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FROM 'MOTHER EARTH' TO 'FATHER HOLDING THE BABY': A GENDERED ANALYSIS OF ORGANIC AGRICULTURE IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE, ENGLAND

GENEVIEVE KATE GROOM

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines what it means to be a gendered subject in the context of organic agriculture. Specifically, it considers the extent to which the ideological standpoint of the organic agriculture movement facilitates the representation and construction of distinctive gender roles, relations and identities within organic farming. Three particular features of organic agriculture have been identified that could potentially impact upon gender roles, relations and identities: firstly, the organic movement has non-agrarian roots and has therefore attracted individuals who are not part of the traditional gendered heritage of agriculture; secondly, the basis of the organic ideology suggests a fundamentally different approach to society-nature relations to that which dominates the agro-industrial model; and thirdly, the ideology of the organic agriculture movement makes explicit reference to the social relations inherent to agriculture and the role that organic farming should take in working towards a production process that is 'socially just'. These three reasons suggest that the construction and representation of gender roles, relations and identities within organic farming may be distinct from agriculture more widely, in which highly 'traditional' hierarchical constructions of masculinity and femininity have been shown to persist.

Informed by perspectives within feminist geography, two phases of empirical research were undertaken in order to address the research aim. The first phase involved a content analysis of three publications drawn from the UK organic agriculture movement (and one from conventional agriculture) and explored how gender roles, relations and identities have been represented throughout its history. In the second phase the themes that emerged from the textual analysis were explored in more detail through a series of in-depth, semi-structured interviews with forty-one men and women working on organic farms in the county of Gloucestershire, UK, in order to critically assess the ongoing construction and maintenance of gender roles, relations and identities within contemporary organic farming.

The findings of the research show that organic agriculture is largely dominated by 'traditional' representations and constructions of gender roles, relations and identities. However, they also show that organic agriculture does provide a space for alternative configurations of gender roles, relations and identities. Nevertheless, these pose a challenge to feminist understandings of what constitutes 'progressive' gender roles, relations and identities since, paradoxically, they draw upon highly traditional notions which associate women and nature whilst at the same time enabling women and men to assume gender roles and relations that transcend conventional boundaries.

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of the University of Gloucestershire and is original except where indicated by specific reference in the text. No part of the thesis has been submitted as part of any other academic award. The thesis has not been presented to any other education institution in the United Kingdom or overseas.

Any views expressed in the thesis are those of the author and in no way represent those of the University.

Signed Date

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Conventional agriculture is an economic sector that has remained largely impervious to more general societal shifts in gender roles, relations and identities. Consequently, highly 'traditional' hierarchical constructions of masculinity and femininity have been shown to persist, in which men and women occupy distinctly gendered roles (Brandth 2002a). However, non-conventional forms of agriculture, with distinct ideological underpinnings, may open up spaces for the emergence of different gender roles, relations and identities. As such, this thesis examines what it means to be a gendered subject in the context of organic agriculture, one important form of non-conventional agriculture, and poses the question: Does the ideological standpoint of organic farming facilitate the representation and construction of distinctive gender roles, relations and identities within agriculture?

Research into the position of women in agriculture, in particular within family farming, has a relatively long history within rural studies (Little 2002a). Therefore, the dominant characteristics of gendered positions within family farms in Europe and elsewhere, have been widely documented (Brandth 2002a). From these studies, and more recent research concerned directly with masculine and feminine agricultural gender identities, it is possible to identify the agricultural gender identities that are hegemonic within conventional farming. This research has shown that conventional agriculture is strongly gendered, with women tending to be excluded from the occupation of 'farmer' whilst at the same time their important contribution to the farm business and household has been obscured and undervalued.

However, despite the considerable body of work, research in this field is of continuing relevance and further research is required. For example, it has been identified that there is a lack of work on the differences between rural women and that "rural research specifically on men's lives and the changing relationship between men and women's

ruralities is...urgently required" (Little 2002a, p. 188). In specific relation to agricultural gender identities, Bennett (2005, p. 60) identifies "gaps and silences" in the research on the gender identities of women in agriculture whilst Brandth (2002a, p. 197) suggests the need for research analysing the processes that sustain hegemonic agricultural gender identities as well as the "counter-hegemonic possibilities". This thesis identifies alternative agricultural systems as potentially offering such possibilities yet, despite their increasing prevalence, they have been largely neglected by feminist analyses of agricultural gender identities.

In the wake of growing consumer unease about the safety of conventional production systems, related to both individualised concerns regarding personal safety and health, and altruistic concerns regarding environmental or social health (Lockie et al. 2002), alternatives to mainstream agriculture have risen to the fore. These alternative strands within agriculture originally developed from belief systems that are in opposition to industrialised agriculture. Organic agriculture is one such alternative that, although still marginalised, has significantly increased in prominence and is thus being accorded greater significance by both academics and policy makers (Dabbert et al. 2004). Within the academic literature organic farming has been the subject of recent debate, with social science concerns focusing particularly upon the extent to which it represents a genuine alternative to conventional production. However, within this work the impact of organic farming upon agricultural gender roles, relations and identities has been neglected.

Organic agriculture can be seen as having the potential to challenge conceptualisations of the rural environment within conventional agriculture, in which nature and culture are seen as separate. Rather, the holistic approach of its ideological foundations, in which the link between healthy soil, healthy plants and healthy people is explicitly fore grounded (Balfour 1946), suggests a view of nature and culture as intertwined (Tovey 2002). The modern-day organic ideology builds upon these historical roots in promoting working alongside, rather than attempting to control, nature (Vos 2000). In this way organic farming can be seen as challenging the conceptual separation of nature and (agri)culture (Goodman 1999). Within this thesis the interpretation of the organic agriculture movement's ideological standpoint is critically assessed in order to determine its impact

upon the gender roles, relations and identities expressed within the space of organic farming.

This study approaches the question of gender roles, relations and identities within organic agriculture using a mixed-method approach, grounded in an epistemology predominantly derived from feminist geography. The research is based upon a content analysis of publications drawn from the organic agriculture movement and semi-structured interviews with organic farmers. The data produced have been analysed relative to hegemonic agricultural masculinity and femininity representing the dominant construction of gender identities within conventional agriculture, derived from previous feminist scholarship. Additionally, the notion of 'third space' has been engaged with in order to reach an understanding of the outcomes of the research.

1.2 Research aims and objectives

The overall aim of this research is to critically examine whether the ideological standpoint of the organic agriculture movement facilitates the representation and construction of distinctive gender roles, relations and identities within agriculture. There are three specific objectives associated with achieving this research aim:

- To explore how gender roles, relations and identities have been represented by the organic agriculture movement throughout its history.
- To critically assess the ongoing construction and maintenance of gender roles, relations and identities within organic farming.
- To consider to what extent the gender roles, relations and identities observed contribute to the broad social objectives of the organic agriculture movement.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

Chapter Two provides the initial context and the theoretical framework for the research. Previous research findings are explored from which the hegemonic gender roles, relations and identities expressed within 'conventional' agriculture are elucidated. This provides a

demonstration of the highly 'traditional' gender roles, relations and identities that have been shown to dominate conventional agriculture. Furthermore, it is shown how the construction of hegemonic agricultural gender roles, relations and identities can be linked to dualistic understandings of masculinity and femininity.

Chapter Three continues the contextualisation and theoretical framing of the research. Within this chapter organic farming is proposed as a form of agriculture within which 'traditional' agricultural gender roles, relations and identities may not dominate. This argument is predicated upon particular features of the organic ideology that potentially unsettle the separation of nature and culture conceptualised as being at the root of the traditional constructions of gender roles, relations and identities found to be dominant within conventional agriculture. The concept of a 'third space' is introduced as an effective means of conceptualising this aspect of the organic ideology.

Chapter Four details the feminist research practice employed within this study, encompassing the epistemological approach, the methodology and the choice of methods, including a justification for using a mixed method approach. It describes in detail the necessary steps that were involved in conducting the content analysis and semi-structured interviews, and explains the methods of analysis employed.

Chapters Five to Seven outline, analyse and discuss the results of the research. Chapter Five presents the data from a content analysis of the representation of gender identities within publications drawn from the organic agriculture movement. Chapters Six and Seven report upon data from interviews with organic farmers. Within Chapter Six the different approaches adopted towards on-farm gender divisions of labour are explained, whilst Chapter Seven elucidates the approach of the farmers to the organic ideology.

Chapter Eight draws together the research findings and summarises the conclusions of this thesis. It focuses upon an analysis of gendered constructions of the organic ideology within a conceptualisation of organic farming as a 'third space'. It goes on to consider the implications for the social agenda of the organic agriculture movement. Finally, it reflects upon the potential of the research to inform new research agendas, and suggests specific areas for future research.

Chapter 2

AGRICULTURAL GENDER ROLES, RELATIONS AND IDENTITIES

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to develop an understanding of the masculine and feminine agricultural gender roles, relations and identities that are expressed within conventional farming. In order to do so, this chapter draws upon research literature related to four central themes. The resulting understanding of agricultural gender roles, relations and identities will be employed as a heuristic device in subsequent chapters to explore the notion that organic farming provides a space within agriculture for the representation and construction of distinctive gender roles, relations and identities.

The first section of the chapter will provide an overview of academic feminisms and situate this thesis within feminist geography. The chapter will then go on to illustrate the construction of agricultural gender identities through the assimilation of four interconnected, sequential themes, each of which will be discussed in turn. It will begin with a discussion of the foundational theme of how men and women are differentially associated with nature, and how these associations support dominant understandings of rurality. The second section is concerned with how dominant understandings of rurality shape rural gender roles, relations and identities. The next section will discuss the third theme of on-farm gender division of labour and gender relations. Fourthly, agricultural gender identities will be discussed. The final section of the chapter examines how individuals involved within agriculture have been shown to contest dominant constructions of agricultural gender identity. However, it will conclude that despite these contestations particular agricultural gender identities remain dominant.

2.2 Employing a feminist theoretical framework

Following an account of the development of feminist geographical theory, this section will show how this thesis is situated within feminist geography.

2.2.1 What is feminist theory?

This thesis is informed by feminist theory, which is broadly understood as:

> *...seek[ing] to analyse the conditions which shape women's lives and to explore cultural understandings of what it means to be a woman. It was initially guided by the political aims of the Women's Movement - the need to understand women's subordination and our exclusion from, or marginalisation within, a variety of cultural and social arenas. Feminists refuse to accept that inequalities between women and men are natural and inevitable and insist that they should be questioned. Theory, for us, is not an abstract intellectual activity divorced from women's lives, but seeks to explain the conditions under which those lives are lived. Developing this understanding has entailed looking at the material actualities of women's everyday experience and examining the ways in which we are represented and represent ourselves within a range of cultural practices, such as the arts and the media.*
>
> *(Jackson and Jones 1998, p. 1)*

This general, overarching definition usefully expresses the overall objectives of feminist theory. However, despite the apparent political unity of the feminist project, there are multiple academic feminisms encompassing a breadth of theoretical approaches; reflecting that feminist theory is about numerous and potentially contradictory locations and differences among, and within, different women (Braidotti 2005). The multi-stranded nature of contemporary feminism evolved out of its 'Second Wave' (the resurgence of political activism and feminist writing from the late 1960s in the United States (US) and United Kingdom (UK)), which acted as a catalyst for rapid development within the field. Feminism has since diversified, through a "constant process of debate, critique and reflection" (Jackson and Jones 1998, p. 3), into a multi-faceted, inter-disciplinary area of scholarship. The disciplinary area central to this thesis is feminist geography, which itself is influenced by the various strands of feminist theory. The feminist geographical basis of this thesis will be outlined below.

2.2.2 The development of feminist geographical theory

Early feminist geography was predominantly concerned with 'making women visible' within the discipline, both within geographical subject matter and within academic departments (Little 2002a). For example, in one of the most significant early articles on feminist geography (Paul Jones et al. 1997), Monk and Hanson (1982) identified sexist bias in geographic research through:

> *...inadequate specification of the research problem, construction of gender-blind theory, the assumption that a population adheres to traditional gender roles, avoidance of research themes that directly address women's lives, and denial of the significance of gender or of women's activities.*
>
> *(Monk and Hanson 1982, p. 14)*

Meanwhile, in her "path-breaking" (Duncan 2004, p. 363) book 'Feminism and Geography: the Limits of Geographical Knowledge', Rose (1993) argued that women "have been and continue to be marginalised as producers of geographical knowledge" (p. 2). Studies emanating from this initial phase in the development of feminist geography described the details of womens' lives, in particular their gender roles, gender divisions of labour and inequitable gender relations. Within this body of work, men and women's differential use of space, particularly in relation to the public/private dichotomy, was focused upon. However, descriptive studies of differences between men and women's behaviour and perceptions, although important, were not sufficient to explain *why* the differences (and, crucially, the inequalities) arise (WGSG 1984). Therefore, mirroring the developmental trends of feminist scholarship more widely, feminist geography entered its 'second phase', whereby the focus shifted from description to explanation, and from a focus on women to a focus on gender (Little 2002a).

This shift from women to an emphasis upon the construction of gender relations is described by Little (2002a, p. 18) in the following terms "[f]eminist theory prioritises the study of gender relations in seeking to understand the nature of gender difference and the production and operation of gender inequality". Clearly, therefore, the concept of gender is central to theorising in feminist geography. However, the term has evolved into two different, but interconnected usages: firstly in contrast to sex, and secondly as being

subsumable into sex (McDowell 1999). In its first usage, gender describes the socially constructed characteristics of masculinity and femininity and thus can be differentiated from sex, which depicts biological differences. By means of this distinction between sex/gender feminists have been able to challenge the 'naturalness' and universality of gender divisions, thus enabling feminist geographers to theorise gendered characteristics as spatially and temporally variable. The second perspective on gender differences challenges the biological basis of the sex/gender distinction and its reliance upon a universal conceptualisation of the body. In this view the body itself is theorised as variable.

In the so called 'second phase' of feminist geography the sex/gender distinction was predominantly drawn upon, and research emphasised the uncovering of variations in the ways material social practices resulted in inequitable gender relations (McDowell 1999). Feminist social theory and the concept of patriarchy were crucial to this work. Feminist social theory is based on the premise that male dominance is derived from social, economic and political societal arrangements. In their initial attempts to account for women's subordination, feminists drew upon reformulated versions of Marxism, giving rise to the 'patriarchy debates', between those who saw it as arising from capitalism and those who saw it as arising from patriarchy (Stacey 1993). Patriarchy, in the specific feminist usage of the term, "refers to the system in which men as a group are assumed to be superior to women as a group and so to have authority over them" (McDowell and Sharp 1999, p. 196). In a key article, Foord and Gregson (1986) promoted the use of patriarchy as a theoretical framework for feminist geographers. However, patriarchy has remained a subject over which there is much debate. In particular, the concept has been criticised for its inability to account for historical and cross-cultural variations in gender relations and in differences between women (Segal 1987). Despite these criticisms Walby (1989) argued for its continued relevance and developed its flexibility by identifying six causal structures of social relations that structure gender relations: the patriarchal mode of production, patriarchal relations in waged labour, the patriarchal state, male violence, patriarchal sexuality, and patriarchal culture. This overarching conceptualisation of patriarchy was also criticised for its ethnocentricity and for ignoring the interconnections between gender relations and other social divisions (See Gottfried 1998; Pollert 1996).

More recent work has developed the conceptualisation of patriarchy in relation to gender orders or regimes, emphasising the complexity and variety of the inequalities caused by gender relations and in their ability to change (See Connell 1995; Duncan 1994; Walby 1997). Furthermore, Connell (1995) has developed the dichotomy of 'hegemonic masculinity' and 'emphasised femininity' as a framework for exploring patriarchal gender relations. The concept of 'hegemonic masculinity' (and the related term 'emphasised femininity') has been used to understand the study of masculinity as a 'critical adjunct' to feminist analyses (Campbell and Bell 2000). As stated by Connell (1995, p. 74): "Hegemonic masculinity is not a fixed character type, always and everywhere the same. It is, rather, the masculinity that occupies the hegemonic position in a given pattern of gender relations". Thus, alongside hegemonic masculinity it is posited that there exists a range of relationally empowered masculinities. Although its usage has not been without critique, the concept of hegemonic masculinity has been successful in identifying forms of domination by men, of women and of other men (Hearn 2004).

Despite the ongoing debates surrounding patriarchy, it remains influential within feminist theorising and to the field of feminist geography. Moreover, as identified by Bennett (2004), despite the focus of academic work having shifted from a direct confrontation with the persistence of patriarchal structures, "plenty of academic work (often indirectly) demonstrates their endurance" (p. 147). Therefore, although the 'cultural turn' in feminist theory has led to a shift in emphasis from social science perspectives to approaches drawn from literary and cultural theory, feminist social theory continues to play an important role in understanding the material basis of male dominance (Jackson 1998).

Feminist geographers have increasingly engaged with the 'cultural turn' within geography, which can be defined as the "meeting of social and cultural geography based upon a shared interest in social, cultural, literary and psychoanalytic theories" (McDowell and Sharp 1999, p. 183). Under the influence of the 'cultural turn' and the shifting focus of the political aims of feminism, the dominant emphasis of feminist geography has changed from a focus upon the material inequalities between men and women to a focus on "language, symbolism, representations and meanings in the definition of gender, and on questions about subjectivity, identity and the sexed body" (McDowell 1999, p. 7). This

has led to the recognition of difference, multiple locations and the instability of gendered subjectivities (McDowell 1992). Post-structural, and specifically post-colonial, feminists have been at the forefront of challenging the primacy of gender as an analytical category, arguing that it is mutually constituted along with other social categories such as race and sexuality (WGSG 1997). Therefore, the understanding of gender identity as fluid and contingent has become central to feminist analyses. In this view gender is seen as being constructed and maintained through discourse and everyday actions (McDowell 1999). Discourses of femininity and masculinity refer to "sets of practices and ideas that shape appropriate behaviour, roles, appearance and aspirations for men and women" (McDowell and Sharp 1999, p. 60-61) that vary over space and time, and the way in which spaces themselves are discursively produced.

The shifts occurring within feminist scholarship to accommodate the issues discussed above can be seen as paralleling those within postmodern theory more widely (McDowell 1992). However, as described by Haraway (1991, p. 147), for feminists this recognition of difference and multiple subjectivities can be empowering rather than disabling:

> *While contributing fundamentally to the breakup of any master subject location, the politics of 'difference' emerging from this and other complex reconstructings of concepts of social subjectivity and their associated writings is deeply opposed to levelling relativisms. Non-feminist theory has tended to identify the breakup of 'coherent' or masterful subjectivity as the 'death of the subject'. Like others in newly unstably subjugated positions, many feminists resist this formulation of the project and question its emergence just at the moment when raced/sexed/colonised speakers begin 'for the first time', that is, they claim an originary authority to represent themselves in institutionalised publishing practices and other kinds of self-constituting practice.*
>
> *(Haraway 1991, p. 147)*

Or in the words of Braidotti (2005, p. 204) "all deconstructions are equal but some are more equal than others": Feminism can be seen as having been deconstructed as "a preclude to offering positive new values and effective ways of asserting political presence" (Braidotti 2005, p. 205).

2.2.3 Drawing upon feminist geography

This thesis draws its framework from feminist geography and its engagement with feminist social and cultural theories. Within this thesis gender is seen as being socially constructed and distinct from sex. However, whilst gender is prioritised as the central analytical category, the research framework is also informed by post-structuralist feminist positions which recognise 'difference' and challenge the 'structure of othering' central to Western knowledge (WGSG 1997). In this view it is clearly untenable that there exists an analytically separate gender identity specific to agriculture per se. However, while it is accepted that there is no single 'agricultural femininity' or 'agricultural masculinity', the remainder of this chapter will show that a hegemonic agricultural masculinity and femininity can be identified that exist alongside other, less dominant forms. The following section will argue that the relationship between gender and nature plays an important role within the formation of rural gender identities, and in the related formation of hegemonic agricultural gender identity.

2.3 Gender and nature

As asserted by Little (2002a, p. 69) the relationship between gender and nature "underpins many of the values, assumptions and attitudes" that shape men's and women's experiences of rurality and as such this relationship is crucial to an understanding of gender identities expressed within agriculture. This section will explore how the pervasiveness of dualistic thinking within Western society helps to legitimise patriarchy and influences the construction of gendered relationships with nature.

2.3.1 Dualisms, gender and nature

Feminist theorists have claimed that the structure of Western thought is dualistic and gendered as man/woman (Johnston 2005). This has enabled "a focus on the ways in which certain knowledge becomes aligned with masculinity (and privileged) and how other knowledge becomes aligned with femininity (and devalued)" (Johnston 2005, p. 121). Feminist geographers have adopted this critique of binary categories with regard to the construction of knowledge and discourse within geography. Clearly, one of the most

important aspects of binary categories for geographers is how they relate to the concepts of space and place (WGSG 1997). Moreover, of particular relevance to feminist geography and to this thesis, is how the man/woman binary influences gendered divisions of labour and the associated binaries of production/reproduction, public/private and home/work; and therefore, how it impacts upon the construction of gender identity.

One of the most important dualisms in Western thought, and indeed one central to the discipline of Geography, is that of nature/culture (Rose 1993). The association between women and nature is a social construction that has prevailed "throughout culture, language and history", albeit in significantly different guises (Merchant 1990, p. xix). In recent history the dominance of the mechanistic world view, developed through the western philosophical and mathematical traditions, has led to the perception of a feminised nature as wild and unruly and thus as something that needs to be controlled. As argued by Merchant (1990, p. 2), the ideas "of mechanism and of the domination and mastery of nature, became core concepts of the modern world" fundamental to industrialisation and the development of commercialism:

> *...an organically oriented mentality in which female principles played an important role was undermined and replaced by a mechanically oriented mentality that either eliminated or used female principles in an exploitative manner....The change in controlling imagery was directly related to changes in human attitudes and behaviour toward the earth. Whereas the nurturing earth image can be viewed as a cultural constraint restricting the types of socially and morally sanctioned human actions allowable with respect to the earth, the new images of mastery and domination functioned as cultural sanctions for the denudation of nature.*
>
> *(Merchant 1990, p. 2)*

What is crucial within this argument is that the separation of nature from society is seen as being linked to the dominance of patriarchal gender relations. The cultural association of women with nature and men with society is a dualistic construction which is also linked to numerous other pairs of dualisms that are legitimised within the mechanistic world view and vertically conflated through the engendering of the nature/society opposition (Rose 1993). Moreover, as argued by Plumwood (1993), in dualistic constructions "the qualities (actual or supposed), the culture, the values and the areas of life associated with the

dualised other are systematically and pervasively constructed and depicted as inferior" (Plumwood 1993, p. 47). Plumwood goes on to describe the influence of dualisms within society and specifically how they act to naturalise the inferiority of the 'othered' groups:

> *A dualism is an intense, established and developed cultural expression of....a hierarchical relationship, constructing central cultural concepts and identities so as to make equality and mutuality literally unthinkable. Dualism is a relation of separation and domination inscribed and naturalised in culture and characterised by radical exclusion, distancing and opposition between orders constructed as systematically higher and lower, as inferior and superior, as ruler and ruled, which treats the division as part of the natures of beings construed not merely as different but as belonging to radically different orders or kinds, and hence as not open to change.*
>
> *(Plumwood 1993, p. 47-48)*

Through the integration of dualisms into cultural norms, it is argued that the subjugated groups internalise the inferiorisation within their identity and thus "collude in this low valuation, honouring the values of the centre, which form the dominant social values" (Plumwood 1993, p. 47).

The importance of the cultural persistence of dualisms in maintaining patriarchal dominance and hegemonic masculinity has been recognised by gender theorist Connell:

> *A familiar theme in patriarchal ideology is that men are rational while women are emotional. This is a deep-seated assumption in European philosophy....Science and technology, seen by the dominant ideology as the motors of progress, are culturally defined as a masculine realm. Hegemonic masculinity establishes its hegemony partly by its claim to embody the power of reason, and thus represent the interests of whole society.*
>
> *(Connell 1995, p. 164)*

Connell (1995) employs the dichotomy of hegemonic masculinity and emphasised femininity as a framework for exploring gender relations and identities. This framework is not itself conceived as a dualism. Instead, Connell recognises the pervasiveness of dualisms within popular culture as crucial to maintaining difference between men and women, and thus for enabling hegemonic masculinities, and therefore patriarchy, to

persist. Importantly, Connell conceives hegemonic masculinity as part of a configuration of gender practice in which it is "the masculinity that occupies the hegemonic position in a given pattern of gender relations, a position always contestable" (Connell 1995, p. 76). Thus hegemonic masculinity is understood as varying spatially and temporally, and as being defined in relation to femininity.

This thesis seeks to explore the contention that the persistence of dualistic thinking, and the related cultural legitimacy of hegemonic masculinity and emphasised femininity, shapes the relationship between gender and the production and consumption of the rural landscape and environment. Whilst the control of nature resonates with traditional hegemonic masculinity and men's power over women, the perceived closeness of women to nature resonates with traditional emphasised femininity and women's related lack of power (Little 2002a). Culturally pervasive dualisms, such as masculine/feminine, culture/nature, rural/urban, public/private and production/reproduction, provide the foundations for the rural ideology and its' associated gendering of rural spaces and power relations:

> *...nature and the rural landscape incorporate and reflect gendered power relations; power relations, moreover, that are not confined to the way we experience nature and the rural landscape, but impinge on other social and economic characteristics of the countryside through their role in constructions of masculinity, femininity and rurality.*
>
> *(Little 2002a, p. 70)*

The following discussion will explore how the persistence of dualisms naturalises the dominant hegemonic masculinity and emphasised femininity that shape gendered relationships with the rural landscape and environment. Of particular significance to this thesis is how the cultural sanctioning of the domination of nature informs and interacts with the dominant constructions of agricultural masculinity and femininity that are argued to persist within conventional farming, although this is a subject that will be considered specifically in the later section on gender identity in agriculture.

2.3.2 Emphasised femininity: embedded within the rural landscape and environment

It has been suggested above that there is a tradition within Western society of understanding nature as feminine, and thus viewing femininity as being closer to nature than masculinity. The association between women and nature, as explained by Little (2002a), is linked to the gendering of the rural landscape as female: "Our ways of seeing the landscape...embrace very powerful ideas about not only the position of women and the relationship between men and women within the rural environment, but also the association between femininity and nature" (p. 51). It can be shown how representations of the landscape reveal these gendered associations. For example, Rose (1993) describes how the representation of landscape within nineteenth century European and North American landscape art not only feminised nature by drawing upon associations with the female body, but also reflected the power relations of men over both women and nature:

> *The female figure represents landscape, and landscape a female torso, visually in part through their pose: paintings of Woman and Nature often share the same topography of passivity and stillness. The comparison is also made through the association of both land and Woman with reproduction, fertility and sexuality, free from the constraints of Culture. Incorporating all of these associations, both Woman and Nature are vulnerable to the desires of men.*
>
> *(Rose 1993, p. 96)*

Thus in such representations of the landscape, the ability of men to control women is depicted as being linked to their ability to control nature, an association which influences the wider gendering of the rural environment (Little 2002a).

However, visual representations of the landscape do not necessarily support patriarchal gender relations, and therefore as argued by Nash (1996) "Rather than interpretation being framed by a concentration on male visual pleasure in images of landscape or the female body, interpretation needs to acknowledge the multiplication of contexts and relations of reception and the diverse and contingent meanings and effects of representations" (p. 152). Indeed Nash shows how depictions of the male body as landscape deliberately deconstruct assumptions about the male and female gaze and concludes that:

Certain forms of visual representation may support patriarchal power relations, but looking is never only or just masculine. To view body as land or land as body has no essential meaning, yet neither can it ever be innocent. Its politics are always contextual; there are different kinds of looking.

(Nash 1996, p. 167)

Nevertheless, what is being argued here is not that there is an essential male gaze but that a particular dominant masculinity has drawn upon the land/body metaphor in order to legitimise the control of women and nature and that these power relations can be shown to be depicted within representations of the landscape.

2.3.3 Hegemonic masculinity: control over the rural landscape and environment

As has been discussed above there is a long tradition within Western society of distancing masculinity from a feminised nature, in a position of dominance and control. Indeed it can be shown how the feminisation of the landscape and environment can be critical in the production of particular forms of hegemonic masculinity. This notion will be explored through several studies that consider the influence of the rural landscape upon the construction of masculinity. These studies, although having different subject matters, have in common that they each describe a hegemonic masculinity which, in order to persist, requires the externalisation and control of nature.

The 'othering' of nature in the representation of a particular version of masculinity is explored by Phillips (1995), who interprets the metaphorical femininity of the landscape depicted in British Victorian juvenile adventure books as presenting "an other against which the hero can define his masculine self" (p. 601):

When adventurers confront this metaphorical femininity, they do so from a safe distance, admiring awesome rather than intimate scenes, and doing so from the detached and commanding security of promontories. They never get very close to nature, even when they have "penetrated" her. Their relationship to the metaphorically feminine nature, as to the women left behind in the settlement, is one of distance, detachment and difference.

(Phillips 1995, p. 601)

Phillips sees the literature as a "figurative expression of the more general mapping of masculinity (including masculine culture, society) in relation to constructions of femininity (landscape, nature)" (p. 601). In a similar way the modern day 'mythopoetic men's movement' uses the rural landscape and environment to provide the opportunity for city men to redefine and reclaim their masculinity from the perceived threat of the feminist movement and changing gender relations (Bonnett 1996).

The landscape and environment of rural Britain has been shown to be critical in producing the British Army's particular version of hegemonic masculinity, termed the 'warrior hero' by Woodward (Woodward 1998; Woodward 2000). The identity of the 'warrior hero' is shaped during (male) army recruits training, crucial to which is its setting within the rural landscape:

> *The recruits become exhausted, cold, wet, hungry, and injured, but still they carry on. And throughout, while superior officers urge them on, their identities as men are forged. The sheer physical challenge of route marches and mountain running is presented as a test of one's manhood. The warrior hero must be fit enough to conquer landscapes; indeed he is literally made in the landscape of the Army's training areas.*
>
> *(Woodward 2000, p. 651)*

Woodward (2000) shows how the masculinity of the 'warrior hero' is defined in opposition to femininity through the use of imagery that genders the landscape as female, claiming that: "the labelling of [landscape] attributes as female and the subsequent denial of their place in the soldier's lifeworld are key components of this model of military masculinity" (p. 652). Thus the masculinity constructed within the British Army conquers and dominates the (feminised) rural landscape and environment.

The performances of rural masculinity described above have in common with rural gay masculinity the exploiting of associations between the rural landscape and the expression of a dominant masculinity. Despite the exclusion of homosexual identities from dominant constructions of rurality, the rural environment has been an important site within the 'gay imaginary' (Bell 2000). Within homosexual imagery the dualism of rurality/urbanity is drawn upon in order to idealise the rural landscape as a site in which to be(come) a man opposed to the effeminising tendency of the city. In this way "a certain kind of rurality is

powerfully erotised; it is remote, wild, and natural as are its people" and therefore "the rural is eroticised and masculinity is naturalised in such a way that same-sex genital activity can be accommodated without suggesting effeminacy" (Bell 2000, p. 559).

Jones (1999) argues that the disassociation of maleness from nature is a process that starts in puberty. He demonstrates how cultural constructions associating maleness with nature can be identified within idealised visions of childhood whereby the 'natural' state of childhood is a 'wild, innocent maleness' embedded within rural space. In order to take part in this construction it is argued that girls have to acquire the status of tomboy, a resistance strategy which is, however, cut off by the on-set of puberty. In this way, as argued by Jones:

> *...it seems that male children are seen as part of nature....and that they grow from this into adult 'cultural beings'. [As] the processes which produce the masculine hyperseparated self, start in male childhood through the differentiation from the mother and the feminine and from the 'other' more generally (including nature). Conversely, female children seem to start out constructed as entities of culture....and then transform into 'natural beings'*
>
> *(Jones 1999, p. 133)*

2.3.4 Summary of section 2.3

This section has shown how dualistically gendered concepualisations of the relationship between nature and culture influence the relationships of masculinity and femininity with rurality. It demonstrated, in sub-section 2.3.1, how feminist theorists have argued that the structure of Western thought is dualistic and gendered as man/woman. In particular, the association between women and nature was highlighted and its relationship to the subordination of women within patriarchal gender relations. The related concepts of emphasised femininity and hegemonic masculinity were drawn upon. Sub-section 2.3.2 discussed how 'emphasised femininity' is given legitimacy through associations of women and nature and the following sub-section 2.3.3 showed how 'hegemonic masculinity' legitimates the control of nature and the rural landscape.

2.4 Rural ideology, rural community and rural gender identity

The construction of rurality is mediated through societal understandings of nature. Therefore the understanding of nature as gendered, as discussed above, is reflected and reproduced within notions of rurality and rural community. Agricultural gender identities are embedded within rural communities and influence the accepted norms of this cultural concept. Whilst 'rural gender identity' is not being conflated with 'agricultural gender identity' it is understood that they do share characteristics due to their geographical and cultural position within rural spaces. The understanding of the term 'rurality' is itself contested (See Halfacree 1993; Halfacree 1995; Hoggart 1988; Jones 1995; Murdoch and Pratt 1993; Philo 1992; 1993). However, within this thesis a particular understanding of rurality is employed, as will be outlined below, within which particular versions of rural masculinity and femininity are legitimised; an understanding of rurality which draws heavily upon the dualism of rurality/urbanity. This section of the chapter will consider the social construction of the rural ideology and its influence upon rural gender roles, relations, identities and sexuality.

2.4.1 The rural ideology

The prevailing cultural understanding of rurality is dominated by a particular conceptualisation, which carries with it prescriptive and highly traditional notions of acceptable gender roles, relations and identities. It is acknowledged that understandings of 'rurality' are fluid in so far as their construction "takes place over a range of different spatial scales, shifting subtly in emphasis over time" (Little and Austin 1996, p. 102), however, as asserted by Little and Austin (1996):

> *...there are clearly elements of the cultural representation of rurality that endure, changed only minimally, over time and space. Indeed it is the very sustainability of the 'images' and 'myths' of rural life that ensure their importance not simply as reflections of people's views and beliefs about rurality but also as a force in the recreation of 'place' and associated socio-spatial relations*
>
> *(Little and Austin 1996, p. 102)*

One such enduring element of the cultural representation of rurality as identified by Little and Austin (1996) is the naturalisation of patriarchal gender relations manifest in the centrality of home and family and the positioning of women at the centre of both, and conversely, the positioning of men as peripheral to both. This construction has emerged from agriculture. Indeed it has been argued that the 'traditional', i.e. agrarian, nature of rural gender relations is pivotal to the dominant construction of rurality within which the notions of family and rural community are inextricably linked (Little 2004). The importance of traditional and conventional gender relations to cultural constructions of rurality was first conceptualised by Davidoff et al. (1976) who identified the marriage of the rural and domestic idylls during the eighteenth century (a concept which they termed the 'Beau Ideal') into a pervasive, naturalised ideology which continues to persist today:

> *[The Beau Ideal] was adopted by a wide spectrum of social groups in all parts of society, and through its physical manifestations as well as through oral and written traditions it remains very much a part of our thinking about the social and physical world.*
>
> *(Davidoff et al. 1976, p. 145)*

Little (2004) identified the following three aspects of Davidoff et al.'s argument that have proven to be crucial in formulating an understanding of rural gender relations: the claim that rural gender roles are governed by a set of patriarchal gender relations in which women's domestic and community roles are controlled by men; that these gender relations form part of the social and cultural construction of rurality; and that a specifically rural ideology persisted which acted to shape these rural gender relations in a particular manner. There is evidence that these ideas persist even in the face of contemporary changes in the rural population as in-migrants "invest in established ideas of rural community and a belief in the continuing relevance of what are seen as traditional rural values" (Little 2002a, p. 85). Thus dominant social and cultural understandings of what constitutes the rural community sustain, and are sustained by, agrarian gender roles and relations (Little 2002a). For the purposes of this thesis it is important to understand how the dominant rural ideology, and its assumed gender identities, is reproduced in contemporary rural society.

2.4.2 Rurality, domesticity and the 'rural woman'

It has been suggested that the dominant 'rural ideology' has a large influence upon the positioning of women in rural areas and thus impacts their daily lives (Little 1986). However, this historically specific construction of rural gender identities that makes the natural link between womanhood, domesticity and community should be considered in the light of more general feminist debates (Hughes 1997a). The 'cultural turn' disrupted the idea of a stable, homogenous gender identity shared by all women, an understanding which has been supplanted by the concept of difference; a concept which recognises the importance of factors that act in conjunction with gender, such as race, class and sexuality, to produce multiple identities (see Little (1999) for a review of work in rural geography). Despite the importance of recognising difference, it has also been acknowledged that aspects of gender identity may be shared by women in particular places at particular times (Little 1997a). Therefore, although the 'domestic woman' found within popular conceptualisations of rurality has been exposed as a social construction (Hughes 1997a), recent research has nevertheless shown the prevailing influence of the dominant rural ideology upon women living within contemporary rural England, and its impact upon their everyday lives. It has been identified that this ideology encourages a number of characteristics which are central to expectations regarding women's identity in rural communities. This has led to the development of a particular (dominant) construction of rural femininity which links "women and domesticity with notions of the organic community" (Hughes 1997a, p. 125):

> *There is an image of 'the rural woman' to which, clearly, not all women conform - and to which, perhaps, no woman conforms totally - but which nevertheless influences the behaviour, values and expectations of all rural women and men, and hence becomes incorporated in a very real sense within gender identities.*
>
> *(Little 1997a, p. 155)*

'The rural woman' identified by Little (1997a) prioritises childcare and family reproduction over employment and takes an active role in sustaining the rural community through engaging in a range of voluntary work. Research supporting this notion has identified that the employment options for rural women are constrained not only by

structural factors such as the scarcity and limited range of jobs, access to childcare and transport (Little 1987; Little 1997b) but also "through the moral and social orders in village life" that position women in the home (Hughes 1997a, p. 131). Hughes (1997a) found that these dominant constructions are sustained in part through the attitudes of women themselves who openly disapprove and exclude others who do not conform to the accepted vision of a 'rural woman'. The degree of antipathy identified towards rural women's involvement in paid work is in contrast to attitudes towards rural women undertaking voluntary work within the rural community. Indeed it has been shown that women can incur hostility if they *don't* partake in such voluntary activities. The importance attributed to women's voluntary work in sustaining rural communities is part of the cultural construction of rurality in which women's traditional roles are celebrated and rewarded (Little 1997b). Thus it is evident that rural women's lives are shaped not only by their own perceptions of appropriate roles but also by pressure from the expectations of others (Hughes 1997a).

However, more recently research has emerged which, through focusing on gender identity, highlights the diversity of rural women's experiences and thus challenges the universality of the domestic 'rural woman' (Little and Panelli 2003). This can be illustrated by focusing upon research conducted into rural womens' experiences of the labour market. Research undertaken by Little and Morris (2005), for example, has indicated that the contrast between rural women's employment options and overall trends in the UK are becoming less marked, and that a more tolerant attitude is evolving towards rural women undertaking paid work. Furthermore it was found that there are significant variations within rural womens' experiences of the labour market, with class being of particular influence. Yet, despite the clear changes and variations in rural womens' experiences of the labour market as revealed by this research, the authors note that other aspects of their roles do not appear to be altering in line with these changes:

Although it seems to be the case that it is now more acceptable for rural women to undertake paid work, that working women are no longer so contentious or in opposition to rural family and community life, this does not appear to be impacting upon their other, more traditional roles, as women are now doing both. Thus, the apparent changes in rural women's employment experiences revealed by the data may be relatively superficial.

(Little and Morris 2005, p. 24)

As Little and Morris note this then raises questions about the implications of the changes in the labour market upon rural gender identities and that perhaps women's increasing involvement in paid work is legitimised by their "continued contribution ....to domestic and community life" (p. 25). Similar conclusions were drawn by Hughes and Nativel (2005) from their research on (female) lone parents in rural areas of England. They found that although there were variations in the womens' experiences of paid work, for the majority:

...family and work are inevitably interwoven with the majority combining their caring responsibilities with part-time work....Paid work was viewed as positive in so far as it benefited 'the family'. As such, this research ultimately confirms and supports earlier arguments put forward by feminist rural geographers that rural women are not high-flying career women, but primarily home-centred.

(Hughes and Nativel 2005, p. 41)

While the prioritisation of family over work is by no means unique to rural lone parents what is interesting here is that the women understood the particular constraints upon their labour opportunities caused by living within a rural area (particularly as lone parents) yet continued to do so due to the strength of their values that understood country living to be beneficial for family life, and especially for the well being of their children. Furthermore, the research found that lone parents in rural areas actually had a higher than average participation in the labour market (although not necessarily in work that fulfilled their qualifications), a finding that Hughes and Nativel understood to be influenced by pressure from the rural ideology that "rejects social dependency and reliance on benefits and 'government handouts'" (p. 41).

In a recent paper, Henderson and Hoggart (2003) dispute the notion that the position of rural women is "somehow special; that the forces of socialisation, opportunity and constraint in some way bear more heavily on women in rural areas than in cities" (p. 371). Whilst recognising the existence of a rural ideology that impacts upon gender relations, they stress that it is not confined to rural locations. Therefore, they suggest that research should turn to a consideration of particular 'mind-sets', rather than specific locations, in order to understand rural cultures and their impacts upon gender relations.

As this section has shown, the dominant understanding of rural womanhood is open to contestation and women "will, at different times of their lives, engage with, contest and rework dominant conceptualisations of rurality and particularly the feminine identities bound up within these constructions" (Hughes 1997b, p. 184). However, it is also clear that the agrarian-based rural ideology and the expected roles of 'rural woman' continue to be influential upon the gender identities of rural women.

2.4.3 Rurality, hegemonic masculinity and the 'rural man'

Evidently the rural ideology also impacts upon men, in terms of their roles and the expression of masculine gender identities within rural communities. Just as the rural ideology positions women at the centre of home and family within the rural community, it constructs men's 'natural' position as outside of the domestic sphere. Hence the rural ideology positions men as breadwinners engaged with the public domain. Furthermore, although studies of womens' roles within rural communities have shown that men do 'help out' with community activities, they are largely peripheral to their organisation and do not experience the same pressure as women to undertake such voluntary work (Hughes 1997b). Thus the patriarchal structuring of rural society ensures the maintenance and reproduction of a traditional hegemonic 'rural man'. However, just as the idea of a 'rural woman' has been unsettled by the cultural turn so the idea of a singular 'rural man' is also untenable. Despite this, it is argued here that, just as the rural ideology has been shown to have a pervasive influence upon rural women, so it must also continue to exert a considerable influence upon the lives of rural men. As with constructions of rural femininity, conceptualisations of rurality and masculinity are mutually constituted, in

other words masculinity is constructed within rural spaces and sites, and notions of rurality help to constitute notions of masculinity (Campbell and Bell 2000). As such it is suggested that a dominant conceptualisation of rural masculinity can be deduced. Studies which show how hegemonic masculinity is reproduced within the society and culture of rural communities will be discussed below.

A study by Campbell (2000), argues that rural pubs can operate as "a key site where hegemonic forms of masculinity are constructed, reproduced, and successfully defended." (p. 563) through the performance of two characteristics of so called pub(lic) masculinity: namely 'conversational cockfighting' and 'disciplines of drinking'. This process of constructing pub(lic) masculinity draws upon a binary categorisation of masculinity and femininity, whereby the masculine 'ideal' remains an unacknowledged standard against which femininity is acknowledged and derided:

> *Physical performance was gendered: spilling or slopping beer, leaving beer unconsumed in a glass, and an inability to "hold you piss", were characteristic of women and children. Such gendering involved both the embodied disciplines of drinking and a wider assessment of men's skills outside the pub. Occupations outside the acceptable range of manual labouring, agriculturally related activities were also feminised derisively.*
>
> *(Campbell 2000, p. 576)*

Crucial to the negation of femininity within this hegemonic masculine performance is the importance of being able to act "symbolically unmarried" and to deny the tie of domestic responsibilities. As such, Campbell showed how the rural pub is a site in which rural men are able to demonstrate their power through the performance and legitimising of a specific form of hegemonic masculinity which draws upon the ideological separation of masculine and feminine spheres. Similarly, Leyshon (1995), in his study of the performance of young people's identity in English pubs, identifies that the process of learning to enact a specific hegemonic masculinity associated with drinking enables young men to gain power and legitimacy within their rural community whilst also acting to marginalise young women and 'other' young men to "bit parts in the performance of rurality" (p. 120).

Little and Jones (2000) also show, albeit in a rather different context, how rural structures can both reflect and reproduce male power through drawing upon a particular set of

hegemonic masculine values and assumptions, legitimised through their construction in opposition to feminine values and assumptions. Using their case study of the English 'Rural Challenge' rural regeneration policy they argue that hegemonic male power is reproduced within the rural policy making process through "...the emphasis on direct competition, the priority given to the private sector and the preference for large-scale, flagship, style projects", all of which, they argue, favour "particular masculine working practices and values" (Little and Jones 2000, p. 19).

However, despite the demonstrable persistence of hegemonic masculinity in rural areas, it has also been highlighted that rural restructuring is acting to threaten this form of rural masculinity within some groups of rural men. This is a particular issue for men whose sense of masculine identity is associated with traditional rural industries, the decline of which is leading to their increasing marginalisation. In particular, men involved within agriculture are reported to be increasingly undergoing a crisis in their masculinity because, as suggested by Peter et al. (2000), the struggle to survive in farming is also a struggle to retain ones identity as a man. Ni Laoire (2001) describes the situation as follows:

> *As farming undergoes radical change, rural masculinities, as traditionally defined, are under threat. This is not to suggest that the power of men in rural society is necessarily under threat, rather that the power of certain groups of rural men is undermined through processes of agricultural rationalisation and the discursive power of the mobility ethos. While hegemonic masculinities are undergoing transformation, certain groups of rural men, such as the marginal farmers and the isolated, may be most affected by challenges to hegemonic masculinities. It is those men whose livelihoods and very identities are affected by rural restructuring for whom a crisis of masculinity may be a reality.*
>
> *(Ni Laoire 2001, p. 232)*

This marginalisation is attested by the rising levels of stress within farming households and, in its most extreme manifestation, the increasing rates of suicide amongst male (and female) farmers (Ni Laoire 2001; Price and Evans 2005). This can be partially understood as a demonstration of the strength of the pressure to maintain the idealistic notion of the farming 'way of life', which itself is entwined within a dominant rural ideology and the gendered associations that this concept embodies (Price and Evans 2005).

A rather different expression of male marginalisation within rural areas is the rise of right wing militias in rural North America related to the farming crisis which has persisted since the 1980s:

> *...for many the continuing farm crisis is a gender crisis: a crisis of masculinity....Many white, rural American men feel under siege and vulnerable, unsure of their manhood. They are furious and are looking for someone to blame. Some direct their rage inward, even to the point of suicidal thoughts and actions. Others direct their anger outward.*
>
> *(Kimmel and Ferber 2000, p. 585)*

The rhetoric of the militia's anger is highly gendered and aimed at restoring their own (hegemonic) masculinity through the violent subjugation of what is conceived as the emasculating power of feminists and numerous 'others'.

The two previous examples, namely the rise of rural suicide rates in the UK and the rise of right wing militias in rural America, are extreme manifestations of the marginalisation of hegemonic rural masculinity. However, they nevertheless provide an insight into the power of the dominant conceptualisation of rural masculinity as a legitimising ideology through which rural men express their own gender identities. In this respect these two extreme examples of responses that can occur in part due to the challenging of this hegemonic masculinity, are highly revealing of its pervasiveness and persistence in the lives of rural men.

2.4.4 Rurality and sexuality

The dominant emphasis upon the family and community that has been shown to persist within rural spaces carries with it the presumption of heterosexuality which is translated into the expression of rural gender identities (Little 2002b). Drawing upon geographies of the body, Little (2002b) argues that representations of rural bodies as "non-sexual, unerotic and unthreatening underpins the highly conventional gender identities - including the assumptions of heterosexuality and the emphasis on the family - found in rural society" (p. 4). Thus the particular construction of sexuality that dominates rural society draws upon highly conventional gender relations and identities in which the perceived

'naturalness' of heterosexuality is pivotal; thus (dominant) constructions of rural gender identity and heterosexuality are shown to be inextricably linked (Little 2003).

