Paper 19: Women, Gender and Paid Work in Britain since c. 1850

Part II Specified Paper, 2019-20

Convenor: Dr Helen McCarthy
Other teachers: Dr Deborah Thom, Dr Lucy Delap, (Dr Laura Carter)

This paper enables students to explore change and continuity in women’s working lives in Britain since the mid 19th century. This period witnessed a set of wide-reaching transformations in the character of the British economy and state, in the size and shape of the family and household, and in ideologies of feminism and sexual politics, all of which affected women’s status in the labour market in profound ways. By the end of the twentieth century, recorded employment rates amongst women were dramatically higher than a hundred years previously, women’s presence in senior-level professional and managerial posts was considerable, and combining paid work with motherhood had become increasingly commonplace. Yet this paper does not advance a simplistic story of linear ‘progress’ towards women’s workplace equality. Students will grapple with a rich set of complex and contested narratives, from struggles over pay, occupational sex-typing and childcare, to the impact of two world wars, anti-discrimination legislation and feminist activism in all its varieties. The paper will explore diverse histories of women’s wage-earning as shaped by class, marital status, age and ethnicity, as well as the dynamics of regional labour markets and occupational ‘traditions’. By adopting gender as a tool of analysis, we will examine how women’s paid work has acquired its meaning in relation to normative ideas about the primacy of men’s careers and earnings, as well as assumptions about what constitutes ‘male’ and ‘female’ work. In addition to lectures and supervisions, four two-hour classes will invite students to reflect on the different lenses which historians have adopted in order to recover and interpret women’s paid work, from official statistics and social investigation to representations in popular culture and women’s own life writing and oral testimonies.

Provisional programme:

The course will be delivered through sixteen one-hour lectures, four two-hour classes, two one-hour revision classes and six supervisions (32 contact hours in total). The latter will be taught in groups of one, two or three students by Dr McCarthy or Dr Thom, depending on topic choice. Enrolment will be capped at 16, with most supervisions taking place in LT.

Michaelmas Term Lectures: (broadly covering 1850 – 1945)

(All lectures delivered by Helen McCarthy, unless otherwise stated)

Week One: Introduction: Historicising Women’s Paid Work
Week Two: Gender, Wage-Earning and ‘Skill’
Week Three: Welfare, Protection and ‘Sweated’ Work
Week Four: Women, Trade Unions and Workplace Activism (DT)
Week Five: Women and Domestic Service (Lucy Delap)
Week Six: Class, ‘Respectability’ and White-Collar Work
Week Seven: Women’s War Work (DT)
Week Eight: Paid Work, Leisure, and Domestic Labour

Lent Term Lectures: (Broadly covering 1945 to the present)
Week One: Gender, Work and the Post-War Welfare State
Week Two: Education, Training and Career Choice (Laura Carter, subject to availability)
Week Three: Work, Marriage and Motherhood
Week Four: Race, Ethnicity and Migrant Women’s Working Lives
Week Five: Feminism, Activism and Workplace Rights (Lucy Delap)
Week Six: Inequality and Labour Market Polarisation in 1980s Britain
Week Seven: Women, Family and Work since the 1990s
Week Eight: Comparative Perspectives on Women’s Work

Michaelmas Term Classes:
1. Observing women’s work: social investigation and social research (HM & DT)
2. Narrating the self: paid work, identity and subjectivity (HM & DT)

Lent Term Classes:
3. Feminist perspectives on paid work (HM and LD)
4. Representing women’s work in popular culture (HM & DT)

Indicative Reading List:

General:
Leonore Davidoff and Belinda Westover, eds., Our Work, Our Lives, Our Words: Women’s History and Women’s Work (Basingstoke, 1986)
Edward Higgs, ‘Women, occupations and work in the nineteenth century censuses’ HWJ 23 (1987)
Marie Hicks, Programmed Inequality: how Britain discarded women technologists and lost its edge in computing (Cambridge MA, 2017)
Janet Howarth, Women in Britain: Voices and Perspectives from Twentieth Century History (London, 2018)
Gerry Holloway, Women and Work in Britain since 1840 (London, 2005)
Pat Hudson and WR Lee, eds., Women’s work and the family economy in historical perspective (1990)
Jane Humphries, Childhood and Child Labour in the British Industrial Revolution (Cambridge, 2010)
E Richards, ‘Women in the British economy since about 1700: an interpretation’ History 59
(1974), pp. 337-47
Pamela Sharpe, ‘Continuity and change: women’s history and economic history in Britain’
Louise Tilly and Joan Scott, Women, Work and Family (London, 1978)
Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, ed., Women in Twentieth-Century Britain (Harlow, 2001)

Comparative perspectives beyond Britain

Europe:
Arnlaug Leira, Welfare States and Working Mothers: The Scandinavian Experience (Cambridge, 2009)
Angus McLaren, Sexuality and Social Order: The Debate over the Fertility of Women and Workers in France, 1770 – 1920 (1983)

USA:
Alice Kessler Harris, A Woman’s Wage: Historical Meanings and Social Consequences (Kentucky, 1990)
S Dex and L Shaw, British and American women at work: do equal opportunities policies matter? (1986)
Elizabeth Meehan and Peggy Kahn, eds, Equal Value/Comparable Worth in the UK and the USA (1992)
Claudia Goldin, Marriage bars: discrimination against married women workers from the 1920s to the 1950s in P Higonnet et al, Favorites of fortune: technology, growth and economic development since the industrial revolution (1991)
Penina Glazer and Miriam Slater, Unequal Colleagues: the entrance of women into the professions, 1890-1940 (1987)
Barbara J Harris, Beyond her Sphere: women and the professions in American history (1978)
Julie Matthaei, An Economic History of Women in America: Women’s Work, the Sexual Division of Labour, and the Development of Capitalism (New York, 1982)
Mary Yeager, ed Women in Business (London, 1999)
Stephanie Shaw, What a Woman Ought to Be and Do: black professional women workers during the Jim Crow era (1996)
Teresa L. Amott and Julie A. Matthaei, Race, Gender & Work: A Multicultural Economics History of Women in the United States (1991)

British Empire:
Samita Sen, Women and Labour in late-colonial India: the Bengal jute industry (Cambridge, 1999)

Essay Topics (corresponding to weekly lectures)

Gender, Wage-Earning and ‘Skill’
The valuing of women’s industrial work; the nature and drivers of horizontal and vertical segregation in the workplace; regional, occupational and ethnic dynamics and differences; the gendering of notions of ‘skill’; the dynamics of wage-setting; the ideological power of the ‘male breadwinner family’; gendered conflict in the workplace.

Josie Castle, ‘Factory work for women: Courtaulds and GEC between the Wars’ in Bill Lancaster and Tony Mason, eds., Life and Labour in a Twentieth Century City: The Experience of Coventry (Coventry, 1986), pp. 133-171
Nigel Goose, ed., Women’s work in industrial England: regional and local perspectives (Hatfield, 2007)
Margaret Hewitt, Wives and Mothers in Victorian Industry (London, 1958)
Katrina Honeyman, ‘Sweat and sweating: women workers and trade unionists in the Leeds clothing trade, 1880 to 1980’ in Mary Davis, ed., Class and Gender in British Labour History: Renewing the Debate (or Starting It?) (Pontypool, 2011), pp. 55-75
Angela John, By the Sweat of their Brow: Women Workers at Victorian Coal Mines (London, 1984)
Laura Lee Downs, Manufacturing Inequality: Gender Division in the French and British Metalworking Industries, 1914 – 1939 (London, 1995)
Judy Lown, Women and Industrialization: Gender at Work in Nineteenth-Century England (Cambridge, 1990)
Carol Morgan, Women Workers and Gender Identities, 1835-1913: The Cotton and Metal Industries in England (London, 2001)
Andrew Phillips, ‘Women on the shop-floor: the Colchester Rag, 1918-50’ Oral History 22 (Spring 1994)
Rex Pope, Unemployed women in inter-war Britain: the case of the Lancashire weaving district’ Women’s History Review, 9 (2000), pp. 743-759
Jennifer Redmond, Moving Histories: Irish Women’s Emigration to Britain from Independence to Republic (Liverpool, 2018)

