotional matters was the assumption that the years at school should be devoted to studies for largely positive, rather than preventive, reasons. This was considered particularly important for girls as a means of equipping them to guard against male exploitation. Comments to the effect that 'interest in sex and marriage is particularly widespread among girls at middle school' assumed that girls were more interested than boys in sex primarily because they were conditioned to think of their lot in life as wives and mothers. (74) It was also claimed that an important reason for what appeared to be greater female interest in such matters was male pressure. Some men, often soldiers and cadres, thought that schools were a good place for meeting girls. They

also wanted to marry as soon as possible on the grounds that having finally found a girlfriend, 'if [they] didn't marry, then the girl would become more educated and would no longer be reliable' (*ruo bu jiehun, jianglai nuxuesheng wenhua gaole, jiu kaobuzhule*). (75) The innocence of young girls made them particularly vulnerable to the unscrupulous behaviour of older men, as in the case of a fifteen-year old who was pursued by and married a cadre on the rebound from a former affair, became pregnant and was then abandoned by her husband. (76) In another case a young girl was pushed into a hastily arranged marriage in order to cover up for the local peasant association chairman who had made her pregnant. (77) For women, therefore, advice against sexual involvement was not constructed as a repressive measure *against* certain attitudes and practices, except in so far as these affected women's freedom of choice. On the contrary, it was given the progressive meaning of contributing towards women's rights and sexual equality.

The constructive value attached to advising young people against sexual and emotional involvement did not obscure the moralism accompanying it. Sexual activity for young people was unequivocally wrong not only because of its negative effects on their educational and social development, but also because it signified the expression of sexual desires outside the acceptable marital context. However, those who had ventured beyond the recommended boundaries 'should not be attacked for they had not committed a crime'. (78) Furthermore, cautioning against sexual involvement should not, as many argued, be interpreted as criticism of 'normal' friendly social contact between the sexes. (79) Widespread as they still were, traditional customs of sexual segregation were regarded as outdated, harmful, and one of the major reasons for the inadequacy of young people's understanding about sexual matters. (80) Local level cadres were frequently castigated for interfering with young people's freedom to mix with people of the opposite sex by condemning them as promiscuous (*hujiao*). (81) They were also indirectly accused of contributing to young people's emotional problems; fear of contact

with the other sex as a result of the social stigma attached to it could lead to 'mistaking friendship for love', which as the following chapter shows, could have disastrous consequences. (82)

One of the difficulties contingent upon encouraging 'healthy social activities' between boys and girls concerned how to break down discriminatory attitudes on the part of young people themselves. (83) If in girls, this referred principally to the problems inherent in constructing a self-image as potential victim and tool of unscrupulous male designs, then in boys it referred to gender abuse of women. Boys who called their female fellow students 'surplus goods' (*shengyu wuzi*), for example, were criticised for their 'immoral' (*bu daode*) behaviour. (84) Young men's ridicule of, insulting behaviour towards and offensive jokes about women were condemned, as 'indications of a low ideological consciousness'. (85) However, this was 'by no means to say that joking should be stopped between young men and women... ' because, in any case, 'a certain mutual curiosity is difficult to avoid'. (86)

Advice to adolescents to devote their energies to studies rather than emotional and sexual concerns corresponded to the official discourse's construction of the relationship between private and public concerns. The priority the official discourse attached to 'public' concerns required that attention to what were considered 'private' (*siren*) issues had to be integrated into the public domain. Interest in 'private' issues was considered 'selfish' and potentially damaging to the individual person if divorced from commitment to the social good. (87) The demands on young people to take their educational and social development seriously meant that, important as they were, personal issues should not be permitted to divert attention from public and social ones. Schools and the Youth League were accordingly informed that attempts to transmit advice to young people through discussing issues like 'what to look for in finding a partner' or 'what to do if you cannot find a partner' were mistaken, for they arose from an 'incorrect world view' which put love before work and other

'important matters' (*da shi*). (88)

One of the consequences of the new state's interests in directing social development after 1949 was that young people's entry into the world of public affairs acquired immense social and political importance. The state's supervision of youth welfare and education inevitably brought issues of adolescence into the orbit of its concerns, and in the process subjected young people to a series of medical, pedagogical and political interests in instructing and defining youth development for the good of the country's future. The identification of adolescence as a distinct stage of life with specific sexual, moral and social characteristics facilitated the intervention of the agents of the state - the doctors, teachers and professionals - in matters of youth development. Adolescence became a legitimate and necessary subject of official discourse because in its new interpretation it introduced into social practice a range of attitudes, aspirations and activities which needed to be guided and controlled in the name of the new social order. Public discussion about adolescence therefore signified more than an acknowledgement of it as an important aspect of social life; it also marked the identification of concerns that were considered potentially threatening to the new government's programme of social transformation. (89) The representation of adolescence in the official discourse as a potentially problematic stage of development was coterminous with state mediation to shape it in the service of society's future.

The model of health which advice to adolescents sought to popularise was bounded by the notion that restraint of sexual interest was necessary to the conservation of energies for adult

life. The principal issues of male concern -- seminal emission and masturbation -- corresponded to the view of the dominating male urge, which if uncontrolled would provoke a series of physical disorders. Just as with male sexual excess discussed in chapter two, the deleterious physiological and psychological effects of masturbation were associated with the wasteful expenditure of semen; as with excessive sexual intercourse, medical warnings against male masturbation invoked the damage it would cause to the vitality of the male urge. The difference was that the wasteful character of masturbation as a 'private' occupation demanded that it be subject to auto-surveillance to a degree not applicable to the heterosexual expression of sexual excess. Self-control in masturbation was not principally required in the name of marital harmony -- as was the case with intercourse -- but in order to conserve individual male energies for healthy, strong and socially useful development. (90)

By contrast, female self-restraint in adolescence referred not to the control of physiologically-based sexual urges, but to patrolling sexual conduct within cross-gender relationships in order to avoid premature emotional and sexual involvement. This was advised, as we have seen, to enable young women to devote their energies to intellectual and professional development. Early sexual involvement would lead to early pregnancy, thus limiting women's potential to enter the world of public or social responsibilities. (91) Despite the predominantly social orientation of advice about girls' conduct during adolescence, the topics selected for discussion about female adolescence also suggested that auto-surveillance was required of young women in order to protect and strengthen their reproductive capacity. As the above sections show, adolescence was treated as particularly problematic for girls; the specificity of female development in adolescence was thought to generate a physical and emotional condition which increased young women's susceptibility to disease, and which could, as a result, impair their reproductive performance. Reminiscent of late nineteenth century European prejudices that young women should rest during menstruation in

order to conserve their energies for the development of their reproductive organs, recommendations for menstrual hygiene rested on warnings of the negative effects on fertility that failure to respect certain measures would produce. (92)

Seen in this light, the representation of adolescent self-control as a requirement of healthy development was inscribed with gender distinctions which corresponded to the biological model of sexuality analysed in chapter two; male control of the dominant drive, and female self-vigilance for the sake of fertility and reproductive health. That masturbation was scarcely mentioned with reference to women did not make it any more permissible for them. Rather it indicated an indifference to an aspect of sexuality that did not conform to the dominant themes of the discourse of sexuality. Female masturbation would have demanded recognition of an area of autonomous sexual experience that was precluded by the relational and reproductive emphasis of the discourse on female sexuality.

The goal of sexual equality constituted an important, if implicit referent of the new construction of adolescence. Advice to young women to devote the years of their adolescence to study instead of to boys was motivated -- at least, in part -- by recognition of the sexual exploitation to which young women were still vulnerable. It also corresponded to an ideological position which rejected the conventional relegation of women to purely domestic and marital concerns. Encouragement to girls to adopt a serious attitude to their studies was implicitly backed up by the attractions of the opportunities for educational and professional development that would be available to them, should they reject the path laid out by traditional gender conditioning. In this sense, girls were offered an incentive to question traditional self-images and assumptions about their gender role. Urging girls to restrain sexual interest during adolescence presupposed a critique of conventional gender practice.

However, the gender specificity of advice to girls imposed limits on the meaning of sexual equality in adolescence. Female auto-surveillance was required for the sake of fertility and

reproduction, as well as for the development of intellectual and political interests. Girls' contribution to socialism thus acquired a dimension not applicable to men, in that it was mediated by their reproductive function. The implication that girls would be better equipped for equal status with men if they devoted their adolescence to study was circumscribed by the gender implications of advice concerning the physiological aspects of female adolescence.

FOUR

PRE-MARITAL PRESCRIPTIONS

Pre-marital sexual propriety constituted one of the dominant themes of the 1950s official discourse on sexuality. It was, by definition, constructed for the benefit of young people, but in contrast with the adolescent audience of the materials analysed in the last chapter, it directly addressed the slightly older constituency of those already thinking about or preparing for marriage. Defined with reference to the new model of free-choice marriage, pre-marital advice sought to encourage young people to adopt the 'correct attitude' towards matters of love and sex, in order to establish a stable basis for marriage. In a social context which treated marriage as a natural inevitability, sexual propriety in pre-marital relations was projected as a necessary condition for the eventual satisfactory realisation of marriage. (1)

Discussion targeted at the pre-marital constituency assumed that amorous interest was legitimate, whereas in adolescence it was proscribed on the grounds that it interfered with study. The discourse's focus accordingly moved away from the physiological themes of the writings about adolescence to the moral, affective and ideological aspects of love relationships. The principal subject of concern was no longer the single person or self, but the self in relation to the other. Exhortations to exercise self-control and constraint therefore moved from an emphasis on bodily health and strength to the mode of response to the other. While active sexual involvement was still prohibited, materials addressed to the pre-marital interest group aimed to equip young people with the ideological and informational techniques necessary to select a partner and to construct a stable basis for marriage. The representation of 'communist morality' in pre-marital relations that emerged is the focus of analysis in this chapter.

Advice about the 'correct approach' to love was premised on the principle of balancing personal with social commitments. Over-emphasis on the private aspect of the love relationship at the cost of public commitment was inconsistent with the socially oriented values of the official discourse. Ideological categories were used as a means of ratifying and condemning different modes of sexual conduct. Different ideological approaches were set out in a hierarchy of moral values that left little doubt about what constituted acceptable conduct in affective and sexual matters. Ideology therefore served as a means of reiterating the normative expectations represented by the official discourse. Tutoring the inexperienced youth was synonymous with providing them with a moral education based on a unitary definition of correct pre-marital behaviour.

State interests in patrolling pre-marital conduct were oriented to controlling individual interests in the name of the collective good. However, the predominant use of women as the major referent of discussion about pre-marital conduct signified that the major target and agent of control and surveillance was not pre-marital behaviour in general, but female conduct. Prescriptions and proscriptions in pre-marital behaviour were principally made through examples of female behaviour. The gender implications of the official construction of self-control and restraint in pre-marital conduct are therefore a major theme of this chapter.

Courtship and the social context of free-choice marriage

Advice to young people preparing for marriage was, in broad terms, defined in relation to the forms, requirements and expectations of marriage. In the official discourse of the early 1950s, these were dominated by the single, urban-based model of free-choice marriage, despite the continuation of many traditional marital arrangements. Much of the early material published for the pre-marital category was devoted to explaining the benefits of the new

form of marriage. Attempts to elucidate the conditions and practices facilitating the implementation of free-choice marriage established the context for discussion about pre-marital propriety in sexual conduct.

Centuries-old imperatives governing sexual, and particularly female, propriety functioned to make sexual segregation one of the most striking features of social life prior to 1949. (2) Public proximity between an unmarried woman and a man was widely regarded as immoral, and girls were thought of as wanton and shameless if seen talking to boys. (3) Courtship was a virtually unknown practice, and as with free selection of marriage partner after the May Fourth movement, it was only practiced by a small number of men and women from the educated families of the cities. Prior to 1949, it was available as an individual rather than social and institutional alternative to traditional procedures. (4)

In the early years after the passing of the Marriage Law customary practices of sexual segregation continued to be one of the greatest barriers to successful implementation of the free-choice principle of marriage. The popular notion that 'freedom of marriage' was little more than an invitation to promiscuity and chaos functioned to prevent young people from engaging in day-to-day social contact. (5) Sexual segregation was thought to be a major source of the ignorance and fear with which many young people approached marriage. (6) It was also widely considered responsible for the rash decisions about marriage that young people often made; such was the extent of social pressure against public contact between men and women that any public statement of mutual interest was often understood as a commitment to marry. (7)

In response to such conditions, courtship, often known as 'making friends' (*jiao pengyou*), was upheld as an indispensable aspect of the free-choice model of marriage. It was explained as the appropriate way for young people to develop the mutual understanding and affection considered necessary to realise the new model of conjugal marriage. As Deng Yingchao put it in a speech given in the spring of 1942, 'Permitting free social contact between young men and women and giving young people the

opportunity to get to know and make friends with the other sex is the necessary premise for making love and marriage satisfactory.'

(8) Exponents of courtship were also conscious that granting freedom of choice could potentially consolidate young people's commitment to the broader interests of social and economic development: 'If they [young people] have the opportunity to find the partner they want, they will be able to resolve matters of great importance to their lives, and will be more energetic and vigorous. Is this not of great benefit to production?' (9) This conceptualisation of courtship did not, however, sanction active expressions of sexuality for the 'nearly-weds' any more than it did for adolescents. Sexual intercourse between potential marriage partners was proscribed by the official discourse, as well as subject to widespread social reprobation. (10) Rather, it posited a heterosexual relationship in which sexual interest was implicit and, as later sections will show, to a certain extent sanctioned, but dependent for active expression on final selection -- and registration -- as marriage partner.

Formulated on the basis of urban practice, the identification of 'making friends' as a desirable mode of 'normal' (*zhengchang*) social contact between young people had little to do with rural customs. (11) It was only in the cities where young people typically took more initiative in marriage negotiations, and where residential and productive organization offered more possibilities of getting to know potential partners, that courtship could be readily accepted as customary practice. (12) As an exhortatory representation of gender relations, courtship was far removed from day-to-day practices in the countryside. Indeed, the CCP's commitment to institutionalising courtship contrasted sharply with the hostility shown it by the rural population. Most encouragement to implement courtship as a standard part of the free-choice procedure was therefore addressed to the rural population. In response to widespread antagonism, the aim of official approval of courtship in the locally directed work of the Youth League and the Women's Federation in the early 1950s was to reduce the controls of the older generation over the procedures of marriage and to

persuade a conservative rural public of the benefits of transforming old practices and ideas, as much as to encourage young people to adopt new practices. (13) Parents and cadres were told that it was 'wrong' (*bu dui*) to forbid ordinary, healthy contact between the sexes on the grounds that it would lead to improper behaviour. (14) Any ridicule or rumour-mongering about a couple seen 'talking together or going for a stroll' was 'liable to accomplish nothing and spoil everything!'. (*cheng shi bu zu, bai shi you yu*). (15) Local cadres, caught between the conflicting pressures of local custom and official policy, often bowed to the former in their mediations. As those considered responsible for upholding the law at the village level, they were subjected to harsh criticism throughout the early 1950s for effectively maintaining customary rules of sexual segregation, and for wrongly forcing young people to 'confess the crime' (*danbai*) of illicit activities, frequently at tragic cost to both women and men. (16)

Many case histories were published throughout the early 1950s to convince the conservative public of the erroneous and outdated character of their ideas. One typical story, published under the title of 'Shi shenmo fang' aile qingnian de youyi he aiqing?' (What is it that hinders friendship and love between young people), concerned a bright and outward-going girl who was interested in all sorts of activities including art, literature, music and dancing. (17) Her liveliness and friendliness meant that she was pursued by a number of men. She wasn't interested in any of them, and so rejected their advances, only to find herself shunned by her workmates who accused her of 'immoral conduct' (*zuofeng bu zhengpai*) for 'leading [men] up the garden path' (*aiqing shang de pianzi*). The editorial comment suggested that friendship and love needed to be clearly distinguished in order to avoid making this type of error. Another typical case published to initiate a debate in *Zhongguo qingnian* about attitudes towards friendship and love, described a young woman who was vilified for rejecting the advances of a team leader who was pursuing her and falling in love with someone else. (18) Despite the woman's reluctance to respond to the man's advances, the fact of her public contact

with him made her as liable as him to social disapproval, and to imputations of 'loose' behaviour. (19) A more serious case told of a peasant woman who, after the death of her first husband, got to know and fell in love with a man from her own village. (20) Her mother and mother-in-law both opposed her liaison, her mother principally because she thought it would jeopardise her chances of finding a wife for her son. To stop the marriage, she orchestrated a number of people to write reports to the district authorities, proving that the woman's lover had raped an innocent widow. As a result of the mother's machinations, he was imprisoned for more than a month, and the woman tried to commit suicide. It was only at this point that the local leaders realised their mistake in uncritically accepting local gossip.

Friends and marriage partners

The function of courtship as an 'anticipatory socialisation for marriage' was integral to its articulation. (21) Encouraging readers to make the appropriate distinctions between friendship and love, or to give time to the process of 'establishing a friendship' (*jianli pengyou guanxi*) thus constituted an important part of educating the public in the social, moral and sexual attributes and principles that were to inform the new model of marriage. (22) This did not, however, entirely preclude the function of courtship as a procedure for mate selection, as Croll and others have suggested. (23) Tentative and constrained though they might be, attempts were made to encourage the practice of courtship as a means of enabling young people to choose from a number of possibilities, rather than to assume that the first and only 'friend' would be the future spouse. Opportunities to meet young people to prepare for love and marriage should 'absolutely not', as Deng Yingchao said, 'be taken to mean that every social encounter should inevitably lead to love and marriage'. (24) Rather, the propriety of using the courting period to choose, and

reject, as well as to become well acquainted with a potential partner depended on the nature of a couple's mutual agreement and on the expectations thereby generated.

Distinctions were made between the various stages of familiarity along the emotional spectrum, which functioned as signs marking the boundaries of permissible behaviour. Progress from initial acquaintance (*huxiang renshi*), through friendship and 'liking' (*hao*) a person, to 'love' (*lian'ai*), signified qualitatively different degrees of commitment, each of which granted permission to engage in progressively intimate, although never overtly sexual contact. (25) The final stage beyond which expectations of marriage were legitimate and indeed morally required was the 'declaration of love' (*biaoshi aiqing*). As later sections show, withdrawal from this was considered the mark of a flippant, immoral and fundamentally bourgeois attitude towards love. (26) Prior to the point of no return, however, a certain measure of experimentation was permissible, as long as it did not signify any sexual involvement or lead to false expectations.

The author of an article called 'Qingnian nan nü zhijian de youyi he aiqing' (Friendship and love between young men and women) drew attention to the importance of the selective aspect of courtship as an aspect of the free-choice principle. He claimed that it would 'be wrong' to think that 'friendship that does not develop into love is immoral simply because after it you may look for another intimate relationship'; such an attitude restricted young people's freedom of choice. (27) The distinction between friendship and love, however, was difficult to define, given the circumscribed nature of the metaphors and images considered appropriate for discursive use. Indeed, the two affective states were often effectively homogenised by the limited vocabulary of communist morality, as later sections in this chapter indicate. One suggestion was that friendship should not be confused with 'affection', or the 'feeling' (*ganqing*) of love;

We do not reject the idea that feeling (*ganqing*) may 'gradually develop' between a man and a woman. Many men and women become couples on the basis of frequent contact.

But this on no account should be taken to mean that mutual love can always 'slowly develop' out of friendship, no matter how great the differences between a man and a woman... And if in the course of the development of feeling, one partner suddenly discovers that he or she is incompatible with the other, then he or she must -- and has the right to -- suggest withdrawing from the relationship. There is nothing improper in this, and neither partner has the right to force such a relationship to continue. (28)

On the other hand, freedom to choose a partner should not be interpreted to mean irresponsibility, as in the case of the 'wanton' (*hu san mu si*) young Shanghai factory worker who reportedly had five or six boyfriends in a year, or the nurse in Fuxun who had 'had an affair' (*tan lian'ai*) with more than thirty men, and who spent all her time fixing times to see them (*shixing yuyue zhi*). (29) Such 'flippant' treatment (*suiyi qingshuai*) was no less than the bourgeois attitude of 'loving the new and hating the old, and playing around with the other sex' (*xi xin yan jiu, wannong yixing*). (30)

Debates held in *Zhongguo qingnian* to air readers' views about friendship and love revealed considerable divergences of opinion about precisely what kind of behaviour was permissible prior to the 'declaration of love'. Nor was editorial opinion unanimous on the subject. The dividing line between courtship as sanctioned by the discourse and use of it as a pretext for illicit sexual activity was difficult to draw. What were the limits of the selection procedure? Some suggested that absolute commitment was required only after a declaration, or sign of love had been given and accepted; for example, in exchanging photographs, writing letters, or even showing extra attentiveness during sickness. (31) Correct interpretation of another person's behaviour was still, however, problematic. One young factory worker by the name of Xiao Li, for example, was criticised when she responded negatively to a young man she worked with 'when he expressed his love to her' (*biaoshi aiqing*). (32) After getting to know Er Dilei in the factory where she worked, Xiao Li quickly realised that 'he liked her' (*dui ta hen hao*), but she felt that he was not educated

enough (*wenhua di*), and that she would be better off finding a college student. According to the editor, her 'ideological problem' (*sixiang maobing*) was that in thinking of Er Dilei as not adequately educated, she was 'looking down on workers'. The implied criticism, however, was that her initially positive response had led to certain expectations which should not be let down. Her desire to find a 'good looking' (*moyang haokan*) college student indicated a somewhat impure, fickle nature; putting status and looks first was not properly proletarian. An autobiographical case history, published in a compilation of writings on 'love, marriage and marital life', described a nineteen year-old girl's confusion when after a lengthy and close friendship with a man eleven years her senior, she suddenly received a letter from him asking her to marry him. (33) Most of the responses to the girl's plea for advice about what to do indicated that since her friendship with the man had permitted discussion about such matters as love and friendship, he was quite justified in thinking that this was tantamount to a relationship of love. Her immaturity and lack of understanding about matters of love meant that she was unable to recognise love when it was offered. (34)

Nearly all the examples illustrating different approaches to finding potential marriage partners focused on young women. Within the terms of the official discourse, the implication was that women were constructed as the main standard, -if not arbiters, of what constituted the normative approach to selecting a partner. Constant references to female behaviour, whether as positive or negative exemplars of pre-marital sexual morality, left the reader with little doubt as to who functioned as the main agent of appropriate courting behaviour. That this was further associated with certain moral responsibilities specific to female gender became apparent in the representation of other aspects of pre-marital conduct.

True socialist love

'The objective of love is marriage, and a marital relationship is for life.' (35) Given new status under the free-choice principle of the Marriage Law, love became one of the central themes of official writings published to disseminate the new model of marriage. It was widely treated as the principle criterion for selecting a marriage partner, and was also seen as the indispensable basis for establishing a lasting marriage.

Identifying love as the main condition of a successful marital relationship did not enlighten the public as to how to recognise or define it. The idea that 'correct love (*zhengque de lian'ai*)... lays a good foundation for future marriage' required clarification. (36)

How are true and false love distinguished? This is a complex problem, but it can be resolved. You should learn how to probe into other people's hearts, you should understand your partner, discover his good and bad points, you should understand what he lives for and what his ideals are... (37)

Given its new value as a condition of stable marriage, one of the primary concerns in the media discussion about love was to establish the criteria for identifying what it was and for distinguishing it from friendship.

How is love born?... When people enter youth and begin to experience those vague and unconscious [feelings], they often reflect on the question of the nature of their own relationship with the other sex, and from their daily friendly relations with their comrades, a deep and excited melody of feeling begins to play, which gradually gives birth to a desire to be able to better understand the other person and to be able to spend more time together, to talk freely of one's ideas, feelings and interests, and to discuss certain shared problems in life and plans for future work.

It is in this way that love is born and develops. Of course, in [real] life, the development of love takes many varied forms... But the main content and beauty of love is shared ideas, aspirations and interests; even though a couple may be totally unlike in character, this will not cause difficulties if their political outlook is the same. (38)

The ideal of love this description represented was of a comradely, solidary sharing of work, studies and political outlook, all underpinned by love of the Party. Love signified 'mutual familiarity and understanding, mutual admiration, help, and encouragement to do even better in production, studies and work, and to make life even happier'. (39) It was 'pure' (*chunjie*) and 'selfless' (*bu zisi*), and just as it was lent strength by its revolutionary commitment, so did it nurture that same revolutionary resolve. (40) 'Love occupies a particular position in life, and it has a particular function in the individual person's attitude towards the work of the revolution.' (41)

Stories illustrating the correct approach to love put shared political commitment in pride of place in the hierarchy of criteria for selecting a partner. A highly idealised example of this was the heroine Zhao Yiman who, as a Young Communist League member, met her future husband on a boat going to Moscow where both had been sent to study. The couple's initial acquaintance came about because of mutual commitment to further the revolution. It developed on the basis of work and study, and despite separation and suffering back in China during the struggle against the Nationalists, it survived as a source of inspiration to give even greater commitment to the cause. (42) A somewhat more mundane and accessible example was of a couple who first met in a model labour group in a factory in Jinan. Both were known for their exemplary attitude of co-operation and hard work, and having got to know each other through work, study and mutual support and consideration, began to feel the seeds of hope for a different kind of affection. An unspoken love began to grow between them, which culminated in a declaration of intent to remain together forever. (43)

A clear assumption of these stories was that serious, socialist love could not be based on a fleeting acquaintance, even less so on 'love at first sight' (*yi jian zhong qing*). As Wang Wenbin indicated, it had to grow gradually and steadily on the basis of friendship: 'Normal friendship is established on the basis of broad mutual ambitions, diligent study, hard work and mutual help;

only the love which develops out of this is the healthy love (*jiankang de aiqing*) which provides a firm foundation for a family.' (44) Love which was not rooted in mutual familiarity and interests was considered inherently unstable, 'no good' (*bu hao*) and bound to fade. (45) A review of a Soviet novel translated into Chinese as *Zhenshi de gushi* (True story) exemplified this approach. (46) It told of a young woman's brief acquaintance with a young man who, apart from being interested in art and books, also danced very well. The woman was initially quite interested in him, but when she discovered that he was a cement worker and not a graduate from the college of architecture, as she had thought, she broke off the relationship. This kind of behaviour, so the reviewer argued, was mistaken, because it indicated that the girl had attached too much value to talents like dancing without understanding the importance of getting to know the man first. It also showed by negative example that 'sharing the same political and ideological outlook was the most basic condition of love'. (47)

The desired social and political orientation of love recommended by the exponents of the official discourse had a number of implications for the function of love in an individual person's life. First of all, young people were urged to realise that 'it is not the only matter of great importance in our lives, for we have work that is even more important than love...' (48) Deng Yingchao elucidated this view:

We oppose the view of love as supreme (*lian'ai zhishang*), exaggerating its importance and seeing it as the only significant question in life, but at the same time we also oppose treating it with indifference, underestimating it, and treating it irresponsibly. We think that the question of sexual relations does not refer to personal life and happiness alone, for it is of immense significance for social progress... (49)

Explained in other terms, this approach signified that 'correct' socialist love was inseparable from its social use value. Love became true when it could transcend individual and personal interests to put the social good before private happiness. The following description of the course of true love was a typical

example. Luo Shufang, a worker in a textile factory got to know Ding Changjiu, a worker praised by everyone, and 'because they worked near to one another, helped and encouraged each other, they developed deep feelings of friendship.' (50) Luo loved Ding's unswerving and tireless character, and his ability to communicate with the masses; Ding loved Luo's strong sense of responsibility, and her capacity to take the lead at work and show consideration for the progress of her fellow workers. The message was unmistakeable; the 'true love' of the proletarian spirit was immune to individualistic interests which put private pleasure before the social good. 'Only the heart of someone who works for the good of the motherland, and who does not in any way consider individual gain, only the utterly selfless heart is the heart of true love.' (51)

Proletarian love was thus equated with control, restraint and self-denial; it was inseparable from love of the state and society as a whole. 'Love for an individual is only true love when combined with love for the country.' (52) This representation of love suggested an almost organic link between the individual person and the country. True love for the person was mediated by love of the country or state, and love of the country was refracted through love of the individual. 'Under socialism, the combination of love for an individual person with love for the country is the basis for a new kind of love between the sexes.' (53) Numerous examples of this new kind of love filled the pages of the journals. A poem called 'Guangrong de gunian' (Glorious girl) depicted a peasant girl from an impoverished background who joined the Youth League and moved to the city to study and join her fiancé. (54) They fixed March 8, International Women's Day, as the date for their marriage, but on the morning of the appointed day, the chairman of the union gave a report to mobilise people to volunteer to work on a project to dam the Jing river. The girl volunteered, without even consulting her fiancé, and left immediately, postponing her marriage until a later date. Even though hospitalised after an accident at work, she still refused to return home. Another example told the story of a girl

who on the eve of her marriage, volunteered to work on a construction site, where she lost an arm in an accident. (55) Undeterred, she said that this was a sacrifice for the country, and that she would still go on striving to become a party member. A cartoon story called 'Jiehun' (Marriage) conveyed a similar message. (56) Two villagers met at a League meeting, fell in love and decided to marry, but postponed the date of the registration at the girl's request so that she could attend a county level training course in hygiene for women and children. On her return to the village, she postponed marrying a second time in order to complete some work for the community.

Illustrations of this kind were undoubtedly intended to convey political messages that had little to do with gender relationships. For example, many of them coincided with the Korean war when enormous propaganda efforts went into encouraging people to volunteer to go and fight. Some means had to be employed to convince potential recruits that leaving home to fight for the motherland would not impair their chances of marriage. Throughout the early 1950s, the pages of *Zhongguo funü* and *Zhongguo qingnian* were replete with descriptions of faithful fiancées who welcomed their betrothed home after years of waiting, and of young women who became 'model dependants' for encouraging their menfolk to volunteer. (57) Whatever the main political purpose of such stories, however, the reader could be left in little doubt about where the question of love ranked in the social and moral order. Love for an individual was considered moral only when combined with the social good. Self-denial was preferable to the gratification of desire, particularly when the latter signified potential conflict with serving the greater good. The young woman who refused to marry her boyfriend because he wavered instead of promising outright to avenge her mother's death had virtue on her side. (58) When they eventually did marry, she encouraged him to go and fight rather than enjoy their first few days of marriage together. 'It is not that we are ascetic', wrote Song Tingzhang in his *The Correct Approach to Love*, because

when young people reach a certain age, it is natural to be interested in love, for love can make our lives happy. But we ought to encourage the correct [kind of] love...and to find suitable solutions to problems of love and marriage on the understanding that love must come after revolutionary work. (59)

Criteria in selecting a partner which suggested an exaggerated interest in private, as opposed to public, characteristics were, by definition, erroneous. Foremost amongst these was physical attraction, relegated to the bottom of the list defining the appropriate understanding of love. Indeed, the suggestion that 'sexual attraction between a man and a woman is the natural foundation [of love]' made in the collection of writings entitled *Lun shehuizhuyishehui de aiqing, hunyin he jiating* (On Love, Marriage and the Family in Socialist Society) was exceptional. (60) With very few exceptions, descriptions and accounts of appropriate attitudes towards love omitted all reference to physical and sexual characteristics. Any acknowledgement of the possible importance of physical compatibility was invariably begrudging. The following comments about physical attraction which appeared right at the end of a two page article on love and the criteria for partner selection offer a good example: 'As for good looks, of course this is important, but it is not the most important thing. It is impossible to love a person who is beautiful, but who doesn't work, and doesn't study, and is ideologically backward.' (61) As later sections indicate, the distaste which characterised any mention of the physical aspects of mate selection and love corresponded to official antipathy towards indications of pre-marital sexuality.

The repeated representation of true love as an aspect of an individual's social and political responsibility could be interpreted as the result of official insistence -- recurrent in Chinese communist ideology -- on assimilating a traditionally private realm of concern and experience into the public realm of social commitment. As pointed out in chapter one, any emphasis on personal satisfaction or self-fulfilment was invariably considered inconsistent with commitment to the public good. However, what is

striking about the descriptions supporting this approach in the materials analysed in the section above is that they depended almost exclusively on the use of female exemplars. The concern to establish what was proper social and moral conduct as a normative expectation of courtship acquired particular gender characteristics, the implications of which were inescapable. Women's self-denial and restraint in love relationships became the standard of the 'new socialist love'.

Ideologically unsound love

The importance attached to love as a social, political and moral quality rather than an emotional and sexual experience dictated the terms of its representation. The ideological values of the discourse limited the extent to which love could be described through positive use of affective metaphor and imagery. Physical attraction, excitement and longing for the loved one came too close to the dangerous territory of bourgeois attitudes to be permitted explicit reference as aspects of love. The 'correct' perspective on love thus had to be constructed via other techniques; one of the easiest and possibly most persuasive was that of binary oppositions. (62) Constructing images of what was acceptable and desirable by reference to their opposite could also function to identify the 'incorrect', and so disarm unwanted behaviours and practices by categorising them as immoral and dangerous. An oppositional or contrasting device could simultaneously advise and encourage certain modes of behaviour while warning against and admonishing others. Thus, articles which set out to inform their readers about what friendship was, or about how it differed from love, often did so by inverse reference to what it was not. Descriptions which started off on a positive note were interrupted by some conjunction of contrast to introduce the necessary tone of warning. (63) And this technique could easily be backed up by the unambiguous use of the negative, as in the contents of Song

Tingzhang's pamphlet. (64) This started with a section entitled 'Love is not the principal aim in life' and followed with 'Unsuitable ways of selecting a partner', 'Criteria in selecting a partner', and 'Oppose the degenerate bourgeois behaviour of discarding the old for the new and playing around with the other sex.'

Many of the series of opposites and contrasts used to evaluate different modes of conduct belonged to the canon of communist party political rhetoric just as much as to its discourse on sexuality. 'Correct' and 'incorrect' (*zhengque*, *bu zhengque*), 'good' and 'bad' (*hao*, *bu hao*), 'individual' and 'collective' (*geren*, *jiti*), 'private' and 'public/social' (*siren*, *shehui*) were familiar ideological categories used in all communist publications. The use of them in the discourse on sexuality therefore granted the possibility of attributing differential value to an attitude or practice in the knowledge that it would be understood within the specific discourse and context to which it referred. Specific ideological categories and contrasts became connected with certain modes of behaviour. Hence 'private' and 'individualistic' signified an exaggerated view of the importance of love as an aspect of individual experience, the tendency to romanticise the meaning of love at the cost of its social value, or indulgence in the pursuit of personal pleasure -- in the prioritisation of the self -- against the interests of the group. In contrast, terms such as 'correct', 'collective' and 'social' indicated attitudes and conduct which conformed to the social emphasis of the official discourse's representation of socialist love.

Among the most common of the contrasts used in the official discourse were the ideological categories of 'feudal' or 'bourgeois' and 'proletarian'. As Deng Yingchao, President of the Women's Federation, commented in an article about communist morality, 'the remnants of feudal and capitalist influence are more persistent in sexual relations, family life, customs and mores than in any other area.' (65) Precisely which ideological system was to blame for what kind of behaviour depended on a number of factors. 'Fengjian' (feudal) behaviour erred in being over-restrictive in

attempting to control young people's sexuality. It could therefore refer to behaviour that ranged from requirements to observe customs of sexual segregation, as in the saying '*shoushou buqin*' (they [men and women] should treat each other as strangers), to a woman's obedience to the whims and wishes of her husband. (66) 'Bourgeois' (*zichanjiefi*) behaviour indicated too individualistic and permissive an attitude towards love and sex, whether in interpreting too literally the notion of 'freedom of love' (*lian'ai ziyou*) or in entertaining idealistic and romantic notions of beauty. (67) Different ideological categories could also be used to describe similar attitudes and practices, the specific interpretation of which depended on the political priorities of the moment. Hence, as a 'feudal' notion, 'love at first sight' (*yi jian zhong qing*) was treated as an understandable response to social and political pressures against unmarried men and women getting to know one another. The difficulties many young people encountered in establishing any real friendship before marriage made first impressions - a major association of 'love at first sight' - an obvious criterion in choice of partner. (68) As a 'bourgeois' tendency, however, it was associated with individual indulgence in trivial, romantic fantasies, which by definition was incompatible with ideological commitment to the Party and state. (69)

It was no coincidence that discussion of 'bourgeois' errors in sexual conduct began to gather momentum at the end of 1953. With the termination of the month-long campaigns to publicise the Marriage Law, the anti-feudal thrust of the work to implement it came to an end. This was followed by an attempt to introduce some measure of stability into communities disrupted by the radical effects of the Law. (70) Official interest in popularising the progressive principles of the Marriage Law was superseded by attempts to minimise its more disruptive effects. The earlier emphasis on the priority to be given young women's rights to free-choice marriage as part of the anti-feudal struggle gave way to increasingly prevalent concerns about the dangers of pursuing individual happiness. The notion that the feudal system was responsible for sexual inequalities was increasingly replaced by

the implication that individual bourgeois errors were the major culprit. And individual errors were less threatening to the norms of the discourse on sexuality than systemic deficiencies; attributing the cause of sexual misconduct to individual behaviour rather than to structural factors facilitated a socially manageable approach to the regulation of sexual conduct. (71)

The changes in the use of ideological categories to approve or condemn different modes of sexual behaviour were accompanied by modifications in their gender associations. Prior to 1953, the major culprit of 'feudal' behaviour in sexual matters was male. The feudal label referred predominantly to the maintenance of 'male authority' (*fu quan*) over women, whether in the form of sexual discrimination and abuse, or of women's submissiveness to their husbands. (72) This did not easily allow for criticism of female behaviour, given that women were seen as victims of an oppressive system. After 1953, however, the prevalent substitution of the bourgeois for the feudal label facilitated the inclusion of female examples in discussion about sexual impropriety. Discarding the notion that the feudal system was responsible for sexual misdemeanours permitted the identification of women's behaviour alongside men's as examples of sexual immorality. After 1953, the initially dominant use of 'male and feudal' to categorise sexual misconduct was modified, if not totally replaced, by the use of female and bourgeois, to indicate sexual conduct which was considered incompatible with socialist morality. (73) Ideological labels and the gender differences inscribed in them were therefore used to evaluate different modes of sexual behaviour, defined in accordance with the new political priorities of the First Five Year Plan.

In discussions about appropriate attitudes towards love, an exaggerated, abstract and individualistic view of the importance of love was generally considered one of the main errors of a bourgeois mentality. (74) Love was important, and for too long had been subjected to imputations of shame and suspicion, but as Ding Ling pointed out to her student audience, 'it does not solve everything'. (75) A 'bourgeois' tendency in matters of love could

produce disappointment and even despair. For example, two undergraduates who fell in love and thought it was wonderful to be engaged in the revolution together decided to go to the liberated zone, but on arrival there discovered that distributing land was monotonous and living conditions were harsh. (76) The magic of their love suddenly disappeared, and it was only by undergoing self-criticism of their 'bourgeois' attitudes, that they learnt to overcome their romantic notions. Deng Yingchao made it clear that 'putting love and marriage before everything else' was closely linked to 'bourgeois passion'; an individual affected by such a view might well show the 'cowardly behaviour' (*qienuo xingwei*) of 'no longer wanting to live', if obliged to confront rejection or the loss of a loved one. (77) Song Tingzhang took pains in his advice to young miners to point out that the imbalance between work and private life implicit in the bourgeois notion that 'love was more important than work' could lead to disastrous consequences: 'quite a number of mine workers who spend their time with their girlfriends (*tan lian'ai*) go to sleep late, and so spend their time at work yawning, and because they lose their concentration, have a finger cut off by a machine or produce poor quality material and damage the machinery. Some suffer from insomnia because they spend too much energy thinking about love.' (78) The romantic belief in 'love at first sight' (*yi jian zhong qing*) could easily develop into the 'fantasy of passion' (*kuangre de huanxiang*), and the 'selfishness and self-interest' (*zisi zili*) typical of an individualistic outlook. (79) The pejorative value of these terms obviated any need to spell out the erroneous, immoral and potentially corrupt connotations of the practices they identified. Condemnation of an approach to love which focused on gratification of the self instead of commitment to the other also served to reaffirm the importance of self-denial and restraint in love relationships.

An autobiographical account entitled 'Wo gaibianle jiu de lian'ai guandian' (I have changed my old view of love) exemplified this approach. (80) It described how Meng Zheyin, a girl from a well-to-do merchant family, had spent her time reading novels, watching

American films, and listening to love songs, with the sole aim in life of being a 'beautiful and gentle little mother' (*meili wenrou de xiao muqin*). At school she refused the advances of her fellow students, and even though on a number of occasions she had felt something for some of them, her 'silent oriental sentiments' (*chenmo de dongfangshi lianqing*) had prevented her from expressing it. Then, in Beijing, she encountered a handsome young medical student whom she had known at school. 'You know, a young Party member has immense appeal for a young person just arrived from the newly liberated areas, eager to absorb new knowledge.' She fell in love with him, feeling that he was the only man she could marry, and after months of anguish because 'he was not yet hers' (*ta bu shuyu wo*) finally summoned up the courage to write to him. When he replied, it was to say that her view of love was mistaken; they did not understand one another, and were even less likely to in the future if they got together now. In her distress, Meng decided to discuss her plight with the Youth League. In time, she came to realise that it was she who had been in the wrong for entertaining a mistaken and 'shallow' (*bu yansu*) view of love, and for attaching excessive importance to an idealised view of romantic love. By implication, the article contrasted her self-centred individualism with the rational and mature proletarian approach of the Party member whose affections she desired.

Another prominent use of ideological contrast and label was to refer to the dangers of using physical appearance as a criterion for choosing a partner. As indicated in the previous section, attaching importance to physical appearance came at the bottom of the hierarchy of appropriate criteria in selecting a partner.

It is understandable that young people should often think that appearance is an important condition of love, for no-one wants to spend their life with someone they reckon is ugly. But on no account should appearance be given more importance than other conditions, because if beneath external beauty hides a hideous soul, what is there worth loving?' (81)

Prioritising appearance could sometimes denote a 'feudal' outlook, as in the idea that the slender look of the flat-chested woman was a mark of beauty. (82) More commonly, however, an interest in 'outward beauty' (*waimao de mei*) as a criterion of 'establishing a love relationship' (*jianli aiqing guanxi*) was identified as a 'bourgeois' tendency, dangerously associated with pre-marital sex. As the images of young women in high-heeled shoes or in a tight gown suggested, it was considered somewhat insalubrious and indulgent. (83) A girl who used her feminine looks to attract men's attention was criticised for her individualistic and bourgeois attitude towards love. (84) 'Oppose looking for beauty only, think of thought' became one of the slogans of a series of provincial marriage campaigns held in 1956 and 1957, and 'outward appearance' was dismissed as a bourgeois obsession of those 'who don't understand' what love is. (85) Just to emphasize the point, readers were warned that too much attention to external appearance would lead to unhappiness and misery, and even to being taken in by class enemies. (86) Of course 'everyone likes beauty, and we certainly do not oppose beauty' but it is 'internal beauty' that matters. (87) The subtext was that 'external beauty' was associated with sexuality, and as such was vulgar and base. (88) When not associated with sexuality, however, 'outward appearance' could be an acceptable criterion for assessing someone's character. Thus while slender elegance and fine clothes denoted a suspect bourgeois character, the robust looks and strong hands of a peasant woman could serve as legitimate signs of proletarian hard work. (89)

In matters of love, a 'bourgeois outlook' represented all attitudes and actions that subordinated group or collective need and interest to the individual's, from the expression of passing fancies to romantic fantasies of passionate love. The moral superiority of the true proletarian spirit was contrasted with the depraved desires of the bourgeois individualist. Logically, it was only in a socialist society that true love could be realised. 'Mutual trust, and therefore true love, cannot exist in bourgeois society', because the 'principal condition for marriage in the West is individual wealth', whereas under socialism it is 'shared

ideological interests... mutual respect and trust'. (90) Jealousy, competitiveness, hurt and insults were all intrinsic to the individualist, corrupt and indulgent turpitude of bourgeois love. (91) And as the next section shows, indulgence and excess were contrasted unfavourably with regulation and moderation. The parallels with the view of healthy sexuality analysed in chapter two are immediately apparent. Just as sexual indulgence was negatively contrasted with sexual restraint, so a bourgeois attitude was unhealthy precisely because it was inconsistent with the restrained image of the true proletarian.

As in the representation of true love, the official discourse relied heavily on images of women to describe erroneous approaches to love. Women were used as the principal examples in stories illustrating mistaken notions of love, and the ideological contrasts used to condone and condemn different practices were commonly associated with female practice. The instrumentality of female gender in the official representations of love suggested that excessive interest in love was construed as a particularly female phenomenon. Conversely, individualistic errors and self-indulgence in love were largely women's responsibility. This pejorative view was nowhere more apparent than in the writings of the greatest authority of all. In a letter to Klara Zetkin translated in *Zhongguo funü* in 1953, Lenin wrote:

I have heard that in the evening, the main topics that women read about and discuss are sex and marriage.... When I heard this, I was so surprised that I thought I had misheard. The first country with a proletarian dictatorship is surrounded by the counter-revolutionary forces of the world, and the German situation demands the greatest possible concentration of revolutionary strength to attack the daily rampage of counter-revolution. But our female comrades are discussing questions of sex, and of past, present and future forms of marriage.' (92)

The implications of this representation for the official construction of female sexuality and gender are analysed in later sections.

The dangers of passion

The imputed dangers of individualistic indulgence and excess - the core of the bourgeois evil - reached their peak in the representation of passion, the point at which an individual could 'lose self-control' (*sangshile kongzhi ziji de lilian*). (93) The romantic and passionate individual's disengagement from social responsibilities was anathema to a discourse that aimed to assimilate the private and personal into the public sphere. Love was a political and social issue, not to be confused with passion and sex, so young people were told. (94) In contrast, passion signified all that was most unstable and impure to the communist moralist. It was unequivocally dismissed as socially divisive and injurious to the individual. It was harmful and base. As in the warnings about the physical consequences of excessive masturbation or excessive sexual intercourse, the negative value attached to the search for passion was highlighted by the imputed misery that would inevitably result from it. Potentially romantic images were juxtaposed against ones which evoked physical harm or social reprisals in order to dramatise the dangers of indulgence. (95) Passion was therefore associated with the 'abyss' into which those who 'pursued happiness' would fall, and with 'dirt', the only way out of which was to 'crawl'. (96) It indicated, as Song Tingzhang commented, the 'dissipated behaviour from which there could be no salvation' (*bu ke jiule de fangdang xingwei*), and as Deng Yingchao pointed out, could easily lead to the 'betrayal of communist morality' and 'glass of waterism' (*beishuizhuyi*). (97) 'Why is it', the author of an article entitled 'Yao shanyu zhengui de aiqing' (Be true to pure love) wrote, 'that the initial flame of love can die so quickly when it comes across difficulties?' (98) Because it is like 'soap bubbles', so a story of the same name suggested, and therefore doomed to burst and disappear. (99) It was this 'bourgeois' idea that led young people to think that 'marriage is the tomb of love' (*jiehun shi lian'ai de fenmu*). (100) Pamphlets published to prepare young people for marriage warned against the dire consequences of such views. Brief passionate involvement could

not substitute for the more secure understanding built up through work and study. Passion, by definition, could not last. (101) It was inherently unstable (*kaobuzhu*), and was 'a kind of curious fantasy' (*yi zhong qiyi de huanxiang*) which 'people who do not understand' (*bu liaojie de ren*) such things often mistook for real love. (102) Arguments and recriminations were only to be expected for the young couple who married after two weeks of passionate involvement. (103) Desire for 'incomparable intimacy' (*titie wu bi*) made women blind to the 'seeds of misfortune hiding behind [their] happiness.... during moments of passion (*relian shihou*)'. (104)

The danger associated with passion arose from its character as an expression of base physical desire and moral turpitude as much as from its anti-social character. (105) In its typical representation, therefore, passion had little to do with the idealised emotional intensity described in the *Hong lou meng*, for example. (106) Rather, it was associated with the murky degeneration of 'sexual relations' (*liangxing guanxi*), replete with connotations of uncleanness and impurity. The idea that sex was no more than a 'biological attraction' (*shengwu xiyin*) was a not uncommon mode of indicating its moral inferiority. Sexual love was inferior to the purity of love of the revolutionary spirit because it was physical. (107) And when dissociated from the virtues of lofty ideals and aspirations, physical love was tarnished, unclean and fundamentally immoral. (108) As one commentator put it,

thinking and consciousness, feeling, intelligence, cultural accomplishment, interest in life and other such social elements are the determining conditions of lofty love among people; physical attraction between the sexes must be integrated with these social elements,... and only then can loving behaviour (*lian'ai xingwei*) occur. To denigrate sexual relations to the level of biological sexual satisfaction (*shengwu ban de xing de manzu*) is the expression of the depraved morals of capitalist society. (109)

Sexual love and desire could have no place within a perspective which customarily treated sex as a mechanical, and somewhat debasing, physiological phenomenon. (110) The idea that 'sexual

attraction between a man and a woman is the natural foundation [of love]' was found only once in the official materials of the 1950s; it was unusual not simply for its biologicistic assumptions about the nature of love, but because it was not accompanied by the dismissive or admonitory tone generally used in advice about love matters. (111)

A predominant concern behind the representation of passion as potentially divisive and dangerous was to discourage young people from sexual activity prior to marriage. Indeed, sexual abstinence prior to marriage was an absolute requirement of the discourse on sexuality, such that even though not strictly illegal, infringement could be treated as a crime. (112) As in advice to adolescents, the unequivocal message to those already considering marriage was that sexual involvement would get in the way of their studies and work, as well as possibly destroy the chances of making a happy marriage. Biological arguments were produced to support advice to young people to abstain from marriage, and therefore sexual activity, as long as possible. For example, an article in *Zhongguo funü* argued that there were strong physiological reasons in favour of women marrying at the 'appropriate' (*shidu*) age of marriage, for it was not until the age of twenty-five that the 'internal system' (*neifenmi xitong*) of the female reproductive organs was fully mature. (113) Another argument was that women's pelvic capacity was only fully developed after the age of twenty-five. (114)

Pre-marital chastity was demanded of men and women alike; male preoccupations about female virginity were considered misguided and 'anachronistic'. (115) However, despite the apparent attempts to minimise the exclusive emphasis on female virginity as a requirement of marriage, most references to the dangers of pre-marital sex took women as their examples. As with other aspects of the discourse of sexuality, advice to refrain from passion and sexual involvement prior to marriage was largely conveyed through images of women. Implications of purity were constructed through representations of young women's patience and self-restraint, or through their commitment to public concerns. (116) Pre-marital fidelity was demanded of the girl, rather than her partner, when

their relationship had become 'more than a relationship between friends.' (117) It was young women's sexual behaviour that was invoked when readers were told that creating a 'triangular relationship' by embarking on a second 'love relationship' (*aiqing guanxi*) would 'violate the monogamous requirements of the law'. (118) This gender bias responded, at least in part, to the particular circumstances of women's sexual vulnerability. (119) At a time when neither contraception nor abortion were readily available, when women's sexual involvement prior to marriage was treated with extreme severity, and when unmarried mothers had few means of material or social support, requirements of sexual abstinence acquired a potentially progressive meaning for women. Advice to refrain from sexual involvement could be interpreted as a means of protecting women from social stigma and sexual abuse.