However, some aspects of the rural idyll have also been appropriated by homosexuals in order to forge their own space within the countryside community; revealing how the dominant construction of rural sexuality can be challenged whilst maintaining aspects of the dominant idea of rural community. Valentine (1997, p. 111) shows how the imagined rural of US lesbian separatist communities shared with traditional constructions of rurality the idea that rural space was "healthy, simple, peaceful [and] safe" whilst also acting to marginalise and exclude 'other' groups. Their idea of rurality also drew heavily upon the dualism of rural/urban, whereby the communities saw themselves as being protected by nature in their rural community separated from the 'heteropatriarchal' 'man-made' space of the city. Similarly, as discussed previously, Bell (2000) shows how the rural/urban dualism and aspects of traditional rural masculinity are drawn upon by homosexual men in their use of the rural in the 'gay imaginary'. In this conceptualisation the location of rural communities within the rural landscape facilitates the expression of a natural (homosexual) masculinity compared to the influence of the urban environment and community which is seen as effeminising gay men.

2.4.5 Summary of section 2.4

This section has discussed the relationship between gendered conceptualisations of nature and the dominant gender roles, relations and identities expressed within rural areas. Sub-section 2.4.1 presented the notion of a rural ideology, derived from agrarianism, which is argued to persist within rural areas, showing how emphasised femininity and hegemonic masculinity are central to this ideology. The following sub-sections, 2.4.2 and 2.4.3, demonstrated the impacts of the rural ideology upon the lives of women and men living within rural areas; showing how the rural ideology emphasises traditional gender roles, relations and identities. Sub-section 2.4.4 discussed the relationship between the rural ideology and sexuality, showing how, despite the emphasis upon heterosexuality in rural areas, homosexual groups have appropriated the rural ideology in order to create their own subversive constructions.

2.5 Agricultural gender roles and relations

Through the practice of agriculture, humans directly engage with nature and shape the landscape. Furthermore agriculture is central to popular understandings of rurality. As such agriculture can be viewed as a specific case in which the themes discussed above, namely the gendered relationship of society and nature and the related expression of rural gender relations and identities can be seen to converge and interact.

Research conducted into conventional agriculture has shown the numerous ways in which farming is a highly gendered occupation. It has been found that within family farming women typically undertake a range of roles all of which are important to the maintenance of the farming household and farming business. However, this work undertaken by women on family farms is not officially recognised and neither is it highly valued. Family farming is understood here, following Gasson and Errington (1993), as farming that displays the following six elements to some degree:

- Business ownership is combined with managerial control in the hands of business principals.
- These principals are related by kinship or marriage.
- Family members (including these business principals) provide capital to the business.
- Family members including business principals do farm work.
- Business ownership and managerial control are transferred between the generations with the passage of time.
- The family lives on the farm.

Fundamental to maintaining the subordinate position of women within family farms are the patrilineal inheritance norms which act to perpetuate and maintain patriarchal control of farm ownership. Furthermore, within capitalised agriculture, women have been shown to be largely absent from productive work apart from in traditionally feminised roles such

as farm secretaries and within low status seasonal work. In the wider public agricultural arenas of education, training and agri-politics women are also under represented. The following section will discuss this situation in more detail, primarily concentrating upon family farming in the context of developed countries within Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand.

It is the aim of this section to elucidate the dominant gender roles and relations in agriculture. It should also be noted that although this thesis is concerned with women *and* men within agriculture, due to the nature of the available literature the discussion on gender roles within agriculture will be largely restricted to a focus upon *women*; a specific consideration of men within agriculture will be undertaken in the subsequent section concerning the construction of agricultural gender identities.

2.5.1 Agricultural gender roles

Farm women remained largely unacknowledged in early academic studies of farming families as the following critique of research undertaken in the UK describes:

> *The role of women in British agriculture has been neglected by agricultural economists and rural sociologists alike.... While agricultural economists recognise that most farms are run by families, little attempt has been made to measure systematically the nature of the wife's contribution to the business. Rural sociologists writing about farm families in Britain have tended to emphasise women's marital roles, to the exclusion of any other....Despite its neglect by academics, the important contribution which women make in agriculture by maintaining and reproducing the labour force, assisting in farm production and business management and supporting rural communities, is self evident.*
>
> *(Gasson 1980, p. 165)*

Following this critique by Gasson, feminist researchers set out to render visible the roles performed by women in agriculture and subsequently the on-farm gender relations that underpinned and explained those roles, predominantly within the context of family farming. These initial studies were concerned with describing the tasks undertaken by farm women, their access to property or occupational resources, and their involvement in decision-making on the farms (Brandth 1994). The highly gendered nature of agricultural

households was revealed and the roles of the women within them were shown to be largely obscured and undervalued. O'Hara's (1998) description of farm women as being at the "heart of family farming" and her subsequent summary of their work, describes the womens' roles highlighted by this body of research:

> *The process of family formation, of bearing and rearing children, through which family farming is established and continues inter-generationally, intimately involves [farm women]. In addition, many farm women contribute substantially to farm production for the market and for home consumption and, almost invariably, undertake all of the domestic work in the farm household in addition to childcare and (sometimes) elder-care. When they work off the farm, their income is often essential to the family's well being. Through engaging in voluntary work, they make a major contribution to the quality of rural life, and they are increasingly participating in locally based rural development initiatives. Women's actions are therefore essential to the survival of family farming and to the quality of rural life, but their position in farming is distinctly different from, and unequal to, that of men.*
>
> *(O'Hara 1998, p. 2)*

Early research predominantly focused upon the gender divisions of family labour and decision making on family farms (Whatmore 1988) and documented the under-representation of women in non-domestic farm work (O'Hara 1998). The numerous publications by Gasson and Whatmore detailed the situation in the UK (Gasson 1980; Gasson 1989; Gasson 1992; Gasson and Errington 1993; Whatmore 1991a; Whatmore 1991b) while other studies documented the situation internationally (See Alston 1995; Ashton 1991; Fink 1991; Haugen 1990; Keating and Little 1994; O'Hara 1998). These studies identified that most farm women do some amount of manual farm work, however the majority of their time is spent in and around the farmhouse in more domestic roles. Alston (1995) identifies four factors that she considers critical in governing the level of women's manual farm work: structural family arrangements; presence or absence of hired labour; the woman's farming background; and the woman's availability. Research has also identified the interaction between the level of modernisation of a farm and its dependence on hired labour as being important in determining the role of women (Shaver 1991). However, whether or not they perform manual work, a universal finding of these studies was that the majority of farm women work long hours, combining an array of roles that

are "primarily a complex of unrelated and disembodied tasks" (de Rooij 1994, p. 73). The following diary entry from a study by Ashton (1991) provides an example of one woman's experience at a "non-busy" time on her Welsh hill farm:

> *Up at six, breakfast for the family (six in all), do dishes and put laundry in machine to hang out later. Tidy and Hoover downstairs and make sure father (in-law) is right for the morning. Answer phone three times before 9.00am - all to do with the farm. 'Ministry' arrived at 9.30am to scan 'Chernobyl' sheep - help husband drive and catch these. Finished at 2.30pm - but made lunch for everyone in between and got washing on the line. Went food shopping (15 miles away) and called in at the vet's and farmers co-op to pick things up for the farm. Did banking and called in at the accountants to sort out some business problems. Home,got dinner for everybody and washing off the line. Husband and son off to (rented) lowland to check stock there, so I fed the dogs (5), washed dishes and helped other children with homework. Did some ironing and went to village for carnival committee meeting (fundraising for community centre). Home around 10.30pm supper for family then did some work on accounts before bed at 12.00 midnight.*
>
> *(Ashton 1991, p. 124-5)*

Clearly the traditional interpretation of farm labour that regards commercial production as the defining factor would, by definition, appear to exclude or devalue the majority of work that is performed by farm women (Alston 1995). This is despite the fact that many of the tasks are necessary for the production and reproduction of the family farm (Garcia-Ramon and Canoves 1988). The narrow definition of farm labour is normalised to the extent that those living and working alongside active farm women are unable to recognise their activities as being work, and rather their roles are regarded as a 'natural' extension of their domestic duties (Gasson 1992). Fink (1991) recalls a farmer's wife describing a conversation with her husband:

> *She remarked to [her husband] that she had not decided what she would do when she retired; maybe she would continue to keep a few chickens. He replied that she did not need to think about retirement as she had never really worked! She laughed and thought he was joking; later she came to understand that he had meant what he said.*
>
> *(Fink 1991, p. 20-21)*

In addition to revealing the gender division of agricultural labour the early studies were framed by the wider theoretical debate surrounding production and reproduction (Little 2004). As identified by Little (2004), the under-valuing of farm women's labour was linked to the wider lack of recognition for women's work and its association with reproductive activity. The definition of 'work' tends to be "narrow and ideologically loaded towards paid employment on or off-farm" (Price and Evans 2005, p. 48). However, within this thesis, in line with Price and Evans (2005), the term 'work' is used broadly and understood as encompassing the unremunerated on-farm activities of women. This conceptualisation recognises the worth of work that is otherwise undervalued, conducted mainly, but not exclusively, by women; on farms this would include, for example, child care, cooking, running errands and taking telephone messages. It is also accepted that the definition of work should extend beyond public-private distinctions to encompass voluntary work, in rural areas this is often a vital role that is normally executed by women (including farm women) (Little 1997b). Frequently, however, farm women themselves accept the normative definitions of farm work, and therefore underestimate their own actions, either by not defining them as work at all or by blurring the distinction between work and leisure; manifest in the use of phrases such as farming being 'a way of life' rather than a job in the conventional sense (O'Hara 1998). Methods of collecting and reporting official statistics have also been shown to reinforce these ideas. For example, Gasson and Errington (1993) reported that the Irish farm management survey, at the time of writing, counted the labour of a woman as being two thirds of a man, even where the woman actually ran the farm. Furthermore, the wording of the current Agricultural and Horticultural Census and the Labour Force Survey in Northern Ireland report women in relation to their family status and not as working individuals (Shortall 2005).

2.5.2 Agricultural restructuring and the gender division of agricultural labour

In the face of agricultural restructuring off-farm work has become an economic necessity for some farm households. Furthermore it has been suggested that farm women can "escape from redundancy" on highly mechanised farms, where their labour has been displaced, by obtaining alternative employment on or off the farm (Symes 1991, p. 87). It is possible that on either spouse entering off farm work or developing on-farm diversified

enterprises the power relations within the farm household shift, possibly leading to a renegotiation of roles. However, as a number of studies have shown, this is not necessarily the case.

A study by Deseran and Neller (1991) in Louisiana, USA, found that women's off-farm work did not impact significantly on their responsibility for domestic tasks, neither did the type of off-farm work have any effect. Similarly, Gasson and Winter (1992) found that women's pluriactivity did not necessarily affect gender roles and power relations within family farms in Devon. Indeed they question whether off-farm work signifies new independent economic roles for farm women or an exploitation of their willingness to work long hours for low returns in order to support their families, thus acting to reinforce the unequal distribution of power. In research designed to build upon the findings of Gasson and Winter, Evans and Ilbery (1996) considered the impacts of on-farm diversification into farm-based accommodation upon the degree of power in the household held by farm wives (sic). Their findings suggest that responsibility for farm-based accommodation increased farm women's workload without necessarily increasing their power within the farm business structure. This is echoed in the results of an Irish study on farm women who undertake off farm work as part of family farm survival strategies (Shortall 2002). It was found that the farm women did not experience changes in their on-farm roles and gender relations despite the importance of their wages in sustaining the farm:

> *There is little evidence to suggest that women's off farm work has led to any renegotiation of childcare roles, household work or on farm responsibilities....While there is ostensibly potential for women's off-farm work to provide the means to negotiate more favourable gender relations within the farm household, the weight of traditional gender ideology restricts the extent to which this happens.*
>
> *(Shortall 2002, p. 167)*

Despite off-farm work and work associated with diversification enterprises leading to an increase in the work load of farm women, it can also be a way to increase their independence, status and improve their personal identity; thus it can be interpreted as a means of escaping their subordinate position within farming. Symes (1991) concurs with

this position, arguing that the status of farm women must increase upon their participation in work dissociated from farming, helping to move away from the "uncritical legitimisation of women's undeveloped status" in the countryside (p. 89). Indeed, it has been suggested that the development of on-farm food processing enterprises is influential in terms of the gender division of labour and women's wider participation in farm businesses (Little 2002a). Moreover, research by Bennett on farm women in Northern England (2004, p. 161) has found that declining farm incomes have "roused new opportunities for some women", with many undertaking paid work off-farm and some establishing their own businesses.

However, these new roles do not necessarily challenge existing patriarchal structures and associated gender relations (Bennett 2004). Moreover it does not address the issue of why the work that women undertake within family farming does not provide recognition and status itself, and it also does not challenge why, when off-farm work is undertaken, the women are not able to negotiate more equitable on-farm gender relations (Shortall 1992). Furthermore it has been identified that by working off-farm in order to sustain family farms during economic crisis women are effectively subsidising the farm and 'keeping it male' (Price and Evans 2005). Thus their "career aspirations are subordinate to both the farming 'way of life' and their roles as 'farmer's wife' and mother" (Price and Evans 2005, p. 56). It therefore appears that the strongly gendered ideology underpinning agriculture can negate the potentially liberating potential of off-farm employment for farm women.

2.5.3 Gender relations, the patrilineal transfer of land and gendered knowledge acquisition

It is evident that what farm women do, and what they control, are separate issues. As stated by Gasson (1988, p. 302), even if women's farm roles change "nothing has really changed" if they are not able to exert power within the farm business. Therefore trying to understand how rural structures and situations create a less powerful position for farm women, and why this status quo is rarely challenged, is highly significant. Crucial in this regard are the traditional inheritance laws and norms which have, on the whole, excluded

females from inheriting farmland and thus the occupational status of farmer (Leckie 1996). Indeed, as argued by Shortall, the patrilineal line of inheritance is fundamental in reproducing women's lack of status within agriculture:

> *Women's whole relationship to farming is shaped by their route of entry and position within the farm family. It affects women's role in farming organisations and in the politics of farming. The protection of this gender discriminatory practice of land transfer by the state is the single greatest barrier to women's equality in farming.*
>
> *(Shortall 2005, p. 101)*

Patrilineal inheritance "embodies the transfer of social and gender relationships" and thus gender equality for farm women will remain limited for as long as the state protects this social custom (Shortall 2005, p. 91). The transfer of social and gender relationships within families is particularly influential upon the maintenance of conventional gender relations within the practice of agriculture due to the high degree of 'occupational inheritance' that occurs within farming (Leckie 1996) whereby knowledge transfer is intimately linked to the transfer of land:

> *The resources of information and expertise exist within a socially constructed agricultural system. Within this system women have largely been excluded from the occupational inheritance of farming, in part because they are not expected to, and usually do not, own farmland. Since women do not directly own this basic factor of production, they have very often been discouraged from learning anything further about the occupation that depends on it, except the minimal amount that they need to know to provide their labour to the male landowner.*
>
> *(Leckie 1996, p. 310)*

A central aspect of the reproduction of social and gender relationships is sex stereotyping and socialisation. Through words and action the family unit plays a crucial role in transferring occupational information to children (Leckie 1996). For example, career ambitions of young females in rural Greece have been shown to bear a "remarkably close correspondence" to those expressed for them by their mothers (Gidarakou 1999, p. 154). Indeed it has been found that Greek farm women, due to the problems they encountered in their own farm roles, actively discouraged their daughters from pursuing a career in farming (Gourdomichalis 1991). Further research conducted in Greece a decade later

found the attitude of young women towards farming "continued to be exceptionally negative" (Gidarakou 1999, p. 155). A similar situation was observed within the Republic of Ireland by O'Hara (1994), who found that farm women encourage their daughters to achieve a good education in order to improve their career prospects. This is described as "an ideology of autonomy...through ensuring that by having a 'career' [their daughters] will never be financially dependent" (O'Hara 1994, p. 63). Within the UK there has never been widespread encouragement to daughters to become farmers (Gasson and Errington 1993) and in individual farm families this support is even less likely to be forthcoming if the daughter/s also have male siblings (Leckie 1996). Inheritance norms and related sex stereotyping and socialisation therefore contribute towards the perpetuation of the gendered division of agricultural labour, and the consequent positioning of men and women within family farming.

The marginalisation of women within family farming is also reflected within public agricultural arenas. It has been shown, for example, that the gendering of knowledge acquisition extends beyond the familial networks into the sphere of formal agricultural education and training, which is primarily targeted towards males (Shortall 1996). This has also been shown to be true of the training of young people in other rural industries such as forestry (See Follo 2002). Furthermore, it has been found that when attempting to gain access to both formal and informal networks of information and expertise, the legitimacy of female farmers can often be challenged, forcing them to develop "specific information channels and contacts, thus circumventing those who believe that such resources are the domain of male farmers" (Leckie 1996, p. 323). Similarly, despite their manifold roles within agriculture, women are markedly absent from mainstream agri-political leadership (Alston and Wilkinson 1998; Liepins 1998a; Pini 2002; Shortall 1992). Despite this there has been a recent emergence, as examples from Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the US show, of groups of farm women mobilising their resources in attempts to influence policy and decision-making (Haney and Clancy Miller 1991; Liepins 1998a; Mackenzie 1992; 1994; Wells 1998). In particular, times of farming crisis and need have acted as catalysts for farm women's involvement in agricultural politics, as they struggle to protect their family farms and rural communities (Liepins 1998a). In doing so they have drawn upon conventional understandings of the roles of farm women within the

family farm in order to gain legitimacy and are keen to "avoid being labelled as radical and disruptive" (Teather 1996, p. 5). As identified by Shortall (1994), these groups defy academic categorisation due to their seemingly contradictory aims of promoting the maintenance of rural community life and the family farm, whilst at the same time advocating the increased representation of women within public agricultural institutions.

2.5.4 Summary of section 2.5

This section has considered the gender roles and relations that are central to the persistence of the rural ideology. The first sub-section, 2.5.1, described the traditional gender roles that have been demonstrated to persist within agriculture. Sub-section 2.5.2 discussed the impacts of agricultural restructuring, and in particular off-farm work and on-farm diversification, upon gender roles and relations. The final sub-section, 2.5.3, considered how the patrilineal transfer of land impacts gender relations within family farm businesses.

2.6 Agricultural gender identity

Theoretical and conceptual discussions of rural gender identities are sparse, and this is particularly true of work that has considered the expression of femininity in the context of agriculture. However, studies of masculinities within agriculture initiated this area of work and as such are slightly more numerous, although by no means comprehensive (Little 2002c). Despite this, it is possible to extract the characteristics of gendered identities from the numerous studies describing gender roles and relations on family farms (Brandth 2002a). These characteristics, as have been described in the preceding sections, are neatly summarised by the following paragraph:

> *...men's identity as farmers is tied to their land ownership, occupational position as farmer and the productive work they are seen doing. It is publicly recognised, awarding income and status. Men's masculine identity is also defined by their position as head of the family workforce and farm business. The position of farm women is tied to their marital contract....assuming the identity of 'farmers' wives'. They have no independent status, thus their occupational identity is weak and hardly recognised. Homemaking also defines women as mothers, tying the definitions of social roles to their biological functions.*
>
> *(Brandth 2002a, p. 184)*

However, this section of the chapter will draw upon the literature that is concerned directly with agricultural gender identities in order to show how the dominant versions of femininity and masculinity are expressed within agriculture. It will then go on to show how these constructions are reproduced in representations of men and women within the agricultural press. The final section will explore research that has shown that these dominant gender identities within conventional agriculture can be contested.

2.6.1 Agricultural femininities

This sub-section will show how agricultural femininities are constructed by drawing upon traditional conceptualisations of femininity related to physiology and biology. It has been argued by Saugères (2002a) that within the conventional understanding of agricultural femininity women are seen as unable to have a natural embodied relationship to farming by virtue of their gender, despite their perceived closeness to nature. This is the case even if a woman is from a farming background or has inherited a farm. Therefore, whereas men are seen to represent farming through their dominant relationship over nature and the land, it is suggested that women construct their farming identity as 'marginalised others' through their relationship with their husbands or other male family members.

There are other related patriarchal ideologies based upon physiology and biology that also contribute to the narrow construction of femininity within agriculture. In a study of young women in tertiary agricultural education in Australia, it was found that this ideology marginalises women from more traditional areas of agriculture because they are seen as more able to use their "heads and not their bodies" (Bryant 1999a, p. 9). Therefore young women "construct occupations in agriculture in management, administration or research to

maintain aspects of traditional femininity and dominant forms of heterosexual masculinity" (Bryant 1999a, p. 8). Despite changes in shifting perceptions of acceptable masculine and feminine work (Bryant 1999b) it is argued that traditionally gendered body images still operate to restrict female tasks and thus constructions of femininity:

> *There remains among younger women from family farms an understanding about farming and gender that is embodied in traditional masculinity and femininity even though feminism has expanded the modes of acceptable femininity....But no matter how removed young women see themselves from notions of traditional femininity in farming (e.g. homemakers, not farmers but farmers' wives) their understanding of their* ***bodily*** *self disallows particular constructions of femininity.*
>
> *(Bryant 1999a, p. 8, emphasis in original)*

In order to compensate for their perceived lack of masculine strength the young women essentialised womanhood, positioning themselves in opposition to men's qualities and capabilities and emphasising stereotypical feminine traits such as communication, team work and compassion (Bryant 1999a). In a similar way Australian farm women involved in environmental activism have been shown to draw upon their social positioning of mothering and caring in order to gain legitimacy for their standpoint (Liepins 1998b).

Research from Norway has shown that farm women choosing to work as primary farmers are reconstructing femininity by entering a position traditionally associated with men and at the same time rejecting the traditionally subordinate position of women on family farms (Brandth 1994). New aspects of femininity are constructed by these women in relation to masculinity: "they want to be paid for their work, they want to be visible and respected, and they want the same authority and freedom of decisions as men have as farmers" (Brandth 1994, p. 146). However, despite these demands, they also maintain aspects of traditional femininity such as performing reproductive work and traditional activities such as flower arranging and knitting. Therefore, Brandth argues that "they are both dissociating themselves from and associating themselves with traditional femininities" (Brandth 1994, p. 147). In this way, it is claimed that femininity is being reconstructed in a way that maintains the gendered hierarchy.

As these international examples have shown, women use traditional constructions of femininity in order to advance their position within agriculture and therefore the "core of the gender system is maintained" (Brandth 1994, p. 147).

2.6.2 Agricultural masculinities

This sub-section will demonstrate how hegemonic agricultural masculinities are constructed and reaffirmed through their dominant relationship to the land and nature (Saugères 2002a). Central to this relationship to the land, as with rural masculinities more widely, is the ideal of control. Following this, the performance of hegemonic masculinity in agriculture relies upon employing stereotypical physical attributes to control nature. Therefore the successful (male) farmer is considered "tough and strong, able to endure long hours, arduous labour and extreme weather" (Little 2002c, p. 666). Likewise, notions of strength and battle have been identified as crucial to dominant forms of masculine agricultural identity (Liepins 2000). The use of combative and dominant images within agricultural advertisements can be seen as a reflection of this dominant masculine ideology (Brandth 1995; Kroma 2002).

In order to succeed in controlling nature male farmers not only perform certain 'masculine' traits but also rely upon the use of powerful machinery. The tractor in particular has been shown as an important symbol of masculine identity and power within agriculture, used to define masculine identity in opposition to women and nature (Saugères 2002b). In this way the ideal of masculine control over nature and the two main attributes upheld as necessary to maintain this dominance, namely the ability to display strength and a 'natural aptitude' for technology, can be seen as acting to naturalise the construction of agriculture as a male space.

Furthermore, it can also be argued that the naturalisation of heterosexuality in agriculture is linked to masculine dominance over the land. Saugères (2002a) suggests that although the earth itself is feminised it is men who are seen within farming communities as having a closer relationship to the land than women, a finding echoed by Modelmog (1998). Male farmers are seen as possessing an essential embodied (physical and biological) connection to farming and the land, dominating nature due to their characteristics of strength, energy

and vitality. This association is manifest in the imagery which relates male biological functions to farming operations such as ploughing, through which they are seen as "penetrating and fertilising the land" (Saugères 2002a, p. 380). Therefore despite being positioned as close to nature and the land, agricultural masculinity retains control and dominance over both the land and women:

> *...these two tendencies are not opposed, they are both part of the same patriarchal ideology....there is a need for the farmer to feel part of the land. He takes pleasure in feeling this connection. At the same time, this unity seems to be only possible if the farmer separates himself from the (mother)land. In the process of distanciation, the farmer sees the land as a sexualised object that he owns and which can respond to his needs. The land becomes an other against which the farmer defines himself.*
>
> *(Saugères 2002a, p. 378)*

2.6.3 Gendered representations in the agricultural print media

Agricultural power relations are constructed in words and images by the agricultural press (Liepins 1996), which can therefore be seen as both a product and (re)producer of agricultural gender identities and inequality (Kroma 2002). It has contributed to and reflects the dominant ideological construction of farm women by marginalising them within accounts of farming and, where they do appear, by emphasising their reproductive roles and relationship to the (male) farmer. At the same time the dominant ideological construction of farm men is reproduced. Indeed Kroma (2002) argues that:

> *The construction of hegemonic masculinity is nowhere more evident than in the rural agricultural landscape where a taken-for-granted, normal notion of the farmer as white, heterosexual and male, is constantly reproduced and reflexively perpetuated in mainstream agricultural media.*
>
> *(Kroma 2002, p. 5)*

This sub-section explores how these dominant representations of farming men and women have been shown to prevail within the conventional farming press.

An analysis of American farming magazines published from 1934 to 1991 found that representations of farming women focused upon their positioning within a 'traditional domestic ideology', thus reinforcing the gendered dualism of reproduction and production:

> *It has reinforced the view that farm and household are under normal circumstances separate spheres of activity joined only by women's occasional forays into farm labour. In this picture of farming, men have been the primary decision-makers and women have been at most minor and occasional contributors to farming success.*
>
> *(Walter and Wilson 1996, p. 245)*

Dualistic representations were also identified by Morris and Evans (2001) in their analysis of articles from 1976 and 1996 issues of 'Farmers Weekly', the leading agricultural publication in the UK. Using Connell's conceptual framework of emphasised femininity and hegemonic masculinity, Morris and Evans show that despite "fragmented and competing versions of femininity" evolving over the 20 year period "emphasised femininity persists *implicitly* within the[se] representations" whilst the representation of hegemonic masculinity remained explicit (2001, p. 388, emphasis in original). Similarly, narrow representations of farming men and women that dichotomise their roles and identities have been identified by Liepins (1996) in a discourse analysis of the Australian agricultural press. The publications were found to overwhelmingly focus upon a particular hegemonic masculinity and hegemonic agriculture to the exclusion of alternatives:

> *...discourse surrounding a hegemonic white masculine subject is incorporated in rural texts as certain qualities, work and politics are portrayed as 'truly' masculine, thereby excluding or limiting alternative masculinities and femininities in agriculture. Likewise....a hegemonic discourse of agriculture is constantly referred to in individual texts. This discourse constructs agriculture as an activity based on scientific knowledge, productivity and market oriented economics, and physical labour.*
>
> *(Liepins 1996, p. 5)*

The publications construct agriculture through associations with science, productivity, the marketplace and physicality, all characteristics that are gendered masculine within the system of Western dualisms. Additionally, alongside the dominant discourses of masculinity and agriculture was a "marginalisation of women and a construction of domesticated, relational and subservient femininity" (Liepins 1996, p. 5).

Despite the continued prevalence of highly traditional representations of men and women within the farming press there is evidence that 'new farm masculinities' are developing in

line with changes in agriculture, based upon a construction of farming associated with financial and managerial concerns rather than physical, outdoor work (Brandth 1995; Liepins 1998c). Three possible meanings of this shift have been identified: that the old hegemonic masculinity is being replaced by a new one; that the two types of image will continue to exist alongside each other; or that hegemonic masculinity is in the process of reconstruction in order to adapt to contemporary changes in agriculture, in other words "it is being redefined to remain hegemonic" (Brandth 1995, p. 132). In this way, although the reduction in reliance upon heavy machinery ostensibly makes agriculture more accessible to women, the presentation of the new technology with masculine language and symbolism within the farming media marks it as male, and thus incompatible with femininity. Therefore these changing representations, although perhaps symbolising a shift in the construction of hegemonic masculinity, act to retain masculine control of farming, and therefore also act to perpetuate traditional femininity.

However, it has been suggested that rather than being entirely representative of gender relations and identities within agriculture the farming press shows a 'discursive lag', whereby the narrative of hegemonic masculinity and related emphasised femininity is continually reproduced despite the evolution of gender relations and identities within the practice of agriculture itself (Liepins 1998c). This is also argued of the general societal discourse surrounding farm women's identity:

> *...the discourse continues to be closely associated to the women's work in the gendered division of labour on the family farm and that a specific understanding of 'farm woman identity', as different from a modern and urban female identity, continues to be reproduced discursively. This means that the radical changes in women's connection to farming is not reflected in the dominant discourse on farm women's identity, and there is very little evidence of other discourses of farm women's identity emerging in the public domain.*
>
> *(Oldrup 1999, p. 344)*

The following section will consider the literature that can provide an insight into these supposed 'radical changes in women's connection to farming' in order to ascertain the influence of changing agricultural gender roles, relations and identities upon the relevance of a focus upon dominant conceptualisations of agricultural gender identities.

2.6.4 Challenging hegemonic agricultural gender identities

Static and homogenous representations of farm men and women occupying the dichotomous positions of 'tough men' and 'caring women' (Liepins 1998c), as described in this section, are a recurrent feature of the research literature (Brandth 2002a). In this way the agricultural sector is depicted as a site in which traditional gender relations are reproduced over time. However, this framework, and the research upon which it is based, cannot account for the issues of individual agency, and how identity may vary over time or within different forms of agriculture and the possibility of "self-definitions and resistance to the ascribed identities" (Brandth 2002a, p. 187). Furthermore, implicit within much of this research is the conceptualisation of farm women as victims and farm men as victors, with the associated assumption that it would be in the interest of farm women to break out from this (oppressive) model of gender relations. However, this way of thinking carries assumptions about progress and emancipation to which farm women themselves do not necessarily subscribe:

> *Feminist research has revealed structures of domination that ensure a subordinate position for farm women. However....many women do not define themselves as oppressed or victims in everyday life situations, and indeed, they do exercise a level of power and influence over their own lives. Thus, there is good reason to believe that the researcher will interpret accounts in a different way than the women who have given the accounts.*
>
> *(Brandth 2002b, p. 113)*

This sub-section will explore research that has argued for farm women's agency within traditional constructions of agricultural femininity and research that has shown how agricultural gender identities are changing over time. In this view farm women are seen as active in constructing and shaping their gender identity within the confines of their traditional roles, rather than powerless, thus attributing more dynamism to their gender identity.

In her work on 'farmers' wives', Bennett (2001) complicates and disputes the accepted concept of patriarchy, by acknowledging its role in not only subordinating some women, but also in empowering others through their role in reproducing the structure of the family farm. This work challenges the origins of research that portrays farm women's position as

necessarily powerless and subjugated to men, work that also carries the implicit assumption that it is in their interest to break free of their traditional roles. Rather, the key position of farm women in farm decision-making is acknowledged and patriarchy is conceived as having a "web like form":

> *This web allows for women (and men) to experience particular patriarchal structures more strongly than others depending upon where they are positioned in the web and whether or not they have waged work, are responsible for domestic work and so on. Similar to a spider's web the strands (patriarchal structures) of the web are constantly in the process of being re-woven given that power is continually and creatively constituted through individual (re)actions. Whilst women are implicated in its (re)production, they can also feel simultaneously ensnared, trapped, out of control. So too can men.*
>
> *(Bennett 2004, p. 163)*

However, despite its potential to represent oppressive gender relations, Bennett claims that her conceptualisation of patriarchy as a web allows for the potential of men and women to gradually weave a less oppressive form of gender relations.

One such way in which the 'patriarchal web' is being re-weaved is posited by O'Hara (1998, p. 10) who argues that through the negotiation of family relationships Irish farm women have shaped their own form of equality and are conscious of their own "power and influence" within farm businesses. In particular, it is argued that through their role as mothers they are able to exert greatest influence upon the future of family farming. Therefore, in common with Bennett, O'Hara recognises that patriarchal structures act to both constrain and empower farm women. Ensuring that their daughters can secure their financial independence is seen as a strategy of "orchestrating the withdrawal of women and farm wives" from an active involvement in family farming:

> *In so far as farm wives in the future are likely to retain their pre-marriage occupations and farmers to select wives who can provide the farm family with a regular source of off-farm income, this constitutes a fundamental shift in women's relationship to family farming. It has been precipitated by farm women's rejection of the patriarchal structures of family farming and reinforced by the need for farm families to insure against risk by securing off-farm income.*
>
> *(O'Hara 1998, p. 65)*

In this way it is argued that traditional role boundaries in family farming are not static but shift over time and that through this process, women can exert considerable influence over the evolution of agriculture.

Similarly, it has been argued that young women in Finland are actively demonstrating their rejection of traditional expectations regarding farm women in two different ways: by leaving the countryside and not marrying farmers; or by taking on the position of farmer and thus acting to construct new gender identities as farm women. However, where new gender identities are constructed the traditional model is used as a framework from which aspects are adapted to their own "personal options and....personal choices" (Silvasti 2003, p. 163). A comparable adaptation of traditional agricultural gender identity has been observed in Norway where women were identified as dissociating from a traditional femininity which required accepting a subordinate position on family farms, whilst at the same time they were constructing a new femininity which combined aspects of traditional femininity with aspects of masculinity (Brandth 1994). Therefore, through this process the gendered hierarchy was maintained.

Despite some notable recent attempts to uncover alternative versions of masculinity within agriculture (Brandth 1995; Liepins 2000; Peter et al. 2000; Saugères 2002a; 2002b), a clear deficiency of the literature is its focus on hegemonic agricultural masculinity to the exclusion of other versions:

In concentrating largely on the construction of hegemonic forms of masculinity within agriculture, the treatment of rural gender identities has yet to fully engage with ideas of fluidity and movement that have characterised the study of gender identity in geography more widely.... Work has yet to fully explore how different versions of masculinity are negotiated between and within individuals, or, indeed, whether such shifts in dominant constructions of masculinity are mirrored in similar shifts in femininity or in gender relations in agriculture.

(Little 2002c, p. 667)

Moreover, although this sub-section has demonstrated that the construction of agricultural gender identity is more complex than dualistic conceptions suggest, the alternative versions uncovered do not appear to offer a fundamental challenge to hegemonic agricultural identities.

2.6.5 Summary of section 2.6

In this final section of Chapter Two the negotiation of agricultural gender identity has been explored. Sub-sections 2.6.1 and 2.6.2 dealt with agricultural femininity and masculinity respectively; showing how traditional constructions of femininity and masculinity are drawn upon in order to reinforce the existing gender roles and relations within agriculture. Sub-section 2.6.3 showed how these traditional constructions are reinforced within the agricultural media. The final sub-section, 2.6.4, discussed research that has stressed the complexity of gender identities within agriculture, and illustrated how farm women have contested traditional constructions.

2.7 Summary of Chapter Two

This purpose of this chapter has been to explore gender roles, relations and identities expressed within agriculture, and to situate them within the wider debates of rural gender identities and associations of gender with the nature-culture binary. It has shown how the historical associations of women-nature and men-culture are related to a particular understanding of gender roles, relations and identities within agriculture and the associated rural ideology. In this understanding there is a clear distinction made between masculine and feminine roles within family farming, with women undertaking

reproductive roles and men productive roles, with little or no overlap. Moreover, the manifold roles undertaken by women are not officially valued or recognised as work, despite their critical importance to the operation of family farms. Related to this, within agriculture more widely women are under-represented and marginalised.

In uncovering hegemonic agricultural gender identities it has been necessary to focus upon the dominant social processes and discourses that come together in the construction of agricultural masculinity and femininity. Throughout this process of assimilation alternative constructions of agricultural gender identity have been acknowledged which undermine and challenge the existence of a generic agricultural gender identity. Indeed it is evident from recent literature, as discussed in sub-section 2.6.4, that multiple gender identities exist within agriculture. However, the challenges they pose are marginal and they do not represent radical changes to the fundamental divisions constructed between masculinity and femininity within agriculture.

There is a shortage of research that explicitly seeks to consider the complexity of agricultural gender identities. In particular there is little work that explores how alternative sites within agriculture impact the construction of gender identities. This is a deficiency of the literature that this thesis partially seeks to redress. It is the contention of this thesis that a specific site within agriculture which potentially offers a challenge to the dominance of hegemonic agricultural gender identities is that of organic farming. There are fundamental features of organic farming which suggest that agricultural masculinities and femininities may be more fluid and diverse than previous research, which has largely focused on conventional agriculture, has argued. Therefore, Chapter Three will argue that organic farming may provide a space in which individuals can contest hegemonic agricultural gender identities.

Chapter 3

ORGANIC FARMING: CHALLENGING HEGEMONIC AGRICULTURAL GENDER ROLES, RELATIONS AND IDENTITIES

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will examine the contention that organic farming provides a space within agriculture for the expression of distinctive gender roles, relations and identities from those expressed within conventional agriculture, as detailed in Chapter Two. Firstly, however, an introduction to organic farming will be presented in order to provide a context in which to proceed, including discussion of an 'organic ideology'. The chapter will then go on to identify the features of the organic movement and its organic ideology that indicate that gender roles, relations and identities expressed within organic farming could be distinctive. It will consider these features in more detail and the degree to which the currently available research on (or related to) gender roles, relations, identities and organic farming supports the notion. The third section goes on to interrogate the relevance of the organic ideology to contemporary organic farming, and considers how this may impact upon the proposition that organic farming provides a distinctive space within agriculture for the expression of gender roles, relations and identities. Finally the different threads of the chapter are drawn together into a defence of the original contention that the notion of hegemonic agricultural gender identity does not fully reflect the theoretical relationship between organic farming and gender identity.

3.2 Introduction to organic farming

The aim of this section is to present an overview of organic farming and its current position within European agriculture, and specifically the UK. Firstly it will consider the definition of organic farming and then explain how an 'organic ideology' can be deduced from the aims of the international organic movement. It will then go on to discuss the

regulation of organic farming, the process of converting from conventional farming to an organic system and to present some recent statistics on the organic sector in Europe and the UK. In the final part of this section there will be a discussion of how the recent growth and changes in the organic farming sector is part of a process through which organic farming is becoming 'conventionalised'.

3.2.1 What is organic farming?

The concept of organic farming rests upon a holistic vision that understands the soil as a living system which has an essential link to plant, animal and human life (Lampkin 1990). This notion has been explained by proponents of organic farming as aiming "to work with nature rather than against it" (Soil Association 2005, online source). Evidently, the concept of organic farming is broad, and therefore difficult to define in a way that is both succinct and able to satisfactorily communicate its full meaning (Lampkin 1990). However, the following passage indicates the breadth of organic farming:

> *Organic farming can be seen as an approach to agriculture where the aim is to create integrated, humane, environmentally and economically sustainable agricultural production systems. The term 'organic' is best thought of as referring not to the type of inputs used, but to the concept of the farm as an organism, in which all the components - the soil minerals, organic matter, micro-organisms, insects, plants, animals and humans - interact to create a coherent, self-regulating and stable whole. Reliance on external inputs, whether chemical or organic, is reduced as far as possible.*
>
> *(Lampkin et al. 1999)*

Although the above passage successfully expresses the holistic nature of the concept of organic farming, in order to comprehend its complexity and, of particular importance to this thesis, to understand how social aims are embedded within it, it is necessary to turn to the aims of the International Federation of Organic Agricultural Movements (IFOAM).

3.2.2 The 'Principle Aims of Organic Agriculture' and the 'organic ideology'

Organic agriculture is represented internationally by IFOAM, an umbrella organisation which states that its goal is "the worldwide adoption of ecologically, socially, and economically sound systems that are based on the principles of organic agriculture"

(IFOAM 2004a, p. 3). IFOAM was established in 1972 during an international congress on organic agriculture organised by the French farmer organisation 'Nature et Progrès', on the initiative of its late president Roland Chevriot (Langman 2002, p. 10). Five member organisations formed the initial federation: The Soil Association of the UK, the Swedish Biodynamic Association, the Soil Association of South Africa, Rodale Press from the US and Nature et Progrès. It has now grown to represent over 750 organisations worldwide (IFOAM 2004a). The organisation was founded upon the desire to facilitate: "...the diffusion and exchange of information on the principles and practices of organic agriculture of all schools and across national and linguistic boundaries" (Langman 2002, p. 10). The 'Principle Aims of Organic Agriculture' (see Box 3.1), conceived in their initial form by IFOAM in 1977, have been described as the 'overarching keystone' of the organisation; they are based a number of principles and ideas, and all of the aims are equally important (IFOAM 2005a)[1].

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[1] It should be noted that the Principle Aims of Organic Agriculture are currently under review. It is proposed that they be reduced to four overarching principles to identify organic agriculture: The principle of health; The ecological principle; The principle of fairness and The principle of care. IFOAM states that: "The principles all belong together to be used interdependently in consideration with the other principles. Together they have been composed to inspire action to make their vision a reality" (IFOAM 2005b, p. 12). IFOAM is in the process of consulting its members regarding the second drafting of the principles, with the aim of presenting a motion at the General Assembly in September 2005.

Each principle is articulated in a statement with an explanation, but are reproduced here in their abbreviated form (IFOAM 2005b):

- Principle of health: Organic agriculture should sustain and enhance the health of soil, plant, animal and human as one and indivisible.
- Ecological principle: Organic agriculture should be based on living ecological systems and cycles, work with them, emulate them and help sustain them.
- Principle of fairness: Organic agriculture should be built upon relationships that ensure fairness with regard to the common environment and life opportunities
- Principle of care: Organic agriculture should be managed in a precautionary and responsible manner to protect the health and well-being of current and future generations and the environment.

Box 3.1: The principle aims of organic agriculture for production and processing

- To produce sufficient quantities of high quality food, fibre and other products.
- To work compatibly with natural cycles and living systems through the soil, plants and animals in the entire production system.
- To recognise the wider social and ecological impact of and within the organic production and processing system.
- To maintain and increase long-term fertility and biological activity of soils using locally adapted cultural, biological and mechanical methods as opposed to reliance on inputs.
- To maintain and encourage agricultural and natural biodiversity on the farm and surrounds through the use of sustainable production systems and the protection of plant and wildlife habitats.
- To maintain and conserve genetic diversity through attention to on-farm management of genetic resources.
- To promote the responsible use and conservation of water and all life therein.
- To use, as far as possible, renewable resources in production and processing systems and avoid pollution and waste.
- To foster local and regional production and distribution.
- To create a harmonious balance between crop production and animal husbandry.
- To provide living conditions that allow animals to express the basic aspects of their innate behaviour.
- To utilise biodegradable, recyclable and recycled packaging materials.

- To provide everyone involved in organic farming and processing with a quality of life that satisfies their basic needs, within a safe, secure and healthy working environment.
- To support the establishment of an entire production, processing and distribution chain which is both socially just and ecologically responsible.
- To recognise the importance of, and protect and learn from, indigenous knowledge and traditional farming systems.

(IFOAM 2005c)

It is evident that IFOAM understands its role as an organisation representing a social movement that surrounds organic farming, an understanding that is reflected in both its name and its mission of "[l]eading, uniting and assisting the organic *movement* in its full diversity" (IFOAM 2005a, online source, emphasis added). Social movements are defined as "[an] organised effort by a significant number of people to change (or resist change in) some major aspect or aspects of society...[they] are purposeful and organised....have specific goals, formal organisation, and a degree of continuity. They operate outside the regular political channels of society, but may penetrate quite deeply into political power circles as interest groups" (Marshall 1994, p. 615-6). Thus, in line with the views of IFOAM itself, it is suggested that those organisations and individuals that subscribe to the aims of IFOAM constitute part of an international social movement. As stated by Tovey (1997, p. 25), "the movement is wider than just the farmers, and membership within it involves many other things besides producing food...Reading 'alternative' media, belonging to networks and organisations like city-based food co-operatives, and turning up at occasional movement events, may all also be bases for 'membership'". The assertion that organic farming is based within a wider social movement, is supported by the work of rural sociologists such as Buck et-al. (1997), Reed (2001), Tovey (1997; 1999) and Coombes and Campbell (1998). As such, the 'Principle Aims of Organic Agriculture', which act to underpin the activities of IFOAM, are understood within this thesis as

describing an 'organic ideology'. It is crucial to note that IFOAM specifically states that it does not seek to establish any priority of importance to the list of 'Principle Aims'. However, the following two 'Principle Aims' are of particular importance to this thesis in that they foreground the social intent inherent to the organic ideology:

- To recognise the wider social and ecological impact of and within the organic production and processing system
- To support the establishment of an entire production, processing and distribution chain which is both socially just and ecologically responsible.

It is not being proposed that all organic farmers subscribe to the organic ideology in its entirety, and nor is it being proposed that it can even be attained in practice by those farmers who do fully subscribe to it. It is, however, taken as representing an ideal towards which those farmers who are *fully committed* members of the organic movement would aspire. Therefore, it follows that those organic farmers who fully adhere to the aims of the organic movement, as articulated by IFOAM, would necessarily be concerned with the wider social impact of organic farming and would aspire to attain 'social justice' within their farming system (see section 3.3.3 for an explanation of the term 'social justice').

Although it is representative of the organic movement, IFOAM does not have a direct influence upon the legal regulation of organic farming, but it does operate an accreditation program which is administered by the International Organic Accreditation Service (IOAS). The regulation of organic farming, as administered by governmental and non-governmental bodies, is discussed in the following sub-section.

3.2.3 The regulation of organic farming

In the European Union the first policy intervention into organic agriculture was a state-supervised certification system for organic products (Council Regulation 2092/91) and the introduction of subsidies for organic production. The Regulation formalised organic production by laying down common principles and rules for organic production and provided a guarantee of the authenticity of organic produce for consumers (Dabbert et al. 2004). The Regulation is used as a minimum standard from which European governments

formulate their own national organic operating standards. In the UK, for example, the Compendium of UK Organic Standards is based upon Regulation 2092/91 and implemented under the Organic Products Regulations 2004 (DEFRA 2005) by the Advisory Committee on Organic Standards (ACOS)[2] which supersedes the United Kingdom Register of Organic Food Stuffs (UKROFS). Equivalent legislation was implemented in the US by the National Organic Program in 2002 (Dabbert et al. 2004).

The adoption of Regulation 2092/91 was highly significant for the organic movement, as it represented official recognition for organic farming at a European level, and indeed worldwide (Baillieux and Scharpe 1994). Until this point the organic farming movement had been largely ignored by agricultural institutions, and indeed it had defined itself in opposition to the institutional setting of agriculture, in terms of both education and policy making:

> *From the organic movement's perspective, this formal political recognition was a landmark in the development of organic farming in Europe. Organic farming suddenly became an agricultural policy instrument - after being 'in opposition' to the agricultural policy establishment for many years.*
>
> *(Dabbert et al. 2004, p. 5-6)*

Although the definition of organic farming has become legalised through the intervention of institutions such as the European Union, the organic movement is able to establish stricter rules above the legal minimum through the private standards and regulations set by organic farming organisations, such as the Soil Association in the UK (see sub-section 3.2.7 for an explanation of the Soil Association). Furthermore, recognising the increasing influence of policy on the organic farming sector, the organic movement is increasingly co-operating with official bodies in this respect. Indeed, IFOAM is a leader in this debate, focusing upon defining a "broader, more holistic concept of organic farming that also sets

[2] The role of ACOS is to advise the UK government on organic standards, approval of organic certification bodies and research and development.

minimum social standards for the people involved in organic farming" (Dabbert et al. 2004, p. 7). For example, at the UK level the Soil Association is increasingly engaging with policy making, reflected in their appointment of a policy director in 2002 and the

inclusion, for the first time, of a policy section in their Annual Review (Soil Association 2002).