Welfare, Protection, and ‘Sweated’ Work
What late-Victorians/Edwardians meant by ‘sweating’ and how its meanings were gendered; home-working as a flashpoint for anxieties about sweated labour; debates over women’s need for ‘protection’; factory legislation and the minimum wage; concerns about the link between women’s employment and infant mortality; prostitution as a particular type of ‘sweated’ work.


Andrew August, Poor Women’s Lives: gender, work and poverty in late Victorian London (1999)


Carl Chinn, They Worked All Their Lives: Women of the Urban Poor in England, 1880-1939 (Manchester, 1988)


B Harrison, Not Only the ‘Dangerous Trades’: women’s work and health in Britain, 1880-1914 (London, 1996)

Katrina Honeyman, ‘Sweat and sweating: women workers and trade unionists in the Leeds clothing trade, 1880 to 1980’ in Mary Davis, ed., Class and Gender in British Labour History: Renewing the Debate (or Starting It?) (Pontypool, 2011), pp. 55-75


**Women, Trade Unionism and Workplace Activism**

*The extent and nature of women’s participation in trade unions; why the late 19th-century women’s trade union movement was led by middle-class women; the ideological character of the movement; whether its leaders were ‘social feminists’; the attitudes and behaviours of male trade unionists; non-union action and ‘everyday’ forms of workplace resistance.*

Gerry Holloway, ‘Let the women be alive!: the construction of the married working woman in the Industrial Women Movement, 1890-1914’ in Eileen Yeo, ed., *Radical Femininity: women’s self-representation in the public sphere* (Manchester, 1998)
Laura Schwartz, ‘“What We Feel is Needed is a Union for Domestics Such as the Miners Have”: The Domestic Workers’ Union of Great Britain and Ireland 1908-1914’ *Twentieth-Century British History* 25 (2014), pp. 173-192.

**Women and Domestic Service**

*Updated 1.7.2019*
The extent and variety of women’s paid domestic work; why domestic service was considered ‘suitable’ work for women; how domestic service shaped women’s ‘class’ identities; why residential domestic service declined after the First World War and what forms of paid domestic work replaced it (See also later topic for the revival of the domestic service economy in the 1980s and 1990s).

Leonore Davidoff, Worlds Between: Historical Perspectives on Class and Gender (London, 1995)
Lucy Delap, Knowing their Place: domestic service in twentieth-century Britain (Oxford, 2011)
Jonathan Gathorne-Hardy, The Rise and Fall of the British Nanny (London, 1972)
Judy Giles, ‘Authority, Dependence and Power in Accounts of Twentieth-Century Domestic Service’ in Lucy Delap, Ben Griffin and Abigail Wills, eds, The Politics of Domestic Authority in Britain since 1800 (Basingstoke, 2009), pp. 204 – 220
Katherine Holden, Nanny Knows Best: the history of the British nanny (Stroud, 2013)
P Horn, The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Servant (London, 1975) and Life Below Stairs in the Twentieth Century (Stroud, 2001)
Kristina Huneault, Difficult Subjects: Working Women and Visual Culture, Britain 1880-1914 (Farnham, 2002), chapter 2
Alison Light, Mrs Woolf and the Servants (London, 2007)
Selina Todd, ‘Domestic Service and Class Relations in Britain, 1900 – 1950’ Past & Present 203 (2009), pp. 181-204
Leonard Schwarz, ‘English Servants and their employers during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries’ Economic History Review 52 (1999), pp. 236-56

Class, ‘Respectability’ and White-Collar Work

The extent and variety of paid work amongst middle-class women; female business-ownership and enterprise; the growth of white-collar and professional work for women and the gendered practices of employers; how and why some occupations acquired the status of ‘respectable’ work for women; white-collar work as a route to social mobility or source of identity and community; feminist struggles over access to higher education and professional training; the marriage bar.