The language of love

One corollary of the discourse's representation of love was that silence reigned over its affective and physical qualities. The discourse's insistence on 'correctness' and conformity of approach seemed to cancel out the possibility of love being associated with either enjoyment or sensuality. Listing the criteria for selecting a marriage partner or explaining the social and ideological characteristics of sincere commitment contained little indication about what loving or being in love might be as a subjective experience. Furthermore, reminders that encountering difficulties in love did not mean the end of everything offered little advice about what to do when problems arose. (120)

It might be argued that reference to the complexities of love was precluded from the outset by the absence of the individual as a discursive subject; without reference to individual subjectivity, the discourse had no site for the inscription of experience and feeling. Similarly, the exclusion of the individual person and the denial of the self prevented the representation of

love as an exchange between two people. The occasional letter, or gesture such as going out of one's way to deliver milk, symbolised the fact, rather than the texture and substance of love. (121)

While a few references to 'nurturing feeling' (*peiyang ganqing*) indicated some recognition of the importance of emotional compatibility, and Deng Yingchao, who was not notably permissive, advised her listeners not to forget 'harmony of temperament' (*xingqing rongqia*), such comments were insignificant in comparison with the attention given to political and social compatibility.

(122) Few words or images indicated what it might *feel* like to love someone. The image of the face, the gesture, or the look in the eyes were not part of the vocabulary used to describe love. Even the simple sensitivity shown by the martyred founder of the Communist Party, Li Dazhao, was absent from the discourse:

The love between man and woman is the most important part of human life. We should protect its freedom, its sanctity and purity; it may not be forced, insulted, defiled or subdued into losing its exquisite value in human society. (123)

Reticence about the emotional, sensual and romantic aspects of love undoubtedly indicated a certain prudery on the part of the architects of the official discourse. More importantly, however, it was a symptom of the state's interests in controlling sexual behaviour in an increasingly restrictive moral atmosphere. (124) Public discussion of the sensual aspects of love would have implicitly invited readers to indulge in ideas about sexual matters which were inconsistent with the norms of the discourse. As such, it would have threatened the state's interests in representing love as a predominantly social responsibility. The commentator who asked 'why is it that heroes are never allowed to fall in love?' did not have to look far for an answer. (125)

This is not to suggest, however, that romantic imagery was entirely absent from the discourse. (126) Images and language that in other contexts might have belonged to descriptions of romantic and sexual love were reserved by the 1950s discourse to express

the nature of an individual's relationship with the Party and state. Hence, a young widow could be described as having given 'her whole heart to the Party, and to the people', without a word about her feelings for her newly married second husband. (127) A girl's love for Lenin and the Party gave her the strength and determination to overcome feelings of deep loneliness and despair. (128)

Expectations of love were limited in the 1950s. Economic and material considerations still dominated choice of marriage partner. (129) A number of autobiographical accounts suggest that basic companionship and support was enough to make many women feel that they had not done badly. (130) Love was for many an irrelevance that only the leisured and wealthy had the opportunity to indulge in. The contrast between the abstract ideals of the official discourse and the general day-to-day expectations of marriage was potentially immense, and fraught with dangerous attractions for dissatisfied readers. It may be argued therefore that one consideration in minimising the representation of love as a source of emotional experience and pleasure was realistic and pragmatic. It was to provide a pragmatic response to concerns that 'marriage was the tomb of love', and to reduce the possibility of advice and encouragement being interpreted as an invitation to high, and unattainable, hopes and expectations. (131) Romantic love was an illusion which obscured the mundanities, and difficulties, of true love. As a commentator reminded his readers in 1954:

True love is not only filled with happiness and contentment, because sometimes it may make you anxious and jealous. Love in itself sometimes creates insurmountable difficulties in a person's life, because people sometimes have no alternative but to endure tension and strife in order to make their partner the kind of person they want. (132)

The politicisation and socialisation of love and sexual relations gave the official discourse a potentially progressive message. In attacking notions of romantic and passionate love disengaged from social responsibility, it signified the excision of an aspect of

love imagery that was associated with the gender inequalities of 'feudal' and 'bourgeois' behaviour. (133) In its place, love was to embrace a series of new meanings, which represented a commitment to social as well as personal responsibilities. In its new representation, love was explained as a means of enabling young women to take advantage of their new freedoms without risking subjection to new forms of oppression in the form of sexual promiscuity. Integrating private issues into the public sphere gave women a potential leverage over issues long used to ensure obedience to restrictive Confucian rules.

There were many obvious similarities in the state's aims and techniques in advising the pre-marital group on the one hand and adolescents on the other. In both groups, the provision of advice to young people signified the intervention of state agencies to harness youth energies in the service of social rather than individual or private goals. For both groups, public discussion about sexual and moral development was explained primarily as a response to the need to prevent sexual practices which would endanger individual and social interests; discussion about sex-related issues functioned as a mode of moral surveillance. Advice to both groups deployed negative sanctions to persuade young people of the benefits of conforming to the norms represented by the official discourse. Furthermore, as with adolescence, appropriate pre-marital conduct was constructed, among other things, in the name of sexual equality. Some of the main referents of the two aspects of the discourse were not, however, the same. In this respect, a number of features deserve mention.

As we have seen, sex before marriage was incompatible with the norms of the discourse. It was very rarely mentioned in anything

but indirect and brief tones. Indeed, the absence of references to love as a physical experience implied that mere mention might provoke precisely the kind of behaviour the discourse was at pains to prevent. However, amorous inclinations were, by definition, acceptable for young people thinking of marriage. The perceived dangers of active sexual involvement on the part of the pre-marital group were therefore greater than for the younger adolescent group, and the need for prophylactic measures was more urgent. The view of pre-marital love disseminated by the official discourse promised social approval and even political status to those who conformed to its norms. In contrast, violation of the norms of the discourse would result in misery, suffering, and social disapprobation. The insistence in the discourse on the social orientation of affective matters prior to marriage thus offered an indirect, but unequivocal means of warning young people away from sexual activity.

Official interests in controlling pre-marital sexual conduct were manifested primarily through images of women. The vast majority of the stories about pre-marital issues were written either for or about women, with scant mention of male interest in affective and sexual matters. Indeed, this was a particular feature of the construction of pre-marital conduct which distinguished it from the representation of adolescence. Constant attention was drawn to the kinds of behaviour expected of young women prior to marriage in different dyadic relationships, with friends, potential husbands, or parents-in-law to be. Editors and contributors invariably pointed to female behaviour to illustrate an argument or conclude a debate about youth morality. Even in Song Tingzhang's book, which was explicitly addressed to an audience of young male miners in the north-east, women's behaviour provided most of the examples. (134) Whether as deterrents against bourgeois tendencies of 'loving the new and hating the old' in selecting a partner, or as paragons of the socialist virtues of self-sacrifice on behalf of the loved one, women's behaviour was presented as the yardstick for normative standards of sexual morality. In the process, as we have seen, gender values became inscribed in the

ideological labels used to identify and valorise different practices and attributes. Once sexual misdemeanours could no longer be explained by reference to the feudal past, the ideological contrasts which were used as metaphors to condemn or applaud different attitudes were commonly associated with women's behaviour.

Such concern with women's behaviour corresponded to a number of assumptions. The legacy of gender conditioning made women vulnerable to sexual exploitation, and potentially more disposed to want change in a system that upheld male prerogative. The introduction of new practices of courtship and free choice of partner was therefore deemed to be of particular interest to women, given that they stood to gain the most. As mentioned above, concerns about women's sexual behaviour also contained a potentially progressive message; warnings to women to abstain from sexual involvement prior to marriage were motivated -- in part at least -- by interests in protecting women from male sexual abuse.

The significance of the gender imbalance in the construction of pre-marital behaviour can also be interpreted by referring to the broad dimensions of women's representation as agents of sexual morality, as implied by the terms of the discourse. The subtext of the use of women to convey an apparently universal message was that the major moral responsibility for upholding the required standards of sexual behaviour, particularly during the potentially vulnerable years between adolescence and marriage, lay with women. Public discussion of sexual propriety functioned to define the limits of acceptable sexual behaviour for both men and women via inscribing different moral values in different images of women - in different kinds of women. That women preparing for marriage were encouraged to identify with the selfless heroines who filled the pages of *Zhongguo funü* was an important part of the process of transforming notions of gender responsibility and power. However, despite the claims that the 'socialist morality' of these models had universal validity, applicable to men and women alike, they contributed to a representation of sexual morality that was, in some ways, a modified and modernised version of the traditional

Confucian view. Images of female chastity were replaced by a new socialist version of purity that focused on women's self-restraint. Socialist female purity thus emerged as the new standard of sexual morality.

Given the prevalence in Chinese society of traditional ideas about sexual morality, of which female chastity was the standard bearer, it is perhaps not totally surprising that concerns about pre-marital conduct should have converged on women's behaviour. Fears that granting women freedom of choice was in effect inviting illicit behaviour were consistent with an historical legacy of stringent control of women's sexuality. However, the continued use of female conduct as the principal agent of sexual morality in the discourse of pre-marital sexuality conflicted with its assertions to uphold the principle of sexual equality. A model of sexual morality that depended on the agency of women, while male responsibility was scarcely mentioned, indicated a gender difference that fed into a new gender hierarchy. Indeed, women's projected interest in matters of the heart was, in itself inscribed with differential value, because as the juxtaposition of words and contrasts often used to qualify such interest indicated, it was not as important as commitment to the social, professional and political responsibilities of the masculine world. 'No-one can deny that love is of particular importance to young people, but we must in no way think of the question of love as the focus of life and the principal aim of existence.' (135)

State control of pre-marital behaviour was exercised not through control of the ungendered self in relation to the other, as the discourse seemed to claim, but through the female in relation to herself and the male. The unitary representation of the 'correct' approach to love was thus inscribed with a fundamental tension which had particular significance for the representation of women; between love as a liberator from oppressive 'private' concerns, and love as a moral constraint containing and controlling women's behaviour in the name of the social good.

The conclusions that emerge suggest that a potentially progressive message simultaneously functioned as an instrument of

moral surveillance to safeguard sexual boundaries through patrolling female behaviour. The focus on images of the selfless fiancée, or of young women who postponed marriage for the sake of public interest, suggested an ideal of women's pre-marital behaviour according to which, just as in the biological representation of sexual complementarity, the female self was underplayed in the juxtaposition between male and female. The lack of references to male conduct in articles about sexual morality did not signify that the male other in relation to the female self was unimportant in the discourse, but that the responsibility for observing the normative expectations of chastity and restraint in pre-marital relations lay with women. The male other therefore retained dominance, even in his absence.

FIVE

WOMEN AND SEXUALITY IN MARRIAGE

The model of legally registered monogamous marriage formally introduced in 1950 was presented in the official discourse of sexuality as the only legitimate context permitting sexual activity. Wifehood defined women as sexual beings; wifehood was distinct from other categories of womanhood in that it acknowledged women as mature, rather than potential, sexual beings. It defined female sexuality in two principal ways, first in relation to her husband, and second in relation to reproduction. The assumption that wifehood rapidly and naturally led to motherhood minimised the attention given to non-reproductive sexuality. Notions of sexual harmony between husband and wife assumed the inevitability of procreation. Representations of female sexuality were therefore bounded by the inseparability of women's conjugal and reproductive responsibilities. The official construction of the sexual responses and responsibilities expected of married women in relation to their husbands, and the marital conduct these were associated with, are the major themes of this chapter.

While men were subject to monogamous obligations as much as women, the discourse's consistent focus on the latter to exemplify proper marital behaviour indicated a continuing attachment to female conduct as the standard and agent of marital harmony. The official interpretation of monogamy as a principle of sexual and gender relations defined wives as faithful and selfless servicers of their husbands. This representation of wives suggested a tension between the requirements of female commitment to the husband, on the one hand, and the state, on the other. One mode of resolving this was by minimising the importance attached to the marital relationship. Another, however, was by indicating that

women's duty to the state could be, and, at times, even should be, mediated by her commitment to and support of her husband and children. A further purpose of this chapter, therefore, is to identify the significance of the sexual and moral imperatives imposed on women in their dual role as wife and mother for the official construction of female gender -- for the meaning of the category 'woman'. (1)

Wifehood and sexual harmony

Monogamous marriage was the only relationship in which sexual relations between a man and a woman were considered legitimate. It was the sexual component that distinguished marriage from other gender relations, and for the purposes of the present analysis, distinguished wives and mothers from daughters and girls. It has already been noted that the synonymity between marriage and sexual relations was so widely assumed that sexual intercourse prior to marriage was sometimes treated as a crime. (2) The interchangeability of two concepts was also evident in the use of language. Hence 'marital relationship' (*fufu guanxi*) and 'marital life' (*fufu shenghuo*) were frequently used to denote sexual relations between a man and woman, even when the context clearly indicated that a couple were not married. (3) As Wang Wenbin stated, 'the sex life of a couple begins after marriage.' (4) Representations of women's sexual responses were bounded by the assumption that they were directed towards her husband, who, according to the official interpretation of monogamy, was her exclusive and life-long sexual partner. Legitimate female sexual conduct was therefore defined with sole reference to her relationship with her husband.

The meaning attached to marriage as the natural and 'inevitable' (*biran*) culmination of the developmental and learning processes of adolescence and early adulthood indicated that sexual intercourse between man and wife was a natural biological function. (5) Indeed,

the identification of normative sexual activity with marriage was inscribed in the view that women who failed to marry were in some way inviting physical problems. 'Marriage is an individual's natural biological need; not to marry is abnormal (*bu zhengchang*) and does not have any physical benefit.' (6) The idea that 'women who marry live longer', or that unmarried women were either physiologically^{at} deficient or sexually promiscuous, was repeated in different forms in the discourse of the 1950s. (7) Remaining single was not considered a viable solution to the pressures of marriage and childcare, and 'freedom of love' did not mean freedom 'to remain single' (*bu shi dushengzhuyi*). (8) That female celibacy and the failure to bear children were treated as signs of physical or mental irregularity signified a gender-specific technique of underlining the desirability and naturalness -- the absolute normality -- of heterosexual sex. (9)

The contrast between the positive representation of sexual relations within marriage and the dire consequences imputed to any sexual activity outside marriage was striking. A 'good sex life' was described as an aid to marital satisfaction. (10) While advisers like Wang Wenbin went to considerable lengths to show that good sex was not everything, nor even the most important aspect of marriage, it was nevertheless discussed as a salutary practice which could make the difference between a satisfactory and a merely routine relationship.

Marital life has many aspects including work, child upbringing, social activities and so on, among all of which sex is only a part.....A harmonious sex life may add new elements to the love that already exists between a man and a woman, and it invariably consolidates and strengthens the marital relationship. If husband and wife are compatible in their thinking and outlook, but fail to rationally sort out their sex life, their feelings for each other may suffer, and conflicts may arise. (11)

The idea of a 'good sex life' was premised on the model of complementarity - of 'sexual harmony' - between the active male urge and the passive female response analysed in chapter two.

Self-restraint of his spontaneous sex drive was urged of the husband in order to elicit the appropriate response in his wife. References to the desirability of an 'appropriate and harmonious sex life' (*shidu er hejie de xing shenghuo*) were mostly targeted at women, who, as we have seen in chapter two, were considered the potential victims of their husbands' demanding sexual urges. (12) A wife's feelings of sexual frustration were not infrequently described as a potentially serious threat to marital stability. (13) Contributing passively to maintaining the appearances of a sex life, or thinking that to do so was a necessary duty (*yiwu*) towards the husband, could only exacerbate tensions. (14) Because women were considered to be less interested in sex than their husbands, the consequent damage to an otherwise satisfactory marriage could be disastrous. Couples were therefore urged to be patient and understanding of each other's needs, because, as Wang Wenbin emphasized, 'time is needed to make a sex life full and satisfactory.' (*xing shenghuo xuyao you yiding de shiying de shiqi, cai neng dadao meiman de jingyu*). (15) Couples were also urged to discuss their sexual difficulties early enough on in their relationship, to prevent the emergence of conflict later on. (16) And while men were asked to control their excitement for the sake of their wives, women were urged to suppress negative feelings of anger and resentment in order to protect their husbands from feeling hurt and rejected. (17) The asymmetry characterising the notion of sexual harmony did not therefore exclude requirements of mutual responsiveness in a sexual relationship.

The ideal of sexual harmony in the marital relationship was also associated with age. Wives should be a few years younger than their husband. (18) Song Tingzhang in fact suggested that women should 'normally' (*zhengchang*) be younger than their husbands; it was not suitable for a twenty-four year old woman to marry a forty year old man. (19) Wang Wenbin suggested that the age difference could be legitimised by the physiological differences between male and female; 'because the male's reproductive function lasts longer than the female's, it is appropriate for men to marry a bit later

than women.' (20)

The expectations of a couple's mutual sexual responses which accompanied the discourse's representation of sexual harmony were inscribed with a number of gender differences. As previous chapters have argued, the fundamentally reproductive purpose of sex and marriage was evident in requirements that women monitor their health for the sake of 'reproductive hygiene' and fertility. It was also apparent in the warnings against having sexual intercourse during menstruation and pregnancy. At the same time, and despite the supposedly passive nature of their sexuality, women were asked to be responsive and understanding of their husbands' sexual needs. As the only context within which a woman could give legitimate expression to her sexuality, marriage therefore signified not the prospect of realisation of her own, autonomous, sexual identity, but the enactment of certain sexual responsibilities and responses for the sake of her husband and future family. A woman's appropriate expression of her sexuality was thus interpreted in the same asymmetrical terms as those apparent in the biological model of sexuality analysed in chapter two. The gender connotations of this for the other modes of behaviour expected of wives within the marital relationship are analysed in later sections of this chapter.

The sexual and affective aspects of the marital relationship were given relatively little attention in the official publications of the 1950s. It might reasonably be suggested that this was a consequence of the imperviousness of an obviously 'private' aspect of the marital relationship to attempts to define it. It might also be argued that the relative infrequency of articles about sexual relationships reflected the lack of interest, particularly on the part of women, in the sexual aspects of married life. (21) However, as previous chapters have shown, sexuality and sexual relations were no less susceptible to the state's interests in imposing categories and controls than any other aspect of the marital relationship. Husband and wife were subject to norms of behaviour in their sex life as much as in other areas of their

marriage. That sex seemed to count for an insignificant aspect of marriage responded not to a lack of official interest in channeling and controlling individual behaviour, but to the depreciation of sexual experience as a factor validating the marital relationship. As a component of the marital relationship, sexual harmony was invoked in the name of conjugal and family happiness rather than of individual exploration and self-realisation. The representation of sex as a measure contributing to physical and mental health did not focus on individual satisfaction, but on its function as a means of enabling the individual man and woman to contribute more to the family and society. (22) Despite the occasional references to the importance of a 'good sex life' noted above, sexual satisfaction appeared more as a bonus to a marital relationship founded on mutual interests in work and political outlook, rather than as an essential component validating the marriage tie. The gender asymmetry in the representation of sexual behaviour therefore suggested that women had a particular responsibility to be responsive not to her own needs, but to those of her husband, her future children, and thereby indirectly to those of society as a whole.

Motherhood and reproductive sexuality

The new conceptualisation of women's role as wives and mothers ratified by the Marriage Law centred on a redefinition of the husband-wife relationship. The category of mother no longer dominated the value accorded female gender. (23) The traditional emphasis put on motherhood was modified by the new conceptualisation of wifehood, and the legally recognised conjugal union, freely chosen by both partners, was to become the core relationship of the family unit. (24) The law's stipulations concerning the 'rights and duties of husband and wife' represented the wife as the equal partner of her husband, enjoying 'equal

status in the home', subject to the same requirements of love, respect and assistance, and with the same 'right to free choice of occupation and free participation in work and social activities.' (25) No longer was a wife's principal value to derive from producing male children, and no longer was she obliged to define her responsibilities as a woman with exclusive reference to her husband, sons and mother-in-law. (26)

Despite such a radical departure from traditional values in its construction of the conjugal relationship, the discourse retained the projection of motherhood as a desirable and natural state for all women. Indeed, motherhood was represented as an inseparable aspect of wifehood, and marriage signified the wife's rapid assumption of motherhood. (27) That women were 'born to be mothers' was in the first instance explained by reference to women's physiological and reproductive structure. It was also apparent in the emotional and behavioural responses that developed early on in a girl's life. It was inevitable that women would want to give expression to their natural attributes of 'sympathy' (*tongqing*), 'patience and restraint' (*ren'nai*) and 'gentleness' (*wencun*) by becoming mothers. (28) It was, moreover, women's 'natural duty' (*tianran yiwu*) to give birth to children, and failure to do so was considered irresponsible. (29) Only in exceptional cases of congenital disease and madness was it considered legitimate for women not to marry and, therefore, not to have children. (30)

The equivalence between wifehood and motherhood was also sustained by the reproductive focus of the representation of female sexuality. Chapter two put forward the argument that the official discourse's construction of normative heterosexuality was premised on a view of sexuality which was fundamentally given meaning by its procreative function. The interpretation of sexual harmony in terms of its contribution to conjugal happiness presupposed the eventual birth of a child. Many factors sustained this view, not least among which was the common assumption of an automatic and necessary correspondence between marriage, sexual relations and reproduction. The anguish of a woman who for ten years debated whether to divorce her husband because she thought

that she was infertile, or the concerns for women's reproductive capacity seen in the warnings against sexual intercourse during menstruation both indicated that, whether in the popular view, or in the terms of the official discourse of sexuality, the notion of a 'good sex life' was inseparable from its reproductive purpose. (31)

A distinct aspect of the accounts of married life in which this was evident concerned the use of contraceptive methods. Coinciding with the formulation of a birth control policy in the mid 1950s, much of the discussion about birth control set out to explain to a somewhat suspicious audience the different methods available, describing how they were used and the ways in which they were effective in preventing conception. (32) Details of contraceptive techniques which made use of Chinese medicine as well as more standard western methods were clearly set out to allay popular doubts that the use of condoms would impair male potency, or would provoke tubercular disease in women by preventing the 'yin and yang from joining together' (*nan nü yin yang bu he*). (33) Considerable attention was also paid to persuading women that contraceptive devices did not impair fertility. (34)

Advice about the benefits of contraception postulated a link between its function to control fertility and the quality of a couple's sex life. A woman with three children who had started using contraceptive methods soon after she married described the benefits to 'marital feeling' (*fuqi zhijian de ganqing*) that planning her births had brought her. (35) Contraception was also mentioned as a means of 'resolving the difficulties of early marriage' imposed by the burdens of childcare. (36) Positive views of its contribution to a couple's sex life did not, however, imply that it could be used as a means of foregoing producing children altogether. The attribution of reproduction as a natural biological need and social duty denied women this alternative. Suggestions that contraception represented a beneficial and scientific means of enabling women to devote themselves to public concerns were intended either for women who had already had children, or for women who wanted to plan their births. (37)

Contraception thus gave women the possibility of determining the length of their childbearing career, but not the right to choose an alternative to the role of mother.

As a means of contributing to felicitous sexual relations, contraception did not therefore contrast sexual harmony with reproduction; it did not free sexuality from its reproductive purpose. Rather, alongside the concerns about reproduction apparent in advice to women about when to refrain from sexual intercourse, the knowledge disseminated about contraception suggested an interest in sustaining the representation of sexual harmony as necessarily inclusive of reproduction. That sexual harmony essentially excluded non-reproductive sexuality was evident in an article about whether public discussion about contraception encouraged 'bourgeois behaviour':

Of course there are some men and women who seek idle pleasure (*tantu qingxian xiangshou*) and are unwilling to take on the responsibility of having children. With these kind of people, we should carry out education in socialist morality. (38)

Monogamy and marital fidelity

In accordance with the CCP's earlier approach to marriage reform, the official discourse of the 1950s consistently projected monogamy as an unchanging and essential feature of the socialist marriage system, identifying the parameters defining legitimate sexual activity and sexual morality. (39) As such, it was seen as an historic advance on both the feudal and the capitalist systems of marriage, much in the same way as it had been by Marx, Engels and Lenin. Based on free choice of marriage partner, socialist monogamy would introduce a new respect for women by eroding the idea that women were the private property of men. In a gushing eulogy to the marriage between Karl and Jenny Marx, a commentator argued that monogamous marriage was 'fundamentally different' in a socialist system because 'it no longer is based on economic

considerations... nor sexual attraction, but on absolute equality between the sexes and joint participation in socialist and communist labour.' (40) To emphasize the same point, the salacious connotations of marriage in American society were used to highlight the virtues of socialist monogamy. (41) Deng Yingchao further elucidated the progressive meaning of monogamy when she told her audience that love which endured for a long time in marriage was the 'humanist' (*rendaozhuyi*) expression of the individual's sense of social responsibility. (42) In its new guise, monogamy was dissociated from its historical links with private ownership and capitalism, and was upheld as an expression of communist morality. (43)

Between 1949 and 1953, when the thrust of official work to implement the new Marriage Law was on eradicating feudal anomalies, free-choice monogamy was heralded as the most appropriate means of protecting women from the injustices of customary practices of arranged marriage and polygyny. (44) It was upheld by the Law as the only form of marriage able to protect women's new rights in relation to her husband and children. (45) The legal requirement that marriage be registered in person signified an additional means of reducing institutional injustices against women. (46) It would, for example, prohibit forms of male cohabitation that had been accepted by the wife as a means of avoiding disruption of the family. Exclusive emphasis on the monogamous tie furthermore gave women protection against being abandoned by husbands taking advantage of the legal abolition of feudal practices. Court cases brought against men who were initially married under parental arrangement and who later married a woman of their own choice invariably upheld the man's union with his first wife. (47) As a rule of sexual as well as marital conduct, monogamy was therefore upheld for its function in protecting women against abuse by men taking advantage of the 'free choice' rights of the new Law to engage in immoral conduct. (48)

By 1953, it was recognised that the first three years of the Law's implementation had resulted in enormous suffering, often

ending in women's death by suicide or homicide. A government report of 1953 estimated that 70,000 to 80,000 women per year had died in this way. (49) The Law had notably failed to convince the rural population of the need or desirability of replacing traditional marital arrangements, and at best, it had achieved only limited results in the urban areas. (50) The intensified attempts to spread the message of the new Law in the 1953 campaigns perhaps signified a last ditch effort to overcome resistance to the Law. In any event, the end of the campaigns ushered in a period of retrenchment from the more extreme potentialities of the free-choice model. In the process, the official construction of monogamy acquired a series of new emphases. The general tenor of publicity about marriage practices indicated a desire to build on the gains made rather than to strive for new ones. Divorce became increasingly difficult to obtain, and mediation was urged to patch up marital conflicts in the name of preserving family harmony. (51)

The implications for women in their role as wives were striking. The change in orientation of the publicity accompanying the Marriage Law in effect signified that women's interests were no longer to be served by prioritising their new marital rights, but by making concessions to conservative opinion in order to preserve marital and family stability. This was accompanied by numerous articles encouraging women not to complain about their lot in life, to be caring wives and efficient domestic managers. (52) The representation of women's monogamous responsibilities as wives were modified in the process, with the effect that monogamy appeared as a new constraint on female sexuality and gender. Despite the many divorces and remarriages of women now freed from the Confucian yoke, one consequence of the new emphasis on monogamous marriage, as the following discussion shows, was to produce images and expectations of 'virtuous' women that were not far removed from traditional concerns.

As a rule of sexual and gender relations, monogamy defined the boundaries of marital fidelity. As mentioned in chapter one,

monogamy was represented as a life-long tie (*yibeizi de shiqing*) signifying an exclusive sexual commitment both before and during marriage. (53) It was represented as the inevitable outcome of 'the physiological differences between the sexes' and therefore as the 'biologically natural form for the perpetuation of the species'. (54) Fears that free-choice marriage was little more than an invitation to sexual promiscuity were effectively discounted by the discourse's insistence on restricting sexual activity to the marriage contract. (55) Both partners were expected to be virgins on marriage, and despite the suggestions analysed earlier that a certain degree of amorous experimentation was permitted during courtship, this did not include sexual activity, even when a love relationship - and therefore the eventuality of marriage - had been established. (56)

Despite the general antipathy the official discourse directed towards pre-marital and extra-marital sex, the mode in which expectations of chastity and fidelity were transmitted manifested a number of gender-specific characteristics. Chapter four showed how representations of sexual propriety during courtship invariably took women's conduct as their standard. Chapter seven argues that admonitions against indulging in extra-marital sexual activity also focused on female behaviour. Similarly, it was women's conduct that became the major exemplar of sexual fidelity during marriage.

The most explicit instances of this were in references to women's required sexual status at the point of marriage. Few as they were, all direct references to virginity during the 1950s constructed it as a requirement of female sexuality prior to marriage. (57) Men's concerns about the lack of hymeneal blood on 'the night of the wedding' were criticised as unscientific and even anachronistic, indicating a possible escape mechanism for women who had previous sexual experience. (58) However, none of the articles which made such comments questioned the desirability of female purity, with the corollary that, in the absence of references to male virginity, the norm of pre-marital chastity invoked female

behaviour as its standard. The few exceptions referred to cases where the wife had lost her virginity prior to marriage through no fault of her own. Men were warned that it was 'misplaced and feudal' to blame a wife for having been raped; it was unjust to focus on purity in instances when sympathy and support were required. (59)

Most allusions to female marital fidelity, however, did not explicitly implicate requirements of sexual purity. Rather, they projected ideals of trustworthiness, commitment and loyalty which served to convey messages about desirable political attitudes and practices as much as about marital harmony. A story written at the end of the Korean War, for example, described a young woman's attempts to convince her mother-in-law that she would not go off with someone else during the absence of her husband. Once in Korea, her husband had to have a leg amputated, and was so worried that his wife would leave him that he refrained from writing to her about it until two years after the event. When she eventually received the news, his wife's response was of sadness that he had so misjudged her loyalty and commitment to him. (60) Another story told of a young man who went off to Korea one year after marrying. When he returned a year later, somewhat nervously because he had lost an arm in battle, his wife greeted him with the comment that his mutilation was an honour, and that she would stay with him for ever. (61) While the prime objective of these descriptions was undoubtedly to reassure men about to join up in Korea, the subtext linked men's commitment to the cause with notions of female fidelity. Men's anxieties were concerned with the possibility that their wives would abandon them in their absence. Their fears could be assuaged by signs confirming their wives' loyalty. (62)

Normative expectations of male fidelity were frequently associated with concerns to protect the wives of arranged marriages, particularly in the rural sector, whose psychological and familial security was threatened by the regulations of the Marriage Law. Relevant examples suggested that the husband's infidelity was often the consequence of being caught between traditional parental authority and the new modern values of free

love. (63) Instances of young men who left their peasant wives to go to the city to study or work, or who sought release from the constraints imposed by maintaining their first, arranged, marriage, in favour of a more fulfilling relationship, were invariably constructed as unfortunate and undesirable consequences of the feudal marriage system. (64) After 1953, male infidelity was increasingly identified as a bourgeois tendency engendered by aspirations to higher social and political status. (65) However, in neither interpretation were expectations of male fidelity constructed through images of a woman's fears about her husband's sexual conduct, nor were they conveyed through direct representations of a husband's monogamous responsibilities to his wife. For the terms of the official discourse of sexuality, the implication was that male infidelity was first and foremost associated with an inability to exercise self control within the context of new social pressures and possibilities, and only secondarily with a failure to respect his sexual and gender obligations to his wife. (66) Requirements of female fidelity, in contrast, were directly linked to a woman's sexual and gender responsibilities to her husband.

Selflessness and service

The dominant representation of female sexuality as responsive to male and reproductive needs was paralleled by a consistent emphasis on selfless care of and attention to the other -- primarily the husband -- as appropriate features of wives' marital role. As with many of the attributes women were encouraged to identify with described above, descriptions of the considerate, self-sacrificing wife and mother were frequently concerned with promoting political causes just as much as with informing women of their domestic responsibilities. Nevertheless, the gender assumptions in such descriptions were distinct from the activeness and decisiveness, the creative strength and initiative invariably

associated with model husbands. (67) Whether in descriptions of the peasant woman who after seven years of separation from her husband, was commended for her loyalty and encouragement to him to continue fighting in Korea, or of the wife whose gratification lay in caring and catering for her husband so that he could become a member of the Party, images of marital harmony invariably included the requirement that women serve the husband in the name of the public good. (68) The corollary was that the significant male other was always constructed as the dominant aspect of the marital relationship.

The instances in which the image of the servicing, selfless wife and mother emerged varied enormously, depending on the political priorities of the moment. Some invoked the conventional gender division of domestic labour in urging women to support their spouses at work. 'A wife's labour is not wasted if she methodically handles domestic affairs, brings up the children to be sweet and loveable, frugally and beneficially manages the household expenses, makes the food tasty and keeps the home clean and tidy, because in this way she helps her husband to work even better and contributes to marital harmony.' (69) Others included a reference to some disability of the husband, as if to underline the importance of the wife's selfless care. An article entitled 'Tamen yongyuan xiang'ai' (Their eternal love) described a wife's devotion to her husband after he lost both his hands and the use of one of his legs in an industrial accident. (70) She was removed from her original position and allocated the responsibility to take care of her disabled husband in the factory where they both worked so that he could continue his political work. Another story called 'Wo yong bu bian xin' (My heart will never change) described a woman's selfless dedication to her husband who was blinded in an industrial accident. (71) With her support and encouragement, he continued to work with such revolutionary fervour that he eventually became a Party member. Articles published during the Korean War praised women who encouraged their husbands to enlist as volunteers for expressing their patriotic love through unswerving devotion to their menfolk. (72) Others

described the 'patient comfort and help' (*ta zongshi naixinde anwei wo, bangzhu wo*), or the 'support and concern' (*zhiyuan, guanxin*) young wives showed their husbands. (73) As a letter reportedly sent by volunteers in Korea to their women back home put it, 'It is the heartfelt desire of mothers and sisters to show support, care and affection, but we feel that what we are doing for them is much less than what they are doing for us.' (74) In contrast with such representations of the selfless wife, a husband's responsibility to support and help his wife was commonly conveyed through descriptions of, for example, the encouragement he gave her to study and work. (75)

A woman's service to her husband was sometimes refracted through images that indicated commitment to the state and public good. In a story called 'Zhenshi de ai' (Sincere love), a young wife whose husband's leg was amputated during the Korean War decided not to join him in Korea as she longed to do, because she felt that her work as a group leader in a factory demanded that she stay at home. (76) Once his fears that she would leave him because of his disability were dispelled by the photograph she sent him, he began to respond more positively to her commitment to making 'progress' (*jindu*) in her work, realising that restraining her personal desires for the sake of the collective was a sign of 'sincere love'. Another short piece about a young woman's heroism during the civil war in 1946 demonstrated how service and loyalty to the husband and Party ideally invoked each other. (77) Although the woman was six months pregnant, she carried her wounded husband on her back to escape the enemy's fire. Finally cornered by the enemy, she jumped off the cliff, together with her baby, rather than endure capture.

A noticeable, although minor aspect of the self-sacrificing representation of the ideal wife implicated her relationship with her mother-in-law. Despite the state's explicit attempts to improve the status accorded the younger married woman, female filiality continued to be stressed in order to minimise generational conflict within the family. (78) The image of the servicing wife was therefore not infrequently associated with the

help she gave her in-laws by working the land and caring for them in the absence of her husband. (79) A woman's care for her in-laws was in turn represented as a sign of loyalty to her husband. (80) Self-restraint and compromise were required of the younger woman in the name of marital and domestic harmony. (81)

Self-sacrifice in the service of the group and state was one of the recurrent demands made of the individual -- male or female -- during the 1950s. Any prioritisation of individual desires or aspirations, whatever the interests these were associated with, was interpreted to contradict the collective principles espoused by the Party. The stress on mutuality, sharing and social commitment apparent in the representations of the conjugal relationship suggested that husband and wife were subject to such expectations in equal measure. Analysis of the above examples, however, indicates clear gender differences. Selflessness and service were frequently asked of the wife and mother in the name of domestic and marital satisfaction. In instances where a woman's relationship with the state was invoked, it was often described as a mode of her relationship with her husband. By contrast, male help and support was to encourage a wife to participate more actively and effectively in public affairs. The gender characteristics inscribed in the images examined in this section therefore upheld the association between female service and the private, domestic sphere alongside requirements that she transcend domestic interests to serve the state. Echoing the asymmetry of the representation of sexual complementarity analysed in chapter two, the demands of the male defined the mode of response required of the female. A wife's definition of her own responsibilities with reference to her husband's needs was another expression of the dominant status accorded male-oriented goals, whether directly associated with the husband and his achievements, or indirectly with the Party and state.

The moral responsibilities of marriage and motherhood

The value attached to wives' selflessness and self-sacrifice in safeguarding marital harmony did not always indicate service directly oriented to the husband. Indeed, the discourse was characterised by a tension between the female self's attachment to the significant others -- her husband and children -- and her attachment to the state. The tension was sometimes resolved in favour of reducing the importance associated with the singular relationship. Thus, women were encouraged to shift their loyalties away from the husband when attachment to the latter seemed to conflict with loyalty to the state. During the Three-Anti and Five-Anti campaigns which engulfed China's cities during late 1951 and 1952, considerable attempts were made to encourage women to persuade their husbands to confess crimes. Sources in *Zhongguo funü* indicated how useful wives could be in exposing cases of corruption among their husbands. (82) As C. K. Yang argued, the pressure on women to uncover their husbands' misdeeds required a drastic shift in the centre of loyalty away from the family, which was often accompanied by terror and extreme emotional tension. (83) However, the representation of wives who conformed to such pressure indicated not so much a betrayal of, but a moral service to the husband, refracted through obligation to the state. In the terms of the gender asymmetry of the new model of conjugality, such requirements of women signified not a rejection of service in the private sphere, nor an absolute choice between the husband and the public realm of the state, but a means of strengthening the social and moral value of the marriage relationship. In these instances, wives' service to their husbands was mediated by responsibilities to the state.

Examples of such conduct depicted wives in different ways according to the characteristics of the husband's crime. One rural wife, praised for carrying out her duty in exposing the treachery of her ex-KMT soldier husband, was represented as a fiercely stalwart member of the Communist Youth League. (84) In an autobiographical piece entitled 'Wode qizi bangzhu wo fangxiale

tanwu de baofu' (My wife helped me shed the burden of corruption) another wife was represented as a composite of purity, selflessness, and determination, whose virtue lay in devoting her energies to reforming her husband rather than to leaving him. (85) An article published in 1952 applauded a wife's attitude of self-reproach for having tacitly agreed to her husband's nefarious undertakings before deciding to persuade him to give himself up to the authorities. (86) On a slightly different note, an article called 'Zai jiating shenghuo zhong yinggai jianchi shenmo' (What you should uphold in domestic life) warned wives against being weak in criticising their husbands' mistakes, because this would permit the latter to continue down the road to perjury. (87) On the other hand, the article advised, women should not refuse to make compromises to their husbands for this might easily disrupt family harmony.

While, as mentioned above, the explicit purpose of many of these stories referred more to general political issues than to questions of conjugality, some of them directly addressed the nature of a woman's moral responsibility to her husband. The subtext of advice to women to criticise their husbands was that women were appointed as guardians of their husbands' moral welfare. Conversely, a husband's moral health depended, at least in part, on his wife's diligence in maintaining surveillance over his behaviour. Constructed in this light, the definition of wives' proper behaviour in the light of their husbands' needs -- whether these demanded support or criticism -- projected wives as the moral agents of family harmony via servicing and patrolling their husbands' conduct.

A similar representation of women was apparent in many images of motherhood. A 1951 handbook on the Marriage Law stated that 'between the mother and the children, there exists a blood and flesh relation and a natural emotional tie; the mother is more devoted to and more concerned over the raising of her children than anybody else.' (88) The supposition of a strong, natural link between women's biological function to reproduce and their mothering responsibilities found expression in descriptions of

mothers' moral responsibility for their children's welfare. Biologically rooted maternal love was considered indispensable to the healthy personality formation of a child. The autobiography of an errant mother gave a particularly vivid illustration of this. Entitled 'Wo zhuanbianle dui haizi de taidu' (I changed my attitude to my children), the story's protagonist was Chen Pengtao, who, by the time of liberation, had already had three children, none of whom, as she commented in her opening sentence, had she herself raised. (89) Chen described how her commitment to the revolution meant that she had no time either for childcare or for interest in her children's development, and they were all sent off to boarding creches and nurseries. Monthly reports from their schools indicated that they were naughty and recalcitrant, and extremely unpopular with their peer group. Later in primary school, the eldest did badly in her studies, and was bad tempered and irascible. At home, she frequently stole things to eat, was disobedient and refused to talk to her mother. And so on with the other two. Encouraged by her colleagues, Chen slowly began to realise that her children's behaviour was largely the consequence of her failure to be loving and caring as a mother should. She had mistakenly thought that her children's education was entirely the schools' responsibility. She began to be more considerate, and to spend more time playing with and educating her children. Their behaviour improved and they began to show progress at school. The story ended on an appropriate note of self-reproach: 'in the past I did not care enough for my children, and so did not take on the responsibility for their education. This created unfortunate consequences which I understood all too well.'

One unequivocal implication of this story is that women were considered the natural and principal educators and moral guardians of their children. Indeed, Chen's husband in this story is notable for his total absence. The legal stipulations requiring that fathers and mothers be equally responsible for child care and education clearly corresponded neither to social practice nor to the gender characteristics associated with the parenting function. (90) On the contrary, employment policy on the one hand

and gender assumptions on the other presupposed a strong, natural link between women's biological function to reproduce and their mothering responsibilities. (91) Maternal love -- the 'mother's heart' (*muqin de xin*) -- made women the natural agents of their children's socialisation and moral education. (92) Just as child maladjustment was treated as the consequence of inadequate maternal care, so a child's exemplary character depended on the mother's care and consideration. (93) The corollary was that neglectful mothers bred children who were aggressive, who stole things, or who were silent and timid. (94) Model mothers, on the other hand, bred model children; unsurprisingly, brave men were commonly presented as the sons of committed and long-suffering mothers. (95)

The above images of the selfless wife and mother presented women's self-denial in the service of husband and children as indispensable to the maintenance of marital and familial harmony. Associated predominantly with private interests, the asymmetrical gender attributes inscribed in such images signified an almost total deprecation of the wife/mother's independent interests in the favour of those of the other -- the husband, children, and the state.

Emotions and mutual responses in marriage

A striking feature of the 1950s images of happy marriages was the absence of references to emotional and bodily contact between man and woman. Descriptions of physical gestures rarely alluded to the responses and contact between a couple. Similarly, words expressing mutual affection were absent from accounts of verbal exchanges between couples. On the contrary, the typical picture of the happily married couple focused on their commitment to work and the Party as the key component cementing their relationship. As Sulamith and Jack Potter suggested in their analysis of a peasant community, the 'expressive forms that validate the relationship

are not enacted in an idiom of love as an emotion, but in an idiom of work and mutual aid.' (96) Conversations between couples emphasised collective rather than personal concerns. Verbal contact between husband and wife centred on discussion about attitudes towards work and study. Descriptions of partings and reunions between married couples were refracted through messages of encouragement and determination to contribute to the collective cause rather than through gestures denoting affection and physical contact. Alternatively, the exchange of letters and photographs sometimes symbolised desire and longing. (97) The only reference to physical proximity between a man and a woman was when a couple was described as 'warmly shaking hands' to express their joy at being reunited after many years of separation. (98) The marital relationship thus emerged as a bond which was moulded according to social interests, and which was validated in terms of social commitment, rather than by emotional and physical content.

One explanation for this is that the images of exchanges between a wife and husband served to convey political messages rather than to indicate the emotional substance of their relationship. However, the discourse's silence about the emotional substance of the marriage relationship may also be explained by its didactic purpose. The ideological objective of most stories about married life was to identify the domestic, social and political responsibilities considered appropriate for young couples, not to place value on the individual experience of marriage, nor to examine the internal emotional dynamics of the marriage relationship. The evident depreciation of individuated experience as a subject of analysis in the discourse's representation of love and marriage served to underline official emphasis on the social orientation of married life.

The lack of attention given to the individual and personal aspects of the married relationship may also be interpreted as an aspect of the discourse's function to regulate sexual behaviour. As argued above, sexuality was not considered a central aspect of the marital relationship. Choice of partner and marital satisfaction were ideally to be based on socially rather than

personally oriented interests and commitments. This restricted the range of possible references to aspects of marital experience which were necessarily private and individual. To construct marital harmony in terms of individuated experience would have granted an importance to notions of the self and individual identity that were considered incompatible with the discourse's prioritisation of social commitments.

The conscious aim to persuade young people of the benefits of social commitment, and of the immorality and potential suffering that would result from prioritising personal, as opposed to collective, satisfaction, also appears in a culturally specific light. As the Potters indicated in the reference noted above, Chinese communities may attach little significance to the individual's emotional experience and expression in validating the social order. (99) Given this interpretation, neglect of individual experience was not simply an aspect of state intervention to channel sexual behaviour, but the expression of culturally overdetermined interests in encouraging certain kinds of conduct among young people.

The discourse's silence about marriage as an expressive rather than instrumental relationship also corresponded to the social orientation of issues of affect and sexuality analysed in previous sections. The gender differentiation which accompanied this emphasis, however, indicated more than a general insistence -- applicable to both men and women -- on minimising the value attached to individuated experience of marriage and the sexual relationship. The requirement that women be sexually responsive and, as such, subordinate their own needs and desires to their husbands', implied that the negation of the self as a centre of experience had particular relevance for women. That it was women who were asked to deny their desires and wants in the name of their husbands, and not vice versa, indicated a gender asymmetry according to which women were constructed as the principal agents of marital and familial happiness through denial of themselves.

The state's interests in constructing images of ideal wives and harmonious homes were modified at different moments of the 1950s. If, on the one hand, they were directed towards persuading a hostile public with low expectations of marriage of the benefits of the new free-choice model, they were also to establish standards of marital and, as this chapter argues, particularly wifely behaviour, which were fundamentally conservative in orientation. (100) The new approach was reminiscent of an earlier statement issued in a document of the CCP's Special Committee for Northern Jiangxi of the Central Committee entitled 'Plan for Work among the Women':

We must not only refrain from imposing limitations on the freedom of marriage, since this would be contrary to Bolshevik principles, but we must resolutely oppose the idea of absolute freedom in marriage as it creates chaotic conditions in society and antagonizes the peasants and the Red Army. (101)

As this quotation suggests, the new expectations of marriage were to be bounded by ideological interests defined in the name of maintaining social and moral order. This chapter has attempted to analyse some of the implications of such interests for the representation of women's responsibilities and responses in the marital relationship.

The radical reevaluation of the function of the conjugal relationship signified by the 1950 Marriage Law did not, and could not, eradicate at one stroke all the 'feudal' assumptions concerning women's proper responsibilities within marriage. Popular acceptance of the new image of wifehood was hampered by deep attachment to interests and values which sustained many of the discriminatory practices associated with the feudal marriage system. More surprising, given the Party's long-standing endorsement of principles of sexual equality, was the continued

adherence to certain traditional gender values seen in the official materials publicising the new model of marriage. While the old image of the 'virtuous wife and good mother' was vilified by the protagonists of the 'new woman', the gender assumptions shaping official representations of a wife's loyalty, service and commitment to her husband continued to subscribe to the primary identification between women and the domestic sphere.