The monitoring of organic farms for compliance with minimum standards is carried out by approved certification bodies. Certification bodies enforce their own standards that comply with the minimum national requirements. Farmers choose to join a particular certification scheme, whose responsibility it is to ensure that their own standards are fully implemented prior to granting organic certification to the farmer. The certification schemes continually monitor farms under their jurisdiction through an inspection procedure to ensure their standards are maintained. In the UK there are ten approved certification schemes, of which the largest are Soil Association Certification Ltd and Organic Farmers and Growers Ltd (DEFRA 2003).

It should be noted that although legislating for organic farming is a recent development, organic farming organisations in many European countries established their own production standards prior to any formalisation within legal structures. Indeed, these standards, independently developed by the organic movement, have helped to define what have now become the legal regulations for organic farming (Seppanen and Helenius 2004). In the UK, for example, the Soil Association first started to develop standards for organic farming in the early 1970s (Reed 2001). This influence of a social movement upon commercial and public standards for food makes organic agriculture an unusual case. Therefore despite the regulation of organic farming being ultimately beyond the control of IFOAM (and other organic farming organisations), the 'Principle Aims of Organic Agriculture' are consonant with the legal/policy positions, as will be shown in the following example from the UK.

The Compendium of UK Organic Standards (the minimum standards to be applied by UK certification bodies) focuses upon production issues in its definition of organic farming:

> *Organic production systems are designed to produce optimum quantities of food of high nutritional quality by using management practices which aim to avoid the use of agro-chemical inputs and which minimise damage to the environment and wildlife.*
>
> *(DEFRA 2005a, online source)*

However, despite the clear focus upon production issues in their definition of organic farming, the Compendium of UK Organic Standards also highlights the following six organic "principles", thus revealing their recognition, in common with IFOAM and the organic movement that it represents, that the concept of organic farming carries a broader meaning:

- Working with natural systems rather than seeking to dominate them
- The encouragement of biological cycles involving micro-organisms, soil flora and fauna, plants and animals
- The maintenance of valuable existing landscape features and adequate habitats for the production of wildlife, with particular regard to endangered species
- Careful attention to animal welfare considerations
- The avoidance of pollution
- Consideration for the wider social and ecological impact of the farming system.

The inclusion of one of these principles is of particular interest to this thesis because of its implications, potentially at least, for gender relations and identities within the practice of organic agriculture. The principle is: 'Consideration for the wider social and ecological impact of the farming system'. However, as will be argued later in this thesis, the principle of considering the wider *social* impact of the farming system is not successfully translated into the codified standards and as such it is possible to farm organically without due consideration of this principle.

Organic farming can be understood as an agricultural movement whose membership extends beyond those officially certified (Tovey 1999). However, organic farming was chosen as the focus of this thesis, rather than other forms of alternative agriculture, precisely because it is unique in defining the farming system through the application of legislated and voluntary standards and certification procedures (Morris et al. 2001).

Therefore, for the purposes of this thesis organic farming is defined as a farming system that complies with the legislative standards on organic production. The following sub-section explains the process of conversion necessary to achieve organic certification.

3.2.4 The conversion process

In order to become eligible for organic certification by a certification body a farm (or the area of farmland to be converted) has to be managed organically for a stipulated length of time called the 'conversion period'; usually a minimum of two years. The conversion period is guided by a conversion plan, in which an appropriate target organic system is formulated, along with a plan for the transition from the current conventional farming system to the target organic system (Lampkin 1990). The emphasis of the conversion period is upon the successful physical transition of the farming system to organic production. Indeed, the success of conversion, in terms of the granting of organic certification, is assessed upon factors of production. Padel and Lampkin (1994) identify three specific aims of the conversion period:

- Improve soil fertility by establishing a rotation with legumes so that crops can be produced without synthetic nitrogen fertiliser or large amount of bought-in manures

- Adjust the stocking rate to the natural carrying capacity of the farm, so that livestock can be produced without large amounts of purchased concentrates and/or forage

- Change the management to maintain animal and plant health with the limited inputs available according to organic production systems.

Lampkin (1990) maintains that converting to organic farming usually entails "radical and dramatic" changes to the farming system and a fundamentally different approach to farm management. Furthermore, he goes on to argue that "personal conviction" is a necessary part of conversion: "[c]onversion of the farming system has to begin with a personal conviction, in terms of attitude and approach, of all the people who have a significant influence on the running of the farm" (Lampkin 1990, p. 526). However, holding the

personal conviction that operating an organic system is preferable to retaining a current farming system does not necessarily require that the farmer embraces the organic ideology (Padel and Lampkin 1994). Thus it is possible for farmers to successfully convert their farms and gain organic certification without embracing the organic ideology in its entirety i.e. it is possible to farm organically whilst ignoring some of the IFOAM 'Principle Aims of Organic Agriculture'. This has been recognised within an IFOAM publication in which it is stated that the entry criteria for new organic farmers have "demanded support for only the vaguest notion of the organisation's principles" (Woodward et al. 1997, p. 32). It is argued within this thesis that it is particularly the social principles of the organic ideology which are overlooked within the conversion process and in the regulation of organic farming more widely. The next sub-section will explain the differences between organic and conventional farming which make it necessary to undertake a period of conversion.

3.2.5 How is organic farming different to conventional farming?

The fact that a period of conversion must be undertaken before a farm can officially be labelled organic is illustrative of the practical differences that exist between organic and conventional farming. As explored briefly above, organic farming also differs substantially from conventional farming in a conceptual sense in that there are specific principles which shape its development. While it is recognised that there actually exists a range of production systems beyond conventional and organic agriculture as well as a range of worldviews and opinions (Batie and Taylor 1989), a more polarised understanding of each is adopted here.

In an early definition, conventional farming was described as a production system that employs a full range of pre- and post- planting tillage methods, synthetic fertilisers, pesticides, antibiotics and hormones in order to *maximise* productive output (Cacek and Langner 1986). This is popularly understood to have provided the model for agricultural development throughout the twentieth century, in particular in the post-war period (Morris et al. 2001). However, as commented by Morris et al, despite such simplistic conceptualisations, "the term 'conventional' encompasses a continuum of management practices, ranging from very extensive/low-input to very intensive systems" (Morris et al.

2001, p. 21). Furthermore, as a result of increasing environmental awareness there have been significant changes in conventional production techniques since the early 1990s, with the result that conventional farming now encompasses farming practices that would previously have been considered 'low-input' (Morris et al. 2001). Despite recognising the range of conventional farming systems, for the purposes of this thesis the term 'conventional farming' is employed.

Within this thesis the organic ideology, as represented by the IFOAM 'Principle Aims', is assumed to be the template for organic farming, in terms of both the practical farming system and the theoretical standpoint. Thus organic farming is taken as a form of agriculture that seeks to create closed systems with little reliance on external inputs in order to *optimise* productive output. Furthermore, it is a form of agriculture that specifies a concern with the social aspects of production. This is in contrast to other forms of farming (with the exception of fair trade, which in any case is not currently operable within Western agricultural systems) in which social criteria are not specified. Biodynamic farming, a particular form of organic farming, will be discussed in the following sub-section.

3.2.6 Biodynamic agriculture

Biodynamic agriculture is a form of organic farming that is distinguished by its application of the spiritual science of Anthroposophy to organic principles. As explained by Lampkin (1990, p. 666): "The movement began in 1924, following a series of lectures which Rudolf Steiner, founder of the anthroposophical science of the spirit, gave at the request of farmers". The farmers who attended the lectures, one third of whom were women (Schmitt et al. 2004), believed that they had noticed a deterioration in plant and animal health due to chemical fertilisation and they wanted to know how to strengthen the "vitality and forces of their crops and livestock" (Steiner 1993, foreword). The course of lectures given by Rudolf Steiner, known as the 'Agriculture Course', became the foundation for the Biodynamic Method of agriculture. However, although initiated by Rudolf Steiner, biodynamic farming was founded on basic research carried out by an Austrian woman called Lili Kolisko (Inhetveen 1998).

A unique aspect of biodynamic farming is a focus on the use of specific 'preparations' within the farm system, based on the following beliefs:

> *Spiritual scientific knowledge indicates that components of mineral, plant and animal origin can be metamorphosed by the effects of cosmic/earthly influences during the course of the year, into preparations imbued with forces. When used in the soil, on plants and manures, these preparations contribute to enlivening the earth, stimulating yield and quality in plants, and health, vitality and production of animals on the biodynamic farm.*
>
> *(Biodynamic Agricultural Association 2001, p. 25)*

Despite these additional principles, biodynamic agriculture is considered to have much in common with other forms of organic farming (Lampkin 1990), and the Biodynamic Agricultural Association is recognised as one of the official organic certification bodies within the UK (DEFRA 2003). The Soil Association will be introduced within the next sub-section.

3.2.7 The Soil Association

The Soil Association is an advocacy charity for the promotion of organic farming and food. It plays a central institutional role within the contemporary British organic movement, and is responsible for certifying over 70% of UK organic farms (Reed 2001). However, the central position of the Soil Association has been relatively short lived and it was only in the 1990s that the Soil Association and organic farming came to be seen as a credible option; until this point "its status was that of a quirky fringe activity: marginalised to the point of almost total disregard" (Clunies-Ross and Cox 1994, p. 53).

The Soil Association initially emerged due to interest provoked by Lady Eve Balfour's 1943 book 'The Living Soil', which sought to establish the scientific evidence for the superiority of organic agricultural methods over conventional methods (Clunies-Ross and Cox 1994). In doing so she developed "a powerful holistic approach linking the soil and its fertility to questions of animal and human health" (Clunies-Ross and Cox 1994, p. 57). When the Soil Association was founded in 1946 its pioneers shared a concern to "encourage an attitude to the natural world which would have social implications" and their aims were (Conford 2001, p. 89):

- To bring together all those working for a fuller understanding of the vital relationship between soil, plant, animal and man.
- To initiate, co-ordinate and assist research in this field.
- To collect and distribute the knowledge gained so as to create a body of informed public opinion.

More than half a century later, the current Soil Association claim that "the heart of our mission remains that same" (Soil Association 2004, p. 3). They specify their work as including: lobbying policy makers; raising public awareness; educating young people, promoting local food; advising and representing organic farmers; setting organic standards; and inspecting and certifying farms and organic businesses (Soil Association 2004).

3.2.8 Organic farming in Europe and the UK: statistics and geography

Official statistics for organic agriculture only became available relatively recently. However, the European Union (EU) started to gather statistics on European organic agriculture in 2000 and the UK government began the same process in 2003. Until these dates statistics were gathered rather haphazardly by organic organisations, such as the Soil Association in the UK.

Within the EU organic farming accounts for approximately three percent of the total agricultural land area (Dabbert et al. 2004). However, despite only accounting for a relatively small land area, organic farming is exceptional within European agriculture in that it is a growth sector (Dabbert et al. 2004). For example, the area of EU agricultural land which was either certified or in-conversion increased from 0.7 million hectares (29,000 holdings) in 1993 to 3.3 million hectares (120,000 holdings) in 1999. However, organic farming is spread very unevenly throughout Europe, and is particularly concentrated in less favourable regions. Although this uneven spatial distribution of organic farming within Europe is not yet fully understood, in addition to variation in soil quality, it is likely to be related to the intensity of agricultural practices as well as policy and market influences (Dabbert et al. 2004).

In terms of percentage share of the total EU organic and in-conversion land area, Austria has the largest share (8.5 per cent), followed by Italy (6.5 per cent) and Finland (6.3 per cent); the UK, ranked seventh, falls just below the EU average of 2.3 per cent with a percentage share of 2.2 per cent. However, regarding the percentage share of the total EU organic and in-conversion holdings Austria has the largest share (9.4 per cent), followed by Finland (5.7 per cent) and Denmark (4.9 per cent); the UK, ranked eighth, is below the EU average of 1.9 per cent with a percentage share of 1 per cent.

Within the UK organic farming increased considerably between 1997 to early 2003. By 2004 there were just over 4000 organic producers and growers in the UK, farming a total area of in-conversion and organic land of 695,619 hectares, representing 4 per cent of the total agricultural area. Fifty-four per cent of this organically managed land is situated in Scotland; 37 per cent is in England; 8.4 per cent in Wales and 0.8 per cent in Northern Ireland. However, these figures represent a decrease in organically managed land, which peaked in March 2003, after "several years of very notable increases" (Dabbert et al. 2004, p. 81). In the UK as a whole, the total area of organically managed land fell by 4 per cent between March and December 2003. However, the decrease is due to a fall of 13 per cent in the organically managed land in Scotland, whereas England, Wales and Northern Ireland all experienced increases during the same period.

There were 2570 producers and growers in England in 2004, farming a total area of organic and in-conversion land of 258,930 hectares, representing 3 per cent of the total agricultural area. Although the area of organically managed land has increased since 2003 there has been a 2 per cent fall in the number of certified producers and growers to 2570. This indicates that organic farms in England are increasing in size.

The aggregate data on organic farming, as discussed above, "obscures differences in the pattern of diffusion of organic farming at different spatial scales" (Reed and Lobley unpublished paper) and therefore it is important to look beyond such statistics and consider the spatial pattern of organic farming. The geographical distribution of organic farms in the UK has been considered in several papers since the late 1980s. From research

conducted at a broad regional scale in the late 1980s Cudjoe and Rees (1992) came to the following conclusions regarding the geography of organic farming in the UK:

> *Examination of the organic sector shows that organic farmers and growers are relatively few in number, and at present dominated by small owner farmers with a low proportion of rented land. The geographical distribution of organic farming was characterised by a concentration in Southern and Western regions, which [was] in part a function of environmental suitability for mixed farming and husbandry.*
>
> *(Cudjoe and Rees 1992, p. 23)*

In a piece of later research, understood as an addition to the work of Cudjoe and Rees, Ilbery et al. (1999) considered the changing geography of organic farming in England and Wales during the 1990s. Through this research it was found that a process of "spatial rationalisation" was occurring in which organic farming was "becoming increasingly concentrated in a select group of counties in Central-Southern England"; a concentration which was termed the "organic core" (Ilbery et al. 1999, p. 294). Furthermore, despite the organic sector increasing during the study period of 1993 to 1996, it was also found to be very dynamic, experiencing a high turnover of farms both entering and leaving the sector. This dynamism was particularly pronounced within the organic core and its peripheral areas.

Reed and Lobley (unpublished paper) built upon the work from the two earlier papers, whilst making use of new statistical data available from DEFRA since 2003, in order to extend and deepen the analysis of the geography of organic farming in England. To this end they found that the South West region is established as the core of organic farming in England, whilst other regions such as the North East are experiencing a period of growth. Despite confirming that the turnover within organic farming is high, it was nonetheless found that organic farms that have been certified for longer periods appear to gather newer organic farms around them. However, research executed by Risgaard et al. (2005) in Denmark, suggests that this is influenced by a "complex of issues related to the social environment and coherence in [a given] area" (p. 27). Of particular pertinence to this thesis is the observation by Reed and Lobley (unpublished paper) that due to the rapid expansion of the organic sector and the spatial dynamics observed "...the social

characteristics of those who are just adopting organic production techniques may be very different from those who have been farming organically for many years. This indicates the need for further social investigation of organic farming".

3.2.9 The 'conventionalisation' of organic farming

The organic farming sector in the UK has experienced a period of rapid growth over the last decade, driven by conventional farmers undertaking the conversion process. The continuance of this increase is being promoted by government initiatives such as the Organic Targets Bill, which aims towards 30% of UK agricultural land to be organic by 2010. This expansion in the number of organic farms and the area of organically managed land has been facilitated through market segmentation into organic products and conventional products; which in turn was predicated upon a clearly defined production system guaranteed by control and certification systems (Dabbert et al. 2004). In the UK the buoyancy of consumer demand for organic food has been mostly mediated by the major supermarket chains, which account for over 70% of total organic sales (Smith and Marsden 2004).

However, there is concern that such retail-led organic supply chains will increasingly exhibit many of the long-standing features of conventional food chains (Smith and Marsden 2004), in a process which has been termed 'conventionalisation'. This issue was first raised in papers written by Buck et al. (1997) and Guthman (1998) whose arguments were formulated from research conducted in California, although the term itself was coined by Hall and Mogyorody (2001). The 'conventionalisation thesis' argues that organic farming is becoming a slightly modified version of modern conventional agriculture and thus "exhibits many of the same social, technical and economic characteristics - smaller farms become bigger, debt loads increase with increasing capital intensification, labour is replaced by mechanisation and other industrial inputs, and marketing become export-oriented rather than local." (Hall and Mogyorody 2001, p. 399). Moreover, as argued by Guthman (2004a, p. 310), "carried to its conclusion, the economic threat posited could manifest in a [further] threat of agro-ecological enfeeblement, such

that organic agriculture would cease to be substantially differentiated from conventional agriculture".

3.2.10 Summary of section 3.2

This section has provided an introduction to organic farming within a European, and specifically a UK context. Firstly, it defined the meaning of organic farming and argued that there is an organic ideology propounded by the international organic movement, based upon the 'principle aims' of IFOAM. Furthermore, it described how organic farming is regulated, the process of conversion from conventional farming systems, how organic farming is different to conventional farming, introduced biodynamic farming and the Soil Association, and provided an overview of the geography of organic production within Europe, and specifically within the UK. It ended with a brief introduction to the 'conventionalisation thesis'. The following section will go on to discuss the ideological basis of the organic ideology in more detail. Specifically, it will identify aspects of the organic ideology which suggest that the dominant gender relations and identities within organic agriculture may be different from that of conventional agriculture.

3.3 Organic farming as a site within agriculture for the expression of 'progressive' gender identities

Aspects of the development of organic farming and the organic ideology suggest that the ideological basis of organic farming is distinct from conventional farming, and therefore that organic farmers may adopt a different ideological framework to conventional farmers. It is suggested here that these differences in outlook are such that the hegemonic agricultural gender identities discussed in Chapter Two may not adequately represent the gender identities expressed within the context of organic farming. Therefore the space of organic farming potentially provides a space for the expression of alternative versions of agricultural gender identity.

Specifically, three features of the organic movement have been identified that could impact upon gender identities in a way that would challenge the hegemonic agricultural gender identities. The first factor is that organic farming has non-agrarian roots and

developed apart from mainstream agriculture, thus attracting people from outside the conventional agricultural sphere who were not part of the traditional gendered heritage of agriculture. Secondly, the basis of the organic ideology suggests that its adherents would have a fundamentally different approach to society-nature relations to that which dominates the agro-industrial model. Thirdly, the alternative approach to society-nature relations has led to the organic movement attempting to integrate a concern for social equity into understandings of organic farming. In the section below these three unique aspects of the organic movement and its organic ideology will be discussed in turn, with respect to their potential impacts upon the expression of gender identities in organic farming.

3.3.1 Development trajectory of the organic agriculture movement

It is widely accepted that the organic movement as it exists today is the result of the convergence of four social movements, broadly based upon alternative production technologies, health and pure food, the 1960s counterculture and modern environmentalism (Guthman 2004b). Although in some ways contradictory to each other, these movements are united in their critique of agricultural industrialisation. Organic farming developed apart from mainstream agriculture through the cooperation of individuals drawn from either the periphery of agriculture or outside of the agricultural sphere completely (Michelsen 2001a). The earliest pioneers of organic farming stem from diverse initiatives in northern Europe and America in the first half of the twentieth century; prominent individuals include Lady Eve Balfour and Sir Albert Howard in the UK, and Henry Rodale in the US (Vos 2000). Central to these early projects was the social aim of improving human health, particularly of the poorest in society, based on the belief that human health is intrinsically linked to the health of the soil (Balfour 1946; Howard 1945). Thus from its inception the organic ideology was premised upon a "special bond with nature" expressed through the concept of health (Vos 2000, p. 251).

The early organic farming movement included a "large number of women pioneers" (Inhetveen 1998, p. 280). Indeed, it has been suggested that the organic movement was unusual in the opportunities that it offered women:

> *Without question...women were offered better chances to develop themselves during the beginnings of the anthroposophic movement than otherwise in society at the commencement of the 20th century. In spite of the impression that the history of the development of alternative agriculture is the success story of "great men", deeper insights into the history of biodynamic and organic farming show us that women played a very important role in the field.*
>
> *(Schmitt et al. 2004, p. 7)*

The roles of women within the early organic movement included those within farming and agricultural research. As well as demonstrating the high involvement of women in the initial stages of biodynamic agriculture, Schmitt et al. (2004, p. 7) discuss the "astonishing number of female researchers [who] contributed to the advancement of alternative agricultural science in the first generation of biodynamic and organic agriculture". The large number of women pioneers are explained by Inhetveen (1998) through the application of three arguments: firstly, the initial research was knowledge-based and closely tied to everyday practice and therefore more easily accessible to women than academic science research; secondly, its holistic basis and emphasis on healthy nutrition was linked to women's caring roles; and thirdly, its focus on the social implications of agriculture was attractive to women who felt "challenged by their prescribed social role and strive to achieve new emancipated forms of living" (p. 281).

The dominant focus of the organic movement evolved over time and it is possible to locate the birth of a more radical and visible organic movement as part of the general social and political changes of the 1960s, at which time organic farming was adopted by the 'back to the land movement' in the USA (Vos 2000) and by equivalent groups in other Western countries. These movements were composed of individuals who sought to escape urban life and renew links with nature through practicing a form of agriculture whose methods and philosophy ran contrary to the productivist paradigm that dominated at that time.

The strands of the early organic movement, as described above, had in common a rejection of the agro-industrial model, in favour of a holistic approach which made the essential link between soil, plant, animal and man (Lampkin 1990). In other words, the early organic farming movement can be seen as having promoted an alternative

relationship between society and nature through (re)learning a respect for human dependency on the soil (Kaltoft 2001).

Michelsen (2001b) describes the path of development taken by organic farming as society having 'broken into agriculture'; this developmental feature of organic farming sets it apart from that of conventional agriculture, an industry typically characterised by narrow recruitment and closed networks (Michelsen 2001b). Clunies-Ross and Cox (1994) employ the term 'parallel worlds' to describe the resulting [lack of] relationship and fundamental gulf of understanding between organic and conventional agriculture, wherein the two communities did not interact or compete with each other. Indeed the initial distinctiveness of organic farming, which historically led to the fundamental division between the two communities, is how it came to be defined: in opposition to conventional agriculture. Thus according to Michelsen (2001b, p. 10) "the reproduction of this distinctiveness is crucial for the survival of organic farming both as a concept and a social movement".

Different socio-demographic characteristics

One result of organic farming's unique developmental trajectory is that the socio-demographic characteristics of organic farmers can differ significantly from those of non-organic farmers. Padel (2001) describes how early comparative studies of organic and conventional farmers found that organic farmers were educated to a higher level, had less farming experience and were more likely to come from an urban background than conventional farmers. In the same paper, Padel also claims that there are 'indications' that gender is a relevant factor in the decision to convert to organic farming and that women seemed to have a more active role in organic farming generally, although the lack of empirical evidence for this is stressed. A study of organic producers conducted in the US corroborates these findings in which, compared to American producers in general, the respondents were "well educated, became growers well into adulthood....and include[d] many women" (Lockeretz 1997, p. 18-19). This is paralleled by Egri (1999) who found that the sample of organic farmers from her Canadian based research had been farming for a shorter length of time, had a higher level of education and were more likely to be women

than the conventional farmers. Similarly McCann et al. (1997) revealed that the organic farmers in their comparative study had been farming for significantly fewer years and were less likely to come from a farming family than the conventional farmers. These claims are corroborated by a recent comparative survey of organic and conventional farmers in England (Lobley et al. 2005), in which it was found that organic farmers were significantly younger, more likely to have achieved a higher education qualification and to be new entrants to farming, having previously worked in an unrelated area.

The claims made regarding the involvement of women in organic farming by Padel (2001), Lockeretz (1997) and Egri (1999) are more speculative than the other demographic findings reported and the authors do not explain specifically in what context women are [more] involved in organic farming (moreover this was not the intention of their work). Nevertheless, their claims are interesting and are also in line with anecdotal comments made by other academics (Clunies-Ross and Cox 1994; Egri 1994). However, Lobley et al. (2005) found that the female organic farmers in their English survey, although fewer in number than their conventional counterparts, were more likely to have made a decision to run a farm on their own account, rather than inheriting a farm business upon the death of their spouse. The nature and extent of any impacts that this higher involvement of women has had within organic farming is not elaborated upon in the studies referred to above. This thesis aims to partially rectify this gap in the literature and claims that organic farming provides a space within agriculture for the expression of distinctive versions of masculinity and femininity.

Potential impacts on gender roles, relations and identities

It may be expected, due to the socio-demographic variations that have been shown to exist between organic and conventional farmers in a range of geographical locations, that organic farming is more likely than conventional farming to include individual farmers whose approach to gender roles, relations and identities is more progressive than the approach which has been shown to dominate agriculture more widely.

Research has found that organic farmers are more likely to be new entrants to agriculture than conventional farmers. Therefore, a group of organic farmers made an overt choice to

practice organic farming over other forms of agriculture. This means that they represent a new group within agriculture, not bound by the traditional agricultural paradigm. It can be conjectured that making the specific decision to farm organically suggests that they may have a number of personal characteristics that could influence their approach to gender roles, relations and their gender identities. Firstly, it is likely that they have a background which is 'urban' and may have experienced social and work environments in which traditional gender roles are not 'naturally' assumed. Secondly, it is likely that their choice to farm organically is related to their political views. If the related political views are liberal then they may also adopt a more liberal approach towards gender roles and relations. Lastly, the specific choice to farm organically suggests an especially principled approach to the organic ideology. Therefore it can be inferred that they are perhaps more likely to embrace the organic ideology in its entirety, including the implications of the social principles.

In order to reflect upon the potential implications of a higher involvement of women in organic farming it is useful to draw upon research conducted amongst the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) movement in the USA in which it has been found that the majority of CSA members are women (DeLind and Ferguson 1999; Wells and Gradwell 2001). While it is true that not all CSAs are necessarily practicing organic farming (or even sustainable farming), many do and there exist parallels between some of their aims and the purported aims of the organic movement, as is demonstrated within the following description:

> *CSA provides a social and economic alternative to the conventional, large-scale, corporately managed food system. CSA is first and foremost a local institution. It allows farmers and farm members to get to know one another face to face and to directly interact around the activities and ecological realities of local food production...CSA members can build interpersonal trust and a sense of community rooted in place. Through such relationships, there can develop a shared responsibility for, and a deeper connection to, the earth and the welfare of those who inhabit it, human and otherwise.*
>
> *(DeLind and Ferguson 1999, p. 191)*

This is contrasted with a conventional agriculture "that grows for distant markets with technology that separates the grower from the land, that mines instead of builds the soil, and that treats food as commodity rather than sustenance" (Wells and Gradwell 2001, p. 117). Thus it appears that the CSA movement shares with the organic movement a critique of industrial agriculture and the conviction that humans and nature can be reconnected through their particular visions of what constitutes ethical food production Wells and Gradwell (2001, p. 118) claim that "certain human values, those more often associated with women, are nurtured and validated more in CSA than in other agricultural systems." However, they are not explicit about the nature of these human values "more often associated with women". Despite this ambiguity they do state that a holistic agriculture, "coded as feminine", would value "cooperation, social relationships and connection...future generations...and community" (Wells and Gradwell 2001, p. 118). They go on to claim that through both men and women engaging with these values, CSA blurs the boundaries that form the traditional gender division of labour and can enable them to move beyond gender stereotypes. Thus the suggestion seems to be that CSA can be liberating for both men and women; for women because attributes traditionally associated with femininity are valued more highly and for men because it provides an environment in which they are free to engage with and express values seen by conventional society as feminine. Therefore the high proportion of women in CSA is not only interpreted by Wells and Gradwell as having a transformative potential for the female individuals involved and the farming system itself, but also for the male participants.

3.3.2 Alternative approach to nature-society relations

The holistic basis of organic farming suggests that it can be viewed as an alternative approach to nature-society relations. Goodman (1999, p. 33) interprets the organic ideology as one in which food is seen as the "central unifying material and symbolic linkage that bridges and binds the social and natural together", in contrast to the "punctualising or black boxing characteristics" of industrial agro-food networks in which food is "fetishised" and "abstracted". Thus organic farming's proposal and exploration of alternative nature-society relations can be seen both as a challenge to the hegemony of the agro-industrial paradigm and as offering a new vision for society as a whole in what Vos

(2000, p. 246) considers a "radical gesture of reconciliation with nature". Thus it has been argued that through rendering invisible the social relationships inherent to food production, industrial agro-food networks act to conceal nature-society relations (Allen and Kovach 2000). In contrast, it is argued that the project of revealing nature-society relations is central to the organic agro-food network:

> *In organic agriculture the fetishized abstraction of food is intentionally unveiled bringing the complex filaments of food provisioning explicitly into focus. That is, the organic agro-food network invites scrutiny of its constituent metabolic relations, an interrogation that follows from its organisational and ethical premises of connectivity....food becomes a signifier for political, social, and ecological struggles that are otherwise easily ignored.*
>
> *(Goodman 1999, p. 32)*

Echoing Goodman, Vos (2000, p. 251) claims that organic farming, through its focus upon the socio-ecological relations of production, opens up "new possibilities for alternative emancipatory projects". Thus, it is suggested that organic farming not only renders visible the relationship between society and nature but also acts to alter perceptions of that relationship:

> *The bio-politics of food, as expressed in the organic farming movement, is an oppositional politics of praxis that contests the industrial orderings of eco-social relations based on instrumentalist utilitarian rationality. Such an alternative world view directly subverts the modernist dichotomy of nature/society. Instead, [organic farming emphasises] the metabolic unity between the cultivation and consumption of food, and encompass[es] a moral community that transcends the instrumentalist division between people and nature.*
>
> *(Goodman 1999, p. 33)*

In the 'modernist dichotomy of nature/society' referred to by Goodman, nature is objectified and viewed as being separate from culture. This dualistic approach to the relationship between nature and culture leads to nature being seen as a material object with no meaning or value in itself (Verhoog et al. 2003), in contrast to organic farming which "insists that 'the environment'", or nature, "is internal to farming itself" (Tovey

1997, p. 24) and therefore, it follows, ascribes nature with an inherent value. These two fundamentally different conceptualisations of the relationship between nature and culture can be seen as reflected in the contrasting approaches of conventional and organic farming; namely the control of nature advocated by the conventional farming approach and the notion of working with nature encouraged by the organic ideology. As has been discussed in the previous chapter, feminist geographers have argued that there is a relationship between the philosophical approach of dominating of nature and the domination of women in Western societies (Little 2002a).

Merchant (1990) illustrates how nature has been feminised in Western discourses and how the nature-culture binary can be seen as a gendered construction central to Western patriarchal culture; in which male attributes and values are associated with the prioritised realm of culture and female attributes and values are associated with subordinate nature. This historical construction can also be shown to be responsible for the 'naturalisation' of femininity [and masculinity] (WGSG 1997). Other pairs of binary oppositions follow from the association of women and nature such as reason-emotion; mind-body and production-reproduction, a concept which has been central to feminist critiques of the domination of women within patriarchal society (Barry 1999). It can be argued that industrial agriculture fits into this hierarchical ordering with its promotion of objective, rational practices (codified knowledge) and concurrent dismissal of subjective, intuitive practice (tacit knowledge) (Morgan and Murdoch 2000); the ideal of controlling and competing with natural cycles as opposed to working co-operatively within them; and the distinction made between productive and reproductive work, central to the gendered division of labour on family farms. Thus in challenging the dichotomy of nature-society organic farming can be interpreted as a way of struggling to resist the boundaries drawn between binary categories and therefore as offering an alternative to the hierarchical model of industrial agriculture. Following from this, it can be hypothesised that organic farmers are ideally placed 'agents of resistance' to deconstruct and subvert the traditional divisions that have been shown to exist between men and women working within agriculture (Egri 1994).

As shown above, the theoretical basis of the organic ideology involves a different approach to nature-culture relations than that of conventional agriculture. At a basic level

the organic ideology promotes working *with* nature, whereas conventional agriculture draws upon a discourse which advocates working to *control* nature. In this way organic farming is seen as having the capability to unsettle the binary division constructed between nature-culture within Western discourses. Crucially to this thesis, the associated hierarchical binary of man-woman may also be unsettled by the organic ideology, leading to the expression of gender roles, relations and identities that differ from those found to dominate conventional agriculture. In this way, the traditional association of women and nature, and its arguable influence upon women's subordination would be rejected in favour of a more 'progressive' approach.

Potential impacts on gender roles, relations and identities

This part of the sub-section will draw upon research conducted within organic farming as well as the sustainable agriculture movement more broadly, in order to gain an insight into the possible impacts of an alternative view of nature-society relations upon gender roles, relations and identities within agriculture. Although the term 'sustainable agriculture' encompasses a breadth of approaches and ideals, the aims of the organic movement are reflected to some degree within its various manifestations. Therefore, while it is not being claimed that the results of the research into sustainable farming and gender can be held up as being a representation of organic farming, it is nonetheless assumed that some of the factors observed may be of relevance. Analysis of the findings from this research will suggest that sustainable agriculture can be interpreted as having a 'progressive' impact upon the nature of agricultural gender relations and identities whilst, somewhat paradoxically, drawing upon the traditional association of women and nature.

Ethnographic research with twenty female farmers practicing sustainable agriculture in Pennsylvania USA, led Trauger (2004a, p. 290) to argue that "sustainable agriculture provides spaces of empowerment for women farmers. These spaces have the potential to be constructed as sites of resistance from which we can witness the creation of new gender identities". However, the research found that the female farmers resisted traditional constructions of femininity through the representation of themselves in public, rather than through challenging traditional on-farm gender roles:

> *...the work roles of women in sustainable agriculture are similar to the work of women in conventional agriculture. Thus, they participate in the practice of agriculture without crossing major work culture boundaries, yet they cross the more significant boundary of gender identity by identifying as farmers, rather than as farmwives.*
>
> *(Trauger 2004a, p. 303)*

Trauger suggests that 'women's work cultures' are suited to sustainable agriculture production' in that it is a form of agriculture that does not stress mechanisation or the use of artificial chemicals; work cultures into which farm women are typically not socialised. Thus she recognises that "the reason women farmers find a home in sustainable [including organic] agriculture has more to do with the socialisation of work skills and knowledge in patriarchal communities, than any predetermined relationship between women as nurturers and a supposedly 'kinder, gentler' agriculture" (Trauger 2004a, p. 304). Essentialist notions of the relationship between women and nature are therefore rejected and rather it is women's unique socially constructed standpoint that is seen as making them suited to organic farming. Similarly Liepins and Campbell (1997; 1998) found that the division of labour on organic farms in Canterbury, New Zealand followed that of conventional farms. However, they claim that "because of [women's] gendered social location as the carers and reproducers of family, farm and community structures....they are strategically placed to more frequently consider and support the implementation of organic farming" (Liepins and Campbell 1998, p. 26), finding that farm women were likely to have been involved in the initial decision to convert to organic farming. Pedersen and Kjærgård (2004) elaborate on the specific (socially constructed) standpoint that it is claimed women can bring to organic farming when they discuss the values of the women interviewed in their study of female organic farmers in Denmark. Despite differences between the six women in the sample they are seen as united in viewing organic farming as a holistic concept:

> *They have chosen a lifestyle that provides a framework for the values they find essential as professional female organic farmers; values that include healthy food, a sound environment, living in contact with nature and animals, practicing spiritual principles and family life*
>
> *(Pedersen and Kjærgård 2004, p. 390)*

A particular aspect of organic farming that potentially provides a more publicly active role for women, particularly within family farms, is its ideal of local marketing, strongly advocated by the organic movement; as Klonsky (2000, p. 241) comments: "Many supporters of organic agriculture maintain that regional production and a close link between producers and consumers is a necessary condition for achieving the environmental and social goals of organic agriculture". If, as is suggested above, traditional divisions of labour persist on organic farms then it follows that on family farms the responsibility for any local marketing would also fall to women.

Peter et al. (2000) identified the transformative potential of sustainable agriculture for both men and women in their study of agricultural masculinities in Iowa, USA. They argued that the transition to sustainable agricultural techniques is hindered by the "conventional masculinity" of most male farmers and that the "success of the sustainable agriculture movement depends, in part, on providing a social arena in which men may discover and perform different masculinities" (Peter et al. 2000, p. 216). They found that the change to sustainable agriculture, of which an important facet was the farmers' affiliation with a sustainable agriculture group (Practical Farmers of Iowa), brought about changes in masculinity whereby they became more open to change and thus more able to engage with ecological and social interrelations. This, it was argued, made sustainable agriculture more accessible to women, who consequently appeared to participate more actively in the movement. In particular the involvement of women in structures such as CSA and direct marketing was cited as evidence for this.

However, Peter et al.'s argument that the CSA movement and the sustainable agriculture movement can have transformative potential for gender identities uncritically draws upon and reinforces traditional notions of femininity based on maternity and associations with nature. In this conceptualisation the presumption of women's obligations to family and community care is extended to encompass the care and nurturing of the environment through the practice of alternative agriculture. This echoes the findings of a study of Australia's 'Women in Agriculture' movement (Liepins 1998b), in which it was found that in order to claim authority the movement articulated maternal and caring qualities

associated with women such as "cooperation, nurturing, education and communication"; an approach which she interpreted as being potentially problematic:

> *...the authority and obligations that flow from such positioning may involve a regressive repositioning of women to make them accountable not only for the unpaid and under-recognised social reproduction of families and communities, but also the nation's socially nurtured and well ordered rural environment.*
>
> *(Liepins 1998b, p. 1192-3)*

Despite this it was found that by employing such conceptualisations the 'Women in Agriculture' movement was gaining the legitimacy to reconstruct Australian perceptions of sustainable agriculture through "promoting the connections between farming, family, community, environment, economy and world 'development'" that are often ignored in discourses of agricultural sustainability dominated by men (Liepins 1995, p. 123). Thus the 'Women in Agriculture' movement demonstrates that it is possible to draw upon traditional notions of femininity in order to bring about change within agriculture.

3.3.3 The social agenda of the organic agriculture movement

The third aspect of the organic ideology suggested as having implications for the expression of agricultural gender identity is the explicit social agenda of the organic movement. The organic movement has had an identifiable social agenda throughout its history. The early development of organic farming rested upon the premise that the health of the soil is related to human health. Amongst the pioneering projects of the organic movement in the UK, was the Pioneer Health Centre in Peckham, London which was "intended as a laboratory for exploring the autonomous behaviour of humans, in order to discover the true character of health" (Reed 2001, p. 137). A crucial aspect of the so called 'Peckham experiment' was the provision of organically produced vegetables, fruit and milk from its own farm to socially deprived members of the local community.

The contemporary organic farming movement also has an explicit social agenda. The social aims of the contemporary organic movement are manifest within the organic ideology, as expressed in the principle aims of IFOAM, which integrate a concern for the social and ecological factors of agricultural production. The 'Principle Aims of Organic

Production and Processing' lay out the basic values of the international movement in a series of seventeen unprioritised statements (see Box 3.1) that describe a vision of a holistic, sustainable agriculture system, incorporating concern for nature and society, including the wish "to support the establishment of an entire production, processing and distribution chain which is both *socially just* and ecologically responsible" (IFOAM 2005c, italics added).

The importance attributed to a social agenda within the modern-day organic movement is reflected in the following statement, written by the president of IFOAM in 1997:

> *Promoting organic agriculture requires much more than introducing new agricultural techniques - it asks us to change the very way we eat, the way we think about health, the relationship between the city and the country, the organisation of work - it is to be interested in HUMANITY and to act for the future of our planet. Organic agriculture can and should be the yeast fermenting the social changes necessary for the survival and well-being of humankind.*
>
> *(La Prairie 1997, p. 8, capitalisation in original)*

This statement does not merely stress IFOAM's social agenda, but places it in a pivotal position, suggesting that it underpins organic farming, which is described as "the yeast fermenting...social changes". It also reveals the extent of the holistic vision of IFOAM's organic ideology, which is seen as having implications that extend beyond farm boundaries to address issues such as, "the relationship between the city and the country"; a focus which implies that challenging western dualisms is part of the social intent of the organic ideology.

The organic movement's practical commitment to social issues is evident in recent IFOAM activities and publications. For example, the IFOAM World Congress 'Cultivating Communities' held in 2002 included sessions entitled 'Making Social Change', 'Organic Farmers and Gender Issues' and 'Social Stewardship and Organic Standards' (IFOAM 2002). Also, recent editions of the IFOAM membership publication 'Ecology and Farming' have contained a number of articles focusing on social responsibility, and in particular how the concept of fair trade relates to organic agriculture

(Altieri and Nicholls 2003; Cierpka 2002; Courville 2002; Henderson et al. 2002; Leahy 2003; Nickoleit 2002; Panyakul 2003; Paulsen 2003; Rundgren 2002).

It appears therefore, that the claim of having a social agenda and a commitment to 'social justice' is central to the identity of the organic movement. Despite this, the section in the IFOAM Basic Standards concerned with social justice is lacking in detail and relies heavily upon the concept of basic human rights as defined by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the United Nations (UN) (see Box 3.2). Furthermore, IFOAM do not explicitly define what they mean by the term 'social justice'. Similar shortcomings are recognised by members of the organic movement. For example, in an article in Ecology and Farming Paulsen (2003) concedes that the social standards of organic farming are quite 'basic' while in the same volume Altieri and Nicholls (2003, p. 25) call for the inclusion of social and labour considerations in organic standards and to "exclude from certification operations that do not consider social equity".

Box 3.2: The section on social justice (section 11) within the IFOAM 'Basic Standards for Organic Production and Processing'

General principles

Social justice and social rights are an integral part of organic agriculture and processing.

Recommendations

- All ILO conventions relating to labour welfare and the UN Charter of Rights for Children should be complied with.
- All employees and their families should have access to potable water, food, housing, education, transportation and health services.
- Social security needs should be met, including benefits such as maternity, sickness and retirement benefit.
- All employees should have equal wages when doing the same job and they must have equal opportunities irrespective of colour, creed and gender.
- In all production and processing operations, labour conditions regarding noise, dust, light and exposure to chemicals should be within acceptable limits and workers should have adequate protection.
- The rights of indigenous peoples shall be respected.

Standards

- The certification body/standardising organisation shall ensure that operators have a policy on social justice. This standard is applicable for operators with 10 or more persons hired for labour. The certification body/standardising organisation may allow operators under a state system enforcing social laws not to have such a policy.

- Certification bodies/standardising organisations shall have a policy on social justice.
- The certification body/standardising organisation shall not certify production that is based on violations of basic human rights (in cases of clear social injustice).

(IFOAM 2000a)

'Social justice' is itself a highly contested term (see Smith (1994) for a review of theories of social justice). Indeed, the very idea that there can be a universal notion of social justice has been challenged by feminists, and other social groups; who have questioned the assertion that the abstract notion of social justice is "above and apart from social life whilst simultaneously legitimising very particular and oppressive configurations of power relations" (McDowell and Sharp 1999, p. 140). The complexity of implementing a social agenda which ensures that organic farming is beneficial for all those involved, is recognised by the organic movement and, in an article in the IFOAM membership magazine, the following series of questions were asked:

> *...it is recommended [in the IFOAM standards] that 'All ILO conventions relating to labour welfare and the UN Charter of Rights for Children should be complied with'. However, how many people are aware of ILO conventions, what they are concerned with, and what impact their implementation might have to daily operations? Furthermore, is it possible to come to an agreement on the definition of social standards/codes of conducts not only for production and processing, but also for the complete organic trade chain? How can globally relevant and worldwide implementable standards and codes of conducts be developed?*
>
> *(Cierpka 2002, p. 22)*

As the article goes on to comment, inspectors need "clear and 'measurable' indicators to evaluate social justice issues within a reasonable time frame" (p. 22).

One aspect of social justice embraced within IFOAM's rhetoric is that of the status of women and the nature of gender relations within organic production systems. Indeed the

Managing Director of IFOAM has stated that: "Prevailing attitudes to gender are very progressive in the organic movement, giving women equal rights and respect" (Cierpka 2002, p. 21). Furthermore, at the forthcoming IFOAM World Congress 'Shaping Sustainable Systems' it is claimed that "...the issue of 'sustainability', which is at the heart of organic agriculture, will be revisited, rethought and recaptured; and with consideration to broader social and policy issues of community, gender and social justice" (IFOAM 2004b). This statement appears to demonstrate that IFOAM is placing gender issues at the centre of its concern with the sustainability of organic agriculture.

However, it is not only the official bodies representing the organic movement that indicate its social agenda. The linking of individual members of the organic movement with a broader social agenda has been identified in a study of organic farmers in Ireland (Tovey 2002). The farmers within this study were not only concerned with production issues but also with social relationships regarding labour and customers. In this way they developed local marketing schemes, co-operated with other producers and organised additional labour through co-operative initiatives such as Local Exchange and Trading Systems[3] (LETS) and Willing Workers on Organic Farms[4] (WWOOF). Tovey (2002, p. 9) argues that although their own livelihoods were the primary concern of the farmers in the study, their "worldview leads them to assume that these can best be addressed...through collective and co-operative construction of new social as well as technical knowledges". It is possible that the alternative approaches to social organisation, such as their novel approaches to the organisation of labour, could impact upon gender roles and relations within organic farming.

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[3]LETS are local community-based mutual aid networks in which people exchange various goods and services with one another, without the need for money (LETSLINK UK, 2005)

[4]WWOOF is an organisation that facilitates placements for volunteering on organic farms both within the UK and world wide (International WWOOF Association, 2005)

Potential impacts on gender roles, relations and identities

As demonstrated above, the organic ideology has an explicit social component in which gender issues, and specifically the status of women, are identified as an area of concern. The last part of this sub-section will consider the extent to which the social agenda of the organic movement, and specifically its aim of attaining 'social equity' may have a transformative impact upon the expression of gender roles, relations and identities within agriculture. In order to explore this contention research conducted with the sustainable agriculture movement will be drawn upon.

An important characteristic of the inequitable relationship between men and women identified within conventional agriculture is that of the marginalisation of women from access to knowledge about the practice of farming (Leckie 1996). Trauger (2004a) argues that this inequity is emphasised by the spatial segregation of women in agriculture, because "by limiting women's access to space, patriarchal communities can deny women access to knowledge" (p. 296). In the public spaces of the conventional farming community women are seen as farmers' wives and therefore incapable of exchanging valuable knowledge about the practice of farming. However, Trauger suggests that the spaces and places of the sustainable farming community offer women the potential to transgress the role of farmer's wife by legitimising them as farmers in their own right, and "in the process of asserting a different identity for women, they gain a certain amount of 'publicity' and (re)write social scripts about the identities of both farmers and women" (Trauger 2004a, p. 297). It is likely that organic farming, particularly due to the specific focus of the organic movement upon 'social equity', also offers women an alternative space within agriculture in which they are able to negotiate more progressive gender identities.

3.3.4 Summary of section 3.3

This section has highlighted and discussed three specific features of the organic movement and its ideology that lead to the proposition that organic farming represents a challenge to hegemonic agricultural gender identity. The three aspects are: the unique development trajectory which has led to its distinctive socio-demographic profile; the approach to

nature-society which suggests a non-hierarchical approach to binaries; and the related integration of social factors into the organic ideology. By assuming the existence of some parallels between the organic movement and the sustainable agriculture movement, this section has also speculated upon the possible impacts of the nature of the organic movement and the organic ideology upon gender roles, relations and identities expressed within organic farming. In summary, this section has suggested: firstly, that the distinctive features of organic farmers' socio-demographic profile may influence the expression of a more progressive approach to gender roles, relations and identities; secondly, that organic farming can provide a space in which traditional gender roles are recognised and valued while at the same time enabling individuals to assert their identity in ways unacceptable within conventional farming, and that women can bring particular values arising from their social positioning within society to organic farming; and thirdly, that the organic movement has a specific social agenda which promotes gender equality as part of its aim of achieving 'social equity'.