Wendy Alexander, ‘Early Glasgow women medical graduates’ in Eleanor Gordon and Esther Breitenbach, eds., The World is Ill-Divided: women’s work in Scotland in the 19th and early twentieth centuries (Edinburgh, 1990)


Penny Summerfield, ed., *Women, Education and the Professions* (Leicester, 1987)


Women's War Work

How far the wartime mobilisations altered patterns of women’s employment; attitudes towards and experiences of industrial conscription; industrial welfare policies and anxieties about the maternal body; how far war work destabilised or entrenched existing gender inequalities in the labour market; similarities and differences across the two conflicts.

Stephen Bourne, *The Motherland Calls: Britain’s black servicemen and women, 1939-45* (Stroud, 2012)


Richard Croucher, *Engineers at War* (London, 1982)


Denise Riley, ‘The Free Mothers: pronatalism and working women in industry at the end of the last war in Britain’ *HWJ* 11 (1981)


Wendy Webster, *Mixing It: Diversity in World War Two Britain* (Oxford, 2018)

Bonnie White, *The Women’s Land Army in First World War Britain* (Basingstoke, 2014)


Paid Work, Leisure, and Domestic Labour

How paid work interlocked with unpaid domestic and reproductive labour; how age and marital and maternal status shaped women’s patterns of wage-earning in the household; how women’s wage-earning affected fertility patterns and the allocation of household resources, including the entitlement to ‘leisure’; how far employment practices (e.g. marriage bars) and social welfare regimes reinforced the gendered division of domestic labour; the rise of ‘housewifery’ as a domestic ideology between the wars.


Rosemary Crook, “‘Tidy Women’: women in the Rhondda between the wars’ *Oral History*, 10 (1982), pp. 40-46

A Davies, *Leisure, gender and poverty: Manchester and Salford, 1900-1939* (Buckingham, 1992)


S Horrell and D Oxley, ‘Breadwinning, family employment and household resource allocation’ in CE Nunez, ed., *The microeconomic analysis of the household and the labour market, 1880-1939* (Seville, 1998)

S Horrell and D Oxley, ‘Crust or crumb? Intrahousehold resource allocation and male breadwinning in late Victorian Britain’ *Economic History Review*, 52 (1999), pp. 494-522


Melanie Reynolds, *Infant Mortality and Working-Class Child Care* (Basingstoke, 2016)


L Tilly, J Scott and M Cohen, ‘Women’s work and European fertility patterns’ *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* VI (1976)


Gender, Work and the Post-War Welfare State
How demobilisation and post-war labour shortages affected the size and shape of the female workforce; how far the Beveridgean welfare state institutionalized women’s subordinate status in the labour-force; whether anxieties over ‘population’ and ‘Bowlbyism’ constrained employment opportunities for mothers of young children.

Susan Carruthers, ‘Manning the factories: propaganda and policy on the employment of women, 1939-47’ *History* 75 (1990), pp. 232-56
Jane Lewis, *Women in Britain Since 1945* (Oxford, 1992), chapter 4

**Women, Education and Career Choice**

Gender differences in educational achievement and progression to higher education; whether the post-war education system prescribed marriage and motherhood for girls; continuity and change in the jobs and careers deemed suitable for women; why so many middle-class women went into teaching in the post-war decades; whether education was a route to occupational mobility for working-class women.