Within the terms of the official discourse on sexuality, monogamous marriage functioned as a principle of social order, equally applicable to men and women. However, the images of service and wifely care analysed above indicated that as wives and mothers, women were given the main responsibility of ensuring the appropriate moral orientation and stability of the marital relationship. Wifehood signified expectations of female denial of the autonomous self in favour of the male significant other. The obligation on married women to adopt the role of selfless moral overseer of and example to husbands and children constructed women as the key agents of marital and family morality. The official discourse of sexuality thus constructed women's primary responsibilities to society through a conjugal relationship which was inscribed with evident gender imbalances. Monogamous marriage represented a sexual, moral and social obligation on women to behave in ways which perpetuated the relegation of women to subordinate status in the interests of state order.

A prominent area where this was apparent was in the wife's sexual relationship with her husband. According to the notion of male-female complementarity characterising discussion about appropriate sexual relationships, the ideal wife combined responsiveness to and patience with her husband with attention to hygiene to protect her reproductive capacity. A wife's sexual activity emerged either as a boost to conjugal harmony or as a series of measures undertaken for reproductive purposes. The apparent interest in women's sexual responses manifested in writings such as Wang Wenbin's may have been part of the attempt to change women's attitudes towards marriage. As an aspect of the official discourse of sexuality, however, sexual satisfaction for women was

proclaimed and defined in the name of marital contentment and procreation, not in terms of her own experience. (102) In this, women's sexuality was acknowledged in the name of the same goals of marital and familial harmony as her service and selflessness. The identification of women as the main custodians of sexual fidelity and of healthy fertility complemented their function as servicers of their husbands' interests and protectors of the future of socialism.

SIX

GENDER BOUNDARIES OF WIFEHOOD

The official representation of female gender and marriage in the 1950s suggested that women's adoption of new gender constructs had to be contained within the boundaries defining marital harmony. The female gender constructs associated with the notion of marital harmony paralleled the attributes and requirements of female sexuality as a component of sexual harmony. Just as female sexuality was constructed with reference to, and in response to, the dominant male drive, so many female gender constructs associated with preserving marital harmony were defined in relation to the interests of the significant male other. By the same token, just as expressions of female sexuality which diverged from the normative standards projected by the official discourse represented danger and disorder, so wives' failure to conform to the gender positions of the discourse represented a transgression of its boundaries, and as such a potential disruption of marital harmony. In the gender as well as the sexual aspects of marriage, therefore, women were constructed both as the principal guardians of, and the principal threat to, the boundaries defining conjugal stability.

This chapter argues that whether in representations of the female body and appearance, or in expectations of wives' domestic role, the female gender constructs associated with notions of marital harmony paralleled the view that female sexuality was ultimately legitimised by its reproductive and relational function. Women's domestic obligations converged with their sexual, reproductive and mothering responsibilities to produce a model of marital harmony which was premised on a wife's attention to her husband. Gender images of women that did not conform to the functional purpose of contributing to marital and family harmony were unacceptable to

the terms of the official discourse.

Notions of female autonomy were as absent from the representation of the gender requirements of wifehood as they were from the representation of sexual harmony. This indicated a tension within the revised gender constructs concerning study and social labour, with which women were encouraged to identify. This chapter analyses the gender positions inscribed in the representations of wifehood, and identifies the gender boundaries that women were asked to respect in the name of marital harmony. In so doing, it seeks to clarify the ways in which the representation of female gender in marriage confirmed or challenged the asymmetrical view of sexual harmony examined in earlier chapters. It thus identifies the parallels between the gender and sexual boundaries of wifehood.

The ideal of companionate marriage

Representations of appropriate gender behaviour in marriage were based on an idealised description of married life:

The new style marital relationship (*xinxing de fuqi guanxi*) is influenced neither by class position nor money, nor does it consist of simply physical attraction between the sexes. Rather it is based on unanimity of political consciousness and harmonious sympathy of ideas and emotions. Husband and wife are tender towards each other; they also honour each other and respect each other's rights and domestic position... The new style marital relationship is also reflected in mutual responsibility, to each other and to society... Since husband and wife have joined their lives together, they have the responsibility to help each other and cooperate in ideological matters, studies and daily life. They should share the responsibility for domestic affairs and for childcare. (1)

Such a description of socialist conjugality projected a relationship of total equality and companionship, apparently

unaffected by gender differences. To attain this ideal, husbands were urged to discard the idea that because their wife's 'level' (*shuiping*) was lower than their own, they were not worth discussing political issues with. (2) They were also asked to encourage their wives to become involved in affairs outside the home. A 'revolutionary couple' were, after all 'social activists' (*shehuishang de huodong fenzi*); a revolutionary husband had no right to demand that his wife stay at home all day to look after his own comforts and convenience, any more than she should desire to do so. (3) The desire for a 'virtuous wife and good mother' (*xianqi liangmu*) who was 'gentle, considerate, playful and who took good care of everything' (*wenrou, titie, hui wan, shenghuo zhaogu, zhoudao*) was, therefore, criticized as an expression of a husband's 'selfish' (*lijì*) desires. (4) Suggestions that a wife should ideally be slightly less educated than her husband were condemned for their sexist ideology (*nan zun nü bei*). (5) And in any case, a wife who took good care of her husband by cooking and looking after the children should not be thought of as 'backward'. (6)

For their part, women who gave up work after marrying, and who claimed to find happiness in the 'narrow' interests of the home were told that their priorities were wrong. (7) They were not only denying themselves a 'future' (*qiantu*) by thinking that life simply consisted of their own 'little world' (*xiao tiandi*); they were also failing to provide the revolutionary example that their children's healthy development depended on. (8) Even if a wife did not work outside the home, she should nevertheless be interested in studying and social activities, such as 'mass work' (*qunzhong gongzuo*), 'neighbourhood work' (*jumin gongzuo*) or 'hygiene work' (*weisheng gongzuo*). (9) Those whose traditionalist outlook made them reluctant to do anything independently of their husbands, or who relied on their husbands to take the initiative in making decisions even in matters concerning their own work, were gently urged to change their attitudes. (10)

Just as women were urged to expand their interests beyond the

boundaries of the domestic domain, so they were encouraged to reassess their understanding of marital love. Wives who described feeling neglected by husbands who spent all their time at work were criticised for their 'inadequate understanding of the meaning of revolutionary work and of the spirit of patriotism.' (11) An understanding of love which excluded others' needs could make a woman selfish and narrow-minded. On the contrary, a wife's love for her husband should include comradely affection and love for others. (12) It should be a 'powerful stimulus to doing even more for the revolution'. (13) Those who assumed that marriage brought with it a diminished interest in mutual activities, and less time for mutual enjoyment, mistakenly held a 'mechanical' (*jixie*) view of married life. (14) While the domestic pressures which marriage imposed on a couple did not signify a weakening of the love that bound them together, conscious efforts were nevertheless required to maintain the mutual trust, consideration and patience which a stable marriage required. (15)

The pressure on wives to shift their loyalties away from exclusive focus on the domestic sphere questioned the traditional gender associations of marriage which bound a woman to serve her 'in-laws, husband and children without any consideration for non-family centred concerns. In this respect, the main features of the representations of wives were consistent with the general tendency of the Party's 'woman-work' to revise the gender constructs women were encouraged to identify with. Stories about model women often ended with images of their victorious entry into the Youth League or Party, or their appointment as representatives for some collective body, symbolising the improved status women's participation in public affairs would bring them. (16) Others suggested that a wife's commitment to the social good could be source of inspiration to a husband, as in the case of a young peasant wife whose symbolic gesture of public commitment in decorating the household cow with her red wedding ribbon convinced her husband to contribute it to the cooperative. (17) Yet others conveyed the message that a woman's political and educational

development would make her a better companion to her husband and better mother to her children; a wife's transition into the public domain would earn her a new respect in her husband's eyes. For example, a man who used to beat his wife was described as her 'respectful companion' once she began to study and show an interest in political affairs. (18) Another man, who left his unsophisticated young peasant wife to go to university, described how she began to gain a place in his affections for her once she began to study. (19)

Biology and gender in the domestic context

Despite the often genderless images of the ideal couple, women were considered to possess certain biologically based attributes which made them responsive to particular responsibilities -- notably domestic ones -- in marriage. Many descriptions of women and married life contained evidently hierarchical gender constructs which paralleled the asymmetry of the model of sexual harmony analysed in previous chapters. Just as transgression of the sexual boundaries established for women by marriage brought misery, suffering and disorder, so women's failure to conform to the gender constructs associated with wifehood was considered disruptive to marital harmony.

The 1950s approach to the gender division of domestic labour was founded on the biological arguments which defined the official construction of women as wives and mothers. The same biological structure which made women 'born to be mothers' dictated that women take on the lion's share of domestic duties, regardless of what other responsibilities they might have had. Women who expressed concern that having children would interfere with their work were left in no doubt about where their proper duties lay. When to give birth, and how many children to have might be an individual decision, but the obligation to reproduce was a both a biological and a social one. As indicated in chapter five,

childbirth and childcare were represented as a woman's first and 'natural duty' to society; 'children are not a private matter, but of importance to the entire future of the revolution.' (20)

Moreover, as Lenin pointed out, it was childbirth -- the 'natural result' of love and marriage -- which gave marriage its 'social content'. (21) Cai Chang stated the biological case even more clearly when, in response to women's queries about why women's work in the labour force never seemed as important as men's, she noted that,

one reason is that apart from revolutionary work, women also have the duty of giving birth to and looking after children. Of course, we shall think of ways to set up childcare facilities to reduce some of women's burdens, but we can absolutely not reduce the burden of pregnancy. (22)

That women's domestic responsibilities were treated as a biological imperative did not help women lighten their 'double burden'. Advice to women about how to 'resolve the contradiction between domestic chores and work' was premised on the assumption that the state would eventually replace the household as the main provider of childcare and domestic services. (23) State provision of welfare and childcare facilities, however, could only be expanded 'step by step, following the development of the economy'. (24) In the meantime, the Women's Federation offered little advice to women about what to do. Deng Yingchao's approach, recorded by Dymphna Cusack, was typical of the unsympathetic tone of many an article:

In fact, I don't see why any woman should find it difficult to organise her time between housekeeping and outside activities....Of course, wives and mothers have the chief responsibility for the home and we respect them and their work. And we advocate their managing the household with thrift and industry so that they may contribute to the building of the country. (25)

Women who postponed marriage, or who 'refused to see their husband' for fear of becoming pregnant, were told that these were not appropriate ways to resolve their difficulties; on the

contrary they would create marital tensions and provoke their husbands' estrangement. (26) Instead, women were told 'not to despair in the face of difficulty' (*bu yinggai zai kunnan mianqian aisheng tanqi*). (27) It was possible to combine work with domestic duties as long as women 'have confidence and are good at organising domestic life, and succeed in gaining their husband's cooperation.' (28)

Until the state made more comprehensive provision of childcare and welfare facilities, it was, therefore, considered 'inevitable' (*birande*) that women shoulder more domestic responsibilities than men. (29) Few comments suggested that the division of labour in the household was a gender as well as a social and economic issue. Even if in ideal terms, domestic and childcare responsibilities should be 'rationally' (*he li*) organized between husband and wife, few articles indicated in anything but the most general terms that men had a role to play. (30) In contrast with the detail used to identify women's responsibilities, suggestions that men should 'help out' because it was 'one of life's necessities' were invariably somewhat hollow and vague. (31) Husbands may well have been asked to adopt the 'right attitude', and to appreciate their wife's domestic labour more, but such comments were largely rhetorical. (32) Descriptions of model couples of good organization, domestic cooperation, responsible and loving childcare and revolutionary commitment were caricatures of an abstract ideal which could not, by definition, address the real problems of domestic life. (33)

The emphasis given to different aspects of women's domestic role fluctuated in accordance with the changes in central policy throughout the 1950s. During the period of rising urban unemployment in the mid-1950s, women's domestic role, including their particular skills in frugal household management, was stressed almost to the exclusion of all else. At the other extreme, the tendency to minimise the importance of women's domestic attachments was exaggerated beyond the point of credibility during the Great Leap Forward. Despite such variations, however, suggestions that a woman's natural attributes

prepared her to provide the gentle care and selfless domestic attention associated with wifedom and motherhood did not rest easily alongside messages that women's future lay in working for society and the state. Moreover, legitimising women's domestic role by reference to biological conditions destroyed all possibility of allocating equal status to women. Lenin's harsh stigmatisation of housework as 'the drudgery of the most squalid, backbreaking and stultifying toil in the kitchen and the family household' simply affirmed the subordinate position biology bestowed on women. (34)

However, a representation of gender relationships in the domestic context which was synonymous with the unequal distribution of status could not be explicitly upheld without conflicting with official policy. Some means had to be developed to mediate between the conflicting expectations to which women were exposed in ways which responded to the needs both of organising domestic labour and of maintaining ideological consistency with official views of sexual equality. The solution adopted was to redefine mothering and domestic work as a social good, in much the same way as had occurred in the Soviet Union. (35) Constructed in a new light which linked it with service to the state, women's domestic work need no longer be associated with the naturalised gender hierarchy of relations within the household. (36) Women who had taken the Marxist equation between female participation in production and emancipation to heart were urged to realise that their gendered attachment to the domestic sphere did not mean that they were not 'liberated', but simply that they were identified with a specific field of social practice 'which corresponded to a division of labour based on mutual support.' (37) They were asked not to look down on domestic work and childcare, nor to denigrate other women who did not work outside the home, for work for the family was as '*guangrong*' (glorious) as any other, despite the fact that it was unsalaried. (38) Predictably, women's predominant role in childcare was presented as an indispensable aspect of women's contribution to the future of the revolution. (39) As an article published to celebrate International Women's Day in 1954 suggested, despite the

importance of developing an interest in public affairs, women should nevertheless remember that 'bringing up children is part of working for the country.' (40)

Despite its support of female participation in social production, the official discourse on women did not fundamentally question the gender distinctions and boundaries conventionally associated with the domestic division of labour. When theory interfered with women's realisation of their 'natural' duties, its progressive contribution could be redefined in the name of social duty, economic welfare and family harmony. The interpretation of domestic work as a proper and indispensable aspect of women's social responsibilities also confirmed the value attached to notions of women's selflessness and service in the marital context. Corresponding to the construction of female sexuality as fundamentally responsive to male needs, it confirmed the asymmetry of the gender roles associated with marital and family life. The redefinition of women's domestic and maternal role as a public good did not obscure such an imbalance. It merely shifted the gendered requirements of women's self-denial from the private to the public sphere.

Dress and the female body

Not inconsiderable attention was paid to women's dress and appearance in the official media at different moments of the 1950s. Part of this interest touched on issues of female gender and sexuality. Images of what was considered appropriate attire for women in the 1950s generally conformed to the sexual and gender boundaries delineated by other aspects of the official discourse. They also indicated that views about women's dress were subject to the same modification of principle -- albeit on a different scale -- when economic need so required, as were views about women's domestic role.

In accordance with the reconstruction of images of female gender to accord with women's new public role, the general tendency during the 1950s was to play down the feminine characteristics of the female body. Any indication that dress might signify sexual meaning was treated as the expression of a potentially corrupt and immoral mind. (41) By the same token, women who wasted time attending to their appearance, or who spent money on fashionable clothes, were invariably represented as individualistic, self-seeking and sexually suspect. (42) Physical beauty and fashionable clothes could hide an unpleasant and undesirable character. Any bodily expression that potentially signified sexual meaning was similarly suspect. . . . Conversely, an unexceptional, or even somewhat unsightly appearance might cover wonderful 'internal' qualities. The true revolutionary paid no attention to appearance; it was 'internal beauty', and not external appearance, that contributed to a felicitous marriage. (43) Clothing the body -- invariably the female body -- to obscure its sexuality thus emerged as a condition of sexual propriety. That neither men nor women always agreed with such views was apparent in readers' letters complaining about wives who were 'sallow and thin', or 'coarse and unrefined', or about husbands who were 'too short'. (44) Men's anxieties about their wives' appearance were countered with stories about the robust and lively demeanour of women committed to the social good.

The official attack on traditional perceptions of feminine beauty signified condemnation of the old 'exploiting class's notion of beauty' on the grounds that it was medically harmful and insulting to women. (45) It also signified an attempt to revise the gender constructs associated with appearance at a time when both economic exigency and a moralistic antipathy to individual self-expression promoted conformity. (46) Women's dress should be comfortable, simple and functional, without any indication that it might be a form of sexual representation. Almost masculinised imagery was sometimes used to persuade readers that far from imparting any sexual or gender identity to the individual, appearance should , if anything, indicate the nature of the individual's political and

social commitment. Hence, the description of a guerrilla fighter of peasant stock whose large feet were described as 'man-like', represented determination and commitment rather than lack of femininity. (47)

Descriptions of excessively feminine appearance were sometimes used to convey messages that had little to do with sexuality *per se*. The previous section noted how women's desire for fancy clothes could be used as an analogy for their political degeneration, or for their responsibility in provoking marital conflict. Similarly, stories about the moral pitfalls of illicit liaisons or 'love at first sight' often included descriptions of a couple's appearance, as if to emphasize the dangers of attaching importance to looks. (48) The analogous value of such references, however, stemmed from the association between ostentatiously feminine appearance and sexual impropriety. (49) The projection of a neutral, asexual appearance as a desirable feature of the new socialist woman was therefore another means of signalling propriety in gender and sexual behaviour. It was also a very obvious means of indicating that minimal importance should be attached to sex and desire in the selection of marriage partner. As previous chapters have indicated, the excision of sexualised imagery from the official approach to sexuality corresponded with a view of sexuality which was fundamentally functional; sex was legitimised by its reproductive function and by its contribution to harmonious marital and family relations. Hence, images of the female body and behaviour which were associated with a non-reproductive, and potentially autonomous sexuality were invariably condemned as 'bourgeois' and immoral.

The apparently sudden reversal of the emphasis on de-feminising appearance in 1955 was, therefore, surprising. Not only did the publicity accompanying the clothes reform campaign suggest that gender distinctions were now desirable after the long war years of conformity. It also attempted to legitimise the new femininity of women's fashions by arguing, for example, that 'long trousers were not an aesthetic accompaniment to the narrow shoulders of women'. (50) Instructions about how to refashion old clothes were

now a regular feature on the back pages of *Zhongguo funü*. Dress patterns accompanied articles encouraging women to discard the mistaken notion that being interested in fashion was 'bourgeois'. (51)

During the unemployment crisis of the mid-1950s, alongside publicity boosting the self-image of the housewife, the clothes reform campaign appeared as part of the official attempt to persuade women to withdraw from social labour by reaffirming the acceptability of conventional gender images. Media discussion in the mid-1950s clearly identified an interest in appearance as a feminine characteristic, and as such, it was associated with private and domestic concerns. (52) The new feminisation of women, even if restricted to a brief period of the 1950s, was therefore facilitated by an understanding of female gender which persisted in linking women with the domestic sphere. It indicated a tension within the gender constructs women were encouraged to identify with. Female gender was subject to notions of change and transformation in contexts which urged women to enter the public world of social labour, study and politics. However, when social need or convenience so demanded, this view of female gender could be effectively ignored on the grounds of sex. Just as in the representations of women's proper responsibilities in other aspects of marital and domestic life, suggestions that women's identification with the domestic sphere was dictated by nature limited the progressive character of the official revision of gender constructs.

The focus on women in references to dress and physical appearance could also be interpreted in another light. The insistence on sexual neutrality in images of women, and the suspicion generally directed towards signs of feminine taste, represented another mode of implying that women were required to patrol their interests and conduct for the sake of sexual propriety. Indications of individual interest in dress were discouraged, and if anything treated as morally suspect. The ideal woman was one who subordinated her individual tastes to the requirements of sexual and social uniformity. The images of women's appearance therefore

functioned -- among other things -- to reiterate the idea that sexual order depended on the female's denial of her own interests, in favour of those defined by agencies external to her.

The limits of conjugal companionship

While the above sections have suggested areas where the conventional female gender constructs associated with marriage were subject to considerable, even if partial, modification during the 1950s, there were also indications that women should not err in the opposite direction. Just as female responsiveness to her husband was required to maintain an appropriate balance in sexual relationships, so female mediation between the demands of work, domestic life and her husband's needs was called for in the name of marital stability. The ideal wife should strike a balance between the female attributes of selfless support of her husband, efficiency in domestic management, and the acquisition of 'male' skills associated with entry into the world of public affairs. Too strong an identification with the domestic sphere could provoke scorn and self-deprecation. On the other hand, many stories and autobiographical sketches warned women against identifying too strongly with typically male constructs. Too enthusiastic an approach to the acquisition of educational and professional skills could signify a dereliction of domestic duty. In both cases, women's failure to adopt an appropriate response was interpreted as a source of marital friction. The idea that women's failure to conform to the recommended gender boundaries of wifehood threatened marital harmony paralleled the view, examined in chapter seven, that women's transgression of the sexual boundaries of marriage brought disruption and chaos,

A notable area of the discourse's representation of married life where the gender boundaries could be threatened referred to women's aspirations for education and professional or urban status -- in other words, to what could be described as conventionally

male symbols of authority and status. While women's interest in political affairs or education was represented as an advantage to the conjugal relationship, too close an identification with this area of public practice was considered a threat to marital stability. Indeed, some articles implied that women's acquisition of education, professional and political status would inevitably lead to marital estrangement and separation. (53) Where a wife's identification with new gender constructs signified competition with or threat to her husband, she was represented as a danger to marital harmony.

Some such cases were described in terms that signified values and expectations similar to those addressed to men in equivalent situations. One young woman, for example, wrote to the editorial of *Zhongguo qingnian* about how her husband had been warned that she would lose her affection for him once she started university. Her fellow students felt that their 'cultural difference' was so great, and her future so bright, that divorce would be the best solution to her increasing estrangement from her husband. (54)

Another young woman who was engaged to a poor peasant who volunteered to fight in Korea became increasingly politicised during his absence. Her fellow villagers thought that she had made so much progress, becoming active in production and joining the Youth League, that she would want to withdraw from the engagement (*tui hun*). Her father-in-law became sick with anxiety that she would break off her engagement with his son. (55) As in equivalent cases of male behaviour, editorial opinion invariably insisted that women who found themselves in such a position remain with their initial partner, and shelve their own personal aspirations if these conflicted with the interests of marital stability. (56)

Other stories indicated a more evident gender bias in their representation of women who ventured into the male sphere of professional skills. A story published in *Zhongguo qingnian* in July 1957 was a typical example. (57) The story began by describing a young woman who, shortly after her marriage, became increasingly frustrated and demanding. After only a few weeks of married life, she had changed so much that she was 'totally unlike her former

self', and presumably no longer the woman her husband thought he had married. She wore fashionable clothes, shiny black shoes, permed her hair and generally put on airs, all so the reader was told, the consequence of receiving a university education. The implication was that even though it was an indispensable condition of women's struggle for equality with men, too much education could make a woman feel a cut above her husband. In another similar case mentioned above, readers were warned in even more explicit terms against the immoral and bitter consequences that a woman's changing social status could lead to. Entitled 'The Twisted Path I Once Went Down', it told the story of a young woman who betrayed her husband and her class background in the pursuit of urban attractions. (58) When she was still quite young, she married a young rural teacher who, in order to help her through school, encouraged her and helped her, even by washing her clothes. When she became pregnant, he did even more to support her in her studies. But when she eventually gained entrance to Peking's specialist school for finance, she began to change. She started wearing fancy new clothes, and even bought such luxuries as skates, a swimsuit and leather shoes. She began to feel ashamed of her rural husband; the husbands and boyfriends of her fellow students were all cadres and university graduates. Finally, she decided to goad her husband into seeking a divorce by getting together with a Japanese man who was nineteen years her senior. (59) It was only when she overheard the tearful and pained tones of the Japanese man's wife one day that she realised how wrong she had been, and immediately made plans to return to her village and to her husband.

Other images illustrated the marital difficulties that could arise as a consequence of a woman's insufficient identification with public affairs. The 'backwardness' and general unworldliness of rural wives were not infrequently described as disincentives to developing the affectionate interest and companionship associated with marriage. (60) Indeed, some articles suggested that a woman's acquisition of education was often motivated by the fear that her husband would otherwise leave her. (61) A wife's ignorance of the

world of knowledge and politics was portrayed as a potential source of shame for her husband, and her devotion to domestic tasks was commonly scorned as 'feudal' and 'backward' (luohou). (62) It was also represented as a limitation on the kind of support a wife could give to her husband in his professional life. (63) Articles with titles like 'I helped my wife improve her education' praised men for their consideration and patience in 'helping' their wives develop the skills and interests appropriate to socialist married life. (64)

The above examples suggested that whether associated with upward social mobility or with the acquisition of education, a woman's aspirations to transcend her domestic role should not signify the assumption of autonomous power and knowledge. The boundaries of the gender constructs associated with wifehood were defined with reference to the dominant male position in the asymmetrical marital relationship. Female desire for the symbols of the male world, whether in the form of urban experience, political power or knowledge, were portrayed as legitimate as long as they contributed to conjugal harmony. By the same token, a woman's acquisition of non-domestic skills was desirable for its contribution to her role as support and companion to her husband. Echoing the requirements that women be responsive and considerate to their husbands' sexual needs, women's identification with the public sphere should complement, rather than compete with, their husbands' interests. Female identification with new gender constructs should not disturb the asymmetrical prescriptions for marital harmony. Rather than give women the power to threaten male authority, it should consolidate the projected complementarity between wife and husband, as the story of Liu Dezhen showed. (65)

Married by traditional parental arrangement, Liu Dezhen had never had a very satisfactory relationship with his wife. As he 'made progress' after liberation, he became even more estranged from his wife: 'I thought that she was incredibly backward, (si luohou) and was always holding me back (lao che). Sometimes when she cursed me and said strange things I beat her, so she would angrily say "we have been liberated now, and women have gone up in the world. If

you beat me, then I will beat you." ' Eventually, Liu began to realise that his wife's backwardness was not her fault alone. His attitude towards her gradually improved, and 'despite the pressures of work' he began to pay attention to helping her. 'On my return from meetings in Peking, I would explain things to her, and I encouraged her to study', as a result of which she decided to attend night school and 'made progress'. She participated in the patriotic activities during the 'resist America support Korea campaign', and 'signed a patriotic ^lpledge with the dependents' group to do well in domestic work to enable me to do my work without any hindrance... She always had meals ready on time and rarely gave me the same food to eat. She often washed my clothes. Gradually I grew fatter.' She even suggested that they give all their savings to the support Korea movement. The transformation of Liu's wife brought a new harmony to their relationship, and their 'feelings for one another improved day by day'.

As an example of the 'correct' attitude a husband should adopt towards his 'backward' wife, this story encapsulated the gender hierarchy implicit in the official discourse's view of marital harmony. The husband's contribution to a happy marriage lay in introducing his wife to the world of knowledge and politics; the wife's was in using that knowledge to help her husband, demonstrate her patriotic loyalties, and to improve her talents as cook and housekeeper. A further implication was that the husband's initial disdain of his wife was justified because of her 'backwardness'. Women had the responsibility to find the means -- and the status -- to become worthy companions of their husbands, much in the same way that Jean Robinson noted in her discussion of women's responsibility in home education in the 1980's. She suggested that one implication of making women liable for finding solutions to their own maltreatment by their husbands and for eradicating the 'feudal ideas in their minds' was that 'practices like wife-beating and female infanticide, which are considered remnants of feudal thinking, are intensified because women have low ideological and cultural levels.' (66)

The above analysis indicates that in appropriate measure,

education and knowledge were the conditions of becoming a modern socialist woman, a successful wife and mother. However, there was a potential conflict between the gender constructs of marital harmony and the revision of gender constructs made in the name of sexual equality. Within the context of marriage, independent knowledge which threatened conjugal stability by directing a woman's interests outward, away from her husband and children, was incompatible with her responsibilities as companion and servicer of her husband and children. The implications of Wei Junyi's criticism of conventional gender stereotypes when he asked who it was who had 'ordained that femininity only means softness and warmth. Why shouldn't it also mean depth?' were not to be taken too far. (67)

The limits on women's appropriation of new gender constructs implicit in the images described above was by no means synonymous with the preservation of traditional ones. Men who complained that women were failing in their wifely duties if they went out on their own, or if they refused to offer the affectionate care expected of a 'virtuous wife', were criticised for their feudal attitude. In one case of marital discord, a woman was accused of 'lacking femininity' by her husband. (68) 'I used to like your strength of character', he was reported to have said, 'but was irritated that you lacked feminine gentleness' (*nüren si de wenrou*). He became 'commandeering and dominating' after their marriage, and particularly after the birth of their child. He refused to let her go dancing on Saturdays, because he considered such activities 'improper' (*bu zhengpai*), and he never offered to help her around the house. His wife tried using patience and persuasion to make him see the error of his ways, but he persisted until he was transferred to work in Nanjing. Now separated from him, his wife realised that she felt much better without him, and wrote to him saying that unless he changed his attitude she would prefer him not to return. When he eventually returned at the auspicious time of the Spring Festival, he asked his wife's forgiveness, promising to respect her interests and wishes more if she would have him back. Liu Lequn, Luo Baoyi's abandoned wife,

was censured by some readers for having contributed to her husband's decision to leave by her own 'unwifely' behaviour. (69) She was reported to have been 'cold and distant, had not fulfilled her rightful duties as a wife, had failed to treat her mother-in-law as a daughter-in-law should, and had never treated her husband's home properly as her own'. (70) However, the implication that Liu was in the wrong for having refused to give the appropriate affection and support to her husband and his family was rejected as 'incomplete' (*bu quanmian*). If anything, readers were told, her mistake lay in not being ideologically strong enough to confront her husband with his own errors. (71)

The dangers of crossing gender boundaries

The representation of women's appropriate attitude in the materials analysed above constructed an ideal conducive to marital harmony. It also signified the disturbance to marital harmony that could result from women's over-identification with typically male or typically female constructs. The concern with marital stability in the mid-1950s put limits on the extent to which women could easily experiment with the new female gender constructs available. Marital harmony was premised on women's respect of the appropriate balance between old and new gender constructs. The construction of female gender in marriage was therefore bounded by the perceived requirements of marital stability. The materials examined above indicate that, in the terms of the discourse, a woman's responsibility in the development of marital tension often arose as a result of her transgressing the boundaries of her gender.

The lack of detailed instruction to men and the frequent exhortations to women to make concessions and to be patient left the unmistakable conclusion that it was women who were liable to make the adjustments necessary to prevent domestic and marital rupture. Sexual equality did not mean demanding that the husband 'wash the clothes', nor did it mean that a wife should

'obstinately stick to her own ideas against her husband's wishes and refuse to make compromises'. (72) Such attitudes would provoke family discord and disruption (*jiating fenfen*). (73) Once a wife had decided that she had not yielded enough over domestic disputes about, for example, who would take time off work to take care of the children when they fell sick, marital difficulties were miraculously resolved. (74)

In ideological terms, such images of women's responsibilities could be interpreted as putting the interests of the group, or the family before those of the individual. In this light, they could also be seen as conforming to the redefinition of relationship between private and public commitments. However, the gender dimension meant that such representations signified more than a reiteration of the familiar individual-collective dichotomy. Marital harmony and stability were predicated on women's success in finding the correct balance between too much and too little identification with the symbols and practices of masculine prestige. At no point should such identification be seen to threaten male authority. Women thus found themselves in the impossible situation of being asked to internalise a set of images and subject positions that signified a rejection of conventional gender constructs, and, at the same time, to renegotiate them to achieve domestic balance. The terms of the discourse were not those of 'who wore the trousers', for this would have introduced a note of conflict and power into the discourse, incompatible with the assumption of gender complementarity. Rather, they were those of complementarity and harmony, to preserve which women's appropriation of new gender constructs had to be limited. Alongside requirements that they patrol their sexual and moral conduct in the interests of marital harmony and their husbands' needs, women were also asked to restrict their professional and intellectual development in order to avoid marital tension. Just as sexual complementarity invoked women's self-denial in demanding sexual responsiveness to the dominant needs of the husbands, so gender complementarity in marriage demanded women's self-restraint

to safeguard the boundaries protecting the husband's authority.

The representation of women's responsibilities in protecting the gender boundaries associated with marital harmony echoed the asymmetrical requirements of the model of sexual harmony analysed in earlier chapters. Women were asked to identify with gender constructs which supported and complemented their husbands' interests. Acquisition of autonomy in the sphere of interests generally associated with male authority was considered potentially disruptive of marital harmony. Women were also attributed with the major responsibility for patrolling their own actions and attitudes against any transgression of the gender boundaries drawn by the official discourse. In this light, women were given the ultimate responsibility for protecting the complementarity of gender roles within marriage on which marital stability depended. Their failure to do so was interpreted as the precursor of marital tension and conflict. As in the asymmetrical construction of sexual complementarity, this signified female subjugation of the self to the demands of the marital relationship as the condition of sexual and gender harmony.

As with many arguments about the mutuality and complementarity of gender difference, this was little more than another mode of representing women's subordinate status. Women's acquisition of autonomy and prestige was limited by suggestions that in the event of conflict between traditional and new gender constructs, women should often uphold the former. Applying limits to women's appropriation of key symbols of authority, such as urban status and education, in the name of marital harmony was to deny women access to the centres of power. This was, in effect, an expression of the relegation of women's interests to those of society as a whole, which, as many writers have pointed out, has been a recurrent feature of policy towards women in China. (75)

SEVEN

THE DANGERS OF SEXUAL TRANSGRESSIONS

After the shift away from the anti-feudal emphasis of marriage policy in 1953, sexual behaviour that was seen to threaten the moral and social foundations of socialist monogamy occupied an increasingly prominent place in the official discourse of sexuality. Biographical sketches and cautionary tales extended their focus from the need to eliminate the pernicious practices of the past to the need for vigilance against 'bourgeois' attitudes towards love and marriage. Concerns about sexual morality no longer centred on safeguarding women's rights of free choice and divorce, but increasingly implicated the dangers to marital stability that would result from a failure to understand, and enact, 'communist morality'. (1) The new emphasis of the discourse of sexuality was therefore on the consolidation of felicitous marital relations. (2) As part of this concern, discussion about how to resolve marital conflict, and about the social and moral issues raised by divorce, featured more frequently in the official media. (3)

The increasing attention to marital harmony was accompanied by a redefinition of the ideological character of sexual misdemeanours. Official interest shifted away from the condemnation of feudal abuse of women to identify bourgeois errors in sexual conduct. This permitted the appropriation of female conduct as a new target of criticism. The construction of women as autonomous sexual agents outside the proper boundaries of responsive wifehood signified a threat both to the model of sexual complementarity and to the requirements of marital harmony. Identification of those who lay outside the categories of wife and mother in relation to the significant other as a source of suffering functioned as a means of reaffirming the

proper control of female sexuality as an agent of conjugal stability. Sexual order was proscriptively defined by notions of female deviance. Discussion about women's sexual conduct functioned to demarcate the boundaries between normative and illicit sexual practice. This chapter argues that, via representations of the harmful consequences of female deviance, female sexuality became the site for safeguarding monogamous marriage as the only proper context for legitimate sexual activity. The control of female sexuality therefore emerged as the key agent preserving the social and moral order.

Ideology and gender in marital conflict

Until 1953, the Women's Federation's defence of women's right to divorce was foremost among its priorities in its work to eliminate feudal discrimination against women. Considerable efforts were made to make divorce acceptable to conservative public opinion by publicising cases of cruelty to wives and daughters-in-law designed to evoke public sympathy. (4) Attempts were also made to convince the public that freedom of divorce did not mean divorce at will any more than it was a licence for promiscuity. (5) Evidence from divorce courts suggests that until the conclusion of the provincial campaigns to publicise the Marriage Law in late 1953, most divorces were sought and granted on what were described as anti-feudal grounds. Women were both the principal petitioners and beneficiaries of the divorce suits of these years. (6)

Once the initial rush for divorces had freed many women from arranged unions, however, divorce seems to have become more difficult to obtain. (7) Petitioners were now frequently advised by mediating agencies that divorce was not in their interests, and were advised to go back home and try again. Even with evidence to the contrary, couples were told that the emotional basis to their marriage still existed. (8) Many petitioners were

admonished for the 'trivial' nature of their complaints, and were urged to adopt a more serious attitude. (9) Mutual alienation of affection (*ganqing polie*) -- disdainfully referred to by one commentator as the 'theory of feelings' (*ganqing lun*) -- did not necessarily provide adequate grounds for divorce, since it indicated an exaggerated concern with personal issues (*geren wenti*) at the expense of social order (*shehui zhixu*). (10) Once the anti-feudal objectives of the initial stage of marriage and family reform were superceded by other policy priorities, the view of divorce as an instrument of women's emancipation was replaced by another more conservative approach which saw it as a potentially disruptive factor in local social and familial organisation. The impact of the initial insistence on the progressive nature of divorce was now interpreted to have created serious divisions and conflicts in local communities. At a time when political priorities were on uniting forces to contribute to the First Five Year Plan and the building of a new future, the emphasis in discussion of 'marriage problems' was on reinforcing domestic harmony and stability. As Judith Stacey has pointed out, the CCP's attempt 'actively to promote harmonious, stable marriages and family life... was not purely altruistic, but [was] an attempt to place family stability in the service of the revolution.' (11)

Adultery was recognised as an important cause of marital conflict and divorce both before and after 1953. Prior to 1953, it was often treated as a form of feudal abuse on the part of men who callously abandoned their first wives, whom they had married under parental arrangement, in favour of other, often younger and urban-based women of their own choice. (12) Until 1953, as Meijer noted, 'divergences from the ordained sexual morality are punished as relics of the past in order to protect the future, to safeguard the development of that spiritual progress which is needed for the construction of the new socialist society.' (13) Many references commented on the injustice of young men who left their wives in the village to work or study in the city, where they would then set up a new relationship. A survey by Olga Lang

carried out in 1936-37 showed that 'many boy students were potential bigamists, feeling that they should accept the wives chosen for them by their parents, but that at the same time they had the right to live with the girl of their choice whom they would regard as their wife.' (14) In these cases, men were often encouraged to remain with their first wives; opposition to feudal marriage arrangements was secondary to protecting women from what Yang described as 'surreptitious polygamy'. (15)

In his article in *Faxue* published in 1958, Liu Yunxiang argued that 'feudal relationships and feudal remnants' could no longer be treated as the main cause of divorces. He cited a survey carried out by the Women's Federation in 1954 which stated that 85-95 per cent of 'family relationships' were harmonious, and that of the total number of divorce cases brought before the people's court, only a minority were sought as a result of feudal pressures. (16) Liu noted that 'bourgeois and petty bourgeois perceptions of marriage are currently the principal cause of divorce.' (17) He also gave precise details about the range of practices which bourgeois tendencies to 'love the new and hate the old' (*xi xin yan jiu*) might include:

1. When either husband or wife develop intimate relations with a third party.
2. When a couple's relationship was initially very good, but because of improvements in the professional position, treatment and knowledge of one partner, or because of changes in living environment and work, that partner seeks divorce on the grounds that the other is unsuitable.
3. Because of excuses like 'I can't live', 'I can't communicate', 'she's not beautiful', 'he's not got any style', and 'there's no feeling.'
4. Fickle and loose behaviour (*zhao san mu si*)
5. Bourgeois glass of waterism [ie. promiscuity] in playing around with women. (18)

At first glance, these categories of bourgeois transgressions indicate little gender distinction. Rather they would appear to express little more than a modified ideological gloss on the practices and behaviours earlier criticised as feudal. (19)

However, analysed in conjunction with the representation of women's sexual transgressions in the official discourse, it becomes clear that this kind of categorisation invoked substantially different behaviour from that of the earlier period, in so far as it created the ideological space for the implication of women as guilty partners alongside men. In the official materials on sex-related issues, the 'third party' referred almost exclusively to women, as did 'fickle and loose behaviour', and despite the implication of male behaviour in the fifth category, the aphoristic 'glass of waterism' was invariably associated with female sexuality. (20) It was not easy to use the feudal label to categorise women's marital transgressions, given that feudal misconduct was primarily associated with male discrimination against women. The shift to the anti-bourgeois orientation of marriage policy after 1953 therefore afforded a convenient means of permitting the identification of sexual transgressions of women as well as men.

In discussing use of ideological label to identify different modes of sexual conduct, chapter four noted that 'bourgeois' behaviour was commonly associated with any kind of act which put the interests of the individual before those of the group or collective. (21) As a euphemism for sexual indulgence, irresponsibility and immorality, it covered any mode of behaviour which was perceived to threaten the stability of the married couple and the family. Examples of marital conflict put the responsibility for disturbing the projected norm of monogamous stability on both men and women, depending on the details of the case. Men were condemned for 'playing around with women' (*wan nüren*), or abusing their authority as cadres to seduce young innocents. A prominent case which attracted considerable publicity was of a cadre called Zhou Xixian, who on the rebound of a relationship with one woman, married another who was fifteen years old. When she became pregnant, he started an affair with a third woman. In despair, his young wife contemplated suicide. (22) For their part, women were criticised for being flirtatious and fickle in their affections (*zhao san mu si*), for dressing up and

putting on airs, and for showing an exaggerated interest in material matters. (23) However, despite the attribution of responsibility to both men and women in committing bourgeois errors, it was defined and regulated differently according to gender, and often in ways that echoed the male/public-female/private dichotomy discussed in earlier chapters. The condemnation of cadres for using their authority to seduce, cheat and abuse women invariably indicated a link between their 'bourgeois' errors and their insertion in the public sphere of politics and professionalism. (24) In contrast, women's bourgeois sexual conduct was also associated with their character, or with attachment to the implicitly private sphere of materialistic -- and therefore politically unreliable -- interests. (25)

The transition in ideological emphasis in 1953 thus coincided with an interpretation of the requirements of sexual order that was more severe on women than in the previous few years. The renewed restrictions on divorce were accompanied by a revised perception of women's instrumentality in regulating sexual order. As the following sections argue, women became progressively identified as both subject and object of sexual morality; they were constructed on the one hand as the agent responsible for regulating moral standards and, on the other, as the perpetrator of sexual degeneracy.

Virgins and victims

Chapter three put forward the argument that women were represented as sexualised beings only inasmuch as they responded to the more active male urge. The representation of female sexuality ranged from the passive and reluctant to the responsive, but never as an independent source of experience. It was only projected as a source of pleasure and benefit inasmuch as it contributed to marital and family harmony. Even then, the suggestion of pleasure was implicit rather than explicit. Female

sexuality was not conceptualised as a source of autonomous experience, and was rarely discussed outside the context of marriage and reproduction.

This projection of female sexuality by no means always corresponded to practice. Indeed, evidence from informants and writers demonstrated that after marriage, women in certain areas of China enjoyed considerable licence to engage in sexual relationships in a way that was taboo prior to marriage. (26) Letters and autobiographical accounts published in *Zhongguo funü* and in legal publications gave further indication - often veiled by the use of euphemism - that women engaged in pre-marital or extra-marital sexual activities that were not condoned by the values of the sexual paradigm. Comments like 'they had gone beyond ordinary friendship' (*chaoguole pengyou guanxi*), or 'to have been friendly with him' (*gen ta haoguo*), were often circumlocutions for sexual intercourse. (27) Some way had to be found of responding to such evidence without inviting interest in practices and attitudes which the official discourse of sexuality aimed to eradicate. If women were by nature passive respondents to the dominant male drive, then indications of a more active and autonomous sexuality associated neither with marriage nor with reproduction could only be explained by resorting to the concept of deviance (*bu zhengchang*) or by removing from women responsibility for their own actions. (28)

One way of doing this was by representing women who were possibly guilty of sexual transgressions as innocent victims of corrupt and evil men. A number of cautionary tales warning against illicit sexual liaisons described how young and innocent women had been led down the road to degeneration by older men, often cadres, interested in satisfying their own corrupt desires. One example, entitled 'Wode jiaoxun' (My lesson), described how a twenty year old girl who was pursued by her boss, refused to respond to his advances because she knew he was married. (29) He persisted in his intentions and played on her innocence to persuade her that he was trustworthy. She eventually gave in and agreed to have sex with him. When the organisation found out, she

was sent to another place to work. However, it was not until some time later, when she heard that her former boss was up to the same game with another young woman, that she realised what his real intentions had been. Full of remorse, she acknowledged her own errors, which she then publicised to warn other young women against falling victim to similar deception.

The image of the ingenuous victim in the representation of female sexuality was commonly used in the context of attempts to explain why some women were discovered not to be virgins on marriage. As earlier chapters have shown, the official view of pre-marital relationships and courtship urged sexual abstention on the part of both men and women on the grounds that premature involvement would detract time and energy from studies and work, and would lead to unfortunate consequences, particularly for women. (30) Such advice was premised on standards of sexual morality that applied to men and women alike. It made no explicit reference to female virginity as a particular moral requirement, nor to any expectations of sexual behaviour that echoed the double standard.

This problem of the hymen should no longer be treated as a problem, because all it does is make people anxious. Of course, this doesn't suggest that we advocate 'sexual chaos' (*xing luan*); it is rather to say that everyone, no matter whether man or woman, should adopt a serious approach to resolving problems related to love and marriage, and should follow the principles of communist morality. (31)

Many men, however, indicated in letters to the press that they continued to esteem traditional requirements of female purity. Husbands wrote of their anger and anxiety on discovering on 'the night of the honeymoon' that their wives were not virgins. (32) Young women who were known to have been the object of a man's attentions were commonly thought of as free with their sexual favours. (33) Rape victims were treated as 'broken shoes', blamed by their husbands for having led the culprits on. One victim of rape had to wait five years until her case was resolved, during which time her husband was convinced that her loose morals were

to blame for her plight. (34)

Editorial responses pointed first of all to the injustice of such views. Alongside bigamy and seduction (*youjian*), rape, for example, was treated as an 'improper relationship' (*bu zhengdang de guanxi*), which was attributable to the 'old marriage system.' (35) Men who felt humiliated on discovering that their wife did not bleed during sexual intercourse were told that attaching such importance to hymeneal blood indicated unreasonable, feudal demands for proof of female purity. (36) It was, moreover, unscientific given that the hymen could be broken in many different ways. (37) A further common suggestion was that a woman may have lost her virginity because of her innocence and lack of experience, and because of her inability to reject the advances of an older man. Indeed, one of the main reasons why women were not virgins on marriage was that their innocence had led them to being duped in the past (*nianyou wuzhi, shou ren qipian*). The case of a woman who had been raped by her cousin three years prior to marriage was just such an example. (38) In such cases, husbands should be sympathetic rather than critical, and should remember that anxieties about a wife's pre-marital misfortunes might impair marital happiness. (39) Even in cases where a woman had sexual relations with a man before marriage because her fiancé had been away for a long time on work, husbands were reminded that they should be lenient and understanding. (40) And, as Ding Ling pointed out on a more suggestive note than most, as long as a woman repented her past conduct, there was not too much cause for worry. (41)

One interpretation of these comments is that they were an indirect criticism of the double standard that sanctioned pre-marital sexual activity among men, but not among women. Suggestions that the hymen could be broken by medical examination, for instance, or by excessive physical exercise, could assimilate a woman's pre-marital sexual conduct into the realm of acceptable behaviour. (42) It also offered an escape valve for women who would otherwise have found it difficult to explain their pre-marital experiences to their suspicious

husbands.

A more probable interpretation, however, is that these comments were motivated by a concern to minimise areas of tension and conflict affecting the conjugal relationship. It was perhaps not coincidental that, few as they were, most of the articles that made reference to a married couple's sex life, to hymeneal blood and by implication to wives' pre-marital sexual experiences occurred during the mid-1950s when, as noted above, a main aim of marriage and family related work was to boost marital stability. Criticism of masculine concerns about hymeneal blood did not obscure the implication of immorality of a woman having sex before marriage. It did not diminish the desirability of female virginity, for sex before marriage was inconsistent with the norms of the official discourse. Nor was the aim of such criticism to advocate 'sexual chaos' (*xing luan*), a term which was invariably used as a euphemism for female promiscuity. (43) Rather, it was to serve the interests of monogamous order and family stability by devaluing the significance of an aspect of female sexuality which was still considered a great threat to a marriage. (44)

Widows and divorcées constituted another category of women who were sometimes represented as victims of misfortune. As with rape victims, widows and divorcées were popularly thought of as 'loose' women who had little hope of remarrying. (45) But in contrast with the somewhat circumlocutory responses to anxieties about hymeneal blood, official condemnation of such a view was unequivocal. Women had been victimised by the feudal system which had denied them the right of remarriage; preventing widows and divorcees from remarrying was against the law. (46) For the purposes of the current discussion, therefore, the representation of widows and divorcées as victims had a somewhat different aim to that of the above examples. (47) Women in the former category were oppressed by institutionalised arrangements upheld in the interests of patrilineality, the elimination of which was considered indispensable to the implementation of the new Law. Moreover, widows and divorcées lay outside the category of the

wife-mother in so far as they were removed from notions of agency in the relationship with the significant other. As widows and divorcées, they were therefore not significant in discussions about conjugal relations. In the latter case, the actions of women who had possibly deviated from the values of the new communist morality within the context of marriage were redefined to suit the terms of the accepted discourse. The emergence of the female as an active sexual agent was incompatible with the model of sexual and marital harmony upheld by the discourse. Potentially disruptive expressions of female sexuality were therefore reinterpreted to diffuse the threat they posed to conjugal stability and satisfaction. The unity of the official discourse of sexuality was thus preserved.