3.4 The relevance of the organic agricultural movement and the 'organic ideology' to contemporary organic farming

This thesis has suggested that organic farmers adhering to the organic ideology may not conform to the hegemonic agricultural gender identities. In particular, certain aspects of the organic ideology have been identified which indicate that the relationship between organic farming and gender identity may be different to that of conventional farming: its developmental trajectory and the resultant distinctive characteristics of organic farmers; its approach to nature-society relations; and the explicit social and emancipatory aims of the international movement. However, the argument for the potentially transformative potential of organic farming developed so far has relied upon the assumption that the 'Principle Aims' of IFOAM, and the organic ideology derived from it, provide a template for the practice of organic farming. Furthermore, it has assumed that as a result of this organic agriculture can be viewed as a coherent whole. However, in reality organic agriculture is highly fractured, and in the words of Guthman:

In truth, it is impossible to divine a singular argument and meaning for organic agriculture. The unification of themes into an organic movement has not been without contradictions and exclusions, and many contemporary understandings of organic agriculture are not even complementary. Moreover, there has always been a tension between those who see organic agriculture as simply a more ecologically benign approach to farming and those who seek a radical alternative to a hegemonic food system. These unresolved tensions continue to surface in ongoing battles over the regulation of "organically grown food", and....even the idea of regulation is contested

(Guthman 2004a, p. 3)

Moreover, not only do contradictions exist within organic farming but they have become more marked as a result of the rapid growth that the sector has experienced since the 1990s; growth that, as discussed in section 3.2.9, is primarily driven by farmers converting from conventional farming. This expansion of the organic sector has, in the words of Guthman (2004a, p. 41, emphasis in original), "necessarily transformed the character of organic *farmers*. At the very least the sector became dominated by those who converted to organic production. The question is how such growth affected the character of organic *farming*..." This section will consider the likely impacts of these two factors, namely the contradictions that exist within contemporary organic farming and the related recent influx of converted farmers, upon the contention that the relationship between gender identity and organic farming differs from that within conventional farming.

The proceeding section will argue that contemporary developments within organic farming are likely to have both positive and negative impacts upon its transformative potential in relation to gender roles, relations and identities. Firstly it will be argued that the process of standards-setting has acted as both an obstacle and an aid to the organic ideal of integrating social factors into organic farming. Secondly, it will suggest that the recent growth experienced within organic farming, driven by conversions from conventional agriculture, will not have a necessarily detrimental impact upon the expression of alternative versions of agricultural gender identities.

3.4.1 Organic standards and 'conventionalisation'

Standard-setting within agriculture is recognised as being critical within contemporary transformations of agriculture and rural life because they act as the medium through which "the moral economy is produced and reproduced" (Busch 2000, p. 274). Indeed, the development of standards for organic farming has had a large impact upon the sector, as will be discussed within this sub-section. It has been suggested by Østergaard (1998) (quoted in Seppanen and Helenius 2004, p. 21) that organic agriculture can be understood as a "double phenomenon", viewed either in a closed manner as a set of rules for farming practices or interpreted more openly "as a variety of ideas and visions for a better way of farming". The current standards-oriented regulation, which requires that organic farms undergo regular inspections, necessarily prioritises the closed approach as it encourages producers to focus upon allowable inputs and staying within the boundaries of the rules and regulations, rather than on agro-ecological design (Seppanen and Helenius 2004). This is reinforced by Guthman (2000, p. 265) who claims that "...setting minimum standards of allowable practices.... effectively creates ceilings....By codifying organic production, that is, it gives growers less incentive to incorporate an ideal practice when an allowable one will suffice".

Organic production standards were first developed independently by organic farming organisations in the 1970s, and are now at the core of organic farming, providing a basis for legal regulation. Standards have played a major role in distinguishing organic farming from other forms of farming (Michelsen 2001a). Indeed, the prescriptive nature of organic farming has been described as its 'crucial particularity' (Guthman 2000). The evolution of production standards, and the associated development of third party certification bodies, has facilitated the extension of organic food networks beyond a sole reliance on direct sales to customers (Klonsky 2000), whilst at the same time it has enabled the movement to form a tangible, evolving critique of the agro-industrial model of farming. The fluid nature of the standards, which are continually being (re)shaped and (re)negotiated by members of the organic community, enables the organic movement to react to contemporary issues and threats to the distinctiveness of organic farming. Indeed, as commented by Morgan and Murdoch (2000, p. 166), "the regulatory rules of [organic farming] are still unfolding, still

being contested and therefore still liable to change". However, the process of standard setting and regulation can be regarded as reducing organic to technical and quantitative definitions and rules (Kaltoft 1999) in a process that is divergent to the holistic organic ideology from which organic farming has developed.

Organic standards are based on the basic values of organic farming as written into the declaration of the IFOAM 'Principle Aims'. As a result of the Principle Aims covering a broad set of issues they are inherently difficult to combine (Michelsen 2001a), therefore regulation has inevitably led to their simplification. Thus, crucially, the Principle Aims, initially intended by IFOAM to be of equal importance to each other, lost their parity on translation into a practical code leading to a prioritising of factors of production over the wider, and less tangible, social aims of organic farming. This suggests that the extent to which social standards are implemented is reliant upon the philosophy of individual farmers. Despite this inconsistency, the organic movement continues to claim that "social justice and social rights are an *integral* part of organic agriculture and processing" (IFOAM 2000b, online source, italics added).

The inherent problems of reducing organic to technical and quantitative definitions and rules, and the resulting focus on production issues, has had two significant ramifications. Firstly, it has led to the instrumentalist view that organic farming is just 'farming without chemicals' and its related promotion as an 'environmentally friendly' form of farming. This narrow image was successful as long as other forms of agriculture were seen as being the opposite. However, with the advent of other specified forms of agriculture which encompass some of the same issues, such as integrated farming systems which promote the use of fewer and more benign chemicals (e.g. as promoted by 'Linking Environment And Farming'); farm animal welfare schemes such as 'Freedom Foods' (administered by 'Royal Society for the Protection of Cruelty to Animals'); as well as basic farm assurance schemes stipulating good agricultural practice with which many farmers now comply; the perceived differentiation between organic and conventional agriculture may become blurred.

Secondly, the accessibility of organic production via a measurable, minimum set of organic standards has provided entry to practitioners who, despite fulfilling the basic production standards, do not necessarily subscribe to the 'organic ideology' in its entirety. This process has been explored in studies of Californian organic agriculture (Buck et al. 1997; Guthman 1998; Guthman 2000) in which it is argued that organic farming is being undermined and conventionalised.

Thus it appears that regulation is effectively responsible for the erosion of the distance between the practice of organic and other forms of agriculture; leading to the situation where, as Goodman (2000, p. 215) comments: "Lines that once appeared to delineate apparently polar opposites have become fuzzy and blurred, confounding previous certainties and stereotypical representations". As an outcome this is highly paradoxical considering that regulation, the very process which enables organic production systems to appear distinctive, is leading to the erosion of this distinctiveness.

However, there are studies refuting the unidirectional nature of the conventionalisation argument (See, Coombes and Campbell 1998; Hall and Mogyorody 2001; Nigh 1997). In the New Zealand context, for example, it has been argued that the developmental path of organic agriculture is more complicated than the linear trajectory of the conventionalisation argument suggests, and the "processes that form the discursive field are somewhat more circular and becoming increasingly complex as [the diverse members of the organic movement] reposition themselves in the construction of organics" (Campbell and Liepins 2001, p. 36). As is suggested elsewhere, the success of this repositioning, in terms of retaining the ideological component of organic farming, lies with the ability of the organic movement to construct different versions of organic definitions, principles and standards (Hall and Mogyorody 2001). A key issue for the organic movement in this respect is the ability to define a "broader, more holistic concept of organic farming that also sets minimum social standards for the people involved in organic farming" (Dabbert et al. 2004, p. 7).

This view is supported by Guthman (2004b, p. 173), who describes the impact of the complementarity between organic regulation and industrialisation as having "effectively

reinvigorated the movement", as the movement responds to the threat to its distinctiveness by increasingly emphasising its previously neglected social aims (Raynolds 2000):

> *...producers who identify with the movement have seen their own livelihoods affected by growth and change in the organic sector [and] they have started to fight back....I have witnessed growing interest in making social justice a vital component of organic agriculture, another way in which to go "beyond organic"*
>
> *(Guthman 2004b, p. 173)*

This so called 'fighting back' is reflected in recent activities of the organic movement through which it is acting to rectify the gap between its long standing rhetoric on social justice issues and the paucity of its current standards in this respect. Indeed, there are signs that the organic movement is acting to implement these ideas through various initiatives. For example, in 2002 the Social Accountability in Sustainable Agriculture (SASA) project was launched, in which IFOAM was a collaborator. One of the objectives of SASA was to 'develop guidelines and tools for the implementation of social audits across a wide range of agricultural production systems and product chains' (Courville 2002, p. 31). SASA conducted an international 'social survey' of agricultural organisations during 2003 in order to 'investigate which organisations are addressing social justice issues in the agricultural sector and what kind of activities are being carried out' (Lorenzen 2004, personal communication). In the UK the Soil Association developed a set of 'ethical trading standards' for UK organic agriculture which were launched as a pilot project in 2004.

This sub-section has argued that the process of regulation, and the related conventionalisation of organic agriculture, is having a dual-impact upon organic farming's social agenda. Firstly, the regulation of organic farming has been shown to be related to the conventionalisation of the sector, which can be argued to have led to the erosion of the 'organic ideology', and in particular the neglect of its social agenda. Secondly, the threat to organic farming caused by conventionalisation is causing sections of the organic movement to reaffirm their radicalism as critique and therefore, as the recent moves by the organic movement suggest, it can be argued that the social aims of organic farming, and by extension, its commitment to gender equality, are being reinvigorated.

3.4.2 Growth in the organic sector

It is conjectured within this thesis that the distinctive socio-demographic features of organic farmers may impact upon the nature of the gender roles, relations and identities expressed within organic farming. Specifically, it is suggested that they may contribute to a more 'progressive' approach to gender roles, relations and gender division of labour, and may facilitate the expression of gender identities that do not conform to hegemonic agricultural gender identities. Their comparatively young age could be a contributing factor, although this is not corroborated by any research. However, it is suggested that a progressive approach is particularly likely of new entrants who specifically choose to enter farming as organic farmers. This could be due to various characteristics including: that they are likely to have had a more varied work history; they often come from 'urban' backgrounds; they are likely to be liberal in their outlook, as indicated by their approach to farm organically as a political choice. Furthermore, their specific choice to farm organically suggests an especially principled approach to the organic ideology, and therefore they are perhaps more likely to embrace it in its entirety, including the social factors of organic production.

However, the recent growth experienced within the sector, caused predominantly by conversions from conventional agriculture, may temper the differences in demographics between organic and conventional farmers. Moreover, organic farming is changing from a form of agriculture with a significant core of individuals from a non-agricultural background, to a form of agriculture dominated by those from farming lineages. It is likely that those individuals from a farming lineage will bring with them the associated heritage of traditional agricultural gender identities. Furthermore, the approach taken towards the organic ideology by the recent converters may differ from earlier organic farmers, particularly in relation to their adoption of the social factors. Indeed it has been suggested by Koesling et al. (2005, p. 1) that the growth in new organic farmers will lead to a "shift in ideals and values within the organic farming movement compared to the early organic community". In this way, the influx of converters may dilute the transformative potential of organic farming in relation to gender roles, relations and identities. However, whilst recognising the potential implications of increased conversions from conventional

farming, the following section will argue that the transformative potential of organic farming could nevertheless remain.

Firstly, although the recent growth of organic farming will inevitably increase the ratio of converters to new entrants, it will not necessarily eliminate the distinctiveness of the socio-demographic characteristics of organic farmers. Indeed, recent research conducted within England suggests that the distinctiveness of organic farmers as a group has remained despite the rapid increase in conversions (Lobley et al. 2005). This research suggests that the farmers who have thus far chosen to convert to organic farming in England, are themselves distinctive in terms of their relative youth and high educational attainment, and furthermore, that the proportion of new entrants to agriculture within organic farming remains significantly higher than in conventional farming.

Despite the retention of a certain degree of difference in the characteristics of organic farmers as a group, it is nevertheless accepted that the recent growth stimulated by the entrance of farmers converting from conventional production will inevitably impact upon the characteristics of organic farming. However, the impact upon scale, practices and motives has been shown to be less clear cut than simplistic old versus new arguments allow, as Guthman describes:

> *...in my research I met growers who had been involved with organics for over twenty-five years who were dubious about its benefits, and I met those who were still part of major conventional operations who were quite taken with organic philosophy. More significantly, as the organic sector has been struck by inter-firm competition, some so-called lifestyle-oriented growers have become very business-oriented.*
>
> *(Guthman 2004a, p. 306)*

Despite being based upon the results of a study from the specific geographical area of California, and therefore unable to claim general applicability, this finding nonetheless problematises assumptions sometimes made by activists and academics, who see the ideological quandary in which the organic movement finds itself as predicated on a lack of commitment of large-scale new comers to the organic ideology. In this view, a grassroots movement of small scale growers committed to the organic ideology is distinct from larger scale operators "who may still technically qualify as organic, but who...otherwise eschew

the movement's basic ideology" (Vos 2000, p. 253). Furthermore, the claim made by Guthman also leads to a questioning of the notion that the growth in the organic sector will necessarily lead to the marginalisation of those who take a holistic approach to the concept of organic farming. This is further challenged when consideration is made of the possibility that the process of converting to organic farming may lead to some farmers embracing a holistic approach in which a different attitude towards the nature-society relation is adopted (Verhoog et al. 2003).

The view that structural changes within organic agriculture are increasingly favouring large-scale operations, and the related assumptions about lack of commitment to the organic ideology, is exemplified in a recent article by Pedersen and Kjærgård (2004, p. 374), in which they claim that "professional female farmers appear to be a 'threatened species' in the organic sector". They suggest that there is a relationship between the favouring of large-scale organic operations and female organic farmers allegedly abandoning organic production. This, they argue, is because the holistic view apparently assumed by female organic farmers is being increasingly marginalised by the influx and favouring of increasingly large-scale operations. This erosion of the holistic approach to organic farming will, they argue, lead to the (continued) loss of women currently involved in organic farming, as well as significantly decreasing the likelihood that new women will be attracted into the sector. There are a number of problems with this claim. Firstly, it makes two specific assumptions about women involved in organic farming: that they are not involved in running large-scale organic farms; and that they necessarily take a holistic approach (an assumption also made within other research as discussed above), and therefore by deduction, that those in the sector who do not are necessarily male. Secondly, it draws upon the belief, common within organic discourses, that large-scale farming is not compatible with a holistic organic philosophy; a discourse that also posits philosophically less committed newcomers to organic farming against philosophically committed grassroots organic farmers. Thirdly, it does not allow for the personal transformations that have been shown to take place amongst some farmers when they enter sustainable (and therefore possibly organic) farming from conventional farming, whereby they become more open to adopting a holistic approach.

In this sub-section the idea that conversions from conventional agriculture will necessarily lead to an erosion of the organic ideology is challenged. This challenge is made on two grounds. It is suggested that the farmers converting from conventional farming may still have distinctive characteristics compared to agriculture as a whole; factors which could be influential in the negotiation of gender roles, relations and identities. Also, the notion of committed grassroots versus less committed newcomers is problematised. It is suggested that this is over-simplistic, and furthermore does not allow for the personal transformations that may occur after conversion, leading to a deeper commitment to the organic ideology.

The 'conventionalisation' thesis as a method of conceptualising organic agriculture has initiated and sustained much debate. However, in a recent paper Reed et al. (2005), despite acknowledging its usefulness, suggest that it is time to move beyond 'conventionalisation' to alternative conceptualisations of organic agriculture. In particular, they cite its basis in political economy and its related failure to account for the organic ideologies approach to the relationship between society and nature. In this way, 'conventionalisation', it is argued, depends upon conceptualising nature as passive and draws heavily upon the nature/society binary. This has the ironic outcome that:

> *Those working most closely with those who insist on the agency of nature - organic farmers and consumers - have been the least receptive to what their collaborators are telling them.*
>
> *(Reed et al. 2005, p. 23)*

It is suggested here that one way of transcending the debate around 'conventionalisation' and the related problem of the fixity of binary thinking, is to engage with the notion of 'third space'. 'Third space' is a way of conceptualising spaces that transcend what is produced by binary processes, in which "new forms of otherness can emerge and new kinds of identity can be acted out" (Cloke and Johnston 2005, p. 15).

3.4.3 Summary of section 3.4

This section has argued that, despite the process of conventionalisation and the related increase in farmers converting from conventional agriculture, organic farming remains a

site with potentially transformative implications for gender roles, relations and identities within agriculture. The process of conventionalisation is forcing the organic movement, as represented by IFOAM, to act defensively in order to retain the distinctiveness of organic farming. Therefore, conventionalisation can be seen as being a stimulus for the reassessment and development of the social standards inherent to the organic ideology. In this reaffirmation of its commitment to social equity, the organic movement is explicitly targeting gender equality as an area of action. The overall composition of organic farmers is changing from having a significant core of individuals from non-agricultural backgrounds to one dominated by farmers from agricultural lineages. However, it has been argued that this change does not necessarily signal that the organic ideology, and its commitment to social factors of production, is being abandoned.

3.5 Summary of Chapter Three

Organic farming is uniquely placed to challenge the traditional gender roles, relations and identities that have been shown to persist within conventional agriculture. In particular, three distinctive aspects of organic farming, with respect to the organic movement and its organic ideology, have been identified which could directly influence gender roles, relations and identities within organic farming. Furthermore, it has been shown that despite certain contemporary features of organic farming, namely its conventionalisation and related rapid growth, the contention that organic farming could have transformative impacts upon agricultural gender identity still remains a possibility.

The review of the literature presented in Chapters Two and Three has identified specific gaps that this thesis seeks to fill. It has highlighted that feminist geography has largely overlooked the analysis of gender roles, relations and identities within alternative agriculture, including organic farming. Also, the features of organic farming that potentially make it a particularly interesting form of alternative agriculture with respect to gender roles, relations and identities have not been identified in previous research. With these shortcomings in mind, the research objectives of this thesis are:

- To explore how gender roles, relations and identities have been represented by the organic agriculture movement throughout its history.

- To critically assess the ongoing construction and maintenance of gender roles, relations and identities within organic farming.

- To consider to what extent the gender roles, relations and identities observed contribute to the broad social objectives of the organic agriculture movement.

Chapter Four will describe the methodology applied in order to explore the notion that the ideological standpoint of organic farming encourages the expression of distinctive forms of gender roles, relations and identities within agriculture, and therefore to determine the extent to which it challenges the hegemonic agricultural gender identities.

Chapter 4

METHODOLOGY: EMPLOYING FEMINIST RESEARCH PRACTICE

Prologue

I consider it fortunate that I was drawn to feminist research practice in the early days of my PhD because, even if I had attempted to conduct interviews in a consistent, detached and neutral manner, it would have become increasingly difficult, and in the end impossible, to hide (and minimise the impact of) one of my subject positions during my fieldwork. When embarking upon my interviews, at four months pregnant, I could have passed for being a bit plump, but by the time of the final interview prior to my maternity leave I was looking 'ready to drop' according to the farmer being interviewed at the time. Indeed it became a customary part of the introductory greetings to be asked the question, "so when is it due then?" a question that becomes such a familiar part of life during the latter stages of pregnancy.

The evolving nature of my pregnant body was a powerful demonstration to me of the influence of subject positioning and the impartiality of the research process, as my embodiment meant that I could not avoid observing the impact of being positioned as a subject even if I had wished to. I was able to observe, as my pregnancy became increasingly obvious, how it overshadowed my other subject positions and influenced the interview process through both my own actions and those of the participants. It soon became clear to me that being a young, pregnant woman had a larger impact upon the interview process than simply acting to shape the initial exchange of pleasantries. In this way I was able to obtain a unique insight into the inescapable impacts of positioning upon the research process, and it illustrated to me that neutral social research is surely an unobtainable aim and that the personal does have a place in the research process because, as recognised by England (1994, p. 85) "the researcher cannot conveniently tuck away the personal behind the professional, because fieldwork is personal".

Moreover, becoming a mother twice over during my PhD has impacted upon my own interpretation of feminist geography and consequently upon the shape of this thesis. My life as a feminist geographer started late, in the initial period of my PhD. As touched upon above, formative to the shaping of my nascent feminist geographical politics/awareness, and therefore my research practice, has been the change of life course brought about by the experiences of pregnancy and the subsequent births of my two boys. That this has coincided with the birth and growth of my feminist awareness is no coincidence for, as Holloway (in Ekinsmyth et al. 2004, p. 99) observes from her own experiences, "[motherhood] brings questions of feminist politics home with...an emotional force". The influence of maternity is acknowledged by Ekinsmyth et al. (2004, p. 104), who claim that "maternity matters" in shaping the practice of feminist geography, conflating the level of its impact with other complex subject positions such as class, 'race' and gender (p.104).

What should be clear from the above account is that I believe the personal does influence the research process. Or, put another way, research is a process that occurs through the medium of a person and therefore, whether stated or not, the "researcher is always and inevitably present in the research" (Stanley and Wise 1993, p. 175) and I recognise that the way I went about doing my research is inextricably linked to how I see the world (Kirby and McKenna 1989). Therefore, my own approach to feminist epistemology, methodology and method has come together, along with my own positionality, to produce my individual interpretation of feminist research practice. It is this feminist research practice that will be discussed in the following chapter.

4.1 Introduction

The central objective of this thesis is to establish the extent to which the ideological standpoint of organic farming encourages the expression of distinctive forms of gender roles, relations and identities. The adoption of a feminist conceptual framework within the research (as detailed in Chapter Two, section 2.2) led to the choice of a feminist methodology. This chapter describes the feminist research practice applied throughout the research process. In the first section the theory of feminist research practice is explored both in general and specific terms, discussing in turn epistemology, methodology and method, and their application within this project. This is followed by a detailed description of the two phases of empirical work: comprising a content

analysis of publications from the organic movement and a series of semi-structured interviews with organic farmers. Each empirical phase is discussed separately, with details of the method employed (including the rationale behind the choice of method), the sample selection, sample description, the analytical framework and the coding systems applied to the data.

4.2 Feminist research in practice

The term 'feminist research practice' encompasses all aspects of the research process and acknowledges their inherent interconnectivity (WGSG 1997). It is important to differentiate between epistemology, methodology and method, whilst also recognising that they each continually impact upon each other within the research process (Harding 1987). The following section discusses the feminist research practice that formed the basis of the research, and in turn the approach adopted towards epistemology, methodology and method.

4.2.1 Feminist epistemology

Epistemology encompasses the wide-ranging philosophical arguments employed to answer the question 'How do I know what I know is true?' (McDowell and Sharp 1999). There are different epistemologies, with numerous variations, that specify different conceptualisations of the relation between knowledge, experience and reality (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002). Feminists can draw upon different critical epistemological positions within the social sciences in order to challenge dominant ways of knowing by asking: "Who knows what, about whom and how is this knowledge legitimised?" (Maynard 1994, p. 19). In posing these questions feminists draw on epistemologies which, although not unique to feminism (Eyles 1993; Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002), have in common a fundamental confrontation with the hegemonic empiricist and rationalist epistemologies associated with post-Enlightenment thinking and positivism. A recent review of feminist philosophies by Braidotti (2005) used a threefold classification (initially developed by Harding (1991)) for making sense of the dominant epistemological frameworks for feminist theory. These are: feminist empiricism, feminist standpoint, and feminist postmodernism (including postmodernist, post-structuralist, post-colonial or post-feminist approaches). However, Braidotti (2005, p. 199) stresses that the three categories are not mutually

exclusive but "represent approaches, moments or positions which can coexist, even within the same individual thinkers"[5].

The authority and 'universality' of hegemonic epistemologies has been challenged by exposing their inherent masculine (and white, western, middle-class) bias and their reliance on the exploitation of other genders, races, cultures and classes (Strickland 1994). Most feminist epistemologies regard impartiality and personal disengagement as both unattainable and undesirable, whilst seeing knowledge as situated, limited by its positioning and furthermore, as reflecting social experiences, values and interests (Strickland 1994). Thus notions of universal 'truth' are questioned and 'objective' knowledge is not prioritised above other ways of knowing, such as subjective experience (WGSG 1997).

As suggested above, feminism is not alone in adopting this critique of epistemological meta-narratives. Postmodernism, for example, has rejected the concept of 'truth' upheld by positivism and is sceptical towards universal discourses of humanism, theories that are rejected in favour of a celebration of fluidity and difference. Furthermore, locating the researcher in relation to the research process, central to feminist epistemologies, is increasingly seen as a requirement of good practice in social research more generally (See Cloke et al. 2004; Hoggart et al. 2002 for discussions situated within geography). Nevertheless, despite overlapping with other areas of the academy, feminist epistemologies are distinct through their inherent relationship with the politics of feminist research: "feminist research is politically for women; feminist knowledge has some grounding in women's experiences and in how if feels to live in unjust gendered relationships" (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002, p. 16).

[5] Braidotti (2005) defines the three dominant epistemological frameworks for feminist theory as follows:

Feminist empiricism: Aligned with scientific rationality and objectivity. Argue that gender bias and discrimination against women is a failure of scientific rationality.

Feminist standpoint: Privilege women's 'ways of knowing' and critique the gendered construction of knowledge. Argue that women's experience provides a good starting-point for new paradigms of knowledge.

Feminist postmodernism: Challenges essentialism and is critical of seeing women as a unified group and therefore emphasises differences between women. Knowledge is seen as an expression of Western culture which is to be deconstructed.

The ideals of rationality and objectivity that have guided western philosophy have been constructed by suppressing and 'othering' characteristics and experiences associated with femininity and under-class status (Code 1996). Therefore, central to the challenge posed by feminists has been a concern with exposing these suppressions within Enlightenment thinking (Lloyd 1984). As Maynard (1994, p. 18) explains "Feminists have pointed out not only that these polarisations mirror the dichotomy male/female, but that they are false in the way in which they imply opposite, unconnected extremes and consistently devalue the second component of these". Chapter Three illustrated how the basis of organic farming can be interpreted as challenging dualistic structures, and therefore it is suggested that the organic philosophy can be viewed as being consistent with feminist projects.

However, feminism has been criticised for reproducing 'false universalism' in its presentation of a generic 'Woman', generalised from the experience of some (white, western, middle-class) women (Dyck 1993). Thus within the research process it is important to be sensitive to differences between women resulting from class, race and sexuality, and furthermore not to assume that the words feminist and woman can be used interchangeably because, as identified by Maynard (1994, p. 20), "most women are not feminists and would not necessarily agree with accounts of the social world generated from a feminist stance". Theories of feminist methodologies have been criticised for not addressing the political and practical difficulties of conducting feminist research with women who are unsympathetic, or hostile, to feminism and feminists (Millen 1997).

This leads on to a troubling aspect of much of the feminist literature on farming (and 'rural') women. The common assumption in much of the research is that to liberate women from the domestic is a desirable, and indeed necessary, part of emancipation. This is a projection of the aspirations of a particular group of women, and what they consider 'progressive', and does not allow for differences between women. Farm women have been identified as a group who tend not to identify with the ideas and politics of feminism. In rejecting feminism farm women are seen as being traditional and oppressed and it is often assumed that they will eventually move towards emancipation, in the manner of urban (academic) women (Brandth 2002b). As Brandth (2002b, p. 113) recognises, it is difficult for feminist researchers to avoid having a

"modernist vision of a more emancipated and liberated future for the women under study", despite their objective not being shared by the research subjects. Indeed it has been demonstrated that farm women do not necessarily consider themselves to be oppressed victims, and that they are able to exercise a degree of power and influence over their own lives (See Bennett 2001). These fundamental differences in outlook have implications for the interpretation of feminist research since "...there is good reason to believe that the researcher will interpret accounts in a different way than the women who have given the accounts" (Brandth 2002b, p. 113). In the words of Kelly et al. (1994, p. 37), this raises the "troubling issues of what we do when our understandings and interpretations of women's accounts would either not be shared by some of them, and/or represent a form of challenge or threat to their perceptions, choices and coping strategies". This issue is confronted by Millen in her research on women working within science, engineering and technology (Millen 1997). Millen found that her interpretation of the women's experience of work as sex-based was at odds with the interpretations of the women themselves, who tended to view their experiences as individualised rather than because of the systematic organisation of the workplace.

It is recognised, therefore, that the epistemology forming the basis of this thesis, embedded as it is within the feminist academic community, contains particular assumptions related to the author's positioning as a feminist researcher (Millen 1997). For example, as identified by Brandth (2002b, p. 113) "from a feminist researcher perspective, it is likely that the label "traditional" will be used to characterise women who stay within the social and cultural frames of domestic femininity, while women who challenge these frames will be interpreted in more accepting terms as "modern" or postmodern". However, despite the inevitable difficulties in adapting abstract critiques of masculinist notions of science and enlightenment forms of knowledge to the day-to-day practicalities of conducting empirical research, feminist epistemology should nevertheless inform all stages of the feminist research process (Stanley and Wise 1993). The following sections will discus how a feminist epistemology was applied to the research methodology and the methods used.

4.2.2 Feminist methodology

Methodology involves the theory and analysis of how research should be conducted, how research questions may be dealt with and the criteria against which to evaluate research findings. Feminism has posed a challenge to positivistic methodologies that uphold the neutrality of the research process, as described in the following quote: "the western industrial scientific approach [positivism] values the orderly, rational, quantifiable, predictable, abstract, and theoretical: feminism spat in its eye" (Stanley and Wise 1993). In particular, the production of scientific knowledge has been criticised for claiming to be gender-neutral while simultaneously promoting, reproducing or ignoring the masculine appropriation of science (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002). Feminism advocates an alternative view that seeks to acknowledge and embrace the contradictions and complexities of the social world within the research process (England 1994).

The defining characteristic of a feminist methodology is the theoretical perspective that acknowledges the pervasive influence of gender divisions on social life (Maynard and Purvis 1994), and therefore places the social construction of gender at the centre of its inquiry (Lather 1988). Despite this foundational premise, due to the multiplicity of political and epistemological positions that exist within feminism, feminist methodology has no single overarching definition. Indeed it has been posited that the suggestion that an overarching definition might be possible runs counter to the basic themes and concerns of feminism (Stanley and Wise 1983). However, it *is* possible to identify commonalities in how feminist methodology is understood. These commonalities, additional to the ubiquitous focus on gender, have been identified as being: value given to women's experiences and knowledge, rejection of the separation between subject and object, an emphasis on consciousness-raising and an emphasis on political change (Pini 2003). Although, as has been pointed out by critics of feminist methodology, none of these features are exclusive to feminism (Hammersley 1992), it is "the manner in which these are engaged, in the context of feminist theory and derived from a feminist epistemological and ontological position, which makes them 'feminist'" (Pini 2003, p. 420).

While it is agreed that feminist research practice should focus upon the social construction of gender, there are two areas related to the question of gender over which

consensus has not been reached. These contentious areas are the issues of difference and diversity amongst women, and the place of men and masculinities within feminist research (Pini 2003). The view taken within this thesis is in line with Ramazanoglu and Holland (2002, p. 147), whereby "research projects can be thought of as feminist if they are framed by feminist theory, and aim to produce knowledge that will be useful for effective transformation of gendered injustice and subordination. But this does not mean that feminists have to study women". Indeed, the politics of gender is such that the investigation of men's lives is seen here as an integral part of feminist research. Studying women inevitably includes the influence of male dominance, masculinity and men on the shaping of women's lives (Kelly et al. 1994). Therefore, in order to reach a full understanding of the oppression of women it is argued that feminist research needs to involve men.

4.2.3 Feminist method

There is disagreement amongst feminist geographers over the issue of whether there is, or indeed should be, a specifically feminist research method (McDowell 1992). As a result of feminism's challenge to positivism (and the association of positivism with quantitative methods), the use of qualitative methods became synonymous with feminist geographical research. However, as explained by Crang (2002, p. 648), the debate has moved on from "over-quick assumptions that qualitative work was intrinsically more feminist or committed, to considering its weaknesses and strengths in a more balanced fashion". Therefore, the primacy of qualitative methods for feminist research has been challenged, and some argue in favour of the use of multiple methods (Gelsthorpe 1992; Maynard 1994). It is maintained that just as the traditional interview format has been adapted to feminist methodology, so too can quantitative methods such as surveys (Maynard 1994).

Research employing a multiplicity of methods challenges the simplistic qualitative/quantitative dichotomy and thus is in line with the feminist project of deconstructing false binaries (Stanley and Wise 1990). Moreover, positivism and the use of quantitative methods is not necessarily one and the same and, as has been discussed previously, it is theoretical orientation that creates feminist enquiry in terms of the conceptual framework, the methods applied and the interpretation of the results, rather than the particular method or technique employed (Dyck 1993). Therefore a

focus on qualitative versus quantitative methods is seen as obscuring feminisms more fundamental challenge to the underlying epistemology of traditional science and social science (Epstein Jayaratne and Stewart 1991). Thus, although there is no specifically 'feminist method', there *is* broad agreement that the techniques employed should be "consonant with [our] values and aims as feminists, and appropriate to feminist topics" (McDowell 1992, p. 405).

4.2.4 Employing a mixed method

The debate regarding quantitative and qualitative methods is ongoing within feminism and the academy more widely, and has highlighted the possibility of seeing them as a range of options rather than just as dualisms. This view is in line with the wider feminist project of deconstructing binary oppositions that informs the theoretical framework for this research process. Therefore, for this thesis a mixed approach was adopted with the intention that the trends and patterns observed from the quantitative phase would be explored and made more tangible/grounded in everyday life through the qualitative phase.

As explained above, a mixed method approach was deliberately chosen as being suitable for a research process situated within feminist theory. Therefore the feminist research within this thesis involved two phases of empirical work in a research design that incorporated both quantitative and qualitative methods. The two phases were:

- A largely quantitative content analysis of periodicals drawn from archives of the organic agriculture movement;
- A series of qualitative semi-structured interviews with men and women working on organic farms.

The preliminary findings from the first phase of the empirical work were used to inform the design of the interviews. Furthermore, any patterns or inconsistencies in the two phases will be highlighted in the discussion. Formative to the empirical work was the application of feminist epistemology and methodology to the quantitative and qualitative methods employed. In the following two sections the two different phases will be discussed; section 4.3 will detail the content analysis and section 4.4 will discuss the in-depth semi-structured interviews.

4.3 Content analysis of organic farming publications

The first phase of the empirical work involved employing the technique of content analysis to critically assess the representation of gender roles, relations and identities within periodicals originating from the UK organic movement. This section will outline the process undertaken including the aims and method, the sample selection, a description of the periodicals within the sample, the framework of analysis and the pro forma used, and finally the method of coding.

4.3.1 Aims and method

The aim of this stage of empirical work was to identify how gender roles, relations and identities within the UK organic agriculture movement have been represented by sections of the movement itself; and to consider to what extent these representations are distinctive within the agricultural print media as a whole. Specifically, it was designed to answer the following research question: How have gender roles, relations and identities been represented by the organic agriculture movement throughout its history?

Content analysis was chosen as being the most appropriate method to fulfil the aims of this thesis. Content analysis is a research technique that uses a set of procedures to make inferences from text, the conventions of which are governed by the theoretical and substantive interests of the researcher (Weber 1990). The conventions employed can be seen as the operational link between the theory and the data, enabling the coding to be achieved in a rigorous and systematic manner (Lindkvist 1981). A content analysis is composed of a number of distinct, interconnected procedures, comprising its 'analytical infrastructure', all of which have to be accounted for prior to proceeding with the analysis (Carney 1972). The procedures can be grouped according to three consecutive phases: the theoretical phase, the data extraction phase, and the back check phase (Carney 1972). In order to implement a successful content analysis it is crucial that the study has a solid theoretical phase. Therefore, it was important to ensure that the three interdependent components of the theoretical phase, namely the framework of analysis, the research questions and the sample, were secure prior to starting the analytical phases. This was achieved through conducting the additional

phase of a pilot study to highlight any necessary adjustments to the analytical framework.

4.3.2 Selection of the sample

A multistage sampling strategy was employed, involving three sequential steps which can be termed the stratified sample, the internal sample and the purposive sample.

Stratified sample

Research analysing agricultural and rural documents from a feminist perspective has predominantly used the print media as its source material (see Agg and Phillips 1998; Brandth and Haugen 1997; Brandth and Haugen 1998; Brandth and Haugen 2000; Kroma 2002; Liepins 1996; Morris and Evans 2001; Walter and Wilson 1996). Therefore, in order to build upon previous findings, and to have a relevant frame of reference, an analysis of the organic agricultural print media was considered appropriate. The choice of a print media analysis restricted the population of documents to magazines and journals, and eliminated from the sample pamphlets, reports, books, and any other published material produced by the organic movement. The research was particularly concerned with publications that represented and originated from the UK organic agricultural movement, thus the inclusion of glossy lifestyle magazines, such as 'Organic', was discounted.

By following the aforementioned sampling criteria a total of six periodicals were identified. However, an initial appraisal of the six publications concluded that three were unsuitable for inclusion within the study as Table 4.1 shows.

Table 4.1: Organic periodicals excluded from the sample frame

Periodical title	Affiliated organisation	Reason for exclusion from sample
'Ecology and Farming'	IFOAM	Considers international agricultural systems, focusing particularly on developing countries
'Elm Farm Research Centre Bulletin'	EFRC	Focuses on scientific research into organic agriculture rather than the practice of organic farming
'The Organic way'	HYDRA	Focuses predominantly on organic gardening

The remaining three publications identified as fulfilling the requirements of the research were 'Organic Farming', 'Star and Furrow' and 'Living Earth'. In order to ensure that the sample encompassed as much of the spectrum of approaches within the organic movement as possible, all three of the suitable publications were included within the stratified sample. Furthermore, an additional publication, 'Farmers Weekly', was also chosen as part of the stratified sample. The 'Farmers Weekly' is the predominant media source regarding agriculture for the UK farming industry. It was considered that the inclusion of the dominant mainstream UK farming publication within the analysis would provide an interesting and useful comparison to those originating from the organic movement. The basic details of the four publications and the rationale for their inclusion are summarised in the Table 4.2 below:

Table 4.2: Periodicals included within the sample frame

Periodical title	Affiliated organisation	Reason for inclusion in sample
'Living Earth'	Soil Association	Represents the broad UK organic movement beyond a sole focus on agriculture; targeted at lay persons
'Organic Farming'	Soil Association Certification Limited	Received by the majority of UK organic farmers
'Star and Furrow'	Biodynamic Agricultural Association	Received by a radical section of the organic movement; targeted at farmers and lay persons
'Farmers Weekly'	None	Read by members of the general agricultural community

Evidently, the publications had different target readerships, and consequently their style and content varied considerably. The magazines are described in section 4.3.3. The length of publication and the circulation figures for the publications were also markedly different as illustrated in Table 4.3. These differences impacted upon the procedure for selecting the internal sample.

Table 4.3: Description of periodicals included within the stratified sample

Periodical title	Date first published	Publication rate	Circulation[6]	Estimated readership[6]
'Living Earth'	1946	quarterly	25,000	50,000
'Organic Farming'	1983	quarterly	unknown	unknown
'Star and Furrow'	1953	biannually	750	unknown
'Farmers Weekly'	1934	weekly	77,233	200,000

[6]Figures obtained from editors in 2002

Internal sample

The variation in publication rates for the four periodicals negated a uniform internal sampling rate. Therefore the publications were sampled at selective, rather than arbitrary points, and the sampling rate was not pre-determined. This approach was also considered to be consistent with a feminist methodology which recognises the need to remain reflexive and open to adaptation throughout the research process. The sampling rates chosen were dependant upon the frequency of publication and the density of relevant material as well as practical constraints, in particular limited time and finances. Additionally it was ensured that the sample of organic publications was fairly balanced regarding the number of issues included from each of the three magazines. The sampling of the three organic publications started at the first year of publication and continued at regular intervals up to the year 2000. The internal sampling of 'Farmers Weekly' was approached differently due to the large number of publications available and the scarcity of articles focusing on organic farming, few of which satisfied the criteria for inclusion in the sample (as outlined in the following paragraph). The sampling of 'Farmers Weekly' started at 1943 (the holdings of the British Library start at 1943 although it was first published in 1934) and the interval between the years included within the sample was reduced as the density of relevant articles increased. Within each year chosen the first issue from each month was sampled. A total of 530 issues from the four publications were included within the sample, an internal sampling rate of 52% of the available publications.

Purposive sample

In order to be included within the purposive sample an article had to meet the following requirements:

- A feature article positioned within the editorial content of the publication
- Identified particular members of the organic movement or individuals engaged within organic farming as its central characters
- Contained a description of the individuals concerned or characterised their activities within the organic agriculture movement

The 530 issues within the internal sample yielded 235 individual articles that fulfilled the criteria for inclusion within the purposive sample. The sampling rates and number of relevant articles yielded from the four publications are illustrated in table 4.4. The high sampling rate of the organic magazines - 67% of those available were included within the sample - coupled with the fact that a similar number of issues were drawn from each publication, demonstrates that the final sample was balanced and representative of the sampling frame of organic publications. Furthermore, the three organic farming magazines within the sample represented the body of publications predominantly concerned with UK organic agriculture that were available at the time of the research, thus the sample was representative of media publications produced from the organic movement. Despite the large number of issues of ''Farmers Weekly' included within the sample, the 9% sampling rate was significantly lower than that of the organic publications due to the volume of publications available. However, due to the purposive nature of the sample, whereby the sampling rate increased in line with the level of interest accorded to organic farming within the publications, and hence in line with the number of eligible articles yielded, the sample is considered to be a fair representation of the 'Farmers Weekly' over the time-frame of the research.

Table 4.4: Description of the purposive sample of organic periodicals

Publication	Internal sampling rate of available publications[7]	Number of issues in sample	Number of eligible articles
'Living Earth'	50% (every issue of every other year from start date to 2000)	97	105
'Organic Farming'	50% (every issue of every other year from start date to 2000)	72	37
'Star and Furrow'	100%	85	74
'Farmers Weekly'	9% (first issue of each month within 1943/50/ 60/ 65/ 70/ 75/ 80/ 85-2000)	276	19
Total (excluding 'Farmers Weekly')	67%	254	216
Overall total (including 'Farmers Weekly')	52%	530	235

[7]The sampling rates for 'Living Earth' and 'Star and Furrow' were unavoidably impacted through the archival collections at the Soil Association and Biodynamic Agricultural Association being incomplete, approximately 10% of the potential samples for both publications were missing

4.3.3 Description of publications

The publications varied considerably in their layout, content and perspective on organic agriculture. The following section describes each of the magazines.

'Living Earth'

The 'Living Earth' is predominantly a membership magazine for Soil Association members, who include licensees and lay persons. However, approximately 1000 copies/month are also sold to the general public via select retail outlets. The editorial policy was stated as being congruent with the original British Broadcasting Corporations (BBC) mission statement: "To inform, educate and entertain" (Winkler 2004, personal communication). The magazine aims to provide readers with information about organic farming, food and lifestyles, alongside information regarding the campaigning activities of the Soil Association (Winkler 2004, personal

communication). The majority of the articles are written by the editor, although there are also regular outside contributions, often from high profile individuals from within the movement as well as media celebrities with an interest in organic farming and food.

It should be noted that the periodical of the Soil Association has developed and changed since its inception in 1946. In particular, it has had three previous names as follows:

- 1946-1967 'Mother Earth'
- 1968-1975 'Journal of the Soil Association'
- 1976-1980 'The Soil Association Quarterly Review'
- 1988-2003 'Living Earth'

However, throughout this thesis it will be referred to by its most recent name of 'Living Earth'.

Organic Farming

This publication is received by Soil Association Limited licensees and is also available by subscription. It was not possible to ascertain the current editorial policy. However, the first issue (under the title 'New Farmer and Grower') contained the following statement by the editor, who claimed that it was a "magazine aimed at serving the practical and technical needs of organic producers in Britain....['New Farmer and Grower'] will feature the practice, news and views of those involved in a non-chemical approach to agriculture and horticulture. It will carry articles of farmers and growers who are making organic systems work profitably" (Editor 1983). Despite being published over twenty years ago, this statement could equally apply to the current content of 'Organic Farming'. The articles are written by members of the editorial team as well as individuals from the organic farming community such as farm consultants, advisors, inspectors and researchers.

'Organic Farming' has undergone three name changes since it was first published in 1983, as follows:

- 1983-1989 'New Farmer and Grower'
- 1989-1993 'Organic Farmer and Grower'
- 1994-1998 'New Farmer and Grower'
- 1998-2003 'Organic Farming'

However, as with the 'Living Earth', the most recent name 'Organic Farming' will be used throughout this thesis.

'Star and Furrow'

This publication is a membership magazine received by members of the Biodynamic Agricultural Association, including licensees and lay-persons. Sub-section 3.2.6 introduced the practice of biodynamic agriculture and explained that it is considered a form of organic farming. The aim of the 'Star and Furrow' magazine is to keep members abreast of current issues and developments with regard to biodynamic work, as well as making biodynamics more known within the wider public (Mundy 2004, personal communication). The articles are written predominantly by the editorial team and members of the biodynamic community.

'Farmers Weekly'

This publication is available through retail outlets and via subscription. Its' editorial policy aims to "provide independent news, business and technical coverage of UK agriculture" (Sub-Editor 2004). Therefore, as a developing agricultural sector within the UK, organic farming is represented to an extent. The articles are written by journalists employed by the publication and freelance journalists.

4.3.4 Framework of analysis and the pro-forma

The hegemonic agricultural gender roles, relations and identities, as discussed in Chapter Two, shaped the structure of the pro forma that was developed to record specific information from the articles within the sample. The findings of earlier feminist work employing textual analysis to study the conventional agricultural and rural media were used as the foundation for its design. In particular two specific

studies, both of which had employed the technique of content analysis to analyse gendered representations within agricultural media, were influential in this respect: an analysis of the place of women within 'successful farmer narratives' within US agricultural media (Walter and Wilson 1996); and an analysis of the changing representation of women within the home section of the dominant agricultural periodical in the UK (Morris and Evans 2001). As discussed in Chapter Two section 2.6.3, these studies, and related feminist work employing different textual analysis techniques, have found that highly traditional representations of men and women, which draw heavily upon gendered dualisms, persist within the agricultural and rural media. This thesis contends that the organic agriculture movement provides a more progressive space for the expression of gendered identities. Therefore, the pro forma was designed to ascertain the extent to which the organic publications depiction of men and women differed from conventional representations of agricultural and rural gender identity. The analytical categories incorporated within the pro forma were structured using core concepts from feminist geographical enquiry, such as space/place and production/reproduction, coupled with the foundational premise of gendered dualisms. This approach enabled the subsequent statistical analysis to be based upon the differences found between the 'traditional' media representations identified from previous research, and the representations within the organic publications. In this way the data collected could subsequently be used to determine how far the organic publications blurred the boundaries of gendered dualisms.

The pro forma was composed of four main sections designed to record details regarding the article specifics (including the magazine number and date of publication and the page numbers, author, title, topic and style of content of the article), the featured organic activity and the featured individual. Table 4.5 lists the pro forma categories whilst Table 4.6 provides the rationale for the inclusion of each category, explaining their basis for inclusion and the representations that would be expected within conventional agricultural publications. The pro forma functioned as a device for recording the relevant information into a convenient format for later in-depth analysis. It is recognised that the act of simplifying the articles was itself a form of analysis, however, the information was kept as 'raw' as possible so that the later interpretative process could be performed in a deductive manner. Therefore, if the process were to be

repeated by a different researcher, the information gathered from the articles would be equivalent.

Table 4.5: The pro forma categories

Article	Featured organic activity	Featured individual: personal information	Featured individual - organic activity	Additional information
issue no./date	location	sex	relationship to organic movement	description of supporting photographs
page number	type of activity	title	role within activity/type of role	additional quotes
sex of author	details	age	spaces/places occupied	synopsis
title of article		personal status - mother, father etc.	opinions on activity	
topic		work status	quotes by/about individual related to activity	
style of content		characterisations: physical, personality, parental, professional	additional comments	
		references to others		
		education		
		life history		

Over a period of four months between July and October 2002, three archives were used to gain access to the four publications within the sample: the Soil Association archive in Bristol was used to gain access to 'Living Earth' and 'Organic Farming'; the Biodynamic Agricultural Association in Stroud was used to access 'Star and Furrow'; and 'Farmers Weekly' was accessed from the British Library in Collingdale, London. At the start of the period of empirical work a pilot study was conducted in which ten random issues were chosen from both the 'Star and Furrow' and 'Organic Farming'. Following the pilot study the pro forma was revised slightly. However, the alterations required the removal of a small number of options rather than radical changes to the format. Therefore, the analyses of the articles included within the pilot study were valid and were able to form part of the final sample. A copy of the final pro forma is located in Appendix A.