Liz Heron, ed., *Truth, Dare or Promise? Girls Growing Up in the Fifties* (London, 1985)


Stephanie Spencer, *Gender, Work and Education in Britain in the 1950s* (Basingstoke, 2005)


**Work, Marriage and Motherhood**

*Changing patterns of employment over the female life-course and the rise of the ‘dual role’ model; the extent to which the dual role was a cross-class phenomenon; the growing significance of part-time work for wives and mothers; the extent to which growth in married women’s employment altered divisions of labour in the home; the extent to which working motherhood became socially acceptable or even aspirational in this period.*


Stephen Brooke, ‘Gender and working class identity in Britain in the 1950s’ *Journal of Social History* 34 (2001), pp. 773-95


Jane Lewis, ‘Myrdal, Klein, Women’s Two Roles and postwar feminism’ in Harold Smith, ed., *British Feminism in the Twentieth Century* (Aldershot, 1990), pp167-188

Jane Lewis, ‘The Failure to Expand Childcare Provision and to Develop a Comprehensive
Childcare Policy in Britain during the 1960s and 1970s’ Twentieth Century British History 24 (2013) pp. 249-274
Helen McCarthy, ‘Women, marriage and paid work in post-war Britain’ Women’s History Review 26 (2017), pp. 46-61
Helen McCarthy, ‘Social Science and Married Women’s Employment in Post-War Britain’ Past & Present 233 (2016), pp. 269-305
Margaret Williamson, “I’m going to get a job at the factory”: attitudes to women’s employment in a mining community, 1945-65’ Women’s History Review 12 (2003), pp. 407-421.

Race, Ethnicity and Migrant Women’s Working Lives
How migrant women’s employment patterns differed from those of white, British-born women, and the factors behind those differences; experiences of racism in the workplace; the identification of migrant groups with particular occupations; the significance of empire and its racialized legacies for women of colour in Britain; the existence of the ‘ethnic economy’ and women’s place within it; black and minority ethnic women’s growing involvement with trade union politics in 1970s.

Jordanna Bailkin, The Afterlife of Empire (Berkeley, 2012), chapter 5
Enda Delaney, Demography, State and Society: Irish Migration to Britain, 1921-1971 (Liverpool, 2000)
Elyse Dodgson, Motherland: West Indian Women to Britain in the 1950s (London, 1984),
Haifaa Jawad and Tansin Benn, eds., Muslim women in the United Kingdom and beyond: Experiences and images (Brill, 2003)
Linda McDowell, Migrant Women’s Voices: talking about life and work in the UK since 1945 (London, 2016)
Louise Ryan and Wendy Webster, eds., Gendering Migration: Masculinity, Femininity and Ethnicity in
*Post-War Britain* (London, 2008)


Jennifer Redmond, *Moving Histories: Irish Women’s Emigration to Britain from Independence to Republic* (Liverpool, 2018)


Anitha Sundari and Ruth Pearson, *Striking women: struggles and strategies of South Asian women workers from Grunwick to Gate Gourmet* (London, 2018)


Feminism, Industrial Action and Workplace Rights

New feminist critiques and activism around workplace rights in the 1970s; women’s growing visibility in trade union activism; the origins and impact of sex discrimination legislation; the growth in maternal employment rates; mounting demands for public investment in daycare provision; how far women’s changing aspirations around paid work help to explain demographic change in the 1970s. (See also reading list for class one)


Jonathan Moss, ‘We didn’t realise how brave we were at the time’: the 1968 Ford sewing machinists’ strike in public and personal memory’, *Oral History*, 43 (2015)


Sally Westwood, *All Day, Every Day: Factory and Family in the Making of Women’s Lives* (London,


Anitha Sundari and Ruth Pearson, *Striking women: struggles and strategies of South Asian women workers from Grunwick to Gate Gourmet* (London, 2018)


A Zabalza and Z Tzannatos, *Women and Equal Pay: The Effects of Legislation on Female Employment and Wages in Britain* (Cambridge, 1985)

**Inequality and Labour Market Polarisation in 1980s Britain**

How growing social inequality shaped women’s employment opportunities and career mobility in the 1980s; the ‘feminisation of poverty' and the reappearance of ‘sweated’ labour; how mass male unemployment affected women’s working lives; women’s advances in management and the professions; whether ‘neoliberalism’ helps us to understand the dynamics of women’s paid employment under Thatcherism.