Adultery and the third one

As a rule of sexual and gender relations, monogamy ideally signified pre-marital chastity as well as sexual fidelity during marriage. (48) Any form of extra-marital sexual indulgence was wrong and immoral, and whether attributed to men or women, was invariably condemned as the 'degenerate behaviour of the bourgeoisie' (*zichanjieji de duolou xingwei*). (49) As in other aspects of the representation of sexuality, however, the modes of description used in accounts of sexual infidelity and adultery were inscribed with gender differences. Different emphases depending on the sex of the guilty party indicated different interests in exposing cases of sexual misconduct. Criticism of male transgressions was not infrequently couched in terms to warn women against men's unscrupulous behaviour just as much as to castigate men. (50) In comparison with the attention given women's sexual misconduct, men's sexual misdemeanours were, furthermore, sometimes treated with a certain negligence in official texts, mentioned in passing at the end of a paragraph. For example, an article about a young woman who was repeatedly abused by her

corrupt and pleasure-seeking husband was principally devoted to an analysis of the reasons for the breakdown of her marriage, and to criticisms for her mistaken understanding of love. (51) The main message, delivered to 'encourage her and other young women like her to struggle', was that had she been more vigilant against her husband's shallow charms, and had she got to know him better before deciding to marry, she might have saved herself considerable torment. It was only towards the end of the story that her husband's errors were mentioned, and then only to characterise them as those of a 'cruel' (*yeman*) person who 'has absolutely no prospects in today's society'. (52) As in this case, women were often given detailed advice about how to approach their husbands' errors. An article entitled '*Ruhe duidai fuhua duoluo de zhangfu*' (How to treat your corrupt and degenerate husband)' suggested that 'the correct attitude is to maintain your composure, and not get hysterical... and help him analyse the character and harm of his mistakes'. (53)

The adulterous man was thus subject to censure as much as the female 'third one', but his sexual conduct seemed subject to less specific condemnation. The emphasis in criticisms of male transgressions tended to invoke the social and economic conditions explaining their actions, just as much as their moral or sexual character. (54) By contrast, criticisms of a woman's infringement of the monogamous principle behaviour focused on her imputed sexual immorality, particularly when she was constructed as the iniquitous 'third one'. (55) The mistresses of male adulterers were represented as calculating sexual trespassers, unmoved by the prospect of disrupting happy marriages, as in the case of Luo Baoyi discussed below. (56) Indeed, the disruption of marriages through the intrusion of a third one was described as 'invariably the fault of the woman'; even when violation of the monogamous principle was clearly the man's, just as much as the woman's, responsibility, it was the woman who was censured. (57) For example, the adulteress who fell in love with a Japanese man nineteen years her senior was represented as an uncaring, heartless self-seeker who was prepared to forsake everyone and

everything for the sake of status and prestige, but her lover -- perhaps predictably -- escaped mention. (58) Both the adulteress and the 'third one' were, in a sense, beyond redemption, for the nature of their sexual transgressions defied accomodation to the norms of the official discourse. While loss of virginity prior to marriage could be explained away by passing the woman off as a victim, the active and autonomous expression of sexuality in the image of the adulteress or the 'third one' violated the feminine norm of passivity and responsiveness upheld by the discourse of sexuality. The adulteress and the 'third one' represented the transgression of the incontrovertible boundary between the permissible and the forbidden. As Lynda Nead has suggested, 'woman as victim could be accomodated within the code of respectability but woman as offender transgressed that code and was defined as sexually deviant'. (59)

The following stories are typical examples of the gender bias in the discourse's treatment of adultery. One, published in 1957, was designed to illustrate the kind of approach deemed immoral in cases of marital estrangement. (60) During the anti-rightist campaign, a student in Wuhan university sent a couple of photos to a girl with a letter declaring eternal love. After their marriage, the girl was sent to Shanghai to work, and he was sent to a small town near Wuhan. In less than a year, he had got together with another girl, and despite criticism from his workmates, he insisted on continuing his relationship with her. Eventually his wife got to hear of what was going on, and fell ill, whereupon he decided to go to Shanghai to see her. Unable to disguise his coldness towards her, he told his wife that he was in love with someone else, and suggested that they divorce. At this point, his wife realised that all he was concerned with was his own feelings, and that he was nothing but 'selfish and hypocritical' (*zisi jia xuwei*). However, at the end of the story it was his girlfriend, and not he who was reproached. 'She, a certain Yang, already had a boyfriend, whom she had known for a long time, and had often bragged about (*kuayao*) to her fellow students. Their relationship had gone beyond ordinary friendship.

So why did she have to show love to a man who already had a wife?' (61). Conduct which constructed women as sexual agents outside the permitted boundaries of responsive wifehood represented a danger to the values of the official discourse.

Another example became the focus of an extensive debate in *Zhongguo funü*, following the publication of a woman's autobiographical account of marital conflict in an article called 'Women fufu guanxi weishenmo polie?' (Why ^{did} our marriage break down?)(62) During her third pregnancy, the woman's husband, Luo Baoyi, started an affair with another woman and sought separation from his wife. When she, Liu Lequn, refused to divorce for the sake of the children, Luo decided to leave to live with his mistress. The letters and comments published in the following six issues of the journal indicated considerably divergent attitudes both about the morality and wisdom of divorce in such a situation, and about the reasons for the couple's estrangement. Some contributors suggested that Liu was to blame for having failed to provide a warm and affectionate environment at home. Others blamed the immorality of women who put themselves in the position of the 'third one', even when it was clear that the man did not get on with his wife. Official opinion, set out in an editorial article to close the debate, suggested that even though the conflict principally arose as a result of Luo's selfish desires for other women, the 'third one', Wang Mou, was also guilty for having 'deliberately disrupted' a marriage. (63)

The intruding female 'third one' was thus seen as a principal cause of suffering in the triangular relationships implicated by her behaviour. The motivation of women who found themselves in the position of the 'third one' was invariably suspect, so one commentator suggested, leaving no space for the possibility of manipulation or abuse. (64) Young girls, when they first became interested in matters of the heart, often caused pain and tragedy to others by 'unconsciously putting themselves in the role of the third one' and by 'disrupting harmonious families (*hemu de jiating*)'. (65) Furthermore, the implication that girls would continue to inflict pain unless they acknowledged the errors of

their behaviour was apparent in a story called 'Bu neng ai ta' (I cannot love him). (66) This described an undergraduate who, apparently without being aware of it, fell in love with another student in his third year. She knew that her love was improper (*bu zhengdang*) since he was already married and had a child. In vain, she tried to forget her love for him, but only succeeded once she realised that to pursue the relationship would cause suffering to other people. In any case, readers were advised, a woman should never get involved with a man before he was actually divorced, because there was always a chance of reunion with his wife. (67) And just to push the point home, readers were warned that persisting in immoral sexual behaviour would lead to dire consequences, such as 'petty crime, and assuming pseudonyms'. (68) Given such clear condemnation of the immorality of the 'third one', indications that a 'wronged partner' might derive a certain gratification from seeing the offending 'third one' punished were logically approved of as the appropriate response to a woman's shameless behaviour. Having decided to sue her husband for divorce, Liu Lequn openly expressed her satisfaction when her husband's girlfriend (and wife-to-be) was imprisoned for eight months. (69)

These accounts of marital conflict and separation had two major and interrelated functions: to illustrate the kind of behaviour deemed incompatible with communist morality, and to emphasize the need and desirability of protecting the interests of marriage and the family. Deng Yingchao made a direct link between these two aspects when she pointed out that 'liking the new and hating the old' was inconsistent with communist morality for it indicated 'a selfish attitude' which did not take the abandoned party and the family into consideration. (70) Other commentators sometimes took an even more rigid view of marital propriety, when it seemed to be threatened by extra-marital relationships. Writing in the legal journal *Faxue*, Liu Yunxiang argued that the 'bourgeois approach to marriage' (*zichanjieji hunyin guandian*), which he claimed was now the main reason for divorce, was not adequate grounds for divorce, since to permit a couple's separation for

ideologically suspect reasons would disrupt social order as well as family life. (71) On a more flexible note, Li Deting, writing in the same journal, called attention to the tragic consequences that could arise as a result of such an unyielding approach. (72) He cited the case of a young woman who had married a man more than thirty years her senior, and 'for whom she had been unable to develop any real affection because he was unable to satisfy her sexual needs.' She found a new job, and started 'an improper sexual relationship' (*bu zhengdang de nan'nü guanxi*) with someone else, and asked her husband for a divorce. He agreed, but their mutual request was turned down by the court, and the woman, in despair, committed suicide.

Represented as the principal subject and object of most of the media discussion about illicit sexual practices, women thus emerged as the fulcrum of sexual morality, responsible for sustaining marital stability by adopting the correct approach in sexual matters. As wives, women were advised to be patient, gentle, and forgiving of their husbands:

When criticising him, you will be unable to resolve the problem if you simply adopt a harsh, argumentative attitude. You must adopt the approach of a comrade, of curing the sickness to save the person, and you must begin by showing loving care (*aihu*). Only in this way will you be successful in your results. (73)

On the other hand, women were chastised for being ineffective in criticising their husbands' shortcomings. 'Weakness, concessions, and compromises can only contribute further to his bad behaviour (*huai xingwei*).' (74) Even as the potential 'third one', women were implicitly given the responsibility of defending sexual propriety, and, by implication, of helping men restrain their impulses. Despite the explicit indictment of adulterous men, it was often the 'third one' who was expected to take the initiative in terminating adulterous relationships by withdrawing from them, as suggestions in an article entitled 'Disanzhe yinggai zidong tuichu gan'ga de diwei' (The third one should withdraw from an awkward position) unequivocally indicated. (75)

The hidden dangers of female sexuality

The gender asymmetry in apportioning responsibility for marital breakdown and extra-marital relationships in part corresponded to popular and deeply embedded ideas that women were the source of evil and disorder. Ancient sayings like 'Disorder comes not from heaven... it is produced by a woman' and 'For a man to take his pleasure is a thing that may be condoned. That a girl should take her pleasure cannot be condoned' were echoed in contemporary sayings of the 1950s, common particularly at the time of the promulgation of the Marriage Law: (76) 'freedom of marriage is none other than marrying as you please, divorcing as you please, and sexual promiscuity (*luan gao nan'nú guanxi*)'; (77) 'the Marriage Law is women's law' which will 'disrupt family life'; (78) 'leading the devil in through the door is bringing trouble on yourself'. (79) That such sayings expressed fears that the Marriage Law was an invitation to promiscuity and to the 'increasing power of women' (*funu quanli dale*) was clear in a speech Hu Yaobang gave in 1953 to convince the public of the advantages of free-choice marriage. (80) Indeed, Hu Yaobang went to considerable lengths to explain that the law was not an invitation to promiscuity. In so doing, he gave tacit recognition to the regulation of female sexuality as a necessary condition for dispelling popular anxieties about the law. (81) The barely hidden subtext was that expressions of an autonomous female sexuality, unsusceptible to the control of others, violated the boundaries established by the discourse. Unless controlled, female sexuality would provoke disorder and chaos. Sexual transgressions by women would give expression to the evil and polluting powers of female sexuality.

When given expression outside the appropriate context of marriage, female sexuality was, as above sections have argued, associated with a range of harmful consequences both for women and for men. Indeed, the continued qualification of aspects of female sexuality as a *yin* force -- and as such culturally associated with notions of pollution -- was in itself, indicative

of its potential dangers. (82) However, it would be stretching speculation to its limits to suggest that the source of harm and danger was identified with female sexuality in anything more than its most general meaning. The imagery of the discourse suggested, for example, that young women possessed potentially disruptive sexual powers because they were young and attractive, not because they defined female sexuality in its totality. Menstrual blood was associated with disease, the lack of hygiene and generally distasteful fluids, but not, at least not explicitly, with the polluting powers of the female sexual organs. (83) More often than not, the negative and polluting effects associated with female sexuality were conveyed via allusion to the gender characteristics linked to it. Descriptions of dress and appearance offered an obvious means of signalling the potential for sexual immorality often attributed to women; the 'loose' character of morally suspect women was not infrequently suggested by references to their colourful dress and 'bourgeois' appearance. For example, an article about a young woman's extra-marital affair after seven years of marriage began by describing how she became interested in fine clothes. (84) Other references mentioned in previous sections signalled the women's dubious sexuality by describing their shiny, high-heeled shoes, tight dresses, and sleek hair. (85) The brief moment of 'prettification' encouraged in the mid-1950s was the exception which proved the rule. (86) Undesirable consequences, if not physical harm, were therefore associated with certain aspects of what was projected as female nature, such as petty materialism, fickleness and changeability, when permitted expression within the context of a love or marital relationship.

While the purpose of these images was doubtless not primarily to illustrate women's grasping and devious nature, but to warn people away from the pitfalls of bourgeois aspirations, the contrast with those used in cases of male transgressions was striking. The image of the woman breaking off her engagement because her fiancé did not have enough money to buy her the clothes she wanted, or the woman who decided that because her

doctor husband had been sent to the countryside, she had adequate grounds for divorce, were not found in association with men. (87) Nor was the idea that a woman would get fed up waiting for an absent husband to return home, and so turn to the attractions of another, found to apply to men waiting for their wives. (88) Given such gender discrepancies, it was no coincidence that the 'glass of water' metaphor was invariably used to denote women's sexual behaviour. (89)

Official opinions and pronouncements on the circumstances meriting divorce changed during the 1950s, in conjunction with the changing emphases of state interests in family and marital stability. At no stage, however, was adultery or 'three cornered love' (*san jiao lian'ai*) discussed as a palpable and serious response to changing affection and social position. With few exceptions, the very real tensions created for couples by changing roles, professions and status were largely ignored under the priority of maintaining conjugal stability in the name of economic progress. The source and motivation for what was imputed as deviation from the moral norm were trivialised by pejorative comparisons with the corrupt and materialistic individualism of western capitalism, and by admonitions for failing to respond to the call of the collective. (90) No matter what the circumstances, extra-marital relationships were treated with suspicion, and were subsumed under the category of corrupt bourgeois behaviour. Indeed, that adulterous behaviour was sometimes treated as a crime was in itself evidence of the unsympathetic approach of the official discourse. There was no accommodation for 'deviant' or 'abnormal' behaviour, or for any actions which could not be interpreted under the terms legitimised by the official

discourse.

The behavioural characteristics attributed to women in accounts of marital and family tension grafted meanings on to the construction of female gender and sexuality which both complemented and contradicted the representations of women found in other discourses. Women appeared as victims and villains, in what often seemed like a reworking of the virgin-or-whore dichotomy familiar in the western tradition. (91) They were empowered to activate or to restrain men's active sexual urges, and were charged with guaranteeing standards of sexual morality by regulating their own. In foregrounding issues of sexual morality, the changing focus of 'marriage problems' had, therefore, particular implications for women. The attribution of misery and suffering to women who deviated from the norm of sexual morality was a means of reinforcing the desirability of respectable sexual behaviour. Associating harm with women's sexual transgressions offered a mode of demarcating the acceptable from the unacceptable in the normative expectations of sexual behaviour. Again as Nead wrote, the sharpening of demarcations between the married and the unmarried worked to produce a norm of respectable sexual behaviour and to define extra-marital sex as illicit and deviant. (92)

Removed from the context of British society in the nineteenth century, this is in many ways an apt description of the general purpose of the Chinese discourses of the 1950s. All pre-marital and extra-marital sex was defined as immoral and harmful, in social and psychological, if not in strictly physical, terms. All displays of female sexuality which were not contained within the proper boundaries of monogamous marriage were treated as unorthodox, and therefore potentially dangerous. The construction of women as autonomous sexual agents outside the boundaries defined by wifehood and motherhood represented a threat to the model of sexual and marital harmony projected by the official discourse. This is not to suggest that the state's concerns about sexual morality were simply defined by the double standard, the code which condones sexual activity in men as a sign of

'masculinity' while condemning it in women as a sign of deviant behaviour. (93) Rather, they were qualified by emphases and tendencies, indicating that sexual transgressions in men were the result either of changing socio-economic and professional circumstance, or of natural sexual urges, while in women they were the result of innocence or of interference in others' happiness. In this reworking of the male/public-female/private dichotomy, female sexuality acquired meanings and functions which underwrote the normative requirements of the discourse of sexuality. Identifying women's sexual transgressions by reference to categories such as victim and the deviant 'third one' (*disanzhe*) aimed to contain the extent of sexual deviancy, by associating it with pain and evil. It also offered a convenient technique for explaining women's deviation from the norm of marital procreative sex.

We have already seen how women were charged with the responsibility for patrolling sexuality before marriage. During marriage, this responsibility grew, commensurate with women's increased powers to disrupt the conjugal unit. Just as women emerged as the key agents of sexual morality and conjugal and familial harmony, so violating this role by becoming the adulteress or 'third one' could destroy the structures on which that harmony rested. As Victoria Goddard wrote in her work on women's sexuality in Naples, 'women had the capacity to provoke crises in the system precisely through their sexuality.' (94) It was precisely because women were attributed with the responsibility for regulating sexual order through regulating their own behaviour that they were empowered to threaten the values of the discourse. (95) Attributing suffering to women's sexual misdemeanours therefore had a related purpose; it could minimise the potential threat to the discourse's standards imposed by constructing women as the mediators of sexual morality.

In her work on rituals of purity and pollution, Mary Douglas argued that the human body can be used as a metaphor for the integrity and distinctiveness of social units. (96) Rituals and

ideas expressive of a concern to protect the body, often from the polluting powers of one sex, may represent preoccupations with the vulnerability of the social unit. (97) By extension, practices and discourses to protect women from sexual contact may express certain perceptions of the limits, or boundaries of social or familial identity. Female purity thus becomes associated with protecting the group from contaminating influences. (98)

Such ideas were echoed in the representation of female sexuality analysed above, not so much with precise reference to notions of female purity, but rather to the expectations of female sexuality which were constructed in the interstices between appropriate and inappropriate conduct. Female sexuality was constructed to indicate both the general standards of sexual morality demanded by the discourse, and the sexual conduct and attitudes excluded from it. Controlled, it represented social and moral order, while unfettered and autonomous, it represented danger, disruption and chaos. The contrast between the different modes of female sexuality -- between what could be thought of as extremes of pollution and purity -- defined the boundaries of acceptable sexual behaviour in general. Whether by confirmation or negation, the official discourse therefore constructed female sexuality as the principal agent of sexual order.

EIGHT

CONCLUSIONS

The articulation of sex-related issues in the official publications of the 1950s signified the construction of sexuality as a site of state control. It signified the formulation of techniques to supervise and direct the healthy socialist development of China's youth, not through the imposition of control in the form of imperatives and injunctions, but through integrating the most personal aspects of ordinary men's and women's lives into the orbit of state interests. As a principle of gender and social order, the regulation of sexuality appeared as more than the control of the already fixed entities of male and female. The treatment of the categories of male and female as objects requiring definition was synonymous with the construction of the entities that the official discourse sought to address. (1) The categories of male and female thus emerged as both the object and the subject of the official discourse of sexuality. The construction of sexuality itself became an instrument of control. The official discourse of sexuality therefore functioned as a mechanism of control through representing the male and female as particular kinds of sexual and moral subjects. The conclusions that follow assess the significance for women of the official construction of their responsibilities and attributes within sexually implicated relationships.

The official discourse of sexuality

As various writers have argued, the Chinese state's policies towards women, marriage and the family during the 1950s were

principally determined by the requirements of socio-economic development and political control. (2) As in the Soviet Union under Stalin, and despite the radical attempts to transform rural society under the programme of collectivisation, the family unit remained the lynchpin of social, economic and moral order in the countryside. (3) The adoption of an essentially urban model of practice to inform the norms of sexual behaviour considered appropriate to the monogamous system of marriage failed to dislodge the rural household-family unit from its dominant role in social and economic organisation. Indeed, as Stacey has convincingly argued, family reform in China was not an 'independent variable', but 'was integral to and inseparable from the general causes, processes and outcomes of socialist revolution'. (4) State intervention to modify and mould family inter-relationships through land and marriage reform constituted a vital part of the aim to channel family energies and commitments in support of the state's goals of transformation. Ordered and stable family relationships responsive to the state's needs were essential to the success of its policies.

The regulation of sexuality formed a distinct means of ordering family relationships; identification of the range of representational practices subsumed under the concept of sexuality as used in this study offered a distinct technique for establishing mechanisms of control within the family not available within a policy focus on social and economic practices alone. The development of what Donzelot called 'political technologies that invested the body [and] health' granted the state access to controlling the sexual behaviours of ordinary men and women in informal as well as formal, legal ways. (5) A 'technology of sex', to use Foucault's formulation, created through a variety of medical, pedagogical, social and political discourses, constructed sex as a 'matter that required the social body as a whole, and virtually all of its individuals, to place themselves under surveillance' in the interests of marital, family and social welfare. (6) The state's identification of sexuality as a target of intervention expanded the available possibilities for sculpting

gender, marital and family relationships to suit the interests of central policy.

The various components of the official discourse of sexuality analysed in the foregoing chapters embraced all the sex-related issues and relationships an individual person was normatively expected to encounter in his or her lifetime. They covered information about the biological and medical aspects of sexuality; advice about sexual behaviour for adolescents concerned about the physiological and psychological changes taking place in their bodies, and for young people preparing for marriage; encouragement to young married couples to develop their sexual relationship as a positive contribution to marital and family satisfaction; recommendations to married women about how to regulate sexual activity to suit the requirements of reproductive health and fertility; admonitions against sexual conduct which disrupted the exclusive link between sexuality and the marriage relationship; and condemnation of extra-marital sexual activity which threatened the principle of monogamy. The didactic purpose in publicising such issues was unambiguous; none of the materials about sex-related issues published in the official journals of the 1950s were intended for pleasure, amusement or literary value. Few relevant articles, moreover, were published without some reference, either explicit or implicit, to the responsibilities of the individual person to include the interests of the family, the group, or the state in his or her understanding of the issue or relationship in question. The orientation of the apparently 'private' sphere of the sexually implicated relationship to the 'public' realm of social and political commitment was given a status which dominated all other considerations in the discourse of sexuality. The political and moral concerns apparent in the articles about sex-related issues aimed to instruct the reader, at different stages of his or her personal development, in the sexual behaviour considered suitable to principles of 'socialist morality'.

In support of this purpose, the sex-related topics discussed in the official press were selected on the basis of their value

alongside the norms and principles of 'socialist morality' as defined in the official discourse. Many themes were selected for their positive value, as models or exemplars of appropriate sexual behaviour. Articles about the ideological compatibility of courting couples, for example, or about the constituent components of a happy marriage were intended to identify the values and practices men and women were expected to adopt. Others were selected as negative examples of the unfortunate consequences likely to occur as a result of failure to conform to normative expectations of sexual behaviour. In this way, oppositional categories of negative and positive, of bourgeois and socialist, of correct and incorrect served to define each other. The meanings attached to notions of 'correct' sexual behaviour were constructed through contrast and internal differentiation within the texts of the discourse. (7) The labelling of 'correct' and 'incorrect' behaviour according to these contrasts functioned as a form of control via circumscribing the area of acceptable behaviour and isolating abnormalities. All the images and examples present in the texts of the discourse, whatever the value attributed them, were therefore tailored to fit in to the discourse's general strategy of education and direction; areas of knowledge which eluded explanation within the terms of the discourse were simply excluded from it. Hence, silence reigned over issues associated with homosexuality, incest, child sexuality and sexuality in old age. (8) The creation of what Weeks called a 'single uniform sexuality' was incompatible with the inclusion of 'different class and gender sexualities' which rejected its terms. (9) The authority of the discourse was maintained by its consistency. (10) Denial of sexual forms and behaviours which could not be assimilated into the framework of the discourse effectively eliminated a potentially enormous range of sexual representations as valid subject positions for the audience to identify with. As an aspect of control, the recommendations contained in the materials of the 1950s sought to narrow the gap between the idealised relations between men and women in the official discourse and the actual practices and relations of ordinary men and women at a day-to-day

level.

The representations of sexuality analysed in this work were, therefore, not reflections of social and economic practices of men and women. Many of the sexual representations of the official discourse were contradicted by individual experience and social practice. (11) For example, suggestions about the passive and yielding nature of women in sexual relationships may have represented men as dominant, but they obscured the real power that women possessed. However, Chinese representations of sexual equality and western analyses of these have consistently focused on the actions of women and their access to and control over different social, economic and political resources. In the process, various meanings attached to concepts of womanhood and female gender, and particularly those which are embedded in discursive and cultural valuations, have been obscured. A focus on the textual representations of women in sexually-implicated situations and relationships compensates for the omissions created by an exclusive focus on their social actions.

Selfless sexuality

Sex-related issues were discussed in the materials of the 1950s without any indication that they were the subject to the variations of specific individual experience as well to the norms established by the discourse. Sex (*xing*) was constructed as a concept that had little bearing on notions of self-identity and personhood, unless these could be assimilated into the discourse's emphases on reproduction and marital stability. On the contrary, the inclusion of sex as a significant aspect of individual identity was invariably used, as we have seen, to illustrate improper sexual conduct. When applied to sex-related concerns, the notion of individuality was almost synonymous with the pejorative concept of the individualistic person, and as such was interchangeable with attributions of selfishness and self-

aggrandisement, both of which were considered marks of immorality and depravity. In the absence of the individual self as a category of analysis, sexuality was represented either as a collection of physical acts and conditions, that varied only in so far as physiological needs varied, or as an innate force to be kept in check in the name of social stability.

The dissociation between sexuality and notions of self or personhood in the discourse of the 1950s was, *ipso facto*, clear indication that sexuality was omitted from the hierarchy of components associated with personal value, prestige and achievement. Sexuality, understood as an area of representational practices indicative of a gendered and sexual identity, was not considered as one of the subject positions ordinary men and women were encouraged to identify with. It was only important in so far as it contributed to reproduction, marital harmony and family satisfaction.

It was this removal of sexuality from the range of subject positions to which an individual had access in constructing his or her self-identity that overdetermined its representation in the discourse of the 1950s. Running through all the different representations of sexual morality in the materials analysed in this work, one salient characteristic stands out above all others: the images and examples used to describe sex-related issues and relationships were essentially asexual and aphysical. Discussion about the physiological aspects of sexuality analysed in chapter two presented sexuality in the detached, impersonal tones of abstract science; its focus was on universal structures and functions rather than on the personification of physical experience. Similarly, advice to newly-weds about techniques of sexual intercourse was targeted at the universal couple, rather than at real examples.

The representation of sexuality in the official discourse of the 1950s was therefore divorced from sexuality as individuated experience. The discourse's silence about sexuality as a bodily, erotic and relational experience did not reflect the meaning attached to sexuality by ordinary men and women. On the contrary,

it was dictated by the 'self-less' emphasis of the discourse of sexuality, which was moulded - at least in part - by historical as well as political considerations. Discussion of the physical and erotic properties of sex would have signified the personalisation of sexuality as an aspect of individual experience in a way that the discourse did not, and could not condone. Reinforced by inherited perceptions of the family and group orientation of individual rights and responsibilities, the political priorities of the day banished the possibility of representing sexuality as a series of responses bounded by a specific dyadic relationship; attention to the individual case was incompatible with the generalising orientation of the discourse. Inclusion of the individual - and therefore individual differences - as a category of analysis would have threatened the consistency of the normative sexual standards of the discourse; it would have destroyed its unitary message and therefore have invalidated its purpose. The terms of analysis on which the discourse depended could not admit any interference with its exclusive emphasis on the group, whether this was defined as the family, the collective or the state. There was no alternative, therefore, but to characterise individualised, 'selfed' representations of sexuality as signs of ideological and moral deviance or physical suffering.

Female sexuality and gender

The construction of sexuality as a collection of acts which were fundamentally determined by biology affirmed an absolute conflation of sex with gender. The suggestion that the biological structure of male and female dictated two distinct and fixed sets of sexual responses served to legitimise the restriction of sexual practices that men and women could engage in and the imposition of asymmetrical gender responsibilities onto those practices. Moreover, as in any biologistic account of heterosexuality, the appeal to biological imperatives legitimised the inevitability of

procreation and therefore its structuring of sexual practice. This had particular implications for women. The discourse's link between sexuality and procreation was most notable in the advice to women about sexual activity during menstruation and pregnancy. As we have seen, this link did not exclude the idea that a good sex life could contribute to conjugal happiness; it did not exclude the representation of sexuality as an aspect of the married, rather than reproductive, relationship. Evidence of a desire to dissociate sex from reproduction was, however, considered immoral and deviant. The biologicistic assumptions of the 1950s discourse therefore imposed on women a reproductive and nurturing role that was considered an aspect of her natural responsibilities.

The conflation of sex with gender in the discourse of the 1950s informed the view of the male-female relationship as one of harmony and complementarity. Any conflict associated with sex was represented not ^{as} the consequence of a hierarchical opposition between male and female, but of a failure to understand the meaning and needs of complementarity. Thus, the excitability of a man's natural drive was described not in terms of the dominance of male penetration but in relation to the requirements of eliciting a complementary response in the woman. The gender expectations of male and female within the married relationship were described with reference to similar notions of balance and harmony. As we have seen, the suggestion that women should undertake more domestic duties than men, and should be prepared to sacrifice her own needs for the sake of her husband and children invoked the same notions of sexual and gender complementarity. Hence, while it was recognised that the dual demands of domestic and professional life imposed certain burdens on women, such recognition was dissociated from questions of hierarchy and power in family and social organisation.

This study has argued that through its representation of the gender characteristics associated with female sexuality, the official discourse of sexuality gave women a key role as agent responsible for patrolling sexual morality and family order.

Consolidated by the biological arguments informing the state's differentiated construction of men and women in its discourse of sexuality, the corollary was the continued representation of women in association with the domestic, and therefore subordinate, sphere. The gender implications of the official discourse of sexuality were inconsistent with the claims to sexual equality made by its architects.

The full significance of these gender biases^s only become apparent when analysed in conjunction with the denial of the female self which emerged from the official discourse. Chapter two argued that women's sexuality was given no effective recognition except with reference to procreation and to the dominating demands of the male drive. The representation of female sexuality as a naturally passive and responsive complement to strong male desire, oriented principally to the needs of procreation, therefore ignored the female subject as a distinct, and autonomous, source of pleasure. Combined with exhortations to care for and serve her husband, whether in criticising his ideological excesses or in attending to the needs of his work, this contributed to a construction of the woman in sexually implicated relationships as almost literally without self. Hence, the representation of female self-regulation and sexual restraint before marriage was associated not principally with a woman's own interests as a potential victim of abuse, but with the needs of conserving her own and men's energies to devote to study and work before the advent of marriage. General requirements of pre-marital propriety were constructed through suggestions that the major responsibility for exercising sexual self-restraint lay with women. During marriage, the only context legitimising sexual activity, women's sexual responsiveness, conjugal service and self-sacrifice were demanded in the name of marital satisfaction and familial harmony. The selfless wife, sensitive to her husband's sexual and domestic needs, became a protectress of moral boundaries. Alongside requirements of sexual restraint after and outside marriage, in particular to suppress her potential role as the iniquitous 'third one', the representation of women's sexuality was inseparable from

expectations of self-denial. Women's sexuality was constructed as the site of a series of injunctions which, if violated, brought misfortune on her and her family. Women's selfless sexuality was represented as the main agent protecting the boundaries of marital stability from disruption and chaos.

The meaning attached to female gender that emerged from the official discourse of sexuality was unequivocal. The combination of images of women's sexual self-restraint, selflessness and service served as continuing reminder of the *liên ữ* tradition, with its focus on female patience, loyalty and restraint. The association between female sexuality, reproduction and female self-restraint in the service of male or male-associated interests confirmed the construction of gender relationships not as a complementarity between equals but as an essentially hierarchical relationship imposed by biology.

NOTES

Chapter one Introduction

1. For the history of the CCP's approach to women and the family see Elisabeth Croll, *Feminism and Socialism in China*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978; Delia Davin, *Woman-Work*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976; and Judith Stacey, *Patriarchy and Socialist Revolution in China*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983.
2. See Davin, op. cit., 17, for an explanation of the term *funü gongzuo*, to refer to 'all sorts of activities among women, including mobilizing them for revolutionary struggle, production, literacy and hygiene campaigns, social reform, and so on.' *Funü gongzuo* may also have included attention to sex-related issues which concerned reproduction and childbirth, but this was not given prominence in Party publications prior to 1949.
3. See appendix for the frequency of publication of specified topics, and for the correspondence between the topics published and changes in state policy on economic, social and political issues.
4. Zhang Jun, 'Yonghu hunyin fa, shixian hunyin fa' (Uphold and carry out the Marriage Law), *ZGQN* 38 (6 May 1950), 10-11; 'Bangzhu qingnian jiejie hunyin wenti' (Help young people resolve their marriage problems), *ZGQN* *ibid.*, 14; Cheng Jinwu, 'Jianli zhengque de lian'ai guan' (Establish a correct perspective on love), *ZGQN* *ibid.*, 16-17; Lei Ji, 'Tantan wode lian'ai guan' (A brief talk about my perspective on love), *ZGQN* *ibid.*, 19.
5. Li Yang, 'Chunümo yu aiqing' (The hymen and love), *ZGFN* 11 (1 November 1956), 12-13; Lin Qiaozhi, 'Cong shengli shang tan jiehun nianling' (Talking about the age of marriage from a physiological point of view), *ZGFN* 4 (1 April 1957), 25.
6. The article starting the debate was written by the wife of Luo Baoyi, who had left her during her third pregnancy in favour of another, younger woman. See Liu Lequn, 'Women fufu guanxi weishenmo polie?' (Why did our marriage break down?), *ZGFN* 11 (28 November 1955), 6-7. The subsequent debate was published in the first four and the sixth issues of *ZGFN* of 1956. It was also published as a booklet by the Chinese Women's Magazine Press in 1956. In western works, the case has been discussed by M. J. Meijer, in *Marriage Law and Policy in the People's Republic of China*, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1972, 141-142, and more recently by Emily Honig and Gail Hershatler in *Personal Voices*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988, 219.
7. The only other work which analyses issues of female sexuality and gender in the PRC is Honig and Hershatler, op. cit. In contrast with the present study, however, *Personal Voices* focuses on the late 1970s and 1980s.
8. For discussion about the influence of Havelock Ellis and Freud on the earlier 'naturalist' or 'essentialist' views of sexuality see Jeffrey Weeks, *Sex, Politics and Society*, London: Longman, 1981, 1-6; and Margaret Jackson, '"Facts of life" or the eroticization of women's oppression? Sexology and the social construction of heterosexuality', in Pat Caplan ed., *The Cultural*

Construction of Sexuality, London: Tavistock Publications, 1987, 52-81.

9. See, for example, Sherry B. Ortner and Harriet Whitehead's 'Introduction: Accounting for Sexual Meanings' in Ortner & Whitehead, eds., *Sexual Meanings; The Cultural Construction of Gender and Sexuality*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981, 1-27.

10. For a survey of the different anthropological approaches to issues of sexuality, see Pat Caplan's introduction to *The Cultural Construction of Sexuality*, op. cit., 1-30.

11. See, for example, Margaret L. Andersen, *Thinking about Women; Sociological Perspectives on Sex and Gender*, New York: Macmillan, 1988.

12. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume I: An Introduction*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1984.

13. See, for example, Weeks, op. cit., 6-11; and Martha Vicinus, 'Sexuality and Power: A Review of Current Work in the History of Sexuality', *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 8, no. 1, (Spring 1982), 132-156.

14. Weeks, op. cit., and his briefer, but equally lucid survey, *Sexuality*, Chichester: Ellis Horwood Limited & London: Tavistock Publications, 1986. The quotation here is from Vicinus' review, see op. cit., 140.

15. Jacques Donzelot, *Policing the Family*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980.

16. Barbara Ehrenreich and Deidre English, *For Her Own Good; 50 Years of the Experts' Advice to Women*, London: Pluto Press, 1979; Elaine Showalter, *The Female Malady; Women, Madness and English Culture, 1830-1980*, London: Virago Press, 1987.

17. Despite the increasing acceptance of the conceptualisation of sexuality as a social construct, the view of sex as an overpowering natural drive that shapes individual and social life is nevertheless still upheld by some historians. See, for example, Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1979 (1st ed. 1977). The essentialist view of sexuality typifies the work of sexologists such as William Masters and Virginia Johnson, *Human Sexual Response*, New York: Little, Brown, & Co., 1966, as well as radical Freudians such as Wilhelm Reich and Erich Fromm.

18. The notion of sexuality as a 'thing in itself, rather than a collection of acts or eroticized bodies' is relatively modern in western societies. The first use of the term, according to the Oxford Dictionary, dates from 1800. See Vicinus, op. cit., 135.

19. I have been told that the term '*xing jiaose*' is used as the nearest equivalent to the concept 'sexuality'. However, it seems to be used more in Taiwan than in the PRC; it does not appear in the 1950s materials examined for the present analysis.

20. Wang Yunwu and Fu Weiping, eds., *Zhongguo funü shi* (A History of Chinese Women), Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan (Commercial Press), 1937; Li Youning and Zhang Yufa, eds., *Zhongguo funü shi lunwen ji* (Collected Essays on the History of Chinese Women), Taiwan: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1981. See also, Cheng Dongyuan, *Zhongguo funü shenghuo shi* (A History of the Lives of Chinese Women), Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1937.

21. For example, see Zhonghua quanguo minzhu funü lianhehui

- xuanchuan jiaoyu bu (Educational Bureau of the All-China Democratic Women's Federation), ed., *Zhongguo funü yundong de zhongyao wenjian* (Important Documents of the Chinese Women's Movement), Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1953; Zhonghua quanguo funü lianhehui (All-China Women's Federation) ed., *Zhongguo funü yundong zhongyao wenxian* (Important Documents of the Chinese Women's Movement), Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1979.
22. Wang Shunu, *Zhongguo changji shi* (A History of Chinese Prostitution), Shanghai: Sanlian shudian, 1988; Xiao Mingxiong, *Zhongguo tongxinglian shi lu* (Records of the History of Homosexuality in China), Hong Kong, 1984.
23. Jiang Xiaoyuan, "Xing" zai gudai Zhongguo -- dui yizhong wenhua xianxiang de tansuo ("Sex" in Ancient China -- an exploration of a cultural phenomenon), Shaanxi: Kexue jishu chubanshe, 1988.
24. Howard S. Levy, *Chinese Footbinding: The History of a Chinese Erotic Custom*, New York: Walton Rawls, 1966; John Byron, *Portrait of a Chinese Paradise: Erotica and Sexual Customs of the Late Qing Period*, London: Quartet Books, 1987.
25. Vivien W. Ng, 'Ideology and Sexuality: Rape Laws in Qing China', *Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 46, no. 1 (February) 1987, 57-70.
26. Charlotte Furth, 'Blood, Body and Gender; Medical Images of the Female Condition in China', *Chinese Science*, Vol. 7 (December 1986), 43-66, and 'Concepts of Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Infancy in Ch'ing Dynasty China', *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 46, no. 1 (February 1987), 7-35; Bret Hinsch, *Passions of the Cut Sleeve: The Male Homosexual Tradition in China*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.
27. Robert H. Van Gulik, *Sexual Life in Ancient China*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1974 (first published 1961).
28. For example, see Xue Suzhen, Wang Youzhu, and Wang Lijuan, 'An Investigation of Some Marriage Cases in Urban Shanghai', in David Chu, ed., *Sociology and Society in Contemporary China, 1979-1983*, Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1984, 82-98. A survey about attitudes towards pre-marital sex appeared in *Baokan wenzhai*, (August 27 1985). Another was Li Minghua, Wang Shengbing, Xiao Muhua and Tao Jianhui, 'Wuchang qu qinggong lian'ai hunyin xianzhuang diaocha' (An investigation of the current place of love and marriage among young workers in Wuchang district), in *Shehui* 6 (June 1983), 29-31. Occasional references in the materials of the 1950s indicate that similar surveys were conducted, even though they were not published for public consumption. Lack of evidence, however, makes it impossible to assess their value.
29. One of the few to do this is Liu Dalin's 'Xingkexue yu funü jiefang', (Sexology and women's liberation), *Shehui kexue zhanxian*, 1 (January 1987), 120-125, which suggests that women's subordinate position within the family and society has been, and continues to be sustained by discriminatory views of women's sexual behaviour and interests. Liu argues that changes in attitudes about sex are indispensable to women's emancipation.
30. Honig and Hershatter, op. cit.
31. Stacey, op. cit., 230-231; Beverley Hooper, *Youth in China*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1985, 182-188. The suggestion that

contemporary attitudes towards sex in China are 'puritanical' is a common one. Given the present focus on the discourse of sexuality rather than social attitudes, this work does not attempt to analyse the value of these comments. It is worth pointing out, however, that if puritanical is loosely interpreted to mean judgmental, strict and pleasure-denying, then its value to describe Chinese attitudes should be contrasted with those of ribaldry and amusement which are just as -- if not more -- characteristic of popular attitudes towards sex in China. For further comments which coincide with this view, see below, note 36.

32. Margery Wolf, *Revolution Postponed: Women in Contemporary China*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985, 141-181.

33. Esther Cheo Ying, *Black Country Girl in Red China*, London: Hutchinson, 1980, 50-54.

34. *ibid.* The proverbial 'glass of water' theory referred to Lenin's criticism of Alexandra Kollontai who, in his eyes, was guilty of suggesting that sexual relations should be as easy as 'drinking a glass of water'. See Klara Zetkin, 'Liening tan funü, hunyin he xing de wenti' (Lenin's views on issues concerning women, marriage and sex), *ZGFN* 12 (9 December 1953), 13. This was a translation of excerpts from Klara Zetkin's *Reminiscences of Lenin*. For further discussion about Kollontai's views, see Cathy Porter, *Alexandra Kollontai, A Biography*, London: Virago, 1980, 432-433.

35. Cheo Ying, *op. cit.*, 66-67.

36. William Hinton, *Fanshen: A Documentary of Revolution in a Chinese Village*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1966, 163-64, 228-229; Jonathan D. Spence, *The Death of Woman Wang*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1978, 104-5, 108-9; Lloyd Eastman, *Family, Fields and Ancestors*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1988, 33.

37. A personal informant from a village in northern Jiangsu province, told me of a song called 'Shiba mo' (The eighteen models) commonly sung by the married women of his village, in which the erogenous zones of the female body were listed and described. He said that while a certain tolerance was shown towards women who had extra-marital liaisons, sex for unmarried women was considered totally wrong.

38. See, for example, Florence Ayscough, *Chinese Women, Yesterday and Today*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1937; Dymphna Cusack, *Chinese Women Speak*, London: Century Hutchinson Ltd., 1985 (first published 1958); Olga Lang, *Chinese Family and Society*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968 (first published 1946); Ida Pruitt, *A Daughter of Han: The Autobiography of a Chinese Working Woman*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967 (first published 1945); Chao Buwei Yang, *Autobiography of a Chinese Woman*, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1970 (first published 1947); M.C. Yang, *A Chinese Village: Taitou, Shantung Province*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1945;

39. C.K. Yang, *The Chinese Family in the Communist Revolution*, Massachusetts: The M.I.T. Press, 1959; Meijer, *op. cit.*

40. William Parish and Martin King Whyte, *Village and Family in Contemporary China*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press,

1978; Martin King Whyte and William Parish, *Urban Life in Contemporary China*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984; Judith Stacey, op. cit.; Delia Davin, op. cit.; Elisabeth Croll, *The Politics of Marriage in Contemporary China*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981; Margery Wolf, op. cit.; Kay Ann Johnson, *Women, the Family and Peasant Revolution in China*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983.

41. While acknowledging the difficulties of applying the concept 'sexuality' to the present analysis, it is beyond the scope of this research to embark on a discussion of this highly complex -- and developed -- issue of theory. However, Foucault's exposition of the concept to refer to disciplinary discourses which focus on the ordering of sexual relations, marriage and reproduction, makes the concept as applicable to the analysis of the Chinese data of the 1950s as to the materials deriving from the Christian tradition. See the three volumes of Foucault's *History of Sexuality*, Volume I: *An Introduction*, op. cit.; Volume II: *The Use of Pleasure*, London: Penguin Books, 1987; Volume III: *The Care of the Self*, London: Penguin Books, 1990.

42. For examples of books published in the mid-1980s which typified the more diverse tones of the recent discourse, see Fang Fang, *Nuxing shengli he xinli* (Female physiology and psychology), Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe, 1986; Gongren ribao sixiang jiaoyu bu (Ideological education section of the Workers' Daily), ed., *Aiqing, hunyin, daode* (Love, Marriage, Morality), Beijing: Gongren chubanshe, 1983; Jin Ma, ed., *Qingnian aiqing shenghuo* (The Love Life of Young People), Zhejiang: Zhejiang kexue jishu chubanshe, 1987; Li Songchen, ed., *Jiating daode jiahua* (Familiar Tales about Family Morality), Beijing: Zhongguo zhanlan chubanshe, 1983; Tang Dao, *Hunyin xinlixue* (The Psychology of Marriage), Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1984.

43. Honig and Hersshatter point out that although 'some of the topics under discussion had been raised first in the 1950s, the debates about women's issues in the 1980s were not a restatement of earlier concerns... the 1980s discussion picked up [the] interrupted conversations [of the 1950s], using categories and language familiar to readers from an earlier era... Adornment and sexuality became matters of public concern to a degree undreamed of in the 1950s. Female employment became problematic in new ways because of the economic reforms. Each of these issues was more complex, and the public pronouncements on it less unified than had been the case thirty years before.' op. cit., 6-7.

44. Ortner and Whitehead, op. cit., 39.

45. Weeks, op. cit., 1981, 11. In Foucault's analysis, sexuality becomes a crucial target of power particularly in disciplinary society, in which surveillance of sexuality grants access 'both to the life of the body and the life of the species.' See Foucault, op. cit., 1984, 146. See also Weeks' introduction to Foucault's analysis of sexuality in Weeks, op. cit., 1981, 6-11.

46. In contrast to Foucault's argument that the 'discursive explosion' about sex during the last three centuries was produced by varied mechanisms operating in different institutions, and was answerable to no single unifying strategy, (see Foucault, op. cit., 1984, 17-49), the discourse of sexuality in China was

defined, constructed and contained by central state organs and their regional representatives.

47. Formal modes of regulating sexuality are represented by marriage and divorce laws, incest taboos, operations of the church and state, and so on, see Weeks, op.cit., 1981, 13. See Croll, op.cit., 1981, 86-93, for the deployment of political power through emphasizing political status in the choice of marriage partner.

48. Although established as an independent nation-wide organisation on 3 April 1949, and described as a 'united front organisation of democratic women of all social strata and professions', the All-China Democratic Women's Federation was nevertheless described as coming 'under the leadership of the Communist Party of China' in numerous editorials published in *Zhongguo funü* throughout the 1950s.

49. This formulation by Weeks refers to Foucault's notion of the deployment of sexuality as an aspect of power in a 'society of surveillance and control'. See Weeks, op. cit., 1981, 7-8; and Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison*, London: Allen Lane, 1977.

50. This formulation is derived from Foucault's analysis of the 'deployment of sexuality' as an aspect of power, in Foucault, op.cit., 1984, 92-102.

51. Wang Wenbin, *Xing de zhishi* (Knowledge about Sex), Beijing: Renmin weisheng chubanshe, 1956, 1. This was one of the few, and certainly the most important book on sex education for young people to be published in the 1950s. It was reprinted in 1980.

52. This work uses the term 'official discourse' to refer to party-state responsibility for and power over the sources producing the discourse analysed in this research. It does not seek to develop a general concept of the term.

53. Without exception, the official discourse assumed that the only legitimate relationship for the expression of sexual desire between two people was the formally registered monogamous union, described in Chapter I, Article 1 of the Marriage Law of the People's Republic of China, promulgated on May 1, 1950. See *The Marriage Law of the People's Republic of China (1950)*, Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1973.

54. As the first paragraph of Article 1 of the Marriage Law stated, 'The feudal marriage system based on arbitrary and compulsory arrangements and the supremacy of man over woman, and in disregard of the interests of the children, is abolished.' *ibid.*, 1. For discussion concerning the limited achievements of the new law, and the persistence of arranged marriages, see Croll, op.cit., 1981, 24-37. Wolf, op. cit. 1985, 170-171, suggested that the figures for those who selected their marriage partner entirely on their own during the 1970s and 1980s (35% of those interviewed for Wolf's survey) were almost identical to those of the 'first cohort' to marry during the decade after Liberation. Local cadres were frequently criticised for the failures and abuses of the new law in the early 1950s, see appendix.

55. For discussion about the conceptualisation of marriage and family reform as a process of ideological change see Croll, op.cit., 1981, 8.

