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**CANADIAN WOMEN AND THE WELFARE STATE
IN AN AGE OF GLOBALIZATION**

**by
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**Thesis submitted to
The School of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a
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Thesis Director: Professor Ann B. Denis

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Abstract

Economic globalization and neo-liberalism have led to the restructuring of the labour market and the dismantling of the welfare state in Canada. The erosion of the Canadian welfare state and the changing labour market have had significant impacts on the lives of Canadian women, men and children. This thesis explores the gendered impacts of globalization and economic restructuring on Canadians in the labour market and the welfare state. We will demonstrate the existence of gender inequalities in the Canadian welfare state and assess the gendered effects of globalization on social citizenship rights in Canada. This thesis will review the Employment Insurance and the Canada Health and Social Transfer programs and will argue that women, in particular, have felt the adverse effects of cutbacks in these welfare state programs and that globalization has thus further intensified the inequalities between women and men. A feminist agenda of initiatives to counter the destructive effects of globalization and economic restructuring is explored.

Chapter I: Introduction

Since the 1980s, Canada and many other countries around the world have been undergoing significant changes. The current capitalist restructuring trends of the global economy have not only affected the state and the labour market, but they have also had an important impact on the daily lives of women, men and children. Globalization and the liberalization of trade have put constraints on states that have resulted in the claim that in order to be competitive in the global market, governments have no alternative but to reduce welfare state expenditures. Deficit-reduction policies are in the process of dismantling the Canadian welfare state and, therefore, eroding our social citizenship rights.

The relationship between women, the market, and the state is one of great complexity. Although some feminists have argued that the state is a main agent in the perpetuation of social, economic and political processes that subordinate women, others have contended that the welfare state has at times promoted women's issues and thus could be a positive force for women. In Canada social citizenship rights have helped reduce social inequalities and protect individuals from universal risks. However, feminist scholarship has suggested the existence of gendered social citizenship rights in the Canadian welfare state. Critical gender analyses of the impacts of restructuring on women have found that while cutbacks to the welfare state have an effect on both women and men, there is evidence to suggest that economic restructuring disproportionately affects women. Thus, the social policy constraints resulting from globalization have very definite gender implications. Public expenditure has a key role in supporting gender equality from an economic and social perspective. Where this support is reduced or even absent, women

bear an uneven burden and, for those who are in absolute poverty, the absence of support will make them even more vulnerable to the changing economy.

This thesis has three objectives. The first consists of defining the concept of economic globalization, assessing the impacts of globalization and economic restructuring on the Canadian labour market and the welfare state, and determining what some of the consequences have been, particularly for women. The second consists of presenting a gendered analysis of some of the social citizenship rights that Canadians benefit from and examining the effects of globalization on social citizenship entitlements in Canada. And finally, the third is to outline a feminist agenda of alternatives to economic globalization and the erosion of the welfare state.

Before outlining the chapters of this thesis in more detail, we will provide, in our methodology section, an explanation of our reasons for using a gender-sensitive methodology and basing our study on feminist scholarship. We also identify a number of the databases and government and non-governmental organizations that are referred to for this study. Because there have been opposing assessments by feminist scholars of the relationship between women and the welfare state, we briefly examine some of the critiques that feminists have made regarding the welfare state.

1) Methodology

a) Using a Feminist Lens

Feminist scholars (Daly, 1994; Finch, 1991; O'Connor, 1996; Sainsbury, 1994, 1996) have argued that, because women are faced with different social, cultural, political and economic realities than men, gender-sensitive research methodologies are needed in

order to study the diverse experiences of women and men. Gender-sensitive methodologies are necessary because mainstream methodologies do not consider gender to be a fundamental structuring mechanism in societies and therefore do not include gender in their analyses. Thus, feminist scholarship has criticized mainstream research for failing to acknowledge the importance of gender analysis. Sainsbury writes:

By applying the prism of gender to social phenomena and making women the focal point of analysis, feminist scholarship has opened up new perspectives and has called attention to deficiencies in a variety of social theories. The emphasis on gender represents a challenge to much social science research because it calls for the explicit inclusion of both sexes in the analysis, whereas previously the unit of analysis was usually either the individual or various collectivities. (1996: 34)

Mainstream or gender-blind methodologies assume that research on men can inform us about both men and women. Moreover, when women are explicitly studied they are usually only identified in their role as mothers and caregivers in the private sphere. However, women have a significant role in the public world of politics and paid labour as well as in the private world of the family. Indeed, women's role in the development of the Canadian welfare state during the reform era of the 1880s to the 1920s (which will be examined later in chapter IV), attests to women's participation in the public world of state and politics. Furthermore, throughout the Western world, working-class women were among the first women to access the public sphere (Burt, Code and Dorney, 1993; Lewis, 1998). Women's participation in the public sphere increased during the Second World War when many women entered the labour force to replace the men who had gone off to war. In fact, women's participation rate in the labour force increased from 24.4% in 1939 to 33.2% in 1945 (Armstrong and Armstrong, 1994). However, the implementation of different measures after the war discouraged women's participation in the labour market

and resulted in their return to the household. It wasn't until the 1950s when women began to re-enter the labour market (Armstrong and Armstrong, 1994).

Feminist analyses have argued that the public / private dichotomy has served to maintain patriarchal power (Burt, Code and Dorney, 1993; Pateman, 1992; Williams, 1989). Although the separation of the private and public spheres in Western societies was by no means complete, the distinction that was made between the two spheres had a significant impact on women and "resulted in women's exclusion from the 'rights' of citizenship" (Maguire, 1992: 15). Furthermore, Maguire writes:

Contemporary nineteenth-century notions of the obligations and duties of fatherhood and motherhood further reinforced the domestic/ public separation and women's dependence on men because of their status as non-citizens. These assumptions continue to be reflected in contemporary legislation and social welfare policies [...]. (1992: 15)

Many assumptions about women's roles and their dependence on men remain present today and can be perceived in women's lower wages, in their segregation in the labour market, and in the discriminatory policies of the welfare state. All of these issues will be examined in more detail later in this thesis.

As will be demonstrated throughout this thesis, the gender bias in mainstream studies of the welfare state and its social policies is often blatant, since mainstream research does not consider what aspects of the welfare state are important for women in particular. Also, this type of scholarship does not take into account the gendered impacts that the restructuring of the welfare state has on women, and in fact, there is a general assumption that the impacts are the same for women and men (O'Connor, 1996; Sainsbury, 1996). Thus, to effectively analyse the gendered dimensions of the welfare state one must turn to feminist scholarship.

Janet Finch (1991) maintains “it is important to consider whether our impact upon the study of social policy might be advanced further by paying more attention to issues of method in feminist research” (1991: 194). She suggests that we take into consideration research questions that would render the study of social policy more beneficial to women. To do so would require not only making women's needs and concerns more visible, but also highlighting the significance of gender relations in social policies and the provisions within these policies. According to Finch, “It is important that the whole picture should be redrawn so that social knowledge, especially of a kind which could be influential in shaping social policies and changing social institutions, should reflect the interests of women” (1991: 199).

Indeed, feminist analyses of the welfare state recognize gender as an important factor in the study of society and more importantly they acknowledge gender as a critical element in the understanding of welfare states. Feminist scholarship has brought gender into welfare state analyses by studying the relationship of women to the welfare state (Orloff, 1993, 1996; O'Connor, 1996; Sainsbury, 1996). Feminists have also argued that gender is a fundamental aspect in determining the basis for inequality in welfare states. Furthermore, in order to have a feminist analysis of the effects of restructuring and globalization on the welfare state it is important “to understand how the dominant discourse of globalization conceals and excludes gender-specific consequences” (Brodie, 1994: 48).

To present a gendered analysis of women's relationship to the welfare state and to analyse the impacts of globalization on the Canadian welfare state and what the consequences of restructuring have been for women, I have chosen to adopt a socialist

feminist framework because it acknowledges the importance of gender, race, class, production, and reproduction in the analysis of inequality. The socialist feminist standpoint provides important tools for the analysis of the welfare state because it necessitates an understanding of the division of labour between the sexes and the mechanisms that help perpetuate it (O'Connor, 1996). Furthermore, socialist feminism is concerned with changing the relations of power and domination between women and men, and reallocating economic and political power among classes and races (Adamson, Briskin and McPhail, 1988). Although it would be preferable to have an in-depth analysis of the intersection of race with gender and class, that is the study of the “[...] *simultaneity* of racism, sexism, and class exploitation as interconnecting ‘systems’ of privilege and oppression” (Stasiulis, 1999: 354), time and length constraints do not permit it.

The approach that is taken in this thesis is one that recognizes the existence of gender inequalities in the welfare state as well as women’s subordinated position within it. However, this thesis does not perceive the welfare state as an institution that is solely oppressive to women. In fact, it acknowledges that the state has in the past responded to political struggles and mass mobilizations that have resulted in the development of the welfare state and its offering more resources to women and other disadvantaged groups. Therefore, this thesis sees the potential for the welfare state and its social policies and programs to be sources of empowerment for women.

b) Data Sources

This thesis relies mainly on secondary sources and data, and consequently will be based on an examination and analysis of scholarly books and articles, government and

non-governmental organization reports and documents. In order to collect the information needed for my research, I have searched the Orbis. Sociofile, and the women's studies databases at the University of Ottawa. In addition, several organisations have sites on the Internet that offer many useful articles and data for downloading. These organisations include: The National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC), the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), the Canadian Council on Social Development (CCSD), the Caledon Institute of Social Policy (CISP), the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA), Status of Women Canada (SWC), and Statistics Canada.

2) Women and the Welfare State: An Ambiguous Relationship

Because we believe that it is important for the reader to understand that there is an ambiguous relationship between women and the welfare state, we will briefly examine some of the critiques that feminists have made against and in defence of the welfare state. Feminist analyses of the relationship between women and the welfare state have been somewhat contradictory. One school of thought sees the welfare state as an institution of control that has “been shaped by ideologies and practices which perpetuate inequalities” (Griffin Cohen, 1997a: 28). Moreover, it considers the welfare state as an institution that has extended patriarchy from the private to the public domain (Orloff, 1996; Pascall, 1986; Walby, 1990). Orloff indicates that this approach “emphasizes the ways in which state social policies regulate gender relations and contribute to the social reproduction of gender inequality through a variety of mechanisms” (1996: 53). According to Orloff, the means used by the state to maintain gender hierarchy include:

- (i) [G]endered divisions of labor, with men responsible for families' economic support and women responsible for caregiving and domestic labor

as well as for producing babies; (ii) the family wage system, in which men's relatively superior wages (and tax advantages) are justified partly in terms of their responsibility for the support of dependent wives and children; women are excluded from the paid labor force (or from favored positions within it) and therefore are economically dependent on men; (iii) traditional marriage (which implies the gender division of labor) and a concomitant double standard of sexual morality. (Orloff, 1996: 53)

Hence, feminists who are critical of the welfare state perceive state programs as a means of reinforcing women's dependence on men (and / or the state). Ferguson (2000) asserts that although the welfare state has been beneficial for women at times, defending it represents a dilemma for many feminists since the welfare state has also been responsible for perpetuating women's oppression. However, both Ferguson (2000) and Griffin Cohen (1997a), claim that because globalization and economic restructuring has led to the erosion of the welfare state, feminists are being put into a position where they are forced to defend the welfare state in order to preserve the services and programs that still exist. Griffin Cohen explains that although "resisting the dismantling of social programs is 'reactive'..." (1997a: 45), and is therefore a position that is often criticized by left feminists, it is important to emphasize that most Canadians cherish and want to maintain their social entitlements.

The second school of thought perceives the welfare state as an institution that reduces both gender and class inequalities. Income transfer programs, which vary according to the level of generosity of welfare state regimes, have sometimes helped alleviate women's poverty (Orloff, 1996). Indeed, in some cases, it has been welfare state programs that have assured the survival of many women (Peterson, 1996). The welfare state is also sometimes seen as supporting women in their reproductive work (Pascall,

1986). Finally, this perspective sees the state as an important potential tool for women's empowerment (Andrew, 1984; Masson, 1995; Orloff, 1993; Peterson, 1996).

3) Central Questions

This thesis is divided into five chapters. Following the introductory chapter, the second chapter will provide an analysis of the impacts of globalization on the Canadian welfare state and the labour market. We will begin this chapter by defining the concept of economic globalization and examining its effects on public policy and the economy. Our analysis will then briefly explore the impacts of trade agreements on governments and will attempt to demonstrate that the restrictions imposed by free trade impede the state's ability to improve social conditions. We will also explore how trade liberalization has contributed to the growing employment insecurity in the Canadian labour market. Our last section will assess what the impacts of globalization have been on women in the labour market. In addition to examining the income gap between women and men, we will argue that the current economic restructuring trends have disproportionately affected women's work. Moreover, our analysis of labour market inequality would not be complete without a brief examination of the effects of globalization on immigrant and visible minority women in Canada.

The third chapter will focus on the gendered dimensions of social citizenship rights within the Canadian welfare state and will examine how globalization has further intensified gender inequalities in Canada. We will begin this chapter by briefly reviewing T. H. Marshall's very influential work on citizenship. We then continue our analysis of social citizenship rights with an examination of Gøsta Esping-Andersen's welfare state

regime typology. Through a gender relations perspective we will discuss certain of the limitations of Esping-Andersen's work. Before we examine the different social citizenship rights that exist for women and men within the welfare state, we will briefly assess the general impacts of globalization on social citizenship entitlements in the Canadian welfare state. Our analysis of the gendered dimensions of the welfare state will focus on two very important income security schemes of the Canadian welfare state: The Employment Insurance Act (formerly the Unemployment Insurance Act) and the Canada Health and Social Transfer (formerly the Canada Assistance Plan). Finally, by reviewing these programs we intend to reveal firstly, that women have experienced systemic discrimination within the Canadian welfare state and, secondly, that women have been further disadvantaged by the restructuring of the welfare state caused by globalization.

The fourth chapter will explore alternatives to economic restructuring. Our analysis will begin with an examination of feminist activism in Canada. We briefly review the importance of popular education in generating political mobilization, defending the welfare state and bringing about progressive change. Furthermore, we will explore the importance of a democratized social policy agenda for meeting the needs of people and demonstrate how women's commitment to social change has contributed to the development of the welfare state. Next, we will examine international initiatives that have been proposed to counter the impacts of globalization and economic restructuring and improve social conditions around the world. We end this chapter by briefly examining two international events that have united women from all over the world in the struggle for their equality: The Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women and the World March of Women 2000. These two events demonstrate how the impacts of globalization and

economic restructuring have helped bring women together to organize for change and fight against the implementation of neo-liberal policies.

Finally, our concluding chapter will attempt to bring together the essential concepts and arguments of this thesis. Our focus will be on the gendered impacts of economic globalization on the Canadian welfare state. We will show that although economic restructuring and downsizing has an adverse effect on all citizens, it is women who are particularly affected by the cuts in the welfare state as well as in the labour market. We argue that economic globalization is leading to the erosion of our social citizenship rights and that the changes implemented to our social programs are reinforcing the inequalities that exist between Canadian women and men. We claim that although economic globalization has constrained the power of governments in some areas, alternatives have been identified and governments can still implement policies that would work towards protecting their citizens' social rights.

Chapter II: Globalization, the Welfare State and Canadian Women

The welfare state, an institution originally designed to protect individuals from life-threatening poverty by providing them with social benefits to ensure their survival, is being eroded by pressures on the government to comply with the growing demand to compete in the global marketplace. Indeed, our well-being has become secondary to the interests of the corporate sector as we are told that the restructuring of the welfare state and the labour market is needed in order for Canada to succeed in the global economy.

This chapter is concerned with the consequences of globalization for the Canadian welfare state and the labour market. Although restructuring affects both women and men, there is evidence to suggest that the erosion of the welfare state has disproportionately affected women. In order to comprehend what kind of impact policies of the neo-liberal agenda have on women, we must explore how globalization and the restructuring of the welfare state and the labour market have affected women's lives. We will begin this chapter by defining the concept of economic globalization and examining its effects on public policy and the economy in Canada. We will then proceed to explore the effects of free trade on the government and the labour market. Finally, our last section will specifically examine what the impacts of globalization and the current capitalist restructuring trends have been on women in the Canadian labour market.

1) Globalization: A Definition

Although globalization is a phenomenon that we have been hearing about increasingly over the last few years it is not new. In fact, it also characterized the mercantile and colonial periods (Mies, 1986). Defining globalization is not a simple task.

It is a concept that includes a wide range of economic, political, technological and social components. However, for the purpose of this thesis, I will refer to the political economy model of globalization. Globalization, as we know it today, has flourished since the end of the Second World War when international financial institutions were established to facilitate trade between countries and to support economic strength globally. The revolution in information and communication technologies and the subsequent rapid global diffusion of finance capital through multinational corporations are factors that have contributed to the current level of international economic interdependence for which the term globalization is generally used. Globalization is a process in which transnational corporations including banks, whose visions and actions are dominated by international interests, dominate production, finance, and investment (Teepie, 1995).