Table 4.6: Assumptions employed for the basis of the pro forma categories

Category name	Explanation of category name	Justification for category/ research questions related to category	Outcome as expected from conventional agricultural publications
ARTICLE			
Issue/date	NA	For reference and to provide historical context	NA
Page no.	NA	For reference	NA
Sex of author	NA	Are there more articles written by men or women? Do women/men write particular types of articles?	More male authors Articles written by men/women related to traditionally gendered areas respectively
Title	NA	For reference	NA
Topic	Overall subject of the article	Are women/men more likely to be featured in certain types of articles?	Men/women featured according to traditional gendered associations of article subject
Style of content	Writing style of the article e.g. interview, descriptive etc.	For reference	NA
FEATURED ACTIVITY			
Location	Geographical location of the activity	For reference	NA
Type	Type of activity featured	Are certain activities more likely to be associated with men or women?	Men and women represented doing traditionally gendered activities
Details	Extra information provided on activity	For reference	NA

PERSONAL INFORMATION			
Sex	NA	Are there more articles featuring men or women?	More articles feature men as the central character
Title	Title used such as Mr, Mrs or Ms	Are men or women more likely to be referred to by first name?	Women more often referred to as Mrs or Miss
Age		Is the age of men or women more likely to be referred to?	Age of women more often referred to than men's
Personal status	Reference to personal status of the individual, such as 'mother', 'father', 'daughter' or 'son'	Is the personal status of men or women more likely to be referred to?	Women's personal status, e.g. as mother and wives, referred to more often than men's
Work status	Reference to the work status of the individual	Is the work status of men or women more likely to be referred to?	Men's work status is referred to more often than womens. Women often depicted in voluntary work roles
Characterisations: physical, personality, parental, professional	Words used to describe the individual, categorised according to the four categories physical appearance, personality, parental and professional	Are particular types of characterisations more likely to be assigned to men or women? Are the characterisations gendered?	Descriptions of women's physical appearance and parental abilities more likely to be referred to than men's. Descriptions of men's professional abilities are more likely to be referred to than women's. Descriptions of personality likely to be gendered
Education	References made to the educational level of the individual	Is the individual's educational level mentioned? What level of education have the individuals attained?	The educational level of men is more likely to be mentioned than women's The featured men are likely to be more highly educated than featured women
Life history	Additional details about the life history of the individual	Are the life events referred to related to gender?	For women, life events such as marriage and having children are likely to be referred to, whereas for men work-related events are likely to be referred to

FEATURED INDIVIDUAL: ACTIVITY			
Relationship to activity/organic movement	The context in which the individual is included within the article e.g. as a farmer	Are men or women more likely to have particular associations with the organic movement?	Men more likely to be represented as farmers
Role within activity	The role taken by the individual as depicted within the article	Is there are difference in the types of roles men and women are featured in?	Role types represented are traditionally gendered
Spaces/places occupied	The particular spaces and places occupied by the individual as referred to in the article	The concepts of space and place are of central theoretical importance to feminist geography. They are often gendered.	Spaces and places represented as occupied by men and women are traditionally gendered
Opinions on activity	Any of the individual's opinions towards the activity/organic movement	Is more emphasis is given to male opinions?	Men's opinions more likely to be recorded
Quotes by/about individual's involvement in activity/organic movement	Pertinent quotes within article of individuals involvement within activity or the organic movement	For reference	NA
Additional comments	Additional comments by researcher	For reference	NA
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION			
Description of supporting photographs	Description of subject of photographic images within article	Are there differences in the types of images provided of men and women?	Photographs portray men and women in traditional roles
Additional quotes	Additional quotes within the article of interest to research	For reference	NA
Synopsis	Short summary of article's significance related to the representation of gender identity	For reference	NA

4.3.5 Coding

In order to analyse the information collected on the pro forma, a coding system was devised to enable the data to be entered into a data base. The coding within the categories was developed deductively upon completion of the sampling. At this stage of the analysis the nature of the content within each pro forma category was familiar, and it was possible to construct a draft outline for the coding. In order to refine the draft coding the set of complete pro formas were assembled and picked out at random to test against the coding structure. The coding was adjusted accordingly, with variables being removed, added or adapted as appropriate. This process was considered sufficiently complete when the coding fitted a succession of pro formas without requiring further adjustment.

The successive analytical stage following the development of the coding was to devise a coding dictionary. The function of the coding dictionary was to layout, in a systematic fashion, the instructions necessary to input the raw data from the pro formas directly onto a computer spreadsheet. This included translating the information into a format that was compatible with SPSS, the computer package to be used within the analysis. The coding dictionary contained instructions regarding the positioning of the results for the different categories from the pro forma within a spreadsheet (in the form of a row number), the shorthand variable names for SPSS (less than eight characters), the variable labels for SPSS (full titles as they appeared on the pro forma), the coding instructions and an explanation of the variables where necessary. An abbreviated copy of the coding dictionary is in Appendix B.

The next stage of the analysis was to input the data directly from the pro formas onto a spreadsheet in SPSS following the instructions contained within the coding dictionary. SPSS was used to facilitate the production of basic descriptive statistics and some statistical analysis including chi-square goodness of fit and independence, the Mann-Whitney U test and the Kruskal-Wallis test. See Chapter Five section 5.4.1 for the rationale behind using these particular statistical tests.

4.4 Interviews with organic farmers

The second phase of the empirical work involved a series of semi-structured interviews with male and female organic farmers operating in the county of Gloucestershire. The section will outline the process undertaken including the aims and method, the sample selection, a description of the final sample, the framework of analysis and the interview design, the process of semi-structured interviewing, the impacts of positioning upon the interviewing process and finally, the data analysis and coding.

4.4.1 Aims and method

The aim of this stage of empirical work was to identify how gender roles, relations and identities are constructed and maintained on organic farms, and to consider the extent to which these constructions are distinctive within agriculture as a whole. Qualitative interviewing was considered to be the most appropriate technique to fulfil the research aims with the time and resources available. May (1997) identifies four types of interviews used within social research: the structured interview, the semi-structured interview, the unstructured (focused) interview and the group interview. The interview types are characterised along a quantitative-qualitative spectrum, from the highly prescriptive structured interview, similar in format to a questionnaire, through to the highly flexible unstructured interview. In their most extreme manifestation structured interviews are conducted in a neutral, detached manner, supposedly to reduce interviewer bias and achieve uniformity (Sarantakos 1998). Unstructured interviews, on the other hand, are conducted in a flexible manner that encourages interaction and rapport between the interviewer and the interviewee. In its most extreme form unstructured interviewing is theoretically inconceivable, and in reality most forms of interviewing fall somewhere between the extreme structured and unstructured forms (Sarantakos 1998). Semi-structured interviews contain elements of both forms of interviewing, to varying degrees depending upon the objectives of the research. They allow respondents to answer on their own terms whilst also retaining a structure for comparability (May 1997).

Feminists were amongst the first academics to suggest that establishing a close and non-hierarchical relationship with research participants can lead to the production of more significant and meaningful data (Finch 1993; Oakley 1981). Moreover, it has

been advised by Kirby and McKenna (1989, p. 67) that "some combination of set format with preformed questions and more interactive, spontaneously developed questioning is optimal" for creating space for the input of the research participants to help guide and shape the research interaction. Thus semi-structured interviews, closer in form to the unstructured end of the spectrum, were chosen as suited to the aims of the research.

4.4.2 Selection of sample

This stage of the research was not intended to be generally applicable to a wider geographical area than that covered by the sample frame. Neither was it expected that the participants would be a representative sample of organic farmers within the geographical area of the sample frame. Rather, the research was designed to be exploratory, with the objective of opening up avenues for research in what is a new area for studies of this kind in UK organic agriculture. Therefore the sampling process was required to make effective use of the information available in order to access as wide a range of farming situations as possible that may have had some influence on gender relations on the farms. It would not have been possible to ensure this requirement was fulfilled via a random sampling method. Therefore a purposive sampling strategy was employed to construct a suitable sample, including farmers from a range of farm types, sizes and length of time practicing organic farming methods.

The sampling frame was taken as the official organically certified farms within the county of Gloucestershire in the year of the research (2002). Gloucestershire was chosen for a number of reasons. Recent research has demonstrated that the South West region of England has the highest relative concentration of organic holdings (Lobley et al. 2005), and has been described as England's heartland of organic farming (Reed and Lobley unpublished paper). Within this 'heartland' more established organic farms appear to gather around them other newer organic farms. Therefore in focusing on Gloucestershire, as one of the counties in the South West, it was likely that a range of farmers, in terms of the length of time practicing organic farming, would be available. Also, due to its physical geography, Gloucestershire has a wide range of farm types and sizes making it likely that a range of farming situations could be accessed that may variously impact upon on-farm gender relations. Furthermore, it was considered that

the location of the Biodynamic Agricultural Association headquarters within the county and the Soil Association headquarters in the adjoining county, may impact upon the level of activities occurring within Gloucestershire, and therefore it was likely that the farmers interviewed may have experience of gender relations within the wider organic community. It was also decided that the sample would be drawn from officially certified organic farms, rather than farms that claim to be organic but choose not to be officially certified. The primary reason for this decision was so that the interviews would tie-in with the content analysis, which considered publications from the 'official' organic movement. However, issues of access were also of relevance as there were no known registers with the contact details of 'unofficial' organic farms.

There were a total of 104 certified and in-conversion organic holdings registered with organic certifying bodies within Gloucestershire in 2002. Three of the certifying bodies operating within England at that time were active in Gloucestershire, including Soil Association Limited, Organic Farmers and Growers Limited and Bio-dynamic Agricultural Association. The three certifying bodies comply with the UKROF's (since changed to Compendium of UK Organic Standards) basic criteria and had IFOAM accreditation at that time, however, the organic standards of each of the certifying bodies differ in line with their approach to organic farming. The awareness of these differences led to the hypothesis that farmers attracted to a particular certifying body may have similar reasons for choosing one over another, which in turn could be related to particular characteristics that influence gender identities. Therefore, it was decided that farmers from each of the three certification bodies should be included within the sample.

Copies of the Gloucestershire producer licensee lists were obtained from each of the certifiers. The farm details contained on the lists included a contact name and title, address, telephone number, farm type and the area of organic and non-organic land. This information allowed a purposive sample to be constructed that included a range of farm types and sizes. It is understood from the literature that the type and size of farms can impact upon on-farm gender relations, and therefore it was considered paramount that a range of farms was included within the sample. Towards the end of the series of interviews, in order to achieve a balance between male and female participants, three additional female producers were obtained through a previous interviewee.

The initial contact with the organic producers was made by a letter of introduction (see Appendix C). The letter, typed on university headed paper, briefly introduced my research, why I was conducting interviews with organic farmers, ensured participant anonymity and explained that I would shortly be contacting them via a telephone call to find out if they would like to take part in an interview. I also included a small amount of information about my own background and why I had a personal interest in organic farming. It was felt that it was important to disclose these additional personal details due to a conviction that the research process should be an exchange of information. Introductory letters were sent to 56 organic farms of which 45 were subsequently contacted successfully by telephone (see Appendix D for the telephone prompt sheet). From the 45 farms contacted by telephone a total of 34 farmers agreed to organise interviews (leading to 35 separate interviews), representing a success rate of 61%. The 34 farms where interviews were held comprised 32.7% of the certified organic holdings in Gloucestershire, and included farms certified by each of the three certifying bodies operating within the county, as shown in the Table 4.7. Although 35 interviews were conducted, one was unsuccessful and excluded from the analysis.

Table 4.7: Comparison of sample farms against all organic farms within the sample frame by certifying body

Certifying body	Organic holdings in Gloucestershire	% of county's organic holdings	Total farms in sample	% of samples total
Soil Association	68	65.4	24	70.6
Organic Farmers & Growers	30	28.8	6	17.6
Biodynamic Agricultural Association	6	5.8	4	11.8
TOTAL	104	100.0	34	100.0

It was considered important that the period between the initial contact with individual farmers and their interviews was kept as short as possible. Therefore, the process of contacting the farmers continued throughout the period of interviews. This staggered approach also aided the purposive sampling technique, with the final sample containing a range of organic farms with respect to farm type, size and length of time being farmed organically. In total forty one organic practitioners were interviewed (twenty one men and twenty women) in thirty five separate interviews: fifteen interviews with single women; thirteen interviews with single men; and seven joint interviews with six married couples and two brothers. These interviews took place on thirty four separate organic farms within Gloucestershire. The following section will describe the sample in terms of the characteristics of the organic farms, the organic farmers and farm households. It will also compare the characteristics of the research sample with that of a survey of organic farmers undertaken for DEFRA.

4.4.3 Description of sample

The description of the sample in this sub-section will comprise a description of the farms, the farm businesses and the farmers and the farm households. The characteristics of the sample will also be compared to the findings of a recent survey commissioned by DEFRA (Lobley et al. 2005).

The Farms

As a result of the purposive sampling strategy the participant's farms were varied, and fairly representative of the range of organic farms within the sample frame of Gloucestershire, in terms of area and farm type. In this respect, the sample also compares favourably with that of a recent DEFRA survey of 302 organic farms drawn from three different geographical regions in England, which the authors claim to represent a cross-section of organic farms (Lobley et al. 2005). Although attaining a representative sample was not an explicit aim of the research, it was considered important in terms of achieving the aim of attempting to access a broad spectrum of approaches to on-farm gender roles and relations.

In total thirty four farms were visited, of which twenty six were entirely organic, seven were part organic and part in conversion and one was entirely in conversion. The

majority of the farms were certified by the largest certifying body, the Soil Association, although six were certified by Organic Farmers and Growers and four by the Biodynamic Agricultural Association; proportions not dissimilar from those for the county of Gloucestershire as a whole (see Table 4.7). Most of the farmland had been converted officially to organic production fairly recently, with just under half of the producers having started the conversion process less than five years ago, and only four having entered organic conversion over twenty years ago. However, a number of the producers asserted that their production system had been organic in practice for longer than they had held the official label, thus while only five producers had started conversion immediately upon first acquiring land, a further four felt that they had always farmed according to the organic principles. Indeed two of the producers were granted a reduction in the official conversion period for this reason.

The size of the holdings ranged from 2 hectares to 550 hectares. Table 4.8 illustrates the spread of farm sizes and compares them with organic holdings in Gloucestershire and with the DEFRA survey data from England.

Table 4.8: Size of organic farms in the sample, Gloucestershire and England

Farm area (ha)	Thesis sample (Gloucestershire 2002) % (N)	Certified organic farms (Gloucestershire 2002) %	DEFRA sample (England 2004) %
Less than 20	26.5 (9)	20.2	21.6
Between 20-49	20.6 (7)	20.2	17.6
Between 50-99	23.5 (8)	23.1	23.6
between 100-199	8.8 (3)	20.2	17.9
200 or over	20.6 (7)	16.3	19.3
%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N =	34	104	302

The size of the farms within the sample was fairly representative of Gloucestershire's total organic holdings at the time of the research, and was also similar to the findings of the DEFRA survey. However, farms of 100-199 hectares were under-represented

whilst farms of less than 20 hectares and 200 hectares or over were slightly over-represented. Twenty one of the farms were partially or totally owned by the participant and/or their families, while ten were tenanted and the farmland of the three biodynamic communities was held in trust.

All but three of the holdings were mixed to some degree, as would be expected on organic farms. However, a number concentrated primarily on specific enterprises and as such, following the DEFRA classification, only nineteen are classed as mixed operations while three holdings are classed as horticultural, four as dairy, and six as cattle and sheep. Of the three holdings that concentrated on one enterprise, one was a pig farm, one a deer farm and one an independent horticultural enterprise located on a large mixed organic farm. Comparison of the sample with organic holding types in Gloucestershire as a whole and with the DEFRA survey, as illustrated in Table 4.9, reveals that the sample is fairly representative of organic farming in Gloucestershire and England as a whole in terms of farm type. However, dairy and mixed farms are over-represented within the sample whilst arable and mixed farms are under-represented.

Table 4.9: Type of organic farms in the sample, Gloucestershire and England

Farm type	**Thesis sample (Gloucestershire 2002)** % (N)	**Certified organic farms (Gloucestershire 2002)** %	**DEFRA sample (England 2004)** %
Arable cropping	0.0 (0)	5.8	7.6
Cattle and sheep	20.6 (7)	31.7	27.2
Dairy	20.6 (7)	11.5	10.3
Horticultural	5.9 (2)	6.7	9.3
Pigs and poultry	2.9 (1)	3.8	4.6
Mixed	47.1 (16)	39.4	34.4
Other farm type	2.9 (1)	1.0	6.6
%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N=	34	104	302

The farm business

Nineteen of the holdings (55.9%) had diversified in at least one respect, of which nine (26.5%) had multiply diversified; six were involved in provision of accommodation, fifteen in trading enterprises, seven in processing their primary products, two in equine services and one in unconventional livestock. These findings are in line with the DEFRA survey which found that 56% of the organic farmers had diversified, 23.2% of which in multiple ways. As with the sample in this research, the largest proportion of the organic farmers in the DEFRA survey had diversified into accommodation or trading and processing enterprises. Although most of the diversification initiatives were not necessarily dependent upon the holding being organic, it is notable that the majority diversified after they had started the conversion to organic production.

Most of the holdings were farmed full-time by at least one person, with twenty nine of the primary farmers being full-time and six part-time. Thirteen of the farms also had at least one regular non-family employee. However, half of the holdings had at least one member of the farm household undertaking regular off-farm employment and a further four households were in receipt of at least one pension. The majority of the farms could be described as a 'farm family business', as understood by Gasson and Errington (1993), in that they displayed the following elements to some degree:

- Business ownership is combined with managerial control in the hands of business principals.
- These principals are related by kinship or marriage.
- Family members (including these business principals) provide capital to the business.
- Family members including business principals do farm work.
- Business ownership and managerial control are transferred between the generations with the passage of time.
- The family lives on the farm.

Although all of the farm businesses were under family ownership, a number of the farms did not conform strictly to the above model. For example, one farm was a share farm partnership and on three of the farms the work was performed solely or predominantly by non-family members.

The farmer and the farm household

Turning to the participants themselves, a range of personal and demographic data shows that a diverse cross-section of farmers were interviewed, which, when some aspects are compared with the DEFRA sample, appears to be fairly representative of English organic farmers more widely.

Although most of the participants were aged over 45, a significant number of were under 45, as illustrated in Table 4.10 this compares favourably with the findings of the DEFRA survey.

Table 4.10: Age of organic farmers in the sample and England

Participant's age	Thesis sample (Gloucestershire 2002) % (N)	DEFRA sample (England 2004) %
<35	9.8 (4)	4.7
35-44	24.4 (10)	23.6
45-54	39.0 (16)	42.2
55-64	17.0 (6)	20.9
>65	9.8 (5)	8.6
%	100.0%	100.0%
N=	41	302

Ten of the participants had completed a full secondary education, eleven had completed either A' levels or further education courses, eighteen had attained a degree and one a masters degree. Only one participant had not completed their secondary education. Again, these results are similar to that obtained by the DEFRA survey, as is illustrated in Table 4.11.

Fourteen of the participants had worked in different areas of work before taking up farming, including jobs in such varied fields as teaching, psychotherapy, shoe-making, engineering, film editing and pharmacology.

Table 4.11: Highest level of formal education achieved by organic farmers in the sample and England

Highest level of formal education	Thesis sample (Gloucestershire 2002) % (N)	DEFRA sample (England 2004) %
Full secondary education	25.0 (10)	23.7
FE 16+	27.5 (11)	25.1
Higher Ed 18+	47.5 (19)	51.2
%	100.0%	100.0%
N =	40	299

The majority of the participants were members of farm family businesses, as defined by Gasson and Errington (1993), in which at least one member of the household worked on the farm. However, two of the male participants differed in that one was employed as a manager for a large family owned farm and another employed a full-time farm manager to run his own family farm whilst he and his wife worked full-time off-farm. In seventeen instances the participant was based on the farm full-time along with their partner or other members of their family. However, five of the partners did alternative work from home and therefore were not available to work on the farm on a full-time basis (one woman was a freelance writer, one woman ran an internet aromatherapy sales business, one man ran a business consultancy and two women were at home with young children). In nine instances the participant's partner worked off farm full-time and in two instances off-farm part-time. Three of the participants worked off-farm on a part-time basis themselves, including two of the participants whose partners also worked full-time. There were only two cases in which both partners worked off-farm full-time, although a full-time manager was employed by one of these farms as discussed above.

All of the male participants and all but three of the female participants were either married or living with a partner. However, of the three single women interviewees only one was living alone, the other two were living with family members: one with her three teenage children and the other, a young woman in her early twenties, with her parents. Of the forty one participants interviewed twenty three were from a farming background themselves (ten females and thirteen males), of which sixteen were 'established farmers' (at least second generation farming family, either operating original family farm or a farm in the immediate area of the first family farm) and seven were 'recent established farming entrants' (at least second generation farming family but farming a new farm in a different geographical area). Just less than half (eighteen) of the participants were new entrants to farming in that they were the first member of their family to farm. Two of the new entrants were 'recent new entrants' as they had entered farming less than five years ago. Of the new entrants, five had married into farming families (two females and three males) and thirteen were neither from a farming background themselves nor had they married into a farming family (nine females and four males). As can be seen in Table 4.12, the sample from this survey differs from the DEFRA sample as it includes a higher proportion of new entrants and a much lower proportion of established farmers who farm their original family farm. However, there is not a large difference in the proportion of farmers from a farming background as is shown by the higher percentage of 'recent established farming entrants', which redresses the imbalance.

Table 4.12: Entry of organic farmers in the sample and England into farming

Entry into farming	Research sample (Gloucestershire 2002) % (N)	DEFRA sample (England 2004) %
Recent new entrant	4.9 (2)	5.6
New entrant	39.0 (16)	25.3
Recent established farming entrant	17.1 (7)	5.6
Established farmer	39.0 (16)	63.5
%	100.0%	100.0%
N=	41	301

Summary

The description of the sample of farms, farmers and farm households, and its comparison with the population of organic farms within Gloucestershire and recent DEFRA survey data, has illustrated that it is representative of organic farms more widely. Although was not a specific aim of the sampling method to obtain a representative sample, it *was* intended that a range of farm types should be accessed in order to obtain broad spectrum of participants. This section has demonstrated that this aim was achieved.

The sample of organic farms within the DEFRA survey was compared with a sample of non-organic farmers. It was concluded that the people operating the organic farms within the sample represented a 'distinctive group' compared to the conventional farmers with respect to factors such as the greater level of new entrants, their higher educational level and younger age. The authors suggested that this distinctiveness may bring with it "different skills and aptitudes...and possibly also a different attitude to operating a farm business" (Lobley et al. 2005, p. 60). It is possible that this distinctiveness may extend to the approach to on-farm gender roles and relations and the gender identities of the farmers. Due to the clear parallels that have been demonstrated between the characteristics of the DEFRA sample of organic farmers and the sample from this research, it can be assumed, not only that the sample from this research is representative of organic farmers more widely, but also that it represents a 'distinctive' group of farmers compared to non-organic farmers.

4.4.4 Framework of analysis and interview design

As for the first empirical phase of the research (i.e. the analysis of organic movement publications), the hegemonic gender roles, relations and identities found within conventional agriculture, shaped the structure of the interview schedule. The schedule was designed so that the interviews could explore whether the participants gender identities differed from conventional agricultural gender identities. A further aim was to determine the level of congruence between representations of men and women in organic publications and the participants' negotiation of their own gender roles, relations and identities. As with the pro forma design for the first stage of the empirical work, the analytical themes incorporated within the schedule were structured by

applying core concepts from feminist geographical enquiry, such as space/place and production/reproduction, to the issues that have been shown by previous research to be important in the shaping of agricultural gender identities. Due to the nature of the area of investigation, whereby certain aspects of the interviews were concerned with personal negotiations, often concerning private relationships between family members, it was important to be sensitive in the tone of questioning. Therefore, the schedule was designed so that the gender focus of the research was not necessarily overt within the questions asked. Furthermore, explicit reference to the 'feminist' nature of the research was not a routine part of the interview process. Therefore, although there was consistency in the themes covered, the schedule incorporated an element of flexibility, and was adapted according to the participant. Thus where it was deemed appropriate additional, more explicit questions were asked regarding the negotiation of gender identity.

The interview schedule covered the following eight themes for discussion:

- The organic philosophy of the participant/s
- The personal history of the participant/s
- The organisation of labour on their farm
- The organisation of labour on organic farms generally
- Involvement in off-farm work
- The participant/s experience of the organic farming community
- Their perception of the involvement of women within organic agriculture
- Their perception of the future of their own organic system and organic production more widely

Within each theme covered on the schedule there were a number of questions, with associated prompts where considered necessary. Two slight variations of the schedule were designed, one for farmers who had converted from conventional farming and another for farmers who had always farmed organically. The schedule was designed as

a guide rather than a blueprint for the interviews. However, the order of certain themes was considered to be important. Organic philosophy was chosen as the first theme because it covered questions with which it was predicted that the participants would feel confident and comfortable, due to their familiarity and non-personal nature. It also established and reinforced the focus of the interview on the social aspects of organic farming. The final theme was chosen as the future of organic farming because it was an appropriate and potentially 'upbeat' topic with which to end the interviews. The order of the other five themes was not considered to be critical, although it was considered appropriate to ask the more sensitive questions about gender once a rapport had been established. The interview schedules were summarised in the form of two prompt sheets to be used as a reference point during the interviews. For convenience they were printed on two different colours of card. See Appendix E and F for copies of the interview schedule and prompt sheet respectively.

The questions within the themes were designed to gather information from the participants that would satisfy the research questions. Therefore, although the questions were not necessarily directly enquiring about gender identity, they were informed by feminist theory, and in particular previous work on agricultural gender identity. Table 4.13 contains examples of the types of questions asked and the associated research questions from three of the interview themes.

4.4.5 The process of semi-structured interviewing

The number of interviews conducted was not pre-decided. Rather, the sample was judged to be comprehensive upon the convergence of two criteria: when the sample was 'balanced', in terms of men and women, farm types and sizes; and when it had reached the point of 'theoretical saturation', whereby the same responses were being repeated. The final number of interviews conducted was thirty five, comprising separate interviews with fifteen females and fourteen males and dual-interviews with six mixed-sex couples and two brothers.

The initial intention was to interview all of the adults on any one farm who played an active role in the running of the farm (excluding general farm workers). As such, the letter of introduction asked permission to interview "the adults who play an active

daily part in running [the] farm[s], both in the home and in the field". It was also specified that it would be preferable to conduct separate interviews if possible.

Table 4.13: Examples of the relationship between the interview themes, interview questions and research questions

Interview theme	Example of interview question	Research questions related to example interview question
Organisation of labour on the farm	What areas of work related to the farm do you have responsibility for?	Is labour on organic farms structured by gender or other factors? How does it compare with the 'conventional' gender division of labour on farms?
	Since converting to organic farming has your workload and the work you do on the farm changed?	Does converting to organic production alter the gender division of labour?
Organic philosophy of the participant	What were your original motives for entering organic farming?	Are there gender differences in the initial motives for choosing to farm organically?
	Have your motives changed since you first decided to farm organically?	Does the process of farming organically impact upon an individual's outlook? Do they become more open to the social aspects of organic production?
Perception of the future	Do you have any specific plans for the future of your farm?	Do any planned changes on their own farm have potential implications for gender relations?
	How do you see the future of organic farming?	Do they consider organic production to be under threat? If so, do they see the social aspects of production as being part of its resolution?

However, in practice, on the majority of the farms visited only one person was available to be interviewed. Moreover, on the eight farms visited in which two people were interviewed the interviews were conducted together in all but one case, due to their personal time constraints. On each of the other twenty six farms visited only one individual was interviewed (although at four of the farms the partner 'turned up' for a while and was temporarily included in the interview): in five of these cases only one person was actively involved on the farm; in twelve cases the partners were not available due to full or part-time work commitments; in one case the partner specifically did not want to be interviewed; and in five cases the partner was a full-time homemaker. Although I would have liked to interview the homemakers, a factor that was encouraged when I contacted the farm, they did not appear when I arrived. It can be assumed that this is because they did not consider that they played an 'active role' within the farm, which is quite a revealing outcome in itself. Lastly, towards the end of the interview series, by which time the initial aim of interviewing more than one person from each farm had been revised, three women were specifically approached for single interviews in order to 'balance' the ratio of male to female participants.

Research has demonstrated that the composition of participants within household interviews inevitably impacts upon the nature of the data produced. Hertz (1995) asserts that interviewing only one spouse or both together reflects a set of assumptions about family life and appropriate divisions of labour. However, Valentine (1999) disagrees, suggesting that neither strategy, interviewing couples either together or apart, is superior to the other. Nevertheless, she does suggest that interviewing all household members can: "increase the complexity and sophistication of the accounts collected by the researcher; add depth to the research by exposing the negotiated and conflictual basis of household relations and decision-making; and enable the dynamics of household relationships to be explored" (Valentine 1999, p. 67-8). It was on this basis that the planned method, of interviews with at least two members of each household, was devised. However, due to the wishes and time constraints of the participants, this was not possible in practice. It is recognised that the resultant structure of the interviews has impacted upon the data created.

The households involved within this research were headed by heterosexual couples, the majority of whom were married. In the interviews in which couples were

interviewed together I witnessed processes of negotiation and mediation, which provided insights into the dynamics of the households which could not be ascertained from the interviews conducted with single members of a household. However, whilst unable to see household dynamics, it is possible that within single interviews the participants had more freedom to express their own opinions. This was clearly demonstrated within one particular interview in a very 'traditional' farming household with a couple called Diane and Morgan[8]. When I arrived at the interview Morgan was resting in bed so Diane was interviewed singly for the first fifteen minutes. During this time Diane was very chatty and gave her views freely. However, when Morgan joined us Diane deferred completely to her husband, and remained very quiet for the remaining portion of the interview.

The interviews were conducted at the participant's farms at a mutually convenient date and time, with the majority lasting approximately 1-1.5 hours. All of the interviews were recorded on audio-cassette at the consent of the participants (none refused). Prior to the interviews I introduced myself, spoke a little about my research, ran through the themes that would be covered during the interview and asked if they had any questions. Following the introduction, a short face-to-face questionnaire covering basic information about their farm, was completed with the participant/s (see Appendix G). Completing the questionnaire before the start of the interview served to put the participant at ease before the interview started, as it covered a subject about which they were the experts and invariably happy to discus. Often the questionnaire acted as a starting point for informal conversation.

During each of the semi-structured interviews the seven themes were covered, although not necessarily in the order they appeared on the schedule. However, as discussed previously, the first and last theme of every interview remained as the participant's organic philosophy and the future of organic farming respectively. The focus, when discussing each theme, was the way in which they related to gender roles and relations on the farm, the gender identity of the individual being interviewed and

[8] Participant names are pseudonyms in order to retain their anonymity

the involvement of men and women within the organic agriculture movement more broadly. The questions on the schedule were used as a guide, but were not asked verbatim. In some cases, where it was felt to be appropriate, the issue of gender identity was broached more directly and in more depth.

The interviews were conducted in an informal manner with the aim of covering the themes and questions whilst keeping the conversation flowing in the manner of a 'natural' conversation. The prompt sheet was taken to the interviews but in practice was seldom referred to, apart from at the close of the interviews where it was used as a 'checklist' to ensure all of the themes and questions had been addressed. In line with the ideal of reducing the division between the researcher and researched, throughout the interviews the participants were encouraged to interact fully, and any questions they asked were answered as fully and honestly as possible.

Immediately upon leaving the interview field notes were written. The field notes included any extra information that may have been imparted by the participant off-tape, as well as pertinent details regarding the nature of the interview environment, the interviewee and the interview process itself. The transcription of the interviews was also achieved as soon as possible in order that the interaction still had a level of immediacy. Several days after the interview a hand written letter of thanks was sent to the interviewee, the content of which varied slightly (reference was sometimes made to an issue that was discussed with the participant e.g. enquiring after a new-born grandchild). The letters included the assurance that they would be informed of the outcomes of the research process in due course.

4.4.6 The impacts of positioning

> *All researchers are gendered and culturally situated so they approach research with a worldview (ontology) that stimulates questions (epistemology) that require examination in specific situations, using particular mechanisms (methods)*
>
> *(Denzin and Lincoln, quoted in Hoggart et al. 2002, p. 223)*

Throughout the series of interviews a reflexive approach was adopted which demanded an awareness of the relationship between myself and the participants (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002). The starting point for this approach was an understanding of my

own positioning. However, this understanding was necessarily limited because, as highlighted by Rose (1997), it is impossible to fully recognise or represent our own positionality. Nevertheless, as was demonstrated in the prologue to this chapter, I was aware of the impact of my own subject positions upon the shaping of the series of interviews.

Furthermore, this approach required that I conceptualised myself and the participants as "variously positioned, interconnected, and capable of changing, as well as being changed by, the societies in which [we] live" (Cook and Crang 1995, p. 7). During the research process I chose to play up and down particular aspects of my identity in order to "ensure the flow of good quality information" (Hughes et al. 2000, p. 13). The process of adjusting one's performance as a researcher during interactions with different research participants has been recognised by other academics, including those who have undertaken research within rural communities (See for example, Bennett 2000; Fielding 2000; Pini 2004).

Being positioned as a pregnant, young mother (the question "is it your first?" invariably followed acknowledgment of my pregnant state), as discussed in the prologue to this chapter, had clear impacts upon the interview process. At a basic level my pregnancy and my status as a mother provided a degree of common ground with the majority of the participants, most of whom were parents themselves. Furthermore, the fact that I was obviously pregnant gave the participants a focus and helped to 'break the ice' at the start of the interviews.

Overall I was able to use my pregnancy positively to assist the interview process. For example, being pregnant often provided a basis for informal discussions on gender roles regarding children, thus providing me with the opportunity to concur with 'traditional' or 'progressive' views depending upon the views of the participant. Therefore my pregnancy was used in two conflicting ways. I predominantly used it to make my research less threatening within households structured by 'traditional' gender identities. In these cases I was positioned within a traditional role as a mother alongside the less traditional position of a female academic. Therefore, despite the participant's knowledge of my positioning within the academic community and the obviously feminist nature of my research, I did not feel that I was ever perceived as a

threat. Less often I used my pregnancy to align myself with more 'progressive' household structures where it could be used to demonstrate how I was continuing with my career despite my other, more traditional roles. In this way, I found myself concurring with views that were not necessarily my own in order to facilitate the interview process.

However, on a few occasions I felt that being pregnant was a disadvantage and was responsible for me not being taken seriously as a researcher. One particular conversation with a farmer acts to highlight this issue, in which he conflated my research (or "project") with "other students, school children and the like" that he had helped in the past. This type of attitude became particularly apparent when, at the latter stages of pregnancy, unable to drive due to anaemia, I was driven to interviews by my own mother. In these instances a dual-positioning as a daughter and mother-to-be was emphasised, thus undermining my positioning as an academic.

4.4.7 Data analysis and coding

The interview transcripts were coded deductively, using the interview themes to form the overall structure of the analysis. The original eight interview themes were retained, although they were slightly reorganised and developed: the themes, 'organisation of labour on participant farms', 'organisation of labour on organic farms generally' and 'involvement in off-farm work' were amalgamated; and two additional themes, 'marketing' and 'farming system', were added to the structure in order to accommodate unforeseen developments from the interviews.

In preference to traditional techniques, computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) was employed to facilitate the coding and analysis of the interview transcripts. The CAQDAS considered most appropriate was NUDIST Vivo (NVivo). CAQDAS act as a replacement to traditional 'pen and paper' methods of structuring qualitative data analysis. Computers are most commonly associated with quantitative data analysis, in which they are predominantly used to calculate statistics. The use of computers to carry out calculations for the creation of statistics significantly simplifies the process of quantitative analysis. However, there is no real equivalent to the calculation of statistics within qualitative analysis, and the heart of the analysis requires the researcher to have an understanding of the meaning of the texts.

Nevertheless, CAQDAS makes the process of qualitative analysis "easier, more accurate, more reliable and more transparent" by significantly aiding record keeping and providing easy access to the data (Gibbs 2002, p. 11).

There are various categories of CAQDAS and, as can be seen in Table 4.14, their breadth of potential usages range from basic text retrieval through to assisting with the development of theoretical ideas and the testing of hypotheses. NVivo is capable of performing all five of the roles identified within Table 4.14, through use as a basic text retriever to building conceptual networks.

Table 4.14: Types of computer-assisted qualitative data analysis

Type of CAQDAS	Function
Text retrievers	search for words or phrases
Textbase managers	sort and organise data
Code and retrieve	support coding and reporting by codes
Code-based theory builders	coding and the ability to build conceptual structures and test hypotheses
Conceptual network builders	diagrams, concept mapping, charts

Source: Weitzman and Miles (1995)

NVivo was chosen because it is designed to support fine-grained, intensive analysis making it appropriate for relatively small-scale, in-depth research (Gibbs 2002). During the analysis for this thesis, NVivo was principally used as a data management tool. Despite not fully engaging with its concept-building capabilities, the use of NVivo was considered preferable to traditional methods of managing data. The most significant advantage was the ease with which chunks of text could be coded and retrieved, whilst retaining ready access to their original context. This capability facilitated intimate knowledge of the interview transcripts alongside a broad understanding of the overall analytical structure, a combination that is vital for effective analysis.

4.5 Summary of Chapter Four

This chapter has explained the feminist research practice employed within this research. In the first section of the chapter a specific distinction was made between epistemology, methodology and method as the components of feminist research practice. This was followed by an explanation of the individual approach adopted towards feminist research practice within the research, discussing the epistemology, methodology and method in turn. The following two sections provided detailed descriptions and explanations for the methods applied to generate the data necessary to answer the research questions of the thesis: a content analysis of periodicals drawn from the organic movement and a series of semi-structured interviews with 44 organic farmers.

The preceding three chapters will present and discuss the findings from the two empirical stages of the research as described within this chapter. The following chapter, Chapter Five, will focus upon the results of the content analysis of organic periodicals.

Chapter 5

GENDERED REPRESENTATIONS WITHIN THE ORGANIC FARMING MEDIA

5.1 Introduction

The central objective of this thesis is to establish whether the ideological standpoint of organic farming encourages the expression of distinctive forms of gender roles, relations and identities. This chapter, the first of three results chapters, presents the findings from the first phase of the empirical work, a content analysis of four national farming periodicals, which was undertaken to answer the following research question: How have gender roles, relations and identities been represented by the organic agriculture movement throughout its history? As discussed in Chapter Two, the agricultural press can be seen as a product and (re)producer of agricultural gender roles, relations and identities (Kroma 2002) and previous research has found that the conventional agricultural press represents the dominant ideological constructions of agricultural gender identity. However, an analysis of the organic agricultural press has not previously been undertaken. Therefore, the aim of the content analysis was to establish how gender roles, relation and identities have been represented within publications of the organic agriculture movement and to determine whether they present a challenge to conventional representations.

As described in Chapter Four, the content analysis focused upon articles which identified particular members of the organic movement as their central characters. The content of the articles was coded using a standard pro forma; references to the individuals and any characterisations ascribed to them throughout the articles were coded inductively whilst more detailed information was copied verbatim and later coded deductively. A total of 236 articles were analysed comprising 105 from 'Living Earth', 75 from 'Star and Furrow', 37 from 'Organic Farming', and 19 from 'Farmers Weekly'. Three of the publications, 'Living Earth', 'Organic Farming' and 'Star and Furrow', were chosen due to their association with the organic movement and are therefore considered as one

dataset; however, the fourth publication, 'Farmers Weekly', was chosen because of its independence from the organic movement, with the aim of providing a reference point upon which to build the analysis. Therefore, the 'Farmers Weekly' dataset will be considered separately.

The first two sections of the chapter describe and summarise the two datasets in terms of how the articles were found to represent men, women and couples. Overall the results are structured in the same manner as the pro forma (see Table 4.5 in Chapter Four). Information about the article specifics is discussed first, including the dates of publication and their general categories, followed by information about the type of activities featured within the articles. Personal information about the featured individuals is considered next including their sex, title, age, personal status (whether they were referred to as a mother, father or friend etc), work status, any characterisations used to describe them - either physical, personality, parental or professional, references made to others in relation to the individual and their educational background. This is followed by how the individual is related to the featured activity; this includes the nature of their relationship to the organic movement, their role within the featured activity, the places and spaces occupied through their involvement within the activity, and any further roles mentioned. Other more qualitative information collected, such as the individual's opinion of the activity or the organic movement, quotes from the individuals and descriptions of photographs are used alongside the coded data for illustrative purposes. The results from statistical tests are also integrated into the chapter in order to show the significance of the findings. The final section of the chapter draws together the findings from the content analysis and goes on to discuss the parity of the findings with the existing body of work which applies feminist methods to the analysis of farming publications and finally draws some conclusions.

5.2 Coding structure

The first stage of the analysis was to develop a coding dictionary in order to create a dataset suitable for quantitative analysis using the information recorded on the pro formas. The overall structure of the coding dictionary followed that of the pro forma, with the original sections and categories retained. As discussed in Chapter Four, the categories

forming the pro forma were developed by drawing upon key concepts from feminist geography and previous research of this kind with a focus on the agricultural media. The method used for coding the data collected on the pro formas was deductive. Therefore, the results within each category were first considered, and then appropriate variables were chosen which satisfactorily encompassed the spread of answers. The development of the coding system was described in detail within section 4.2.5 of Chapter Four. However, Table 5.1 provides a tabulated summary of the coding structure for reference purposes.

5.3 'Farmers Weekly'

The data collected from the 'Farmers Weekly' articles is described within this section. However, the data are presented solely in the form of a summary as the small sample size makes it unsuitable for more detailed analysis. Nevertheless, as stated in Chapter Four, due to the purposive sampling strategy employed the dataset is fairly representative, and its size is a reflection of the lack of attention accorded to organic farming within the magazine. The 'Farmers Weekly' sample yielded a total of nineteen articles which fitted the research criteria; of these articles sixteen featured a male individual, two a female and one a heterosexual couple. Due to its limited size the sample is treated as a whole, rather than being split into two sets according to the sex of the individual within the articles. The sample size was not large enough to meaningfully apply any statistical analyses.

5.3.1 Information about the articles and their featured activities

Overall the majority of the articles fell within two categories; five were farm profiles and six concerned technical or financial agricultural issues, e.g. an article discussing an alternative forage open day and an article providing advice on converting to an organic farming system. The remaining eight articles focused on horticulture, gardening, marketing issues or profiles of individuals. In line with this finding, fifteen of the featured activities involved farming and only four of them did not have a direct link to farming practice, for example the articles which focussed on marketing or a profile of an individual. Overwhelmingly the articles were concerned with the economic rationale for

Table 5.1: The structure of the coding dictionary

PROFORMA CATEGORIES AND CODING SUB-CATEGORIES			
Article	**Featured activity**	**Featured individual - personal information**	**Featured individual - featured activity**
Publication issue no. and date	**Location**	**Sex**	**Relationship to organic movement**
1940-49	England	-male	-involved in organic growing
1950-59	Wales	-female	-involved with organic farming
1960-69	Scotland	-male and female-married or	organisations
1970-79	Europe	living as married	-involved in organic movement
1980-84	North America	-male and female-unrelated	but not organic growing
1985-89	'Southern' country	**Titles used**	-pioneer of organics/founder
1990-94	not located	Mr	member of organic organisation
1995-99	**Type of activity**	Mrs	-no direct link to the organic
2000+	organic farming	Mr and Mrs	movement but has influence/relationship
Page no.	organic horticulture/gardening	Miss	**Role within activity**
(Text entry)	organic farm visits	professional	on-farm work-productive
Sex of author	organic education or research	titled	on-farm work-reproductive
male	job within organic movement	none used	on-farm work-productive & reproductive
female	health related/organic food	**Age**	gardening/horticulture
male and female	not applicable	stated/not stated	research and development
anonymous	**Details**	**Personal status**	educational
Title of article	(Text entry)	no. of references (0-3)	marketing
(Text entry)		**Work status-productive**	management of organic organisation
Category of article		-organic farmer/manager	general running of organic organisation
organic farm profile		-gardener/horticulturalist	not applicable
organic horticulture/gardening		-partner/works in team with	**Type of role**
technical/financial issues		farmer on organic farm	leader/autonomous
nutrition/health/cooking		-within organic agriculture	team member
education		but not on an organic farm	helper
research		-within organic movement	unclear
organic businesses (non-agric.)		but not organic agriculture	**Spaces and places occupied**
organic movement - individuals		-professional occupation outside	-outdoors on-farm

organic movement - history marketing **Style of content** descriptive biographical autobiographical narrative interview opinion		organic movement -non-professional occupation outside organic movement -voluntary work within organic movement -voluntary work outside organic movement **Work status - reproductive** mentioned/not mentioned **Characterisations (No. stated)** physical personality- masculine, feminine and gender neutral parental professional **References to others (yes/no)** spouse children siblings relatives friends parents **Educational level attained** school further education higher education post-graduate education specialist training not referred to **Agricultural education referred to** yes/no **Life history** (text entry)	-indoors on-farm -outdoors working for organic organisation/doing organic research/ involved in organic education -indoors working for organic organisation/doing organic research/ involved in organic education -garden -market, shop or kitchen -overseas travel -outdoors other -indoors other -not applicable **Opinions** (Text entry) **Quotes** (Text entry) **Comments** (Text entry)

organic farming, as the following quotes from illustrate: "organic premiums do compensate for extra effort and labour" ('Farmers Weekly', 2 June 1989, p. 50); "we would not have made the switch if we were not totally convinced that there are real and lasting commercial benefits" ('Farmers Weekly', 6 November 1992, p. 44); and "I am in this to make money. That I can do that while meeting my ethical objectives is even better" ('Farmers Weekly', 8 September 2000, p. 68). In some cases there was an overt attempt to challenge negative views of organic farming through the use of financial and scientific arguments, as illustrated in the following opening sentence from an article: "Mention organic farmers and many still think of the woolly shirt and sandal brigade. But much of the produce reaching the retailers now comes from shrewd business people" ('Farmers Weekly', 8 September 2000, p. 68); and also in the following quote about a biodynamic farm: "It is hard to believe such a mystical sounding system can work, but experiments have borne [it] out" ('Farmers Weekly', 1 Dec 1989, p. 2 Farm Life).

5.3.2 Personal information about the individuals featured in the articles

The personal information about the individuals featured within the articles and coded included their sex; whether a title was used as a prefix to their name; whether or not their age was mentioned; the number of times an individual was attributed with a personal label such as 'mother' or 'father'; their productive and reproductive work status mentioned; characters ascribed to them - physical, personality, parental or professional; whether or not references were made to spouses, children, siblings, parents, other relatives or friends in relation to the individual; their educational level and agricultural education mentioned. Very little personal information was provided about the featured individuals within the 'Farmers Weekly' articles, reflected in the fact that only five were given a title as a prefix to their name, either 'Mr.', 'Mrs.' or 'Sir'; and none of the articles mentioned either the individual's age or information regarding their education or training. Although reproductive work was not referred to in any of the articles the productive work status of the individuals was made clear within all of them, with eleven of the individuals being classed as farmers or farm managers; five as partners or team members on a farm and two as working within professions outside farming. Furthermore, the characters attributed to

individuals were all 'professional' although they only featured in three of the articles, these included use of the phrases "skilled stockmanship" and "first class marketing skills" ('Farmers Weekly', 3 September 1993, p. 41). While only one of the featured individuals was attributed with the personal status "husband and father" ('Farmers Weekly', 15 December 2000, p. 22); siblings, relatives and friends were not referred to at all. Children were mentioned explicitly for only one individual and a spouse was also only mentioned for one individual, while reference was made to the parents of two individuals.