56. See Chen Jianwei, 'Lun fengjian jiazhangzhi de pochu' (On the

- breaking down of the system of feudal patriarchy), *HR*, (8 April 1959), 3.
57. *ibid.*
58. Yang Xing, 'Zai jiehun he jiating shenghuo shang ye yao jianli gongchanzhuyi daode pinzhi' (We should also establish correct moral qualities in married and family life), *ZGQN* 8 (16 April 1953), 18-19; Chen Dong, 'Ruhe zhengque duidai lian'ai wenti' (How to correctly treat the question of love), *ZGQN* 4 (16 February 1954), 5-6; Henan All-China Democratic Women's Federation, *Ruhe zhengque duidai lian'ai, hunyin yu jiating wenti* (How to correctly treat problems of love, marriage and the family), Zhengzhou: Henan renmin chubanshe, 1955.
59. *Lihun wenti lunwen xuanji* (Selected essays on problems of divorce), Beijing: Falu chubanshe, 1958, 5.
60. See appendix.
61. See appendix for the themes which predominated in articles about women's issues in the Great Leap period.
62. The tensions between the requirements of general policy and those specific to women form one of the recurring themes in Davin. *op. cit.*, Croll, *op. cit.*, 1978, and Stacey, *op. cit.*
63. See appendix.
64. Chapter I, Article 1 of the 1950 Marriage Law states that 'the New-Democratic marriage system.... is based on the free choice of partners, on monogamy, on equal rights for both sexes.' Chapter III, Article 7 further states that 'Husband and wife are companions living together and enjoy equal status in the home.' *The Marriage Law of the People's Republic of China*, *op. cit.*, 1 & 3.
65. See, for example, Wang Yifu, 'Bixu jiaqiang ganbu dui hunyinfa de xuexi' (We must strengthen cadres' study of the marriage law', *ZGFN* 1 (5 January 1953), 6-7; 'Lao qu nongcun zhong hunyin de xin qixiang' (The new marriage atmosphere on the old rural liberated areas), *ZGFN* 5 & 6 (1 June 1952), 46-47. See also appendix.
66. See, for example, the debate about Luo Baoyi's adulterous behaviour, one important aspect of which concerned evaluations of his wife's response to his needs. One commentator even suggested that his wife was to blame for the estrangement by not being as warm and welcoming to her husband as a good wife should be, see Chen Qi, 'Luo, Liu fufu guanxi polie de yuanyin hezai?' (What are the reasons for the breakdown of Luo and Liu's marriage?', *ZGFN* 2 (1 February 1956), 18.
67. For discussion about the relative importance attached to matters of love and marriage alongside women's other social responsibilities, see chapters four and five.
68. See Stacey, *op. cit.*, for a critical discussion about the instrumentality of socioeconomic requirements in determining the CCP's policy towards women. The argument that women's issues were largely subordinated to the broader policy priorities of the CCP is also prominent in Croll, *op. cit.*, 1978, Davin, *op. cit.*, and Johnson, *op. cit.*
69. Yu Ming, 'We must adopt a solemn attitude towards the problem of love and marriage', *Da gong bao*, (22 December 1956), quoted in Croll, *op. cit.*, 1981, 6.
70. Many articles on friendship and love suggested that problems

occurred as a result of treating them as private, or personal issues. See, for example, 'Ziji de qizi' (My wife), *ZGQN* 4 (16 February 1956), 36-37, which suggested that love between young people could easily deteriorate if it excluded other social interests.

71. See, for example, Jie Xuegong, 'Jianjue fandui zichanjieji gerenzhuyi sixiang' (Resolutely oppose bourgeois individualist ideology), *ZGFN* 1 (1 January 1956), 6.

72. Henan All-China Democratic Women's Federation, *Ruhe zhengque duidai lian'ai, hunyin yu jiating wenti*, op. cit., 7. Stacey, op. cit., 177, argues that in imposing such a collective emphasis, CCP policy towards marriage and family transformation in the 1950s 'reformed Confucian values to socialist ends'.

73. Xie Juezai, 'Chonggao de aiqing' (Lofty Love), *ZGFN* 9 (7 September 1953), 4.

74. Robert A. Padgug, 'Sexual Matters: On Conceptualising Sexuality in History', *Radical History Review*, No. 20 (Spring/Summer 1979), discussed in Vicinus, op. cit., 139-140.

75. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 1.

76. Liu Dalin, op. cit.

77. In response to this emphasis, many women described how they felt inferior and inadequate if they did not work outside the home. A typical comment to this effect was contained in a letter written by a housewife, Li Jingfen, under the title of 'Jiating funü yinggai ruhe geng hao de jianshe shehuizhuyi fuwu?' (How should housewives serve socialist construction even better?), *ZGFN* 4 (28 April 1955), 7: 'because everyone looks down on housewives, I feel that I can't face other people.'

78. Rape within marriage is not recognised in China, although according to Liu Dalin, it has been mentioned in a number of legal journals in China. See Liu Dalin, op. cit., 121.

79. This is James Legge's standard translation of the *Da Xue* (The Great Learning), Text of Confucius, verse 4.

80. For a brief but comprehensive description of the Chinese family in traditional society, see C.K. Yang, op. cit., 5-10.

81. Mark Elvin, 'Between the earth and heaven: conceptions of the self in China', in Michael Carrithers, Steven Collins, and Steven Lukes, eds., *The Category of the Person; Anthropology, Philosophy, History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, 156-157.

82. Lloyd Eastman, op. cit., 15.

83. Official attempts to reform the structure of the family unit under the combined impact of the Marriage Law and the Land Reform Law did not signify that the family and the state were seen as contradictory. Indeed, the turn to more moderate policies in implementing the Marriage Law after 1953 was largely in response to the disruptive effects on the family -- and particularly on its economic function -- of the earlier radical attacks on it. Policy emphasis on encouraging individual commitment to social and collective concerns, and on de-emphasizing individual loyalties to the family, aimed to reduce the power of the kinship unit as a potential source of threat to state and Party interests. For a full discussion of the Party's interests in family reform in the 1940s and 1950s, see Stacey, op. cit., 158-194.

84. See Davin, op. cit., 21-52.

85. *ibid.*, 50-52. Davin suggests that despite the formulation of appropriate marriage laws in all the border regions, conflicts within the women's associations over the issue of free-choice marriage prevented its effective implementation.
86. 'A man in China is usually subjected to the domination of three systems of authority: (1) the state system (political authority)...; (2) the clan system (clan authority)...; and (3) the supernatural system (religious authority)... As for women, in addition to being dominated by these three systems of authority, they are also dominated by the men (the authority of the husband).' Mao Zedong, 'Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1967, 44.
87. After the rectification campaign in Yan'an in 1942, a resolution of 1943 claimed that earlier woman-work had been deficient because it neglected the importance of economic work. 'We have not regarded economic work as the most suitable for women, nor grasped that the mobilization of women for production is the most vital factor in safeguarding their special interests', quoted in Davin, *op. cit.*, 39.
88. Little evidence is available about the implementation of the marriage law in the Soviet Republic in Jiangxi, but by the early 1940s, the CCP's fear of the divisive effects of insisting on implementation of the law was clear in its concern to encourage a 'mass outlook' and to criticise 'feminism' among women Party members.
89. For an introduction to Ding Ling's life and politics, see Yit-si Mei Feuerwerker, *Ding Ling's Ideology and Narrative in Modern Chinese Literature*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982, 1-18.
90. See Robert H. Van Gulik, *op. cit.*, 36-47.
91. For example, *yindao* (lit. hidden passage) is the word for vagina.
92. See Albert Richard O'Hara's translation of the *Lienü zhuan*, *The Position of Women in Early China According to the Lieh Nü Chuan "The Biographies of Chinese Women"*, Taipei: Meiya, 1971.
93. See, for example, the disgrace suffered by a family as a consequence of a female member's scandalous behaviour, in Ayscough, *op. cit.*, 126.
- right to pass these portals of fame. *op. cit.*, 111.
95. For example, Su Wen, 'Zheizhong fengqi shi zhengchang ma?' (Is such practice proper?) *ZGQN* 2 (16 January 1957), 40, which described the worries of a female Youth League branch secretary about the ideological state of a worker in her factory who spent all her spare money on buying new clothes. Other references warned against the deceptive nature of beautiful young women. See, for example, a poem by Lan Li, 'Jiao guniang' (Lovely girl), *ZGQN* 10 (16 May 1958), 36, about a beautiful girl with evil thoughts.
96. See Tien Ju-k'ang, *Male Anxiety and Female Chastity; A Comparative Study of Chinese Ethical Values in Ming-Ch'ing Times*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1988. For a survey of more contemporary Chinese attitudes towards female suicide see Margery Wolf, 'Women and Suicide in China', in Margery Wolf and Roxanne Witke, eds.,

Women in Chinese Society, Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1975, 111-141.

97. 'Whenever the interests of the ruling class were threatened by foreign invasion, or the ideal pattern of Han culture was deteriorating as a result of alien contamination, the cults of fidelity and loyalty were elaborately prescribed and held up to glorify the steadfast purity of the fairer sex and at the same time to ridicule men for their pitiful lack of courage. The proselytizing, biographical sketches of females who had committed suicide to save their honor in times of calamity became standard models in the dynastic histories... ', Tien Ju-k'ang, op. cit., 17.

98. It is known that contributors to the debate about women, the family and sexuality such as Havelock Ellis, Ellen Key, Morgan, Frazer and Malinowski were all discussed during the May Fourth period, see Olga Lang, op. cit., 113-114, but it is difficult, at the current stage of research, to assess with any accuracy the extent to ^{which} the early CCP leaders responsible for woman-work were familiar with their work.

99. See chapter on Ding Ling in Helen Foster Snow, *Women in Modern China*, The Hague: Mouton, 1967, 190-221. See also Yi-tsi Mei Feuerwerker, op. cit., 1-18. Despite such criticism from the Party, the Party leaders seemed to exempt themselves from the strictures such criticism implied. Esther Cheo Ying, for example, noted that few people had much respect for the performance of leaders like Mao Zedong, Liu Shaoqi and Zhu De, all of whom abandoned their older wives to marry beautiful younger women, see Cheo Ying, op. cit., 64-65.

100. See Croll, op. cit., 1981, 19-20. Marion Levy and C.K. Yang relate the urban origins of marriage and family reform to the socio-economic pressures forcing changes in the family economic structure in the cities. See Marion J. Levy, *The Family Revolution in Modern China*, New York: Atheneum, 1949, 318, and C.K. Yang, op. cit., 136.

101. Croll, op. cit., 1981, 20.

102. See appendix for the frequency of articles criticising local cadres' shortcomings in implementing the Marriage Law. Croll argues that the initial failures of the Marriage Law in the countryside should be explained by reference to the lack of any economic incentive on the part of peasant households to substantially alter their marriage arrangements, see op. cit. 1981, 184-188. In this sense as well, therefore, the problems the Party encountered in implementing the Marriage Law were associated with its urban bias.

103. Cheng Yan, 'Bangzhu qingnian gongren jiejie hunyin wenti' (Help young workers resolve their marriage problems), *ZGQN* 61 (27 March 1951), 32, notes that many young workers were very timid about approaching fellow women workers, and even those who were more courageous in applying the free choice principles did not go any further than talking with young women in secret. The moral outrage often expressed against public contact between unmarried men and women, combined with the reluctance of local cadres to confront such issues, often resulted in suicide. See, for example the case of a young girl who, having been forced to 'confess' by

the people's militia for having selected her own partner, then hanged herself rather than be forced to confess a second time, Zhu Liguang, 'Tuanyuan Yu Zhangquan ganshe lian'ai ziyou bichu renming' (Youth League member Yu Zhangquan drove someone to death by interfering in the freedom to love), *ZGQN* 61 (27 March 1951), 45. Wolf indicates that sexual segregation continues to exert considerable pressure in the countryside, see op.cit., 1985, 165-166.

104. Personal communication. The informant further noted that the free choice principle was welcomed by the younger people in his village, amongst whom he counted himself, as a sign of liberation from parental control rather than as an indication of the importance of love and compatibility over material interests.

105. One notable example of this was by Deng Yingchao, in which she conveyed the idealised view of all Soviet citizens as models of selflessness and socialist commitment. See Deng Yinchao, 'Xuexi Sulian renmin chonggao de gongchanzhuyi daode pinzhi' (Study the lofty qualities of communist morality of the Soviet people), in *Lun shehuizhuyi shehui de aiqing, hunyin he jiating* (On Love, Marriage and the Family in Socialist Society), Beijing: Qingnian chubanshe, 1953, 1-11.

106. For discussion about Alexandra Kollontai's views on sexuality, see Gail Warshofsky Lapidus, *Women in Soviet Society, Equality, Development and Social Change*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978, 85-89. See also Cathy Porter, op. cit., 180-181, 190-191. Despite the official silence accorded Kollontai in China, a book of hers originally published in Chinese in 1937, was reprinted in 1951, *Xin funü lun* (On the New Woman), simultaneously published in Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong, 1951 (first published by Shanghai Life, 1937).

107. Kate Millett, *Sexual Politics*, New York: Avon Books, 1971, 237.

108. Lapidus, op. cit., 82, 114.

109. *ibid.*, 88.

110. quoted in Croll, op. cit., 1981, 6.

111. It is not the purpose here to analyse whether the new communist state's control over individual sexual behaviour was greater than under the Confucian state. However, given that control was deployed through new forms, such as the media, popular education, and mass organisations, as well as through formal institutional and legal channels, the state's discourse of sexuality had potentially greater access to ordinary people than had previously been possible.

112. Beijing daxue falü xi minfa jiaoyan shi, 'Dui lihun wenti de fenxi he yijian' (Analysis and ideas about the problem of divorce), *ZGFN* 4 (1 April 1958), 16-17; Falü chubanshe, op. cit., 1958, 37-44.

113. Zhong Dianbei, 'Congming xie, jianqiang xie, yiding yao xiang Ma Chengliang shi de e ren zuo douzheng' (Be intelligent and determined, for we must struggle against evil people like Ma Chengliang), *ZGQN* 16 (16 May 1955), 23-24, and in Henan All-China Democratic Women's Federation, op. cit., 18-25.

114. You Tong, 'Duiyu dangqian lihun wenti de fenxi he yijian' (Analysis and ideas about current divorce problems), initially

- published in *RMRB*, 13 April 1957, continued in *ZGFN* 8 (1 August 1957), 16-17, and published in *Falü chubanshe*, op. cit., 1-10.
115. Few as they were, however, it is perhaps no coincidence that the main references to masturbation appeared during the ideologically more open atmosphere of late 1955 and 1956, see appendix.
116. To argue that the discourse of sexuality was centrally defined and controlled would require more evidence about the editorial command of official journals and newspapers than is currently available. However, many of the longer and more authoritative articles about sex-related issues were editorials.
117. Zhu Keyu, 'Yingxiong de ganxiang, yingxiong de xin': (The thoughts and heart of a hero), *ZGQN* 62 (7 April 1951), 42-44, and 63 (21 April 1951), 21-22. It may not have been coincidental that editorial criticism was levelled against the interviewer's attention to a physical feature which was closely associated with sexual interest.
118. Zhang Ziwu, 'Duiyu "Yingxiong de ganxiang, yingxiong de xin"' (About "The thoughts and heart of a hero"), *ZGQN* 64 (7 May 1951), 24.
119. Deng Yingchao, op. cit., 1953.
120. For discussion about the use of role models in Communist Party campaigns, see Mary Sheridan, 'The emulation of heroes', *China Quarterly*, 33 (January- March 1968), 47-72.
121. Croll, op. cit., 1981, 12.
122. For example, see Yu Feng, 'Jintian de funü fuzhuang wenti' (The question of women's dress today), *ZGFN* 3 (28 March 1955), 31-32.
123. Sun Yiqing, 'Rang women de fuzhuang fengfu duocai' (May our dress be varied and colourful), *ZGFN* 6, (1 June 1956), 16.
124. Foucault, op. cit., 1984, 42-43.
125. See, for example, an article written by a physiology professor of a hospital which used biological arguments to urge women to postpone marriage and therefore sexual activity. Zhang Xijun, 'Cong shenglixue jiaodu tan hunling wenti' (Talking about the age of marriage from a physiological perspective', *ZGQN* 6 (16 March 1957), 34.
126. State ownership and administration of China's major hospitals and medical care meant that the medical profession was a branch of the state apparatus.
127. For a discussion about the 'policing' mechanisms facilitated by the proliferation of the medical and 'psy' technologies over the body and health in Europe see Donzelot, op. cit., 80-82.
128. Joan Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1988, 7.
129. See 'Bu yao gulide jinxing guanyu lian'ai wenti de jiaoyu' (Don't conduct education about the question of love in isolation from other ^{matters}), *ZGQN* 22 (16 December 1952), 1, 9, and above, note 122.
130. Esther Cheo Ying, op. cit., 133-134.
131. Personal communications. Some of my older informants indicated that women who engage in sexual relationships prior to marriage are looked on much more harshly than those who engage in

extra-marital relationships, particularly in rural areas.

132. As Henrietta Moore argued in a paper on 'The Problem of Explaining Violence in the Social Sciences' presented to a conference on Sexuality and Violence held in Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford, May 1989, the dominant discourse both informs and is informed by the range of other discourses and practices.

133. In examining Foucault's view of the relationship between knowledge and power, Deborah Cameron wrote that 'Power is exercised not solely through coercive means, but through sets of representational practices which construct power relations without needing to resort to coercion.' in *Feminism and Linguistic Theory*, London: Macmillan, 1985, 116.

134. Weeks, op. cit., 1981, passim.

135. Donzelot, op. cit., 139.

136. Weeks, op. cit., 1981, 7.

137. See appendix for frequency of publication of specified sex-related issues at different moments of the 1950s.

138. Croll, op. cit., 1981., 11-12.

139. Zhou Enlai suggested as much in an interview with Edgar Snow when he said 'When we encourage the good and criticise the bad, it means that bad things surely still exist and good ones are not yet perfect', quoted in Edgar Snow, *The Long Revolution*, New York: Random House, 1972, 229..

140. See above, note 6.

Chapter two The Scientific Construction of Sexuality

1. This argument is, of course, derived from Donzelot's analysis of the process by which medical jurisdiction progressively broke the hold of 'patriarchal tutelage' over questions of marriage and reproduction in Europe, See Donzelot, op. cit., 180-182.
2. For a critical analysis of the different ways in which biological and sociobiological arguments have been considered to shape women's social status and gender position, see Janet Sayers, *Biological Politics, Feminist and anti-feminist perspectives*, London: Tavistock Publications, 1982. She argues that despite the conservative gender orientation of most biological approaches to questions of gender and sexuality, the effect of biological factors on women's lives and sexual equality can neither be denied nor explained purely by theories of social construction. She suggests that sexual inequalities have been determined by both biological and social, historical and cultural factors.
3. See editor's preface to Wang Wenbin, *Xing de zhishi* (Knowledge about Sex), op. cit. The preface indicated that the book was written in response to readers' letters asking for advice and information about sexual matters.
4. According to a report in *Mingbao*, 10 May 1977, the original plan to publish a million copies of the book was never implemented, and it was quickly withdrawn from circulation. Domenach suggests that sex education manuals appeared after the Cultural Revolution in response to the realisation that ignorance did not necessarily assist the policy of birth control, see Jean-Luc Domenach & Chang-ming Hua, *Le Mariage en Chine*, Paris: Presses de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, 1987, 65.
5. Wang Shancheng, 'Tan xing shenghuo' (Talking about sex life), *ZGFN* 8 (1 August 1956), 30 and 'Guanyu xing zhishi de jige wenti' (Some questions about knowledge about sex), *ZGFN* 13 (1 July 1956), 27-28. The latter article was an editorial reply to 'readers' questions' written in anticipation of the forthcoming publication of Wang Wenbin's book.
6. A quantitative survey of articles about sex-related issues published in the 1950s reveals that apart from contraception, childbirth, and women's hygiene, sex-related issues were not mentioned in the terms used by Wang Wenbin after 1956 (see appendix). It was probably no coincidence that references to sexual intercourse, virginity, adolescent sexuality and masturbation disappeared from the official discourse at the same time as the political climate became more restrictive with the launching of the Anti-Rightist campaign in 1957.
7. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 1.
8. Lang, op. cit. 113-114.
9. These comments were included in a quotation from Klara Zetkin's *Reminiscences of Lenin* published in an article under the title of 'Liening tan funü, hunyin he xing de wenti', *ZGFN* 12 (1953), 11.
10. Quoted by Deng Yingchao in *Lun Shehuizhuyi shehui de aiqing, hunyin he jiating*, op. cit., and quoted in Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 5.
11. The creation of the Welfare State in Britain in the 1940s brought with it a major reassessment of the whole field of

sexuality, including the conditions of reproduction and sexual morality among young people. Alongside the celebration of the family, sexuality was recognised as an important area of married life, on the one hand treated as a vital component of conjugal contentment, and on the other as a potentially risky area of pre-marital indulgence. Warnings to young people along the lines that 'no-one should be allowed to expect full expression of his sexual desires', and books with titles such as *Marriage, Sex and Happiness* indicated similar concerns to those expressed by the contributors to the official debate about sexual behaviour in China of the 1950s. See Helena Wright, *Sex: An Outline for Young People*, London: William and Norgate, 1956, 109, and Kenneth Walker, *Marriage, Sex and Happiness*, London: Odhams, 1963, both cited by Jeffrey Weeks in his discussion of the state and sexuality in Britain during the 1950s in op. cit., 1981, 232-239.

12. 'Lun shehuizhuyi shehui de aiqing, hunyin he jiating' (On love, marriage and the family in socialist society), trans. from Russian, in *Lun shehuizhuyi aiqing, hunyin he jiating*, op. cit., 17, and Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 5, 14.

13. 'Guanyu xing zhishi de jige wenti', op. cit., *ZGQN* 13 (1956), 27.

14. Wang Shancheng, op. cit., *ZGFN* 8 (1956). Gonadal differentiation to either an ovary or testis occurs during the first twelve weeks of pregnancy, and constitutes the first stage of sexual development in the foetus, see Seymour L. Romney et al., *Gynaecology and Obstetrics, the Health Care of Women*, New York: MacGraw-Hill Book Company, 1981, 364. According to this definition, the precise meaning of the Chinese reference to gonadal development is therefore not totally clear.

15. Wang Shencheng, op. cit., *ZGFN* 8 (1956).

16. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 14.

17. *ibid.* The same idea was expressed in the suggestion that human sexuality was superior to animals' because it was controlled by social practice: 'Humans and animals are different in that human love is not only based on physical attraction between the sexes, but is controlled by highly developed social behaviour' (*gaoji de shehui xingwei de zhipei*). See Song Tingzhang, *Zenyang zhengque duidai lian'ai wenti* (The Correct Approach Questions of Love), Shenyang: Liaoning renmin chubanshe, 1955, 8, 16; and Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 14.

18. See Weeks, op. cit., 1981, 143-144, 148-152. Havelock Ellis saw the analysis of the 'sexual instinct' as one of the central tasks of his work, and his views about the natural basis of the distinct sexual and social roles of men and women exercised a major influence on subsequent western views of sexuality.

19. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 5.

20. 'Guanyu xing zhishi de jige wenti', op. cit., *ZGQN* 13 (1956), 27.

21. Wang Shancheng, op. cit., *ZGFN* 8 (1956). Wang Wenbin concurred with the view that sexual desire in women was generally concurrent with the duration of reproductive capacity, but he also suggested that just because female reproductive capacity terminates earlier than the male's 'does not mean that her sexual capacity stops and sexual desire disappears'. He suggested that male sexual capacity

began to diminish from the age of forty-five on, but was generally maintained for another fifteen to twenty years. See Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 24, 48, 61.

22. For example, see Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 47. Until the early 1960s, western medical experts similarly considered that sexual intercourse during menstruation and pregnancy was potentially damaging to women's health. Sexologists' subsequent observations of the absence of ill effects of sexual intercourse during pregnancy and menstruation presaged the rejection of these views as little more than superstitious old wives' tales. See Romney, et al., op. cit., 867-868. For a brief survey of the taboos on sexual intercourse during menstruation and pregnancy in the twentieth century, see Alan Rusbridger, *A Concise History of the Sex Manual, 1886-1986*, London: Faber and Faber, 1986, 127-136.

23. This view was criticised in an article by Tan Zhen, called 'Biyun yingxiang jiankang ma?' (Does contraception affect health?), *ZGFN* 7 (1 July 1956), 26.

24. Article 5, b) and c) of the 1950 Marriage Law of the People's Republic of China, op. cit., 2. The reference to impotence as a reason against marriage was eliminated from the 1981 Marriage Law. Such eugenic concerns have also been apparent in recent birth control policy, with, for example, the discouragement of individuals with hereditary diseases from procreating, to ensure the birth of non-defective babies. See Judith Banister, *China's Changing Population*, Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1987, 222-226.

25. Concerns to ascertain the reproductive and sexual health of partners prior to marriage clearly lay behind medical advice to young couples to have a medical checkup prior to marriage. See, for example, Wang Baoen, 'Dajia yao zhongshi hunqian jiankang jiancha' (Everyone should emphasize the pre-marital/medical examination), *ZGFN* 3 (5 March 1953), 38.

26. Wu Yi, 'Zai bu neng youyi bu dingle' (One cannot go on having doubts and not making a decision), *ZGFN* 7 (1 July 1956), 26.

Another article explicitly stated that contraceptive methods were mostly sought by women who already had children, and whose work and time available for child care might be impaired by having any more. See 'Zenyang renshi biyun wenti' (How to approach the question of contraception), editorial, *ZGFN* 5 (28 May 1955), 28.

27. This letter was written by Yu Ping, under the title of 'Kunao' (Anxiety) *ZGFN* 3 (1 March 1957), 14-15.

28. 'Zenyang renshi biyun wenti', op. cit., *ZGFN* 5 (1955).

29. *ibid.*

30. Quoted by Deng Yingchao in Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 5.

31. 'Guanyu xing zhishi de jige wenti', op. cit., *ZGQN* 13 (1956), 27.

32. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 38, 52.

33. Translated in Meijer, op. cit., 219, and quoted in Stacey, op. cit., 188.

34. *ibid.*

35. Wei Junyi, 'Yang haizi shifou fang'ai jinbu?' (Does bringing up children impede progress?), *ZGQN* 21 (1 November 1953), 13-14. This article went as far as to suggest that because having children was also a social duty, particularly for women, failure

to observe it 'should be severely criticised by the Party.' For further discussion of women's childbearing and mothering responsibilities, see chapter five.

36. In an earlier document, this was expressed as follows: 'Girls are born to mother (*nüze shenglai jiu shi yige muqin*), and a girl of three or four years old expresses her maternal nature (*mu xing*) in her behaviour'. See Wang Liming, *Zhongguo funü yundong* (The Chinese Women's Movement), Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1934, 104.

37. Feng Ding, 'Lun jiazhangzhi he jiating' (On patriarchy and the family), *ZQGN* 23 (1 December 1958), 16-18.

38. This -- the only reference to homosexuality found in relatively contemporary Chinese publications -- was made in the context of a brief discussion about the lesbian practices of women in the women's communities of Guangdong, in Wang Yunwu and Fu Weiping, op. cit., 300. The implications of the absence of references to either male or female homosexuality in the materials of the 1950s examined for this research are discussed in later chapters.

39. Jiang Xiaoyuan, in "*Xing*" *zai gudai Zhongguo*, op. cit., argued that homosexuality was practised in ancient China because it was not recognised as a 'sickness' (*bingtai*), but simply as a sign of moral degeneracy. He further suggested that the persistence of such a view in modern times means that homosexuals continue to be thought of either as criminals or as degenerates, rather than as sick people. The view that homosexuality was an abnormality was not too far removed from the suggestion that it was a form of perversion, alongside practices such as exhibitionism, bestiality and necrophilia, see *ibid.*, 118-119. For a detailed historical survey of homosexuality in China see Xiao Mingxiong, op. cit. See also Bret Hinsch, op. cit.

40. Havelock Ellis' view of sexuality as a harmonious balance between male and female rooted in natural causes continued to be influential in western sexological theories until the 1960s, when they were challenged by Masters and Johnson's empirically based arguments concerning sexual incompatibilities. Prior to the 1960s, the principal challenge to Ellis' views came from Freudian theories which saw sexuality as a force or drive constructed in the course of human development. For discussion of these issues, see Weeks, op. cit., 1981, 147-153, and Jackson, op. cit.

41. Tan Zhen, op. cit., *ZGFN* 7 (1956). Van Gulik described one of the aims of sexual intercourse, as understood during the later Zhou period (770 - 220 BC), in similar terms: 'the sexual act was to strengthen the man's vitality by making him absorb the woman's *yin* essence, while at the same time the woman would derive physical benefit from the stirring of her latent *yin* nature.' See Van Gulik, op. cit., 46. The use of the *yin-yang* dichotomy to describe sexual and gender differences dates back to the earliest days of Chinese history.

42. Tan Zhen, op. cit. *ZGFN* 7 (1956).

43. The imbalances in references to male and female desire were not only apparent in the frequency of references -- female desire was rarely mentioned -- and the mode of description, but even in the categorisation of subtitles in Wang Wenbin's book. The most

obvious was the lack of the sub-category 'Xing de xingfen' (Sexual excitement) in the section entitled 'Nanxing xingxian de shengli' (The physiology of the male sex glands) in the equivalent section on female sexuality. See Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 12-14.

44. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 39. This view was also upheld by Wang Shancheng who suggested that '... men can become easily excited whenever they want, and can reach orgasm quickly... after which [their desire] quickly diminishes, rapidly bringing an end to the whole process; women, in general, are not excited so easily, and after they are aroused, reach orgasm slowly... after which [their desire] diminishes and comes to an end slowly.' Wang Shancheng, op. cit., ZGFN 8 (1956).

45. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 39.

46. *ibid.*

47. *ibid.*

48. *ibid.* Wang Shancheng, op. cit., ZGFN 8 (1956), gave more explicit details about how to arouse a woman's desire: 'the man... should wait patiently and stroke his partner's lips, breasts, and clitoris, all of which are sexually sensitive...' In so far as female sexuality was defined in terms of response to the male drive, the concern with female frigidity apparent in these references corresponded just as much to possible threats to the power of male sexuality as to notions of female pleasure and sexual harmony. For a discussion about similar notions in western views of sexuality see Jackson, op. cit., 70.

49. Wang Shancheng, op. cit., ZGFN 8 (1956).

50. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 63.

51. Wang Shancheng, op. cit., ZGFN 8 (1956).

52. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 63.

53. *ibid.* Wang Shancheng was the only commentator to be explicit in criticising this kind of attitude as 'male chauvinist ideology' (fuquan sixiang), op. cit., ZGFN 8 (1956).

54. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 58-62.

55. Wang Shancheng, op. cit., ZGFN 8 (1956).

56. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 63.

57. *ibid.*, 47.

58. Wei Junyi, 'Qingniantuanyuan yinggai zenyang duidai funü' (How Youth League members should treat women), ZQQN 4 (15 Feb 1953), 6-8; Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 40. The concern with women's attitude to sex was further evident in another comment of Wang's that the more serious manifestations of women's antipathy to sexual intercourse was 'usually the result of some psychological damage' (jingshen chuangshang), *ibid.*, 61-62.

59. *ibid.*, 52-53.

60. *ibid.*, 43.

61. *ibid.*, 43, 63.

62. *ibid.*, 39.

63. *ibid.*, 42-43.

64. Theodore H. Van de Velde, *Ideal Woman*, 1928, quoted in Atina Grossman, 'The New Woman and the Rationalization of Sexuality in Weimar Germany', in Ann Snitow, Christine Stansell and Sharon Thompson, eds., *Desire, The Politics of Sexuality*, London: Virago Press, 1984, 195. Theodore Van de Velde (1873-1937) was a Dutch gynaecologist whose extremely influential works focused on the

importance of sex in marriage.

65. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 16; Wang Shancheng, op. cit., *ZGFN* 8 (1956).

66. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 41. The woman's decision to undergo the operation was described as her response to the general unhappiness and negative influence on her work that her sexual dissatisfaction gave rise to. Wang used this case as an example of the importance of 'sexual harmony' in making a satisfactory marriage.

67. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 41.

68. Coinciding with the rise of permissiveness in the West, recommendations to women to establish a good sex life were also oriented to making 'a happier housewife and home', in much the same way as was implicitly advocated during the 'prettification' campaign of the mid 1950s in China. See Ehrenreich and English, op. cit., 217-220.

69. Wang Shancheng, op. cit., *ZGFN*(1956).

70. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 46. Western medical opinion suggests that 'Physiologically, both male and female are capable of coital function into the very late years. Of those still with partners, over 60 per cent do continue coital activity... Continued sexual activity at this age represented a very meaningful self-assertion, a real outlet for... relating to another human. These are the very kinds of relationships of which the aging are largely deprived.' Romney, et al., op. cit., 433. According to this line of argument, reduced sexual activity in old age is more the result of lack of availability, particularly on the part of women who outlive their men, than of physiological factors.

71. *ibid.* The same advice appeared in 'Guanyu xing zhishi de jige wenti', op. cit., *ZGQN* 13 (1956), 27. Wang also suggested that it was 'best to have sex before going to sleep so that the body has a chance to rest and recuperate', op. cit., 47.

72. Tan Zhen, op. cit., *ZGFN* 7 (1956). The same article indicated that men's fear of using a condom was based on the fear that prolonged use could give rise to 'nervous debilitation' (*shenjing shuairuo*).

73. Song Tingzhang, op. cit., 16.

74. 'Guanyu xing zhishi de jige wenti', op. cit., *ZGQN* 13 (1956), 27-28. Wang Wenbin further added 'tingling (*suan*) legs' and 'breathlessness' to the list of ailments likely to affect the immoderate man, see Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 46.

75. Wang Wenbin, *ibid.*, 55.

76. Van Gulik, op. cit., 47.

77. Every emission of semen was considered a depletion of a man's vital force, but it was compensated for by 'the acquiring of an equal amount of *yin* essence from the female'. Limiting his emissions to the days when a woman was likely to conceive would also compensate for a man's loss of vital force 'by the obtaining of children perfect in body and mind', *ibid.*

78. Huang Shuze, 'Zenyang cai neng duanjue shouyin de huai xiguan?' (What should I do to eradicate the bad habit of masturbation?), *ZGQN* 13 (1 July 1955), 38-39. This article was written in response to a young man's letter asking for advice about how to stop masturbating.

79. *ibid.* According to Wang Wenbin, masturbation was a common

cause of male impotence, see op. cit., 55. In general, however, he suggested that 'psychological factors', such as fear and tension, were more important in explaining impotence than biological or physical factors, but they were often neglected since they were less easily recognisable.

80. *ibid.*, 42. Despite his warnings to young men against practicing masturbation, Wang acknowledged that it was a common phenomenon before marriage, as was premature ejaculation in the initial stages after marriage, see op. cit., 56.

81. *ibid.*, 35-36.

82. An extraordinary article about longevity which started with a description of a spirited conversation between two elderly people, one aged one hundred and thirteen and the other one hundred and forty-three, suggested that the reason why people did not live until such an advanced age was because of the deleterious effect of activities like work, physical labour and sexual intercourse. The implicit logic of this was that anyone could live until one hundred and thirty or so if they did not engage in the ordinary activities of daily life. See Gan Xiang, 'Changshou de mimi' (The secret of longevity), *ZGQN* 16 (16 August 1957), 24-26.

83. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 54.

84. *ibid.*, 41.

85. *ibid.*, 51-52. Similar advice elsewhere added that stimulants such as 'cigarettes, wine and coffee' should also be avoided, see 'Guanyu xing zhishi de jige wenti', op. cit., *ZGQN* 13 (1956), 27. Martha Vicinus' reference appeared in a discussion about the hydraulic model informing western views about the male drive and the 'spending of semen' in 'Sexuality and Power: A Review of Current Work in the History of Sexuality', op. cit., 136. Despite the nature of the concerns underlying medical advice about ejaculation and potency, not all ideas expressed about the vitalising properties of semen were accepted by the experts, particularly where these contradicted policy on fertility and birth control. Some men were apparently worried that by interrupting the 'harmony of *yin* and *yang*' the use of contraceptives would impair male potency. See, for example, Lin Qiaozhi, op. cit., *ZGFN* 4 (1957). Others thought that 'using a condom impedes ejaculation because the semen is forced backwards, against its natural flow', and was therefore physically harmful and debilitating. See Tan Zhen, op. cit., *ZGFN* 7 (1956). Contraception, Tan Zhen urged his male readers to realise, 'did not impair sexual intercourse', nor did 'prolonged use of condoms result in nervous debilitation' (*shenjīng shuairuo*) and diminished libido. See *ibid.*, and 'Guanyu xing zhishi de jige wenti', op. cit., *ZGQN* 13 (1956), op. cit., 28.

The use of contraceptive methods could, on the contrary, be desirable, particularly in the first few months after marriage, when sexual intercourse was more frequent, although given the 'passion of newly weds it was not necessarily a very reliable method of preventing conception.' Wang Wenbin suggested that the safest method of contraception for newly-weds was a medicine taken with food (*koufu biyunyao*), because in the height of passion, they might forget other methods which needed preparation beforehand, see op. cit., 71. However, such advice did not address the anxiety

that sexual intercourse would be impaired by the use of contraceptive methods.

86. Lawrence Stone, op. cit., 312.

87. *ibid.*

88. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 47.

89. Wang Shancheng, op. cit., *ZGFN* 8 (1956).

90. *ibid.* The biological and eugenic arguments for exercising sexual moderation were legitimated by traditional views about sex, which included suggestions that intercourse was harmful during old age, under the effects of alcohol, during pregnancy and menstruation. For a discussion of these views see Jiang Xiaoyuan, op. cit., 97-99.

91. Wang Shancheng, op. cit., *ZGFN* (1956).

92. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 48.

93. In 'Blood, Body and Gender; Medical Images of the Female Condition in China', op. cit., (1986), Charlotte Furth argued that in contrast with popular views about the polluting powers of menstrual blood, medical opinion of the Qing dynasty stressed the depleting and destabilising effects on women of the loss of blood. Menstrual blood was not only seen as a source of negative power over social affairs, but also as a sign of 'bodily imbalance' and 'sickliness' in women. However, women's reproductive powers, which included both menstrual and post-partum blood and fluids, were inseparable from notions of danger, as both Ahern and Seaman have shown, see Emily Ahern, 'The Power and Pollution of Chinese Women', in Arthur P. Wolf, ed., *Studies in Chinese Society*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1978, 269-290, and Gary Seaman, 'The Sexual Politics of Karmic Retribution', in Emily Martin Ahern and Hill Gates eds., *Anthropology of Taiwanese Society*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1981, 381-396. Furth lucidly brought the 'twin themes' of danger and weakness together in her later article, 'Concepts of Pregnancy, Childbirth and Infancy in Ch'ing Dynasty China', op. cit., (1987), 8: 'Concerning the symbolic realm, medical texts stressed the dangerous nature of female reproductive powers... At the same time, they also represented blood as an essential source of life and vitality whose inevitable loss condemned women to weakness and bodily vulnerability. Around these twin themes they wove an analysis that asserted the destabilizing and debilitating nature of gestation, the dangers of sexuality and emotion to female and child health...'

94. Zhu Lian, 'Buguize de yuejing' (Irregular menstruation), *ZGFN* 1 (1 January 1952), 37-38, and 'Guanyu xing zhishi de jige wenti', op. cit., *ZGQN* 1956, 28.

95. Wang Shancheng, op. cit., *ZGFN* 8 (1956), and Yan Renying, 'Yuejing bing he jingqi weisheng' (Menstrual sickness and menstrual hygiene), *ZGFN* 11 (1 September 1958), 23. Yan Renying was Director of Gynaecology in the No. 1 Hospital of the Beijing Medical College.

96. 'Fangshi' was a frequently used euphemism for sexual intercourse, see Yan Renying, *ibid.*

97. Wang Shancheng, op. cit., *ZGQN* 8 (1956), and Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 47.

98. Dr. Zhou Efen, 'Youguan yuejing de jige wenti' (Some questions

- about menstruation), ZGFN 2 (28 February 1955) 25.
99. Furth suggests that because pregnancy was seen as a destabilising and 'depleting' (*xu*) event, pregnant women 'inevitably experienced "disorder" and belonged to the category of the not-quite-well'. See Charlotte Furth, op. cit., 1987, 17.
100. Wang Shancheng, op. cit., ZGFN 8 (1956); 'Guanyu xing zhishi de jige wenti', op. cit., ZGFN 13 (1956), 28; Zeng Zhaoyi, 'Weishenmo hui liuchan' (Why miscarriages occur), ZGFN 12 (5 December 1952), 38.
101. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 48. Wang also recommended that sexual intercourse should be controlled during the interim months of pregnancy, and that a woman's movements during intercourse should not be too great.
102. *ibid.*
103. Ye Tong, 'Yuezi li yinggai zhuyi xie shenmo' (What you should pay attention to during the month of confinement), ZGFN 1 (28 January 1954), 32; Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 48. The 1950s references to the month of confinement made no reference to its traditional association with notions of female uncleanness after childbirth. For a discussion about traditional observance of the one hundred day taboo on intercourse after childbirth see Charlotte Furth, op. cit., 1987, 12-15, 22; and Gary Seaman, op. cit., 388.
104. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 72.
105. In answer to questions about having sexual intercourse during the menstrual period, personal informants have indicated that it would be both dirty and potentially harmful, and likely to cause vaginal infection. Some informants referred to medical authority to back up their opinion about the harmful effects of sexual intercourse during menstruation. Many other instances of the connotations of uncleanness associated with menstrual blood can be cited, including Margery Wolf's suggestions that the traces of beliefs about women's pollution, including the idea that 'menstruating women who stepped into a rice paddy would cause the roots to shrivel' could 'be seen in some of the so-called protective regulations concerning women's participation in field work', see Margery Wolf, op. cit., 1985, 81-82. My own observations coincide with Wolf's argument: during a stint of 'open door schooling' during the spring of 1977 in the paddy fields of a farm belonging to Beijing University, a female fellow student told me that the reason she was wearing rubber boots to plant the seedlings while all her fellow students were bare-foot was because she was menstruating, and that it was bad for her health to touch water.
106. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 50.
107. Yan Renying, op. cit., ZGFN 11 (1958), and Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 50. Wang Wenbin seemed to contradict himself, however, when he wrote that 'after intercourse, it is generally not necessary to wash the vagina, because it retains a certain acidity, and there is only one kind of harmless bacteria that normally survives there', *ibid.*
108. Wang Wenbin, *ibid.* The detail used by Wang to describe how menstruating women should wash was in marked contrast to his advice to men simply to 'wash the morning after sex', *ibid.*
109. Yan Renying, op. cit., ZGFN 11 (1958), and Wang Wenbin, op.

cit., 31-32.

110. For example, 'Youxiu de baojianyuan Zhu Xiujin' (The outstanding health worker, Zhu Xiujin), *ZGFN* 1 (5 January 1953), 20-21, told of an illiterate model housewife who overcame local superstition and introduced new childbirth methods into her village; Qie Ning, 'Mofan jieshengyuan Chang Xiuhua' (Chang Xiuhua, the model midwife), *ZGFN* 6 (9 June 1953), 24-25, related the story of a young midwife in confronting local fear and suspicion to eliminate unhygienic methods of childbirth. Other articles provided information about new methods of medical intervention to assist childbirth. See, for example, 'Dali tuixing "wutong fenmian fa"' (Put energy into encouraging painless methods of childbirth), *ZGFN* 8 (5 August 1952), 6-7, which introduced advanced Soviet methods of childbirth.

111. Wang Shancheng, op. cit., *ZGFN* 8 (1956).

112. References to 'foetal education' in the biography of 'The Three Mothers of the Chou Family' in the *Lienü zhuan* included the comment that 'a women with child should be careful about things that affect her. If she is affected by good things, the child will be good; if she is affected by evil things, the child will be evil.' See O'Hara, op. cit., 23. Charlotte Furth examined both the medical views about foetal education, and the moral importance attached to mothers' ritual conduct during pregnancy as a vital aspect of the newborn baby's health and welfare. She suggests that the moral aspects of foetal education were to regulate the emotions of women -- particularly the 'internal heat' of anger or sexual excitement -- to prevent miscarriage or difficult delivery, as much as to ensure a healthy baby. See Charlotte Furth, op. cit., (1987), 14-18.

113. Wang Wenbin conceded that despite its depleting aspects, menstruation was nevertheless a 'normal physiological function', op. cit., 28.

114. Charlotte Furth, op. cit., (1987), 13.

115. 'Guanyu xing zhishi de jige wenti', op. cit., *ZGQN*, 13 (1956) 28; Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 48-49.

116. Furth, op. cit., (1987), 9.

117. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 31.

118. Ahern, op. cit., 1978, 269-290, and Seaman, op. cit., 381-396.

119. Ahern, op. cit., 1978, 289.

120. Wolf, op. cit., 1985, 2.

121. Edward Shorter, *A History of Women's Bodies*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1984, 286-288.

122. Despite her insistence on the polluting qualities of sexual intercourse rather than on the evils of female sexuality, Ahern does suggest that this view of intercourse might be the result of notions of an inexhaustible female supply of *yin* essence which drains the male's *yang* essence, thereby debilitating him. See Ahern, op. cit., 1978, 281, 284-85. The materials of the 1950s contained no suggestion that sexual intercourse was considered harmful *per se*. Rather, harm arose from the combination of the negative manifestations of women's sexual and reproductive powers with intercourse.

123. Shi Nai'an and Luo Guanzhong, trans. by Sidney Shapiro,

Outlaws of the Marsh, Vol. 1, Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1980, chapters 24-27.

124. The Wushan tradition, which centred on the water goddess who made her home on Wushan in the Yangzi gorges, also pointed to the dangerous powers of female sexuality, but in contrast with other representations, suggested that it was ethereal and numinous rather than aggressive in its ungovernability. See Edward H. Schafer, *The Divine Woman*, San Francisco: North Point Press, 1980.

125. 'When Wen-po died, Ching Chiang cautioned his concubines, saying, "I have heard this: He who loves the women of the house too much, dies on that account." ' See O'Hara, op. cit., 35-36.

126. Ida Pruitt, *A Daughter of Han*, op. cit., 199.

127. Ortner suggested that the universal tendency to subordinate women in relation to men involves attributing notions of 'nature' to the female, on the grounds of her reproductive function, and 'culture' to the male, because of his creative production. See Sherry Ortner, 'Is female to male as nature is to culture?' in M. Z. Rosaldo and L. Lamphere, eds., *Women, Culture and Society*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974, 67-87. The conceptual constraints imposed by creating an opposition, or dichotomy out of the relationship between nature and culture are fully explored in Carol P. McCormack and Marilyn Strathern, eds., *Nature, Culture and Gender*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980. Bradd Shore extended the dichotomy as a means of explaining the 'opposition between menstrual blood (over which society has relatively little control) and hymeneal blood of the new bride (which may symbolize the power of society to regulate its flow).' See Bradd Shore, 'Sexuality and Gender in Samoa', in Sherry B. Ortner and Harriet Whitehead eds., op. cit., 192-215. While such an approach has only limited applicability in an historical study of the present kind, the conceptualisation of menstrual blood as potentially dangerous because natural and uncontrolled offers a useful means of explaining the 1950s discourse's approach to menstruation: the provision of detailed advice about what to do and what not to do during menstruation could accordingly be interpreted as an attempt to exercise control over a potentially threatening aspect of female sexuality.

128. Yan Renying, op. cit., *ZGFN* 11 (1958).

129. Wang Shancheng, op. cit., *ZGFN* 8 (1956); Li Yang, op. cit., *ZGFN* 11 (1956), 13, referred to an eleven year old girl's hymen being broken as a result of her and her friend's 'curiosity'.

130. Zhang Xijun, op. cit., *ZGQN* 6 (1957).

131. Weeks also described this view of sexuality as a 'basic biological mandate', see Weeks, op. cit., 1981, 2-3.

132. Jackson, op. cit., 70. Margaret Jackson argues that the biologically based explanations of the male drive were used by Havelock Ellis and other sexologists to legitimise fundamentally discriminatory gender relations.

133. Wei Junyi, op. cit., *ZGQN* 21 (1953).

134. This representation of menstrual disorders has been widely noted in western culture. See, for example, Sophie Laws, 'Male Power and Menstrual Etiquette', in Hilary Homans, ed., *The Sexual Politics of Reproduction*, Aldershot: Gower Publishing Company,

1985, 13-30; and Sayers, *op. cit.*, 110-120.
135. Furth, *op. cit.*, (1987), 7.