The advances in information and communication technologies have had and continue to have significant impacts on the economy. According to Rice and Prince (2000), global technology “increases the ability of corporations to transfer resources and technology from one country to another; it increases the concentration of economic power in the hands of multinational corporations; and it opens domestic markets through the removal of trade barriers” (2000: 20). Because global technology has facilitated the transfer of capital, corporations can now merge more easily which enables a concentration of power among them that, as stated by Rice and Prince, has made “Corporations [...] so powerful they have more influence on the global economy than most national governments” (2000: 21). Globalization has also increased multinational corporations’ power over government and labour by making it possible for the corporate sector to move their operations from one country to another in search of social conditions they deem

favourable in order to boost their productive capacities and profits (Mishra, 1999). Rice and Prince state:

To maximize profits, companies actively pursue situations that offer the least regulation, the cheapest labour, and the smallest social welfare burden. Corporations will bypass countries that uphold laws and regulations limiting business profitability in their relentless quest for favourable economic and social conditions. (2000: 20)

In view of the fact that corporations seek conditions that will allow their prosperity and will move or threaten to move their operations if governments do not comply with their demands for lower taxes, deregulation, a reduction in social benefits and cheaper labour, governments, in order to be competitive on the global market, will pass legislation that transnational corporations request (Mishra, 1999; Rice and Prince, 2000). Therefore, economic globalization has made it increasingly possible for the business sector to pressure our governments into reducing social expenditures.

Analyses of globalization often perceive the structural changes that are said to be necessary in order for a society to “benefit” from a globalized economy as inevitable. However, critics of this view reject this argument on the basis that economic forces are the result of “political decisions based on ideological and cultural values which can be contested on moral and democratic bases” (Griffin Cohen, 1997a: 45). Marjorie Griffin Cohen argues that even though the state has embraced the liberalization of trade and the economic restructuring that has been part and parcel of the globalization of the economies, she believes that the “race to the bottom can be resisted with credibility” (1997a: 45) and that although the power of the state has been “constrained, it is still strong, and the government is the primary avenue people within a nation have for addressing their interests at the international level” (1997a: 45). Furthermore, Evans, McBride and Shields contend

that “while it is true that nation-states have less control over macroeconomic policy, they retain exclusive control over their physical territory and their national population – capital may be highly mobile, but people and land are not” (2000: 94). An analysis of possible initiatives and social policies that could counter the detrimental effects of globalization and economic restructuring will be further discussed in chapter IV.

Nevertheless, neoliberal ideology and proponents of economic globalization are focusing their attention on the liberalization of trade and the restructuring of the world economy. In its quest to facilitate market dominance, the Canadian government has proceeded to dismantle the welfare state. In the next section of this chapter, we will explore the impact that globalization has had on the restructuring and downsizing of the welfare state in Canada.

2) Economic Globalization and the Crisis of the Welfare State

Globalization is having a detrimental impact on social policy as cuts in such areas as health care, education, (un)employment insurance, and social assistance are eroding the Canadian welfare state and are leading to gross inequalities within the Canadian population. The gendered effects of the retrenchment of the welfare state are clear. Because they constitute a large part of the welfare state’s employees and clients, women are bearing the brunt of the attacks (Ferguson, 2000). The restructuring of the welfare state, the move towards the privatization of services, the economic policies of deregulation, and the liberalization of the markets are all linked to the globalization of economies.

Teple (1995) links globalization and the diminishing support for the social welfare state by suggesting that the implementation of neo-liberal policies that became popular in

the 1980s has facilitated both the retrenchment of the welfare state and the world-wide spread of capital. Neo-liberalism stresses the importance of a minimalist state and promotes an agenda where market relationships and the premise of economic efficiency dominate (Teepie, 1995). States now place more emphasis on economics than on politics when it comes to making decisions regarding social policy. In addition, there has been a shift in focus from the national to the global. Therefore, economic worries take precedence over national social problems, and instead of meeting the needs of the population, governments comply with the interests of transnational corporations. For instance, Brodie (1994) writes:

The requisites of globalization demand that states and societies adjust to compete on the world market. This adjustment, so the argument goes, necessarily requires a mode of regulation that will enable states to compete successfully for a highly fluid international capital. In order to compete, national economies must become efficient, which means reducing fiscal and regulatory burdens on industry and lowering expectations about the role of the state both in terms of protecting national economies from global pressures and providing social welfare. It means decentring and displacing the Keynesian state and pre-empting democratic struggle and political agency with the dictates of the market. (1994: 48)

We will demonstrate how the Canadian welfare state, once an extensive system of social security that ensured a minimum standard of living and protected individuals from risks that were beyond their control, is being eroded by the constraints that proponents of globalization and neoliberalism have imposed on governments.

Economic globalization and the international rules of trade have limited governments' ability to effectively influence the economy and consequently restricted governments' capacities to alleviate social problems (Rice and Prince, 2000). According to neoliberal ideology, the restructuring of the welfare state is necessary in order to eliminate the budgetary deficits that are preventing Canada from competing on the global

market. Indeed, reducing the deficit (the excess of expenditures over revenues each year) is of the utmost importance to the business sector. According to Mishra:

The rationale for deficit reduction is that government borrowing results in the 'crowding out' of private borrowing and investment and that a large national debt [the total of past deficits] means high interest rates. These conditions are detrimental to the economy i.e. for economic growth and job creation through the private sector. The business and financial community therefore sets great store by deficit reduction. (1999: 37)

Thus to comply with the demands of corporations who want their taxes reduced in order to better compete internationally, the Canadian government has restructured the welfare state by cutting social expenditures in order to reduce the debt and hence allow the reduction of corporate taxes. As a result, the profitability of the corporate sector has taken precedence over the social and economic well being of Canadian men, women and children (Rice and Prince, 2000).

Furthermore, Griffin Cohen argues, "A consistent theme of the corporate sector, that the economy can no longer support expensive social programs, is directly linked to the downward spiralling of social welfare through the harmonization process" (1997a: 31). Mass media, political and economic analysts all inform us that the Canadian government is in a state of economic turmoil because it overspent on social programs that it could not afford. Business elites and their supporters argue that programs and services of the welfare state should therefore be cut back, privatized, or even completely eradicated. However, Stanford (1995) argues that there is no correlation between the progressiveness of programs and services offered by the welfare state and its debt load. In effect, he indicates that some countries such as Belgium have a progressive welfare state and also a high debt, whereas others, such as the Scandinavian countries, have progressive welfare states and small debts. Moreover, he states:

The dramatic rise in Canada's public-sector indebtedness since the early 1980s was not caused by an undue expansion of public programs (since, for the most part, Canada's existing network of public programs was already in place by the mid-1970s, and has been steadily *eroded* since then). Rather, the historical data clearly suggest that the marked and permanent decline in economic growth and employment over the past fifteen years has been the dominant factor in the deterioration of public finance. (1995: 124)

Therefore, social programs and services have not led to a loss of revenue for the government and are not responsible for the rise of Canada's debt load. Rather, neo-liberal monetary policies of fighting inflation through high interest rates, low employment levels, the slow down of economic growth, recessions, the reduction of corporate taxes, and tax breaks to the rich are the reasons behind Canada's large debt load (Mishra, 1999; Stanford, 1995; Teeple, 1995).

Nevertheless, a large national debt is bad news for governments who must spend much of their revenues on interest payments and servicing the debt (Mishra, 1999).

Indeed, according to Stanford:

Apart from squeezing out government funding for actual public programs and services, the debt-servicing burden also robs government of much of its stimulative or counter-cyclical capacity. With less fiscal leeway in recessionary times, government is hard-pressed to maintain existing programs, let alone to introduce new spending to offset a slowdown in the private economy. Unlike direct spending on programs, or transfer payments to low-income households, payments of interest to investors have very little positive macroeconomic spin-off effect, since a large share of these payments are simply added to the savings of these investors (rather than being recirculated in the form of subsequent re-spending). (1995: 121)

Therefore, cutbacks to social programs, especially income security programs, can only aggravate the economic slowdown since Canadians will necessarily have to reduce consumption to make ends meet. Stanford (1995) argues that what needs to be done is the promotion of full employment. However, the corporate sector does not favour full employment; in fact it prefers high unemployment levels, in addition to inadequate social

insurance programs since workers are more willing to work for lower wages when there is a lack of jobs and income security benefits are insufficient (Stanford, 1995). As will be documented in the following sections, cuts are not only taking place within the Canadian welfare state, but they are also occurring within the labour market.

3) Globalization, Free Trade and the Restructuring of the Labour Market

a) Free Trade

Free Trade has proven to be an important implement for globalization. The multilateral trade and investment agreements that the Canadian government has entered are intended to reduce tariff and non-tariff barriers between countries and provide the corporate sector with greater access to markets and freedom regarding investments. Trading agreements such as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (FTA), implemented on January 1, 1989, and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), implemented on January 1, 1994 limit the government's ability to intervene and regulate the national economy (Brodie, 1994; Jackson, 1999). The constraints posed by these agreements range from prohibiting measures that would favour Canadian firms over foreign firms to limiting the government's power to implement better social, health, employment and environmental standards (Burman, 1997; Evans, McBride and Shields, 2000).

Furthermore, these trade agreements allow corporations and foreign governments the right to challenge measures implemented by a government to benefit its own state. In fact, "any action by a government at any level that would restrict existing or potential profits for foreign corporations can only be established after proper compensation is given"

(Burman, 1997: 207). The case of Ethyl Corporation in which the Canadian government attempted to ban the neuro-toxin and environmental pollutant MMT (a chemical detrimental to the health of Canadians) is a prime example of the power of corporations over governments. Ethyl Corporation challenged the government's ban on the import of MMT, and as Canada realized it was going to lose the challenge, it opted to settle with the corporation, paid them US\$19 million and removed the import ban (Dobbin, 2001).

Furthermore, provisions in both the FTA and NAFTA that seek to eliminate non-tariff barriers which consist of "a broad range of legislation, regulations, programs, and standards that are seen as obstacles to imports" (Sanger, 1993: 185), impede the ability of the state to further develop social policies and improve public services. Both the FTA and NAFTA regard public services as "commodities that must be opened up to the competitive pressures of the marketplace" (Sanger, 1993: 189). Thus, there is increasing pressure to privatize public services such as utilities, education and health care (Russell, 2000).

The privatization of public services such as health care and education, two services in which women figure as the predominant employees (Hadley, 2001; Statistics Canada, 2001a), is an especially important issue for women since they face the increased risk of losing their jobs. Furthermore, Armstrong maintains "private paid jobs are less likely to be unionized, secure, and well paid than are state-sector jobs" (1996: 40). It is also important to note that the privatization of health care services also increases women's unpaid caregiving workload (Armstrong, 1998; Connelly and MacDonald, 1996). According to Armstrong (1998), the cutbacks in education are leading to the privatization of schools and universities. This not only signifies a loss of unionized jobs, but it also means that students will have to pay higher university fees and will accumulate larger debts during their

education. Because women earn lower wages than men, it will take them longer to pay back their loans. Cutbacks and privatization in education will “increase the importance of class and sex in terms of access to post-secondary education as an individual’s personal finances become more important” (Armstrong, 1998: 137).

Moreover, in order to allow corporations in Canada to compete effectively with American corporations, the Canadian government thought it necessary to harmonize tax reforms, labour reforms and social spending with those in the United States (Merrett, 1996). Since social policies in the United States offer lower levels of protection than those in Canada, the Canadian government has proceeded to retrench the welfare state. According to Sanger, “free trade restrictions limit the ability of governments to respond to the most significant problem raised by globalization: how to maintain and improve living standards for individuals, families, and communities in a world of extraordinary capital mobility” (1993: 185). Studies have shown that these trade agreements will have a negative impact on employment particularly in Canada’s manufacturing sector, on wages, on unionization and the bargaining power of labour, and will thus result in a deterioration of employment standards (Armstrong, 1998; Griffin Cohen, 1987; Jackson, 1999).

b) Deregulation of Labour Standards

A further consequence of economic globalization is the reduction of labour standards. Canada’s employment standards consist of legislation pertaining to minimum wages, rates for overtime, maximum hours of work, maternity and parental leave, vacation pay, affirmative action, pay equity, etc. (Fudge, 1996). The deregulation of labour laws and working conditions is of primary importance to the corporate sector, which is making

every effort to exploit labour as a commodity to be discarded when it is no longer needed.

According to Mishra:

Measures such as full employment, employment protection, unemployment benefits, minimum wage laws, health and safety legislation and trade union rights institutionalize basic social standards and to that extent, limit the scope of the market. From the perspective of creating a global market economy, these regulations appear as so many impediments which prevent the deployment of labour freely as a commodity. (1999: 107)

Moreover, seeing that corporations threaten to relocate if less restrictive regulations and inexpensive labour are not available, governments are increasingly passing legislation that restricts the rights of workers. For example, Jackson states:

Canadian employers have extensively used the argument of international competitiveness vis-à-vis the US and Mexico to press not just workers on wages and working conditions but also to press governments for changes in labour laws and regulations and social programs. While labour laws and employment standards have evolved in differing directions, in different jurisdictions, since the FTA came into effect, the recent trend, notably in Ontario, Alberta and Manitoba, has been to severely limit the effective right of workers to organize, and to roll back even basic employment standards. (1999: 149)

The elimination of labour laws and regulations and the attack on unions is weakening the bargaining power of workers and is making it increasingly difficult for unions to effectively bargain for better working conditions. According to Rice and Prince:

Driven by the politics of deficits and debt, public sector labour relations in Canada have deteriorated over the last two decades. Federal and provincial governments have imposed pay freezes and wage rollbacks; restricted what may be negotiated and even suspended collective bargaining; and introduced back-to-work legislation. (2000: 151)

The attack on public sector unions where women comprise a majority of the members is especially significant for our gendered analysis (Armstrong, 1998). Because public sector employment is generally unionized it offers higher wages, better benefits and employment security, therefore it offers some of the best employment opportunities for women. Hence,

an attack on public sector unions will reduce favourable working conditions and diminish women's chances of obtaining good employment.

Moreover, the gendered impacts of the deregulation of labour laws are eliminating much of the advancement that women have made in the labour market. Mishra indicates "with the increasing trend towards deregulation of the labour market and government downsizing, affirmative action, pay equity and other such policies are being marginalized and eroded" (Mishra, 1999: 62-63). In Ontario, employment equity legislation has already been repealed (Armstrong, 1998). Although organized labour and social groups opposed to the North American Free Trade Agreement have pressured participating states into signing the North American Agreement on Labour Co-operation, an agreement which demands that each participating country upholds their own labour and social legislation, the agreement has not been enforced (Mishra, 1999).

c) Free Trade and Employment Insecurity

The restructuring trends that are part of globalization have also had a negative effect on employment security. Because they are among the sectors that are mostly affected by free trade, labour intensive industries seek to reduce production costs as much as possible. Thus, following the implementation of the FTA, from 1989 to 1992, many manufacturing plants in Canada were closed and massive layoffs ensued (Rice and Prince, 2000). Approximately 400,000 jobs in the manufacturing sector were eliminated (Burman, 1997). In fact, between 1990 and 1992, 96% of the total job loss was in the goods-producing sector which includes industries such as agriculture, forestry, utilities, construction and manufacturing (Armstrong, 1996).

Many of the lost jobs resulted from the relocation of American (and sometimes Canadian) manufacturing companies which shifted their production to lower cost branches in the United States or elsewhere (Burman, 1997; Jackson, 1999). Although it cannot be denied that the recession that occurred in late summer 1990 (which was soon after the implementation of the FTA) increased the level of unemployment, it is important to note that approximately one third of the job cuts ensued before the recession. Moreover, unlike job cuts from recessionary times, which are temporary, job losses related to the FTA, were permanent (Burman, 1997; Merrett, 1996).

Using statistics from 1986 (3 years before the implementation of the FTA), Griffin Cohen (1987) asserts that although women make up only 25% of workers in manufacturing, they are concentrated in the industries that are most threatened by free trade. In fact, women comprised approximately 80% of the workforce in the clothing industry, 40% in textiles, 65% in footwear, 38% in electrical and electronic goods and more than 30% in food processing. Indeed, between 1990 and 1992, unemployment rates for women employed in the goods-producing sector increased by 3% (Armstrong, 1996).

Furthermore, Armstrong indicates:

Significantly more women than men lost jobs in the manufacturing industries (171,000 women, compared with 149,000 men), even though women accounted for less than a third of those employed in these industries. [...] Most of this female job loss would be among immigrant women, given that they account for more than two-fifths of the women working in product manufacturing. (1996: 35)

Borowy (1993) argues that the clothing industry is an especially important source of work for immigrant women workers, with 94% of sewing-machine operators who worked in Toronto in 1986 having been born outside of Canada. This industry has made many adjustments to its operations since the implementation of the FTA:

The garment industry is following a low-wage strategy in two ways. First, factories are closing. They have moved to the low-wage parts of the United States, like Dade County, or to Mexico. Forty-two unionized factories have closed since 1988. [...] From 1988, the number of garment workers in Canada dropped from 95,800 to an estimated 62,800. In Ontario alone, employment has fallen off drastically from a high in 1988 of 27,700 to 16,800. Second, production that stays in Canada is shifting out of unionized factories. Garments that are sewn here are produced through a complex chain of contractors, subcontractors, and homeworkers. (Borowy, 1993: 143-144)

The loss of jobs in manufacturing industries puts women at a disadvantage since many of the former employees are immigrants, older and have little education (Griffin Cohen, 1987). Finding alternative employment is difficult for women who don't speak French or English very well and who have little education and few skills.