Jane Lewis, *The End of Marriage? Individualism and Intimate Relations* (Cheltenham, 2001)


Nicky Gregson and Michelle Lowe, *Servicing the Middle Classes: Class, gender and waged domestic labour in contemporary Britain* (London, 1994)

Valerie Grove, *The Compleat Woman: Marriage, Motherhood, Career: Can she have it all?* (London, 1987)

C Hakim, *Home-Based Work in Britain* (Department of Employment: London, 1987)


Ursula Huws, *The New Homeworkers: New Technology and the changing location of white-collar work*
(London, 1984)
Linda McDowell, *Capital Culture: Gender at Work in the City* (London, 1997)

**Work, Gender and Post-Feminism since the 1990s**

Whether the 1990s and 2000s were decades of advance for women in the workplace; the character and impact of New Labour’s gender equality and labour market policies; the debate over whether women can ‘have it all’; the extent to which men’s roles in the family were changing; the emergence of ‘post-feminist’ identities and the rise of ‘neoliberal’ feminism in the new millennium.

Heather Joshi, Hugh Davies and Hilary Land, *The Tale of Mrs Typical* (Family Policy Studies Centre, 1996)
J Rubery, S Horrell and B Burchell, ‘Part-time work and gender inequality in the labour market’
Classes

Class 1: Observing women’s work: social investigation and social research

How has women’s paid work been made visible by different kinds of social research and investigation? How did late-Victorian and Edwardian observers ‘read’ the meanings of women’s paid work? To what extent were these readings shaped by the wider dynamics of class? Did the ‘social problem’ paradigm shift in the mid-twentieth century and how did this affect the emerging sociology of women in the 1950/60s? How has ‘expert’ knowledge about women’s paid work intersected with ‘private’ knowledge? And how has this knowledge shaped the parameters of policy and employment practices?

Primary source texts:

Extracts from Royal Commission on Labour, The Employment of Women: Reports by Miss Eliza Orme, Miss Clara Collet, Miss May Abraham and Miss Margaret Irwin (HMSO, C.6894, 1893)

Clementina Black, ed., Married Women’s Work: Being the report of an enquiry undertaken by the Women’s Industrial Council (London, 1915), introduction and pp-pp

Pearl Jephcott with Nancy Seear and John H Smith, Married Women Working (London, 1962), introduction and pp-pp


Secondary readings:


Helen McCarthy ‘Social Science and Married Women’s Employment in Post-War Britain’ Past & Present 233 (2016), pp. 269-305

Further Reading:


Deborah Epstein Nord, The Apprenticeship of Beatrice Webb (Basingstoke, 1985)


John Goodwin and Henrietta O’Connor, ‘Pearl Jephcott: the legacy of a forgotten sociological research pioneer’ *Sociology* 49 (2015)
Jordanna Bailkin, *The Afterlife of Empire* (Berkeley, 2012), ch. 5
Shirley Dex, *Women’s Attitudes towards Work* (Basingstoke, 1988)

**Class 2: Narrating the self: paid work, identity and subjectivity**

**Class Three. Narrating the Self: Paid Work, Identity and Subjectivity**

How have women articulated the meanings which paid work have held in their lives? Who gets to speak for working women? Has paid work been central to personal identity and narratives of selfhood for women, and if so, which women and when? Did it become easier for women to write or speak about what paid work meant to them in the later twentieth century, and if so, why? Why have women frequently disavowed the narrative trope of ‘career’ when writing or speaking about work?