Chapter three Attitudes to Adolescence

1. Along with other commentators, Wang Wenbin argued that young people's interest in sex-related matters was 'normal' (*zhengchang*) in that it corresponded to a particular stage of physiological and psychological development, op. cit., 1-2. Another indication that adolescents' concern about sex was acceptable was the encouragement given young people for talk about potentially delicate matters in public. See, for example, Huang Shuze's article, op. cit., *ZGQN* 13 (1955), which praised a young man who wrote to the journal for advice for bringing into the open a practice which though not often recognised, was quite common among young people.
2. Levy, op. cit., 84-86.
3. *ibid.*, 89.
4. Article 4 of the Marriage Law stated that 'A marriage can be contracted only after the man has reached 20 years of age and the woman 18 years of age.' op. cit., 2. According to a 1956 survey of the marriage age conducted by *ZGQN* among workers from a cotton mill and a chemical plant, the average age of marriage was nineteen, and women tended to marry as soon as the legal age was reached, see Croll, op. cit., 1981, 67. 66.8 per cent of women in Republican China married between the ages of fifteen and nineteen, and 25.4 per cent between twenty and twenty-four, according to C.M. Chiao, *Rural Population and Vital Statistics for Selected Areas in China, 1929-1931*, Shanghai: Bureau of Foreign Trade, 1934, 28, quoted in Croll, op. cit., 1981, 66. Delaying marriage until the 'appropriate age' (*shidu*) -- between twenty and twenty-five for women and twenty-five to thirty for men -- was widely encouraged as part of the birth control policy introduced in the mid-1950s, and was backed up by physiological arguments about the optimum age for childbirth. See Zhang Xijun, op. cit., *ZGQN* 6 (1957). Wang further commented that 'if girls reach sexual maturity too much earlier [than this], this invariably denotes a pathological case (*bingli*)', op. cit., 28.
5. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 22.
6. Huang Shuze, op. cit., *ZGQN* 13 (1955).
7. The 'inevitability' of marriage was an *a priori* assumption, based on the view that sexual relations did not take place outside marriage, and that sexual intercourse between male and female was fundamentally dictated by biological needs. For further discussion, see chapter five. Quoting Goethe, Song Tingzhang also wrote that 'the inevitable result of love is marriage...' (*lian'ai de biran jieguo, jiu biran yao jiehun*), op. cit., 1.
8. This view was based on the view that the physiological changes affecting girls made them more vulnerable to health problems than boys during adolescence 'Xiang xie shenmo banfa lai zengjia xuesheng de jiankang?' op. cit., *ZGQN* 48 (1950). It was also considered the result of the particular ways in which premature sexual involvement on the part of girls would affect their future development. See Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 64.
9. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 13.
10. This comment was made in an article translated from Russian, entitled 'Liuda zenmo la?' (What's up with Liuda?), *ZGFN* 12 (28

December 1954), 24.

11. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 32-33.

12. 'Liuda zenmo la?', op. cit., ZGFN 12 (1954). This behaviour in girls was also associated with 'backwardness' (*luohou*), as in the description of a girl who was expelled from school because she spent all her time going around with boys, see Li Xiaofeng, 'He luohou qingnian jiao pengyou yihou' (After making friends with backward youth), ZGQN 10 (19 May 1959), 24.

13. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 1-2. Wang further pointed out that it was because of the mystification (*shenmi moce*) of sex that people avoided talking about it, *ibid.* In view of the difficulties encountered in bringing discussion of intimate matters into the open -- Foster Snow even claimed that it was difficult to find out if political leaders had any children, op. cit., 250 -- the frankness of many articles was striking. Interestingly, Levy noted that 'the type of prudery which has dominated the Western approach... played no such role in 'traditional' China.' Marion Levy, op. cit., 111.

14. An article attached to Yan Renying's, op. cit., ZGFN (1958), contained minute details about how to remove blood stains from pants and sheets, such as how much salt to apply to them and how many seconds to leave them soaking in water. See Wang Jun, 'Yuejing kuzi xizheng fa' (Methods of washing menstrual pants), ZGFN 8 (16 July 1958), 23.

15. 'Xiang xie shenmo banfa lai zengjia xuesheng de jiankang?' (What methods can we think of to improve students' health?), ZGQN 48 (23 September 1950), 33-34. According to the author of this article, women's health generally caused more problems than men's. This was often due to women's embarrassment about mentioning anything to do with their menstrual cycle, particularly in front of men, which resulted in a failure to look after themselves properly.

16. Huang Shuze, op. cit., ZGQN 13 (1955).

17. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 27. These comments are reminiscent of Donzelot's argument when he wrote that sex education did not suggest a 'puritanical refusal of sex but rather urging the family to recover possession of it and form it into an inalienable asset.' See Donzelot, op. cit., 205.

18. Wang Wenbin was the foremost exponent of sex education for young people during the 1950s. He argued that sex education was indispensable to equip young people with the knowledge necessary to make a stable and harmonious marriage. In this sense, it was considered to be an aspect of 'ideological education' (*sixiang jiaoyu*) which should be treated seriously. See Xu Mingjiang, 'Tan qingniantuan zuzhi zai dui qingnian jinxing hunyin lian'ai wenti jiaoyu zhong de jige wenti' (On certain problems in the Youth League's education of young people in issues of love and marriage), ZGQN 7, (1 April 1955), 5-6. In the 1950s, however, sex education was far from being accepted as a formal part of the school syllabus. Indeed, the concept of sex education was only applicable in its broadest sense to refer to the wide range of issues discussed in the media -- and often with an explicitly didactic purpose -- under the category 'friendship, love and marriage.'

19. The notion that bringing issues of sex and marriage into public discussion encouraged immoral behaviour was implicit in many popular responses to the Marriage Law. For example, the idea that 'freedom of marriage' was little more than a pretext for sexual promiscuity, or the disdain shown public contact between the sexes on the grounds that 'nan nü shoushou bu qin' (men and women should maintain a distance from each other), were widespread. See Xu Mingjiang, op. cit., ZGQN 7 (1955). During the Cultural Revolution and the 1970s, the dismissal of sex-related images and topics -- whatever their form -- as marks of bourgeois immorality led to sex being entirely eliminated from public discourse. It was not until the more liberal climate of the early 1980s that parents and teachers began to recognise the need for some form of sex education. However, sex education is still far from being part of the school curriculum, and, as Whyte and Parish pointed out, it is only in the last few years that it has been tentatively introduced into some urban middle schools, see op. cit., 1984, 151. According to an editorial article entitled 'Is this really love?' in *China Now*, No. 126, (Autumn 1988), 3, 70,000 students between the ages of 13 and 17 received sex education in Shanghai middle schools, and plans were being made by the State Education Commission for similar provision in 1,500 schools in the rural areas. For the kind of issues discussed in sex education in the late 1980s, see Honig and Hershatter, op. cit., 52-55.

20. In a speech given to students at Qinghua University in 1950, Ding Ling introduced her views about love and sexual morality by noting that never before had it been possible to talk about such matters in public. They had always been considered 'private' affairs, which were very difficult to express, and in any case, the aim had always been to struggle for the 'freedom to love' rather than to debate 'how to love'. See Ding Ling, 'Qingnian de lian'ai wenti' (The question of love for young people), ZGQN 39 (20 May 1950), 10-14.

21. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 1.

22. *ibid.*

23. This was often pointed out in articles about menstruation. For example, Chen Benzhen, 'Dang diyi ci lai yuejing de shihou' (When you menstruate for the first time), ZGFN 8 (16 July 1958), 23.

24. See, for example, Xu Hua, 'Bu yao zhao nianling tai xiao de zhongxuesheng tan lian'ai' (Don't have love affairs with middle school students who are too young), ZGQN 22 (16 November 1956),

26. Xu Hua's advice was made in view of the fact that many 'army and government personnel' thought that schools were a good source of prospective wives.

25. For example, Wang Wenbin referred to the harmful effects on sexual behaviour that reading romantic literature could have, see op. cit., 37.

26. Wang Wenbin suggested that it was because they lacked adequate understanding of the physical changes they observed taking place in their own bodies that young people became worried. See op. cit., 28.

27. *ibid.*

28. *ibid.*

29. Mothers' advice about menstrual hygiene was also important,

- according to Dr. Chen, in order to prevent infection. See Chen Benzhen, *op. cit.*, ZGFN 8 (1958).
30. *ibid.*
 31. Yan Renying, *op. cit.*, ZGFN 11 (1958).
 32. *ibid.*, and Li Xiangjin, 'Jiesheng yuejing zhi de zhedie fa' (Economical methods of folding menstrual paper), ZGFN 11 (1 September 1958), 24.
 33. *ibid.*, and Chen Benzhen, 'Jingnaiqi bu neng canjia zhong laodong' (You must not do heavy manual labour during pregnancy and menstruation), ZGFN 8 (1 August 1956), 31.
 34. Zhou Efen, *op. cit.*, ZGFN 2 (1955); Wang Wenbin, *op. cit.*, 32.
 35. Yan Renying, *op. cit.*, ZGFN 11 (1958); Zhou Efen, *op. cit.*, ZGFN 2 (1955).
 36. *ibid.*, and Wang Wenbin, *op. cit.*, 32-33.
 37. Wang Wenbin, *op. cit.*, 31; Zhu Lian, 'Funü weisheng wenti jieda' (Answers to question about women's hygiene), ZGFN 8 (5 August 1952), 37.
 38. *ibid.*
 39. Yan Renying, *op. cit.*, ZGFN 11 (1958); Chen Benzhen, *op. cit.*, ZGFN 8 (1958).
 40. Wang Wenbin, *op. cit.*, 31.
 41. *ibid.*, 32-33; Chen Benzhen, *op. cit.*, ZGFN 8 (1958).
 42. Furth, *op. cit.*, 1986, 58.
 43. Wang Wenbin, *op. cit.*, 32-33.
 44. In her analysis of the projected links between the menstrual cycle and emotionality in women in Chinese medical thought, Charlotte Furth similarly noted that 'Irregularity in monthly rhythms had its counterpart in unstable and excessive feelings... Doctors connected good health with an equable temperament, free of emotional excess.' *op. cit.*, 1986, 58.
 45. Ya Ping, 'Xingfu de Daye funü' (The happy women of Daye), ZGFN 6 (1 June 1958), 14-15. Esther Cheo Ying noted that 'very coarse woody paper' was used as sanitary towels in the countryside immediately after liberation, see Cheo Ying, *op. cit.*, 34.
 46. The 'three many's' were 'yuejing bing duo, mu zi siwang duo, funü bu xiadi duo', see Ya Ping, *op. cit.*, ZGFN 6 (1958).
 47. This survey was mentioned in 'Xiang xie shenmo banfa lai zengjia xuesheng de jiankang ma?', *op. cit.*, ZGQN 48 (1950). According to its findings, more than four fifths of girls menstruated irregularly, and a considerable number manifested different nervous complaints.
 48. Cheo Ying, *op. cit.*, 33.
 49. This criticism appeared in a response by Huang Shuze to a letter about breast-binding, both of which were published under the title. 'Fandui shù xiōng' (Oppose breast-binding), ZGQN 4 (16 February 1953), 23-24. A survey mentioned in this article suggested that breast-binding was still a common practice among fourteen year old girls, even though it expressed the 'old exploiting class's notion of feminine beauty.' *ibid.*, 23.
 50. Xu Linyue, 'Rufang de fayü' (Breast development), ZGFN 8 (16 July 1958), 24.
 51. *ibid.*
 52. Wang Wenbin, *op. cit.*, 33.
 53. Huang Shuze, *op. cit.*, ZGQN 13 (1955).

54. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 34.
55. *ibid.*
56. Huang Shuze, op. cit., *ZGQN* 13 (1955). The view of the 'devitalising' effects of male masturbation derived as much from Chinese tradition as from the western views inherited by the Soviet and Chinese sexual experts. See Van Gulik, op. cit., 47.
57. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 34. Wang's warnings against masturbation were less stringent than most, and while he insisted that it had serious effects if habitually practised, he rejected the old idea that it could cause 'infertility and blindness' (*buyu he shiming*), op. cit., 36.
58. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 37. Wang recommended 'medical measures' particularly when the foreskin was too long. Weeks noted how until the 1930s in Britain, circumcision was similarly thought to help with such problems by promoting a 'greater capacity for labour, a longer life, less nervousness...' Weeks, op. cit. 1981, 51.
59. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 36-37. Baden-Powell urged his scouts to adopt the same methods to stop the evils of 'beastliness'. See Lord Baden-Powell, *Scouting for Boys*, London: C. Arthur Pearson Ltd., 1954 (first published in 1932), 135.
60. *ibid.* The detail Wang Wenbin used to advise his adolescent readers extended to the weight of bed covers, and to washing feet in warm water before going to sleep, as well as to maintaining the proper communist outlook on life, see op. cit., 37.
61. Wang made the only direct reference found to infantile masturbation as 'an occasional playing with the sexual organs', *ibid.*, 35. As with masturbation in general, he argued that it was not wrong as long as it did not develop into a habit.
62. Li Yang, op. cit., *ZGFN* 11 (1956). Li Yang's reference to female masturbation as a possible way of breaking the hymen was in response to men's queries about why their wives did not bleed during the 'night of the honeymoon'. Another reference in the same article was to a girl of eleven or twelve whose hymen was broken when she and her girlfriend started playing around 'out of curiosity' (*haoqi*). The suggestion that masturbation could cause heavy menstrual periods was a self-explanatory indication of its negative effects, see Zhu Lian, op. cit., *ZGFN* 1 (1952).
63. For example, Huang Shuze, op. cit., *ZGQN* 13 (1955).
64. These were the terms Baden-Powell used to warn against the dangers of 'incontinence'. See Weeks, op. cit., 1981, 50. They were not substantially different from the terms used by Wang Wenbin to suggest that excessive masturbation would deplete energy available for work and study.
65. Foucault's discussion of the hidden dangers of childhood sexuality is enlightening to the argument. He wrote that in 'the sexualisation of childhood, there was formed the idea of a sex that was both present (from the evidence of the anatomy) and absent (from the standpoint of physiology), present too if one considered its activity, and deficient if one referred to its reproductive finality; or again, actual in its manifestations, but hidden in its eventual effects, whose pathological seriousness would only become apparent later.' Foucault, op. cit., 1984, 153.

- Similarly, in pointing to the dangers to a man's reproductive development that masturbation caused, the Chinese discourse identified hidden effects that would only manifest themselves later, after the experience of sexual intercourse and marriage.
66. A comment made by Ning Lao T'ai-t'ai about her foreign mistress's use of 'her baby's diapers' in *A Daughter of Han* suggested that it was 'foreign' methods that were unhygienic: 'It is better to use paper that can be thrown away than to use cloth that must be washed each month.' Pruitt, op. cit., 147.
67. Yu Jiu, 'Zai tan ruhe zhengque kandai lian'ai wenti' (More on how to correctly approach the question of love), *ZGQN* 7 (1 April 1954), 14-15.
68. Donzelot, op. cit., 186.
69. Chen Dong, op. cit., *ZGQN* 4 (1954). Chen also added, 'Love makes life happier, [but] if the main concern is not socialism, love will be empty.'
70. See, for example, Wang Wenbin's generally encouraging approach to the advantages of talking about sexual problems, and Huang Shuze, op. cit., *ZGQN* 13 (1955).
71. Yu Jiu, op. cit., *ZGQN* 7 (1954). Sexual involvement, Yu Jiu noted, signified a 'big psychological pressure' (*jingshen shang... [de] hen da de ciji*) on young people, which could provoke feelings of frustration and dissatisfaction, manifested in an inability to sleep and general debilitation. Huang Shuze in 'Zai zhang shenti de shiqi dahao jiankang de jichu' (Establish a healthy foundation for the body's development), *ZGQN* 1, (8 January 1954), 25-26, pointed out that 'even though adolescents may feel independent, they are not, either in knowledge or experience. They should therefore train themselves to be able to establish a genuinely independent life. If those who already feel that they want an independent life do not prepare themselves adequately in matters of hygiene, or think that such matters are of little importance, this may weaken their physique...'
72. *ibid.*
73. Ding Ling, op. cit., *ZGQN* 39 (1950). In the brief autobiography she wrote for Helen Foster Snow, Ding Ling described her anger at a fellow student in Shanghai falling in love as soon as she joined the Communist Party: 'This made me angry because we had just arrived and I thought we should solve the problem of our work before taking time for love.' See Helen Foster Snow, op. cit., 205-207. Her advice in the speech of 1950 was clearly based on the values that she, along with many others of her generation, acquired through her own experience in her youth.
74. Xu Hua, op. cit., *ZGQN* 22 (1956).
75. *ibid.*
76. See the case of Zhou Xixian, discussed by readers in *ZGFN* 7, (9 July 1953), 24-26. For further discussion of this case, see chapter seven.
77. 'Guanche hunyin fa, bu neng qianjiu fengjian sixiang' (In implementing the Marriage Law you must not yield to feudal ideology), *ZGQN* 81 (29 December 1951), 24-25.
78. Xu Mingjiang, op. cit., *ZGQN* 7 (1955).
79. Yu Jiu, op. cit., *ZGQN* 7 (1954).
80. Xu Mingjiang, op. cit., *ZGQN* 7 (1955).

81. Criticism of local cadres for their lack of commitment to the Marriage Law was very common in the period immediately following its promulgation. For example, see a letter by Meng Changqian, 'Yinggai renzhen xuexi hunyinfafa' (We must diligently study the Marriage Law), *ZGQN* 43 (15 July 1950), 40, and 'Jinxing hunyinfafa de xuanchuan jiaoyu' (Conduct publicity and education about the Marriage Law), *ZGQN* 50, (21 October 1950), 4.
82. Cheng Jinwu, op. cit., *ZGQN* 38 (1950).
83. 'Zhuyi tichang jiankang de shehui huodong' (Pay attention to promoting healthy social activities), *ZGFN* 2 (5 February 1953), 32.
84. Wei Junyi, op. cit., *ZGQN* 4 (1953).
85. *ibid.*
86. *ibid.*
87. See, for example, the representation of true love in Xie Juezai, op. cit., *ZGFN* 9 (1953). See also the discussion below in chapter four.
88. 'Bu yao gulide jinxing guanyu lian'ai wenti de jiaoyu', op. cit., *ZGQN* 22 (1952). This criticism of isolated discussion of 'love matters' also noted that it was abstract and petty bourgeois. 'People, particularly in the cities, should learn that love should come after (*fucong*) work.'
89. Jeffrey Weeks indicated similar concerns in western society, when he wrote 'the impulse behind the recognition of the need for a more sophisticated sex education for children was the desire to harness sexuality to the cause of morality.' Weeks, op. cit., 1981, 212.
90. For discussion about the contribution of sexual intercourse to marital harmony, see chapter five.
91. One major reason cited in favour of postponing the age of marriage was that it would prevent unwanted pregnancies. See Lei Jieqiong, 'He nianqingren tan hunshi' (Talking about marriage with young people), *ZGFN* 4 (1 April 1957), 24.
92. Ehrenreich and English, op. cit., 108-120.

Chapter four Premarital Prescriptions

1. The essentialist view of marriage upheld in the 1950s discourse was legitimised by the view that the monogamous, heterosexual union was physiologically natural. See Zhang Xijun, op. cit., ZGQN 6 (1957). This view of marriage is further discussed in chapter five.
2. For a discussion about the function of sexual segregation to preserve female chastity and to protect against the polluting powers of female sexuality see Croll, op. cit., 1978, 15-18.
3. Many writers have commented on the stigma attached to unmarried women engaging in public contact with men. See, for example, Croll, above, and op. cit., 1981, 168-169; Jerome Chen, *A Year in Upper Felicity*, London: Harrap, 1973, 291. Liu Dalin argued that the pressure on women to conform to the normative requirement of sexual segregation was one of the most obvious forms of sexual injustice against women. See Liu Dalin, op. cit. Florence Ayscough remarked that no sign of affection was permitted between couples prior to marriage, even between young people in love, see Ayscough, op. cit., 39. And Margery Wolf noted that even in the mid-1980s, a single woman enjoying an apparently harmless game of ping-pong with male opponents was looked on with suspicion. See Margery Wolf, op. cit., 1985, 165-66.
4. See Croll, op. cit., 1981, 59. For a more detailed analysis of the various patterns of courtship as a pre-marital ritual and as a function of the new model of marriage, see Croll, *ibid.*, 41-59. My purpose here is not to examine the specific characteristics of courtship as a component of the marriage negotiations, nor to assess the nature of the barriers to institutionalising it as customary practice. Rather, it is to look at the kind of values, particularly those that affected the construction of female gender, that were transmitted by official views of pre-marital sexual propriety.
5. Hu Yaobang criticised this view in 'Qingniantuan yao jiji canjia guanche hunyin fa yundong' (The Communist Youth League must actively participate in carrying out the Marriage Law campaign), ZGQN 4 (16 February 1953), 2-3. Criticisms of this view were particularly prevalent during the radical campaigns of 1953 to publicise the Marriage Law. See Harriet Evans, 'The 1953 Campaign to Publicise the Marriage Law', unpubl. paper given to a China Research Unit seminar on Political Campaigns in the PRC, London, April 27, 1988, and Johnson, op. cit., 138-153.
6. Many articles pointed to this function of sexual segregation during the early 1950s. A typical example was 'Guanche hunyin fa, fandui fengjian canyu sixiang' (Implement the Marriage Law, oppose the remnants of feudal ideology), ZGQN, 76 (13 October 1951), 14.
7. Ren Kunru, 'Yansu duidai jiehun he lihun' (Treat seriously marriage and divorce), ZGQN 76 (13 October 1951), 30. Croll suggested that the implied commitment to marriage represented by public contact between a young unmarried couple was in part because 'it was conceived of as less a procedure of mate selection than as a form of anticipatory socialisation for marriage.' See Croll, op. cit., 1981, 54-55. The validity of this argument is examined below, in the section on 'Friends and marriage partners'.

8. Deng Yingchao, 'Tan nan nü qingnian de lian'ai, hunyin wenti' (On the question of love and marriage for young men and women), (1942) in Zhao Chang'an et al, *Lao gemingjia de lian'ai, hunyin he jiating shenghuo* (The love, marriage and family life of old revolutionaries), Beijing: Gongren chubanshe, 1985, 3.
9. Jiang Fan, 'Guanxin qingnian qieshen wenti' (Pay attention to young people's vital problems), *ZGQN*, 17 (1 September 1956), 13.
10. This was apparent in articles which expressed men's anxiety on discovering that their wives did not bleed on the 'night of the honeymoon', as well as in the punishment of young people who engaged in pre-marital sexual intercourse, despite the fact that it was not, in legal terms, a crime. See Li Yang, op. cit., *ZGFN* 11 (1956); Pang Dunzhi, *Xin hunyinfu jiben renshi* (Basic Knowledge about the New Marriage Law), Shanghai: Huaqiao tushushe, 1950, 68, 99; Meijer, op. cit., 96, 99. The sanctions against pre-marital sexual involvement have contributed to the image of China as 'the ultimate in puritanism', see Whyte and Parish, op. cit., 1984, 130. My purpose here is not to analyse the value of such categorisation -- although the puritanical denial of individual and sensual pleasure was not totally without parallel in the Chinese discourse -- but to analyse the considerations to which such sanctions corresponded.
11. Official views about courtship were based on an ideal model of preparation for marriage, and as such assumed that young people would select, or aspired to select, their own partner. Even now, however, the free-choice principle is far from being universally practised, as Margery Wolf, my own informants and the Chinese press have testified. See Margery Wolf, op. cit., 1985, 164-174. A sixty-year old male informant told me how his aged mother, who lives in the eastern part of Shandong province, had recently arranged a second marriage for his younger brother, after a divorce settlement had been reached with his first wife, through the agency of what my informant called a 'professional introducer'. Chinese press reports about the continuation of forced marriages since the 1980 Marriage Law have tended to focus on the more spectacular and brutal cases of coercion. See, for example, Chen Ji, 'Bu gai fasheng de beiju' (A tragedy that should not have happened), *Zhongwai funü* (Women of China and Abroad), 3 (February 1985), 32.
12. See note 11, and Croll, op. cit., 1981, 49-59.
13. 'One of the chief means by which the older generation have worked to maintain their controls of the negotiations of marriage has been by maintaining the norms of segregation within the local community.' Croll, op. cit., 1981, 180.
14. Yu Jiu, op. cit., *ZGQN* 7 (1954).
15. Deng Yingchao, op. cit., 1985, 3.
16. Meng Changqian, op. cit., *ZGQN* 43 (1950), and Hou Ding, 'Li Ersao gai jia' (Li Ersao remarried), *ZGQN*, 79 (24 Nov. 1951), 27-28. Many cases cited as proof of local cadres' culpability were brutal, such as the first noted here about a young woman's attempted suicide as a result of the local authorities' intransigence about her remarriage. For further discussion about this case see note 20. The same article also warned against local cadres who restricted propaganda about the law because they were

afraid that it would provoke divorces. For another example of criticism of local cadres for their failure to uphold the law was 'Guanyu "Yu Zhangquan ganshe lian'ai ziyou bichu renming" de fanying' (Responses to "Yu Zhangquan's interference with the freedom of love drove someone to death"), *ZGQN* 66 (2 June 1951), 17.

17. Yu Minghua, 'Shi shenmo fang'aile qingnian de youyi he aiqing?' (What is it that hinders friendship and love between young people?), *ZGQN* 11 (1 June 1956), 31-33. This article is one in a debate conducted in five consecutive issues of *ZGQN* on attitudes towards friendship and love.

18. Su Yuan 'Shei shi duoyu de disanzhe?' (Who is the extra third one?), *ZGQN*, 7 (1 April 1956), 39. This letter initiated the debate mentioned above. It is only in recent years, and primarily in the urban areas, that public expressions of interest and affection between men and women have become socially acceptable.

19. Another example of a similarly unjust criticism against a young woman was contained in an article which summarised the contents of readers' letters, under the title 'Zunzhong aiqing shenghuo zhong de ziyuan yuanze' (Respect the principle of voluntary choice in love life), *ZGQN* 10 (16 May 1956), 36-37, which described how a girl was condemned as 'easy-going' (*qingru*) when she dared to reject a man's attentions.

20. 'Yinggai renzhen xuexi hunyinfu', op. cit., *ZGQN* 43 (1950).

21. Croll, op. cit., 1981, 57. Croll based this view on the suggestion that courtship was a 'natural, expected and proper prelude to marriage', in *Gongren ribao* (Workers' Daily), (22 November 1962), see Croll. *ibid.*, 42.

22. This term was used interchangeably with *jiao pengyou*, and *jiao you*.

23. Croll, *ibid.*, 55. Croll argued that this view of courtship worked against its institutionalisation as a means of exercising freedom of choice in the selection of a partner. Whyte and Parish also subscribed to the view that courtship was seen as preparation for marriage, and not as a procedure for mate selection, when they commented that a 'public sign of pairing off is seen not as a preliminary and casual stage of romance, but as indicating a serious commitment that is expected to lead to marriage.' See op. cit., 1984, 121.

24. Deng Yingchao, op. cit., 1985, 3. Indications that courtship was -- to a certain extent -- seen as a process of mate selection did not necessarily correspond to social practice.

25. Terms here translated to denote the different stages of affection and commitment were also sometimes used as euphemisms for practices which were inconsistent with the moral standards of the official discourse. For example, '*ta dui wo hao*' could be translated as 'he liked me', 'he was good/nice to me' or even 'he fancied me'; and '*tan lian'ai*' could be 'to love', 'be in love', 'go out with' or 'make love', depending on context. It goes without saying that the latter meaning only appeared in contexts and situations identified for criticism. The terminological trio of *youyi*, *lian'ai*, *hunyin* (friendship, love and marriage) was used most frequently to denote the 'correct' sequence of the different stages of affection leading to marriage.

26. Li Ruolin, 'Lian'ai neng zheiyang ziyou ma?' (Can love be as free as this?) *ZGQN* 9 (1 May 1956), 37-38. To illustrate this point, Li Ruolin suggested that a woman should stick with one man, and should not feel free to look for a more suitable partner if love had been declared. Another article -- which similarly took women's conduct as its example -- praised a girl who decided to marry her first love, despite his lower status and wealth than a second potential partner. It also suggested that a young woman who entered into an amorous relationship with a second suitor after having enjoyed a 'love relationship' with another would be creating a 'triangular relationship' which violated the monogamous requirements of the law. See Wei Hua, 'Aiqing' (Love), *ZGFN* 7 (1 July 1958), 18-19.
27. Wu Jiu, 'Qingnian nan nü zhijian de youyi he aiqing' (Friendship and love between young men and women), *ZGQN* 8 (16 April 1955), 22-23.
28. 'Women dui peiyang ganqing de renshi' (Our understanding of nurturing affection), *ZGQN* 9 (1 May 1956), 37.
29. The first example here was noted in 'Zunzhong aiqing shenghou zhong de ziyuan yuanze', op. cit., *ZGQN* 10 (1956), as well as in Song Tingzhang, op. cit., 13. The second was also in Song Tingzhang, *ibid.* Song included an even more exaggerated example to back up his argument about the undesirability of promiscuity, of a girl who had slept with (*tan lian'ai*: this term appeared in quotations marks, indicating its use as a euphemism) more than twenty boyfriends, and who had become engaged (*dinghun*) on three occasions to the same man. See Song Tingzhang, *ibid.*
30. *ibid.*
31. In Ren Yuan, 'Zhenshi de aiqing, meiman de jiating' (Sincere love and a happy home), *ZGFN* 5 (28 May 1954), 15-16, the gesture symbolising love was made when a young woman spent the little money she had on buying noodles and tasty vegetables for a friend -- a model labourer whom she had met in a model labourer group -- during a bout of 'flu.
32. Qin Zhengru, 'Aiqing' (Love), *ZGFN* 1 (5 January 1953), 31.
33. This took the form of a short autobiographical piece by Zhang Xiaoling, the young woman in question, under the title 'Lian'ai, bulian'ai?' (Love or not love?), followed by comments and advice submitted by different contributors. See Zhang Fan, ed., *Lian'ai, hunyin yu fufu shenghuo* (Love, Marriage and Married Life), 1952, 17-18.
34. *ibid.*, 18-38.
35. Niu Zhi, *Hunyin da geming* (The Great Revolution in Marriage), Guangdong: Nanfang tongshu duwu lianhe chubanshe, 1951, 29.
36. *ibid.* Despite such importance attached to love in the formation of a stable marriage, love was not generally the major criterion in mate selection for either men or women. For further discussion about the generally low expectations of love held by young people in the 1950s, see Whyte and Parish remarked that the absence of love in the criteria in choosing a marriage partner became increasingly important in the early 1980s as expectations of marriage increased, see op. cit., 1984, 150-151.
37. 'Yao shanyu zhengui aiqing' (Be true to precious love), trans. from Russian, *ZGFN* 11 (28 November 1954), 4.

38. 'Lun shehuizhuyi shehui de aiqing, hunyin he jiating', op. cit., 1953, 15.
39. Niu Zhi, op. cit., 29.
40. This view of love was upheld particularly fervently by Deng Yingchao, in 'Xuexi Sùlian renmin chonggao de gongchanzhuyi daode pinzhi', op. cit., 1953. In this article -- also published in *ZGQN* and *Renmin ribao* in late 1952 -- Deng Yingchao presented a totally idealised view of the selfless commitment of Soviet citizens, and praised young people who claimed that their main desire was to work for the country. This, Deng suggested, was the correct attitude towards love and marriage.
41. Zhang Fan, op. cit., 35.
42. Yang Ge, 'Zhao Yiman', (Zhao Yiman), *ZGQN* 1 (1 January 1957), 20-22; 2 (16 January 1957), 17-19; 3 (1 February 1957), 23-25; 4 (16 February 1957), 23-25; 5 (1 March 1957), 16-18.
43. Ren Yuan, op. cit., *ZGFN* 5 (1954).
44. Wang Wenbin, op. cit., 23.
45. Ren Kunru, 'Yansu duidai jiehun he lihun' (Treat marriage and divorce seriously), *ZGQN* 76 (13 October 1951), 30. The principal aim in this and other similar articles was to show that the hasty encounters and brief strolls that often sufficed for young people to make their promises were not a strong enough foundation for marriage. Without secure friendship and mutual understanding, divorce could easily be the result.
46. Hua Ming, '"Zhenshi de gushi" gaosu wo shenmo' (What "True Story" told me), *ZGQN* 20 (16 November 1952), 11-14. This story was also published in Song Tingzhang's book, op. cit., 1955, 11.
47. *ibid.*, 11.
48. Song Tingzhang, op. cit., 2-3.
49. Deng Yingchao, op. cit., 1985, 1-2.
50. Song Tingzhang, op. cit., 9-10.
51. *ibid.*, 8. A similar, but less idealistic approach to love was apparent in encouragement to young people to 'invest their wedding expenses in production'. See 'Yige jieyue de hunli he yige puzhang de hunli' (A frugal wedding and an extravagant wedding), *ZGQN* 1 (12 January 1952), 28-29.
52. Lin Dong, 'Deng ni huilai zai jiehun' (I'll marry you when you return), *ZGFN* 4 (28 April 1955), 13. This story told of a girl who, due to 'physiological conditions' (*shengli tiaojian*) was not permitted to join up in the volunteer army fighting in Korea. She urged her fiancé to enlist, but his family was against him doing so. The girl eventually discovered that the reasons for her fiancé's hesitation was that he was worried that she would become tired of waiting for him and leave him. Another article -- similarly addressed to reassure volunteers leaving for Korea -- which contained the same message, described a young woman who only realised that she loved her husband-to-be once he volunteered for Korea. The young woman in question was, furthermore, reported to have said that she would not have felt such love had he not been going to Korea. See Cao Ming, 'Aiqing' (Love), *ZGFN* 6 (1 June 1956), 25-27. At its most extreme, such a view of love was conveyed through images of physical endurance, pain and even death. See, for example, the self-sacrifice of a young woman fighter in Yuan Benhui, 'Airen, tongzhi' (Wife, comrade), *ZGQN* 2

- (16 January 1957), 20-22.
53. Xie Juezai, op. cit., ZGFN 9 (1953).
 54. Li Ji, 'Guangrong de guniang' (Glorious girl), ZGQN 17 (1 October 1952), 20-22.
 55. 'Renmin de hao nüer' (The people's good daughter), ZGFN 8 (5 August 1952), 31.
 56. 'Jiehun' (Marriage), ZGQN 73 & 74 (25 August 1951), 34.
 57. For example, see Xie Juezai, op. cit., ZGFN 9 (1953); Gao Guizhen, 'Wo zenyang chengwei guangrong de zhiyuanjun weihunqi' (How I became the fiancée of a glorious volunteer), ZGFN 5 (9 May 1953), 14-15; and Yuan Liang, (this name is a pun on the word 'to forgive'), 'Zhenshi de ai' (Sincere love), ZGFN 9 (7 September 1953), 6-7.
 58. Tian Liu, 'NÜ qingniantuanyuan - Xu Lamei', (The woman Youth League member - Xu Lamei), ZGQN 1 (6 January 1953), 29-30.
 59. Song Tingzhang, op. cit., 4.
 60. 'Lun shehuizhuyi shehui de aiqing, hunyin he jiating', op. cit., 15.
 61. Niu Zhi, op. cit., 31.
 62. The claim by information theorists that the use of binary oppositions is one of the most effective techniques for the communication of information was noted in an analytical survey of the different approaches to controlling the production of language and discourse in the service of predetermined aims, in Deborah Cameron, op. cit., 59. It was based on the argument that the use of two-way contrasts are easy to process, because they involve 'only one decision, whether an item is 'x or not-x'', *ibid*.
 63. The use of *danshi* (but) was a very common example, invariably used to introduce a second clause which modified, partially negated or minimised the importance of the first. For example, see Song Tingzhang, '*lian'ai shi biyao de shiqing, dan bu shi women weiyi de da shi*' (love is an important matter, but it isn't the only matter of importance to us) op. cit., 2-3. This was and continues to be a well known technique of political rhetoric in China, often used to draw attention to social anomalies and undesirable practices which do not conform to the standards.
 64. Song Tingzhang, op. cit.
 65. Deng Yingchao, op. cit., 1953, 10-11.
 66. Such criticism of 'feudal' behaviour was made in Zuo Lin, 'Mantan *lian'ai guan*' (An informal talk on perspectives on love), *Qingnian de *lian'ai yu hunyin wenti** (Young People's Problems of Love and Marriage), Beijing: Qingnian chubanshe, 1950, 14.
 67. Cheng Jinwu, op. cit., ZGQN 38 (1950).
 68. The difficulties of sustaining contact before marriage -- which made physical appearance an obvious criterion in choosing a partner -- did not make '*yi jian zhong xin*' any the less serious, and any less likely to lead to 'tragic consequences' (*beican de jieju*, see 'Lun shehuizhuyi shehui de aiqing, hunyin he jiating', op. cit., 16).
 69. The disdain shown such 'bourgeois' tendencies was apparent in the language used to criticise young people, particularly 'those educated youth from the cities' (*zhexie chengshi zhishi qingnian*), who were simply interested in discussing 'trivial problems of love' (*zai *lian'ai shang suo fasheng de suosui wenti**)

in isolation from broader social issues. See 'Bu yao gulide jinxing guanyu lian'ai wenti de jiaoyu', op. cit., ZGQN 22 (1952). 70. Stacey, op. cit., 177-182, 204-211. The renewed importance of family stability and marital harmony that accompanied the end of the anti-feudal phase in 1953 could be interpreted according to the model of family reform in socialist states formulated by Maxine Molyneux:

In the first phase [of family reform], governments aim among other things to transform the patriarchal family form, this being part of the strategy to erode the social relations of the 'old society' and the productive base on which they rest... The first phase... is one of emancipation from the traditional social order. Once this revolutionary phase has accomplished certain objectives... state policies seek to reconstruct a stable new order... The previously held conflict model of male-female relations disappears and is replaced by one which stresses complementarity and harmony.

See Maxine Molyneux, 'Family Reform in Socialist States: The Hidden Agenda', *Feminist Review* no. 21 (Winter 1985), 54-57.

71. Meijer suggested that, as defined in official writings, 'bourgeois' errors seemed to represent a relatively minor tendency, and therefore constituted a less formidable enemy than feudal thought to the successful implementation of the Marriage Law, see Meijer, op. cit., 147-148. While this argument is valid in structural and quantitative terms, it might be interpreted as underplaying the forcefulness of the official discourse's opposition to bourgeois misdemeanours in sexual matters. The absolute condemnation levied against sexual activity before or outside marriage signified that 'bourgeois' errors were frequently presented in much more vehement tones than was the case with feudal mistakes.

72. See chapter one, note 86.

73. See appendix for increasing frequency of references to women's 'bourgeois' tendencies in matters of love and marriage after 1953. Meijer noted that 'bourgeois thought' was increasingly associated with women, and particularly with their concerns over material matters, after 1953. 'Bourgeois thought', he wrote, seemed to be a 'perversion of the awakened female consciousness', Meijer, op. cit., 139. He did not, however, associate such bourgeois tendencies with aspects of female sexuality.

74. For a brief critique of this view of love, see 'Bu yao gulide jinxing guanyu lian'ai wenti de jiaoyu', op. cit., ZGQN 22 (1952).

75. Ding Ling, op. cit., ZGQN 39 (1950).

76. Guo Su, 'Wode lian'ai jingguo' (My experience of love), ZGQN 38 (6 May 1950), 18.

77. Deng Yingchao, op. cit., 1985, 4. This view was even more apparent in articles and letters published in ZGFN about the suicide of a young woman whose husband disappeared. According to one article, 323 letters had been received about the case, in which two views were dominant. The first was that the woman's suicide was due to the exaggerated importance she attached to her

- 'private life' (*geren shenghuo*). The second argued that her death was her husband's responsibility for abandoning her. See Liu Ying, 'Yang Yun zisha shi yinggai de ma?' (Was Yang Yun's suicide justified?), *ZGFN* 11 (28 November 1954), 6; 'Duzhe dui Yang Yun zisha wenti de yijian' (Readers' views about the question of Yang Yun's suicide), *ibid.* 12 (28 December 1954), 4-5.
78. Song Tingzhang, *op. cit.*, 1. Song Tingzhang's book was addressed to young mine workers in northeastern China.
79. *ibid.*, 13.
80. Meng Zheyin, 'Wo gaibianle jiu de lian'ai guandian' (I changed my old perspective on love), *ZGFN* 15 (15 October 1950), 47.
81. Cheng Jinwu, *op. cit.*, *ZGQN* 38 (1950).
82. Huang Shuze, *op. cit.*, *ZGQN* 4 (1953).
83. See, for example, Geng Xi, 'Rang qingnian zhuiqiu shenmo yang de aiqing?' (What kind of love should young people be permitted to pursue?), *ZGQN*, 16 (16 August 1958), 31-32. This was a review of the film *Qingchun de jiaobu* (The steps of spring).
84. Chen Degui, 'Xiao Yan guniang de "aiqing"', (Miss Xiao Yan's "love"), *ZGFN* 7 (28 July 1954), 9, described the distasteful individualism of a young girl who used her good looks to attract men's attention.
85. Meijer, *op. cit.*, 142.
86. Song Tingzhang, *op. cit.*, 8. In making this point, Song used the term *routi de meicai* (physical beauty), which carried more direct sexual connotations than *waimao* (appearance).
87. *ibid.*, 7-8; Yi Jian, 'Lue tan "qingren yan li chu Xi Shi"', (A brief talk on "the loved one is as beautiful as Xi Shi"), *ZGQN* 19 (1 October 1956), 37-38. This article appeared together with another by Ren Sheng, 'Neizai mei he waixing mei' (Internal and external beauty), *ibid.*, 38, under the title 'Dui "guanyu airen de mei" yi wen de yijian' (Opinions about the article "On a wife's beauty").
88. Cheng Jinwu, *op. cit.*, *ZGQN* 38 (1950).
89. Zhu Keyu, *op. cit.*, *ZGQN* 62 (1951), and 63 (1951). In this example, a peasant woman's large feet were described in particular detail as examples of her hard work and physical strength. That the interviewer seemed to spend considerable time examining his interviewee's feet earned him a rebuke from the journal's editorial board.
90. 'Lun shehuizhuyi shehui de aiqing, hunyin he jiating', *op. cit.*, 7, 9, 11-12; Xie Juezai, *op. cit.*, *ZGFN* 9 (1953).
91. 'Lun shehuizhuyi shehui de aiqing, hunyin he jiating', *op. cit.*, 11; Wei Junyi, 'Cong hua yifu wenti tanqi', (Beginning with the question of colourful clothes), *ZGQN* 5 (1 March 1955), 21-23. This article typified the rhetorical technique of using two-way contrasts or oppositions to legitimise socialist standards of sexual morality by denying bourgeois tastes and values.
92. Quoted in Klara Zetkin, *op. cit.* *ZGFN* 12 (1953).
93. 'Lun shehuizhuyi shehui de aiqing, hunyin he jiating', *op. cit.*, 9.
94. Cheng Jinwu, *op. cit.*, *ZGQN* 38 (1950); Ren Kunru, *op. cit.*, *ZGQN* 76 (1951).
95. There are very few parallels and similarities between the didactic materials of the 1950's and the Butterfly literature of

the 1920's analysed by Rey Chow. Nevertheless his description of the view of love as a 'fundamentally empty process', in which restraint and virtue substituted for the realisation of desire, could well be applied to the projection of love analysed here. See Rey Chow, 'Rereading *Mao's Ducks and Butterflies*: A Response to the "Postmodern" Condition', *Cultural Critique*, (Winter 1986-87), 79-83.

96. *Da gong bao* (March 8 1951), 3, quoted in C.K. Yang, op. cit., 125.

97. Song Tingzhang, op. cit., 14; Deng Yingchao, op. cit., 1985, 4. The proverbial 'glass of waterism' was invariably associated with women's sexual promiscuity, see chapter six.

98. 'Yao shanyu zhengui de aiqing', op. cit., *ZGFN* 11 (1954).

99. Luo Jia, 'Feizao pao si de aiqing' (Soap bubble love), *ZGFN* 4 (28 April 1955), 8-9.

100. Cheng Jinwu, op. cit. *ZGQN* 38 (1950), and Ding Ling, op. cit., *ZGQN* 39 (1950).

101. Luo Jia, op. cit., *ZGFN* 4 (1955).

102. 'Yao shanyu zhengui de aiqing', op. cit., *ZGFN* 11 (1954).

103. Luo Jia, op. cit., *ZGFN* 4 (1955).

104. Liu Lequn, op. cit., *ZGFN* 11 (1955).

105. A number of articles warned young people against mistaking physical attraction for love. For example, see Cheng Jinwu, op. cit., *ZGQN* 38 (1950). For a typical approach to the representation of passion see *Qingnian de lian'ai yu hunyin wenti*, op. cit., 9.

106. The view of passionate love projected in these materials had nothing to do with the tragic and 'ennobling' qualities of the great love described by Denis de Rougemont in *Love in the Western World*, New York: Harper and Row, 1974, 15-17.

107. The philosophical origins of the popular western dichotomy between sexual desire and spiritual love are discussed by Roger Scruton in *Sexual Desire*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1986, 1-2. According to Plato, the contradiction between sexual desire and erotic love could only be resolved by discarding the element of desire from love, leaving the 'intrinsically rational and morally pure' Platonic love.

108. This connotation of physical desire was explicit in the reference above, note 96, but it was more often implicit in the contrasts drawn between social commitment and moral conduct on the one hand, and individual pleasure, sexual indulgence and immorality on the other.

109. Cheng Jinwu, op. cit., *ZGQN* 38 (1950).

110. For a discussion of this view of physical desire, see chapter two.

111. 'Lun shehuizhuyi shehui de aiqing, hunyin he jiating', op. cit., 15.

112. The Shanghai court asserted that sexual intercourse between unmarried people was an offence in 1950. See Pang Dunzhi, op. cit., 68.

113. Lin Qiaozhi, op. cit., *ZGFN* 4 (1957). It was only when the government began to introduce a birth control policy in 1955 that publicity was given to the notion of an 'appropriate' as opposed to legal age of marriage, and that physiological development was used to support recommendations to delay marriage and, therefore,

sexual involvement.

114. Zhang Xijun, op. cit., ZGQN 6 (1957).

115. 'Guanyu xing zhishi de jige wenti', op. cit., ZGQN 13 (1956).

116. See, for example, Gao Guizhen, op. cit., ZGFN 5 (1953), and Tian Liu, op. cit., ZGQN 1 (1953).

117. Lai Gen, 'Xidi yixia ba, liangxin zhanmanle wugou de ren' (Have a wash, filthy people, and let your conscience wash you clean), ZGQN, 22 (16 November 1957), 31-32. The girl in question in this article was the lover of a man who was already married; she was criticised for her involvement with this man on the grounds that her relationship with another man was 'more than a relationship between friends.'

118. *ibid.*

119. Lei Jieqiong, op. cit., ZGFN 4 (1957).

120. For example, see Song Tingzhang's reminder to young people that 'losing heart' (*huixin*) in the face of emotional difficulties was not to 'impede work' (*fang'aile gongzuo*), op. cit., 2.

121. Wang Yuling, 'Wode kunao' (My anxiety), ZGFN 22 (16 November 1959), 18: 'after a time, I began to realise that he had grown to love me. To take a small incident, for example, he often used to bring me my milk when he went downstairs to get his own.'

122. The term '*peiyang ganqing*' was frequently used in the early 1950s to indicate the importance of political, social and emotional compatibility in selecting a marriage partner. See, for example, Ren Kunru, op. cit., ZGQN 76 (1951); Deng Yingchao, op. cit., 1985, 6.

123. Li Dazhao, quoted in 1985, Zhao Chang'an, et al eds., 30.

124. The increasingly rigid nature of the moral constraints that young people were subject to was apparent in Cai Qun, 'Mantan qingnian zai yuedu zuopin zhong de yixie wenti' (Talking about some problems young people encounter in reading literature), ZGQN 17 (1 September 1953), 27-30. Written ostensibly to warn young people against being too narrow-minded in their view of literature, the article also contained questions such as 'Why is it not possible to describe love in literature?'. Cai Qun also pointed out that some readers felt that references to tenderness between a couple, or even to a mother's longing to see her son, indicated 'not entirely healthy emotions' (*ganqing bugou jiankang*), Esther Cheo Ying pointed to the correspondence between the increasing political controls and the moral constraints of the early 1950s. See Cheo Ying, op. cit., 73.

125. Cai Qun, op. cit., ZGQN 17 (1953).

126. The Chinese notion of romantic love, as represented in the official discourse of the 1950s, coincided with certain key features of the romantic tradition of the West in suggesting that the romantic individual was disengaged from and possibly hostile to society. It also shared with the western concept the idea of romantic love as based not on mutual interests and understanding - such as the Chinese discourse encouraged -- but on idealistic and ephemeral passion. The latter, however, was not associated with the intense emotional involvement common to western representations of romantic love. Rather, it was constructed as a negative, and potentially harmful state which was inconsistent with a socialist understanding of love. The naturalistic imagery

often associated with the western concept of romantic love was, in the Chinese materials, used primarily to define the individual's relationship with the state. The importance of this relationship in the classical Chinese tradition may explain -- at least in part -- its reappearance in the materials of the 1950s. The deliberate use of naturalistic imagery in contexts describing the individual's social and political responsibilities -- and never in personal contexts -- does, however, also suggest a conscious design to channel the individual's energies into service of the state. One extraordinary article, which contained one of the few references discovered in the 1950s materials to physical contact, described how a young woman warmed the frostbitten feet of a fellow volunteer in Korea by 'cradling them in her bosom.' See Zhang Yuwen, 'Yingxiong de nü zhanshi', (The heroic woman soldier), *ZGQN* 1 (1 May 1953), 13-16. This imagery could be interpreted as a displacement to the state of references to feeling, affect and physical contact. As such it would be consistent with a literary tradition which often idealised, and almost romanticised the individual's relationship with the state. Qu Yuan (340-278 BC), poet and exiled loyalist of the state of Chu, who cast himself in the role of the rejected 'female' lover of his king, is the most notable example.