Mergers and takeovers, which also have the effect of increasing unemployment, have been more prevalent since the FTA was implemented. Merrett (1996) explains that the increase in mergers and foreign takeovers is linked to the Free Trade Agreement since it abolished many of the investment restrictions. Accordingly, there were more takeovers and mergers in Canada in the six months following the inception of the FTA than there were in the previous three years combined. In fact, Merrett writes:

Between 1988 and 1990, a record 1403 Canadian companies were taken over at a price of Can\$35.5 billion. In the first year of free trade, 460 Canadian-controlled firms were taken over by foreign (mainly U.S.) interests, while only 136 firms were taken over by Canadian investors. A mere 10 percent of this expenditure was actually new investment. The upswing in mergers and foreign investment increased foreign control over the Canadian economy, reversing a ten-year positive trend in Canadian control. (1996: 95)

Corporations justify the increase in mergers and takeovers on the basis of the need to expand their operations in order to better compete on a global scale (Merrett, 1996).

However, Merrett indicates that the increase in takeovers by foreign companies represents a significant job loss for Canadians. He writes:

For every billion dollars of profit made by Canadian firms in Canada, 765 jobs are created. For every billion dollars of profit made by American firms operating in Canada, 17 jobs are created. An American takeover of a Canadian firm can therefore be considered as an indirect job loss of 748 jobs for every Can\$1 billion in American profits from Canadian subsidiaries. (Merrett, 1996: 95)

This is especially significant in the manufacturing sector because American owned plants based in Canada import 90% of their supplies from the U.S. and as a result provide employment to American workers (Burman, 1997). Takeovers and mergers often translate into a loss of work for many Canadian employees because companies will eliminate many duplicate jobs.

Additionally, advances in technologies, which have made it possible for workers to be replaced by machines that enhance productivity and cut production costs significantly, have eliminated many manufacturing and other positions that once required manual labour. However, manufacturing is not the only sector affected by the development of new technologies. The introduction of computer technology in the service sector, in which women are concentrated, has also contributed to important job losses for women (Lynn and Todoroff, 1998). Burman (1997) uses the banking industry as an example to demonstrate the effects that technology can have on employment. Because banking machines and increasingly banking from home have substantially decreased the number of bank tellers and clerks needed, significant job cuts have taken place in the banking industry. Although Burman does not make any reference to differences based on gender, it is important to note that it is mostly women who hold these positions. Hence, technological innovations and the subsequent reorganization of work have increased

employment insecurity for women as well as for men. Thus, restructuring due to globalization, free trade, and technological innovations has led to a loss of employment and a growth of employment insecurity for many Canadian men and women workers.

d) Labour Market Inequality

Government and business reports claim that the economy has regained its strength and that employment levels have recovered since the early 1990s. However, it is important to note that unemployment indicators used by Statistics Canada can be misleading since findings are based on the number of people who are out of work and who are actively searching for work, and do not take into account those who have become so discouraged that they have stopped looking for employment. Consequently, Statistics Canada's official rate of unemployment does not adequately represent the level of unemployment in Canada. This section will examine Burke and Shields' Structural Exclusion Index and Adult Wage Polarization Index (which are indexes that are constructed from Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey) in order to gain a better understanding of the inequalities in the labour market.

According to Burke and Shields (2000), the Structural Exclusion Index which measures unemployment, underemployment and marginal employment and takes into account those who want to work but are unable to find employment, can more effectively determine the level of exclusion from full participation in the labour market than can the indicators used by Statistics Canada. In fact, Burke and Shields indicate that for May 1998, the Structural Exclusion Index measured the level of labour market exclusion at 20.3% compared to the official unemployment rate of 8.4%. The Exclusion Index is

almost 2.5 times larger than the official unemployment rate. Moreover, the Exclusion Index for May 1998 showed that 35.5% of those between the ages of 20 to 24 years were excluded from the labour market. Also of significance is the comparison of the exclusion rate for women and men: 24% of women as opposed to 17% of men were excluded from full participation in the labour market in 1998. In effect, Burke and Shields concluded that there was “an important systematic gendering effect evident. Women are heavily over represented among the structurally excluded, with the most profound differences occurring among those over thirty years of age” (2000: 111).

According to Burke and Shields (2000), employment opportunities have increasingly become of poor quality. Not only has the availability of stable full-time work decreased, but also it is insecure, temporary, and part-time jobs that are poorly remunerated and offer few if any benefits at all, that are becoming the norm. Burke and Shields use the Adult Wage Polarization Index in order to demonstrate the inequalities that exist between stable and flexible forms of employment. The Adult Wage Polarization Index includes only waged workers between the ages of 25 and 59 years since this segment of the population represents those who should be better established in the labour market. Burke and Shields define workers who are in stable or standard employment as individuals who:

1. work full time, that is, thirty or more hours per week;
2. hold permanent jobs without a predetermined termination date; and
3. are tenured, or have worked for their current employer for more than two years. (2000: 111)

On the other hand, flexible work is characterized as:

Any deviation from stable, standard forms of employment. It is comprised of part-time, contract and limited-term employment, and full-time employment held for under two years – waged employment forms which have been less secure and, [...] marked by other inequalities. (Burke and Shields, 2000: 111)

By using the Adult Wage Polarization Index, Burke and Shields found that not only is the gap between salaries for those with full-time tenured employment and those with flexible forms of paid employment widening, but also the percentage of people with secure work has decreased while the percentage of those with flexible forms of work has increased (Burke and Shields, 2000). The Adult Wage Polarization Index for May 1998 indicates that 37.1% of waged workers were in the category of flexible employment. Moreover, gender disparities persist. Statistics show that 68.3% of men possess stable employment compared to 57% of women and 50.9% of single mothers. Furthermore, the index shows that there is a difference of over \$8,500 in annual income between workers in stable employment and those who are in full-time and full-year flexible employment (Burke and Shields, 2000). The Polarization index also shows that significant wage differences exist between the public and private sectors, with public sector jobs (for both stable and flexible employment) being better paid than the latter:

In stable work, the median hourly wage in the public sector (\$20.88) is almost \$5 more than it is in the private sector (\$16). In flexible forms of work, the wage difference between sectors is almost as large (\$4.45), and once again the higher wage is found in publicly financed employment. Revealingly, public-sector flexible work is better paid (\$16.45) than is private-sector stable work (\$16). Public employment offers additional protection to employees by maintaining their wages, even if they are lodged in the generally low-waged flexible sector of the economy. (Burke and Shields, 2000: 115)

The considerable difference in hourly wages between the public and private sectors is due in large part to the fact that public sector jobs are more likely to be unionized. In fact, Burke and Shields indicate that 78.4% of public sector employment versus 26.6% of private sector employment is unionized. Furthermore, not only does unionization have a positive effect on wages but also it positively impacts on employment benefits and

employment security. The Polarization index also showed that 43.8% of those with stable employment (in both public and private sectors) are unionized compared to 25.5% for those in flexible forms of work (Burke and Shields, 2000). Although Burke and Shields do provide gender differentiated data, it is not very extensive. In order to better understand the gender inequalities that exist in the labour market and the impacts of globalization on women in the labour force, we need to further explore how income disparities, occupational segregation and the casualization of work have affected women. Such an analysis will be provided in the following section.

4) Gender Inequalities

a) Canadian Women and the Labour Market

Globalization and the restructuring of the labour market have further accentuated the existing gender inequalities. Because women already face discrimination in the labour market, the impacts of globalization have especially exacerbated poor women's living conditions. Hadley (2001) indicates that women's economic inequality leaves them even more vulnerable to poverty, sexual harassment and violence against women. Before we explore the effects of globalization on women's work, we will begin this section by examining how the income gap between women and men contributes to women's economic inequality. The gap between female and male wages is a significant determinant of the inequality that exists between women and men in the paid labour force. By comparing the full-time, full-year annual wages of women and men, Statistics Canada determined that women earned 72.5% of what men earned in 1999 (Hadley, 2001). Although the wage gap has narrowed since the 1970s, there remains a significant

difference between women and men's incomes (Hadley, 2001). Furthermore, the narrowing of the wage gap is mainly due to the decrease of men's wages rather than to improvements in women's wages (Armstrong 1996; Hadley, 2001).

Gender-sensitive analyses on the income gap have examined several factors that could contribute to the wage differential and have revealed a number of important findings (Armstrong and Armstrong, 1994; Hadley, 2001). To begin with, the wage gap cannot be explained by education, since, in 1998, women with university degrees, working full-time, full-year earned only 74% of what men with degrees earned (Hadley, 2001). Also, more women than men have graduated with university degrees (Statistics Canada, 2001b). In addition, Armstrong and Armstrong (1994) indicate, "in 1991 males who had grade eight or less earned more than women with post-secondary certificates or diplomas" (1994: 44). Hence, the level of education cannot account for the wage gap. Moreover, Armstrong and Armstrong found that job experience could not explain the wage gap since "Women who had been in the job for a year in 1991 earned 70.1 per cent of what men earned and those who had been in the job for six to ten years earned 69.8 per cent of what men with comparable experience earned" (1994: 44).

Feminist research has revealed women's segregation into low-paying employment sectors and their concentration in non-standard employment (part-time, temporary and self-employment) as the main reasons for the income gap (Armstrong and Armstrong, 1994; Hadley, 2001). Women are predominantly found in service jobs and certain manufacturing industries that generally pay low wages and offer little in terms of benefits and few possibilities for advancement (Armstrong and Armstrong, 1990, Griffin Cohen, 1987). Even though some women are found in high paying jobs they still earn lower salaries than

their male co-workers (Armstrong and Armstrong, 1994; Coderre, Denis and Andrew, 1999). According to Pupo (1997), employers often justify paying women lower wages by assuming that their priority is their family and therefore, believing that they could not be strongly committed to their jobs. Furthermore, Hadley asserts that women's segregation within the labour force is due to "historically constructed stereotypes of what constitutes 'women's' and 'men's' work, by legal discrimination, racist immigration and other government policies and by personal and institutional racism and sexism" (2001: 15). However, the purpose here is not to determine why women are paid less, but rather to examine how globalization results in a deterioration of women's jobs and contributes to the intensification of gender inequalities by increasing women's segregation into undervalued job ghettos.

Globalization is causing much of the downsizing that is being undertaken in the service sector which is made up of services such as government, health, education, and social services. Because women represent the majority of employees in this sector it is they who are mainly being affected by the cuts (Statistics Canada, 2001a). The predominance of women in the service sector is linked to the gendered social roles: "In 1999, women were 87% of nurses and health-related therapists, 75% of clerks and other 'administrators', 62% of teachers and 59% of sales and service workers" (Hadley, 2001: 16).

However, it is important to note that apart from the jobs in the public sector, employment in the service sector is generally of poor quality:

Not only have service sector jobs been largely offered under conditions of low pay but, increasingly, they involve non-regular forms of employment (part-week labour, short-term jobs, temporary-help, and own-account self-

employment) as well as part-time work schedules. (Veltmeyer and Sacouman, 1998: 125)

Moreover, Broad (2000) maintains that the service sector has the greatest proportion of part-time work. Veltmeyer and Sacouman call attention to the fact that because corporations continuously strive to drive down the cost of production and augment their profits, non-standard employment has become a preferred method of doing business since this type of low-wage work provides the employers much greater flexibility and higher profits.

As was previously indicated, non-standard employment rarely offers workers employment security, a good salary or opportunities for advancement. Moreover, many part-time workers don't have access to paid vacations, sick leave, health care plans or pension benefits (Lynn and Todoroff, 1998). The lack of these benefits often means that women who need to take time off from their jobs to take care of their sick children or for other care-giving responsibilities will lose part of their pay. Furthermore, the move by the federal government to amend the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) will reduce pension benefits. Skipton writes: "the CPP legislation alters the way the average career earnings figure is reached, which will in many cases reduce future retirees' benefit levels" (1997: 20). Since CPP benefits are associated to earnings and, because in general women earn low salaries, their CPP benefits are often insufficient. Moreover, jobs in the service sector, in which women predominate, are the types of employment that do not usually offer private pension plans. Hence, without adequate public pension benefits and without private pension plans to fall back on, many retired women will be left with insufficient incomes to support themselves.

Also occurring are cuts in the public sector, where two in three employees are women (CLC, 1998). Skipton (1997) indicates that from 1990 to 1995, the number of women with full-time employment in the public sector declined by 4%, with the most significant reduction being in the clerical positions. Furthermore, Andrew writes:

Non seulement le nombre d'emplois dans le secteur public est diminué, mais ces emplois deviennent en outre plus précaires. Le travail à contrat augmente, tout comme le travail à temps partiel. Les emplois du secteur public commencent à ressembler à ceux du secteur privé – harmonisation vers le bas. (Andrew, 1998: 179)

Thus, full-time, full-year employment is being replaced by contract and part-time work. Furthermore, the privatization of what were once public services signifies a loss of unionized and hence relatively well-paid and secure employment for women. The decline of full-time unionized work and the growth of insecure, contract, and part-time work have led to the deterioration of working conditions and to an increase in employment and economic insecurity for women.

The casualization of labour has disproportionately affected women and youths (between the ages of 15 and 24) who make up 90% of the part-time labour force (Veltmeyer and Sacouman, 1998). The lack of full-time employment opportunities has forced many women and youth to accept part-time work as their only option. Involuntary part-timers form a considerable proportion of part-time workers. According to Duffy (1997), in 1975, 11% of part-timers could not find full-time employment whereas in 1993, 35% of part-time employees could not find full-time work. Furthermore, by using data from Statistics Canada's Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID) from 1998, Hadley found that:

Between 1992 and 1996, the number of part-time jobs in the economy more than doubled. In 1998, there were more than twice as many part-time jobs

created as full-time jobs. The vast majority – more than 72% – of part-time workers are women. In 1999, 28% of all employed women worked less than 30 hours per week, compared with just 10% of employed men. (Hadley, 2001: 9-10)

Hence, the increase in part-time jobs and the decrease in available full-time jobs have in some cases obliged women to hold more than one job in order to make ends meet. In fact, Chaykowski and Powell (1999) report that women are more likely than men to hold more than one part-time job.

b) Visible Minority Women in the Canadian Labour Force

Disadvantages that women face based on race, language proficiency (knowledge of English and / or French), class, disability and age exist in the labour market. Women who are also part of one or more disadvantaged group are likely to simultaneously experience double, triple or even more forms of discrimination. For the purpose of this discussion we will examine the inequalities that exist in the labour market for immigrant and visible minority women in Canada. To begin with, it is important to understand that immigrant women's experiences within the labour force are affected by state policies that are discriminatory. Indeed, research has demonstrated that the state and other Canadian institutions perpetuate inequalities (Labelle, 1990; Ng, 1993). Labelle maintains “[...] des travaux récents montrent que le sexisme et le racism, comme idéologies et pratiques, sont pleinement intégrés aux institutions canadiennes, et qu'elles sont renforcées par les politiques d'immigration” (1990: 75). Granting immigrant women entry into Canada as dependants (be it daughter, mother, grandmother or wife) of a male person creates a situation of dependency for women because these “dependant” women are excluded from access to certain services provided by the state. For instance, women who immigrate to

Canada as dependants have not had access to state subsidized programs such as education, language courses, legal aid, public housing and financial support (Labelle, 1990; Armstrong and Armstrong, 1994). Furthermore, Peterson maintains that gendered welfare state policies “reproduce gendered and ethnic/racist divisions of labor and, therefore, power” (1996: 8). Thus, immigrant women are confronted with additional difficulties that hinder their possibilities of finding employment of good quality.

Women from different minority racial and cultural groups face different barriers to employment and have different experiences in the labour market. According to Ng:

Non-white immigrants in general are disadvantaged in a competitive labour market in which “Canadian” (that is, English-speaking) training and work experience are major determinants for entry into occupational classifications. Many non-white immigrants, even those who were in professional and highly skilled technical occupations in their home countries, have to take lower positions because of the lack of recognition of their qualifications and credentials by Canadian governments and employers. (1993: 288)

Furthermore, according to Ng, “Immigrant women in Canada appear to be concentrated in the upper and lower echelons of the occupational hierarchy, either in highly skilled professional jobs or in job ghettos” (1993: 288). However, immigrant women who have highly skilled professional jobs are predominantly from the United States and Britain, whereas immigrant women from Africa, Asia, South America, Southern and Eastern Europe are concentrated in the service and light manufacturing industries (Armstrong and Armstrong, 1990; Ng, 1993).

Moreover, Ng reports that non-white immigrant women who do not speak English are generally employed in three job categories:

First, they are recruited into private domestic and janitorial services by doctors, lawyers, managers, and the like. [...] Second, immigrant women are found in the lower strata of the service industries, including restaurants,

janitorial and cleaning services, and the food industry. Third, they are found in the lower echelons of the manufacturing industries, such as light manufacturing in textiles and garments, in plastic factories and in the retail trade. (1993: 289)

Furthermore, visible minority and immigrant women's jobs are often temporary or on a short-term basis with irregular work hours. As was mentioned earlier, non-standard types of employment are poorly paid, offer few possibilities of advancement and are rarely unionized.

Immigrant and visible minority women's already precarious situation in the labour market makes them even more vulnerable to globalization. As was previously discussed, the implementation of free trade in Canada increased the need for manufacturing plants to lower their production costs in order to be more competitive. The search for cheaper labour outside of Canada has resulted in the closure of food processing and textile manufacturing plants where a large proportion of the employees are women, including immigrant and visible minority women. In addition, the downsizing occurring in the service sector has meant that Aboriginal women and women of colour, those who are often the last hired, are the first ones to lose their jobs. The privatization of certain services in the public sector, where immigrant and visible minority women have had more success in obtaining good employment, has also been detrimental for these women (Armstrong, 1999).