**Primary source readings:**

[Viscountess Rhondda, *This Was My World* (London, 1933), chapter 15]
Extracts from Jean McRindle and Sheila Rowbotham, eds, *Dutiful Daughters: Women Talk about their Lives* (1979)
Nicola Horlick, *Can You Have it All*? (1997), pp

**Secondary Readings:**


**Further Reading:**

Christine Etherington-Wright, *Gender, Professions and Discourse: Early Twentieth-Century Women’s Autobiography* (Basingstoke, 2009)
Class 3: Feminist Perspectives on Women's Paid Work

How have feminists theorised paid work in relation to the wider problem of women’s economic dependence and inequality? How have feminists explained women’s unequal access to the labour market? How have feminists understood the relationship between paid work and domestic and reproductive labour? What have feminists meant by the term ‘patriarchy’ and to what extent have they regarded it as the root cause of women’s inequality in the workplace? How has feminist thinking been shaped by differences of class or race? How have feminist debates regarding the emancipatory potential of paid work changed over the period studied?

Primary source readings:

Eleanor Rathbone ‘The Remuneration of Women’s Services’ Economic Journal 27 (March 1917)

Secondary readings:


Further Reading:
Class 4: Representing Women’s Work in Popular Culture

How has women’s paid work been represented in visual or literary form over the 19th and 20th centuries? How should we read these representations and how should we understand their ideological effects in the wider culture? Did representations of working women in popular culture become more or less ‘positive’ over time? Did they change under conditions of war, and if so, how and why? Is it impossible to impose any kind of order on this chaotic symbolic field?

Primary sources:

Handbook of the Daily News Sweated Industries Exhibition (compiled by Richard Mudie-Smith, May 1906), selection of images and descriptions

JB Priestley, British Women Go to War (London, 1943)

Secondary sources:

Kristina Huneault, Difficult Subjects: Working Women and Visual Culture, Britain 1880-1914 (Farnham, 2002), chapter 5


Further Reading:


Stephanie Spencer, *Gender, Work and Education in Britain in the 1950s* (Basingstoke, 2005)


Rosaline Gill and Shani Orgad, ‘Confidence Culture and the Remaking of Feminism’ *New Formations* (2017)


**Sample Exam Questions**

**Part A:** students answer ONE question focused on the class themes:

1. ‘British feminists were always ambivalent about paid work as the solution to the problem of women’s economic dependence.’ Discuss

2. What do social surveys reveal about the working lives of EITHER working-class women OR middle-class women? Answer with reference to a period of at least forty years.

3. Did paid work become increasingly central to feminine selfhood after the mid-twentieth century?

4. How have working wives and mothers been depicted in popular culture since the late nineteenth century? Answer with reference to at least two of the following genres: art; film; fiction.

**Part B:** students answer TWO questions from the following, based on supervision topics:

5. Why did so few women perform the same work as men in late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century industry?

6. ‘The essential element of evil’ (SIDNEY WEBB) Why was home-work described in these terms in late-Victorian Britain?
7. To what extent were middle-class women’s professional achievements reliant on the paid domestic labour of other women? Answer with reference to any period of at least forty years.

OR

What counted as ‘respectable’ work for middle-class women between the 1870s and 1930s?

8. How widespread was married women’s wage-earning before the 1940s?

9. ‘War work did little to improve women’s position in the labour market.’ Discuss with reference to EITHER the First World War OR the Second World War.

10. To what extent were women’s employment patterns determined by the availability of affordable childcare? Answer with reference to any period of at least forty years.

11. To what extent did the work histories of female migrants differ from those of British-born women in the post-war period?

12. ‘Women’s career opportunities were revolutionized by the sex equality legislation of the 1970s.’ Discuss.

13. Did the growing availability of part-time work from the 1950s improve or retard women’s status in the labour market?

14. How did increasing income inequality transform the composition of the female workforce in the 1980s and 1990s?

15. ‘British women’s working lives changed largely in step with those of other advanced industrial societies after 1945’ Discuss.