5.3.3 Involvement of the individuals within the featured activities

The nature of the individual's involvement within the featured activity included coding their relationship to the organic movement; their role within the activity; the type of role that the individual occupied; and places occupied by the individual through involvement in the activity. The activities featured were largely to do with farming and therefore the majority of the individuals, seventeen, were related to the organic movement through their involvement in organic growing and fifteen of the articles featured individuals with productive on-farm roles either in a leadership or autonomous capacity or as a team member. The other role types featured were either within an educating role, for example a male farmer running a workshop on how to grow Lucerne ('Farmers Weekly', 1 September 2000, p. 42), or a marketing role, for example a farm woman selling meat boxes and producing a customer newsletter ('Farmers Weekly', 22 December 2000, p. 41). Given that the majority of articles were directly about farming it is unsurprising that sixteen of the places featured in the articles were on-farm, fourteen outside e.g. in a field, in a lambing shed and two inside e.g. in a farm house or farm office. None of the articles gave information about other roles that the individuals had outside of the featured activity.

5.4 Organic farming publications

This section will discuss the dataset produced from the organic publications. The articles from the three organic publications included 56.5% featuring men, 33.3% featuring women and 10.2% featuring mixed-sex couples, all of whom were either partners or married. In order to facilitate meaningful analysis along gender lines the three categories of 'men', 'women' and 'couples' are treated as discrete data sets, enabling comparisons to

be drawn between them. The first sub-section will describe the statistical analyses applied to the data in order to test the significance of the findings. The section will then go on to describe the dataset, discussing each category in turn.

5.4.1: Statistical analysis of the results

In order to test the significance of any differences or similarities identified between males, females and couples within the articles, statistical analysis was conducted. It was appropriate to use the chi-square test for goodness of fit for the variables composed of categorical data, and the Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis tests for the variables composed of continuous data. Table 5.2 summarises the type of data within each variable and the appropriate statistical test.

The simplest of the frequency tables, in terms of the number of categories within the variable, were those for: 'sex of individual'; 'age of individual'; 'reproductive work status'; 'references to parents'; 'references to spouse/partner'; and 'references to children'. These variables translated into simple 2x2 or 2x3 cross-tabulations which produced valid chi-square results (with expected cell counts of greater than 5 in at least 80% of cases and for 2x2 tables a minimum cell count of greater than 10). The remaining variables contained a greater number of categories, and consequently the results are spread more widely and the likelihood of running valid chi-square tests was decreased. In the case of these variables the number of categories was reduced by merging appropriate categories, and therefore increasing the likelihood of achieving a valid chi-square test. Table 5.3 below is a summary of the test outcomes. As is shown in Table 5.3, the following eight test outcomes were invalid:

- males, females and partners - category of article and role in activity
- males and females - category of article, role in activity, title used, productive work status, role type and places and spaces occupied

Table 5.2: Type of data within each variable and the appropriate statistical test

Variable	Type of data			Suitable statistical test
	Independent /dependent	**level of measurement**	**Parametric/ non-parametric**	
Sex	independent	categorical	non-parametric	1 group - chi-square for goodness of fit
Category of article Type of activity Title used Age Work status-productive Work status-reproductive References to others Educational level attained Education - agricultural Relationship to the organic movement Role within activity Type of role Spaces and places occupied	dependent	categorical	non-parametric	2+ groups - chi-square for independence and phi for strength of relationship
Personal status	dependent	continuous	non-parametric	2 groups - Mann-Whitney U 3+ groups - Kruskal-Wallis

Table 5.3: Summary of chi-square results for the datasets

Variable	Invalid		Valid and not significant		Valid and significant	
	Men, Women & Couples	Men & Women	Men, Women & Couples	Men & Women	Men, Women & Couples	Men & Women
Sex of individual					X	X
Category of article	X	X				
Type of activity					X	X
Title used	X			X		
Age of individual			X	X		
Productive work status	X			X		
Reproductive work status					X	X
Reference to spouse			X	X		
Reference to children			X	X		
Reference to parents			X	X		
Educational level					X	X
Education - agricultural			X	X		
Relationship to organic movement				X	X	
Role in activity	X	X				
Role type	X					X
Places and spaces occupied	X					X

The strength of the significant relationships identified between the sex of the individuals and a variable was measured using Cramer's *V*. The value ranges between 0 and +1, where 0 indicates no association between the row and column variables and values close

to 1 indicate a high degree of association between the variables. The values obtained for the significant chi-square for independence outcomes are illustrated in table 5.4 below.

Table 5.4: Cramers V Test results for the significant variables

Variable	**Sex of individuals**	**Cramers *V***	**Strength of relationship**
Type of activity	men, women and couples	0.332	Weak
	men and women	0.241	Weak
Reproductive work	men, women and couples	0.252	Weak
	men and women	0.264	Weak
Education - level	men, women and couples	0.171	Weak
Relationship to organic movement	men, women and couples	0.297	Weak
Role type	men and women	0.227	Weak
Places and spaces	men and women	0.263	Weak

The values of Cramers *V* revealed that all of the significant relationships confirmed by running the chi-square test were weak.

The only continuous variable to be rated against the variable 'sex of individual' is 'personal status'. The Kruskal-Wallis test was performed upon the variable when the 'partners' dataset was included and the Mann-Whitney U test was performed upon the variable when it was excluded. Although in both cases the highest overall rank is for females, neither of the tests were significant, therefore the null hypothesis that there is no difference in the number of personal status references individuals receive within an article whether they are men, women or couples is accepted. A summary table of the process and results of the statistical analyses is in Appendix H. The section will now go on to describe and discus the findings of the analysis of the organic publications.

5.4.2 Information about the articles and their featured activities

Date of publication

The content analysis encompassed a time scale of almost sixty years, with articles included ranging from a publishing data of 1943 to 2002. Over the course of this time period gender relations within society underwent changes which are likely to have been reflected within the publications. Therefore it is reasonable to assume that the time in which the articles were published has impacted upon the representation of gender identities found within the analysis. However, due to the irregular nature of suitable articles for inclusion within the sample (as illustrated within Table 5.5), the frequency tables intersecting time and gender for each of the variables contained too many low values for the chi-square results obtained to be valid. Therefore, it was not possible to explore the extent to which date of publication impacted upon gendered representations within the publications.

Table 5.5: Frequency table for the date of publication of the articles by the name of the publication

Date published	'Living Earth'	Organic Farming	'Star and Furrow'	Total
1940-49	4	0	0	4
1950-59	26	0	4	30
1960-69	22	0	6	28
1970-79	15	0	25	40
1980-89	19	13	9	41
1990-99	13	22	30	65
2000+	5	2	1	8
TOTAL	105	37	75	216

Category of article

Overall the majority of the articles fell within just two of the ten possible categories for this variable; 52.8% concerned specific individuals within the organic movement and 26.9% were farm profiles. Although both categories were represented fairly evenly between men and women, the results for couples were distinctly different for which over 90% of the articles were farm profiles and only 4.5% focused on the couple as 'individuals' from the organic movement rather than focusing on an activity. The remaining eight categories each represented 5% or less of the articles, with the range of articles featuring women being more diverse than those featuring both men and couples. Table 5.6 displays the differences between the results for the overall category of the articles.

Table 5.6: Overall category of articles within the sample of organic publications

	% of articles		
Categories	**Men**	**Women**	**Couple**
Farm profile	23.8	12.5	90.9
Horticulture/gardening	4.9	6.9	0.0
Technical/financial issues	0.6	4.2	0.0
Nutrition/health/cooking	0.8	11.1	0.0
Education	0.6	1.4	0.0
Research	0.0	2.8	0.0
Business (non-agricultural)	3.3	1.4	0.0
Profile of individual	59.8	55.6	4.5
History of organic movement	4.1	2.8	4.5
Marketing	0.0	1.4	0.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0

Categories identified for women but not men or couples were, 'marketing' and 'research' and there were 11.1% of women compared to 0.8% of men featured in articles in which the overall category was 'nutrition/health', the following quote describes a woman from one such article:

> *Her great interest in bio-dynamically grown food and her love for small children took up a large part of her life. She would gather the mothers and other people connected with young children about her and interest them in the great importance of freshly grown vegetables and fruit for small children.*
>
> *('Star and Furrow', Autumn 1971, p. 37).*

Type of activity

The type of activity featured most often overall was farming, appearing in 31% of articles. It was also the most common activity within each of the data sets, although the actual percentages differed markedly; from 86.4% of articles featuring couples to 13.9% of articles featuring women. Of the remaining categories the differences between articles with men and women is most marked for activities involving health or food; 0.8% for men and 9.7% for women, and for activities involving horticulture or gardening; 4.1% for men and 8.3% for women. However, in 44% of the articles no activity was featured at all because the articles were profiles of individuals from within the organic movement. See Table 5.7 for the full set of these results.

5.4.3 Personal information about the individuals featured in the articles

Titles used, age and personal status

Overall 72.7% of the individuals within the articles were not attributed with a title as a prefix to their name, and the values for men and women were very similar at 71.3% and 69.4% respectively. The percentage of individuals labelled as either, 'Mr.', 'Mrs.' or 'Mr. and Mrs.' were also very similar with the values of 10.7%, 12.5% and 9.1% respectively. The most striking difference was that 14.9% of men featured were given a professional title, Doctor, Professor, Captain or Lieutenant, compared to none of the featured women.

Only 11.1% of the articles stated the age of the featured individual; 15.3% of the women and 10.7% of the men.

Table 5.7: Type of featured activity within the articles

	% of articles		
Type of activity	Men	Women	Couples
Organic farming	**31.1**	**13.9**	**86.4**
Organic horticulture/gardening	**4.1**	**8.3**	**9.1**
Organic farm visits	**1.6**	**5.6**	**4.5**
Organic education/research	**3.3**	**2.8**	**0.0**
Job within organic movement	**9.0**	**12.5**	**0.0**
Health related/organic food	**0.8**	**9.7**	**0.0**
Not applicable	**50.0**	**47.2**	**0.0**
TOTAL	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

The majority of the featured individuals did not have their personal status referred to, such as being labelled as a 'mother', 'father', 'husband', 'wife' or 'friend'. Only 7.4% of men and 12.5% of women were attributed with one form of personal status, 5.7% of men and 6.9% of women were attributed with two and 0.8% of men and no women with three. The following quote from 'Living Earth' provides an example of an individual whose personal status was referred to: "Mother of three, Jan, Head of Mapledene early years centre". ('Living Earth', Jul-Sept 2000, p. 2).

In another article the featured individual was a woman who established an organic food company as a direct result of having a daughter with learning difficulties, thus the fact that she was a mother was central to the article ('Living Earth', April-June 2000, p. 12-13).

Work status

The most frequently cited 'productive' work status category overall was a farmer or farm manager, and the percentages for men and women were fairly similar at 30.3% and 23.6% respectively, although still biased in favour of the men featured. The nature of the productive on-farm roles in which women were depicted ranged from 'traditional' to 'progressive'. The following two quotes represent women in more 'traditional' roles:

> *...we run the farm together [two men] while Marianne and Sylvia [their wives] run a big house, look after the book keeping and when time allows work in the vegetable garden.*
>
> *(Organic Farming, Spring 1987, p. 9)*

> *The farmers' wives hope to do some processing of pickles and preserves on a small scale.*
>
> *('Star and Furrow', Spring 1995, p. 10).*

In contrast, the next two quotes show women in more 'progressive' productive roles on-farm:

> *Eve...could do any job on the farm as well as any man she employed.*
>
> *('Living Earth', October 1996, p. 5)*

> *Even at 78 she was directing every detail of the farm work. She had a serious coronary in 1972 and from then on had been forced to have her breakfast in bed, but from 8 am onwards there was a steady stream of farm men going to her room for "the judgement", as our old shepherd said.*
>
> *('Star and Furrow', Summer 1978, p. 27).*

However, the largest individual category was within the articles depicting couples in which 59.1% were stated as being partners or team members on an organic farm. This focus on partnership between men and women on farms is illustrated in the following two quotes:

> *The foundation of our whole venture [on our farm] is the equal partnership of my sister, my wife and myself. We have all had varied experience of farming before, especially my sister, who spent 11 years in the land army.*

('Living Earth', October 1956, p. 648)

> *Tim and Caroline work together very much as a team. While they are quite traditional in certain respects - with Tim concentrating on the farm work and Caroline on record keeping and accounts - the farm planning is done together with issues discussed and ideas bounced between them.*

(Organic Farming, Summer 1999, p. 27)

However, in contrast to the focus on partnership, the following quote illustrates a case where a woman whose desire to become a farm partner was denied:

> *...both [brothers] work on the farm where Mary grew up. But even though it's not that long ago, girls did not grow up to be farmers. "After I'd badgered my father for a while he said I could farm with him if I finished my degree" she says. But, in spite of Mary's obvious enthusiasm and the realisation that all she wanted to do was farm, she never became a farm partner.*

(Organic Farming, Spring 1997, p. 26).

The seemingly interchangeable nature of the roles of the farming men and women depicted in the articles as described above is also prevalent in some of the photographs, in which it is not unusual for a couple to be pictured working together outside, or for a woman to be pictured working in a field on her own e.g. the female farmer featured in an article ploughing a field with a tractor ('Living Earth', Jul-Sept 1998, p. 23) and even for men to be pictured alone with a child e.g. the featured farmer in crop of runner beans holding his baby (Organic Farming, Autumn 1989, p. 25).

Also notable is that the percentage of women working within the organic movement in roles unrelated to agriculture was three times that for men, for example an article published in the 'Living Earth' features a woman who writes in health magazines (Oct-Dec 1990, p. 5) and in 'Star and Furrow' a woman was featured who had previously worked both as a lab technician and a nurse (Spring 1977, p. 1-4); also, twice as many women as men were involved in voluntary work within the organic movement performing roles such as running an bio-dynamic group ('Star and Furrow', Autumn 1971, p. 30) or editing the 'Star and Furrow' periodical ('Star and Furrow', Summer 2000, p. 20-30). These differences can be seen in Table 5.8.

Table 5.8: 'Productive' work status of individuals within the articles

	% of articles		
'Productive' roles	Men	Women	Couples
Farmer/farm manager	**30.3**	**23.6**	**13.6**
Gardener/horticulturalist	**4.9**	**4.2**	**9.1**
Partner/team member on a farm	**7.4**	**6.9**	**59.1**
Agriculture but not on a farm	**6.6**	**9.7**	**4.5**
Organic movement but not within agriculture	**4.1**	**13.9**	**4.5**
Professional occupation outside organic movement	**18.9**	**12.5**	**4.5**
Non-professional occupation outside organic movement	**16.4**	**12.5**	**4.5**
Voluntary work within organic movement	**6.6**	**12.5**	**0.0**
Not specified	**4.9**	**4.2**	**0.0**
TOTAL	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Although 88% of articles did not mention reproductive work, of those that did the majority were articles featuring woman. Within the articles depicting a woman, 22.2% mentioned reproductive work compared to just 4.9% of articles depicting men. The references to reproductive work depicted women in very 'traditional' roles, for example the following quotes depict women involved in baking:

> *I never do much cooking over the Easter holidays as, if the weather is fine, I spend most of my time in the garden. However every year I do bake a Simnel cake, either for Mothering Sunday or for Easter itself.*

('Living Earth', March 1984, p. 32);

> *Making your own bread right from scratch...gives you a marvellous feeling of satisfaction and continuity.*
>
> *('Living Earth', September 1984, p. 33).*

In the following two quotes women's reproductive roles are focused on alongside other achievements:

> *Although not playing the archetypal farmer's wife role, Sheila keeps Ed and farmhouse in fine fettle, when not teaching eight year olds. She is fully supportive of Ed's efforts in conversion.*
>
> *('Living Earth', June 1986, p. 21)*
>
> *Before coming here I was always out in the vegetable field and feeling the need for that. Now my role is to create a home for a group of people who go out every day; I feel like a compost heap where things come together, are prepared and then radiate out again.*
>
> *('Star and Furrow', Summer 1998, p. 32).*

Some of the photographs also conveyed similarly 'traditional' notions of femininity, for example in an article published in 'Living Earth' (Jul-Sept 1998, p. 13) the woman featured within the article (about cooking) is pictured holding a basket full of produce which she had collected from her vegetable garden, and in another article published in 'Living Earth' (March 1984, p. 32) the featured woman wrote about cooking and gardening and is pictured holding a toddler on her arm.

Characterisations

Over 95% of the articles in all three data sets contained no characterisations of the parental status of the featured individuals. Slightly more articles mentioned physical characteristics, with 11.1% of women and 9.8% of men having at least one reference, for example the following comment on the physical appearance of the featured woman was written in the first line of the article: "Many people, encountering Mrs Brady's youthful appearance for the first time, find it hard to believe that she was born in 1900" ('Living Earth', April 1956, p. 533); more recently in the 'Star and Furrow' the featured man of an article was described as "slim", "upright" and "handsome" (Winter 1998, p. 14). A larger

percentage of articles contained professional characteristics, such as "distinguished career" or "an expert on gardening" ('Living Earth', Summer 1948, p. 14), although there was little difference in the percentage of articles featuring men and women with at least one reference, at 26.2% and 27.9% respectively. Of greater interest is the frequency of personality characteristics which were classed as being strongly gendered, either traditionally masculine e.g. 'courageous' or 'strong'; traditionally feminine e.g. 'gentle' or 'kind'; or gender neutral e.g. 'enthusiastic' or 'friendly'. A larger percentage of women than men were attributed with traditionally masculine personality characteristics, although the difference was small, 15.3% rather than 12.3%. However, slightly over thirty percent of both men and women were described with gender neutral personality traits.

References to others

As discussed in Chapter Four, reference to an individual's personal status is of relevance to a textual analysis concerned with the representation of gender identities. Previous research has found that references to others, such as spouse or children, are more likely to be made if the article is focusing upon a woman rather than a man (Liepins 1998). The proportion of individuals that had references made to their siblings, other relatives and friends within the articles is less than 5%. However, the overall percentage of articles in which an individual's parent, children or spouse/partner was mentioned were 12.5%, 29.2% and 40.3% respectively. A larger percentage of articles specifically mentioned a spouse/partner or children when the article featured a couple rather than an individual. Furthermore, a larger percentage of articles featuring an individual man mentioned his spouse/partner than articles featuring an individual woman. However, the percentage of articles which mentioned an individual's children was almost the same for men and women, with values of 27.9% and 26.4% respectively. Interestingly there were a greater number of photographs in which a man was pictured with his children (four photographs) than women with their children (one photograph), and there were eight photographs where couples were pictured with their children.

Education

The majority of articles made no reference to the individual's educational level, 54.1% of articles featuring men and 72.2% of articles featuring women. However, of the 39.9% of articles which did mention education almost 30% of individuals had either received a higher education or specialist training. There were 20.5% of articles featuring men which mentioned higher education as opposed to 11.1% of articles featuring women and 13.6% of articles featuring couples. A similar difference in results is found for specialist training which was mentioned for 13.1% of men, 6.9% of women and 9.1% of couples. See Table 5.9 for the full set of results. It is very likely that the level of education of individuals within the articles is affected by the date of publication, and therefore it is recognised that this factor could lead to a level of bias within the results. Unfortunately, as discussed within sub-section 5.4.2 it was not possible to ascertain the influence of publication date upon the difference categories, including educational level within this study.

Table 5.9: Level of education of individuals within the articles

	% of articles		
Level of education mentioned	Men	Women	Couples
School	**4.1**	**2.8**	**4.5**
Further education	**4.1**	**2.8**	**9.1**
Higher education	**20.5**	**11.1**	**13.6**
Post-graduate education	**4.1**	**4.2**	**0.0**
Specialist training	**13.1**	**6.9**	**9.1**
Not referred to	**54.1**	**72.2**	**63.6**
TOTAL	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

In 86.1% of cases overall no agricultural education is mentioned. However, there were marked differences in the articles in which an agricultural education is mentioned; only 8.3% of women were mentioned as having had an agricultural education rather than 15.6% of men and 22.7% of couples, where at least one member of the couple had received an agricultural education.

5.4.4 Involvement of the individuals within the featured activities

Relationship to the organic movement

Involvement within organic growing was the most common relationship that an individual had with the organic movement, with an overall proportion of 44.4%; this could include, for example, farming, gardening, horticulture and working as an advisor to organic farmers. This variable was particularly common to articles featuring couples with a value of 86.4%, and approximately 10% more common with male individuals than female individuals with values of 43.4% and 33.3% respectively. There was a higher involvement of men than women within farming organisations, such as working in the office of the Soil Association or being a member of the BDDA council, although the converse was true of individuals who were involved in the organic movement but not organic growing, such as running an organic shop or conducting research. There were slightly more articles featuring women than featuring men in which the individual was described as a pioneer or founder member of organic farming, 15.3% and 13.9% respectively; the contribution of one such woman, Lady Eve Balfour, is described in the following quote: "Hers has been the vision and the achievement of a pioneer who played a key part in laying the foundations of the organic movement" ('Living Earth', Jul-Sept 1988, p. 12). A small proportion of individuals had no direct link to the organic agriculture movement, although they were related to it in some way, for example being in charge of a publishing house which publishes books about organic farming, or having developed the idea of 'positive health' which underlies the objectives of the Soil Association. High profile individuals chosen to be featured included Dr. E. F. Schumacher and Rachel Carson about whom the following was written: "Single-handedly Rachel Carson had taken on the might of corporate America at the height of its confidence and power. And, despite a series of

orchestrated personal attacks, many of them sexist, she won through...Unafraid to challenge the (male dominated) industrial and economic orthodoxy of their time, and determined to bear witness to activities which were despoiling the environment and killing wildlife" ('Living Earth', Jul-Sept 1998, p. 26). Table 5.10 presents these results fully.

Table 5.10: Relationship of the individuals within the articles to the organic movement

	% of articles		
Type of relationship	Men	Women	Couples
Organic growing	**43.4**	**33.3**	**86.4**
Organic farming organisations	**23.0**	**15.3**	**4.5**
Organic movement but not growing	**8.2**	**16.7**	**4.5**
Organic pioneer/founder member	**13.9**	**15.3**	**0.0**
No direct link[9]	**11.5**	**19.4**	**4.5**
TOTAL	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

[9]Although the individual has no direct involvement to the organic movement they have influenced it or are related to it in some way.

Role

The most common role overall was productive work on-farm, 54.5% of couples, 36.9% of men and 26.4% of women were depicted in this role. Productive work on-farm included activities such as: rearing calves, dealing with customers, crop planning, administration work, tractor work, making bio-dynamic preparations, milking cows and ploughing. The least common role was reproductive work on-farm which was depicted in only 0.9% of articles overall, although 18.2% of couples were shown in both productive and

reproductive roles on-farm. Reproductive roles mentioned include baking, growing food for home consumption, looking after children and housework. It was most common for women to be represented in educational roles, occupied by almost one third of them, such as authoring books, conducting educational tours of organic farms and giving lectures. Only small proportions of both women and men were depicted in roles concerned with research, 3.7% and 1.9% respectively. However, a woman who was represented in a research role was described as having been: "entrusted with the scientific investigation arising from suggestions made by Dr. Steiner at that time [1924 lectures]" ('Star and Furrow', Spring 1977, p. 32). This was a role of great importance to the BDDA, and therefore it is significant that responsibility for it was given to a female, particularly at that point in history. Although 12.5% of women had roles within the management of organic organisations this was still substantially less than the 21.3% of males, these management roles included for example, being on the council for an organisation, being a member of an editorial board and being on the finance committee of the Soil Association. In some cases women were described as playing a supportive role to management, for example: "At our Circle conferences and council meetings here at Clent she was always providing food and putting members up" ('Star and Furrow', Winter 1990, p. 2), and the following was written about the same woman's involvement in the organisation of the BDDA's annual general meetings "making cakes and biscuits herself and getting others to bring contributions" ('Star and Furrow', Winter 1990, p. 2). And even the first woman to be elected as the BDDA chairman (sic) was quoted making a comment expressing very traditional views on femininity:

> *It occurs to me that I must have some very special gifts to bring. Perhaps nurturing or caring as a chairperson...My background is more to do with healing.*
>
> *('Star and Furrow', Summer 2000, p. 27).*

The differences between the representation of men and women are illustrated in Table 5.11.

Type of role

Individuals were most commonly depicted as being in a leadership or autonomous role rather than as a team member or helper. A higher proportion of women than men were represented in leadership or autonomous roles, 70.8% compared to 52.5%. Examples of leadership roles include being involved in the management of organic organisations, being a farm manager, conducting a tour of organic farms or managing an organic restaurant. Examples of autonomous roles include: authoring books, developing agricultural techniques independently, being a cheese maker. Couples were most likely to be described as being a member of a team or as partners.

Table 5.11: Role of the individuals within the featured activities

Role in activity	% of articles Men	 Women	 Couples
On-farm work-productive	**36.9**	**26.4**	**54.5**
On-farm work - reproductive	**0.8**	**1.4**	**0.0**
On-farm work - productive and reproductive	**0.0**	**1.4**	**1.9**
Gardening/horticulture	**6.6**	**9.7**	**0.9**
Research and development	**6.6**	**5.6**	**0.0**
Educational	**15.6**	**29.2**	**0.9**
Marketing	**2.5**	**2.8**	**0.9**
Management of organic organisation	**21.3**	**12.5**	**0.0**
General running of organic organisation	**4.1**	**9.7**	**0.0**
Not applicable	**5.7**	**1.4**	**0.0**
TOTAL	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Places and spaces occupied

The two most common categories representing the spaces in which the individuals were placed within the activity depicted in the article were either 'outdoors on-farm'; such as: fields, animal sheds, milking parlour, or greenhouse; or 'indoors-working for an organic organisation' e.g. in the Soil Association office, doing organic research e.g. in a laboratory, involved in organic education e.g. inside a lecture hall.

Whereas a higher percentage of men were shown outdoors on-farm, 41%, than indoors either working for the organic movement, doing organic research or involved in organic education, 23.6%; the converse was true for women of which 23.6% were outdoors on-farm, and 26.4% were indoors working for the organic movement, doing organic research or involved in organic education. The proportion of women depicted in a garden was almost twice that of men; and 9.7% of them were in a market, shop or kitchen compared to 0.8% of men. See Table 5.12 for a presentation of these results.

Table 5.12: Places and spaces occupied by the individuals within the featured activities

	% of articles		
Places and spaces	Men	Women	Couples
Outdoors on-farm	**41.0**	**23.6**	**72.7**
Indoors on-farm	**1.6**	**5.6**	**4.5**
Outdoors within organic movement	**1.6**	**5.6**	**0.0**
Indoors within organic movement	**32.8**	**26.4**	**0.0**
Garden	**7.4**	**12.5**	**9.1**
Market/shop/kitchen	**0.8**	**9.7**	**9.1**
Overseas travel	**2.5**	**4.2**	**0.0**
Outdoors - other	**1.6**	**0.0**	**0.0**
Indoors - other	**4.9**	**11.1**	**0.0**
Not applicable	**5.7**	**1.4**	**0.5**
TOTAL	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

5.5 Summary of content analysis

This section will summarise the results of the content analysis. Firstly it discuses the findings from the 'Farmers Weekly' and then it proceeds to a discussion of the organic publications.

5.5.1 'Farmers Weekly'

The basic analysis of the 'Farmers Weekly' dataset reveals that there was little variation within the articles. The overall focus of the articles was on organic agriculture rather than

other aspects of the organic movement; and the information provided about the featured individuals, who were mostly male farmers, was minimal. Furthermore, the small size of the sample and the unequal ratio of male to female individuals prohibited analysis along gender lines. However, the unequal ratio of males to females in itself is interesting and may be expected within such a conventional farming publication, given the results of similar research on the conventional farming press (See, for example, Morris and Evans 2001; Walter and Wilson 1996).

5.5.2 Organic farming publications

The description of the 'Farmers Weekly' data contrasts sharply with that obtained from the analysis of the organic movement dataset. The articles from the organic publications revealed a greater variety within both the activities and the individuals featured, although often the articles featuring couples showed less variety within each variable. However, as the statistical analyses indicated, there were significant differences and similarities in the representation of men and women. The summary will be discussed in two parts, with the initial section considering the articles featuring partners, and the second section considering the articles featuring individual men and women.

Couples

In the case of articles featuring a couple there were far more farm profiles than any other category of article; indicating that these farm profiles were conducted on family farms run by heterosexual partners. Indeed, all of the articles featuring partners were concerned with organic growing; farming, horticulture, gardening or farm visits and consequently the resulting dataset is substantially different from that depicting either males or females. There was less variety within each variable, with a marked focus on agricultural categories and, equally evident, was a lack of positive content within the variables concerning personal information about individuals. The lack of personal information was related to the articles being focused on organic growing rather than the individuals involved; a reflection of the number of 'farm profiles' which featured couples. As a result the data collated from these articles does not provide much depth of information regarding the differential representation of men and women.

Men and women

Overall, female individuals were less likely than males to be featured within an article. Analysis of the data from the organic publications revealed that weak relationships exist between the sex of the featured individuals and six of the variables, revealing that there *were* differences in the representation of men and women within the publications. However, nine of the variables revealed no relationship between the sex of an individual and their representation in the articles.

On the whole the two datasets, articles featuring either men or women, appeared quite similar and where differences did appear within variables they were mostly due to men being represented more frequently than women within articles featuring specifically agricultural activities. The majority of both datasets fall into two overall categories; profiles of individuals within the organic movement and farm profiles. Although there were some articles featuring women in farming activities, it was more likely that such articles featured men and if a woman was involved it was more likely that she was depicted within a couple than on her own. However, women were more commonly depicted in activities outside of farming than men, such as within horticulture and gardening or activities based around food and health. These gender differences found within the variable 'type of activity' are significant.

The only individuals featured in articles with a professional title, such as Doctor or Professor, were men although, due to the small number of individuals attributed a title within the articles, the findings are not significant. However, the educational level of featured men is significantly more likely to be mentioned than that of the women; and they were also more likely to have attained a higher level of education. Furthermore, an individual's agricultural education was mentioned in a higher proportion of articles featuring men than women, although the differences are not significant; again, this was probably due to the small number of cases in which it was mentioned. There were few notable differences in the productive work status of men and women, and indeed statistically there is no difference between them. Despite this, the reproductive work status of an individual is significantly more likely to be mentioned if the person featured was a

woman. These findings suggest that women were being represented in non-traditional feminine roles alongside traditional feminine roles.

There are a number of statistically significant similarities in the way in which men and women were represented within the articles. For example, the number of references to personal status, specific characteristics and related individuals, was similar for men and women; although a spouse was more likely to be mentioned if the featured individual was a man. Moreover, it is particularly interesting to note that there were no significant differences in the proportionate spread of gender neutral, traditionally masculine and traditionally feminine personality characterisations ascribed to men and women, and also that the majority of personality characterisations ascribed were those classed as gender neutral. This suggests that the publications did not draw upon overtly traditional representations of masculinity and femininity within their articles.

There were no gender differences in an individual's relationship to the organic movement; most commonly their involvement was through organic growing, involvement in organic farming organisations or as a pioneer or founder member of the movement. Although the proportionate spread of roles within the featured activities was generally fairly even, the results suggested that women more often appeared in articles performing educational roles and men within on-farm productive roles, although these differences were not statistically valid. However, women were much more likely to be depicted in leadership or autonomous roles than men. There were significant differences in the types of spaces and places in which men and women were depicted within the articles. Whereas a greater proportion of men than women were depicted outdoors on-farms, women were more likely to be depicted in a market, shop or garden.

5.6 Identifying metaphors of 'Mother Earth'

A recurring theme within articles throughout the timescale of the sample frame was one in which the earth was feminised, and in particular conceptualised as a mother. These comments were most prevalent within the 'Star and Furrow' which is published by the Biodynamic Agricultural Association, although they also occurred within the 'Living Earth' published by the Soil Association. Whilst this was not directly relevant to the

content analysis, the references were considered pertinent and therefore were recorded within the 'additional quotes' section of the pro forma. This section will present a selection of these quotes.

5.6.1 Earth as Mother

The following two quotes from the 'Star and Furrow' show how members of the organic movement constructed the earth as a female:

> *Trees are organisms of the earth in another sense for they are part of her circulation system.*
>
> *('Star and Furrow', Winter 1978, p. 15)*

> *Whence do we, as children, derive our physical life if not from our mother earth? She has all the attributes we consider necessary for life. The plant kingdom is her skin, her rivers and seas provide a circulatory system. Everywhere she breathes out during the morning, in during the afternoon, and rests at night.*
>
> *('Star and Furrow', Summer 1992, p. 9)*

In addition to describing the earth as a female, the second quote specifically refers to the earth as our 'mother' as human beings. This view was evident in other articles, as illustrated by the following quote taken from an edition of 'Star and Furrow' published in 1992:

> *As long as we look at nature to see how we can exploit it most successfully we will be in trouble. The earth is our mother and you do not exploit your mother. She is willing to feed you, clothe you and care for you, and you have to return the care she gives you.*
>
> *('Star and Furrow', Winter 1992, p. 25)*

The quote above shows that a relationship is made between viewing the earth as mother and [her] stewardship by humankind. In particular a belief was expressed which urged that "mankind should work with Nature and not against her" (Mother Earth (now 'Living Earth'), January 1956, p.67). The following subsection will illustrate how this argument is extended within this discourse to construct a justification for farming organically.

5.6.2 Feminised earth and agriculture

The feminised earth metaphors were drawn upon in descriptions of agricultural practice:

> *Everybody notices the first ploughed field, and it becomes immediately the subject of questions and playful jokes. There is a magical irresistible quality to the turning and falling of the shining earth. It has the folds and fabric of a garment and yet, initially, the earth appears almost transparent, and naked....Many a time you might have turned with apprehension at the end of that furrow, and the sight of the deep-coloured damp earth lying open in gentle undulation, with the contour or in perfect straightness, spoke to you for a moment'; 'Those first three furrows are a statement of committal to that ground, a marriage ceremony.*
>
> *('Star and Furrow', Autumn 1976, p. 24-25)*

As shown in section 5.7.1, the relationship constructed between farming and a feminised earth is employed as an argument for using organic farming practices that work with nature:

> *As the farmers amongst us alter the soil, replace the vegetation and affect the climate we must be sensitive to how we wield our power. Inevitably we tame the earth - humanise it, perhaps - but we must not destroy or maim it. The bio-dynamic farmer works to strengthen it; his intention is that his agriculture should heal the soil so that its condition is actually better than in untended nature. So important is this that some farmers feel that food production at this moment is secondary; first we feed mother earth and then we feed ourselves.*
>
> *('Star and Furrow', Summer 1991, p. 11)*

This approach was contrasted with the so described "evil influence of reductionism" ('Star and Furrow', Winter 1979, p. 27), in which a science-led conventional approach to agriculture is criticised:

> *What the scientists generally want from Nature is to exploit her, trick her, even control her and use her for his own purposes.*
>
> *('Star and Furrow', Spring 1972, p. 7)*

Twenty two years later, in reference to the genetic engineering debate, the following comments were made within an article in 'Star and Furrow':

...we need to look for ways of considering the objects (plant, animal, man, mode of reproduction, individual species) such that the manner of consideration itself provides the moral orientation for dealing with it. This implies an artistic and respectful approach which is not reductional in tendency or liable to lead to 'techno-nature' but which raises nature to a level at which her creative forces and significant coherence can be visualised. 'The bio-dynamic farmer tries to work with the individual coherence on his farm and views his farm as a living organism with an identity of its own.

('Star and Furrow', Summer 1994, p. 3)

Again, within the quote above, reductionism is criticised and biodynamic farmers are depicted as working with nature. An article in Mother Earth (now 'Living Earth') celebrating the Soil Association's tenth birthday, almost forty years previously, echoes this sentiment when it urged people to "join in our efforts to ensure that mankind works with Nature and not against her" ('Mother Earth' (now 'Living Earth'), January 1956, p. 67). However, eight years later, the Soil Association made a specific attempt to rid itself of its association with the notion of a female earth because of concern that it was attracting ridicule from the general public and thus preventing them from being taken seriously. In an editorial note entitled 'At the crossroads: our public image', the editor made the following statement:

It is assumed that we set up a sentiment as a reason and because we feel towards the earth as if it were a "Mother" (which it is), we can no more reason about it in a detached manner than most children can about their parents...A great deal of bogus and exploited sentiments attaches to the Mother image in our time, and this reflects adversely on us. The Mother image is one of the most difficult that people have to cope with in an objective scientific age: it is associated with advertisements and pagan rituals and neurotic obsessions. What we are attempting to do is bridge the intellect and the feelings, and this should be our strength, not our weakness.

(Mother Earth, April 1964, p. 75)

Interestingly, from this date no further references to a feminised earth were noted from within the sample. In 1968 the Soil Association periodical was re-launched as the 'Journal

of the Soil Association'. However, at no point within the 'Star and Furrow' sample was a similar attempt noted by the Biodynamic Agricultural Association to distance itself as an organisation from their association with 'Mother Earth'.

5.6.3 Summary of section 5.6

This section has brought together some material from two of the organic publications, primarily from the 'Star and Furrow', to show how the organic movement, and in particular the biodynamic sector, has employed the metaphor of mother earth within their discourse. It has shown how this imagery was problematised by the Soil Association within their periodical in 1964 and subsequently was not identified as being prevalent. In contrast, the periodical of the Biodynamic Agricultural Association was identified as continuing to draw upon such notions through to the 1990s.

5.7 Discussion of the results presented in Chapter Five

This section discusses the results from the content analysis presented within this chapter. The discussion will relate the results to previous textual research on the agricultural media and to the following research question: How have gender roles, relations and identities been represented by the organic agriculture movement throughout its history? It will highlight the ambiguous nature of the results and argue that the organic agricultural media represent alternative versions of masculinity and femininity alongside more traditional representations.

5.7.1 Statistical ambiguity

The statistically significant differences identified between the representation of men and women within organic publications suggest that they conform to traditional notions of femininity and masculinity. For example, women were more likely than men to be featured in articles where the activity was to do with horticulture, gardening, health or food, domains traditionally gendered as feminine; and it was more likely that an individual's 'reproductive' work is mentioned in an article if they were female. In

contrast, men were more likely to be depicted outside involved in a farming activity and it was also more likely that their educational achievements were noted.

However, the categories for which no significant differences were observed suggest the existence of different constructions of masculinity and femininity, and are certainly not what one would expect to find if the representations of men and women adhered strictly to traditional models. For example, women were no more likely to be labelled with a prefix of Mrs or Miss than men were to be labelled with the prefix Mr; and there was no difference between men and women in the frequency of references to their children, spouses or parents (articles featuring an individual woman were significantly less likely than articles featuring an individual man to mention a spouse). Furthermore, there was no significant gender difference in the featured individual's relationship to the organic movement, for example, whether it was through the practice of organic farming or not directly related to organic farming.

The findings discussed above both correspond with and contradict previous textual analyses of agricultural publications. The multifaceted nature of the results is highlighted by comparing them with the following results from a discourse analysis of the Australian and New Zealand agricultural media, which, it was found:

> *...often portray farm women using ideas of domesticity and relational identity. Women are noted as wives, mothers, daughters or sisters of farmers, and if their work is acknowledged, it is represented as a support function, secondary to the 'real' farming which men are conducting outdoors.*
>
> *(Liepins 1998C, p. 378)*

These findings from the Australian agricultural media are corroborated by other textual research conducted on the agricultural media from the UK (Morris and Evans 2001) and the US (Walter and Wilson 1996). Whilst the results of the research for this thesis echo the representation of men and women in traditional roles, they differ in that notions of relational identity are no different for men or women. Moreover, as the following sub-

section will show, the organic agricultural media also appears to offer alternative representations of agricultural masculinity and femininity.

5.7.2 Alternative representations

Liepins (1996, p. 5) argues that alongside the dominant discourses of agriculture and associated masculinity found within the conventional agricultural media, there is a marginalisation of women and a "construction of domesticated, relational and subservient femininity". This sub-section will show how dominant masculinity and the marginalisation of women are not so prevalent within the organic agricultural media analysed for this thesis. Moreover, a detailed look behind the statistical results confirms that there are different versions of masculinity and femininity being represented by the organic publications which, although not strong enough to produce statistically significant results, are nonetheless deserving of further consideration.

It is particularly noteworthy that although men were more likely than women to be featured within the articles, the number of women featured was not a small proportion Indeed, 33.3% of the articles featured women on their own, and an additional 10.2% featured women alongside their male partner; thus in total almost half of the articles featured women in some way. Of these featured women, a number were farmers in their own right and others were in different types of leadership or autonomous roles. A significant number of women featured within the articles were described as pioneers and founder members of the organic agriculture movement, indeed in one of the articles a woman was attributed with the 'genesis of the Soil Association'. This corresponds with research that has revealed the importance of women pioneers to the development of the organic movement (Inhetveen 1998; Schmitt et al. 2004).

Men were also found to be represented in ways that do not conform to traditional notions of masculinity. For example, similar numbers of articles featuring either males or females mentioned their children, and men were pictured in a number of articles with their children on their own, in two cases holding a baby. Furthermore, a number of featured men had their personality described with traditionally feminine characters such as 'kind' or 'sensitive', and many more were described with neutral rather than masculine characters.

This contrasts sharply with other research which, despite identifying changes in the representation of masculinity in relation to changing technology, revealed the continuing emphasis upon hegemonic versions of masculinity defined in opposition to traditional femininity (Brandth 1995).

Research on the conventional agricultural media has found that where alternative versions of femininity are identified, they are restricted to "woman as masculine" depictions, in which women are depicted as appropriating objects and activities traditionally associated with men (Liepins 1998c). In contrast to this, women represented within organic publications in positions traditionally associated with men, were depicted as continuing to draw upon traditional notions of femininity despite their non-traditional roles. In some cases, traditional notions of femininity were linked to the metaphor of mother earth. Section 5.7 showed how the publications, and the biodynamic publication 'Star and Furrow' in particular, drew upon the conceptualisation of a feminised earth in explaining their holistic approach to agriculture.

This sub-section has shown that, unlike the conventional agricultural media which excludes or limits alternative masculinities and femininities in agriculture (Liepins 1996), the organic media reports and portrays alternative representations of masculinity and femininity. These include women performing traditionally masculine roles or in positions of power and influence, as well as men performing traditionally feminine roles or being reported in relation to female relatives.

5.7.3 Conclusions

The discussion above illustrates that the organic agriculture movement *has* produced representations of males and females within their publications from the 1940s to the present that do not conform to traditional notions of rural/agricultural masculinity and femininity. Although the restricted size of the final sample meant that it was not possible to analyse how the representation of masculinity and femininity altered over the 59 year time-scale of the sample frame, it is clear that women had a high profile throughout the publications from the earliest issues. This factor in itself contrasts with findings from conventional publications.

The content analysis has provided a comprehensive insight into how gender roles, relations and identities have been represented within the publications of the UK organic movement. However, the technique of content analysis is restricted to deciphering representations and therefore was not able to ascertain how individuals acting within organic farming construct their own gender roles, relations and identities with respect to the practice of organic farming. The following two chapters will present and discuss empirical material which was designed to elucidate how gender roles, relations and identities are constructed and maintained on contemporary organic farms.

Chapter 6

GENDER ROLES AND RELATIONS WITHIN THE PRACTICE OF ORGANIC FARMING

6.1 Introduction

This chapter and the subsequent chapter are based on the data obtained from the second phase of the empirical work which involved a series of semi-structured interviews with forty-one organic farmers on thirty-four different organic farms. The interviews were designed to answer the following two research questions:

- How are gender roles, relations and identities constructed and maintained on organic farms?
- Does the ideological standpoint of organic farming facilitate the representation and construction of distinctive gender roles, relations and identities?

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the range of gender roles and relations on the organic farms within the research, and to discuss whether the farmers perceived organic farming to be different to conventional farming in this respect. Therefore, the chapter draws predominantly upon the farmers' responses to two of the interview themes: 'on-farm labour' and 'labour in organic farming' (see Appendix E for the interview schedule) and aims to answer in-part the first question detailed above. The following results chapter, Chapter Seven, will contribute towards answering the second question detailed above by describing the positioning of the farmers in relation to the organic ideology. The research questions will be addressed fully in Chapter Eight.

Firstly, this chapter will introduce the typology of on-farm role-types that developed from the interview analysis; the evolution of the typology will be explained, followed by a description of its component categories. The remainder of the chapter will use the structure of the typology in order to demonstrate the gender roles and relations described

by the organic farmers within the interviews. The process of semi-structured interviewing was discussed in detail within section 4.3 of Chapter Four, including a description of the sample of organic farmers and their farms. However, for ease of reference, Table 6.1 (below) provides a summary of the farmers interviewed, including their pseudonyms and the type and size of their farms (more detailed tables regarding the interviewees and their farms are in Appendix I and J).

6.2 Typology of role-types

Three distinct types of farm household in terms of the gender roles and relations described were constructed from the interview analysis. Although this typology emerged as a result of the interview analysis, as an analytical device it is more useful to begin this chapter with it, and use the typology to structure the successive discussion, than to end the chapter with it. Therefore, in order to facilitate the presentation of the analysis the three-part typology will be used to structure the presentation of the results within this chapter. Within this initial section the development of the typology will be outlined, followed by a description of the defining characteristics of each type, illustrated with a typical example drawn from the sample of farmers.

6.2.1 Evolution of the typology

As discussed in Chapter Four, N-vivo was used to structure the analysis of the interviews in the same way as one would apply the manual 'shoe-box' method. The on-farm gender roles described by the farmers within the sample were conceptualised in relation to 'traditional' agricultural gender roles and relations, as outlined in Chapter Two. Initially the farms with features that corresponded to the 'traditional' gender division of labour were identified. The strategies of the remaining farms were then considered and compared to the traditional approach. They were categorised according to their approach to the different aspects of on-farm labour. Through carrying out this analysis, two additional types were identified in addition to the traditional gender division of labour. In this way a progressive, three-part categorisation of role types was developed on the basis of the evidence that emerged from the interviews, into which it was possible to place the

Table 6.1: Summary information on the interviewees and their farms

No.	Name[10]	Age	Type of farm	Size (ha)	Diversification enterprises
1	Val	40-49	cattle and sheep	13	none
2	Doreen	60-69	cattle and sheep	23	none
3	Diane	60-69	mixed	113	none
3	Morgan	60-69			
4	Victoria	40-49	mixed	122	processing, farmers' markets
5	Nick	40-49	mixed	25	farm gate sales
6	Morwenna	60-69	mixed	6	holiday lets, processing, farm shop
6	Boyd	60-69			
7	Megan	40-49	mixed	69	residential lettings
8	Joan	30-39	mixed	43	none
9	Gillian	40-49	mixed	135	farmers' markets, farm gate sales
9	Callum	40-49			
10	Linda	60-69	mixed	110	none
10	Adam	60-69			
11	Charles	50-59	mixed	231	office lets
12	Adrian	40-49	dairy	53	none
12	Alexander	40-49			
13	Rik	40-49	mixed	625	processing, farm shop, café, conference facilities
14	James	30-39	mixed	241	none
15	Michael	70+	mixed	292	none
16	Hans	30-39	mixed	12	none
17	Daniel	50-59	mixed	142	farmers' markets
18	Mathew	50-59	cattle and sheep	81	none
19	George	40-49	cattle and sheep	227	farm gate sales
20	Tracey	40-49	cattle and sheep	243	farm gate sales
20	Ben	40-49			
21	Ian	50-59	dairy	91	none
21	Melanie	20-29			
22	Harry	40-49	deer	57	none
23	Trudy	30-39	horticulture	1.5	processing, farm shop
24	Rowan	30-39	mixed	24	box scheme
25	Jim	50-59	pig and poultry	28	none
26	Hannah	40-49	cattle and sheep	11	holiday lets
26	Mark	40-49			
27	Emma	40-49	dairy	28	processing, farmers' markets
28	Sally	30-39	horticulture	3	box scheme
29	Jane	30-39	dairy	83	none
30	Julie	50-59	mixed	6	residential lets, processing, farm gate sales
31	Elaine	50-59	mixed	7	farm gate sales
32	Deidre	40-49	mixed	550	processing, farm gate sales
33	Natalie	50-59	horticulture	7	box scheme

[10] All names have been changed to pseudonyms throughout the text to retain the anonymity of the participants

farm households. The following subsection will describe the three 'role types': 'traditional transposed', 'traditional transformed' and 'traditional transcended'.