Unemployment figures for minority women are higher than those for other women. Hadley (2001) reports that 53 percent of immigrant and visible minority women and 41 percent of Aboriginal women compared to 63 percent of other women, between 15 and 64 years of age, were employed in 1999. Furthermore, immigrant, visible minority and Aboriginal women have incomes that are lower than those of other women. In 1995,

Aboriginal women had average before tax incomes of \$13,300 compared to \$16,600 for immigrant and visible minority women and \$19,500 for other women. Although globalization alone cannot account for the higher unemployment rates and lower salaries of minority women, it is reasonable to conclude that visible minority and immigrant women have not fared well in the global economy particularly in view of their concentration in jobs which we've shown have been vulnerable to cut backs and deteriorating working conditions.

Thus, divisions by gender and skin colour are found in the Canadian labour market. The systemic discrimination that exists in Canadian institutions and within the labour market has perpetuated the economic and social inequalities among the population. The relative lack of information on the effects of globalization on immigrant and visible minority women in Canada suggests that there is a need for more sustained research.

5) Conclusion

We began this chapter by defining the political economy model of globalization. We examined how the revolution in information technologies has facilitated the transfer of capital from country to country, and from one corporation to another. We demonstrated that global technology has enabled a concentration of power among corporations which has made it possible for them to dominate the economy and make demands on governments.

The second section of this chapter examined the effects of economic globalization on the welfare state. Our examination revealed that the implementation of neo-liberal policies has led to the dismantling of the welfare state. We looked at how the elimination of government budgetary deficits has taken precedence over social policy as the public is

told that the Canadian government can no longer afford the programs and services of the welfare state. Our analysis demonstrated that the cost of social programs has not led to the rise of Canada's debt; rather the slow down of the economy, job losses and the reduction of corporate taxes are to blame.

We continued our analysis with a brief exploration of the restrictions that free trade agreements impose on governments. We established that trading agreements such as the FTA and NAFTA implement measures that range from prohibiting governments from favouring national corporations over foreign corporations to impeding the state's ability to improve public programs, and environmental and employment standards. Furthermore, our analysis demonstrated that economic globalization has caused the deregulation of labour standards which has in turn weakened the bargaining power of workers and eliminated many of the advancements that women have made in the labour market.

Furthermore, we found that the implementation of free trade in Canada resulted in massive layoffs in the goods-producing sector. Many of the lost jobs resulted from mergers, takeovers and plant relocations to low-wage parts of the United States and Mexico. Research has also indicated that plant closures in manufacturing industries where women are concentrated have resulted in a loss of employment for women, particularly for immigrant women, since they constitute a significant proportion of the women working in product manufacturing. Although we only briefly examined the effects of technology on employment, we were able to conclude that advances in technology have facilitated the replacement of workers by machines and have consequently increased employment insecurity for men and women.

The Structural Exclusion Index and the Adult Wage Polarization Index were examined in order to establish a more exact picture of the Canadian labour market. The Structural Exclusion Index measured the labour market exclusion and demonstrated that the official rate of unemployment used by Statistics Canada does not adequately represent the level of unemployment in Canada. Furthermore, it indicated the existence of gender inequalities in the labour market. The Adult Wage Polarization Index demonstrated the inequalities that exist between stable and flexible forms of work and showed the presence of an increasing trend towards non-standard employment.

Our last section explored how labour market restructuring trends that are part of globalization have disadvantaged women. Our examination revealed that women's segregation into low-wage employment sectors and their concentration in non-standard forms of employment are the main factors explaining the significant difference between women and men's wages. Our discussion then led us to examine how globalization affects women's jobs. We looked at the impacts of downsizing on women in the service sector and found that the decrease of full-year, full-time work in addition to the increase of part-time, short-term and contract work have led to the deterioration of women's work conditions and to an increase of employment and economic insecurity for women.

Finally, our analysis demonstrated that discriminatory state policies and discrimination in the labour market increase immigrant and visible minority women's vulnerability to globalization. Furthermore, we indicated that immigrant and visible minority women's segregation into certain manufacturing industries, which have been hit hard by globalization, has left many women of colour jobless. Indeed, in addition to demonstrating that unemployment rates for minority women are higher than those for other

women, we found that Aboriginal, immigrant and visible minority women's incomes are lower than those of other women.

The following chapter will examine the impacts of globalization on social citizenship rights and will provide a gendered analysis of both the Employment Insurance Act and the Canada Health and Social Transfer (CHST). We will attempt to demonstrate that different social citizenship rights exist in Canada for women and men, and how the erosion of social rights has particularly affected women.

Chapter III: Citizenship, Women and the Welfare State

The concept of citizenship has been very important for the study of the welfare state. Research on citizenship and the welfare state has asserted that social citizenship rights represent the core of welfare states (Esping-Andersen, 1990). However, mainstream citizenship scholarship has concentrated its analyses on the class-citizenship nexus and has ignored gender and race (O'Connor, 1998). Feminist critiques of citizenship literature maintain that the assumption of a universal citizen by mainstream scholarship is problematic when one includes gender into the analysis. Indeed, gendered analyses have demonstrated the existence of differential social citizenship rights for women and men (O'Connor, 1996, 1998; Sainsbury, 1996). Therefore, a gender-sensitive analysis of social citizenship rights is crucial if we are to fully understand the impacts that globalization and the current welfare state restructuring trends will have on women's lives.

In order to examine the gendered dimensions of the welfare state, this chapter will explore how women have been incorporated into the Canadian welfare state. We will begin this chapter by reviewing T. H. Marshall's influential work in the area of citizenship analysis. We will then proceed to briefly outline Gøsta Esping-Andersen's welfare state regime typology and situate the Canadian welfare state within it. Moreover, we will discuss certain of the limitations of his theory when it is examined through a gender relations perspective. Before we turn our attention to women and their social citizenship rights in regards to income security schemes, we will briefly discuss the general effects of globalization on social citizenship rights. By examining the gendered dimensions of the Employment Insurance Act (formerly the Unemployment Insurance Act) and the Canada Health and Social Transfer (formerly the Canada Assistance Plan), we will firstly attempt

to demonstrate the systemic discrimination that women have been subjected to and secondly, reveal how globalization and the restructuring of the welfare state have disadvantaged women in particular.

1) Citizenship, Social Class and Gender

Much of the literature on citizenship is based on the work of T. H. Marshall, a British sociologist whose analysis made a significant contribution to the understanding of citizenship and gave rise to much of the literature which considers citizenship a central element in the analysis of the welfare state. In his essay on *Citizenship and Social Class* (1963), Marshall maintained that citizenship consisted of civil, political and social rights that coincided with different phases in the history of capitalism. He asserted that the achievement of citizenship rights was a process geared towards the modification of social inequalities by providing social benefits in capitalist societies.

Basing his analysis on British history, Marshall indicates that civil citizenship dates from the 18th century and is linked to the rights necessary for liberty of the person, property ownership and the right to justice. Political citizenship dates from the 19th century and is linked to the right to vote and to organise collectively. Social citizenship dates from the 20th century and is linked to economic welfare, security, and education. It is important to note that even though Marshall acknowledges the fact that these stages of citizenship do not apply to women and that women obtained civil and political rights later than men, he does not discuss the relationship between citizenship and gender.

Marshall is especially concerned with citizenship's impact on social inequality. He states that one of the most important aspects relating to his concept of citizenship is the

assumption of equality. In fact, he writes “Citizenship is a status bestowed on those who are full members of a community. All who possess the status are equal with respect to the rights and duties with which the status is endowed” (1963: 87). However, Marshall states that social class is a system of inequality and that it is “therefore reasonable to expect that the impact of citizenship on social class should take the form of a conflict between opposing principles” (Marshall, 1963: 87). Even though Marshall maintained that inequality is essential, he also believed that it could become excessive. Therefore, Marshall considered the aim of social rights to be class-abatement, that is the reduction of class inequalities, and he believed that class-abatement had become “no longer merely an attempt to abate the obvious nuisance of destitution in the lowest ranks of society. It has assumed the guise of action modifying the whole pattern of social inequality” (1963: 100). Indeed, Marshall asserts that what is important is “that there is a general enrichment of the concrete substance of civilized life, a general reduction of risk and insecurity, an equalization between the more and the less fortunate at all levels [...]” (1963: 107).

Following Marshall, Esping-Andersen states “social citizenship constitutes the core idea of a welfare state” (1990: 21). In his influential book *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (1990), Esping-Andersen categorises welfare state regimes according to variations in social rights of citizenship and the principles of welfare state stratification. The importance of de-commodification and stratification in regards to the organization of welfare state regimes are illustrated by Esping-Andersen when he writes:

If social rights are given the legal and practical status of property rights, if they are inviolable, and if they are granted on the basis of citizenship rather than performance, they will entail a de-commodification of the status of individuals *vis-à-vis* the market. But the concept of social citizenship also involves social stratification: one’s status as a citizen will compete with, or even replace, one’s class position. (1990: 21)

Therefore, de-commodification which “occurs when a service is rendered as a matter of right, and when a person can maintain a livelihood without reliance on the market” (1990: 21-22) can be linked to the quality of social rights in a welfare state regime.

Esping-Andersen claims that the welfare state is not only an apparatus that corrects the social inequalities in our societies, but that it is in itself a system of stratification. Accordingly, he writes, “Welfare states are key institutions in the structuring of class and the social order. The organizational features of the welfare state help determine the articulation of social solidarity, divisions of class, and status differentiation” (Esping-Andersen, 1990: 55). Hence, different welfare state regimes promote different kinds of stratification systems. Esping-Andersen differentiates three main regime-types each defined by its distinctive arrangement of the family, the market, and the state. The three different types of welfare states that he distinguishes are the social democratic regime which is found in Sweden and Norway, the conservative-corporatist regime found in Italy, France and Germany and the liberal regime found in Canada, the United States, Australia and to a lesser extent the United Kingdom. However, Esping-Andersen indicates that none of the welfare state regimes are pure types and that in fact, each welfare state regime includes elements of the other regimes.

According to Esping-Andersen (1990), the social democratic regime can be distinguished by the integration of economic and welfare policies that encourage full employment, an important role for the government, and by universal social rights that promote solidarity and minimise stratification. Indeed, according to Esping-Andersen, “Rather than tolerate a dualism between state and market, between working class and middle class, the social democrats pursued a welfare state that would promote an equality

of the highest standards, not an equality of minimal needs as was pursued elsewhere” (1990: 27). Hence, benefits would enable people to enjoy the comforts of the middle classes and ensure workers equality in terms of quality of rights.

The conservative or corporatist welfare state is distinguished by its linkage of rights according to class and status through a diversity of social insurance plans. Moreover, because the church shaped the conservative welfare states, there is a strong emphasis on the conservation of the traditional family. Esping-Andersen writes:

Social insurance typically excludes non-working wives, and family benefits encourage motherhood. Day care, and similar family services, are conspicuously underdeveloped; the principle of ‘subsidiarity’ serves to emphasize that the state will only interfere when the family’s capacity to service its members is exhausted. (1990: 27)

In this regime, stratification is characterized by class and status inequalities that are reproduced by having distinct programs for specific occupational groups and by ensuring that benefits mirror earnings.

In the liberal welfare state regime, the market is the dominant factor. There is an important emphasis placed on income and means testing for access to social benefits, which are consequently allocated to those receiving low incomes. Also, insurance plans and universal transfers are modest. Furthermore, Esping-Andersen writes:

In this model, the progress of social reform has been severely circumscribed by traditional, liberal work-ethic norms: it is one where the limits of welfare equal the marginal propensity to opt for welfare instead of work. Entitlement rules are therefore strict and often associated with stigma; benefits are typically modest. (1990: 26)

Indeed, the liberal welfare state regime is characterized by low benefits that encourage labour-market participation. In this regime, stratification can be identified by a number of dualisms that maintain the division between the social classes.

Although Esping-Andersen's typology has had a considerable influence in welfare state literature, there are shortcomings to his theory when it is examined through a gender perspective. Feminist scholarship (O'Connor, 1996; Orloff, 1996; Sainsbury, 1994, 1996, 1999) has criticized his theory for largely ignoring the gendered dimensions of welfare states. One of the criticisms of Esping-Andersen's theory is that, although it is based on the relationship between the state, the market, and the family, in practice his typology of welfare states is largely based on an analysis of the relationship between the state and the market. Feminist literature has argued that the family aspect of welfare state analysis needs to be given more importance and should in fact be considered central to welfare policy studies (O'Connor, 1996; Orloff, 1996; Sainsbury 1994, 1996, 1999). Before we explore Esping-Andersen's more recent work, we will briefly examine the concept of de-commodification and its discriminatory properties.

As was previously indicated, de-commodification "occurs when a service is rendered as a matter of right, and when a person can maintain a livelihood without reliance on the market" (Esping-Andersen, 1990: 21-22). Although this definition of de-commodification does not make any distinction between men and women, it is important to note "not all demographic groups are equally commodified and that this may be a source of inequality" (O'Connor, 1996: 61). The concept of de-commodification is gendered because it does not affect women and men in the same way. Women's access to the labour market, their unpaid reproductive roles as wives and mothers and their financial dependence on men, all contribute to the gendered nature of the concept of de-commodification (Daly, 1994; O'Connor, 1996; Sainsbury, 1996). In fact, Daly writes:

To the extent that welfare state programmes are constructed only around male life-cycle patterns, de-commodification is an adequate indicator of one

of their component characteristics. However, welfare states also relate to other spheres apart from the market, to other units apart from the individual and to other individuals apart from men. In effect, significant welfare programme inputs are directed to people outside the market, most of whom are women, and to families or households as collectivities and, via that, to adult and child 'dependants'. (1994: 108)

In his analysis of the concept of de-commodification, Esping-Andersen does not take into consideration women's unpaid work in the household and does not consider how social benefits that are allocated to the family instead of the individual affect women in particular. Because it is the head of the household (the male figure) that generally receives benefits that are allocated to families, women are disadvantaged (Sainsbury, 1996).

In a later publication entitled *Welfare States in Transition: National Adaptations in Global Economies* (1996), Esping-Andersen considers the complex relations between women's employment, fertility and care-giving responsibilities and how they can all be reconciled. He states:

Hence, the most pressing issue for these welfare states is how to encourage, at once, a major expansion in the supply and demand for employment. Lower labour costs is one solution, but it does not address women's trade-off between work and family. Without an adequate supply of family care services, women's entry into the labour market may still rise (as it does), but at the long-term cost of extremely low fertility. (1996: 83)

Thus, Esping-Andersen is concerned with low fertility rates and the effects they will have on the future of welfare states because it is working individuals who finance the welfare state. His focus is on "[...] how to ensure higher fertility, family well-being, and adequate human capital resources within future generations" (Esping-Andersen, 1996: 261). However, although Esping-Andersen does discuss women's employment, care-giving responsibilities and fertility, he does not include a *gender relations* analysis. Indeed, O'Connor, Orloff and Shaver state that:

He focuses on women workers rather than on gender relations, and is interested in relations among states, markets and families because of the implications of care-giving responsibilities for women's capacities to bear children and to enter paid employment, both significant for states' fiscal concerns, but not because of women's aspirations for equality. (1999: 20)

Hence, Esping-Andersen's analysis remains incomplete and important concepts in his study of welfare states are biased since for the most part he does not include gender in his analysis.

However, more recently, in his book *Social Foundations of Postindustrial Economies* (1999), Esping-Andersen attempts to address the criticisms that many feminists have made regarding the significance of the concept of de-commodification for women.

He writes:

Inherently, the concept presupposes that individuals – or their welfare acquisitions – are already commodified. [...] It may adequately describe the relationship between welfare states and the standard, full-career male worker, but it is not easily applicable to women considering that their economic role is often non-commodified or at least only partially commodified. [...] The concept of de-commodification is inoperable for women unless welfare states, to begin with, help them become commodified. (Esping-Andersen, 1999: 44)

Nevertheless, Esping-Andersen argues that increasingly the concept of de-commodification does have relevance for women since their participation in the labour force has increased considerably and, thus, so has their de-commodification. However, he indicates that de-commodification for women who perform unpaid labour in the home necessitates de-familialization, a term that he uses to refer to “policies that lessen individuals' reliance on the family; that maximize individuals' command of economic resources independently of familial or conjugal reciprocities” (1999: 45). Esping-Andersen explains that because women's care-taking responsibilities often prevent them

from gaining economic independence through paid employment, women's de-familialization depends on the welfare state and its social policies. Furthermore, he writes:

A de-familializing regime is one which seeks to unburden the household and diminish individuals' welfare dependence on kinship. The concept of de-familialization parallels the concept of de-commodification; in fact, for women de-familialization is generally a precondition for their capacity to 'commodify themselves'. Hence, de-familialization would indicate the degree to which social policy (or perhaps markets) render women autonomous to become 'commodified', or to set up independent households, in the first place. (1999: 51)

Thus, Esping-Andersen does acknowledge that the concept of de-commodification cannot be applied to all women and that women's de-commodification is limited due to their care-taking responsibilities. Furthermore, he recognizes the important role of adequate welfare state provisions for women's full access to paid employment. However, as was previously the case, his concerns still seem to be focused on the significance of women's employment rates and low fertility for the future survival of welfare states.

