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Corporate society to blame for woman's alienation claims UBC sociologist Smith

"The corporate society has taken over the roles of the family and this to a great extent accounts for the fact that women feel the home is a narrow restricted place in which they are trapped," said Dr. Dorothy Smith, a UBC sociologist, Tuesday night.

She was speaking on the family-how it is, why it is how it is and the situation of women within the family Dr. Naomi Hersom, Department of Elementary Education at the U of A, Mrs. Thelma Scambler, Consultant for the Provincial Department of Health and Social Development and Miss Isabel Munroe, Dean of Women at the U of A.

Dr. Smith first defined power as something that has been used against women by men for generations. Using a fable she

then traced the gradual loss of power of the family through history. The first phase was the political moment when man discovered that if he had power one man could use it to do everything for everyone else. Until that time the ultimate power lay with the people; neither sex was dominant. The family was divorced from power; if produced only what was necessary for political movement

where people could be warm, fed, and *human* not only *worker*.

The rise of the giant corporations led to large companies, hiring thousands of men. This completely changed any existing social relationships. "The corporation is a synthetic individual, a super organic being. The work situation is determined by the corporate structure" she said.

Dr. Smith then went on to

everything is running smoothly and is well oiled. This role gives way to strains because women must limit their behavior in order to perform this role.

Ideology treats as biological what are culturally induced reactions to the social structure Dr. Smith said. This absolute belief in biological differences prevents us from seeing the relationships to the economic and political order. The passivity



This is not Tuesday night's Women's forums meeting; it's Wednesday night's meeting but really now "once you've seen one you've seen them all".

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and depended on slaves or women for its existence. A good example of this was the Greek "democracy".

The second moment began with the beginning of capitalism. It took the productive enterprises out of the home and they became capitalist enterprises. One man owned the means of production and conditions were determined *outside* not *in* the family. The working class family stayed together against great odds but still the home was the only place

discuss the effects of corporations on family life. The corporation buys people in whole--their skills, their knowledge and their thinking. It divides people into bundles that makes it impossible for them to decide what parts of them belong to the organization and what do not. The middle class home is reduced to that of a garage where people can be stored when not at work or school. A woman is reduced to the role of looking after the family--to make sure that

of the role is determined by the relation of the family in society.

The second effect of corporations on society is the role in the socializing of children. Children are trained in the home for a corporate role--they are trained to think, understand, and act in abstractions. Children learn to control their impulses. The schools and universities only continue propogating this role. The values set on children some to be the corporate values--not how they are as children.

The order in homes is imposed from outside--the family has lost power in a political, a productive and an individual capacity. As a result women feel that everything they do is no longer theirs--and are dissatisfied with their role in life Dr. Smith concluded.

Dr. Harsem disagreed with Dr. Smith's statement that the schools are merely reinforcing the idea of corporations. She said that when schools have tried to be innovative such as removing the system of grades there has been an outcry from parents. She also said that she feels very strongly that the home *can be* and *is* part of a woman's sphere--but it should not be the only part. She sees women moving out of the home and out into the corporate sphere in the future.

The family undergoes a huge strain when corporations try to own them but "people cannot be owned lock, stock, and barrel" commented Mrs. Thelma Scambler. We should recognize that family life will be taking different forms such as communal living in the future and women should be free to make that choice.

The meeting was then opened to questions from the floor. One woman asked how women could work to destroy corporate society. "Honour your sisters" Dr. Smith replied. Too often women do not accept what women say as worth as much as if it were said by a man. Women have been trained since infancy to speak quietly (to allow people the option of listening to them). They must learn to overcome this and become more assured of their own and other women's capabilities, she said.

By Elsie Ross

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- Academic Development Committee
- Admission Requirements Committee
- Calendars Committee
- Campus Development Committee
- Campus Security Services Policy Committee
- Course Registration Procedures Committee
- Housing and Food Services Committee
- Library Committee
- Parking Appeals Committee
- Committee on Research
- Investigation of Teaching Committee
- Timetabling Policy Committee
- Undergraduate Scholarships Committee
- Committee to Administer the Purchase and Placement of Works of Art

The GFC Nominating Committee will be pleased to hear from staff members and students who have suggestions for nominations or who would be interested in serving on the GFC Committees. Interested persons should contact the Secretary of the Nominating Committee, Miss P. Howlett, 200 University Hall, Phone: 432-4965.

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