6.2.2 Description of the 'role-types' typology

The three approaches to gender roles and the division of labour constructed from the interview analysis are 'traditional transposed', 'traditional transformed' and 'traditional transcended', and each will be discussed in turn within this sub-section. However, it may be useful at this point to review the dictionary definitions of the three words, in order to facilitate understanding of the typology (from Chambers 2001):

- 'Transpose' - to transfer
- 'Transform' - to change the shape of...to another form
- 'Transcend' - to rise above; to surmount

The word 'traditional', used as a prefix in this context, refers to the dominant gender roles and relations expressed within conventional agriculture, as discussed in Chapter Two. This 'traditional' form of gender roles and relations provides the reference against which the three-part typology is conceptualised. Although the typology is presented here as three discrete categories, the types are envisaged as representing dynamic and shifting gender roles and relations. Therefore, it is possible for households to move between the types if their gender roles and relations shift accordingly.

Traditional transposed

This form parallels the conventional division of labour on family farms whereby the two spheres of productive and reproductive work are distinctly gendered masculine and feminine respectively, with little or no overlap. Therefore, 'traditional' gender roles and relations are simply transposed into the different context of organic farming, without undergoing any changes in form. Within this type farm women may be expected to help in numerous ways on the farm such as with the care of young animals, with moving stock, making telephone calls and keeping the books. Often farm women will work off-farm, in

paid employment or in voluntary community work. The male farmer will be confined to the productive farm work. If a farm is diversified in some way, such as through direct marketing, on-farm processing or property lets, the division of labour regarding the diversification is split along traditional lines. Box 6.1 provides two typical examples of traditional transposed households from the interview sample, the second of which had diversified.

Box 6.1: Example of two 'traditional transposed' farm households

Diane and Morgan (farm 3)

Diane and Morgan are a married couple in their sixties who have been involved in agriculture all of their lives. They are both from farming families and they took over their current 113 hectare farm from Diane's parents in 1972, it has been fully organic since 2002. Diane completed a secretarial course when she left school and began working in a solicitor's office until her father became ill, at which point she returned to help on the family farm. Before marrying Diane Morgan worked on his parent's farm; he does not have any formal agricultural training. Their two adult sons live away from the farm in the local area but are still involved in decision making and help out on the farm when necessary. On the day of the interview Diane and Morgan were expecting news about the birth of their first grandchild and seemed delighted at the prospect.

Both Diane and Morgan have always worked on the farm full-time, performing fixed, traditional roles. Diane is responsible for all of the work within the house including the reproductive work and the paperwork. She also does all of the calf rearing and helps with other outdoor tasks when called upon. Morgan takes responsibility for the productive farm work and does not help within the house in any way. However, at the time of the interview Morgan was recovering from a recent heart bypass operation and was not able to work on the farm, something that he was finding difficult to cope with. They were paying a neighbour to do some work for them as well as their sons helping out when they could.

When I arrived for the interview Morgan was resting so I spoke to Diane alone for a while. She was easy to speak to and was happy to answer my questions although she seemed surprised that I wanted to know what work she did around the farm, laughing when she said that she "...just generally helped everyone else". When Morgan entered the room he was introduced by Diane as

"...the Boss" and from that point she did not remain particularly involved in the interview apart from to make occasional comments.

Emma (farm 27)

Emma is in her early fifties and lives on her 28 hectare county council dairy holding with her husband, Paul, and their two teenage children. They have been at the farm since 1985 and reached full organic status in 2003. Emma was brought up in a city but her involvement with horses from a young age meant that she spent time of farms as she was growing up. Convinced that she wanted to farm she applied to the Royal Agricultural College in Cirencester to study agriculture when she was twenty, not realising that at that time they only accepted males. Instead she studied for an HND in Countryside Management at Seale Hayne and worked as an animal health officer until they started renting their current farm.

The on-farm work with the dairy herd is carried out almost exclusively by Paul while Emma's farm-related roles are that of a traditional 'farmer's wife' - doing the books, making phone calls and taking responsibility for the reproductive work. However, Emma also runs a successful cheese making business from the farm and at the time of the interview was negotiating a contract with the supermarket chain, Waitrose. The cheese making business is entirely Emma's responsibility and was started years ago after she closed the farm shop that she ran and bought the equipment, business name and a cheese recipe from someone whose cheese she had sold in the shop. Since then she has developed three new cheeses of her own and has grown the business steadily through local farmers' markets.

Emma is proud of her business and has ambitions to develop it further, hoping that she will be able to sell it in the future with the aim of making their retirement a comfortable one. Achieving organic status is pivotal in her plans to develop her cheese business, and for that reason, although Paul complains that he "cannot farm within this straightjacket that is organic" and despite not being able to sell their surplus milk into the organic market, they will remain certified. Despite Paul seeing the farmers' markets as her day out and not supporting her doing the marketing course that she had just completed, it is notable that without the cheese business Emma believes that the farm would not be viable. Indeed one of the options they are considering is to get rid of their dairy herd and buy in the milk in order to just concentrate on making the cheese. However, there is a sticking point with that idea, as Emma admitted "[Paul] doesn't like the idea of me being the boss."

Traditional transformed

This form maintains the conventional division of labour and traditional roles as a framework that is loosely adhered to. However, the boundaries demarcating gender roles are more flexible than in the previous two forms enabling a certain degree of interchange between traditionally masculine and feminine work. Therefore traditional gender roles and relations are transformed into alternative configurations. Within this model, for example, a female may have responsibility for the day-to-day work with the stock on a farm while still having full responsibility for the reproductive work; and a male may work off-farm full-time but still be expected to perform such tasks as mending fences and tractor work. These farms may also have diversified enterprises.

Box 6.2: Example of a 'traditional transformed' farm household

Nick (farm 5)

Nick is in his forties and lives with his wife, Harriet, and their eleven year old son. Their 25 hectare dairy farm is rented from Harriet's parents who own a neighbouring farm. It is the only farm that they have farmed together and they have been there since they were first married in 1984. The farm has been fully organic since 1997. Nick left school aged sixteen and before marrying Harriet he worked as a farm labourer on dairy farms in the vicinity. He is not from a farming family and received no formal agricultural training.

Both Nick and Harriet work on their farm full-time. Until Nick damaged his back the milking was split evenly between them, with one milking in the morning and one in the afternoon. However, Nick is unable to milk nowadays so Harriet does all of the milking and Nick rears the calves and does the book keeping. Other farm tasks, such as making the silage are carried out between them. However, their approach to strongly gendered areas of work is more traditional, for example Harriet does the majority of the cooking and cleaning while Nick does most of the tractor work and fence mending.

Despite being aware that other farms take a far more traditional approach to the division of labour saying, "we're probably totally back-to-front to most farms", Nick is happy with their arrangement and gave the impression that it is what comes naturally to them.

Traditional transcended

This form does not maintain the conventional division of labour as a framework. The traditional boundaries between gender roles are not obviously apparent, and they are rewritten according to individual circumstances and preferences. Therefore, the 'traditional' formation of agricultural gender roles and relations can be understood as having been transcended. Within this type, for example, a female may run a farm single handed, while a male may choose to take on a childcare role in preference to performing productive farm work.

Box 6.3: Example of a 'traditional transcended' farm household

Hannah and Mark (farm 26)

Hannah and Mark are in their forties and live on their 11 hectare farm with their five year old son and Hannah's teenage son from her previous marriage. The farm was bought with 6 hectares of land in 1997 they have since rented an additional 5 hectares adjoining their land. It is their first farm and neither of them is from a farming family. They started the organic conversion process on their own land in 1999 and it achieved organic status in 2002 although the rented land is still in conversion. They both work full-time off-farm, Hannah trained and worked for many years as an agronomist and is now a technical manager for a firm that grows and packs apples and cherry tomatoes, and Mark is the head teacher of a village primary school, although he used to be a pharmacologist.

Due to their work commitments and their young son's bedtime we conducted the interview at 8pm on a weekday evening. As I arrived Mark was preparing for teaching the following day and Hannah was in the middle of a work-related telephone call, they ate their dinner while we conducted the interview - it was obvious that they lead busy lives!

The farm is primarily Hannah's project, she felt that having spent so many years advising farmers it was time that she gave it a go herself, and although the farm work is divided between them Hannah is ultimately in charge, and describes Mark as being her "cheap labour". Their labour is organised not according to gender, but according to their individual work schedules. For example, they plan the lambing to coincide with Mark's two week Easter holiday and the holiday cottage is

run between them with jobs falling to whoever is available. Indeed in many ways they reverse the traditional division of labour with Mark taking the role as the primary carer for their young son and acting as the farm 'gofer' while Hannah makes the day-to-day decisions and has overall responsibility for the productive work. However, the roles are not fixed but rather are flexible and open for negotiation.

Although Hannah didn't refer directly to feminism it is clear that she believes strongly in the ethos of equal rights for women and that it is something that she pursues within her own life. She spoke about the importance of Greenham Common and was openly scathing of female friends who chose to put their children before their career, saying that she "...thought life had changed, but it hasn't". Meanwhile Mark believed that he would prefer to be at home with children than go out to work, and was happy to be the main carer for their son.

Just over half of the organic households within the sample, a total of seventeen, fall within the 'traditional transposed' category, eleven within the 'traditional transformed' category and five within the 'traditional transcended' category. Table 6.2 shows the distribution of the farmers amongst the three categories. The remainder of this chapter will present the findings from the interview theme that explored the gender division of labour and gender roles within the sample farms. The findings will be presented using the three-part categorisation discussed above as a framework. It should be stressed that it is not being claimed that the categorisation is only applicable to organic farming and indeed it could be applied to non-organic farms. However, as will be shown within the following sections, features of organic farming do influence the gender division of labour. Within Chapter Eight it will be demonstrated how the three-part categorisation of role-types is related to the 'organic ideology' of the interviewees.

Table 6.2: Distribution of the organic farm households within the three-part categorisation

Farmers and farms within each category

Traditional transposed	**Traditional transformed**	**Traditional transcended**
3-Diane and Morgan	2-Doreen	1-Val
9-Gillian and Callum	4-Victoria	26-Hannah and Mark
10-Linda and Adam	5-Nick	28-Sally
11-Charles	6-Boyd and Morwenna	30-Julie
12-Adrian and Alexander	7-Megan	32-Deidre
13-Rik	8-Joan	
14-James	16-Hans	
15-Michael	21-Ian	
17-Daniel	21-Melanie	
18-Mathew	23-Trudy	
19-George	24-Rowan	
20-Tracey and Ben	31-Elaine	
22-Harry		
25-Jim		
27-Emma		
29-Jane		
33-Natalie		

6.3 'Traditional transposed'

Within this section the division of labour on the farms within the category 'traditional transposed' will be discussed. Seventeen of the farm households comprise the 'traditional transposed' category for division of labour. Sixteen of the participants in these interviews were married and one was living with his partner. At least one member of each of the couples came from a family farming background. The farms had all been previously farmed conventionally by the participants.

On all of the farms the primary farmers were male with the farm women helping to varying extents, as will be discussed below. The gender roles adopted on the farms were fixed and followed a traditional gender division of labour. It was found that organic farming acted to reinforce traditional roles in a number of specific ways.

6.3.1 On-farm gender roles

In all of the 'traditional transposed' households, with two exceptions, the men performed the productive farm work and the women performed traditional 'farmer's wife' roles. The exceptions were: Harry who employed a man full-time to work on his deer farm while he and his wife both worked full-time off-farm; and Rik who was employed as a full-time manager on a large organic estate. Three of the other women worked off-farm, two full-time and one part-time. Six of the farms had diversified into the direct selling of their produce, variously using farm gate sales, farm shops, farmers' markets and box schemes. One farm had also developed a caravan park on their farm. The organisation of labour within the diversified enterprises followed traditional lines, with the women taking primary responsibility for the enterprises, sometimes helped by their husband or partner.

It was taken as a given by the participants that the men did the productive farm work and the women the reproductive work. Indeed participants sometimes reacted with surprise that such questions were being asked. Only five of the participants, Harry, Charles, Alexander, Rik and Michael, described their wives as not being physically involved in the farm work in any way. Rik was employed as the manager of a large family-owned estate, as detailed above, and therefore his household was not linked to the farm. His wife was at

home full-time with their four young children. The wives of Harry and Alexander are both teachers and work full-time away from the farms while the wives of Charles and Michael were both described as full time housewives. Charles explained that although his wife is kept informed she does not work on the farm:

> *"No, we don't mix business with pleasure it wouldn't work. No, she doesn't do the farming. I mean we talk about it but no, she doesn't do anything on the farm"*
>
> *Charles, farm 11*

Charles's wife does not come from a farming family, although she is "country" and she spends much of her time "round and about" with her horses and dogs. They own a large arable and beef farm of 231 hectares which is share farmed with a neighbouring farmer. The nature of the business arrangement and the size of the farm allowed a separation from the home in a way that was not possible on other farms. Accordingly, as on Michael's 292 hectare farm, there is a separate farm office on site and the farm has employees, including a part-time female employee who does the paperwork.

On the farms where women were involved in the farm business it was common for them to have responsibility for the paper work or to act as a 'gofer'. These roles were recognised as being important in the running of the farms. For example, Adrian described how his wife acting as a 'gofer' for himself and his brother saved them a lot of time:

> *"... endless posting, photocopy this, sort this out, go and get this...lots of go and get that. It could vary from the vet to machinery parts, you know. There's a lot of that involved. Otherwise we'd be spending a lot of our time running around places you know."*
>
> *Adrian, farm 12*

Emma described how she has to take overall responsibility for the paperwork, and implied that without this organisational input her husband would not keep on top of it all:

"Well it's my responsibility to coordinate really. I mean my husband has to keep the records for the farm but I have to get him to, do you know what I mean? I have to precipitate action. He is incredibly lax when it comes to... I mean there are all his labels off certain bags of food in that carrier bag for instance. I do the admin I suppose you could say."

Emma, farm 27

This was echoed by Mr Whitaker who felt that he would get in a "muddle" if his wife Paula did not help out with the "big heap of stuff". It was often mentioned that converting to organic farming had created an increase in the volume of paperwork. For Gillian the paperwork involved in the organic conversion process was causing her to spend more time inside rather than out helping her husband:

"The other difference I notice is all the paperwork, everything you have to write it down basically. That is one of the bigger differences; I spend more time doing that now. I used to do more outside[....]I used to be out with Callum you know, looking after the animals, feeding, you know bedding-up and doing whatever, but I've sort of stopped that part of it now and am pushing the pen. Well I do some but I tend to do more paperwork."

Gillian, farm 9

It appears therefore that on 'traditional transposed' farms, where the responsibility for paperwork is mostly confined to women (either a female family member or female employees), the increase in paperwork involved in converting to organic farming accentuates traditionally feminised roles.

Where the women were described as being involved in productive work it was in 'helping out roles' and only with specific jobs. Typically the women were described as helping with moving stock, rearing calves or lambing. Speaking of his wife, who is a fulltime nurse, Mathew explained that "I don't think there's a great deal she can do except stand in gateways when we are moving cows". Lack of perceived physicality within these 'helping out roles' is important on 'traditional transposed' farms, thus Adrian constructs moving cattle as being non-physical:

"If we're moving cattle, that's the, nowadays...not sort of physical, that side of it. It's just helpful having an extra pair of hands like moving the cattle around in the morning."

Adrian, farm 12

Jim, a pig farmer, was more explicit about women's inability to stick at the "hard physical work" involved in a large scale pig operation:

"But the bigger operations tend to be pretty much the same as conventional especially with pigs because there aren't many females who are going to stick at it, it is hard physical work. On the scale we're doing it not many growers would put up with it, through the winter it is hard going."

Jim, farm 25

A productive role which does not exist within organic farming is that of spraying. Spraying is a role that is traditionally performed by men and the lack of spraying in organic farming was mentioned by a number of male participants as a positive aspect of converting their farms. However, a new role created due to the lack of spraying is that of weeding, not all of which can be done by mechanical cultivations. Unlike mechanical weeding hand weeding is not viewed as an exclusively male role and often all family members would be expected to help with what is hard, physical work:

"We've had, we try a bit, we've grown fodder beet. That was last year but in one part of the field the weeds were up here and the fodder beet was down here, we would've lost the lot, but we went out and hand weeded the whole lot. We called in a friend, now you can't get friends who will help to do that, you can't find them. I had the children out there, me wife and that but that was in the baking hot sun right in June. Well who can you find to do labouring, we kept thinking who can we get to do it? [...]We managed to save the crop but it really put us off, we wouldn't do that again. We done it with maize as well, we had weeds coming in that. We put a hoe through it with the tractor and that was a similar story. We hand weeded half the ground and we've give it up now."

Adrian, farm 12

While women (and children) are excluded from certain work because of its physicality, hand weeding, which is clearly considered hard physical work, is constructed as a role suited to everyone. This contradiction was recognised by Jane who contrasted her "slave"

role of hand weeding ragwort with the male role of collecting the weed piles with a tractor:

> *"In theory it should get the whole family out but in practice it seems to get me and Emily out and occasionally Jamie. But I think that's just the thing isn't it? I think the big mistake is not taking, and this is for farming generally is not, if you really have an aptitude for driving the machines...I don't particularly like driving tractors because they are noisy and you know on the slopes and so on they are quite tricky. I mean I am sure I could make myself perfectly able to drive them. I don't particularly like driving anyway, I mean I drive a lorry and have done since I was seventeen but I just, you know the whole sort of thing about the tractors is not really what interests me. But I do recognise that if you drive the tractors you always get the easy job. You know if somebody is pulling ragwort basically all the person does who drives the tractor is drive from one pile to the next while the slaves pull ragwort you know. So I think that is probably my fault rather than anything else that probably if I had taken control of the [tractor driving], but you do tend to gravitate to the jobs that you do very well."*
>
> *Jane, farm 29*

Therefore, as with the increase in paperwork, the increase in hand weeding due to conversion to organic farming has gendered implications on 'traditional transposed' farms.

Although women's roles within the traditional transposed category were reported as being confined to sometimes helping with productive work, the women interviewed showed that they are capable of performing productive work independently if necessary. For example Tracey was happy to perform a highly traditional role within the farm household:

> *"I mean I could stay in the house all day everyday cleaning, washing, cooking and ironing and I love it"*
>
> *Tracey, farm 20*

However she later recounted a story which proved that she was also very capable of performing productive farm roles, even when it is unexpected:

"Ben had to go out and he asked me to keep an eye on a cow calving. She was almost there really. I'd been out for the day. You should've seen me: I had on a short black skirt, black stilettos and a cerise jacket. Well, I hung up my jacket on the tree and just got on with it."

Tracey, farm 20

A further example is that of Diane who explained that she had always "just generally helped everybody else". However, since her husband's incapacity due to a heart bypass operation she had taken over the day-to-day running of their family farm, adopting roles that her husband had assumed for many years. Clearly then, under certain circumstances, it can be acceptable for women to temporarily perform some of the roles usually performed by the male farmers. There were no examples within the interviews which indicated whether men would take on the female reproductive work in similarly exceptional circumstances.

Given the nature of the division of labour it is unsurprising that the day-to-day decisions were generally taken by the men. Some male participants stated that their wives did not have any input in long-term decisions like choosing to convert to organic farming. For example, the two brothers interviewed jointly said of the decision to go organic:

Alexander "It would have been between us".

Adrian: "Between us two, no-one else".

Adrian and Alexander, farm 12

Others said that for long-term decisions there was a degree of consultation between all members of the household, although often the final decision would be taken by the farmer himself. On all of the transfigured farms women had an input into the management of the diversified enterprise, and indeed on four of the farms the overall responsibility fell to the woman. For example, Natalie has a high level of autonomy within the horticulture business that she runs with her husband. Decisions over what is grown are taken jointly, combining her own knowledge of what the customers want with her husband's knowledge of the production process:

"Ian says, "I want to grow this" and I say, "Well nobody wants it" and we come to a compromise." But yes so I'm aware of what people want to eat more than Ian is because of the farmers' markets and I do surveys and he's aware of the growing box scheme implications and the rotations you know the logistics of that."

Natalie, farm 33

While day-to-day decisions regarding the box scheme and the farmers' markets are taken by Natalie who felt that "In terms of the marketing and what we are going to do if I have a good enough reason then that's fine." However, their land is rented from a large organic estate and within the business as a whole she did not feel that she was listened to:

"Sometimes I feel I am in the position of many women in business where I'll come up with an idea and its, "Yes Natalie that's a very nice idea" but it is not taken seriously and I think a lot of women are in that position. And in fact I heard a powerful, well she sounded powerful, lawyer saying the other day that she will bring forward an idea and it will be, "Oh yes very nice idea" and then a year later the man she spoke to will have that idea as his own. And she said she's just got used to being the kind of hatcher of ideas, kind of planting seeds and her ideas not being acknowledged as her own. You know there is all that kind of thing [....] it is kind of insidious."

Natalie, farm 33

Jane lives on a family farm passed down from her husband's father. Although Jane and her husband take decisions together she experienced a similar disregard from his father for her ideas and believes that the attitude is governed by age:

"You know we are of a generation who are much more used to probably sharing things more equally between the man and the woman. You know Michael's father, he probably wouldn't thank me for saying this, but he has this sort of inbuilt thing that if it comes out of the mouth of a woman then it is immediately ignored. And its one of those things you know a month later you hear him say something and you think yes actually that's exactly what I said two months ago you know. But because you'd ventured an opinion on something you shouldn't have any knowledge of..."

Jane, farm 29

Summary of sub-section 6.3.1

This sub-section has demonstrated the traditional division of labour within the 'traditional transposed' farm households. Moreover, it has identified two particular aspects of organic farming that appear to retrench traditional roles, namely the purported increase in paperwork and the role of hand weeding which can arise on organic farms of any size. The following sub-section will discuss the division of labour within the diversification enterprises of some of the farms.

6.3.2 Gender-roles within diversification enterprises

Six of the 'traditional transposed' farm households had diversified their farms into processing and/or direct selling (see Table 6.1 for details). Within these enterprises the division of labour was traditional in that it was the women who primarily took responsibility for the new roles created, adopting them alongside their existing roles. Indeed, the analysis found that direct selling was one way in which organic farming actually reinforces traditional gender roles within 'traditional transposed' households.

It is accepted that direct marketing is neither a prerequisite for organic farming nor exclusive to organic farms. Nevertheless, it has been demonstrated in the literature that organic farms are more likely to diversify into direct marketing than conventional farms, and that direct selling is much more important to the economics of organic farming and therefore its relative importance is higher. Furthermore, local marketing is actively promoted by the organic movement as being in-line with the organic ideology as it is written into the IFOAM principle aims, 'to foster local and regional production and distribution'. However, a number of the 'traditional transposed' farmers viewed direct selling as an unimportant role performed by farm women that reinforced their traditional roles as farmers' wives. In these cases it was seen as natural that females would run direct marketing enterprises, this view is typified in the following quote by Mathew: "Well this is it, women basically are traditionally cheap labour and the wife is the first one there isn't she? So she gets collared first."

Gillian and Callum have a caravan site on their farm and they also directly sell some of their meat through farm-gate sales and farmers' markets. Gillian runs the caravan site and does most of the direct selling. Callum reluctantly helps with the direct selling when necessary although he does not enjoy talking to the customers:

> *Callum: "She likes meeting people, I'm not bothered. You know people come here and I'd rather send Janet. I mean because some of the people they come here for half a pound of sausages and want to talk for half an hour..."*
>
> *Gillian: "Sometimes you think oh god it's that man coming in again, but you just think well I've got to go out and serve him. There's one old chap and he always wants to tell you all about his illnesses and I feel..."*
>
> *Callum: "You just say, "How are you?" and he'll say, "Oh I've just come out of hospital and my bowel..." He goes into all these gory details. I was out there for an hour listening. I mean farmers' markets aren't so bad because you know you start talking to somebody and you have to say, "Excuse me I've got to go and serve another customer"."*
>
> *Gillian and Callum, farm 9*

Callum does not perceive direct selling as real work indeed he actually constructs it in opposition to work saying that: "The [male]farmers say "Well, I've got to stay here and do the work, you [farmer's wife] go and do the farmers' market"". However, Emma, who does two farmers' markets a week providing the farm with their only source of cash income, describes selling at farmers' markets in the winter as physically hard, describing it as being "...like torture. You can't even move your hands and you've got to cut the cheese and wrap it up and take money. You can't even take money your hands are so cold." However, her husband, Paul, does not regard it as being work comparable to his own on the farm:

"...he's never been to a farmers' market. He thinks it is my day out. I come home absolutely knackered, freezing cold, soaking wet and really fed up and he's had a bad day, it's always the same. I mean last time we were at Cirencester market two weeks ago it was really windy and I was absolutely shattered because apart from having to try and sell in a high wind we had to stand on the tarpaulins that were over our stalls to stop them blowing off. There was nothing to weigh them down with that were heavy enough apart from ourselves so you were kind of standing half a mile from your stall holding this sheet down trying to cut cheese at the same time. I came home absolutely shattered and then Paul says, "Oh I've had a bloody awful day" you know and you think "Oh tell me about it".

Emma, farm 27

Involvement in a direct selling enterprise is viewed by the 'traditional transposed' farmers as an extension of farmers' wives traditional roles and as such it is not accorded high status. Therefore, despite estimating that half of the cheese makers in Gloucestershire are male, Emma describes cheesemaking as a "girl's job":

"Well it's always been sort of food provision really hasn't it and I suppose, I don't know really, I think it is just a domestic type of chore really isn't it. It involves a lot of washing up and things like that. I mean there are a lot of male cheesemakers but I think certainly historically it would've mostly been the women that would have done it. It's a sort of girls' job isn't it?"

Emma, farm 27

Callum, who despite recognising the importance of "...doing something like [holiday lets] on the farm" in order to survive, went on to depict diversification as a way of a farmer's wife keeping herself occupied without getting dirty rather than a way of making a contribution to the farm business:

"I think you've got a family farm situation and perhaps the wife has got no qualifications so therefore she perhaps says to herself, "I want to do something on the Farm, I don't want to go out and get dirty so let me see if I can make some sausages to sell or whatever, make some cheese or butter...It's probably going back to like years ago when the farmer's wife used to, because you've got it with WI you see, so she makes cakes. And they used to go to market ..... So it's sort of going back you see to how it used to be."

Callum, farm 9

Connecting diversification schemes to historical gendered roles can be seen as being a way of coming to terms with farm women gaining more power within the farm business through their diversification businesses. By constructing the developments as 'going back to how it used to be' any emancipatory elements are subdued.

However, the traditional division of labour within the diversified enterprises is not necessarily taken as given. For example, in the cases of both Natalie and Emma responsibility for the diversification was initially shared with their husbands. However, as the schemes developed the responsibility shifted over to the women, leaving their husbands solely responsible for the farm work. Natalie was self-reflexive about this process, revealing that she did not assume the traditional marketing role within their horticultural business unquestioningly:

> *"I mean it is interesting because when we started off we worked together and we both did everything although I tended to organise, no actually we did it together we did everything together. But because there are only two of us we've come down to economies of scale really. So we ended up. He looks after the plants, brings the plants on and looks after them all year whereas for me once the selling season starts, you know we stop selling at the end of March and start again at the end of June so that three months you know I'm doing marketing and thinking about the next year but also working with him. It's lovely that time of year I can sow and pot-on, but then once July comes there is so much to do with selling that I tend to do that. So I'm really just harvesting and selling from July until early March. I do the farmers' markets and I pack for the box scheme and deliver."*
>
> *Natalie, farm 33*

Although Natalie indicates that she prefers the hands-on farm work she has taken responsibility for their direct marketing including a box scheme and selling at farmers' markets which together take up the majority of her working time. She believes that this has happened:

> *"... partly because I am quite methodical at organisation anyway and I'm the one who has the computer skills and partly because Ian's preference is bringing the plants on you know he is not...he doesn't even really like harvesting, although I make him do it."*
>
> *Natalie, farm 33*

Summary of sub-section 6.3.2

This sub-section has described the 'traditional transposed' farmers approach to the division of labour within diversified enterprises. It has shown that the farm women take responsibility for the enterprises and how, despite the important contribution they can make to farm income, the roles are not accorded high status. The following sub-section will discuss the 'traditional transposed' farmers' opinions on gender roles within organic farming generally.

6.3.3 Gender roles in the organic farming community

The 'traditional transposed' participants did not believe that organic farming was any different in the way practitioners approach gender roles and relations to any other type of farming. This is illustrated by Ben and Tracey's amused reaction to the IFOAM claim that women have "equal rights and respect" within the organic movement, they were both laughing throughout the following exchange:

> *Ben: "No I don't think it makes any difference to be honest, do you?"*
>
> *Tracey: "No not really"*
>
> *Ben: "No I don't think so. No, can't see any difference."*
>
> *Ben and Tracey, farm 20*

The idea that organic farming would necessarily be any different to conventional farming clearly did not make sense to Ben and Tracey. The same attitude, that organic farming is not *fundamentally* distinct from other farming with respect to the division of labour and specifically the involvement of women, was repeated throughout the interviews with traditional transposed farmers. However, it *was* perceived that proportionally more women were involved in organic farming than conventional farming although these differences were attributed to structural factors, particularly scale, the prevailing economic situation and the nature of diversified enterprises (all of which could apply equally well to conventional farms), rather than to any fundamental differences in mind-set.

The structural factor most commonly used as an explanation for the greater involvement of women was the scale of organic farms, with the perception prevailing that organic farms tend to be smaller than conventional farms and that women are generally more likely to be involved on smaller farms. Charles explained that the organic farms that he was aware of were large, and therefore more akin to normal farms, and therefore on the farms he knew women would not be involved in the farm work:

> *"I think the thing you've got to remember in this particular area, and this actually came up the other evening when I went to a meeting purely for organic farmers, is that the point was made very clearly that the organic farmers around here are a lot larger than the average. You are not talking about farms that are fifty or sixty acres. All the people who were there, and I think there were ten or eleven of us, all were looking at farms that are four or five hundred acres up to maybe fifteen or sixteen hundred. So the farming principle, the basis of who you employ and how it is done is much more in accordance with any normal farm. I mean I'm not taking away from any girls I mean they are just as capable of doing it as anyone else but I think that the farms that I'm talking about have converted over the years from a conventional farm to an organic farm and they just carried on with what they've got. They've got sheep flocks, dairy herds whatever, and it's just a matter of getting on with it really."*
>
> *Charles, farm 11*

Clearly, although he states that women are equally capable as men, Charles takes it as a given that they would not be involved on larger farms. He went on to explain that in his opinion women are more involved on smaller farms where there would be a whole system approach:

> *"I think the girls seem to be more involved in the slightly smaller units where they are just dealing with a complete system whereas on the bigger units the blokes are doing it all...that's what I think and I'll stick to it."*
>
> *Charles, farm 11*

It was argued that within agriculture generally women are more likely to be involved on smaller farms where they have livestock, as opposed to large arable farms where they don't. On farms with livestock there are jobs that require extra help, As Daniel states "[women working on large arable farms] just doesn't happen". Emma talked about a large conventional arable and poultry farm that she is aware of, explaining that she didn't think

that the women were involved in the farm work. The dialogue reveals that Emma assumes that where women are involved in farming it is with (small-scale) livestock:

> *"I mean we've got a big farm up the road and I mean it is very industrial sort of large scale arable and chicken farming and they, the men do the work and the women just sort of, we call them the Stepford wives, because they all look the same and they are ladies who lunch, its like another life really. If you go to a different type of farming area you probably get a lot more people like that. I don't imagine they get their hands dirty, I don't think they would know what to do but then they don't have livestock anyway really in places like that, apart from the chickens and they don't regard them as being alive they treat them like shit."*
>
> *Emma, farm 27*

Women are required to help on small farms with livestock as there are "...always jobs on occasions that require extra help and you tend to rope everybody in for things like TB testing and stuff like that..." (Emma, interview 29). George explained that his wife works from home part-time which was good because "it's the sort of thing that she can drop if we need to get the cows rounded up for something or get the sheep in or whatever." Also, often women keep a few animals themselves, "Because ladies love animals don't they? And they like female animals. It's an extension of the pet you know..." (Daniel, interview 17). However, this explanation does not account for why they did not think women would be involved in large-scale livestock farming or large-scale organic farming in general where it is very likely that there will be livestock (although stockless systems are in development).

Another reason provided for the perceived higher involvement of women in organic farming was that organic farms are more likely to be diversified and, as explained by Mathew, it is the women who have to run the diversification schemes:

"Well this is it, women basically are traditionally cheap labour and the wife is the first one there isn't she? So she gets collared first. So if she's sensible she will work it out that she can adopt a fairly management role so that her time will be more valued and you know hopefully more productive. And then I suppose if you go into poultry that's basically women anyway because women are cheaper, that's the way of the world. Well they have been until now. And I suppose for women you can also read students and now it will be asylum seekers, the ones who come over for the summer and all that. You're talking horticulture there rather than organic farming...."

Mathew, farm 18

Mathew sees it as inevitable that women would take on the extra labour created by diversification and sees it as a way of women potentially being more highly valued for their labour input and of being more productive, presumably in contrast to their more traditional on-farm roles which are less valued and less productive. Interestingly he also appears to view it as natural, "...that's the way of the world", that women have been paid less for their labour than men, conflating their value with that of students and "asylum seekers" who, it follows, are also (naturally) paid less than men.

The impression that women can be involved in the management of diversification enterprises was confirmed by the experiences of Rik, the farm manager of a 625 hectare organic estate. The couple who employ Rik are both involved in the daily running of the farm, the husband in the farm work and the wife in the management of the highly successful farm shop, café and conference facilities. The initial impetus to convert to organic came from the woman and she has a "very active role" in the overall planning for the direction of the farm. Rik confirms that he is aware of similar situations on other organic farms and in his experience a different situation exists in conventional farming which he describes as "...very much male":

"I certainly know more women that have got an active role in organic farming than I know in conventional farming. It would tend to be I suppose.... more what I would call management type positions in terms of its either that it's a husband and wife team and the wife has quite a lot of input or it could be that a wife or a woman is taking that role and is saying well this is what...takes the kind of direction[....]but from what I see on our farm then obviously Emily has a very big role there and there are a number of other people [women] that I could think of within organic farming that have got similar sorts of things about having their view as opposed to...the target sort of bit."

Rik, farm 13

Summary of sub-section 6.3.3

This sub-section has shown that the 'traditional transposed' farmers did not view organic farming in general as necessarily being different to conventional farming regarding the division of labour. Despite this they did consider that women were more likely to take an active role on organic farms. However, this perceived phenomenon was attributed to factors not directly related to organic farming itself, such as the size and type of farms.

6.3.4 Summary of section 6.3

Section 6.3 has presented interview material for the farm households that comprise the 'traditional transposed' category for the approach taken to division of labour. It has shown that these farms are indistinguishable from a 'typical' conventional farm in terms of the gender roles adopted both on-farm and within diversification enterprises. Furthermore, it has also demonstrated that the farmers do not consider organic farms in general to be any different to equivalent conventional farms in terms of the gender division of labour and status of farm women.

6.4 'Traditional transformed'

This section will discuss the division of labour on the farms within the category 'traditional transformed'. Eleven of the farm households comprise the 'traditional transformed' category for division of labour. Ten of the twelve participants in these interviews were either married or living as married while one participant was living with

her parents and another was divorced and lived with her children and extended family. In four of the eleven households at least one of the members was from a farming background. In the other seven households neither member of each couple came from a farming background. Of these new entrants to farming three had gone straight into organically certified farming, although the other four claim that they always used organic methods to some extent.

On six of the farms the primary farmer was a female while on the other five, although the primary farmer was sometimes male, the division of roles deviated, to varying extents, from the previous category. In all of the households the gender roles adopted deviated to an extent from the traditional model, however they had in common with the previous category that the roles assumed by the men and women were for the most part fixed rather than being interchangeable and flexible. Further to this, certain aspects of the division of labour remained traditional - with the more strongly gendered roles remaining as for 'traditional transposed' households. Typically, for example, while there was a degree of cross-over in roles that are more weakly gendered in the traditional model such as paperwork or checking stock, the division of labour for more strongly gendered roles such as childcare or fencing remained split along traditional gender lines.

6.4.1 On-farm gender roles

Two main variations in the gender division of labour were identified within the 'traditional transformed' category: farms where the day-to-day work was shared between men and women; and farms where the day-to-day work was conducted primarily by a woman. These features of these two arrangements are discussed below.

Men and women sharing daily tasks

Six of the 'transformed' farms - those of Boyd and Morwenna, Victoria, Nick, Ian and Melanie, Rowan and Hans - are run full-time by both men and women. Boyd and Morwenna, Victoria, Nick, Ian and Melanie live and work on family farms, while the land farmed by Hans and Rowan is situated within Camphill Communities[11]. On these six farms the day-to-day roles were performed by both men and women and responsibility for

specific areas of work fell to a particular person. For example, Ian explained how he and his daughter divide the productive work on their dairy farm: "I generally run the farm, she milks the cows and does the stockmanship....We sort of run it between us really. She works on the stock virtually all the time." Victoria also works alongside her father on her parent's farm and works mainly with livestock. Over the seven years that she has worked on the farm Victoria has built up a new pig enterprise and produces sausages and faggots which she sells at farmers' markets. She also has responsibility for the sheep as well as assisting her father and their full-time employee, Graham, in other areas of work:

> *"[I do the] pigs and sheep basically. I mean when we do anything with the cattle, in the way of de-horning or I don't know, anything, numbering them, castrating, anything like that then I'm there. But normally Dad does the cattle and Graham does the cattle and then sheep is my problem. Graham helps me with my foot trimming and things like that, Dad and I just don't work brilliantly together so I try to do, if I have to do something that needs a second person I usually take Graham."*
>
> *Victoria, farm 4*

Nick and his wife, Harriet, have a small dairy farm which they "run together". The division of labour on the farm is, as Nick himself recognises, in some respects a reversal of traditional roles in that Nick does the book keeping, and calf rearing while his wife, Harriet, does most of the work with the stock:

[8]Camphill is the name given to the movement of therapeutic communities founded in 1940 by Karl Konig, a Viennese paediatrician. A Camphill Community is created by a group of people who live together according to Christian ideals, deriving inspiration from anthroposophy as developed by Rudolf Steiner. The communities include people with special needs, co-workers (volunteers) and salaried families who live and work together in extended family settings. The communities can include biodynamic gardens and farms. There are over ninety communities in twenty countries, 47 of which are in the UK and Republic of Ireland (Camphill 2005)

"I do all of the book keeping; we're probably totally back-to-front to most farms. Most farms the wife does all the book keeping, and rears the calves and the farmer tends to do the milking and all that but we're totally the other way round. Because I was born with a shop I've always been used to working with figures and I've always been quite good at math's and the wife's never been the slightest bit interested so I do all the books, the VAT, and I do all the, because of course there's a lot of bookkeeping for the organic as well. And well every aspect of farming now there's just so much paperwork with all the passports, any sort of subsidy payments, there's reams of forms, so I tend to do all that, because that's what I'm good at...and I tend to do most of the tractor driving but my wife does a lot with the animals, especially with the cows now."

Nick, farm 5

In the following exchange between Boyd and Morwenna they discus how they negotiate three different roles on their farm, all of which are traditionally gendered as female, revealing the extent to which roles are shared between the couple:

Boyd: "I do the books because..."

Morwenna: "He does the books..."

Boyd: "Simply because you know, one of the last jobs I was doing was financial risk assessment on power stations. So what I did was to bring back the computer model that I was using, crossed out all the m's for millions and simply used the same model for keeping the books."

Morwenna: "I manage the stocking of the shop, and the ordering, and most of the shop work. And I do the day-to-day recording of sales. But Dave does all the paperwork otherwise which he's very good at....And I suppose that we share looking after the holiday cottage, don't we?"

Boyd: "Yes"

Morwenna: "He'll put a Hoover round you know..."

Boyd and Morwenna, farm 6

Women performing daily tasks alone

Five of the farms varied from the traditional model in that responsibility for the day-to-day work fell predominantly to a woman - Trudy, Elaine, Joan, Doreen and Megan. For Trudy, Elaine and Doreen their farms were essentially 'hobby' farms, all of them less than 20

hectares, with no expectation that a profit would be generated and rather the intention being that the farm would 'pay for itself' as explained by Elaine: "Our sole aim is that the farm provides us with our meat and is self-sufficient we are not asking it to make money but we'd prefer it if we didn't loose any". These women were able to farm organically due to the financial support of their male partners and, in the case of Elaine and Trudy, their own part-time off-farm work. In all three cases the majority of day-to-day work was carried out by the women while their partners helped in the evenings and at weekends. Doreen also had part-time help during the week:

> *"I have a man who comes two days a week who was previously a cow man which is marvellous because between us we look after the cattle, he could, I didn't know anything, he educated me as far as the cattle were concerned. He is excellent about fencing, he is a good odd-job man and he is a magnificent tractor driver. So with him two days a week, my husband at the weekends, really we turned this place round in about five years."*
>
> *Doreen, farm 2*

The women, none of whom are from a farming background, set out purposely to farm using organic methods due to personal conviction and as such it is due to organic farming that the non-traditional agricultural labour pattern occurred. The two other farms run by women were those of Joan and Megan. Joan came to do the majority of the farm work by default rather than design when her husband was forced to work off-farm full-time as a kitchen porter in a local hotel due to the financial pressures of a low milk price when they were still farming using conventional methods:

> *"It has only been since the prices have got so bad that my husband has worked off the farm, and then the children were small so I decided to stay on the farm. And I've always liked milking and doing the cows and so he went, well he was offered a part-time job first of all and then that became a full-time job.*
>
> *Joan, farm 8*

In the case of Megan, however, the choice to be the primary farmer was her own, and her partner, who helps at weekends, runs an IT consultancy based at the farm. The pattern of work on Elaine's farm is characteristic of all six of the transposed farms run by women. Elaine admits that her husband "wouldn't ever have got a smallholding" had he been on

his own and as such it is very much her project. However, although Elaine performs all of the day-to-day roles while her husband works off-farm full-time, she does not partake in any of the periodic, more masculine tasks such as fencing and tractor work, all of which are performed by her husband, Richard, as she explains below:

> *"Anything to do with the animals within reason I will do it but if it was something like shearing sheep Richard would do that because I can't physically hold the sheep. The more physical work he does, I can't drive a tractor. The haymaking we've just done and Richard has done just about all of it. So anything like that he would do, any fence mending, new fencing that would be all him. But when it comes to going out and feeding the animals, deciding how we're having a cow inseminated then I would tend to do that. The more regular, routine stuff I would do. But saying that Richard will help me lamb and he might put the hens in at night. But in general it would be expected that I would do that unless I couldn't... I never, ever drive a tractor. I can't, he once tried to show me I mean I...and he would prefer me not to because he thinks it's heavy because it's an old Fergy tractor. So he would do all that."*
>
> *Elaine, farm 31*

The division of labour adopted by Elaine and her husband is echoed by Megan when she talks about the roles adopted by herself and her partner:

> *"Here what happens is that because of what Paul does, because he does his business then I do more day-to-day stuff, you know. I feed and bed the animals, but he still does the majority with the tractor. I do things like driving to the keep and checking the stock. Anything that needs to be done on a daily basis, things to do with the vet, things to do with medication, admin, grant applications, selling the animals, arranging transport all that stuff I do and I look after them. He does things that you might call capital because on the weekend he will go out and re-fence the farm, then he'll take two weeks off in the summer and put up a barn. So he does major projects and structural things, which I support him in doing. But in the daily routine of things I do more than he does. Tractor work, I mean fieldwork, we've got contractors, and he does the rest."*
>
> *Megan, farm 7*

As is the case with Elaine, Megan does not perform roles strongly gendered as masculine such as tractor work and what she calls "capital" work although she is responsible for performing all of the daily physical tasks with the livestock. All of the women also remained responsible for the housework; indeed Megan was clearing up after breakfast

and cooking lunch during the course of her interview. Elaine said "I would tend to do the housework. I mean he might iron the odd shirt but in the main he wouldn't be involved in it."

As has been demonstrated above, households within this category are differentiated from 'traditional transposed' households by men and women adopting the weakly to moderately gendered roles that within the traditional model would be performed by members of the opposite sex. However, the identifying factor that prevents the households from being 'transcended' is that men and women within the households *do not* adopt the strongly gendered roles of the opposite sex. Specifically the tasks identified in which there is no crossover between men and women are the reproductive roles within the home such as responsibility for childcare and for housework and productive roles involving heavy machinery or practical skills such as repairing fences or erecting farm buildings.

Thus the lack of engagement with strongly masculine roles is characteristic of women within this category. Hence the unwillingness to work with tractors displayed in previous quotes by Elaine and Megan was echoed by other women. Melanie, for example, said that "Dad's better at the tractor stuff, and if it breaks he can fix it whereas I just sort of stand there and hit it or something. I'm not really interested in mechanical things..." Although a number of the women concede to sometimes working with machinery they do not do so with much enthusiasm or confidence, and instead chose to defer to their male partners, as illustrated by the following quotes:

> *Boyd: "Morwenna drives the quad bike that we have."*
>
> *Morwenna: "I'm not very mechanical though I have to say I'm not very mechanical."*
>
> *Boyd and Morwenna, farm 6*
>
> *"Well I can go up and down with the plough but [my husband] tends to do the heavier stuff. I mean it's a joint effort but he's much more practical with things like that."*
>
> *Trudy, farm 23*

Trudy informed me that she is able to drive their tractor once the plough is attached but she is not able to attach the plough to the tractor. This potential obstacle to women independently operating tractors was recognised by Rowan:

> *"I have found that as such although the men would perhaps tend to come into roles that require more physical strength in that sense, the tractor driving not so much that it is the skill of driving itself which I think generally the skills would be equal there. But its more of course once you start driving the tractor you have to lift up implements or get things moving around it is much more physical in that sense."*
>
> *Rowan, farm 24*

Lack of strength was not just revealed as an issue on the larger farms where tractors were employed for field operations. Other types of machinery associated with smaller-scale units, such as rotovators, were also quoted by women as the reason why they were unable to perform certain roles:

> *"I was thinking about the vegetable growing which really, that's my favourite really, but...for example Boyd does the rotovating because I find it too heavy, I literally can't do that. So for physical reasons we tend to go into different roles on the veg."*
>
> *Morwenna, farm 6*

> *"[My husband] does a lot of the heavy work, he does the rotovating and stuff like that. I mean I can do things with the tractor because that is easier than things like rotovating I find that sort of thing too physical I am just not strong enough. Well partly the problem is that all of our equipment is very old, including the rotovator, so it's this big huge heavy thing, if it was a nice light modern one I might be able to manage. But that's future plans..."*
>
> *Trudy, farm 23*

Trudy indicates that if their machinery was more modern, and therefore lighter, she would undertake more of the mechanical roles which at present she is unable to perform. Elaine, as already quoted above, also used the age of her "old Fergy tractor" as an explanatory factor for her not undertaking tractor work.

Summary of sub-section 6.4.1

This sub-section has shown how the households comprising the 'traditional transformed' category negotiate their roles and how they differ from the traditional model. Two types of farm were identified: farms where the day-to-day labour is provided by men and women; and farms where the day-to-day labour is provided predominantly by a woman. On the farms where there is a daily presence of men and women the gender roles are flexible, with a degree of interchange occurring between weakly and moderately gendered roles. On the farms run predominantly by women, they perform the daily tasks but the more masculine roles are performed by their partners or employees. The following section will show how the farm households approached gender roles within diversified enterprises.

6.4.2 Gender roles within diversification enterprises

Six of the 'traditional transformed' farms had diversified into alternative enterprises: one into residential lettings; four into direct sales; and two into a combination of enterprises including food processing. However, two of these farms will not be discussed here due to the low level and sporadic input of labour into their respective diversification activities. These two farms include the long-term residential let on Megan's farm and the direct sales from Nick's farm. Nick and his wife Harriet had started a trial of selling a very small number of animals to friends and family direct from their deep freeze during the year in which the interview was held.