Gender-blind research on the welfare state has generally concentrated its analyses on the class-citizenship dimension and has had a tendency to overlook gender as an important aspect. Gendered analyses have shown that gender differences exist in the exercise of political and social citizenship rights and that gender inequalities are especially apparent in liberal welfare state regimes such as the one in Canada. In fact, O'Connor indicates:

[...] gender differences in social citizenship rights can be identified in all OECD countries, though the extent of the difference varies considerably. A tiered system of access to social rights has been identified in several countries and is particularly marked in liberal welfare state regimes. (1998: 212)

According to Scott, differentiated social citizenship rights exist in the Canadian welfare state. She argues that women and men's differential access to welfare state programs illustrates the existence of distinct citizenship rights. Moreover, Scott writes:

Liberal welfare regimes also erect a stratification order between women and men – in the market, the family and within the state itself – that cuts across welfare regime types. Because governments attached greater importance to developing insurance schemes that work via the labour market, the majority of women working in the home were at a significant disadvantage. (1996: 11)

Thus, income security schemes that are designed according to the male breadwinner family model value paid work over unpaid work and therefore, have consequently had negative effects on women's claims on the welfare state. Although there have been many changes to social policies and their rules since the establishment of the welfare state in Canada, entitlement rules continue to be designed in a fashion that maintain differential social citizenship rights and hence continue to discriminate against women.

Moreover, neo-liberalism and the economic restructuring that is part of globalization have further accentuated the gender inequalities that exist in welfare state programs and benefits. In the next section, we will briefly examine the general effects that globalization is having on social citizenship rights in Canada.

2) Impacts of Globalization on Social Citizenship Rights

Although social reforms did exist before the Second World War, it wasn't until the postwar period that an expansion of social security programs took place. One of the main reasons for the establishment of the Keynesian welfare state was to protect citizens from the financial ruin of unemployment and universal risks such as old age, disability and sickness. However, as this chapter will demonstrate, neo-liberal governing practices and

globalization have led to the dismantling of the Canadian welfare state programs and consequently to the erosion of social citizenship rights in Canada.

Literature on citizenship and the welfare state has indicated that the main purpose of social citizenship rights was to reduce social inequalities (Marshall, 1963). In Canada, the post-World War II ideal of citizenship rights entailed more than only civil and political rights, it meant that people had rights to social welfare – health care, education, unemployment insurance and old age pensions – because they were Canadian citizens. (Brodie, 1996; Teeple 1995). Furthermore, according to Brodie:

The postwar notion of social citizenship conveyed the idea that poverty was not always an individual's fault and that all citizens had the right to a basic standard of living. The general consensus underlying the creation and maintenance of the welfare state was that Canadians should not have to repeat the harsh lessons in public administration dealt out by the Great Depression of the 1930s. The postwar consensus held that the public could enforce limits on the market, that people were not forced to engage in market activities that denied their safety or dignity, and that the national community was responsible for the basic well-being of its individual members. (1996: 130)

The growth of the post-World War II welfare state reached its peak at the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s. Scholarship has maintained that the Keynesian welfare state developed as a response to class conflict and as “a ‘middle-way’ between laissez-faire capitalism on the one hand and state socialism on the other” (Mishra, 1999: 2). However, as the interest in socialism by the working-class became less of a concern to the ruling classes, the threat of socialist movements diminished and neoliberal ideology resurfaced in the West (Mishra, 1999; Teeple, 1995). Governments began to return to the ideals of classical capitalism: “a free market economy and the drive towards deregulation and privatization” (Mishra, 1999: 3). Hence, since the 1980s, neoliberalism and the move away from the principle of universality, which at one time characterized the Canadian

welfare state, has been eroding social citizenship entitlements (Mishra, 1999). Indeed, Mishra asserts “globalization and strong neoliberal tendencies in policy-making have come together to erode social citizenship and to weaken, if not repudiate, the earlier commitment to a social minimum as of right” (1999: 51).

According to Rice and Prince (2000), globalization alters the relationship between a citizen and the state. Rice and Prince maintain that when power shifts from the governments to corporations, citizens become customers.

But, while citizens have rights and duties conferred by the state – and benefits that accrue from these rights – customers have only choices that are defined by their purchasing power. This change from citizen to customer has the potential of undermining the social fabric of the community. It undermines and encourages public institutions to abandon their social obligations. (Rice and Prince, 2000: 24)

One of the ways which globalization transforms the relationship between a citizen and the state is through free trade agreements. As the previous chapter indicated, free trade agreements impose constraints on governments and limit their ability to implement better social standards and services. Furthermore, they seek to privatize public services and market them as commodities to be purchased. Thus, rather than benefiting citizens, free trade serves the needs of multinational corporations which push governments to abandon social citizenship rights and turn citizens into customers.

The changing relationship between citizens and the state is of great importance to women since neoliberalism attempts to redefine citizenship in a way that denies the significance of gender for women’s citizenship rights (Brodie, 1996). Thus, globalization and neoliberal state ideologies challenge and weaken women’s social citizenship rights. Indeed, Pettman writes:

[...] there is a global trend towards a redefinition of political economy, away from a nation-state base. This trend is characterised by a renegotiation of relations between state and society, as, often, the latter becomes more economy than society; a shift in language from social rights to competition, productivity, and efficiency; and a shift from public to private and from social to family or individual responsibility. These changes dramatically reduce the political space for citizenship or social rights, including rights for women. And they are profoundly gendered in their consequences. (1999: 211)

As the next section will demonstrate, the changes that are occurring to our social citizenship rights are especially important for Canadian women since they are those who have been particularly affected by the restructuring of our welfare state programs.

3) Citizenship, Income Security and Gender

In order to demonstrate the differences in social citizenship rights between women and men in Canada and hence their differential access to the welfare state, we will examine the gender inequalities in both the Employment Insurance Act (formerly the Unemployment Insurance Act) and the Canada Health and Social Transfer (formerly the Canada Assistance Plan). Furthermore, we will show how neoliberalism and globalization have affected both of these income security programs and we will demonstrate what the effects of the recent changes have been on our social citizenship rights.

a) Employment Insurance

The Unemployment Insurance Act was passed in 1940 and was implemented in 1941. The federal government administered this program and financed it by collecting an equal amount from covered employees and their employers. Also, “the federal government contributed, out of its tax revenues, 20 per cent of the total contributions collected”

(McGilly, 1998: 62). Benefits were calculated so that single claimants received about half of their wage rate whereas married claimants received half of their wage rate plus an additional 15 per cent (Guest, 1997). One of the many problems with this program was that it insured less than half of the labour force. According to Guest:

[...] those covered were mainly urban wage earners. Excluded from coverage were important segments of the labour force, including workers in agriculture, forestry, fishing, private domestic service, stevedoring, government, and police forces; nurses and teachers; workers in hospitals and charitable institutions; and most classes of workers earning \$2000.00 a year or more. (1997: 107)

It is important to note that many of the jobs that were excluded from coverage are those that were typically held by women. In her article “Women and Income Security in the Postwar Period: The Case of Unemployment Insurance, 1945-1962”, Ann Porter indicates that the Unemployment Insurance Act of 1940 disadvantaged women. She writes:

[T]he 1940 Act reproduced sexually-unequal wage hierarchies; women’s employment patterns and childcare responsibilities meant they were disadvantaged both in their ability to qualify and in the length of time they were able to draw benefits; women were virtually excluded from the higher levels of the administrative structure; and the prevailing ideology of the “family wage,” which assumed that the male was the head of the household and that married women would be supported by their husbands, led to the inclusion of dependants’ allowances in the UI benefit structure. (Porter, 1993: 113)

It is important to note that dependants’ allowances were payable to the male UI claimant. Moreover, in the years following the Second World War, the federal government discriminated against married women by ensuring that different measures were implemented in order to discourage them from working. Included in these measures were “the closing of daycares, the renewal of civil service regulations barring married women from federal government work, and income tax changes which provided a disincentive to married women to work for pay” (Porter, 1993: 114). Furthermore, women’s entitlement

to UI was often conditional: “[...] women – unlike men – were disqualified for a period of time from receiving UI unless they accepted work in low-wage sectors, often at a fraction of the pay they had received during the war” (Porter, 1993: 144). Hence, policies surrounding the UI scheme ensured that women did not receive the same benefits that men obtained.

On 15 November 1950, the government introduced a new regulation that required married women meet additional conditions in order to be eligible for unemployment insurance. According to Porter, “During the first two and a half months that it was in operation, 10,808 women were disqualified. The regulation remained in effect for seven years, during which time between 12,000 and 14,000 women annually were disqualified at a saving to the UI Fund estimated by the UI Commission at \$2,500,000 per year” (1993: 118). The effects of this regulation were devastating for women. Until November 15, 1957 (when the regulation was revoked), a married woman would not be entitled to receive unemployment insurance benefits for two years after her marriage unless she could prove her attachment to the labour force (Porter, 1993; Rose, 1995). Porter writes:

[S]pecifically, beyond the general requirements of being unemployed, capable of and available for work, and unable to find employment, a married woman had to work for at least 90 days (a) after her marriage if she was not employed at the date of her marriage, or (b) after her first separation from work after her marriage if she was working at the time of her marriage. She was exempt from the regulation, however, if her separation from work was due to a shortage of work or an employer’s rule against retaining married women, if her husband had died, become incapacitated, had deserted her, or if she had become permanently separated from him. (1993: 118)

Porter (1993) maintains that the regulations surrounding the unemployment insurance plan increased a married woman’s dependence on her husband and reinforced the ideology that

a woman belonged in the domestic sphere where she could best take care of her husband's and children's needs.

The UI scheme had many inadequacies that became indisputable during the recessions of the 1950s. The most noteworthy are the difficulties in qualifying for assistance, especially for women, and the fact that the benefits did not provide a decent income to live on. However, during the 1960s, improvements were made to the Unemployment Insurance program by increasing benefit levels and expanding coverage to include two-thirds of workers (Clark, 1998). Among those newly included were barbers, hairdressers (who were strictly employees and not business owners) and employees who worked in agriculture and horticulture (HRDC, 2001). Expanding UI coverage to include hairdressers, a job typically held by women, helped increase the percentage of women that were covered and signified an improvement for women. In 1971, the Unemployment Insurance Act introduced revisions that further eased the eligibility requirements needed in order to qualify for benefits. These revisions led to the expansion of the coverage to include 96 percent of workers (Guest, 1997; Rose, 1995). Furthermore, income interruption that was based on pregnancy, temporary sickness or disability was also covered. Moreover, the duration and amount of benefits received were increased. However, Rose indicates, "until 1975 women usually received lower benefits than men because it was assumed that they did not have dependents" (1995: 334).

During the 1970s, amendments that imposed new restrictions on entitlements were introduced to the 1971 UI Act. Pulkingham indicates that the amendments:

- (i) [I]ncreased the maximum disqualification period for "voluntary" leavers from 3 to 6 weeks (introduced in 1976);
- (ii) disentitled persons aged over 65 years (1976);
- (iii) eliminated special benefit rates (of 75%) for persons with dependents and low income or prolonged periods of unemployment,

producing one benefit rate (67%) for all claimants (1976); (iv) raised the minimum number of weeks of insurable employment in order to qualify for benefits from 8, to 10 – 14 weeks, depending on regional unemployment rates (1978); (v) lowered the benefit rate from 67% to 60%, reducing the after-tax earnings replacement rate to the pre-1971 level (1977-79); (vi) introduced a repayment scheme for high income earners (1977-79) and; (vii) excluded from coverage, or raised the qualifying requirements for, workers deemed to have a marginal attachment to the labour force (1977-79). (Pulkingham, 1998: 18)

According to Pulkingham (1998), new entrants, re-entrants, individuals working fewer than 20 hours a week and those that were frequent UI users were characterized as “marginal” workers. It is important to note that those who worked less than 20 hours a week were entirely disqualified from receiving UI and new entrants, re-entrants and frequent UI users needed to work for longer periods before being eligible for UI. Although these changes to the UI scheme didn’t specifically target women, it is clear that they would be more affected by the disqualification of workers who worked fewer than 20 hours a week since women form the majority of part-time workers. Moreover, the additional weeks of employment needed by re-entrants has a particularly detrimental impact on women because they often need to leave their employment for childbearing or caregiving responsibilities.

The 1980s saw very little in terms of changes to the UI. However, during the 1990s, the Unemployment Insurance system underwent many drastic changes. In order to better understand the significance of these changes, we will begin by examining the federal government’s reasons for the transformation of the UI system. Neoliberalism and proponents of economic globalization have instilled the notion that if Canada is to produce the necessary conditions which corporations require to thrive and thus, compete effectively on a global scale, the federal government must reduce Canada’s debt, the cost of the

welfare state, and corporations' taxes (Griffin Cohen, 1997b; Lum and Williams, 2000). Hence, during the 1990s the Canadian government began to significantly restructure and downsize the welfare state's social programs in order to accommodate the needs of corporations.

Restructuring the Unemployment Insurance system was of great importance to the corporate sector because 'generous' unemployment insurance entitlements worked against the needs of the business sector, since recipients would not be entirely dependent on work for a living and thus, would be less likely to accept unattractive jobs. Indeed, according to Stanford, "Full employment, [...] is ultimately bad for business. But unemployment alone does not sufficiently discipline labour if social programs provide unemployed workers with some degree of economic security [...]" (1995: 125). Therefore, in order to provide businesses with a greater pool of workers who are more willing to work for cheaper wages and fewer benefits, the government needed to implement certain changes to the Unemployment Insurance program.

Hence, between 1990 and 1995, the UI system was radically transformed. Among the changes implemented, we find that the qualifying period required for access to benefits has been lengthened, and that both the duration of coverage and the rate of benefits are reduced (Evans, 1997; CCPA, 1997; McGilly, 1998). Furthermore, individuals who left their employment voluntarily were no longer eligible for unemployment insurance benefits. Also important for our gender analysis, is that the changes implemented have especially discriminated against women since they are often those who leave their jobs voluntarily because of sexual harassment in the work place, unsafe working conditions or childcare responsibilities (Baines, 1996; Evans, 1997).

In 1996, Unemployment Insurance was renamed Employment Insurance and more changes were implemented to the program. The changes include a reduction in coverage and in benefit rates, an increase in the number of hours worked required for eligibility, as well as an increase in the number of weeks required for new entrants and re-entrants (an individual who is unemployed for more than 12 months). These changes to the UI system have especially affected women who represent the majority of service sector and part-time workers who are often without employment (Baines, 1996; CCPA, 1997; Evans, 1997).

The rules that govern the unemployment insurance plan are designed in a manner that clearly demonstrates the gendered dimensions of the welfare state. Because UI policies do not take into consideration women's traditional responsibilities, such as childcare or family obligations, many women are excluded from obtaining unemployment insurance benefits. Although the entrant and re-entrant rules affect both women and men negatively, they hurt women more than they do men. Indeed, individuals who are unemployed for longer than 12 months will have their employment histories deleted and must start over as a new entrant into the labour force (Canadian Labour Congress, 2000). Because the entrant and re-entrant rules do not take into consideration the reasons for the leave of absence, workers who take a leave from work for childcare or other family obligations are penalized. Considering that women take more time off work and more often quit their jobs than men do for caregiving responsibilities, it is not surprising that many more women than men do not qualify for unemployment insurance and hence encounter systemic barriers to their well-being. In fact, in 1997, 39% of unemployed men received EI compared to 31% of unemployed women (CLC, 1999).

It is also important to take into consideration the fact that women's salaries are in general inferior to men's. In 1999, women working full-time earned the equivalent of 72.5% of men's wages (Hadley, 2001). Therefore, "when women are eligible for UI, the earnings-related basis of benefits ensures that their disadvantaged position in the labour market is replicated in their UI benefits" (Evans, 1997: 103). Furthermore, although these new policies are unfair towards women, they have been especially discriminatory for women under the age of 24, ethnic and Aboriginal women, and women with disabilities.

Moreover, although maternity benefits were provided under UI since 1971 and are still granted under EI, not all women are eligible to receive them. New EI rules that have increased the number of hours needed to qualify are making it increasingly difficult for many women to access maternity benefits. Women who apply for maternity benefits will now need to have accumulated 700 hours of work instead of the 300 hours previously required (Pulkingham, 1998; Skipton, 1997; CLC, 2000). According to the Canadian Labour Congress (2000) the increase in the number of hours required has resulted in approximately 10,000 fewer women being eligible to receive maternity benefits. Thus, women who hold seasonal or part-time jobs are often not able to accumulate the number of hours necessary and hence do not qualify for maternity benefits. In fact, although approximately 80% of women aged between 25 and 44 are employed, only 49% of women who gave birth in 1998 were eligible for EI maternity benefits (CLC, 2000). Furthermore, because maternity benefits are based on a percentage of women's earnings, they reflect women's lower wages. Nevertheless, maternity benefits do make an attempt to recognize working women's childbearing responsibilities.

Thus, traditional gender divisions in the family, women's disadvantaged position in the labour market, and state restructuring largely account for women's differential access to the welfare state. Also, the incorporation of women and men into the welfare state on different terms has affected women's claims on social entitlements. Because of their attachment to the labour force, men have been incorporated into the welfare state in terms of citizen-workers, whereas women have been incorporated as wives and mothers (Baines, 1996; Evans, 1997). At the same time, according to Evans:

The 'citizen-worker' model of social insurance provides a formally equivalent entitlement to men and women, but benefits are cast with a male worker in mind. A woman's entitlement *may* equal a man's, but only if her behaviour with respect to paid work and family is like a man's, and if she is also able to escape the general effects of wage discrimination and occupational segregation. (Evans, 1997: 98)

Therefore, women's concentration in part-time and service sector jobs, their lower wages and their childbearing and caregiving responsibilities have a negative impact on their employment insurance entitlements.