127. Zhu Keyu, op. cit., *ZGQN* 62 (1951).

128. Zhu Li, 'Dan niang shi zenyang shenghuo de?' (How did old mother Dan live?), *ZGQN* 67 (16 June 1951), 30.

129. Even in 1985, a survey discovered that 60% of young unmarried couples felt that they lack real and spontaneous love, and had married simply because they were of the right age, or because they thought it was the proper thing to do. See Richard Conroy, 'Patterns of Divorce in China', *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, no. 17 (January 1987), 62.

130. On the basis of a number of personal communications, it would seem that love was an empty word to many rural people in the 1950s; physical strength and reliability were among the most important considerations, given that personal and family welfare depended primarily on the household's resources. Under the system of arranged marriages, couples had 'learnt' to get on with each other because there was little alternative. See also Cusack's description of the Model Married Couple, op. cit., 156-158. The phenomenon of 'getting on' and letting love develop 'after marriage' was one response to low expectations of marriage which has been harshly condemned in recent years by the radical woman writer, Yu Luojin.

131. Cheng Jinwu, op. cit. *ZGQN* 38 (1950) argued that a correct approach to selecting a marriage partner would prevent the experience of marriage as the 'tomb of love' (*aiqing de fenmu*).

132. 'Yao shanyu zhengui de aiqing', op. cit., *ZGFN* 11 (1954).

133. Meng Zheyin, op. cit., *ZGFN* 15 (1950) argued that the illusion of the romantic ideal was clearly demonstrated by the abuse that women suffered at the hands of their husbands after marriage.

134. Song Tingzhang, op. cit.

135. *ibid.*, 1.

Chapter five Women and Sexuality in Marriage

1. For the purposes of the present analysis, the categories of wifehood and motherhood are distinguished in order to clarify the expectations and obligations associated with the different roles. In practice, the distinction was not applicable, nor was it necessarily present in the official discourse. A woman's role as wife and mother merged in the domestic context, such that the one assumed the other. A woman related to her husband both as his wife and as mother of his children. The focus of the present interest in the construction of motherhood is not on the mother-child relationship, but on the wife's relationship with her husband mediated by her attachment to her children.
2. Pang Dunzhi, op.cit., 68. The assumed equivalence between sexual relations and marriage was also apparent in the following advice which appeared in *Hunyin fangwu zhaiwu deng wenti jieda* (Answers to Questions concerning Property in Marriage, Shanghai: Renmin fayuan, 1950, 24:

Q: Can we be considered married given that we
slept together after becoming engaged and that
my girlfriend is pregnant?

A: Even though this does not legally constitute
marriage, it is *de facto* (*shishi shang*) marriage.

3. In a section entitled 'Correctly approach questions of love' in Niu Zhi op. cit., 28, warnings against engaging in promiscuous sexuality prior to marriage were couched in the following terms: 'To treat freedom of love in an entirely easy-going manner is taking freedom too far; [some] love one person today, and another tomorrow, without any seriousness or care, and sometimes go as far as engaging in marital relations (*fufu guanxi*) even though they are not married.'
4. Wang Wenbin, op.cit., 40.
5. Song Tingzhang, op.cit., 1.
6. Zhang Xijun, op. cit., ZGQN 6 (1957).
7. Gan Heng, op. cit., ZGQN 16 (1957). The suggestion that married women lived longer than single women was echoed in the idea, aimed particularly at women, that spinsterhood, and therefore celibacy, had no physical benefit, see above, note 6. An explicit reference to the link between female celibacy, short life and mental sickness was found in Li Taomin, *Zhongguo guodu shidai de jiating* (*The Chinese Family in Transition*), Shanghai: Guangxuehui, 1925, 34-35.
8. Wei Junyi, 'Jiehun hui bu hui yingxiang jinbu?' (Does marriage affect progress?), ZGQN 50 (21 October 1950), 43. In this article, Wei Junyi explicitly stated that 'celibacy is incorrect' (*dushengzhuyi shi budui de*).
9. The presumption that remaining single signified some kind of abnormality lay behind the anxiety about the 'problem of the over thirty year old old maids' frequently expressed in ZGFN in the mid 1980s. For further discussion, see Honig and Hershtatter, op.cit., 104-110.
10. Tan Zhen, op., cit., ZGFN 7 (1956).

11. Wang Wenbin, op.cit., 38.
12. Tan Zhen, op. cit., ZGFN 7 (1956).
13. Wang Shancheng, op. cit., ZGFN 8 (1956).
14. Wang Wenbin, op.cit., 63
15. ibid., 26.
16. ibid., 42-43.
17. ibid., 42-43.
18. Zhang Fan, op.cit., 19.
19. Song Tingzhang, op.cit., 12. In their discussion about the emotional expression of love in China, Sulamith Potter and Jack Potter further suggested that a large age difference is considered 'culturally disgusting'. See Sulamith Heins Potter and Jack M. Potter, *China's Peasants; The Anthropology of a Revolution*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, 191.
20. Wang Wenbin, op.cit., 24.
21. Esther Cheo Ying gave the impression that sexual intercourse was not infrequently treated by women as unimportant, at best, and at worst totally undesirable. See op. cit., 72-75, 130-131.
22. For a comparison with the way in which sex was represented as a health-giving measure in Europe and North America see Ehrenreich and English, op. cit., 217-220.
23. 'Distinctions among women as wives, mothers or sisters are critical to cultural definitions of femininity in ways that analogous distinctions among men are not critical for masculinity.' Ortner and Whitehead, op. cit., 21. The new value accorded women as wives in the 1950s implied a radical change in the conception of 'woman' as a social and sexual category.
24. The retention of many traditional values concerning age and parental authority in China meant that the ideology of the conjugal marriage and family, while enshrined in law, was far from defining practice. This contrasts with Goode's argument, used by MacFarlane in his analysis of the Malthusian model of conjugality, that the ideology of the conjugal family was a 'radical one, destructive of the older traditions in almost every society'. See William J. Goode, *World Revolution and Family Patterns*, New York Glencoe Free Press, 1968, 19, and Alan MacFarlane, *Marriage and Love in England, 1300-1840*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986, 37-39.
25. Articles 7, 8 & 9 of the 1950 Marriage Law of the PRC.
26. For discussion about the traditional requirements of women's subservience to husbands, sons and mothers-in-law see C. K. Yang op. cit., 105-107, and Croll, op.cit., 1978, 12-29.
27. Article 8 of the 1950 Marriage Law of the PRC outlined the parenting duties of husband and wife. The assumption that wives gave birth to the first child soon after marriage was apparent not only in biographical stories which described the two events almost concurrently, but also in references to women's fears that marrying, or 'seeing the husband' (ie. conceiving a child) would interfere with studies and work. A typical example was in Yang Ge, op. cit., ZGFN 3 (1957), in which the appearance of a baby boy was described almost immediately after the young couple's decision to get married. For examples of women's anxieties about the consequences of getting married and having children, see readers' letters in ZGFN 3 (1 March 1957), 14-15. After 1955, when a birth control policy was first introduced, one important reason for

emphasising the importance of the 'appropriate' (*shidu*) rather than the lower legal age for marriage was to raise the age at which women gave birth to their first child. Penny Kane, *The Second Billion*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987, 24, notes that this concern continued to characterise publicity about marriage up until the 1970s. For further discussion, see Croll, op.cit., 1978, 246-247.

28. Wang Liming, op. cit., 104. These kind of comments and descriptions are reminiscent of the attributes of normality associated with 'natural' feminine characteristics and the 'maternal instinct', analysed by Elisabeth Badinter: 'If nature was defined as the norm, the unnatural woman was abnormal, that is, sick or a freak.' See Elisabeth Badinter, *Mother Love, Myth and Reality*, New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1981, 159.

29. Wei Junyi, op. cit., ZGQN 21 (1953). Another article pointed out, however, that failure to produce a child 'was not necessarily a woman's fault'. See 'Funü weisheng wenti jieda' (Answers to questions about women's hygiene), ZGFN 8 (5 August 1952), 37.

30. Article 5, c) of the 1950 Marriage Law of the PRC stated that no man or woman was allowed to marry 'Where one party is suffering from venereal disease, mental disorder, leprosy or any other disease which is regarded by medical science as rendering a person unfit for marriage.'

31. See the autobiographical account entitled 'Mei you haizi suo yinqi de' (Provoked by being childless), by Bai Ning, in *Women fufu zhijian* (*Between Husband and Wife*), Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 1957, 27-30.

32. For discussion about the publicity about birth control methods in the 1950s see Croll, op. cit., 1978, 246-247. Information about scientific approaches to birth control did not, however, eliminate the use of various quack methods, including the 'live tadpole system' to make women temporarily sterile. See Cheo Ying, op. cit., 183-84.

33. Tan Zhen, op. cit., ZGFN 7 (1956). The idea that the *yin* and *yang* would be prevented from coming together by the use of a condom was thought to lead to tuberculosis, a disease commonly associated with women's sexuality in the writings of the 1950s. See Liang Zhao, 'Jihua shengyu bing bu nan' (Birth control is not at all difficult), ZGFN 4 (1 April 1957), 25.

34. *ibid.*

35. *ibid.*

36. 'Bu yao guo zao jiehun' (Don't marry too early), ZGQN 4 (2 February 1957), 9. That this article was an editorial indicated the importance of the message conveyed.

37. The above examples of accounts in which women described their experience of contraception were without exception written by such women, further indicating that contraceptive advice was not intended for the unmarried.

38. 'Zenyang renshi biyun wenti', op. cit., ZGFN 5 (1955), 39.

39. This view of monogamy was upheld by both the KMT and the CCP prior to 1949. For an analysis of both approaches to monogamous marriage prior before 1950, see Meijer, op. cit., 24-82.

40. Deng Yingchao, op. cit., 1953, 3.
41. Li Wei, 'Cong Meiguo fulu shang kan "Meiguo shenghuo fangshi"' (Looking at "the American life style" as seen in American prisoners), *ZGQN* 10 (16 June 1952), 32-33.
42. Deng Yingchao, op. cit., 1953, 4.
43. Alexandra Kollontai is the only example of a leading figure in a socialist state to question monogamy -- with its implications of motherhood and sexual fidelity -- as an aspect of 'communist morality'. See Lapidus, op. cit., 82-92. Kate Millet further argued that from the late 1920s on, the Soviet Union's conservative-oriented policies towards monogamous marriage and the family permitted the generation of practices which had little to do with gender equality. See Kate Millet, *Sexual Politics*, New York: Avon Books, 1971, 229-239.
44. C.K. Yang, op. cit., 57-59.
45. This use of the term 'monogamy' embraces rules of inheritance and family structure as indicated in the 1950 Law. For the purposes of the present research, however, the term is principally used as a rule of sexual and gender relations.
46. C.K. Yang, op. cit., 57-59.
47. *ibid.*, 60-61. See also *Hunyin shouce (Handbook on Marriage)*, Beijing, 1951, 41-42.
48. See, for example, the debate concerning Zhou Xixian, who married a fifteen year old girl after being rejected by another woman, made her pregnant, and then abandoned her for a third woman, in *ZGFN* 7 (9 July 1953), 24-26. Another story in *ZGFN* 9 (7 September 1953), 32-37, described a husband who left his illiterate wife with the idea of divorcing her, but who returned once she began to study. A further article criticised a man who wanted to divorce his peasant wife because she was illiterate and unsophisticated, but could not afford to marry a second time. See Hu Qingxian, 'Wo bangzhu laopo zhuanbianle sixiang' (I helped my wife to change her thinking), *ZGFN* 5 (9 May 1953), 36. Other articles published during the same period indicated that uneducated rural women were worried that their husbands might abandon them for other, more attractive and educated women. For example, see Zhang Chunxun, 'Wo bangzhu qizi tigele wenhua' (I helped my wife improve her education), *ZGQN* 9 (1 May 1953), 30..
49. *Guanche hunyin fa yundong de zhongyao wenjian* (Important documents of the campaign to implement the Marriage Law, Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1953, 12, quoted in Davin, op. cit., 87.
50. Kay Ann Johnson summarised the fundamental reasons for the failure of the Marriage Law in the countryside with the suggestion that it represented too great a threat to 'the patrilineal structure on which the rural communities were based', see Johnson, op.cit., 147. It was also the result of the lack of any economic incentive to rural households to radically alter the traditional arrangements underwriting marital and family structures,, see Croll, op. cit., 1981, 163-164.
51. For further discussion about divorce in the early and mid 1950s, see Davin, op.cit., 98-106, and Conroy, op. cit., 54-55.
52. See appendix. Many of the examples of servicing wives and model housewives coincided with the 'Five Goods' campaign of 1955.
53. Niu Zhi, op. cit., 29.

54. Niu Zhi, op. cit., 29, and Chen Jianwei, op. cit., HR (1959).
55. For example, see Li Ruolin, op. cit., ZGQN 9 (1956). The idea that the new Law invited immoral conduct was also evident in its description as a 'funüfa' (women's law), and 'lihunfa' (divorce law), in Luo Qiong, 'Zhengquede quanmian de renshi Zhonghua renmin gongheguo de hunyinfa' (Correctly and thoroughly understand the Marriage Law of the People's Republic of China), ZGQN 3 (1 February 1953), 3-5.
56. See, for example, Lai Gen, op. cit., ZGQN 22 (1957).
57. The longest, and most explicit article about virginity was Li Yang's 'Chunümo yu aiqing', op. cit., ZGFN 11 (1956), which examined different attitudes towards virginity as a requirement for marriage. This made no mention of male virginity, even though the sexual exclusivity associated with the monogamous marriage applied to men as much as to women.
58. *ibid.*
59. *ibid.*
60. Yuan Liang, op. cit., ZGFN 9 (1953).
61. Xie Juezai, op. cit., ZGFN 9 (1953).
62. A possible comparison could be drawn between the psychological function of such images of female loyalty and those of the Ming-Qing period. Tien Ju-k'ang argued that positive images of female chastity became particularly prevalent at times of national calamity and foreign invasion, with the corollary that female morality was often used as the dominant symbol of purity, courage and self-sacrifice. See Tien Ju-k'ang, op. cit., *passim*. 63. For discussion of this, see C.K. Yang, op. cit., 57-59. See also the example described by Zhang Fan, op. cit., 39.
64. For example, Hu Qingxian, op. cit., ZGFN 5 (1953). A number of articles also indicated that women were not uncommonly worried that after a study or work period away from home, their husbands would want to leave them for the sophisticated ways of urban women. See, for example, Xu Fang, 'Ta hai neng ai wo ma?' (Can he still love me?), ZGFN 8 (28 August 1955), 23-25, about an illiterate woman's anxiety that her husband would no longer love her after returning from a study period in the USSR.
65. Song Tingzhang, op. cit., 13, noted that it was men who were mostly to blame for the 'bourgeois' conduct of 'loving the new and hating the old'. The most prominent form this took, according to Song, was in abandoning wives on the grounds that they lacked education or were too rustic.
66. A typical example of this representation of a husband's sexual infidelity was the Luo Baoyi case, op. cit., ZGFN (1955 & 1956). See also the Zhou Xixian case, in which Zhou's sexual infidelity was attributed -- amongst other factors -- to power going to his head, op. cit., ZGFN 7 (1953).
67. The characteristics associated with model husbands included a range of attributes which emphasized the role of teacher, help and guide in enabling a wife to develop skills and interests identified with the public context of studies, work and political activity. See, for example, Zhang Chunxun, op. cit., ZGQN 9 (1953), and Hu Qingxian, op. cit., ZGFN 5 (1953).
68. Tian Liu, op. cit., ZGQN 1 (1953). In this biographical story, Xu married her husband the day before he enlisted as a volunteer

to go to Korea, and agreed to marry him only when he had indicated to her that he was prepared to avenge the death of her mother by fighting the enemy in Korea. See also an article by Lüda shi zonggonghui nügong bu (The woman work section of the Lüda general union), 'Yige shixing jiating jihua de gongren jiating' (A worker's household which carries out household planning), *ZGFN* 1 (5 January 1953), 26.

69. Sun Ming, *Tantan fuqi guanxi* (Talking about the marital relationship), Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1958, 58-59.

70. Wei Yanxiang, 'Women yongyuan xiang ai' (We will love each other forever), *ZGFN* 9 (1 September 1956), 11-12.

71. Guo Hua and Zheng Shimin, 'Wo yong bu bian xin' (I will never stop being faithful), *ZGFN* 11 (1 November 1957), 20-21.

72. Xie Juezai, op. cit., *ZGFN* 9 (1953); 'Yige shixing jiating jihua de gongren jiating', op. cit., *ZGFN* 1 (1953).

73. Wang Xueyun, 'Xiafang hui bu hui yingxiang fufu ganqing?' (Will going down to the countryside affect the feelings between husband and wife?), *ZGFN* 4 (1 April 1958), 13. The man's anxiety about his imminent separation from his wife was expressed by allusions to missing the support she gave him.

74. 'Gei quanguo muqin he zimeimen de yi feng xin' (A letter to the nation's mothers and sisters), *ZGFN* 1 (5 January 1953), 8-9. This letter was written by returned volunteers from Korea to thank their womenfolk at home for the support they had given them during their period of service.

75. For example, see Zhang Chunxun, op. cit., *ZGQN* 9 (1953).

76. Yuan Liang, op. cit., *ZGFN* 9 (1953).

77. Yuan Benhui, 'Airen, tongzhi' (Wife, comrade), *ZGQN* 2 (16 January 1957), 20-22.

78. For example, Zhang Yi, 'Po xi he' (Mother-in-law and daughter-in-law make up), *ZGFN* 12 (1 December 1956), 14. Despite these images of the filial daughter-in-law, some writers have suggested that the radical effects of the Marriage Law have been particularly noticeable in affecting the relationship between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. See Elisabeth Croll, *Chinese Women Since Mao*, London: Zed Press, 1983, 65; Ellen Judd, 'Niangjia: Chinese Women and their Natal Families', *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 48, no. 3 (August 1989), 533.

79. Xie Juezai, op. cit., *ZGFN* 9 (1953). Other stories suggested that younger women had a moral responsibility to get on with the mother-in-law. See 'Po xi he', op. cit., *ZGFN* 12 (1956).

80. See, for example, the cartoon story called 'Yige zhiyuanjun de weihunqi' (The betrothed of a volunteer), *ZGFN* 2 (5 February 1953), 2-3.

81. The suggestion that the responsibility to exercise self-restraint was primarily the younger woman's was continues to be prevalent. See, for example, the advice that 'a daughter-in-law should consciously and on her own initiative develop respect for her mother-in-law right from the first day [of marriage].... the daughter-in-law should exercise self-control and should try hard not to talk back to her mother-in-law, not to get angry and not to be indiscreet, because doing these things will harm the mother-in-law's self respect...' Wang Jisheng, *Qingnian xinlixue* (Youth Psychology), Beijing: Zhongguo shehuikexue chubanshe 1983, 199-

200.

82. Xia Mao and Xiu Zhen, 'Wode qizi bangzhu wo fangxiale tanwu de baofu' (My wife helped me shed the burden of corruption), *ZGFN* 3 (1 March 1952), 11. See also C.K. Yang, op. cit., 178-180.

83. *ibid.*

84. Chang Gengxi, 'Nongcun nü tuanyuan Wang Xingxing jianju tewu zhangfu' (Rural Youth League member Wang Xingxing informs against her spy husband), *ZQCN* 70 (14 July 1951), 25-26.

85. Xia Mao and Xiu Zhen, op. cit., *ZGFN* 3 (1952).

86. Su Jingzhen, 'Wo mianjiule zhangfu, ye jiaoyule ziji' (I saved my husband, and educated myself), *ZGFN* 3 (1 March 1952), 21.

87. Xiao Lin, 'Zai jiating shenghuo zhong yinggai jianchi shenmo' (What you should uphold in domestic life), *ZGFN* 1 (1 January 1956), 8.

88. *Hunyinfu xuanchuan shouce* (Propaganda manual for the Marriage Law), Beijing: 1951:7-8, quoted in C.K. Yang, op. cit., 52.

89. Chen Pengtao, 'Wo zhuanbianle dui haizi de taidu' (I have changed my attitude towards my children), *ZGFN* 9 (7 September 1953), 21.

90. A typical article about childcare focused on the mother's responsibilities, even suggesting that the mother learn to 'do two things at once'. See, for example, 'Zenyang jiejie gongzuo, jiawu he haizi jian de maodun' (How to resolve the contradiction between work, domestic affairs and children), *ZGFN* 5 (28 May 1954), 6-7.

91. This was particularly apparent during the mid-1950s 'Five Goods' campaign, which, coinciding with rising urban unemployment, called on women to be good housewives and mothers.

92. This idea was reminiscent of the traditional assumption that a good mother was one who educated her sons in 'correct conduct'. See O'Hara, op.cit., 13-48.

93. Chen Pengtao, op. cit., *ZGFN* (1953).

94. For example see the story of the child who became withdrawn and timid as a result of his mother's lack of love for him, 'Bu zhun cuican zuguo de dier dai' (It is not permitted to wreck the motherland's young generation), *ZQCN* 2 (16 January 1956), 35-36. See also Song Jiaren, 'Shei de zeren?' (Whose responsibility?), *ZGFN* 10 (1957), 36-37, about a little girl who stole things.

95. See an article praising Soviet mothers for their contribution to society in breeding revolutionary sons, 'Muqin, jingshen shang de qin'aide...' (Mothers, the dear ones of the spirit), *ZGFN* 10 (28 October 1954), 22-23. Tan Qiufang, 'Guangrong junshu Liu Laidi' (Liu Laidi, the glorious soldier's dependent), *ZGFN* 1 (1 January 1952), 26-27, whose glory lay not only in organising the mutual aid group and meeting Chairman Mao, but in encouraging her sons to follow their father's path in fighting for the motherland and socialism.

96. Potter and Potter, op. cit., chapter 9.

97. Yuan Liang, op. cit., *ZGFN* 9 (1953).

98. Huang Junhui, 'Wo zheige xiangxia fuxi shangle zhongxue' (I, a peasant wife, am studying at middle school), *ZQCN* 8 (16 April 1953), 24. References to physical contact between individuals of the same sex, particularly men, were in contrast quite acceptable. See, for example, the photograph of two men dancing together, arms entwined, in *GMRB* (11 January 1956), 4.

99. *ibid.*, 192. Whyte and Parish subscribed to a similar view in suggesting that 'family members show their concern for each other mainly by the acts they perform for each other and the family, rather than by outpourings of sentiment. Even between spouses there is generally no open display of affection outside the bedroom...', Whyte and Parish, *op. cit.*, 182. In contrast to Potter and Potter's argument, however, Whyte and Parish attribute this to the Confucian emphasis of self-control. This and the above arguments would go some way to explaining comments such as 'We Chinese don't show our love for each other, but keep it instead in our hearts', Sherry Rosen, *Mei Foo Sun Chuen: Middle-Class Chinese Families in Transition*, Taipei: Orient Cultural Service, 1976, 165, and Esther Cheo Ying's comment that 'emotion is a luxury to be kept in a special box, to be brought out only on special and appropriate occasions', *op. cit.*, 162. A further indication of the public distance maintained between partners was in the use of kinship terms in referring to the spouse. In 'Po xi he', *op. cit.*, ZGFN (1956), the man refers to his wife as 'wo jiejie' (my older sister).

100. That low expectations of marriage as an affective relationship were common in the early 1950s was apparent in letters which revealed that women often agreed to marriage without considering the importance of love or companionship. See, for example, Chen Yin, 'Jianli xin minzhuzhuyi de hunyin guanxi' (Establish new democratic marital relations), ZGQN 38 (6 May 1950), 12-14.

101. Quoted in Meijer, *op. cit.*, 39.

102. This representation of sexual satisfaction could be compared to the new interest in women's sexual pleasure which appeared during the Weimar Sex Reform movement, which was to reconcile the 'New Woman' to marriage and motherhood by improving her sex life. See Grossman, *op. cit.*, 191-195.

104. A similar process of women's self-identification through reference to the husband's has been observed by Davin amongst the participants' of dependants' committees, membership of which depended on the husbands' occupation: 'The women of the association were thus being viewed, and learned to define themselves, through the identity of their husbands....', Davin, op. cit., 60. Wolf subscribed to the same view in noting that women frequently referred to themselves, and to others, in terms of their relationship to men, see op. cit., 1985, 218.

Chapter six Gender Boundaries in Marriage

1. Sun Ming, op. cit., 17-19.
2. ibid., 19.
3. ibid., 21.
4. This comment appeared in a section called 'Zenyang jianli zhengchang de fufu guanxi he xingfu de jiating shenghuo ne?' (How should one establish normal marital relations and happy family life?), in a longer article entitled 'Kefu jiating shenghuo zhong de lijizhuyi sixiang' (Overcome selfish thinking in family life), *ZGFN* 6 (1 June 1956), 14-16.
5. Gan Zhongqing, 'Qizi bi zhangfu nengli qiang jiu shi "bu xiangchen de hunyin" ma?' (So when a wife is more able than her husband, it's a poor match, is it?), *ZGQN* 7 (1 April 1959), 28. In this article, the man who was criticised for his 'backward' thinking had initially aired his views about women's education after his girlfriend of two years' standing eventually decided not to marry him on the grounds that she was better educated than him.
6. Wei Junyi, op. cit., *ZGQN* 4 (1953).
7. Li Zhen, *Zhenzheng de aiqing* (True Love), Beijing: Zhongguo qingnian chubanshe, 1956, 12-13.
8. The term '*xiao tiandi*' was used by Li Zhen, ibid., 14, in his discussion about wives who gave up work as soon as they married. The view that women should engage in some form of work or political activity outside the home in order to set an example for their children was reminiscent of the idea, common in Europe during the nineteenth century, that women's education was necessary in order to equip them as their children's educators. See, for example, Elisabeth Badinter, *Mother Love*, 1981, New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 226-227. In the different ideological conditions of China during the 1950s, this was expressed through images of sons whose revolutionary credentials were acquired through following the revolutionary example set by their mothers. A typical example was 'Guangrong junshu Liu Laidi', op. cit., *ZGFN* 1 (1952), which told of a long-suffering, determined and committed woman whose revolutionary example lay in encouraging her sons to volunteer for service in Korea.
9. Sun Ming, op. cit., 23.
10. Li Zhen, op. cit., 52-57. The relevant section of Li Zhen's book was entitled 'Hun qian he hun hou de guanxi' (Relations before and after marriage).
11. Zhang Fan, op. cit., 68. The relevant section was entitled 'Zuihao de qizi shouxian shi zuihao de tongzhi' (The best wife is first and foremost the best comrade).
12. Sun Ming, op. cit., 24.
13. Xia Gengfen, 'Lian'ai wenti bu yinggai yingxiang wo canjia junshi ganbu xuexiao' (The question of love should not affect my participation in the military cadres' school), *ZGQN* 55 (23 December 1955), 13. This article described how a couple decided to live apart for the sake of work.
14. Sun Ming, op. cit., 26.
15. ibid., 32-34.
16. Liu Mucan, 'Cong xianqi liangmu dao dangle renmin daibiao' (From virtuous wife and good mother to the people's

representative), *ZGFN* 15 (15 October 1950), 45. This article was a typical example of the prevalent view that women's identification with the domestic sphere was incompatible with political commitment.

17. Hu Xian, 'Xin xifu' (The new daughter-in-law), *ZGQN* 1 (8 January 1954), 10-14.

18. Liu Dezhen, 'Wo liang you xinxin jianli yige xin jiating' (We both have the confidence to set up a new home), *ZGFN* 1 (1 February 1952), 31.

19. Pang Hui, 'Wo yinggai ai ta' (I should love her), *ZGFN* 23 (1 December 1959), 18-20. The young wife in this story began to study because she realised that her lack of education was alienating her husband's affections.

20. Wei Junyi, op. cit., *ZGQN* 21 (1953).

21. Deng Yingchao, op. cit., 1953, 2. A Soviet decree published on December 28 1917, formally described procreation as a 'social function of women'. See Lapidus, op. cit., 61.

22. Cai Chang, 'Gei Shanghai junzheng daxue funümen de baogao' (Report to women in the Shanghai University for Military and Political Affairs), delivered on 30 August 1947, in *Xiandai Funü* 4 (1 March 1950), 1-3.

23. See, for example, Xiao Song, 'Nü gong Yuan Yi jinle Renmin daxue' (Woman worker Yuan Yi went to the People's University), *ZGQN* 75 (29 September 1951), 27. This told of a young woman, who, having worked in a Peking factory from the age of fourteen, was elected labour model after liberation, and gained a place to study in the People's University when it was first opened in the spring of 1950. Once she began to study, she found herself confronted by a number of difficulties, including the question of domestic responsibilities. She decided, however, there was no way of finding a satisfactory solution to her '*jiating wenti*' (domestic problems) until the state was richer. Many letters published in *ZGFN* in the fifties were critical, and even despairing in tone about the inadequacy of domestic services. A typical example, submitted by a woman called Li Ying who worked in the editorial of a newspaper, was published under the title of 'Duomo nan dang de mama, a!' (How difficult it is to be a mother), *ZGQN* 9 (1 May 1956), 5-7. It expressed dismay at the short-sighted approach of the authorities in its policy towards day creche provision, since working mothers still had the responsibility of looking after their babies during working hours. Despite many statements of intent, and despite evidence that women's difficulties were considerably reduced in areas where state provision was adequate, state and collective welfare facilities fell far short of demand, and according to C.K. Yang, the 1955 levels registered a decrease in comparison with 1951-1952. At the same time, discriminatory practices against women in employment were noted. For example, women factory workers' pay was frequently docked for the time they took off to feed their babies), and by 1956 discrimination against women on the grounds of their reproductive and childcaring functions was being openly criticised by leaders of the ACWF such as Cai Chang and Yang Zihua. For further discussion, see *Zhongguo funü yundong de zhongyao wenjian*, op. cit., 58; C.K. Yang, op. cit., 150-154.

24. Cai Chang, 'Gao hao jiawu laodong, zhiyuan guojia jianshe' (Do domestic work well, and support state construction), speech to the First National Congress of Employees' Dependents, *ZGFN* 9 (1 September 1957), 2-5.

25. Deng Yingchao, in Dymphna Cusack, op. cit., 201. Cusack makes little mention of the fact that Deng Yingchao did not have any children, nor of another equally important factor that as top leaders, Deng Yingchao and her husband Zhou Enlai would doubtless have employed domestic servants.

26. Both these comments were in readers' letters in *ZGFN* 3 (1 March 1957), 14-15, which pointed to the probable interference with studies that would result from marriage. Other examples expressed women's fear that having children would make men look down on them, because of the negative effect childcare would have on work. For example, see Wei Junyi, op. cit., *ZGQN* 21 (1953). The most extreme examples of the authorities' somewhat dismissive approach to the difficulties women faced related to infanticide. An article in *ZGQN* told of a young worker who drowned her two month old baby because of the disruption to her own work and study. She was sentenced to three and a half years in jail, and was expelled from the Youth League. Editorial opinion about this case suggested that 1) it demonstrated the dangers of marrying too early, and 2) that it was wrong to resort to infanticide as a solution. There was no comment about the very real pressures that pushed women to commit infanticide. On the contrary, 'We think that sympathy [for the women] is wrong.' See the editorial article, 'Youle haizi jiu bu neng jinbu ma?' (Does having children mean that you cannot make progress?), *ZGQN* 15 (1 August 1954), 32.

27. Li Yuguang, 'Qingnian funü yao nuli tigao ziji zai shehuizhuyi jianshe shiye zhong gongxian geng da de lilian' (Young women should increase their efforts to contribute even more to the cause of socialist construction), *ZGQN* 5 (1 March 1954), 14-15. This article was published to commemorate International Women's Day.

28. In any case, women were urged to remember, 'professional work was not the only contribution to socialism, because it is vital to nurture the next generation'. See Dong Shan, 'Jieshao "Zenyang zuo muqin"', (Introducing "How to be a mother"), (a review of a Soviet book), *ZGFN* 2 (1 February 1952), 31.

29. Lai Ruoyu, 'Tamen xuyao bangzhu' (They [women] need help), *ZGFN* 7 (1 July 1956), 1. That it was inevitable that women should do more than men around the house did not mean, however, that men should 'look down on housewives'. It is interesting to note that many of the letters conveying women's sense of inadequacy at not working outside the home coincided with the 'domestication' campaign of the mid-1950's.

30. For example, Dong Shan, op. cit., *ZGFN* 2 (1952), mentioned in the third of the five points in this review that 'child upbringing is... a responsibility that both husband and wife should jointly share'. Having said this, the author went on to advise the reader not to quarrel with her spouse in front of the children since the success of cooperation between husband and wife depended first of all on 'harmonious family relations'.

31. This comment was made in an editorial response to a girl's question about whether her brother should do domestic work or not.

See Shen Xiaohui, 'Didi yinggai canjia jiating laodong ma?' (Should my younger brother do domestic work?), *ZGQN* 6 (16 March 1954), 32. Davin, op. cit., 181, also noted that men were invariably asked to 'help' their wives rather than take their share of the work.

32. For example, Liu Ren, 'Wode qizi' (My wife), *ZGQN* 6 (16 March 1957), 38-39. This account told of a man who had been accustomed to taking the domestic work his uneducated wife did for granted. She would often stay up half the night to finish mending his clothes or making his shoes. But on one occasion when his wife was otherwise occupied, the husband sewed a button wrongly on to his child's jacket, whereupon he realised how difficult domestic tasks were. He began to admire his wife's patience. His attitude only really began to change, however, when his wife went away for ten days, during which he broke a number of things in the house, and found that he had little time to attend meetings. The story gave no indication of how the husband applied his new understanding of his wife once she returned home.

33. For example, Mei Mei, 'Yi dui xianjin shengchanzhe de xingfu jiating' (The happy household of a couple of progressive producers), *ZGFN* 8 (16 July 1958), 20-21,, described a model young couple who ordered their lives in a way that would leave maximum time to devote to work and study; eating in the canteen, doing the domestic work together, planning the births of their children, etc. Such a picture of planned bliss must have seemed ridiculous to the average reader. The average night's sleep of a woman textile worker in 1951 was three to four hours, according to the Department of Woman Labour of the All China Labour Federation in 1951 because not only did they have to 'cook, care for the children, [and] wash clothes,' they also had 'to wait on their husbands and parents-in-law... and suffer from beating and malnutrition'. See *ZGFN* 25-26 (1951), 8-9, quoted in C.K. Yang, op. cit., 149.

34. Lenin, quoted in Lapidus, op. cit., 73-74, also added that 'women grow worn out in the petty, monotonous household work, their strength and time dissipated and wasted, their minds growing narrow and stale, their hearts beating slowly, their will weakened.'

35. The improvement in the status accorded the housewife under Stalin's family legislation of the mid-1930s occurred largely in response to economic considerations, much the same way as later occurred in China. Housework was to be considered 'socially useful labour', and Soviet housewives were told that making a comfortable home life was a worthy goal. For further discussion, see Lapidus, op. cit., 110-115.

36. Olivia Harris has shown how hierarchical relations within the household may be seen as natural precisely because of the projected link between the domestication of women and women's basic physiological function to reproduce. See Olivia Harris, 'Households as natural units', in Kate Young, et al, eds., *Of Marriage and the Market*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981, 136-155.

37. Zhang Yibai, 'Zhengquede duidai ziji de gongzuo wenti' (Treat correctly your own work problems), *ZGFN* 4 (1 April 1957), 1-2;

Shuai Guang, 'Suqing fengjian sixiang cai neng tigao ziji' (Only by getting rid of feudal thought can you improve yourself), *ZGFN* 9 (12 March 1950), 7-8. Women's self-deprecation and disdain of others who did not work outside the home was in large part the consequence of the glorification of women's new activities after 1949, which apportioned prestige (and wages) to the typically 'male' occupations. Few attempts were made during the 'domestication' campaign of the mid-1950s to explain the obvious contradiction in suggesting that women give up their new access to status and prestige. In view of the classical Marxist argument about women and participation in production, Cai Chang's suggestion that women should disregard the fact that domestic work was unsalaried was surprising, to say the least. She argued that 'Nurseries and canteens are to serve those who labour for socialist construction. Is not cooking and looking after the children at home also serving those who labour for socialist construction?' See Cai Chang, op. cit., *ZGFN* 9 (1957).

38. Zhang Yibai, op. cit., *ZGFN* 4 (1957).

39. Li Baoguang, 'Qingnian funü yao nuli tigao ziji zai shehuizhuyi jianshe shiye zhong gongxian geng da de lilian' (Young women should work hard at improving themselves to contribute even more to socialist construction), *ZGQN* 5 (1 March 1954), 14-15.

40. *ibid.*

41. See, for example, Zheng Hao, 'Cengjing zouguo de wan lu' (The twisted path I once went along), *ZGQN* 4 (2 February 1957), 33-34, about the young woman who rejected her rural husband in favour of a Japanese lover nineteen years her senior. The story suggested that the first sign of her moral degeneration was when she started dressing up in fancy urban clothes.

42. Yu Feng, op. cit., *ZGFN* 3 (1955).

43. Pu Manting, 'Zhenzheng de aiqing' (True love), *ZGQN* 1 (1 January 1956), 39-40. This story told of a man who decided to marry a woman with only one leg, much to the consternation of his workmates, his neighbours and his mother, all of whom doubted that the marriage would work out. The message that his wife's physical appearance was of minor importance was finally brought home at the end of the story, when the reader was informed that one year after marriage she gave birth to a bouncy baby boy. Various articles about the kind of beauty that mattered in choosing a marriage partner were published in different issues of *ZGQN* throughout 1956 under titles such as 'Guanyu airen de mei' (About a wife's beauty), by Dong Menwang, *ZGQN* 14 (16 July 1956), 21-22.

44. Hua Nan, 'Women fufu hehaole' (We, husband and wife, have made up), *ZGFN* 1 (1 January 1956), 9, described how a man's attitude towards his wife created serious tensions in his marriage, until the Party stepped in and helped him to see the error of his ways in thinking of her as unattractive and uncultured. In an autobiographical article called 'Wode fannao shi bu shi duoyu de?' (Is my anxiety excessive?), *ZGFN* 10 (1 October 1956), 11, Bi Ye, a young woman, described how despite her decision to marry her boyfriend, she still felt ashamed of being seen with him in public due to his 'unmanly' stature. She was urged to realise that it was his 'internal beauty' that mattered.

45. This view was particularly stressed with reference to the traditional habit of female breast-binding during puberty. See, for example, Huang Shuze, op. cit., *ZGQN* 4 (1953).
46. Davin noted the economic considerations behind the neutral appearance recommended for women during the 1950s in op. cit., 109.
47. Zhu Keyu, op. cit., *ZGQN* 62 (1951).
48. See, for example, the description of the initial meeting between a young couple at a dance, which made pointed reference to the good looks of the young woman, as if to prepare the reader for the subsequent descriptions of her temperamental, materialistic and selfish attitude towards her fiancé-to-be. See the letter written by Zhu Minghua as a contribution to the initial articles of a debate entitled 'Shei de guocuo?' (Whose error?), *ZGFN* 8 (16 April 1959), 12. This debate about a young couple's estrangement was continued in the following four consecutive issues of *ZGFN*.
49. See, for example, Zheng Hao, op. cit., *ZGQN* 4 (1957), and below, note 58.
50. Yu Feng, op. cit., *ZGFN* 3 (1955).
51. *ibid.*
52. See appendix for frequency of articles about women's appearance and dress during the mid-1950s. The few articles which made any reference to male appearance focused not on clothes and dress, as was the case with articles written for women, but about physical characteristics, such as height and facial hair. See, for example, Dong Menwang, op. cit., *ZGQN* 14 (1956).
53. Chen Yanping, 'Ta ru jin shi daxuesheng le' (She is now a university student), *ZGQN* 14 (16 July 1957), 33, described how a happily married couple became estranged once the wife's status rose as a result of going to university.
54. Zhou Kelan, 'Wo shi zenyang chuli wode aiqing wenti de' (The way I resolved my love problems), *ZGQN* 22 (16 November 1955), 33.
55. Gao Guizhen, op. cit., *ZGFN* 5 (1953).
56. For example, in response to Zhou Kelan's article, editorial opinion supported her decision to remain with her husband on the grounds that their ideals and commitments were the same. See Zhou Kelan, op. cit., *ZGQN* 22 (1955).
57. Chen Yanping, op. cit., *ZGQN* 14 (1957).
58. Zheng Hao, op. cit., *ZGQN* 4 (1957). Another example was of a young woman who decided that she wanted to marry a cadre once she herself had become one. When her cadre fiancé volunteered to return to work in the countryside, she broke off the engagement because she did not want to lower her newly achieved status. The critical tone used in this article was accompanied by pejorative descriptions of the young woman's tendency to dress up and put on airs. See Wei Wei, 'Ta yinggai biangua ma?' (Should she go back on her word?), *ZGFN* 2 (1 February 1958), 13.
59. Another possible implication of this article was that the young woman's behaviour was even more degenerate than in other cases of adultery, because her lover was both considerably older than her and foreign. For comments about the way in which foreigners were seen as somewhat disgusting, see Cheo Ying, op. cit., 142.
60. Liu Ren, op. cit., *ZGQN* 6 (1957).

61. Zhang Chunxun, op. cit., ZGQN 9 (1953).
62. Liu Ren, op. cit., ZGQN 6 (1957); Liu Dezhen, op. cit., ZGFN 1 (1952).
63. For example, see Zhang Fan, op.cit., 78; Zhang Chunxun, op. cit., ZGQN 9 (1953). Some articles implied that it was a husband's duty to encourage his wife to become involved in political and social affairs. See, for example, Wang Fengyu's article to celebrate International Women's Day in 1951, 'Nongcun nü tuanyuan weishenmo jiehun hou jiu xiaojile' (Why do women Youth League members become passive as soon as they marry?), ZGQN 60 (10 March 1951), 22.
64. Zhang Chunxun, op. cit., ZGQN 9 (1953).
65. Liu Dezhen, op. cit., ZGFN 1 (1952).
66. Jean Robinson, op.cit., 52.
67. Wei Junyi, 'Sanbajie tan Zi Jun de beiju' (Talking about Zi Jun's tragedy for International Women's Day), ZGQN 35 (25 March 1950), 34-35. This article referred to the relationship between Zi Jun and Xiao Sheng in Lu Xun's story 'Shang shi' (Death by wounding) in its discussion about the sources of women's subordination. It is particularly interesting for its unusually critical approach to conventional gender stereotypes. Wei Junyi's questions, such as 'Why is it that in marriage so many women concentrate on what their husbands want?' or 'Why are women always mentioned in relation to love and marriage?' indicated an understanding of the gender differences in the representation of women which was not often expressed in the 1950s discourse.
68. Xiao A, 'Women fuqi hehao la!' (We have been reconciled as husband and wife), ZGQN 17 (1 September 1956), 38-39.
69. Chen Qi, op. cit., ZGFN 2 (1956).
70. *ibid.*
71. *ibid.*
72. Xiao Lin, op. cit., ZGFN 1 (1956).
73. *ibid.*
74. Wei Junyi, 'Women fufu guanxi weishenmo polie' (Why our marriage broke up), ZGFN 4 (1 April 1956), 12-13.
75. See, for example, Croll, op. cit., 1978, Davin, op. cit., 1976, and Stacey, op. cit., 1984.

Chapter seven The Dangers of Sexual Transgressions

1. Warnings against extra-marital affairs, on the grounds that 'freedom of marriage does not mean the freedom to have affairs with a person who is already married and has children' were therefore issued in the name of preserving 'communist morality'. See Xu Mingjiang, 'Tan qingniantuan zuzhi zai dui qingnian jinxing hunyin lian'ai wenti jiaoyu zhong de jige wenti' (On some problems in the Youth League's education of young people in matters of marriage and love), *ZGQN* 7 (1 April 1955), 5-6. According to Meijer, the shift in ideological emphasis in matters of sexual morality coincided with a period of lower standards of sexual morality in the mid-1950s, see Meijer, op. cit., 143.
2. Kay Ann Johnson argued that the disruption caused by the initial, radical period of implementation the Marriage Law was largely in response to the threat it posed to 'the exchange of women upon which patrilineal families and rural communities were based'. See Johnson, op. cit., 147. Stacey, in contrast, suggested that the transition in policy in 1953 was the consequence of the successful implementation of the 'new democratic family reform' in linking changes in family structure and function to the requirements of the small-scale private farm economy. See Stacey, op. cit., 182-186. She also argued that 'the stringent sexual code of the CCP... reflected its attempt to appeal to traditional, patriarchal peasant values', *ibid.* 188.
3. See appendix.
4. A typical example told of how a couple who had succeeded in getting divorces from their previous spouses were forced out of the village by local prejudice, and were eventually imprisoned. See Hua Mu, 'Zai guanche hunyinfa yundong zhong qingnian funü yinggai zuo shenmo?' (What young women should do in the campaign to implement the marriage law), *ZGQN* 4 (16 February 1953), 9-10. Another typical example was of a young woman who, having been forced into an arranged marriage, was refused support by the Youth League when she sought a divorce, and was threatened with ostracism by her own family if she persisted in her claim. In despair, she eventually committed suicide. See Ma Dejie and Liu Xianjun, 'Liu Mei weishenmo zisha?' (Why did Liu Mei commit suicide?), *ZGQN* 48 (23 September 1950), 49. The context for such efforts was indicated by Zhou Enlai, who reported that 'over ten thousand women had committed suicide or were 'murdered' because of the oppression of families in the Canton South Region in the first half year of 1951, and other areas had a similar situation.' See Helen Foster Snow, op. cit., 13.
5. See, for example, Luo Qiong, op. cit., *ZGQN* 4 (1953), and Zhuang Yu, 'Tan zhengpai yu bu zhengpai' (On propriety and impropriety), *ZGQN* 5 (1 March 1953), 14-15.
6. Meijer, op. cit., 145, does not give any figures but suggests that men were more often cited as the guilty party in divorce cases. Figures based on returns from the old liberated areas indicated that 60%-90% of cases were initiated by women. See Zhongyang renmin zhengfu fazhi weiyuanhui (Legal Committee of the Central People's Government) ed., *Hunyin wenti cankao ziliao huibian* (Compendium of Reference Materials on Marriage Problems),

Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1950, 38.

7. This was particularly the case by 1957, when legal commentators widely suggested that 'alienation of mutual affection' (*ganqing polie*) was not adequate grounds for divorce. See, for example, a debate carried in a number of issues of ZGFN, 'Guanyu You Tong tongzhi de "duiyu dangqian lihun wenti de fenxi he yijian" yi wen taolun' (Discussion of Comrade You Tong's article " (Analysis and ideas about current divorce problems)", ZGFN 8 (1 August 1957), 16-17, and other articles with the same title in *ibid.*, 9 (1 September 1957), 20-21; 11 (1 November 1957), 25-26; 12 (1 December 1957), 15.

8. The court had an important function as mediator to try and convince couples against divorce. Some couples were simply told, despite their own perception, that an emotional basis for marriage still existed, and so they had better try again. See You Tong, *op. cit.*, ZGFN 8 (1957). A number of commentators indicated that the increasing emphasis on mediation, and the parallel difficulties in obtaining a divorce, corresponded to a view of marital problems as an ideological problem, often of bourgeois morals, which could therefore be treated by ideological education.

9. For example, see Huo Yongqun, 'Lihun hou de ganxiang' (Reflections after divorce), ZGFN 10 (16 August 1958), 19, which described the case of a couple who after a year of marriage, sought a divorce on the grounds of 'alienation of mutual affection' (*ganqing polie*). The marital difficulties in this case were the result of the couple's failure to develop a 'correct view of love', witnessed by the fact that they had married after only three meetings.

10. The term '*ganqing lun*' was used pejoratively, and was only found in one article, to denote the exaggerated importance attached to 'alienation of mutual affection' in petitions for divorce. See the article compiled by members of Beijing University's Law Department, 'Dui lihun wenti de fenxi he yijian' ZGFN 4 (1958). See also Liu Yunxiang, 'Guanyu zhengque renshi yu chuli dangqian de lihun wenti' (On correctly understanding and handling current divorce problems), FX 3 (1958), 55-58, for the view that 'alienation of mutual affection' invariably indicated an individualistic and bourgeois attitude towards love and marriage.

11. Stacey, *op. cit.*, 185. Stacey points out that her argument contrasts with the views of C. K. Yang and Meijer, who saw the family as a competing unit of loyalty, the influence of which had to be diminished for the CCP to achieve its reform objectives. See C. K. Yang, *op. cit.*, and Meijer, *op. cit.*

12. Pang Dunzhi noted that revolutionary cadres, estranged from their rural wives, accounted for a 'very large number' (*hen da de shumuzi*) of the men who sought divorce in 1950, see Pang Dunzhi, *op. cit.*, 42. However, in the absence of figures, it is difficult to assess the number of divorces granted on grounds of adultery, but from the amount of publicity given to cases of adultery, it seems probable that it accounted for a considerable percentage of all divorce cases. Assessment is further complicated by the lack of legal precision concerning adultery. Pang Dunzhi asserted that 'bigamy and adultery committed after liberation will be punished as criminal offences', see Pang Dunzhi, *op. cit.*, 39-40. Meijer

cited evidence showing that individuals were imprisoned for adultery, see Meijer, op. cit., 95. Meijer also stated, however, that adultery was by no means always seen as a punishable offence, op. cit., 94, and it was not specified as such in the Marriage Law. A further source of confusion lay in the terms used for adultery: the terms '*tongjian*' and '*hejian*' were used interchangeably for both adultery and fornication, see Meijer, op. cit., 96-97. It was apparently clear, however, that sexual relations prior to marriage on the part of one partner was 'not grounds for divorce', see *Hunyin fangzhi wu deng wenti*, op. cit., 36.