Although women's access to the Unemployment Insurance program has improved since its implementation in 1941, there remains much improvement to be made. Employment insurance policies are still in large part designed according to the male breadwinner family ideal where women are perceived as their husband's dependants. Consequently, the rules that govern the (un)employment insurance scheme are established in a manner that demonstrates the gendered social citizenship rights of the Canadian welfare state. Moreover, it is important to note that neoliberalism and globalization have come together to erode much of the (un)employment insurance system and have consequently further disadvantaged women.

b) Canada Health and Social Transfer

Another important program that demonstrates the differences in social citizenship rights between women and men in Canada and hence the differential access they have to the welfare state is the Canada Assistance Plan. CAP was introduced in 1966 as a cost-sharing program between the federal and provincial governments in which the federal government financed 50% of the costs. It is noteworthy that much of the federal support for needs-tested programs has been funded under the Canada Assistance Plan. Under this plan the provinces were responsible for administering the services. According to Chappell:

Under the CAP, the provinces were allowed to design and administer social assistance and personal social services, determine their own eligibility rules, set benefit levels, and legislate the development and maintenance of these programs. [...] Social assistance recipients received financial assistance to meet basic living needs including food, clothing, shelter, utilities, and personal needs; assistance might also be available for transportation, day care, and non-insured health needs such as dental or eye care. (1997: 45-46)

It is noteworthy that entitlement to social assistance was to be solely determined on individual's needs. Moreover, Armstrong indicates that two of the main objectives of this program were "the prevention and removal of the causes of poverty and dependence on public assistance and the provision of adequate assistance to persons in need" (1997: 60). Although there was a belief that those who needed financial support had a right to it without chastisement, this was certainly not the experience of many women.

Indeed, because various income support programs were based on the traditional male breadwinner / dependent wife archetype of the family, it was presumed that women were financially dependent on men and that those women who lived outside of accepted norms were undeserving (Evans, 1995; Scott, 1996). Hence, single mothers who applied for social assistance were refused if they lived with a man. According to Scott, "The 'man

about the house' rule, repealed only in 1987, was the most explicit example of the hegemonic power of the male breadwinner ideology; this rule also directly facilitated the state's active regulation of the 'deserving' mothers who benefited from public largesse" (1996: 18). It is noteworthy that the introduction of a new rule in 1987 allowed a person receiving social assistance to live with a partner for three years before being considered as a common-law couple, and hence having both of their incomes taken into consideration in order to determine eligibility and calculate benefits (Evans, 1997; Scott, 1996). However, in 1995, Harris' Progressive Conservative Party took power in Ontario and, as part of their restructuring of the social assistance program, they reinstated the "man about the house" rule. Therefore, in Ontario a woman living with a man, regardless of whether or not he is financially contributing to the household, is once again excluded from receiving social assistance as a single mother (Evans, 1997; Scott, 1996).

In 1990, in an attempt to reduce Canada's debt, the federal government undertook a massive round of budget cuts and limited annual increases in CAP transfers to 5% for British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario. This 5% limit cost Canada's richest provinces billions in lost federal transfers and "signalled the federal government's intent to radically reform funding arrangements for Canada's poor" (Scott, 1998: 8). In 1996, in order to hasten the move towards a minimalist state and to become more competitive in a global economy, the federal government replaced the Canada Assistance Plan by the Canada Health and Social Transfer (CHST). The CHST is a block fund (single block transfer) that consists of the federal government's financial support for the provinces' social assistance and social services, health care and post-secondary education (Evans, 1997; McGilly,

1998; Scott, 1998). Under the CHST, federal transfers were reduced considerably and they no longer depend on the provinces' actual welfare expenditures. According to Evans:

The shift from a cost-shared to a block-funding approach has potentially very serious consequences for income-tested social programs. It decreases the visibility of the federal government in social assistance spending, and it increases provincial flexibility in spending because the provinces are no longer required to spend on social assistance in order to receive matching federal funds. (1997: 106)

Therefore, without matching federal funds, the provincial governments are left without a financial incentive to provide poor individuals and families with much needed welfare benefits. Moreover, because the federal government has provided the provinces and territories with more autonomy, there is no way to ensure that they will place the same importance on the provision of social programs. Even if the provinces and territories want to maintain the social programs, there is no guarantee that they can afford to. Hence, social services and benefits could vary across Canada. Furthermore, Jennissen indicates:

[...] the CHST imposes stronger conditions on the provinces and territories for health than it does for postsecondary education or social welfare. While the provinces must adhere to the principles outlined in the Canada Health Act, there are no conditions for postsecondary education, and only one condition for welfare. (1997: 226)

The only remaining condition for welfare is the prohibition of provinces imposing a residence period as a condition of eligibility for assistance. The CHST eliminated the previous CAP requirement by which entitlement to social assistance was to be based on need alone. It also abolished individuals' access to an appeal system where decisions denying social assistance could be contested and it eliminated a prohibition that had forbidden provinces from obliging social assistance recipients to work in order to receive benefits (Baines, 1996; Evans, 1997; White, 1997). Workfare has very serious implications for all those receiving social assistance. In fact, individuals might have no

choice but to accept low-paying and even dangerous jobs if they are to continue receiving assistance.

The conditional entitlements that now characterize our social assistance program have eroded our social citizenship rights and have greatly weakened Canadians' social safety net. The consequences have been especially harsh for women since they form the majority of individuals who depend on social assistance (Evans, 1997; Jennissen, 1997; Scott, 1998). According to Jennissen:

Social assistance has been an important financial support for Canadian women. Because of women's more tenuous relationship with the labour market, their roles as child bearers, nurturers and caregivers, and because older, single women are often impoverished, it is no surprise that women are more likely than men to use social programs and services. (1997: 222)

Moreover, the cuts will be particularly detrimental to single mothers since many of them are poor and need to rely on social assistance for financial help. Indeed, the high incidence of poverty among single mothers can be attributed to the combination of often having sole responsibility of their children, the lack of subsidized daycare facilities and good job opportunities. According to Evans (1996), the conditional entitlements and new rules that determine a single mother's eligibility to social assistance demonstrate that society's expectations of women are changing and also indicate the relationship between women and the welfare state. Baines argues "single mothers have seen their claims adopt distinctly charitable relations in which benefit is assumed to be unidirectional from giver to receiver and entitlement is based on benevolence, not rights" (1996: 199).

The social assistance program has undergone many important changes that have significantly eroded our social citizenship claims on the welfare state. The significant changes in the conditions of eligibility indicate our government's intent to drastically alter

our citizenship rights. Indeed, cuts to social assistance will hurt the most vulnerable people and only increase the occurrence of poverty for single mothers, children and people with disabilities since they must often depend on social welfare for their well-being.

4) Conclusion

This chapter set out to examine the impacts of globalization on social citizenship rights. We began by reviewing T. H. Marshall's concept of social citizenship and showed that Marshall believed the purpose of social rights to be the reduction of class inequalities. Our discussion of social citizenship rights continued with an examination of Esping-Andersen's work on welfare state regimes. We looked at Esping-Andersen's typology of welfare states regimes which consists of three different types of welfare states each defined by their arrangement of the state, the market and the family. We found that Canada's welfare state corresponded to the liberal regime type where the market is the dominant factor. We demonstrated that although Esping-Andersen does include women's employment, fertility and care-giving responsibilities in his research, in large part his work does not include a gender relations analysis. Moreover, we indicated that gender sensitive analyses have demonstrated that differences in the access of social citizenship rights exist between women and men.

Furthermore, we demonstrated that social citizenship rights in the Canadian welfare state are being eroded by the globalization of the economies and neo-liberal governing practices. We showed that the shift in power from governments to corporations turns citizens into customers without entitlements to social rights. Moreover, the failure of the labour market to provide full employment (discussed in the previous chapter), results in an

increase of dependency on the income security measures of the welfare state. However, the erosion of the welfare state has left many without adequate means of social protection.

Our analysis continued with an exploration of the gendered social citizenship rights that are discernable in the income security schemes of the Canadian welfare state. We began by examining the Employment Insurance Act (formerly Unemployment Insurance Act) and found that the policies of this scheme were discriminatory from the beginning of its implementation since the rules insured that women did not have the same access as men did to unemployment insurance benefits. Although amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Act in 1971 did expand coverage to include most workers and covered income interruption that was based on pregnancy, further changes to the Act during the 1970s had the effect of disqualifying many women from obtaining benefits. Our analysis then proceeded into the 1990s during which the Unemployment Insurance system was drastically altered. Among the changes, we found that the qualifying periods for access to benefits were lengthened, and that the benefit rates and length of coverage were reduced. Finally, our gender analysis found that the rules that govern the employment insurance plan are structured in a way that do not take into consideration the traditional gender divisions in which women are the caregivers. Therefore the rules have the effect of discriminating against women.

The second income security scheme that we examined was the Canada Health and Social Transfer (formerly the Canada Assistance Plan). We revealed that this program originally considered women as men's dependants and that women who lived outside of accepted norms were regarded as undeserving. In 1990, the federal government placed a limit on federal transfers to British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario, which resulted in

billions of lost transfers for these provinces and indicated the government's intent to restructure the social assistance program. In 1996, the Canada Assistance Plan was replaced by the Canada Health and Social Transfer, which consisted of the federal government's financial contribution to the provinces' social assistance and services, post-secondary education and health care. Among the changes, we found the removal of a requirement that entitlement to social assistance be based on need alone, a restriction of the conditions of eligibility and the implementation of workfare. The changes resulted in a deterioration of social assistance benefits and in the erosion of our social citizenship rights. The consequences have been particularly difficult for women and single mothers since they comprise the majority of social assistance recipients. Indeed, the restructuring of the welfare state and hence of social assistance have affected those who are most in need of social welfare for their survival.

The restructuring and downsizing of the Canadian welfare state has reinforced the already existing inequalities between men and women, and has actually led to a deterioration of many of the gains that women have made. Women's social citizenship rights are being eroded as Canada, along with other nations, transform their economies in order to be more competitive in the global market.

The next chapter will explore a feminist agenda for alternatives to neo-liberal economic restructuring. We will demonstrate that the erosion of the welfare state is not inevitable and that possible alternatives do exist. Finally, we will examine the importance of feminist activism and political mobilization for social change.

Chapter IV: Alternatives to Economic Restructuring: A Feminist Agenda

Chapters 2 and 3 explored several issues associated with globalization and economic restructuring. We examined how neo-liberalism emphasizes the importance of a minimalist state and puts forward an agenda where market relationships and economic efficiency dominate. Furthermore, we provided an analysis that demonstrated that globalization has led to the dismantling of the welfare state and consequently to the erosion of our social citizenship rights. Through a gender analysis, we were able to establish that women have disproportionately felt the detrimental effects of economic globalization.

The objective of this chapter is to demonstrate that although proponents of neo-liberalism have declared that the erosion of the welfare state is inevitable, we are not powerless against globalization. Challenging globalization has become crucial and women have a central role to play in advocating for social change. Political mobilization and feminist activism have in the past proved to be important tools for change. Possible alternatives to economic restructuring have been identified with which to confront the institutions that represent the interests of capital.

The first section of this chapter will focus on feminist activism. In particular, we look at how cuts to the welfare state have been contested with political mobilization from feminists and the importance of popular education in the fight against the implementation of the Canada–U.S. Free Trade Agreement. Furthermore, the importance of a democratized social policy agenda for meeting citizens' needs is examined. We end this section by demonstrating women's commitment to social change and their considerable role in the development of the welfare state in Canada.

The next part of this chapter will examine international initiatives that have been proposed by scholars who believe that the impacts of globalization can be countered and that social conditions could be improved. Finally, I outline two of women's most recent international activities: The United Nations' Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women and the World March of Women 2000. Here we briefly explore the significance of the Internet for women's organizing and look at how women's activism on a global scale has renewed solidarity between women and encouraged them to continue the struggle.

1) Feminist Activism and the Welfare State

The previous chapters have shown that the predominance of neo-liberal economic policies which governments have adopted since the 1980s are causing many of the gains that have been made throughout the years to be reversed. Politicians, economic analysts, business and mass media tell us that in order for Canada to compete on the global market, the government has no choice but to cut spending on welfare programs and reduce our social services and benefit entitlements. The message was repeated over and over again, and in large part, people came to believe that there was no other alternative, and that we would have to adapt to harsher times while we waited for the economy to strengthen.

However, increasingly this neoliberal argument is being rejected. Literature is reporting that the government is not powerless against globalization and that we do not have to accept the erosion of the welfare state (Evans, McBride and Shields, 2000; Griffin Cohen, 1997a; McQuaig, 1993; Rice and Prince, 2000). In fact, Rice and Prince assert, "While the economic winners in the new global economy may want to restrict some decisions in some policy areas, the modern state is not rendered powerless" (2000: 240).

Furthermore, Griffin Cohen (1997a) argues that we do not have to accept the power of capital over social welfare and democracy and that the erosion of the welfare state is not inevitable. She maintains: "There are alternatives to submission and the reduction of state functions to minimalist activities. Nations and people are not paralyzed from acting in response to the increased strength of the power of the corporate private sector" (1997a: 43).

In recent years, people have begun to voice their opposition to global capitalism. World Trade Organization, NAFTA, FTAA, and G-8 Summit meetings where political and economic elites meet to broker new deals and further the corporate agenda are generating mass political mobilizations. Feminists in Canada and abroad have been very active in organizing and participating in protests against globalization. In fact, women have often been at the forefront of action and change. Before we embark on a journey to the past and highlight instances of earlier feminist activism, we will begin by reviewing feminist mobilization against the FTA and will briefly examine suggestions of possible means for women and progressive groups to alter political and economic structures.

Feminist mobilization against the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the United States is a fairly recent example of women taking initiative and organizing at both local and national levels. When the Progressive Conservative government of Prime Minister Brian Mulroney announced that it was looking to enter into a free-trade agreement with the United States, the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) studied what the consequences of such a deal would be for women and characterized it as a threat to Canada's welfare state (Cameron and Gonäs, 1999). Soon it

became evident that if Canadians wanted to preserve their programs and services they would have to fight against the implementation of a free trade deal.

Thus, through educational meetings, publications, and debates in local communities feminists along with labour unions, environmentalists, students, peace activists, social justice and church organizations worked to mobilize Canadians against the Free Trade Agreement. Although the campaign against the FTA was not successful in preventing its implementation, NAC did succeed in generating much opposition from women.

According to Cameron and Gonäs:

In conducting its campaign, [NAC] used its own organizational structure and feminist networks to educate women about the potential effects of continental free trade on women's equality and found ways to intervene in the broader public debate. NAC's success in mobilizing feminists and in characterizing free trade as a women's issue forced free trade supporters to make their own appeal to women and to defend their project against feminist critics. (1999: 62)

Educating women about the effects of globalization, be it free trade or economic restructuring, is essential for feminist activism and gaining support from women and men in general. For instance, Griffin Cohen claims that attacks on the welfare state have been met with political mobilization from women who have "focused on understanding the impacts of the policy changes on women and how change will affect either the way women relate to the state as providers or recipients of social welfare or how well the state protects individual group rights" (Griffin Cohen, 1997a: 29). Hence, popular education has increasingly become an important tool for feminists who are working to generate activism and political mobilization against the current restructuring trends and the implementation of new international free trade agreements, such as the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) which is an expansion of NAFTA (itself an extension of FTA).

Griffin Cohen argues that while the state may be constrained in some policy areas, it still has the power to establish policies that would meet the needs of the community. She asserts that feminists and other progressive groups need to continue to “focus on supporting social welfare, equitable distribution systems, and making the state more democratic” (1997a: 44). She indicates that although the Canadian state has welcomed and supported the restructuring of the economy, the government could still change its course of action and adopt a more democratic position that would respond to the needs of its citizens. Therefore, she asserts that resisting the erosion of the welfare state can be successful.

On the other hand, Susan Ferguson writes that many left feminists maintain that it is not enough to simply retain social citizenship rights previously gained. Consequently “women must not simply replicate the institutions and practices of postwar welfare politics of entitlement; they must challenge the state itself. Women must help *reshape* the very foundations of the state and mold it into a genuinely democratic institution” (2000: 279). Therefore, what women need is a democratized social policy agenda where women can feel empowered and have their social citizenship rights met.

According to Ferguson, there are diverse suggestions about how to achieve the democratization of the welfare state. She examines proposals which promote the view that social benefits and programs should be designed in a way that would take into consideration the family responsibilities of individual citizens, regardless of their sex. Such proposals, she writes would “mount a challenge to one of the key elements of women’s oppression—the ostensible separation between private and public realms—by insisting that domestic caretaking concerns and the individuals responsible for those concerns are integrated into public life and political decision-making” (2000: 280). Such

measures, she continues, are not intended to bring back the postwar welfare state but rather “to engage in a *feminist restructuring*—in order to revolutionize the very operation of the state and people’s common-sense notions about the state’s role” (2000: 280).

Hence, the democratization of the welfare state necessitates “a shift in ideology” (Rice and Prince, 2000: 254). Rice and Prince maintain that in order to democratize the welfare state, it is essential that social policies take into consideration the needs of various oppressed groups such as women, and minority racial and ethnic groups. Furthermore, they indicate that a revised state structure would enable community groups to make a difference by effectively representing their communities within the welfare state. Accordingly, they write:

A more democratized social policy agenda will allow community groups to find ways of encouraging politicians to stop offering corporations an open-door policy in which environmental standards are overlooked, unions are undermined, wages are cut, tax breaks are given, and a blind eye is turned to working conditions. A more open policy debate will encourage community groups to find ways of supporting governments who require corporations to meet fundamental community expectations. Community groups will be able to work with governments to develop regulations that shape the ways corporations enter a community, to ensure that issues such as pollution, health and safety, and working conditions are included in corporate plans. Again history teaches us an important lesson – that community activities can set the stage for government action. (2000: 254)

Hence, the democratization of the welfare state involves community participation, mobilization and empowerment (Rice and Prince, 2000).

Canadian history does demonstrate that involvement in community organizations and activities can make a difference. The 1880s saw an upsurge of reform movements as women and men became increasingly involved in social reform and demanded that the government intervene and make provisions for the poor. Mass industrialization, urbanization and immigration transformed Canadian society as cities became more

populated, urban slums developed and poverty became increasingly visible. Poor health and sanitary practices as well as high infant mortality rates and poor living conditions were part of a growing list of social problems that people could no longer ignore. Society began to acknowledge that the state had a role to play in the social welfare of its citizens. Although both women and men worked together in voluntary and church organizations and both played an important role in advocating social policies, they generally concentrated their efforts in different areas. According to Thelma McCormack, men and women perceived poverty in different ways. She writes:

Men saw the industrial system, the factories, women saw the slums and households; men saw exploited workers, women saw women exhausted by child-bearing; men saw unemployment, women saw sick and underfed children; men saw industrial accidents, women saw the impact of alcoholism on the family. (McCormack, 1991: 31)

Therefore, in becoming active participants in their communities, men urged the state to enact policies pertaining to labour legislation and workers' compensation (Rice and Prince, 2000), whereas women generally demanded policies concerning children and women's welfare.

Between the years of 1880 and 1920 women's organizations proliferated across Canada. Upper-class and middle class women, living mostly in large cities, united within local, provincial and national organizations such as the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), the Woman's Art Association of Canada, the Dominion Woman's Enfranchisement Association, the Fédération nationale Saint-Jean Baptiste, the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) and the Women's Institute (Andrew, 1984; Denis, 2001; Kealey, 1979; Mitchinson, 1987).

Although not all of the women's organizations originated with social reform in mind, many of them did end up taking on reform work. However, the fact that women were from different regions, belonged to different social classes and had different religious as well as political beliefs caused women's organizations to disagree on certain issues (Errington, 1993). For example, Carol Bacchi (1979) argues that while both rural and city women had many of the same problems, i.e. unfair marriage and property laws, and excessive domestic work, economic interests caused them to disagree on the root of their troubles. Class interests often prevented women's organizations from uniting and working together, as women believed that the economic discrimination they faced was more important than sexual discrimination. Also, Jane Errington (1993) indicates that farm women in Western Canada were not concerned about Eastern municipal and factory reforms and actually distrusted the intentions of the middle-class reform groups. Furthermore, she indicates that the middle-class women's reform organizations ignored many of the day-to-day problems of the rural and working-class women. According to Errington:

Such organizations as the YWCA, the WCTU, and increasingly the NCWC were concerned only that working girls be protected from the immoral, unhealthy, and seemingly unwomanly aspects of the workplace. With their distrust of labour and labour organizations and their view of women as future mothers, not members of the work force, middle-class women advocated piecemeal reform of the physical and moral environment of the workplace. Although their proposals did include better hours and wages, the establishment of nurseries to care for the children of the working woman, and new safety and training regulations, the progressive impulse accepted without reservation the hierarchical organization of the social and economic order and that the needs of women were essentially different from those of men. For the most part, equal pay and questions of promotion and advancement for women within the system – issues that many working girls considered essential – were not considered. (Errington, 1993: 77)

Thus, while the women's reform organizations imposed middle-class values on rural and working-class women and believed that they spoke on behalf of all women, in reality they represented the interests of their own class. Moreover, Bacchi indicates that although middle-class, working-class and rural women did work together "for several female-oriented goals, ultimately they identified with their class rather than with their sex" (Bacchi, 1979: 107).

However, the purpose of examining this part of Canadian history was not to recall the class differences, but rather to demonstrate that women's community organizations with divergent concerns and interests can be effective in promoting social changes. Women's organizations for instance, took on such issues as child welfare programs, mother's pensions, widow's pensions, child and female labour, better housing, public health, temperance campaigns, and suffrage (Burt, 1993; Errington, 1993; Kealey, 1979; Rice and Prince, 2000). Thus, women's groups were active politically as they lobbied the government for social policies that would ameliorate the living conditions of women and their families. Women were committed to social change as they worked to pave the way for greater state intervention in matters of social welfare. Indeed, Andrew states: "In pushing for and organizing services and programmes designed to improve the social conditions resulting from industrialization, urbanization and immigration, women played an important role in setting the stage for the development of the welfare state" (1984: 672).

We conclude this section by saying that women's involvement in political activism in their communities at the local and national levels has been successful in the past in leading to the implementation of important state measures that improved the lives of many Canadians. Therefore, there is much reason to believe that it can be successful again. We

will now examine several international initiatives that have been proposed by different theorists to change the course of globalization.

2) International Initiatives

The new world economy has altered the lives of people from around the globe. Social citizenship rights have become secondary to the rights of multi-national corporations, as governments comply with the demands of the corporate sector which seeks among other things, to have their taxes lowered, to weaken labour standards and environmental regulations, and to have social welfare expenditures reduced. International trade agreements, global competition, and economic restructuring are all part of economic globalization and have come together to alter democratic governing practices and erode welfare states. Women and disadvantaged groups have, in particular, been adversely affected. Scholars have suggested different proposals that could counter the destructive effects of globalization and economic restructuring on society. In the following sections, we will examine some of the proposed initiatives that could feasibly reduce global inequalities.

a) Universal Social Standards

In order to guarantee citizens' basic political, civil and social rights, Mishra (1999) believes that each country should be obliged to implement basic social standards that are fundamental to the well being of its citizens. The concept of social welfare rights as individual rights is not only an unfamiliar concept outside the Western world, it is also in retreat in Western countries. Therefore, what is important, according to Mishra, is the need

to affirm the idea of social citizenship but as community standards rather than individual rights. He maintains:

[T]he 'social' dimension identified by Marshall must be seen as a universal category similar to those of the 'economic' or 'political' in modern society. [...] The social is concerned with the maintenance of community and social solidarity, and universal social provision is the key institution. Thus the 'community' emerges as a societal category similar to the economy and the polity. In other words we need to think in terms of *community standards* rather than *individual rights*, for it is the community as a collective that must have some social standards or norms, which entail both rights and obligations. [...] it can be argued that membership in a national community which entails reciprocity, interdependence and solidarity presupposes basic rather than minimum standards. (1999: 118)

Mishra argues that the concept of a community has a wider applicability and significance than individual "rights", and is less open to the criticism of embodying Western hegemony. Therefore, he reasons that "social welfare as an expression of the basic social *standards* of a community and its concern for its members can thus be universalized across different cultures and societies" (1999:118). Furthermore, he maintains that social standards can be implemented in a fashion that would better correspond to the economic development and capacities of countries than can the concept of "rights". He proposes that countries could raise their level of social standards as they develop economically.

Mishra puts forward a possible approach that could help determine how governments might decide what their basic social standards should be and how to establish them in a fashion that would be consistent with their economic capacities. A nation's social standards, Mishra argues, would mainly be determined by social consensus, complemented with the experience of other, more developed nations and expert opinion from agencies such as the International Labour Organization, the United Nations and non-governmental organizations.

He uses the economic classification of the World Bank as a basis to determining the existing level of social standards in a particular country. For example, the World Bank classifies countries according to the per capita income into three general groups: high, medium and low, with the medium group being further divided into two subgroups — a higher and a lower tier. The rich industrialized countries, which already possess welfare states, are those found at the top of the classification. Of course, some rich nations have stronger welfare states with better programmes and services than others. The advanced welfare states would only be required to maintain their level of social provisions, whereas rich industrialized countries with weaker welfare states would have to increase their level of social benefits.

For the poor countries such as those in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, basic social standards would consist of “primary health care, sanitation, safe drinking water, adequate nutrition and the like” (Mishra, 1999: 120). Because the level of social standards would be commensurate with the economic capacity of countries, governments could more easily ensure a basic level of universal social provision. Furthermore, the establishment of international institutions (an idea that will be discussed later in this chapter), which would redistribute funds to disadvantaged countries, could help nations increase their level of social standards. Finally, countries that fall within the medium income groups would have social programs that correspond to their level of economic development. Although the feasibility of the basic social standard approach is not thoroughly discussed by Mishra, he asserts that: “In the absence of an international government with democratic authority and accountability, social standards have to rely on voluntary compliance. But voluntarism is likely to be even less effective than in the past because of globalization” (1999: 130).

In his discussion of basic social standards, Mishra does not make any reference to gender differences and thus, does not provide us with a critical analysis of what could be considered relevant basic social standards for women as well as for men. As the previous chapters demonstrated, globalization and economic restructuring have, in particular, negatively affected women. Therefore, in order to develop social standards that would be beneficial to all citizens, welfare states would need to acknowledge the constraints that women face and implement basic social standards that would respond to women and men's distinctive needs. Welfare states must therefore, create the necessary conditions that would work towards realizing gender equality, promote and reinforce women's rights.

According to Lister, "obstacles to women's citizenship [...] are to be found in the labour market, the (welfare) state and the *polis*" (1997: 202). Hence, in order to improve women's status, states would have to work on implementing policies that would promote women's equality in all of these areas. By considering the different socio-economic status of women and men and identifying women's economic, political and social needs, nations could develop social standards that would respond to the particular needs of its citizenry. Lister indicates that nations could advance women's interests through the labour market and the welfare state by reducing and eliminating women's poverty and developing policies that would "promote women's economic independence" (Lister, 1997: 202). Moreover, women's citizenship rights could be further improved if women participated in the political world. Lister writes:

In the political sphere, the future development of women's citizenship depends on women, in their diversity, being actively involved, both through the formal and informal political systems, in the development of public policies. [...] This requires strategies appropriate to each country for increasing women's representation in formal power structures, with attention to the interests of minority group women. These need to be

complemented by mechanisms to make formal political systems more accessible to informal political groupings. (1997: 202)

Thus, by addressing issues that are important to women, increasing women's accessibility to the political sphere, and encouraging women to become active participants in establishing policy agendas and pursuing their implementation, women's status in societies could be improved and progress could be realized.

b) Opposing the Neo-liberal Ideology

A second initiative consists of developing informed opposition to the neo-liberal ideology which supports the domination of the market over an "intrusive" government. Griffin Cohen (1997a) argues that we need analysis that would evaluate the effectiveness of international trading agreements which impose the same economic and social policy system on all participating countries. She hypothesizes that such analysis would demonstrate the economic hardship that many poor countries, in particular, experience from such a system. She writes:

In the process of demanding economic uniformity, the corporate community has taken away from poor countries any innovative ways in which they might be able to find unique solutions to their problems. If poor countries must both abide by the employment and environmental standards of wealthy countries and maintain the same economic system without any ways of circumventing the impossible through collective, public policies, they most certainly will be made even poorer. (Griffin Cohen, 1997a: 46)

In his book *The Globalisation of Poverty: Impacts of IMF and World Bank Reforms*, Michel Chossudovsky writes about the effects of economic restructuring imposed by financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank on developing countries. Chossudovsky maintains that the international financial institutions are destroying the economies of developing countries. He states:

The restructuring of the world economy under the guidance of the Washington-based financial institutions increasingly denies individual developing countries the possibility of building a national economy: the internationalisation of macro-economic policy transforms countries into open economic territories and national economies into “reserves” of cheap labour and natural resources. (1997: 37)

Hence, Griffin Cohen makes a valid point when she says that what is needed is to allow countries their own economic systems since different countries have different geographic limitations, historical backgrounds and cultural goals and thus, have distinct problems. This is especially true for poor developing countries that have been penalized by globalization and trading agreements.

Feminists’ acknowledgment of differences among women will provide an important beginning for an analysis that will take into account social policies that correspond to the different needs of people (Griffin Cohen, 1997a). Although it seems like an impossible mission to change the international trading rules, Griffin Cohen asserts, “A project which begins to analyse the ways in which international institutions could be organized to allow for economic and social welfare pluralism would be well positioned to be accepted when the promises of the existing trade regimes are not fulfilled” (1997a: 47).

However, although it is important to be aware of the need for pluralism internationally in social and economic systems, we cannot forget that many developing countries are ruled by governments which oppress their citizens and perpetuate inequalities. Thus, in order to guarantee that citizens are entitled to basic social rights, we believe that Mishra’s proposal that calls for the implementation of basic social standards which would be based on the country’s economic development could allow countries their own economic system and at the same time ensure that nations guarantee their citizens’ social rights.

c) International Institutions

This initiative consists of the establishment of international institutions that would control capital by watching over corporations and disciplining them. By penalizing corporations and not countries, international institutions would protect citizens instead of multinationals. Griffin Cohen states:

The current unwillingness or inability of nation states to assert the kind of control over capital which is necessary to protect employment levels, the environment, and conditions of like [sic] reflects the power which corporations have to intimidate or otherwise gain the cooperation of national governments. With the new trading arrangements, new international institutions of governance are being created, but these are market-creating institutions, rather than a replication of market-controlling institutions of the nation state. (1997a: 47)

In addition, this type of institution would especially benefit poor countries that are often taken advantage of by corporations who profit from their lax environmental and labour standards. Along the same lines, Rice and Prince (2000) maintain that international agreements would help governments control social problems and protect the rights of citizens. Such international accords “would require negotiating limits on unrestrained exploitation of resources, the development of global trade, and the international flow of capital” (2000: 249). They could be used to implement regulations that would guarantee every person fairly good life conditions by protecting their safety, working conditions, and health from globalized trade. Furthermore, they would enable governments to place limits on corporations: the latter would have to respect international standards on labour rights, human rights and the environment in order to do business or operate in a country.

According to Rice and Prince:

Over time the Canadian government could evolve a set of agreements with other countries for controlling transnational corporations. Such actions can include cultural, environmental, and labour clauses in trade agreements;

stand-alone multinational social charters to regulate trade and investment relations; and building or reforming public institutions at the international level. These actions represent varying degrees of effort at controlling capital and the power of transnational corporations. (2000: 251)

The implementation of these types of agreements and regulations to control corporations is important because they could ensure that social policies become a priority for governments.

Moreover, Griffin Cohen (1997a) indicates that there should also be international institutions that would replicate the functions of governments in that they would raise and distribute funds to countries that need financial assistance. An idea that has recently resurfaced as a possible way to raise these funds is the Tobin tax. This is a tax on international financial speculation that was designed over twenty years ago by an American economist named James Tobin to avert short-term currency speculation. The implementation of the Tobin tax could raise money that would help countries deal with the social consequences of globalization and help fight worldwide problems such as poverty, famine and disease (Griffin Cohen 1997a; Michalos, 2000).

Although there is an absence of gender sensitivity in this initiative, it is possible to envisage how international institutions could promote women's rights. By encouraging the assignment of positions of power to women in international governing institutions, women could take part in developing and implementing policies that would take into consideration women's specific needs. Policies could be developed with the goal of advancing gender equality. Moreover, national and international feminist organizations could monitor the implementation of such policies and ensure that governments and corporations comply with the demands and regulations of the international institutions.

d) Mobilizing Women

Feminist scholars assert that it is important for Canadian women to work with women of other countries who are also affected by the global economy (Ferguson, 2000; Griffin Cohen, 1997a). As will be demonstrated further in the following section, the significant contacts that women have made through international conferences on women, have allowed feminist groups to develop important alliances. Ferguson (2000) stresses the importance for women's groups to communicate, strategize and work together in their efforts to organize popular resistance. By organizing different events such as fairs, street theatre, political and social meetings, organizers have given women the opportunity to take their struggles into the community by sharing their concerns and addressing issues that are important to women's needs.

According to Ferguson, left feminists have emphasized the importance of grassroots struggle because it is a different approach from the mainstream male norms of mobilizing since it attempts to organize the casual work force which consists mainly of working women and various minority racial and ethnic groups. Although class, race and sexual orientation create different needs and priorities for women, the acknowledged recognition of these differences can enable women to form alliances among themselves and with others and build popular movements (Adamson, Briskin and McPhail, 1988).

However, the insensitivity towards differences between women can prevent women's groups from forming alliances with each other and thus divide them in their struggle for equality. According to Denis (2001), feminist groups have been marginalized because of their differences by national organizations in Canada. The refusal on the part of national feminist organizations in Canada to acknowledge the specific needs, namely

linguistic, of Franco-Ontarian women resulted in Franco-Ontarian feminist activists concentrating “their energy on women’s networks or organizations in which the language of communication was French and the specific focus was *minority* francophone women” (2001: 459). Thus, participating in social and political activism demands that we recognize that differences exist among women and that some groups of women have different priorities than others. An alliance with these groups rather than their exclusion improves the likelihood of developing a proactive strategy for meeting women’s needs (Denis, 2001).

Moreover, Griffin Cohen (1997a) cautions that, although mobilizing women in other countries has not always been easy, and different women from around the world will have different experiences, it is important for women to continue to work together and learn from each other in order to achieve political changes that could lead us toward a more just society. Indeed, “[...] success in winning gains, limited as they are, also serves to encourage further mobilization in support of other demands [...]” (Adamson, Briskin and McPhail, 1988: 187).