13. Meijer, op. cit., 100.

14. Lang, op. cit., 225.

15. C.K. Yang, op. cit., 60-61.

16. Liu Yunxiang, op. cit., FX 3 (1958).

17. *ibid.*

18. *ibid.* 19. Davin pointed out how the same complaint could be interpreted according to different ideological categories, depending on whether a man's divorce application was judged sympathetically or not, see Davin, op. cit., 104.

20. Lenin's views on sexuality, and on female sexuality in particular, were contained in remarks he made to Klara Zetkin, in which he expressed his concern over the 'sexual excesses' of the civil war period. For Lenin, 'glass of waterism' indicated a view of marriage as little more than 'the satisfaction of sexual desire' (*xingyu de manzu*), and as such was no different from an 'expansion of the bourgeois brothel' (*zichanjieji jiyuan de kuochong*). See Klara Zetkin, op. cit., ZGFN 11 (1953), and above chapter one, note 34. For a discussion about Lenin's views on love and sexuality, and for the controversy over sexual liberation in the mid-1920s, see Lapidus, op. cit., 85-90.

21. Popular acceptance of the word 'bourgeois' as a pejorative, and even abusive, term was reinforced in many different ways, depending on purpose and context. In the present context, it was done by repeated reference to the moral superiority of the Soviet system, and conversely, to the turgid corruption of western societies. So extreme was the mode in which such associations were conveyed in discourse of the 1950s that Soviet citizens seemed to appear as almost other worldly paragons of socialist virtue, untainted by the tensions and strains of material existence. See, for example, Deng Yingchao, op. cit., 1953, and Li Wei, op. cit., ZGQN 10 (1952).

22. See the debate about the case of Zhou Xixian in op. cit., ZGFN 7 (1953). Three letters, followed by an editorial summing up, formed the main content of the debate: Sun Junlan, 'Zhou Xixian chuli hunyin, jiating wenti shidiaole gongchandangyuan ying you de daode pinzhi' (In solving his marital and family problems, Zhou Xixian lost the moral character a Communist Party member ought to have); Lin Xiao, 'Zhou Xixian duidai qi, nü de xingwei shi jiduan zisizili, ling ren bu neng rongren de' (Zhou Xixian's treatment of his wife and women is selfish in the extreme, and cannot be tolerated); Fan Zhiyan, 'Wo dui Zhou Xixian wenti de kanfa' (My view of the problem of Zhou Xixian).

23. The association between an interest in appearance and dubious morals had deep historical roots. Indeed, according to the

Lienü zhuan, outward beauty was assumed to signal immorality unless proven otherwise. See O'Hara, op. cit., 29. Brightly coloured clothing, in particular, was somewhat suspect, such that during the 'prettification' campaign of the mid-1950s, contributors to youth and women's magazines went to considerable lengths to persuade their readers that dresses and colourful clothes 'had nothing to do with bourgeois ideology'. See, 'Guniangmen chuanqi hua yifu lai ba!' (Let young girls wear bright and colourful clothes), *editorial*, ZGQN 1 (1 January 1956), 38.

24. See, for example, the criticism of Zhou Xixian, op. cit., ZGFN 7 (1953). This argument is possibly supported by the frequent identification of cadres -- rather than of men without position or power -- as guilty of 'xi xin yan jiu' (liking the new and hating the old).

25. See, for example, the adulteress in Zheng Hao, op. cit., ZGQN 4 (1957).

26. An informant from a village in southern Jiangxi has told me that while a young woman who had sex with her boyfriend before marriage was still subject to extreme social disapproval, some women openly engaged in extra-marital liaisons after marriage, without encountering too much pressure from the community. By contrast, Olga Lang commented that in one area of Shanxi province tacit approval was given pre-marital intercourse, because peasants there were said to have expressed a preference for wives with sexual experience. See Lang, op. cit., 34.

27. 'Tan lian'ai' (lit. talking about love, ie. to go out with, have an affair with), was another possible euphemism for sexual intercourse. More direct terms, such as *fasheng nan'nü guanxi* (male-female relations occurred) or *xing xingwei* (sexual behaviour) and *xing guanxi* (sexual relationship) were used -- in the few examples found -- mainly in references to married couples. One exception was in *Hunyin fangwu zhaiwu deng wenti jieda*, op. cit., 40, when a young woman asked whether she could stop a man from marrying someone else since he had 'destroyed [her] purity' (*pohuai wode zhencao*). Another later exception was Song Tingzhang, op. cit., 13, who in pushing home his condemnation of pre-marital sex, made somewhat exaggerated use of a number of the direct terms noted above.

28. As a social construction, the concept of sexual deviance has functioned to keep 'the bulk of society pure in rather the same way that the similar treatment of some kinds of criminal helps keep the rest of society law abiding', Mary McIntosh, 'The Homosexual Role,' in *Social Problems*, Vol. 16, no. 2, Fall 1968, 184, quoted in Weeks, op. cit., 1981, 97-98. Terms like *bu zhengchang*, or *bu zhengdang* (abnormal or unorthodox), were used in equivalent ways in the Chinese discourses of the 1950s to identify and condemn forms of sexual behaviour, notably adultery and pre-marital sex, considered incompatible with the values of the official discourse of sexuality. In the absence of discussion about minority sexual practices, such as homosexuality, the concept did not have as wide an applicability in the Chinese discourse of the 1950s as in those of modern western societies. One might assume, however, from the biological conceptualisation of sexuality, that any sexual practice which could not be

- identified with the gender positions of the discourse were deemed biologically unnatural, and therefore inherently deviant or perverse, and sometimes a form of sickness. Such views continue to be upheld in China, see Sophia Goodman, 'Glad to be Gay?', *China Now*, No. 130, 1989, 8-9. For further discussion about the construction of sexual deviance see Weeks, op. cit., 1981, 97-98.
29. Shu Fan, 'Wode jiaoxun' (My lesson), *ZGFN* 3 (1 March 1956), 31-32.
 30. See, for example, Lei Jieqiong, op. cit., *ZGFN* 4 (1957).
 31. Li Yang, op. cit., *ZGFN* 11 (1956).
 32. See, for example, Dr. Yan Renying's response to readers' letters, in 'Guanyu "chunümo" wenti' (About the problem of "the hymen"), *ZGFN* 5 (28 May 1955), 28.
 33. See, for example, Shu Fan, op. cit., *ZGFN* 3 (1956). and Su Yuan, op. cit., *ZGQN* 7 (1956).
 34. See Bai Ruifang, 'Wode kongsu' (My denunciation), *ZGFN* 8 (1 August 1956), 2-3, and articles about the case in *ibid.*, 1 and 6. One suggestion in the discussion that followed Bai's article ignored the gender and sexual issues entirely by suggesting that since the rapist was a landlord's nephew, the case should be treated as a reflection of the class struggle.
 35. See 'Guanche hunyinfā, fāndui fēngjiān cānyu sixiāng', op. cit., *ZGQN* 76 (1951).
 36. See 'Guanyu xing zhishi de jige wenti', op. cit., *ZGQN* 13 (1956). In his analysis of sexuality in Samoa, Shore noted that nubial blood is the only female blood which does not represent danger to the man, see Bradd Shore, 'Sexuality and gender in Samoa', in Ortner & Whitehead, op. cit., 192-215. By the same token, as expressed in the 1950s materials, Chinese men's anxieties indicated that the absence of nubial blood represented danger; its presence testified to a man's control of the woman and her sexuality.
 37. Yan Renying, op. cit., *ZGFN* (1958), noted that the hymen could be broken by the introduction of instruments, masturbation, riding bicycles, or riding horses.
 38. See Zhu Zhixin, 'Ai qing shang de geda' (Hang-ups about love), *ZGQN* 22 (16 November 1956), 25-26.
 39. *ibid.*
 40. Li Yang, op. cit., *ZGFN* 11 (1956).
 41. Ding Ling, op. cit., *ZGQN* 39 (1950).
 42. Yan Renying, op. cit., *ZGFN* 11 (1958), and above note 37.
 43. Li Yang, op. cit., *ZGFN* 11 (1956). The context in which the term *xing luan* was used made it clear that it referred principally to fears related to female sexuality. As in Li Yang's article, it was used either in comments about female virginity or about the consequences of enabling women to exercise freedom of choice of marriage partner. See, for example, Li Ruolin, op. cit., *ZGQN* 6 (1956), who suggested that many women used the 'freedom of choice' slogan as a pretext to play around with men. The notion that 'those who have affairs are all loose and improper' (*lian'ai de dou shi hugao, zuofeng bu zhengpai*) was particularly associated with female conduct. See 'Ge ji tuanyuan de zuzhi yinggai jiji canjia xuanchuan guanche hunyin fa de yundong' (Youth League organisations at all levels should enthusiastically participate in

the campaign to publicise and implement the Marriage Law), ZGQN 5 (1 March 1953), 2.

44. That women's loss of virginity prior to marriage was commonly seen as a threat to general standards of sexual morality was possibly one of most entrenched, and resilient, prejudices about female sexuality which the official discourse had to confront. Even in the 1980s, recriminations against women who have lost their chastity or who are suspected of promiscuity may be a function of a sexual order in which the 'prevailing morality denies that women have sexual needs, and women who appear to give away their sexual goods arouse the ire of those who are seeking to sell theirs at the high price of marriage and lifetime support.' Sheridan and Salaff, 1984, 124.

45. The popular view that the remarriage of widows was immoral was, according to Li Yang, inseparably connected with the fact that they were no longer virgins, see Li Yang, op. cit., ZGFN 11 (1956). William Hinton, op. cit., 306-307, and Davin, op. cit., 97-98 commented that widows might have affairs with impunity, at least until the birth of a child, but that remarriage was totally unacceptable to the community. Ning Lao T'ai-t'ai commented that 'To follow a second husband was not a disgrace. It was not to one's honour, but it was not a disgrace', see Ida Pruitt, op. cit., 223. This suggestion coincided with Marion Levy's argument that families which arranged for the remarriage of young widows did so mainly for economic reasons. See Levy, *The Family Revolution in Modern China*, New York: Octagon Books, 1963, 46. According to Margery Wolf, this was still the case in the mid-1980s, see Margery Wolf, op. cit., 1985, 200-202.

46. Articles 2 and 17 of the 1950 Marriage Law of the People's Republic of China. For the story of a widow's experience of remarriage, see Wen Ying, 'San quan qi mei' 'The beauty of the three completes' ZGFN 2 (1 February 1952), 23.

47. For a discussion about the general significance of the law's stipulations concerning women's rights of remarriage see Davin, op. cit., 77-78, 96-98.

48. As a legal category, the meaning of monogamy was precise, but this did not preclude its informal extension to pre-marital relationships. For example, a girl who was praised for marrying her first love, despite his lower status and wealth, was told that to embark on a love relationship with her second suitor would have violated the monogamous requirements of the law. See Wei Hua, op. cit., ZGFN 7 (1958).

49. Song Tingzhang, op. cit., 12. True to style, Song made his distaste for any form of sexual expression outside the legitimate context of marriage clear in his choice of terms.

50. A good example of this was Zhong Dianbei, op. cit., ZGQN 16 (1955).

51. *ibid.*

52. *ibid.*

53. 'Ruhe duidai fuhua duoluo de zhangfu', (How to treat your corrupt and degenerate husband), ZGFN 7 (1 July 1956), 7.

54. This was particularly the case in criticism of cadres, which often implied that pursuing the favours of young girls, or abandoning an uneducated rural wife, were the consequence of power

- going to their heads. See, for example, the Zhou Xixian case, and Xiang Kang, 'Zhei shi shenmo yang de aiqing?' (What kind of love is this?), *ZGQN* 3 (1 February 1957), 37.
55. 'Disanzhe' (the third one), the pejorative term used for the mistress of an adulterous husband, was never used in the 1950s discourse to refer to men in 'triangular love affairs' (*sanjiao lian'ai*). The 'third one' continues to be applied to women because, as Liu Dalin wrote, any public contact with a married man is considered to be the woman's fault. See Liu Dalin, *op. cit.*, 123.
56. See Liu Lequn, *op. cit.*, *ZGFN* 11 (1955), and the debate which followed. See also, Su Yuan, *op. cit.*, *ZGQN* (1956).
57. See Li Ruolin, *op. cit.*, *ZGQN* 6 (1956).
58. Zheng Hao, *op. cit.*, *ZGQN* 4 (1957).
59. Lynda Nead, *op. cit.*, 56. Nead also noted that the adulteress represented such evil that she was not even mentioned in Victorian writings. Of course, the characteristics of the Victorian moral code analysed by Nead were very different from the Chinese, not least because the double standard was explicit in nineteenth century Britain. Both codes, however, shared an interest in controlling female sexuality via the formulation of elaborate discourses.
60. Lai Gen, *op. cit.*, *ZGQN* 22 (1957).
61. *ibid.*
62. Liu Lequn, *op. cit.*, *ZGFN* 11 (1955).
63. 'Kefu jiating shenghuo zhong de lijizhuyi sixiang', *op. cit.*, *ZGFN* 6 (1956). This editorial article concluded the debate about Luo Baoyi, and as such represented the official view of the case.
64. Zhu Zhixin, 'Disanzhe you xingfu ma?' (Can the third one come out alright?), *ZGFN* 3 (1 March 1956), 30-31.
65. *ibid.*
66. Chu Nan, 'Bu neng ai ta' (I must not love him), *ZGQN* 8 (16 April 1956), 39.
67. Zhu Zhixin, *op. cit.*, *ZGQN* 3 (1956).
68. Liu Lequn, *op. cit.*, *ZGFN* 11 (1955).
69. The woman in question was Liu Lequn, the estranged wife of Luo Baoyi, who wrote a letter entitled 'Wo weishenmo tongyi lihun' (Why I agreed to divorce) *ZGFN*, which was subsequently published in *Lihun wenti xuanji*, *op. cit.*, 14-16.
70. Deng Yingchao, *op. cit.*, 1953, 5. As an example of communist morality, Deng Yingchao pointed to the harmonious, conflict free (*conglai bu hui fasheng fenqi de yinying*) (*sic*) marriage of Karl and Jenny Marx !71. Liu Yunxiang, *op. cit.*, *FX* 3 (1958).
72. Li Deting, 'Fufu ganqing polie de zhuyao genju', (The main grounds for alienation of mutual affection in marriage), *FX* 4 (1957), 54.
73. 'Ruhe duidai fuhua duoluo de zhangfu', *op. cit.*, *ZGFN* 7 (1956).
74. Xiao Lin, 'Zai jiating shenghuo zhong yinggai jianchi shenmo?' (What should we uphold in family life?), *ZGFN* 1 (1 January 1956), 8. As a contribution to the Luo Baoyi debate, this article also suggested that while women should help their husbands by criticising them, they should not refuse to make concessions to them, for this would 'disrupt family harmony'.

75. Jin Chuan, 'Disanzhe yinggai zidong tuichu gan'ga de diwei' (The third one ought to take the initiative and withdraw from an awkward position), *ZGQN* 9 (1 May 1956), 37-38. This was the title of one of the articles in the debate following Su Yuan's letter, op. cit., *ZGQN* 7 (1956).
76. These quotations are of James Legge's translations of the Book of Poetry, Part III, Book III, Ode X, 3 and 104 respectively.
77. Hua Mu, op. cit., *ZGQN* 4 (1953). Of the three main factors which, in Hua Mu's view, impeded implementation of the Marriage Law, women's tendency to 'look down on themselves and their own capabilities' was the first. 'Patriarchal feudal ideology' (*jiazhang fengjian sixiang*) came second, followed by the general influence of feudal ideology.
78. Luo Qiong, op. cit., *ZGQN* 3 (1953); Hu Yaobang, op. cit., *ZGQN* 4 (1953).
79. Luo Qiong, op. cit., *ZGQN* 3 (1953).
80. Hu Yaobang, op. cit., *ZGQN* 4 (1953).
81. The sayings above implied that the control of female sexuality was still popularly treated -- even if not explicitly articulated -- as necessary for the maintenance of familial and social order. Hu Yaobang's repeated assurances that the new law would neither lead to female promiscuity, nor would it permit 'women to oppress men' (*funü yapo nanren*), indicated recognition of the extent of popular anxieties about the dangers of extending freedom of choice to women, and that such anxieties had to be assuaged in order to implement the law. However, his reiteration of the terms commonly used by his audience signified a partial accommodation with conservative and discriminatory views about women.
82. See, for example, Zhou Efen, op. cit., *ZGFN* 2 (1955), and Yan Renying, op. cit., *ZGFN* 11 (1958). See also above, chapter three, notes 33-35.
83. In her study of beliefs in the polluting powers of women in south China, Emily Ahern argued that menstrual blood and postpartum discharge were considered to make women 'unclean', and were therefore associated with dangerous powers. See Ahern, op. cit., 269-275. This did not mean, however, that female genitalia and reproductive organs were the single source of pollution, for according to her informants, so was the act of sexual intercourse, *ibid.*, 281.
84. Liu Dezeng and Hao Shimin, 'Nü tuanyuan Hao Xiaogai de gushi' (The story of Hao Xiaogai, a female Youth League member), *ZGQN* 33 (25 February 1950), 33. In *A Daughter of Han*, Ning Lao T'ai-t'ai clearly subscribed to traditional values in female appearance when she said 'if a good woman goes out, she must not go in gay clothing. She must wear a black coat and a black shirt and have a small black veil across her face...' See Pruitt, op. cit., 177-78. The 1950s version of this view was most striking during the Great Leap Forward period. See, for example, a poem about a beautiful girl with evil thoughts, Lan Li, *ZGQN* 10 (1958).
85. See, for example, Geng Xi, op. cit., *ZGQN* 16 (1958), and Chen Yanping, op. cit., *ZGQN* 14 (1957).
86. The references to female appearance in the mid-1950s were the only instances during the 1950s when feminine, rather than purely functional, dress seemed acceptable. The links between this and

the official attempts to boost the image of the housewife have been noted above, see chapter six, notes 50-52. See also appendix for frequency of references to female appearance during the mid-1950s.

87. Tao Lujia, 'Yin zhangfu xiaxiang jiu xiang lihun dui bu dui?' (Is it right to want a divorce just because your husband goes down to the countryside?), *ZGFN* 2 (1 February 1958), 4-5.

88. See Li Yang, op. cit., *ZGFN* 11 (1956). Davin, op. cit., 98, suggested that female responsibility in marital conflict was perhaps reinforced by the fact that divorce after 1949 was commonly initiated by women.

89. Croll, op. cit., 1981, 172, referred to the 'proverbial glass of water', but without making any gender distinction in the way it was applied. However, only one instance of 'glass of waterism' in the materials of the 1950s was found to describe male promiscuity: a contributor to the Luo Baoyi debate suggested that the latter's behaviour was the same as 'Lenin had criticised as glass of waterism'. See Jie Xuegong, 'Jianjue fandui zichanjieji geren sixiang' (Resolutely oppose bourgeois individualist thinking), *ZGFN* 1 (1 January 1956), 6.

90. See, for example, the comparisons between communist and bourgeois approaches to love and marriage in Li Wei, op. cit., *ZGQN* 10 (1952).

91. For discussion of the 'virgin-whore', or Mary-Eve duality in the traditional sexual paradigm of western society see Elizabeth Janeway, 'Who is Sylvia? On the Loss of Sexual Paradigms', *SIGNS*, (Summer 1980), Vol. 5, No. 4, 573-589.

92. Nead, op. cit., 49.

93. One of the few direct references to the injustice of the sexual double standard in the materials examined for the present analysis was in a review of Stendhal's *The Red and the Black*, written by Yao Wenyuan, 'Zenyang kandai xi ou gudian wenxue zuopin zhong de aiqing miaoxie' (How to approach the descriptions of love in the classical literature of western Europe), *ZGQN* 11 (1 June 1958), 37-40.

94. Victoria Goddard, 'Honour and Shame: the control of women's sexuality and group identity in Naples', in Caplan, op. cit., 190.

95. Gary Seaman's argument that female sexuality had the potential to destroy the political unity of the community referred to the polluting powers associated with menstrual and birth blood rather than with women's function as moral agent. See Seaman, op. cit., 394-395.

96. 'We cannot possibly interpret rituals concerning excreta, breast milk, saliva and the rest unless we are prepared to see in the body a symbol of society, and to see the powers and dangers credited to social structure reproduced in small on the human body.' Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: an Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966, 115.

97. Victoria Goddard argued that this role of female purity may become 'particularly important in historical situations of actual or threatened destruction of socio-cultural groups in the face of religion, the state, and/or capitalism.' -- in other words, at moments when the social unit was literally under threat by external forces. See Goddard, op. cit. Tien Ju-k'ang noted a

similar tendency in late Ming and early Qing China. He argued that signs of female chastity, including the extreme of female suicide, were particularly praised during moments of crisis and change. Female chastity was therefore associated with the preservation of standards of social morality, particularly at times when the latter was in danger of deterioration. See Tien Ju-k'ang, *op. cit.*, 126-135.

98. In extending Douglas' arguments to suggest that women and women's sexuality represent the dangerous margins of the group, Goddard concluded her study of Neapolitan society by suggesting that control of women's sexual activity could be explained in terms of their role as 'boundary markers and carriers of group identity.' Transgression of these boundaries threatened the cohesion of the social unit. Many examples from Chinese history concerning practices of sexual segregation and female chastity would support a similar argument. For example, Florence Ayscough described the case of a young woman who 'strolled around the streets and talked with young men', and who in so doing brought such disgrace on both her own and her husband-to-be's family that the two family heads decided to bury her alive. See Ayscough, *op. cit.*, 126.

Chapter eight Conclusions

1. The influence of Donzelot's analysis of the mechanisms of external intervention in the institutions of the family and marriage is evident in this argument. In his examination of the 'psy' technologies, he argued that family therapy, for example, not only treats families, but in constructing their problems, constructs families as the objects of treatment. See Donzelot, op. cit., passim.
2. See, for example, Judith Stacey's *Patriarchy and Socialist Revolution*, op. cit.; Kay Ann Johnson's *Women, the Family and Peasant Revolution*, op. cit.; Delia Davin's *Woman-Work*, op. cit., and Elisabeth Croll's *Feminism and Socialism in China*, op. cit.
3. For a discussion of Stalinist priorities in family policy see Gail Lapidus, op. cit., 112-118.
4. Stacey, op. cit., 259-260.
5. Donzelot, op. cit., 80-82.
6. Foucault, *Introduction to the History of Sexuality*, op. cit., 116.
7. In her introduction to *Gender and the Politics of History*, Joan Scott noted that the attention paid to textuality in the work of literary critics, 'to the way arguments are constructed and presented as well as to what is literally said', brings an 'important new dimension to the exegetical project' of the historian. Analysis of the interdependence and tension between concepts within the text permits a process of 'deconstruction' which makes it possible to 'study systematically (though never definitively or totally) the conflictual processes that produce meanings.' See Joan Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1988, 7. A similar 'deconstruction' of the contrasts and oppositions within the Chinese texts has been indispensable to the development of the present thesis.
8. The language of exhortation and encouragement used in the official discourse of the 1950s meant that the more negative aspects of women's sexual experience were not publicly discussed either. Thus, despite the enormity of the effort put into the eradication of venereal diseases and prostitution in the early 1950s, for example, the official materials gave them only scant mention, as the appendix shows.
9. Jeffrey Weeks, op. cit., 1981, 10.
10. As Jane Gallop observed, in a scientific model 'otherness is suppressed to preserve the theory's consistency. Theory's authority is guaranteed by its consistency.', Jane Gallop, 'Psychoanalysis in France', in *Women and Literature*, Vol. 7, no. 1, (1979), 61, quoted in Deborah Cameron, op. cit., 58.
11. It is also probable that there were a number of areas of correspondence between the views represented in the discourse and day-to-day practice. In personal communications, a number of Chinese women of different ages have indicated agreement with some of the advice contained in the 1950s' discourse, particularly concerning views about when it is appropriate for a woman to engage in sexual intercourse. Indeed, some of these informants have suggested that it is 'unnatural' to have intercourse during

the menstrual period. It is therefore reasonable to speculate that similar views were upheld by women during the 1950s; the relevant aspects of the 1950s' discourse were probably accepted as 'natural'.

APPENDIX

The following charts are based on a quantitative survey of articles on topics relevant to the present research in *Zhongguo funü* and *Zhongguo qingnian*, spanning the years 1949-1959. Information for both journals is incomplete for the years 1949 and 1950; for *ZGFM* it is also incomplete for 1951. With the exception of nos. 7 and 9 of 1952 for *ZGFM*, the subsequent years are complete. The graphs should be read together with the charts, which contain a break-down of the categories on which the survey is based. Each graph is preceded by a brief summary explaining its general significance.

Points along the top of the grey areas represent numbers of articles in *ZGFM*; points on the overlaid line graph show numbers of articles in *ZGQN*; points on the top of the white areas represent the sum of articles in the two journals. Only the points corresponding to years marked on the bottom axis have any meaning. It should also be noted that, with few exceptions, the line representing the total is determined more by *ZGFM* than by *ZGQN*.

The categorisation of topics on which the quantitative survey is based accords with the major themes of interest in the present analysis of the official construction of female sexuality and gender. The figures in the charts record the number of articles occurring in a particular category during the year in question. They do not presume to any objective validity, since both the categories used, and the assignment of articles to one category rather than another, have depended on my own specific use of the materials. The purpose of undertaking such a survey is to give a quantitatively determined idea of the relationship between the occurrence of specified topics of interest, identified for their value in the current analysis, and the major changes in central policy on economic and political issues.

1. Reproduction, Health and Hygiene

This chart covers the physiological aspects of sexuality which appeared in the 1950s materials. These include topics such as childbirth which, while not given independent examination in the preceding chapters, nevertheless had some bearing on the general interest shown issues of female sexuality and gender.

The first peak of the two journals together indicates the attention given issues of health and reproduction during the rehabilitation period, when considerable efforts went to eradicating disease and lowering the infant mortality rate. Similarly in 1955, the increase in attention given to issues of female health and hygiene coincided with the concern about marital stability during the mid-1950s period of rising urban unemployment. Continuing into 1956, it also represented the emergence of official concern to control the birth rate by popularising the use of contraceptive techniques.

Although minimal, the publication of articles about the sexual aspects of adolescent development, including masturbation, during late 1955 and 1956 may have reflected the political relaxation -- limited though it was -- of the Hundred Flowers period.

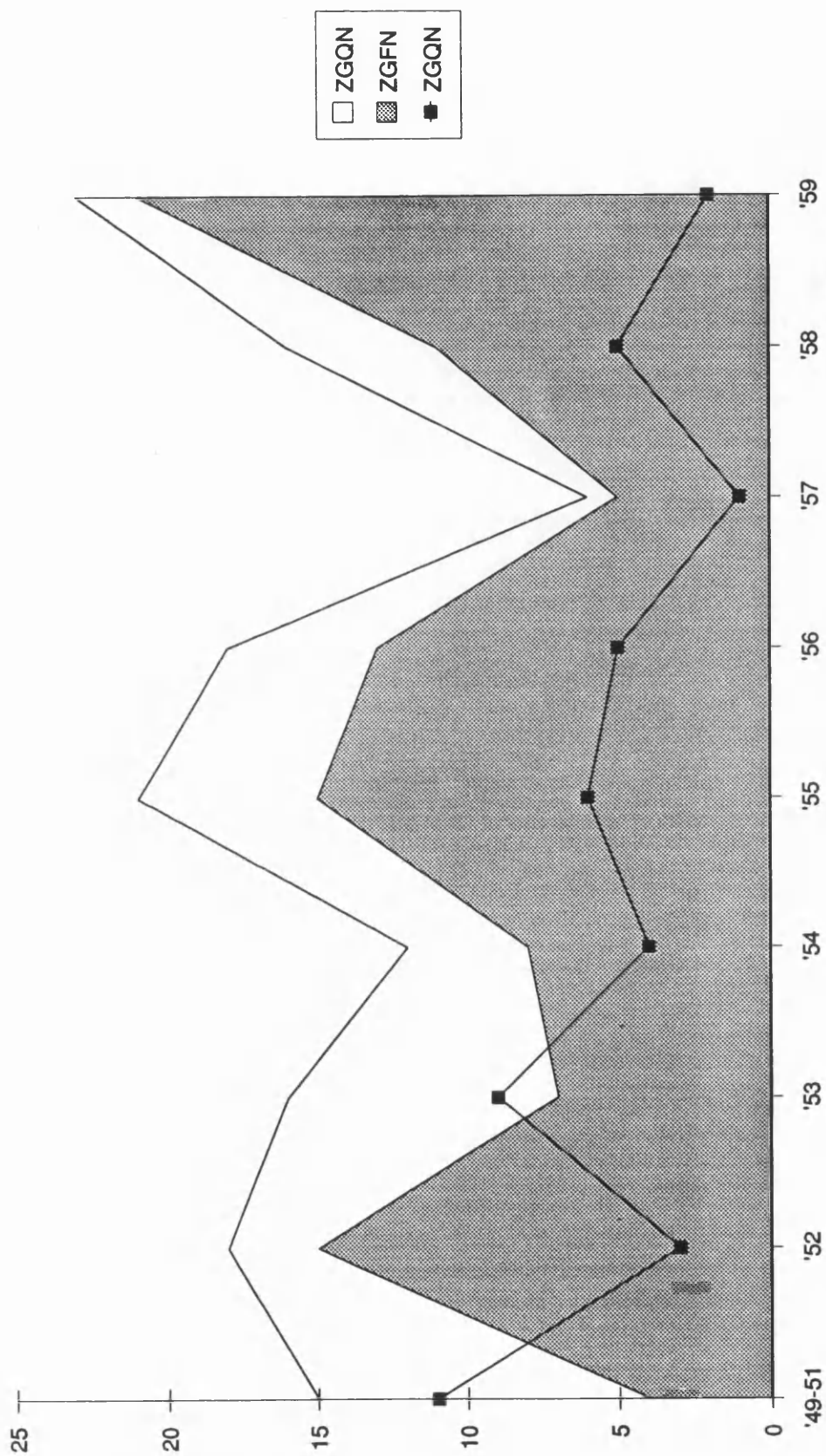
After a lull in 1957, 1958 and 1959 saw a resurgence of references to female health and hygiene, including childbirth and menstruation, much of which was oriented to the requirements of women participating in social labour during the Great Leap Forward.

1) Reproduction, Health and Hygiene

	'49-51		'52		'53		'54		'55		'56		'57		'58		'59	
	FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN
A									1		2							
AD								1		1		2						
BB			1			1												
BF					1		3				1						3	
CB	1		9		3		2		2								6	
CBC									5	1	6		2		5		1	
FHH	1	2	3		1		2		1		1		2		1		6	
FI			1															
FV									1		1	1						
H	1	9		3	1	8		3		4		2	1	1	1	5	1	2
M	1		1		1		1		4						4		1	
P									1		2						3	
Total	4	11	15	3	7	9	8	4	15	6	13	5	5	1	11	5	21	2

A: abortion; AD: adolescent development (incl. masturbation); BB: breast-binding; BF: breast-feeding; CB: childbirth;
CBC: contraception and birth control; FHH: female health and hygiene; FI: female infanticide; FV: female virginity; H: health (general);
M: menstruation; P: pregnancy.

Reproduction, Health and Hygiene



2. Adolescence and Preparation for Marriage

This chart includes those topics covered in the analyses of chapters three and four, excluding the physiological aspects of sexuality. The categories in which gender is not specified refer to both male and female. However, due to the predominant use of female exemplars, such categories represent predominantly female approaches.

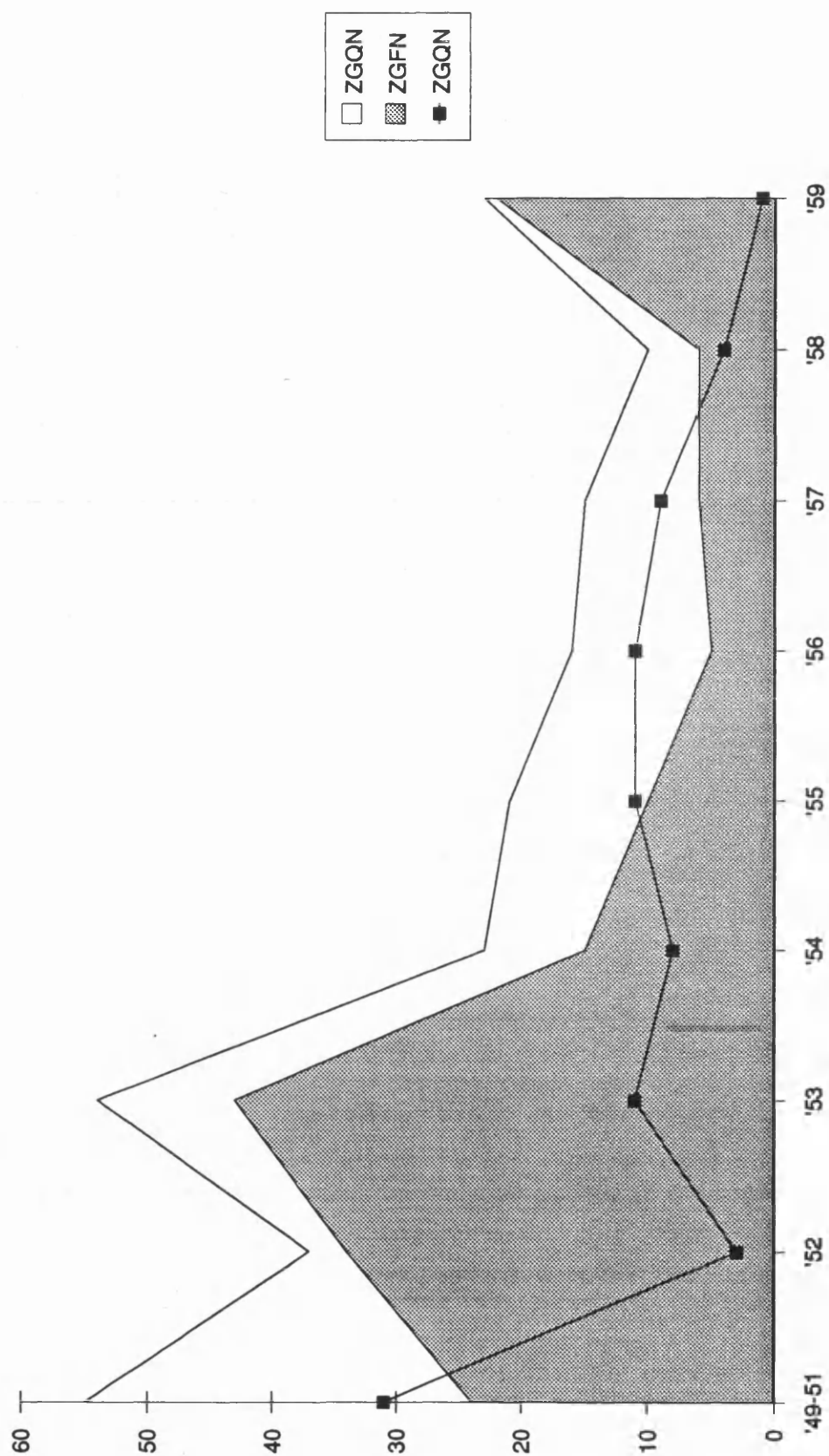
The high points of 1949-1951 and 1953 represent the publicity surrounding the Marriage Law, first as soon as it was promulgated, and second to coincide with the intensified propaganda campaigns of 1953. Apart from general publicity about the new Law, this included criticism of cadres for hindering its implementation, as well as the publicisation of models exemplifying the new approach to selection of marriage partner. With the exception of 1959, steady but unexceptional interest was shown to relevant topics during the period between the end of the 1953 campaigns and 1958. Although not reflected in the graph, the break-down of figures indicate an increase of interest in the ideological characteristics of women's approach to matters of love and marriage. Coinciding with the central birth control policy, they also reflect the official attempt to encourage young people to delay marriage after the legal minimum age. During 1958 and 1959, concerns to channel youth energies in the service of the collective endeavours of the Great Leap Forward were accompanied by a new interest in criticising women's individualistic, material and bourgeois interests in matters of love and the selection of marriage partner.

2) Adolescence and Preparation for Marriage

'49-51		'52		'53		'54		'55		'56		'57		'58		'59	
FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN
AG						1						1					
AL			1				2	1	2								
FM	1		1	1		5				2		1	2	3	1	10	
MA											1	3	6				
ML	12	9	21	25	7	2		2									
MLC	10	12	8	7	1						2		1				
MLSU			1	4	1	3		1	1								
MML	1	4	4	4		2		3						1			
PR		1				2		2		1	5				2	7	1
SL		4		2	2		6	1	8	2	3	1		2	1	5	
Total	24	31	34	43	11	15	8	10	11	5	11	6	9	6	4	22	1

AG: adolescent girls' interest in love etc.; AL: adolescent attitudes to love; FM: women's bourgeois interests in love; MA: age of marriage;
ML: publicity about the marriage law; MLC: criticism of cadres failing to implement the marriage law; MLSU: Soviet models of love marriage;
MML: models of the marriage law; PR: passion, private and romantic views of love; SL: socialist attitudes to love.

Adolescence and Preparation for Marriage



3. Wives and Mothers

This chart covers the representations of the sexual and gender attributes of wives and mothers, identified for their value in the present research. It includes aspects of childcare and welfare provision where these had a bearing on the representation of women's responsibilities as wife and mother. It also includes the category of appearance, which was not exclusive to the representation of women as wives.

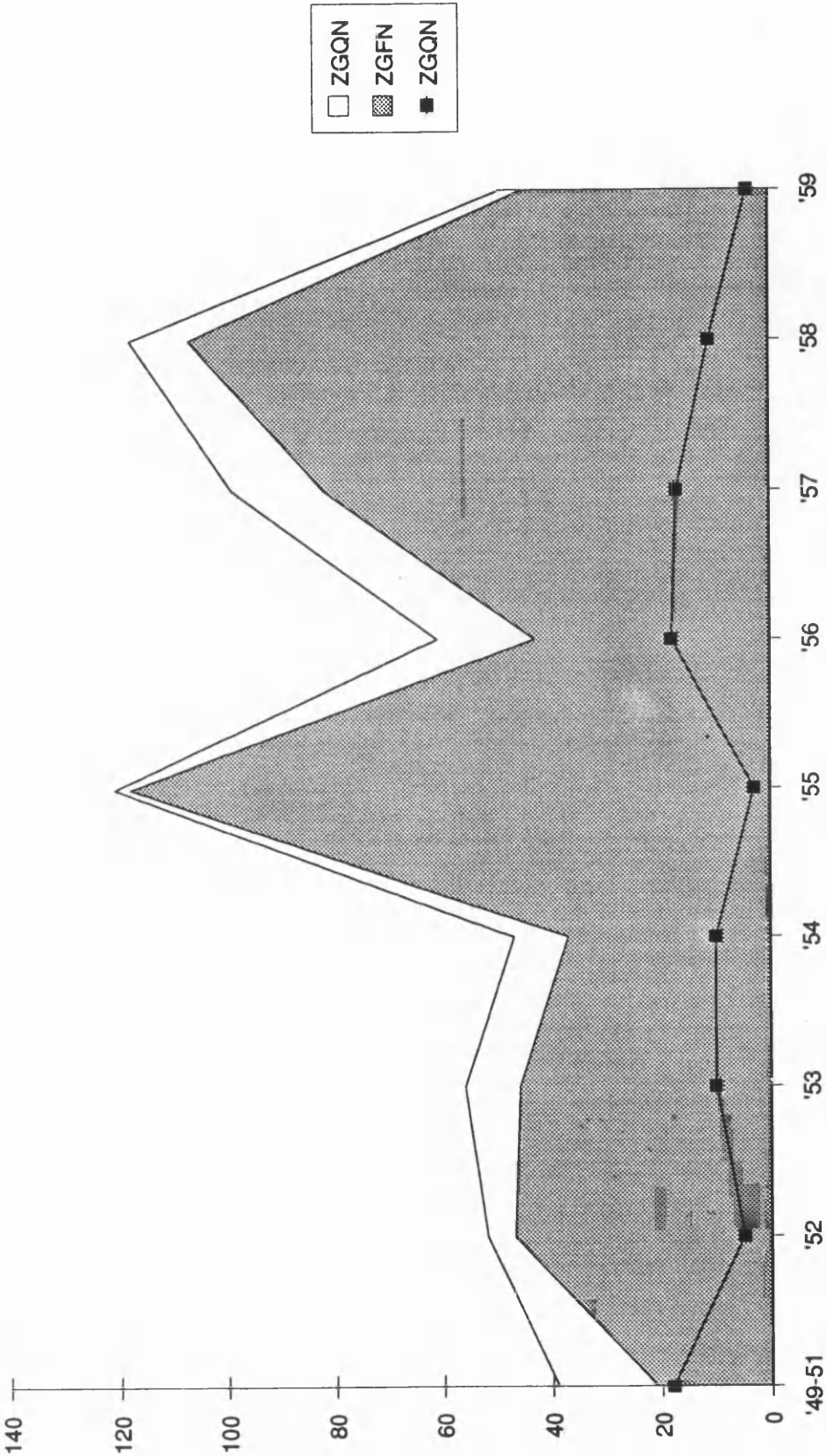
The most prominent peak occurs in 1955, coinciding neatly with the official interest in encouraging women to accept their domestic role by boosting the image of the housewife and mother during the crisis of urban unemployment. The 1958 peak, by contrast, reflects a different concern with childcare and women's domestic responsibilities, oriented to enabling women to reduce their domestic responsibilities in order to participate in social labour during the Great Leap Forward. The relatively minor incidence of relevant references in *ZGQN* reflects the difference in readership addressed.

3) Wives and Mothers

	'49-51		'52		'53		'54		'55		'56		'57		'58		'59	
	FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN
CD																		
CF									5			1	2		1		3	
CH	1		2		1		4		1		1		1		32		8	
CP	1		2		7		8		15		6		10		6		4	
CW	6		11		5		4		12		1		6		8		13	
DM											1		1		1		1	
DN			8						1		4		1					
DPW					1		3		3		2		3		9		1	
FA							1		5		3		3		1			
FDM	1		3				1		5				11		26		3	
FS	1				1				3						1		1	
FW	7		8		9				5						1		1	
MC			3		3		7		29				14		7		2	
MD	2		2		2				6		1		4		2			
MHW					1						1						1	
MIL					1				2		6				4		2	
MM	1				2		5		2				8		2		2	
MN					6		2		5		6		6		1			
S											1							
SH	1		1		5		1		6		4		2		5		4	
SM							1		9				1					
W			1		1								1					
WDB	1		1		1						6		8		3		1	
WH			5						2								2	
Total	21	18	47	5	46	10	37	10	118	3	43	18	82	17	107	11	45	4

CD: child development; CF: fathering; CH: child health; CP: parenting; CW: creche and welfare facilities for women; DM: male help in domestic work; DN: Nannies; DPW: (house)wives engaged in public activities and work; FDM: women as good domestic managers; FA: female appearance; FS: female subservience to husbands; FW: feudal disdain of wives; MC: mothering; MD: models of domestic work; MHW: male help to wives in education etc.; MIL: mother-in-law and daughter-in-law duties; MN: mothers' neglect of children; S: sex life in marriage; SH: servicing and supportive wives; SM: step-mothers and children; W: widows and remarriage of; WDB: women's double burden; WH: wives criticism of husbands' errors.

Wives and Mothers



4. Marital Conflict

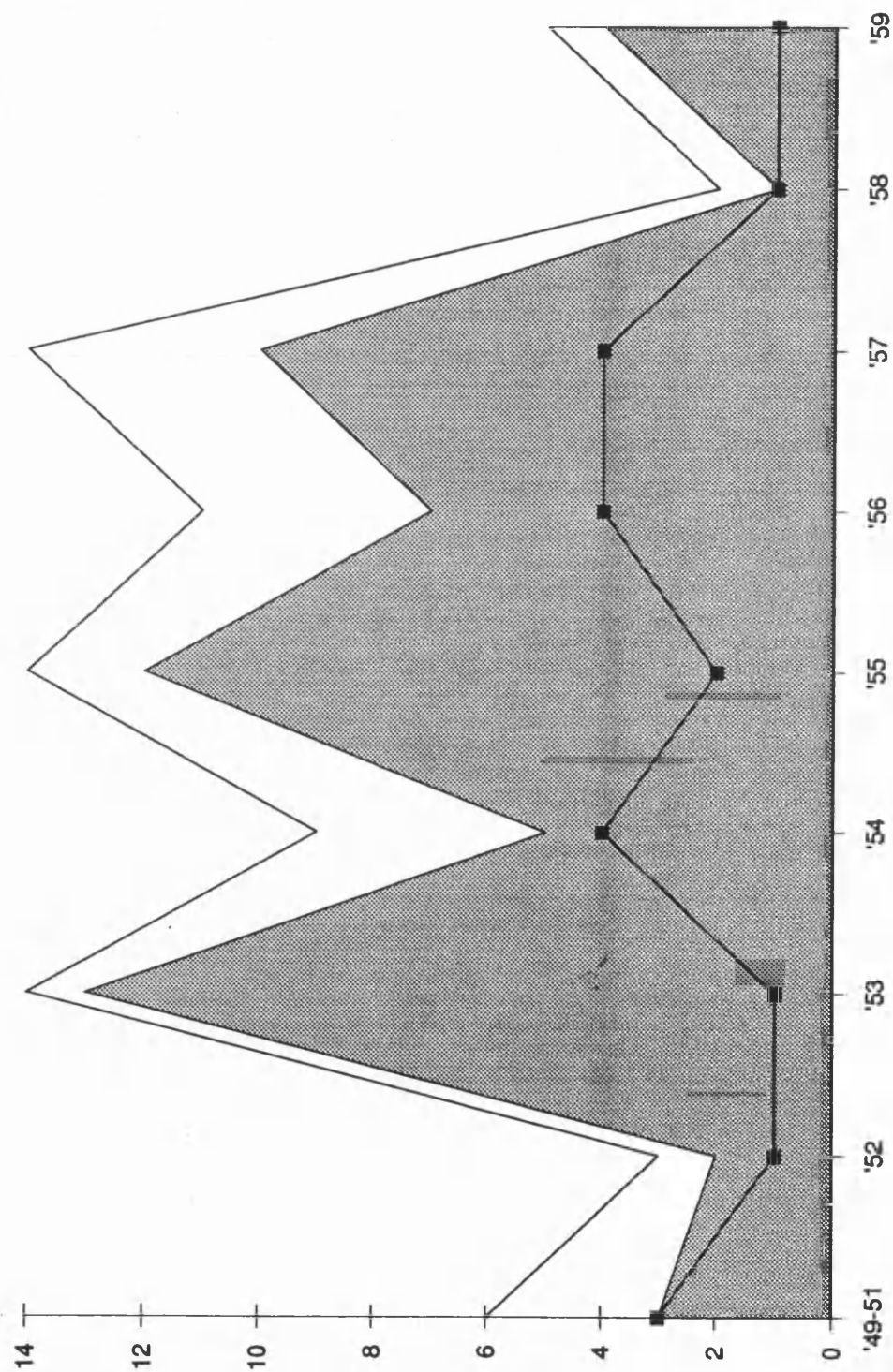
Each of the peaks of this graph represent moments of increased concern with the moral and social issues of marital conflict and divorce. In 1953, after the termination of the Marriage Law publicity campaigns, the first peak represents predominantly bourgeois errors in male conduct. After 1953, however, women were increasingly implicated as responsible parties in provoking marital conflict. This is indicated in the second peak in 1955. The final peak of 1957 indicates a continuation of references to marital conflict without gender specificity.

4) Marital Conflict

	'49-51		'52		'53		'54		'55		'56		'57		'58		'59	
	FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN	FN	QN
D	1	1	2						2				7		1			
DF									1	1			1	1		1		1
DM									1									
F3					1		2		3			2						
MB					12		3		3	1	2		1	1			4	
MCB									2		2							
P	2	2		1				3										
R								1			3	2	1					
Total	3	5	2	1	13	1	5	4	12	2	7	4	10	4	1	1	4	1

D: divorce and separation; DF: divorce, female responsibility; DM: divorce, male responsibility; F3: female 'third one'; MB: bourgeois conduct in men in matters of love and marriage; MCB: bourgeois ideology in marital conflict; P: prohibitions and illicit sexual images; R: Rape and physical abuse of women.

Marital Conflict



ABBREVIATIONS

<i>FX</i>	Faxue	(Legal Studies)
<i>GMRB</i>	Guangming ribao	(Guangming Daily)
<i>HR</i>	Hebei Ribao	(Hebei Daily)
<i>RMRB</i>	Renmin ribao	(People's Daily)
<i>XDFN</i>	Xiandai funü	(Modern Women)
<i>ZGFN</i>	Zhongguo funü	(Chinese Women)
<i>ZGQN</i>	Zhongguo qingnian	(Chinese Youth)

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