3) Women Organizing for Change

As was demonstrated in chapters 2 and 3, globalization and economic restructuring are eroding many of the gains that women have made and are leading to the feminization of poverty. The effects of globalization on women have become issues that women globally have rallied around and worked together on in order to organize for change. By documenting women’s activism and recognizing their successes in organizing, we can give women optimism and confidence in the potential for better lives. In this next section, I

will briefly review some features of two international events that have been significant for the women's movement. The United Nations' Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing 1995 and the World March of Women 2000 were two important events that women from all parts of the world mobilized around in order to demand women's equality.

Both the Fourth World Conference on Women and the World March of Women 2000 utilized the Internet, a form of electronic network technology, to inform the public, encourage women to strategize and become active participants in the events. The Internet has become an important medium of communication that enables those who have access to it the opportunity to obtain information and express their ideas and opinions with a large audience. More importantly, the Internet generates stronger social movements. Not only did the Internet prove to be an important tool for the organization of these activities, but it also allowed women the opportunity to obtain information on the issues and follow the progress of the events as they happened. The Fourth World Conference on Women had all of the conference proceedings, as well as all of the plenary statements and the press releases, available online on the Internet (the United Nations' Web site and the Linkages Web site are among the Internet sites that contain this information. See United Nations, 1995 and Linkages in the bibliography for Web addresses). The World March of Women 2000 also had a list of events, bulletins, articles, press releases, and information regarding the logistics of the March available on the Internet (the Fédération des femmes du Québec's Web site and the Canadian Women's March Committee's Web site are among the Internet sites where this information could be found. See bibliography for Web addresses).

Thus, the Internet became a source of empowerment, particularly for Western women since, in general, the Internet is more accessible in the West (Denis and Ollivier, forthcoming). On the other hand, women in developing countries did not have the same advantages and for the most part, did not benefit from this form of technology since access to it is often not easily available (Hafkin and Taggart, 2001). For example, although access to the Internet has become more available during the past few years, poorly developed telecommunications infrastructure continues to limit the use of the Internet in “third world” countries (Vettraino-Soulard, 1998).

a) The United Nations’ Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women, 1995

The United Nations’ Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development & Peace occurred in Beijing, China from 4 to 15 September 1995. In addition to this conference of government delegates was a NGO forum in which members of regional, national and international NGOs gathered to network and exchange ideas. After extensive preparatory work, delegates from governments, NGOs and international organizations met to work on the Beijing Platform for Action which called for the improvement of women’s economic, political, social and cultural empowerment. The Platform for Action recognized 12 areas of critical concern to women: poverty, health, education, violence, peace, human rights of women, economic participation, power sharing and decision-making, mechanisms to promote the advancement of women, mass media, environment and development, and discrimination against girls. The Platform for Action discusses the areas of concern and identifies several objectives and courses of actions for governments to undertake (Roberts, 1996; United Nations, 1994).

Women from all over the world organized, networked, and lobbied for rights that would give women the opportunity to improve their lives and those of their children. The women in Beijing called attention to the fact that their equality could only be truly achieved through their empowerment. Moreover, according to Eisenstein (1997), women at the Beijing conference believed that their equality was essential for the realization of democracy in their countries: “They also believe that they have a prominent role to play in the democratization of their societies. Their rights, as women, are seen as part of their human rights and, therefore, necessary to any conception of democracy” (Eisenstein, 1997: 161). The conference in Beijing gave women hope that through common actions, women’s movements could successfully pursue the struggle for women’s equality and the democratization of societies.

From 5 to 9 June 2000, a special session entitled “Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-First Century” (also known as Beijing +5), was held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The objectives of this special session were to have representatives from the United Nations and non-governmental organizations review the progress achieved in the implementation of both the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, which was adopted in 1985, and the Beijing Platform of Action adopted in 1995 (at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women), and to ponder possible future initiatives and actions that could be implemented in order to achieve further progress (United Nations, 2001).

In order to assess the progress made, governments were asked to complete a report on the actions they had committed to in order to meet the requirements of the twelve critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action. The reports showed that

although there has been some progress, further action is required by nations, especially in the areas of poverty and violence. The reports also revealed that women still earn less than men in the labour market and that they remain under represented in decision-making positions within national and international institutions. However, on a more positive note, the *Beijing +5 Process and Beyond* document maintains that “Human rights of women had gained recognition, violence against women was now an illegal act in almost every country, and there had been worldwide mobilization against harmful traditional practices” (United Nations, 2001: 6). Unfortunately, these gains do not necessarily signify that men are being convicted for their violent actions against women or that traditional rituals, such as female genital mutilation, are less practised. Delegates at the meeting acknowledged that globalization has made it increasingly difficult for many countries to advance gender equality and make progress in regards to the social welfare of its citizens. Representatives agreed that more work needs to be done locally, nationally and internationally in order to achieve the commitments made in the twelve critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action (United Nations, 2001).

b) World March of Women 2000

A more recent example of grassroots feminist activism is the World March of Women 2000 which took place worldwide between March 8, International Women’s Day, and October 17, the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. Women from all over the world marched to express their commitment to eliminate poverty and put an end to violence against women. La Fédération des femmes du Québec (FFQ) launched the idea of an international march of women at the Beijing conference. Their inspiration for an

international march came out of the positive experience of the Women's March Against Poverty which occurred in Québec in 1995. Not only was this march effective in getting women to participate, but also it was successful in winning for women of Québec several of their demands. Energized by the success of the march in Québec and the women's enthusiasm in Beijing, la Fédération des femmes du Québec began organizing the World March of Women (Canadian Women's March Committee Report, 2001).

The World March of Women 2000 was accomplished by giving women's community, regional and national groups the opportunity to share their experiences and contribute to the list of demands. Women from around the globe met in Québec City on October 16-17-18, 1998 to work on a platform that demanded the elimination of poverty and violence against women. The platform also proposed different courses of action to achieve these objectives. According to The Canadian Women's March Committee Report:

The international demands gave voice to women's perspectives on poverty, the distribution of wealth, work, political representation, prostitution, rape, violence against women, sexual orientation, education, genital mutilation, war, domestic work, agricultural production, slavery. (2001: 4)

For these reasons and many more, women worldwide united to challenge the structures that keep them oppressed and to demand the recognition of their rights.

More than 5200 organizations across 161 countries and territories participated in the realization of the World March. According to Pam Kapoor, the large interest in this march is due to the implementation of neoliberal policies by governments around the world (December 2000 / January 2001). Globalization has led to an unprecedented level of economic restructuring that among other things has weakened women's socio-economic status. Thus, women have been put into positions where they need to fight to seek equality and even to maintain their existing rights.

Women from around the globe united to fight against the implementation of neoliberal policies and their effects on people, and on women in particular, by taking their message to the streets. They reminded those in power that women are determined not to give up the struggle until concrete actions are taken to improve the status of women. Although none of the demands presented to the Canadian government by the Canadian Women's March Committee have yet been met, a renewed solidarity between women has been realized. Nationally and internationally, women's groups have vowed to continue to work on achieving the goals of the World March of Women (Canadian Women's March Committee Report, 2001).

4) Conclusion

This chapter set out to explore alternatives to economic restructuring and understand how a feminist agenda might change the neo-liberal political and economic structures that presently dominate societies. We began by examining feminist mobilization in Canada against the FTA. We established that through popular education, feminist organizations have succeeded in generating social activism against the forces of economic globalization. We also briefly reviewed suggestions of possible means for women and progressive groups to democratize the state and alter political and economic structures. Furthermore, history reminded us that women's activism had a considerable role in the development of the welfare state and that important gains were made because people in communities worked together.

We also indicated that although globalization has constrained the state in some policy areas, the state is not powerless. In fact, we reviewed proposals by scholars who

suggested international initiatives that could be adopted by governments and international democratic institutions to alter the course of globalization and protect citizens' social conditions. We began by reviewing Mishra's proposal for the implementation of universal basic social standards, which he argued would guarantee people's well being. The next initiative entailed opposing the neoliberal ideology and indicated that because international financial institutions are destroying the economies of developing countries we need to allow countries their own economic and social systems. The third proposal consisted of establishing democratic international institutions that would watch over corporations and ensure that regulations were respected. Such institutions could effectively prevent the destruction of the environment, reduce poverty levels considerably, ensure high employment levels and protect labour standards. Also discussed, was the creation of a governing institution that would raise money and redistribute it to poorer countries. The last initiative consisted of mobilizing women and stressing the importance for women to form alliances with others in order to build popular movements.

Finally, our last section demonstrated that by working together, feminists have had successes in mobilizing women from all over the world to challenge the power of capital. International events such as the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women and the World March of Women 2000 have encouraged women to fight for their equality and the democratization of their societies.

Our analysis revealed that it has become increasingly important for the government to reaffirm its commitment to social issues. By democratizing the welfare state, we could establish a social policy agenda that took into consideration citizens needs and ensured that their social rights were respected. We have seen the importance of the participation of the

community in the realization of a democratic society. Finally, global solidarity and a long-term commitment are a must if we want to democratize societies and better the lives of millions of people.

Chapter V: Conclusion

This thesis set out to understand and explain the gendered impacts of economic globalization on the welfare state. Although the impacts of globalization on the welfare state have become increasingly documented, a large proportion of scholarship on this subject does not provide gender-sensitive analyses. Thus, our main objective was to provide a gender-sensitive analysis of the inequalities that exist in the Canadian welfare state and to demonstrate that the impacts of globalization have further intensified the inequalities between women and men.

Our exploration of the impacts of globalization on women and the Canadian welfare state began with a presentation of the political economy model of globalization. We revealed that economic globalization has enabled a concentration of power among transnational corporations which has made it possible for them to dominate the economy and make unprecedented demands on governments. Furthermore, we demonstrated that the ideology of neo-liberalism, which emphasizes the importance of a minimal government and seeks the domination of the market, has led to a shift in governing practices and thus to the dismantling of the welfare state.

Furthermore, we examined the effects of trade liberalization and established that trading agreements such as the FTA and NAFTA implement measures that impede the state's ability to improve public programs, and ameliorate environmental and employment standards. Moreover, our analysis demonstrated that economic globalization has caused the deregulation of labour standards, growing employment insecurity and labour market inequality. The consequences of such effects have been multiple: the bargaining power of workers has been weakened, a growing number of people face unemployment, and there

has been an increase in poor quality employment. We also showed that the consequences have disadvantaged women, especially women of colour, who have had to contend with losing their jobs because of their segregation into low wage manufacturing industries that have been, in particular, adversely affected by globalization.

Indeed, our analysis revealed that globalization and economic restructuring have intensified the gender inequalities in the labour market. We showed that the decrease of full-year, full-time work, in addition to the increase of non-standard forms of employment, such as part-time, short-term and contract work in sectors in which women are segregated, have led to the deterioration of women's work conditions as well as to an increase of unemployment and economic insecurity for women. Furthermore, we indicated that with higher unemployment rates and lower incomes than other women, women of colour are more vulnerable to globalization. Discriminatory state policies and discrimination in the labour market have had the effect of segregating immigrant and visible minority women into certain low-wage sectors that have been hit hard by globalization.

The following chapter set out to examine the gendered impacts of globalization on social citizenship rights. We reviewed T. H. Marshall's literature on social citizenship rights and Esping-Andersen's welfare state regime typology, and found that their work generally lacked a gender relations analysis. We then indicated that gender sensitive analyses of welfare states have established that differences in the exercise of social citizenship rights exist between women and men.

We continued our analysis with an exploration of the effects of globalization on social citizenship rights in the Canadian welfare state. We established that globalization along with neo-liberal governing practices and a shift in power from governments to

corporations have eroded Canadian citizens' social rights. Moreover, we indicated that the changing relationship between a citizen and the state is especially important for women since neo-liberalism denies the importance of gender for women's social citizenship rights.

We then explored two income security schemes of the Canadian welfare state: the Employment Insurance Act (formerly Unemployment Insurance Act) and the Canada Health and Social Transfer (formerly the Canada Assistance Plan). Our analysis revealed that gendered social citizenship rights are discernable in the income security schemes of the Canadian welfare state. We found that the rules which governed these income security programs were discriminatory against women from the beginning of their implementation and that despite subsequent amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Act and the Canada Assistance Plan, both policies remained biased.

Our analysis then proceeded into the 1990s during which time the federal government actively implemented budget cuts to Canada's social welfare system. Our gender analysis found that the changes implemented to the programs had the effect of discriminating against women. We also found that economic restructuring and downsizing of the Canadian welfare state has reinforced the already existing inequalities between men and women and has resulted in the erosion of our social welfare system and thus of our social citizenship rights.

The fourth chapter explored alternatives to globalization and economic restructuring. We began our analysis with an examination of feminist activism in Canada. We briefly explored how feminists fought against the implementation of the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the United States and indicated that although feminists were not able to prevent the implementation of the FTA they did succeed in generating a

great deal of opposition from women. We established that popular education has increasingly become an important means for feminist organizations that want to generate public support and political mobilization against economic globalization. Furthermore, we revealed that although globalization may have constrained the government in some areas, the government can still implement policies that would counter the negative effects of economic restructuring. However, considering the current domination of neo-liberalism in governing practices, the likelihood of such an occurrence without the democratization of the welfare state is slight. Nevertheless, we demonstrated that by involving citizens in the community the democratization of the welfare state is indeed possible. We ended this section by examining how women's activism during the reform period contributed to the development of the welfare state and consequently to the improvement of the lives of many Canadians.

We then continued our analysis with an examination of proposals for international initiatives that could be adopted by governments and international democratic institutions to lessen the impacts of globalization and reduce global inequalities. These proposals varied from suggesting that countries be obliged to implement basic social standards to opposing the neo-liberal ideology and creating international governing institutions that would control and discipline corporations to ensure that regulations were respected. Our exploration revealed that with some effort it would be possible for governments to implement state policies that would protect their citizens' well-being by preventing the destruction of the environment, ensuring high employment levels, protecting labour standards, and reducing poverty levels. Finally, the last initiative stressed that even though

differences between women exist, it is important for women to work together and form alliances with women from other countries in order to build popular movements.

We ended this chapter with a review of the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women and the World March of Women 2000. We began by briefly discussing the advantages of the Internet in organizing and mobilizing women. We then examined how these two international events are good examples of women's successes in organizing, networking and mobilizing women from around the world. Finally, we showed that the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women and the World March of Women 2000, allowed women the opportunity to unite in their challenge against neo-liberal policies and oppressive structures and to demand that their rights be recognized.

This thesis has revealed that while globalization and economic restructuring have had an adverse impact on both women and men, it is women who are particularly affected by the erosion of the welfare state and the restructuring of the labour market. Neo-liberalism emphasizes the importance of a strong economy and promotes the continuing liberalization of trade. This not only impedes the state's ability to establish new social policies and programs that would respond to the needs of Canadian citizens, but also demands that the government retrench the welfare state. The Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), which is currently being negotiated, is scheduled to be implemented no later than 2005 and will undoubtedly further the economic agenda of multinational corporations.

Globalization of the economies has thus far signified greater economic insecurity for Canadian women. However, globalization has not affected all women in the same way and to the same extent. Immigrant women are confronted by additional disadvantages

because of discriminatory state policies which have impeded their access to certain state services. Furthermore, discrimination in the labour market has intensified immigrant and visible minority women's segregation into certain manufacturing industries which have been more vulnerable to the negative effects of globalization. Therefore, there is a need for public policies that recognize the different realities of women and that would work towards reducing the inequalities that exist among women and between women and men.

Although this thesis did examine some of the most important effects of economic globalization on the welfare state in Canada, there remain many significant issues and concerns that we were not able to address. Certainly a more profound look at the issues surrounding the privatization of public services, such as health care and education would have provided a more complete analysis of the gendered impacts of globalization on the welfare state. Also a comparative analysis of the impacts of globalization on the welfare state between Canada and social democratic countries such as Sweden, Norway and Denmark could have been useful in our analysis of social citizenship rights. Furthermore, an examination of the effects of Canadian tax policy and tax reform on women could have supported our conclusion about the existence of gender disparities that are unfavorable to women in the exercise and outcome of state policy. Although questions regarding the future challenges for social policy in a globalized world were partially examined within the section on alternatives to economic restructuring, there remain many more to be answered.

Finally, the failure of the labour market to provide full employment has resulted in an increased dependency on the income security measures of the welfare state. This thesis has shown that Canadian income security measures, such as employment insurance and social assistance, have suffered major cutbacks in recent years. If there isn't any adequate

means of social protection in place for those whom the markets have failed, persistent employment insecurity and inequality will eventually translate into other social problems such as poverty, depression, alcoholism, violence, etc., which will ultimately result in higher costs for the state. Social programs such as employment insurance, social assistance, health care, and education are essential to the welfare of Canadians and to the economic development of the country.

We have seen that economic globalization challenges the advancement of women. If the welfare state does not attempt to eradicate the existing gendered policies, poor women will be faced with the continuing degradation of their socio-economic status. Thus, it is important for the state to undertake different economic and social measures that will help reverse the current trends. We need public policies that would take into consideration women's specific situations and that would regard their needs as fundamental to their well-being as individuals, and to the well-being of society as a whole. Although there are inequalities within the Canadian welfare state, it has been a positive force for many people and has, in some cases, been a source of empowerment for women. Thus, rather than be dismantled, the welfare state should be restructured with social policies that respond to the needs of Canadians and eliminate discrimination based on sex, class and ethnicity. Finally, women must persist in advocating gender equity in economic, political, social, and cultural matters.

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