The primary responsibility for the four diversification enterprises considered here largely fell to the women within the farm households, although there was a degree of overlap. Victoria, however, as a single person was solely responsible for the processing and selling of the meat products from her pigs:

> *"Everything I do from the rearing to...not the killing, that's the only thing we don't do. But the butcher comes, we kill them on a Monday, I collect them on a Tuesday, my butcher comes on a Wednesday, he does all the joints, I make the sausages, bacon, faggots. And then we smoke the bacon. And so they're all, you know the different stages we do here. And I do enjoy it as a job when I think like that but. But reality is, four o' clock in the morning, making your faggots, before your market, when you finished at midnight."*
>
> *Victoria, farm 4*

However, two of the women who did have partners also did most of the work involved within their diversification enterprises. Trudy explained that her husband did not like being involved with their farm shop:

> *"My husband isn't keen on the shop. He'd rather, if we could, just deal with the wholesaler...so we haven't really made a big push on it. So it is just there and you know we don't...but I quite enjoy it because when I am here on my own I quite like having people coming round."*
>
> *Trudy, farm 23*

Therefore, Trudy takes responsibility for the running of the farm shop. This is also true of Morwenna who explained: "I manage the stocking of the shop, and the ordering, and most of the shop work. And I do the day-to-day recording of sales." However, Morwenna and her husband apparently share the work with the holiday cottage, with Boyd being happy to "put a Hoover round".

Elaine sells a small amount of meat direct from her farm gate to customers, mostly comprising her friends and family. However, she explained that because of her vegetarianism her husband deals with the process of selling the meat:

> *"Well because I'm vegetarian he will deal with everything. I decide that we are sending so many sheep and I would probably ring the abattoir and book them in and that would be as far as I'd go. He would take them down, he would get the meat back, he would split the meat and then he would sort out selling it."*
>
> *Elaine, farm 31*

Therefore, in common with the 'traditional transposed' households the division of labour within the diversification enterprises tended to be fairly traditional.

Summary of sub-section 6.4.2

This sub-section has discussed the small number of farmers within the 'traditional transformed' category who had chosen to diversify into the direct sales of farm produce. Direct selling is an area of farm work that traditionally has been undertaken by women. The farmers showed that they tended to adopt traditional role patterns, as it was predominantly the women who ran the direct sales. The following sub-section will discuss how the farmers viewed gender roles within organic farming more widely.

6.4.3 Gender roles in the organic farming community

The 'traditional transformed' farmers expressed views that organic farming was different to conventional farming in terms of the gender division of labour. The following two quotes stating this opinion were typical:

> *"I think from what I experienced it can be different in organic or bio-dynamic farming, I think men and women are much more involved at a more equal level....I would say in our setting it's very important that there is men and women working together. But I've also noticed on other farms and gardens that are worked biodynamically and organically that there is much more an ideal of working together and not having that particularly split up role."*
>
> *Hans, farm 16*

> *"It was considerably different to conventional farms, certainly in the farms that I was dealing with you often found that the women were involved whereas on the non-organic farms that would be rare. That would be rare. The women were definitely more involved."*
>
> *Elaine, farm 31*

In explanation for this perceived difference in the approach to gender roles between conventional and organic farms, the 'traditional transformed' farmers focused upon particular features of organic farming and the sorts of people attracted to it. Two particular aspects of organic farming were suggested as making a difference to gender roles. The

first of these is the perception that organic farming is more labour intensive and therefore women are more likely to be involved within the productive farm work.

> *"It is more labour intensive and I guess women work harder sometimes...I don't know. You know I think men prefer a machine, if there's something that can be done with a machine then they do it. I maybe...and their families and...I really don't know but that's the impression I would get. It might be a terrible thing to say, really chauvinistic..."*
>
> *Victoria, farm 4*

A second reason cited for the perceived higher profile role of women in organic farming was the association of organic farming with diversification, in particular those involving direct selling or food processing:

> *"I would think that probably organic in its nature would lead quite naturally to diversification and maybe on-farm processing and that quite a few women who weren't involved in daily, like you know mucking out and feeding, would perhaps be involved in the production of finished goods from the farm. So you see quite a lot of dairying where women end up making yogurt and cheese, ice cream, things like that, quite a lot of processing. Then you also see things where it has even become a bit more than making yogurt on the farm. Women have kind of taken it on and made like production units, possibly moved off the farm and got inspired by what they did on the farm."*
>
> *Megan, farm 7*

However, it was also suggested that the particular philosophical approach of the type of people attracted to organic farming may explain a less traditional approach to gender roles:

> *"I think its possibly you know the fact that of course people who come to organics generally are people with ideals, if you like, and sort of more progressive minds I suppose who do that. It would be an ideal that would be carried by, if you like in the traditional sense, by a couple or by people who come together and want to do these kinds of thing. They all have an equal share in the ideas and therefore they also I think share the work in a much more equal... you know much more equally in a sense. And I think that really is at the heart of the thing."*
>
> *Rowan, farm 24*

This more "equal" approach to gender roles was related by Elaine to organic farmers' concern for the environment:

> *"I think organic farming would be different. I think in general organic farming could be different because often they appeal to people who tend to have a much more, I don't know what the word is, but non-traditional outlook on life on the way the woman and the man and all this sort of thing....I also think that people that tend to have that view of the environment and the importance of it tend to not have such a stereotyped view of the male and female role. And so the two together mean that there's not this feeling that well you know, "you go and feed the pigs because I'm cooking tea". So that's what I think."*
>
> *Elaine, farm 31*

Another reason was given by Boyd who suggested that organic farmers who are newcomers to agriculture are likely to have had different work experiences prior to entering farming and therefore do not automatically approach tasks in a particular (traditional) way:

> *"And I think that's probably the difference isn't it? That, particularly organic farmers and growers have tended to adopt that work because they feel committed to it. Whereas what you might call a conventional farmer he, he or she, mostly he, grew up on a farm carried on doing it either like his Dad had done it... Whereas a lot of us from the outside have had training and experiences in different things and we therefore think about what we are doing really rather than doing it automatically."*
>
> *Boyd, farm 6*

The view that the approach in conventional farming was different to within organic farming had been reinforced to Elaine by the response of the local conventional farmers to her:

> *"I think they think I'm completely mental for two reasons: one, we farm organically, and two, I do it. Because usually it's me ringing up and saying, "Look can you come round?" But they've been great I couldn't have asked for more help. I don't think I would have been considered so odd if I had been a man."*
>
> *Elaine, farm 31*

However, this view was not confined to the farming community, but also to the general public, as described by Melanie:

> *"When I go out for an evening to Cheltenham and people ask what I do, when I say I'm a farmer they are like "what?" and look at me strangely like I've just dropped from another planet or something. I just make a joke out of it."*
>
> *Melanie, farm 21*

The two biodynamic farmers within the 'traditional transformed' category argued that biodynamic farming was more progressive than organic farming more generally in terms of the approach to division of labour. This was based on the assumption that conventional farmers can adopt organic farming techniques without actually adopting the organic ideology. This was contrasted to those who choose biodynamic farming who, it was argued, are necessarily idealistically motivated, and therefore take a different approach to gender roles:

> *"I can honestly say that my experience with biodynamic that there is that little bit more emancipation compared to organic...a lot of conventional farmers change over to organic and they just change their methods but they don't change their motives. And you know somebody who chooses for biodynamic agriculture does that out of an idealism or motivation."*
>
> *Hans, farm 16*

> *"I think for me the basic difference between organic and biodynamic is that people who choose organic choose it as a working method and people who choose biodynamic choose it as a way of living. I think for me, I have come across that over and over again because it is a more principled choice to choose biodynamics. And I think that is the difference between the two from what I experienced on the practical level of who's doing what on the farm. I think you could still do organic farming in a more or less traditional type of setting; traditional as in traditional roles...but I do feel that biodynamics is really still something quite different from organics."*
>
> *Rowan, farm 24*

However, despite these assertions by both Hans and Rowan, the discussion of on-farm roles with them did not suggest that their approach to gender roles within their communities was different to the other farms within this category. Indeed, due to the structured nature of daily life within the Camphill Communities, certain gender roles were

reinforced. This is illustrated by the following quote in which Hans is explaining why the women take responsibility for running the houses within the community:

> *"I mean in a way the roles are a little bit traditional which is that mostly, in most families, the main responsibility of the house rests with the lady of the house on the practical level. So in the morning most of them have got some cooks but if they don't then the women are cooking, not always, but it is a bit sort of, well, traditional. But that is also because a lot of the men are running workshops like the wood workshop so they can't be in the house all the time. So its also a practicality, you know someone has to be in the house in the morning when [my wife] is cooking and someone is cleaning you know you need to have a bit of monitoring going on."*
>
> *Hans, interview 17*

Summary of sub-section 6.4.3

This sub-section has shown that the 'traditional transformed' farmers, in contrast to the 'traditional transposed' farmers, felt that there *was* a different approach to gender roles within organic farming generally, compared to their experience or perception of the conventional farming community. It was suggested that this was partly due to the type of people attracted to farming organically who, it was asserted, were more likely to be idealistic about their approach to organic farming because of their different social backgrounds. It was felt that this idealism would carry over into their more liberal approach to gender roles.

6.4.4 Summary of section 6.4

Section 6.4 has presented interview material for the farm households that comprise the 'traditional transformed' category for their approach to the division of labour. These households demonstrated a more flexible approach to gender roles, with men and women adopting roles traditionally associated with the opposite sex. However, strongly gendered roles were not readily interchangeable, including roles created by diversified enterprises. The farmers felt that organic farming was different to conventional farming in this respect, in part due to the type of people who they considered tended to be attracted to it.

6.5 'Traditional transcended'

This section will describe the division of labour on the farms within the 'traditional transcended' category. Five of the farm households make up the 'traditional transcended' category. Out of the five participants only Julie lives alone. Val lives with her husband; Hannah and Mark are married and live with Hannah's son from her previous marriage and their five year old son; Sally is living with her partner and her three year old son; and Deidre is married with one son. Only Deidre and Val come from farming families, although Sally had spent a number of years doing farm labouring work before she and her partner acquired their own land and Hannah has had a long-standing career as an agronomist.

On four of the farms the primary farmer was a female and the fifth was a joint enterprise. On these farms a traditional gender division of labour was not evident. Reasons for the particular divisions of labour were cited specifically and as such the participants did not consider that there are 'natural' roles (for men and women). However, the different situations with regard to the progressive division of labour did not necessarily occur by design and were more often circumstantial. The participants certainly did not directly attribute the way the labour was divided up to their own feelings about the politics of gender roles. Indeed one of the participants in this category actually gave voice to her anti-feminist opinions.

Although the way in which the labour is performed on each of the holdings is different and they do not fit into a consistent pattern, making the 'traditional transcended' type more heterogeneous than the previous two types, they are similar in that the participants have overcome prescribed agricultural gender roles and instead chosen a division of labour to suit their own circumstances. However, what binds them together is that they have transcended the divide that exists between men and women within the confines of traditional gender roles. The reasons for the division of labour in the five households varied considerably. Therefore, in a change of format from the previous two categories, the first sub-section will consider the specific situation each individual farmer before proceeding to a more general discussion of gender roles in the following sub-section. The

sub-section on gender roles will consider on-farm roles in combination with roles within diversification enterprises due to the small number of cases.

6.5.1 Individual situations leading to the adoption of non-traditional gender roles

Each of the five 'traditional transcended' households had unique reasons for their adoption of non-traditional gender roles. Therefore, each farmer and their household will be discussed individually within this sub-section in order to explain their circumstances.

Sally

Sally and her partner took on their land when they discovered that Sally was pregnant. Prior to the pregnancy they had not had a fixed address and they felt that they should settle down in one place:

> *"Yes I mean that was a big impetus for us to stop and start doing something for ourselves because it was just like well we're going to have to stay in one area because we're going to have to start thinking about schools and things. And it was just something I thought I could combine with looking after a child, it was better than being a housewife you know just sitting around it would have driven me up the wall."*
>
> *Sally, farm 28*

Sally hoped that she would be able to combine caring for her child with working on their land because she specifically did not want to become a housewife. However, as she admits, "we had some really silly expectations of what having our first child would be like and so we thought you know it will be all right and then it ended up with [my partner] doing a lot of the work because I was looking after [my son]". However, once her son was one year old Sally overcame what she perceived as an unsatisfactory division of labour by finding full-time childcare. Therefore Sally actively overcame the impediment to her performing productive roles on the farm.

Hannah and Mark

Mark stated that he and Hannah "...blow [traditional agricultural gender roles] out of the water", however he also asserted that it has "...nothing to do with the organic farm, it is to

do with the generation we are from and also what we do in terms of employment". Hannah has a professional background advising farmers and she is clearly in charge of the farm. The following quote illustrates the reversal of traditional roles that exists on their farm whereby Hannah provides the management input and Mark 'helps out', and cares for their son:

> *Hannah: "Yes we've got different backgrounds I mean my background is agriculture so I would have a bigger input on the management. I would do all of it on the management side of things, in terms of planning crop rotations and whatever...he [Mark] is a bit of sort of cheap labour..."*
>
> *Mark: "I provide the muscle work and the childcare that's what I do. You see I look after the child, which is fine by me."*
>
> *Hannah and Mark, farm 26*

Hannah's light-hearted referral towards Mark as her "cheap labour" is an amusing reversal of the traditional farming roles found to exist on many farms and of the (more seriously voiced) views of some other participants. Although her reference was light-hearted it certainly is the case that Mark assumed many of the roles traditionally associated with farmers' wives because his local job as a school teacher meant that he was at home more than Hannah. Hannah held strong opinions on gender equality and was openly critical of friends who, as she saw it had "... flopped back into this women childcare, housework thing." Therefore, although they stated that the division of labour was simply a factor of their jobs, it is clear that Hannah would never assume a traditional farm woman role while Mark takes a more liberal approach to his gender roles than someone confined by traditional agricultural gender roles. Therefore, their jobs and the consequent division of labour is a factor of their respective opinions on acceptable gender roles.

Deidre

Deidre describes herself as "chairman" (sic) of her large farm and two national meat marketing businesses. However, she acknowledges that if her older step brother had not died aged twenty-three then her situation would be rather different today. She also recognises that she was lucky that she had a supportive father who was willing to grant her responsibility for the farm when she was just twenty-four years old:

"Yes he was, really supportive my mother was really against it but my father was really supportive. As I say he gave me a huge opportunity unlike most fathers of daughters or sons who seem to want to sort of hang on to the reins until the kids forty or fifty and they are dropping dead. I was back here in the summer of eighty-six and within three months he'd said, "right I'm off you carry on I'm going to move over to the farm twenty miles away" and gave me a huge responsibility very quickly which was great."

Deidre, farm 32

Despite her own conviction that she wanted to farm and the strong support of her father, they both felt that she had to prove her commitment to farming in order to be granted the tenancy:

"I wanted to farm from the age about eight.... So I always very much wanted to farm, it was very much in my blood I come from a long line of farmers and yes just really wanted to do that. And I had always geared up everything including doing my degree and everything else to try and make sure that the church who are our landlords, didn't have an excuse not to give me the tenancy. Because we are on a succession tenancy and at that time there weren't many women in farming at all and my father was slightly nervous that they might think, 'oh young female farmer, not so sure'. As it happened they were completely fine about it, absolutely fine but we took the precaution of doing all that you know."

Deidre, farm 32

Deidre has taken the opportunities opened up to her by both design and fate and built up a high profile organic business. She has taken numerous opportunities to act as an ambassador to the organic movement and policy advisor to the government.

Val

Val's brother had always wanted to farm and it was he who inherited their parent's farm while Val inherited a smaller farm from her Grandfather on which she breeds pedigree Cotswold sheep. Although she is married Val said that she is responsible for most of the work on the farm and particularly that involving the stock because "[my husband] wouldn't have a clue, what animal, how old it is..." Val decided to keep her family name

when she married; her explanation reveals that she did not want to loose her identification with her family who had a long history of farming in the local area:

> *"Because the Irons family have been farming for a long, long time and I just, and when I started I thought I'd built up and, I was showing and selling my pedigree sheep before I was married so I thought I'd just keep that name because it's a name local people know and if I keep it all at that it might be easier. And his cousins are [name of company] with the camping and tents at Whittington, they are quite a big concern so I didn't want to get confused in that so I thought I'd just stay, I'd keep it all as Irons."*
>
> *Val, farm 1*

Clearly farming is an important part of Val's identity and it was important for her to maintain her personal and family history in the local area following her marriage to someone with no farming background of his own.

Julie

Julie, who made it clear in our preliminary phone-calls that she was a staunch "anti-feminist" claims that she was the first person in Herefordshire to convert officially to organic production when she bought her farm in 1980. The majority of the farm work has always been performed by Julie. However, she believes that she was only able to do so in the past because her ex-husband went out to work and earned the "actual cash":

> *"Men have got to be more the breadwinners which is a terribly sexist thing to say but you know maybe it's that, [women] have got the cash backing. I mean that's the reason I did it, I mean it wouldn't have kept us as a family so my husband was doing forestry. So who's to know in this situation maybe women are doing it while the husbands are out earning the actual cash. That could be the reality of it."*
>
> *Julie, farm 30*

However, when she divorced from her husband Julie endeavoured to continue farming by converting a working barn into accommodation to provide a regular income through long-term lets. Therefore Julie managed to replace the income lost by her husband leaving and currently is able to successfully support herself solely through income generated off the farm. She feels that her success in maintaining the farm following the departure of her

husband was pivotal in her acceptance as a farmer by the local farming community as she explains in the following quote:

> *"I also think the other turning point was when my husband left because they saw I just carried on with the farm and then they realised I was the person who'd actually been doing it."*
>
> *Julie, farm 30*

Therefore Julie, by default rather than by design, runs an organic farm and a rental property single-handed with little outside help.

6.5.2 Roles on-farm and within diversification enterprises

With respect to the division of labour on the farms it is possible to identify two ways in which gender roles were adopted differently to the other two categories: there are cases where gender roles were negotiated in a flexible manner between men and women; and there were cases where traditional gender roles were reversed. Both of these strategies will be discussed below.

Flexible roles

Mark and Hannah's off-farm work commitments necessitate a flexible approach to their on-farm roles. For example, as Mark explained, the nature of his holidays accounts for him being responsible for the lambing: "Lambing. Well, it's predominantly me who does the lambing but that's because I am on holiday you see so we plan the tupping so that it is around Easter so I'm on site for two weeks." However, as demonstrated by the exchange below, even when they are both available their on-farm roles are highly flexible and interchangeable irrespective of the nature of the work being negotiated:

> *Hannah: "I feed the stock I would predominately do all the work with the stock. Fencing and hedging and stuff is..."*
>
> *Mark: "It's mainly me but it's more of a split."*
>
> *Hannah: "Sometimes it's both of us and sometimes it's Mark on his own. We don't have a tractor because our banks are too steep but we do have a mechanical brush cutter and again I would do as much of that if not more than Mark. It's a bit of a, "well who feels like going to do it?"*

Genevieve: "And what about the holiday cottage?"

Hannah: "We do that between us..."

Mark: "That's a joint venture..."

Hannah: "Again it's a letting agency but sometimes Mark will do it sometimes I go and do it."

Hannah and Mark, farm 26

The same relaxed approach to areas of farm work that are traditionally strongly gendered is revealed by Val when she jokes about sharing the housework with her husband: "Well yes, we do share it a bit or we share not doing it". Sally and her partner also take a laid-back approach to the negotiation of on-farm roles as Sally describes:

"Well my partner does all the books and paperwork, he's better I think at things like that. I do all the propagation and a lot of the planting and general maintenance. But I can't, I don't do the tractor if he's not about because I can't start it because it is a recoil one. So yes I will use other big machinery but it's just something that Jim has to be out on the farm to start it."

Sally, farm 28

Role reversal

Within this category men and women appeared to comfortably assume roles more traditionally associated with the opposite gender. Three of the women, Deidre, Julie and Val are at the head of their farms. Julie and Val, for example, are solely responsible for the running of their farms, performing almost every task themselves, as Val stated: "Everything's done by me". Although they get help from their partners on an ad-hoc basis both women performed almost any on-farm task. When asked if there was anything that she wouldn't do, Julie replied:

"No. Apart from the hedge trimming I would get someone in to do that because well for a start I mean well obviously I couldn't do it [with my tractor]. I've got a little tractor but that is for topping and minor jobs but hedge trimming, hay making I get somebody in to do. But as far as the, you know, getting help from my ex or Richard my boyfriend that's just sort of general, "could you go and give the pigs water?" and stuff like that or help with mucking out."

Julie, farm 30

However, despite her willingness to perform traditionally masculine roles, including maintaining the barn that she rents out and tractor work, Julie does not undertake mechanical work (although she does the daily maintenance):

"I check [my tractor] is well, give it oil, give it petrol and it seems quite happy [but] I've got a mechanic who does all the mechanical things. I don't like grease, I'm happy with mud, uterus-type exudations, blood, gore but grease and oil I can't stand. I'll kill rabbits, kill rats, kill anything but I don't like grease."

Julie, farm 30

This suggests that although there is a large amount of traditional role reversal, there are roles that remain masculine. However, crucially, if she wanted to do mechanical work then Julie has the option to do so, but she actively chooses not to. Deidre's situation is rather different to the other farmers within this category. Due to the scale of her farm and nature of her businesses she is no longer involved in the day-to-day farm work although, as she explains, in the past she did assume a very hands-on role:

"When I first came back here in eighty-six I was very physically engaged in the farm and was up at six o clock in the morning telling everybody what to do and all the rest of it. Gradually my role has changed as other parts of the business have expanded and as I've got drawn off the farm to do other things. Now it's much more that sort of level of cropping and stocking and planning and the finances and meeting staff and the motivational side of it and appraisals and that sort of thing. But I don't worry about exactly what everybody's going to do if it rains in the morning. And I don't go round checking up on everyone all day long so I am not a farm manager. I don't manage the day-to-day, if either Doug or Henry are away I will do more on that score but normally I leave that to them and I concentrate on the overall, the coordination of the thing."

Deidre, farm 32

Val's situation provides an example of a reversal of what is a common scenario within conventional agriculture, whereby she is married but her husband has no pre-marriage familial associations with farming, and he works full-time in a job unrelated to agriculture. In other cases, such as with Mark and the partner of Sally, men have assumed farm roles traditionally gendered as feminine. Mark, for example, as discussed above, takes primary responsibility for the care of his son as well as performing the 'helper' role traditionally associated with farm women. The following exchange regarding the renovation of a holiday cottage shows how Mark assumes the 'gofer' role:

> *Mark: "And again when it was being converted because it was derelict, I was on site because it was through the summer so most of that came down to me...*
>
> *Hannah: I mean quite often what will happen is I will arrange something and then Mark has to pick up the pieces because I've got to go off and work...*
>
> *Mark: Because it has been very well organised so I deal with it.*
>
> *Hannah: The builder was a bit airy-fairy so he needed chasing and because Mark was at home he chased."*
>
> *Hannah and Mark, farm 26*

Similarly, Sally described how she shares with her partner the two traditionally feminised roles of direct marketing and the care of their young son:

> *"Jim does most of the markets at the weekend, that's something we are going to change this year because [our son's] older now so it can be either of us, so this year we will do that between us. He is going to keep the ones where he has got his sort of loyal followers and I'm going to start, Winchcombe is starting a farmers' market and I'm going to do that one this year and Broadway I'm probably going to do that one as well. So we will end up doing two markets each and the box scheme I do a delivery day and he does a delivery day in two different areas. So we stick to our own routes because people know our faces."*
>
> *Sally, farm 28*

The sharing of the direct selling means that Sally can spend more time working outdoors on their farm, a role that she prefers:

> *"Well I don't actually like selling, I do like seeing the box customers but I don't like doing markets because it can get quite tiring smiling and being nice to people. If you have been up since six o' clock in the morning sort of getting all prepared then it is hard work. It's difficult as well because you've got to carry everything, set it all up and then put it all away again. When it's cold it can be quite a strain you know to keep up the chitchat...I love this time of year because we are not selling, I mean we've got bits and bobs we sell to shops, but most of the time is spent here doing bits and being outside and doing, I actually want to grow vegetables I have to do the rest to get some money."*
>
> *Sally, farm 28*

Summary of sub-section 6.5.2

This section has shown how the 'traditional transcended' farm households disregard traditional gendered roles. Two types of strategies were identified: sharing of roles and role reversal. Roles were not strongly gendered and therefore there was interchange between who did what on the farms. In some cases strongly gendered roles were reversed.

6.5.3 Gender roles in the organic farming community

The views of the 'traditional transcended' farmers, on gender roles within the organic farming community more widely, paralleled those of the 'traditional transformed' farmers. They considered that gender roles would be different on organic farms, and the reasons given were primarily related to the more varied backgrounds of organic farmers as illustrated in the following exchange between Hannah and Mark:

> *Hannah: "I suspect of the organic businesses that I've had something to do with they probably do involve more family than the conventional. I mean if I just think of my own experience the conventional farmers that I have dealt with have been very much completely male dominated. They were mostly arable farms and some were slightly mixed and there yes the traditional thing where the wife perhaps fed the calves and looked after the children and ran around a bit but it would be very male dominated."*
>
> *Mark: "But isn't it just related to the size of the outfit rather than just whether it's conventional or organic?"*

Hannah: "No I don't think it is I think it is a more traditional, they would have also tended to be people who were older or traditional families. Even with the sons coming in the role would still continue to be very much the same which surprises me of people who are younger than me that still that role is very much like that. On organic farms it seems to me the women do get more involved, whether they physically get more involved...because I think in the decision making process the ethos of it seems to be maybe a little bit more of equality, family sort of thing I would say."

Mark: "It might also be when they came into farming, if they've inherited the farm and they've grown up in that image then they will continue it possibly. But if they've come into it from an independent area then they might have a completely different philosophy."

Hannah and Mark, farm 26

Sally commented that the women she knew involved within organic farming "are quite independent, sort of go-getters, very...you know some women can be put off by men working in heavy work". This suggests that the type of women attracted to organic farming may not automatically assume traditional roles. The difference between organic and conventional farming was clear to Julie in the reaction of the local farmers to her:

"And so I asked the people that I had around me here, the conventional farmers, I asked them how they do things. And they all were marvellously helpful. I mean I think I was probably a bit of a joke, probably am still a bit of a joke even after all this time, but they are awfully sweet and very tolerant of me."

Julie, farm 30

Deidre went further than the others, and argued that the organic movement in general is "very progressive and liberal" in terms of gender issues, so much so that:

"...it doesn't get mentioned sometimes because it just gets taken completely for granted I don't think anybody has even thought that there might be a gender issue in the organic world. You know it's just inconceivable...I think [gender equality] is a given, I think it is completely a given."

Deidre, farm 32

Summary of sub-section 6.5.3

This sub-section has shown how the farmers in the 'traditional transcended' category considered gender roles within organic farming to be different to conventional farming. This was attributed to the type of people thought to be attracted to organic farming. One participant even claimed that it was "inconceivable" that there could be an issue about gender equality within organic agriculture.

6.5.4 Summary of section 6.5

Section 6.5 has discussed the gender roles of the farm households that comprise the 'traditional transcended' category. It has shown how the households do not adhere to the traditional gender division of labour and instead they adopted a very flexible approach to roles depending on their own circumstances. The section has also demonstrated that the farmers see organic farming generally as being distinct to conventional farming with respect to the gender division of labour and the status of women.

6.6 Summary and discussion of the results presented in Chapter Six

This final section of Chapter Six will summarise and then discuss the results presented within this chapter drawn predominantly from the interview themes 'on-farm labour ' and 'labour on organic farms'. The discussion will relate the results to the following research question: How are gender roles, relations and identities constructed and maintained on organic farms?

6.6.1 Summary

The analysis of the interviews constructed three types of approach to the gender division of labour within the thirty four farm households: 'traditional transposed', 'traditional transformed' and 'traditional transcended'. The characteristic features of each type will be summarised below:

'Traditional transposed'

These farm households demonstrated a traditional division of labour in which masculine and feminine roles were clearly demarcated. Moreover, it was found that two aspects of organic farming acted to reinforce the traditional roles of farm women in this category: the increase in paperwork and the role of hand weeding. Furthermore, on the farms which had diversified into enterprises related to their organic status, such as direct selling, women took responsibility for the extra workload created. However, their status and positions within the farm households were not affected. Although these farmers perceived women to be more prevalent in organic farming, they did not consider the division of labour or the relative status of men and women to be any different to conventional farming.

'Traditional transformed'

These farm households took a more flexible approach to the gender division of labour. Two sorts of approaches were identified: farms on which the day-to-day labour was provided by both men and women; farms on which the day-to-day labour was provided by women. Although there was a degree of interchange between the gendered adoption of traditionally masculine and feminine roles, strongly gendered roles remained fixed. For example, women tended to be responsible for any diversified enterprises, which were predominantly concerned with direct selling. These farmers felt that the gender division of labour in organic farming generally would differ from conventional farming, suggesting that this was due to the different type of people attracted to farming organically.

'Traditional transcended'

These farm households paid no attention to the traditional division of labour both on-farm and within diversified enterprises, and rather labour was organised according to their personal circumstances. Two particular approaches were identified, the sharing of roles, and the reversal of roles, both of which involved a high degree of interchange between the men and women. These farmers asserted that gender roles and the status of men and women would be different in organic farming due to the type of people attracted to it.

6.6.2 Discussion

This chapter has demonstrated that a range of approaches to gender roles and relations are adopted by the organic farms within the sample. It has shown that although half of the farm households adopted a traditional approach to the gender division of labour and gender relations, half of the farm households adopted a more progressive approach in which the division between masculine and feminine roles was more flexible. The farms on which a more traditional approach was adopted were those which were influenced by the links of their personal histories to the heritage of the agrarian ideology. In contrast, the more progressive farm households were often first generation farmers who brought their more varied backgrounds to the practice of organic farming, and were less influenced by traditional notions of gender roles and relations, and whose gender identities were more flexible. Therefore, it seems that the construction of gender roles and relations on organic farms is largely dependant upon the personal background of the farmers within individual households.

Chapter Seven will present interview material which demonstrates how the organic farmers interpreted the organic ideology.

Chapter 7

ORGANIC FARMERS INTERPRETING THE ORGANIC IDEOLOGY

7.1 Introduction

This is the second chapter based on the findings from the semi-structured interviews with organic farmers. The overall purpose of this chapter is to show how the farmers interpreted the organic ideology, and how their interpretations often involved conceptualising it in feminine terms. The findings presented within this chapter will contribute towards answering the following research question, which is addressed directly in Chapter Eight: Does the ideological standpoint of organic farming facilitate the representation and construction of distinctive gender roles, relations and identities? Although the majority of the material presented within this chapter is not directly concerned with issues of gender it is nevertheless a critical part of building the proceeding gendered analysis presented in Chapter Eight.

The first section will primarily draw upon the responses to the interview themes 'organic ideology' and 'future of organic farming' in order to demonstrate how the farmers can be categorised into two types according to their approach towards the organic ideology. The second section will discuss the responses to the interview theme 'acquiring knowledge about organic farming' in order to discuss how a sector of the organic farmers conceptualised organic farming as a feminised form of agriculture.

7.2 Typology of organic ideological types

The interview analysis constructed two types of farmer in terms of their approach to the organic ideology, as understood in Chapter Three. The presentation of the results within this chapter will be structured around these two categories. However, this initial section will show how the typology developed from the interview analysis and will describe the defining characteristics of each type.

7.2.1 Evolution of the typology

The analysis of the interviews was carried out using N-vivo, which aided the organisation of the thematic analysis. The analysis of the farmers' approach to the organic ideology drew primarily upon the first interview theme, entitled 'organic ideology', which explored their philosophical approach to organic farming through discussing the following subjects:

- Their original motives for entering organic farming
- Their own involvement in the decision to start organic farming
- If/how their commitment to the principles of organic farming had altered since they first made the decision to start organic farming
- If/how their farming system had altered since they first achieved certification
- The aspects of organic farming that were currently most important to them
- Whether they see organic farming as part of a social movement and more than just another form of production
- Their response to the IFOAM claim that 'attitudes to gender are very progressive in the organic movement giving women equal rights and respect'

During the analysis of the farmers' discussion of this theme, it became clear that there were two distinct types of farmers in terms of their interpretation of the organic ideology, which in turn appeared to influence their responses to other interview themes. Although in practice these categories evolved from the analysis they will however, be used as a framework for organising the presentation of material in this chapter from the outset.

7.2.2 Description of the 'ideological-types'

As stated above, during the analysis it was found that the participants divided into two categories relating to their ideological approach towards the practice of organic farming. These two approaches have been labelled as either 'instrumentalist' or 'idealist'. The

motives of the 'instrumentalist' farmers were primarily economic whereas the 'idealist' farmers were motivated primarily by a range of social and environmental concerns. However, this distinction is not a binary and rather each farmer experiences both kinds of motives for farming organically to varying extents and they have been categorised, for ease of analysis, according to the type of approach that dominates. Thus the outlook of the individuals is conceptualised as falling relatively at different points along a continuum between the two types. The typical characteristics of the two types of approach are outlined below.

'Instrumentalist'

Farmers with this type of approach to the organic ideology were initially motivated to farm organically for predominantly economic reasons. They converted from conventional agriculture, usually fairly recently, encouraged by the dual incentives of state policy and high prices for organic produce. They do not consider that organic farming is a particularly different way of farming to 'traditional' farming, and believe that they have not had to make many changes to their farming system. Similarly they see gender roles and relations within organic farming as being no different to conventional farming. Organic farming is seen as another form of production rather than placed within a wider social context. Box 7.1 provides an example of one of the 'instrumentalist' farmers.

Box 7.1: Example of an 'instrumentalist' organic farmer

Charles (farm 11)

Charles is in his fifties and lives with his wife and her dogs on his 231 hectare mixed farm which includes an Aberdeen Angus suckler herd and arable crops. He has been in sole charge of the farm since 1983, when it was passed to him by his father. His brother and sister also own an equal share of the farm and are involved in long-term management decisions, but neither of them lives nearby. The conversion of the farm was undertaken in stages over eight years, starting in 1994 and finishing in 2002. The decision to convert was instigated by the neighbouring farmer with whom Charles share farms. All of the on-farm labour is carried out by Charles and his neighbour, although they also employ a farm secretary to do the administrative work, which is done in the

farm office building. The farm is therefore seen as totally separate from the household, and his wife "doesn't do anything on the farm".

Charles was very dismissive of environmentalists due to their lack of understanding of "real country issues" and is very involved with the Countryside Alliance, with his farm hosting the local hunt. Furthermore, he made it very clear that he only farmed organically due to his land not being suited to intensive conventional production. If it was more lucrative to farm conventionally then he would choose to do so. All of the produce from the farm is marketed through centralised marketing channels and no attempt is made to sell any locally or directly to consumers.

'Idealist'

Farmers with this type of approach to the organic ideology were primarily motivated to farm organically by a range of social and environmental concerns. They are likely to be new entrants to farming, and are often reliant on an external income. They see organic farming as a distinct form of agriculture and its social principles are of importance to them, albeit to varying degrees. Often they expressed strong views on issues such as the environment, animal welfare and nutrition. Box 7.2 presents an example of one of the 'idealist' farmers.

Box 7.2: Example of an 'idealist' organic farmer

Megan (farm 7)

Megan is in her forties and lives with her partner and their young daughter (her three older children from her previous marriage live away from home) on their 69 hectare mixed farm (includes 24 hectares of beech woodland). They bought the farm in 1996 and it is run primarily by Megan whilst her partner runs an IT consultancy business from the farm premises. The conversion of the whole farm was started as soon as it was purchased by Megan and her partner. Megan had previously been involved within organic farming prior to owning her current farm; she ran an organic farm with her first husband for ten years and worked as a part-time certification inspector for the Soil Association for nine years. Megan stated that she would only ever farm organically.

Megan was very concerned about adopting a whole-systems approach on her farm. They had a number of future 'social' plans for the farm related to integrating the farm into the local community. For example, at the time of being interviewed they had submitted plans to convert an

old barn into an education centre. The produce from the farm is marketed through a mixture of farm gate sales and central channels.

Twenty three of the farmers interviewed were 'instrumentalists' and eighteen were 'idealists'. Table 7.1 shows the distribution of the male and female farmers between the two types.

Table 7.1: Distribution of the organic farmers between the two ideological categories

Instrumentalist		Idealist	
Male (farm/name)	**Female (farm/name)**	**Male (farm/name)**	**Female (farm/name)**
3-Morgan	3-Diane	6-Boyd	1-Val
5-Nick	8-Joan	13-Rik	2-Doreen
9-Callum	9-Gillian	16-Hans	4-Victoria
10-Adam	10-Linda	17-Daniel	6-Morwenna
11-Charles	20-Tracey	24-Rowan	7-Megan
12-Alexander & Adrian	26-Hannah	25-Jim	21-Melanie
14-James	27-Emma		23-Trudy
15-Michael	29-Jane		28-Sally
18-Mathew			30-Julie
19-George			31-Elaine
20-Ben			32-Deidre
21-Ian			33-Natalie
22-Harry			
26-Mark			

These categorisations have echoes in the literature on agri-environment participants, as reviewed in the UK by Morris (2005). Research in this area has developed attitudinal typologies which distinguish between two broad types of participants in agri-environment schemes: farmers who join the schemes due to a belief in and commitment to environment protection, and farmers who are attracted by financial incentives and the 'goodness of fit' between the scheme and their farm business. Such categorisations have not been developed to a similar level of sophistication in relation to organic farming. However, as part of an exploration of the adoption of organic farming, Fairweather (1999) distinguishes between "pragmatic and committed" organic farmers. This distinction has since been adopted in discussions of organic farming.

The following two sections of this chapter will present interview findings, drawn predominantly from the interview theme 'organic philosophy', as described in sub-section 7.2.1 above, with the aim of showing how the farmers negotiated their own approach to the organic ideology. The 'instrumentalist' farmers will be discussed first in section 7.3, followed by the 'idealist' farmers in section 7.4.

7.3 'Instrumentalist' organic farming identity

This section will discuss the characteristics of the organic farmers who fell into the 'instrumentalist' category. Twenty-three out of the forty-one participants can be described as predominantly having an 'instrumentalist' outlook towards organic farming, fifteen men and eight women. Five of the twenty-three 'instrumentalist' farmers did not come from farming lineages although three of them had married into a farming family. Therefore, only two individuals, Mark and Hannah, were neither from farming backgrounds themselves nor had married into a farming family. All of them had previously farmed conventionally before converting to organic production.

Practicing organic farming led the 'instrumentalist' farmers to both protect and, to some degree, reconstruct their existing farming values. They undertook to protect and maintain aspects of their farming values when they acted defensively to secure their status with their conventional farming peers, while at the same time they reconstructed aspects of their values in order to accept the new measures of success necessary to flourish within the

organic community. The protection and reconstruction of the 'instrumentalist' farmers' values as a result of practicing organic farming will be discussed below.

7.3.1 Protecting conventional farming identity

This sub-section will demonstrate how the 'instrumentalist' farmers protected their existing farming values, carried over from their years of farming conventionally. Firstly, it will show that they justified their decision to convert in highly pragmatic terms. Secondly it will show how they conflated organic farming with traditional farming, and played down its distance from conventional farming.

Pragmatic rationale for farming organically

In all cases the decision to convert was defined predominantly within pragmatic parameters. The justifications given for their conversions were economic in nature and fell into two types; financial factors and farming system factors. The farmers in the following three quotes, for example, gave three different types of financial reasons for converting to organic farming:

> *"I think if we are absolutely honest things were bad, the milk price was bad and it seemed to be a good economic decision."*
>
> *Morgan, farm 3*

> *"I think the major push to go organic was the fact that we had to give up milking at that time it was the first time that they brought in milk quotas which meant that we couldn't make milk pay on the number of cows that we had so the decision was made all in one to give up milking and to go organic....I could see then the way things were going conventionally. Probably I could see it before a lot of other people did. And I think I'm sure if we hadn't done it when we did we probably wouldn't be in business now so it was the right thing to do."*
>
> *Ben, farm 20*

> *"I could have competed for two or three years but having seen how it has gone I think you'd have had to have it down to a skeleton set up and get a job elsewhere I think to be honest."*
>
> *George, farm 19*

These farmers, along with the majority of the 'instrumentalist' farmers, primarily defined their decision to convert to organic farming as one that made financial sense. Others also gave farming system factors as a justification for their conversions. Mark and Hannah, for example, explained that they had converted because their land was suited to an organic system:

> *Hannah: "[Converting] was just connected to the land itself."*
>
> *Mark: "Part of it is what's best for the land you've purchased. If you bought some land that would be more effective conventionally farmed then we would have done that. But this land cries out for conversion to organic. It's the way it had been managed or abused beforehand and we just came along and tried to put a system into it. But yes it's a natural site for it"*
>
> *Hannah and Mark, farm 26*

Other farmers, such as Charles, made similar comments about the suitability of their land for organic production:

> *"If I lived on a farm, or in an area where we had wonderful soil that was about four foot deep and it was fertile and I could produce four tonnes an acre of arable crops yes I would carry on being conventional. I would spray it with every damn thing because I could probably make some money out of it. But organic seems to work better with rubbish land and rubbish land is what we have and there is nothing I can do about that."*
>
> *Charles, farm 11*

In an argument along similar lines Jane described that her farmland did not respond well to fertiliser due to physical factors:

> *"This farm doesn't get very much rain really and I've always felt that we were wasting fertiliser really. I never felt that we got very much response from fertiliser but you know that is purely as a lay person because I am not an agronomist but there certainly came a point after the first cut of silage that I couldn't see that putting any fertiliser on really made any demonstrable difference to this farm."*
>
> *Jane, farm 29*

Jane therefore implied that the land was more suited to an organic system than conventional because being conventional was not an economically viable option at that

time. The entry of 'instrumentalist' farmers to organic farming was based on rational economic decisions and, as Mark explained if at any point it stopped being economically rational to continue as organic then they would consider dropping out of certification:

> *"The bottom line is it's a business and when you are looking ahead you have to think is it working because if it isn't you need to change your strategy and if the benefits of being organic don't at the end of the line improve the balance of your books you've got to think of something else unless you are doing it purely for principle and no other reason."*
>
> *Mark, farm 26*

The use of economics as the primary justification for converting to organic farming suggests that the farmers considered their decision to be a 'rational' choice, rather than emotional, and therefore it could be argued that it reinforces their existing farming identities.

Retaining acceptance within the conventional farming community

For these farmers the decision to farm organically was often subject to the scrutiny of their conventional farming peers. Mathew, a prominent member of the farming community in Gloucestershire who was county chairman for the National Farmers Union (NFU) when he was considering conversion, described the difficulty of "coming out" as an organic farmer to the wider agricultural community:

> *"We were discussing this actually because I go and play skittles as lots of farmers do, with conventional farmers, and now more and more farmers are talking about it. And we were talking about being, or admitting being organic is like admitting you're gay in the national community. I mean somebody else mentioned this at skittles the other week because a lot of organic farmers sort of keep quiet about it and then when they've done it, or they can show something they come out. It's quite funny that because I made no bones about it, in fact in ninety six I was the county chairman and I think I was voicing that I might be doing it then so I mean the farmers knew that I was going to be organic and I was an easy target as it were. So you get all the jokes...but having said that a lot of farmers now know that it is here and it's not going to go away, it's not a flash in the pan and they just accept that, you know, there are gays about."*
>
> *Mathew, farm 18*

The manner in which Mathew conflated 'coming out' as gay with 'coming out' as an organic farmer intimates that the admission is somewhat shameful. A further suggestion in his use of a homosexual metaphor is that farming organically has implications for the perception of a male farmer's masculinity. That organic farming is only tolerated rather than embraced by the wider farming community was also evident in other accounts in which farmers spoke variously of the scepticism, amusement and criticism of their farming peers. Ironically, the aspects of organic farming identified as attracting negative attention from conventional farmers were the very issues upon which organic farming has built its reputation with the public such as trust, animal welfare standards and food quality.

Some of the farmers reported being constantly watched by their farming neighbours and consequently feeling under pressure to appear successful. Adrian and Alexander, for example, described the reaction of their neighbours when they converted and how, despite a successful conversion, they feel unable to experiment with different crops in view of neighbouring farmers for fear of any potential failures being observed and noted:

> *Adrian: "Looking back it was a big step to take. There wasn't anyone else around and you sort of, it all goes round the area, "the Jones are going organic" you know it goes round."*
>
> *Alexander: "You know the neighbours are all going to watch."*
>
> *Adrian: "And they're always going to watch. If you're going to grow a crop and you think "oh this might be a bit difficult", you don't do it on the side of this road you do it down the bottom of the farm where no one sees it."*
>
> *Alexander: "If you're on the side of a real busy main road I don't think I could do it."*
>
> *Adrian and Alexander, farm 12*

As well as being watched by the mainstream farming community the farmers also reported their integrity being undermined by conventional farmers who were sceptical of their adherence to the organic standards:

Adam: "Another thing is a lot of people are sceptical about organic, they're very sceptical they think you go out putting fertiliser on the fields in the night and things like that you know when you don't. Somebody said to me the other day, "oh you put your fertiliser on at night do you?"

Linda: "Farmers were using so much fertiliser that they can't believe, I mean they still are, but they can't believe that you can farm without it. But I mean when they are doing corn, corn, corn you couldn't you know. I mean you couldn't grow corn continuously without putting something back into the soil. But they can't believe that you can farm at all without fertilisers really I think."

Linda and Adam, farm 10

Further to suggestions that organic farmers are cheating the organic standards they also spoke of receiving criticism over their organic farming methods. For example a number of participants related the view of conventional farmers whereby organic farming is seen as 'farming by neglect' in which fields are untidy and animal welfare standards are poor:

"[Conventional farmers] think it's a lot of stinging nettles and mud and because antibiotics aren't supposed to be used routinely a lot of conventional farmers think the animals suffer but it has been proved that that is not the case. And a lot of people would say, especially with mastitis and things with cows, that not being able to use antibiotics so easily that the animals suffer but that's rubbish."

James, farm 14

A further critique is that the quality of the produce is sub-standard to conventional counterparts. This is illustrated in the following quote in which Alexander discusses the reaction of conventional farmers to their milk being mixed with conventional due to lack of demand for UK organic milk:

"Farmers can pull your leg like at the moment with the old thirty five percent goes into the organic market and sixty five odd goes into the non-organic but that can be mixed with conventional milk and so conventional farmers will say, "all your higher cell count not so clean milk is getting mixed with ours". They'll pull your leg on that, because they think that organic isn't as clean, isn't so good as what they're producing. That's their perception, it depends how you look at it."

Alexander, farm 12

It can be deduced then from the above examples that practicing organic farming can be difficult due to potentially adverse attention from conventional farming peers. It is unsurprising, therefore, that despite their belief that organic farming has become more acceptable many of the individuals within this category acted to reassert their validity as farmers and thus retain their status and acceptance within the wider farming community. This was achieved by distancing themselves from the negative image of earlier organic farmers as well as emphasising how the organic farming system itself is simply 'traditional farming' and that it was not a big change for them to convert. Adam, for example, denied that organic farming was new claiming: "It's only going back to what it used to be, it's nothing more than they were doing fifty years ago really before they started spraying with fertiliser". Charles was another farmer who linked organic farming with the past when he explained that he gets advice on organic farming from a retired farmer:

> *"I mean it's a simple enough process and actually if you really want to find out about organic farming just go and find any old farmer whose seventy plus and he'll tell you and that's how I get an awful lot of my information because you go and ask the nice old boy who lives over the road and used to farm. And I just, I ask, "well how did you do it during the war? How did you do it then?" "Oh we did it this way and that way" and on he goes. As long as you've got half an hour to find out a five minute answer you're fine."*
>
> *Charles, farm 11*

However, the farmers were selective in their appropriation of the past and were anxious to dissociate themselves from the earlier organic farmers who were considered to be "sort of a different breed" (Joan, farm 8). The image acquired by those pioneers was described further by Joan:

"The people that were organic and that went years ago have been a little bit old fashioned and a little bit lapsidaisical and very laid back, and sort of not quite on the ball like the conventional farms with all modern day farming and things. Because in a way organic farming years ago was sort of very low input, well you've got this image of sort of very old fashioned cows grazing on pastures and everything. But it's different now its very sort of modern isn't it? And that's the thing, [nowadays] you've got the same sort of cattle breeding and the same machinery and everything and good grass fields you see."

Joan, farm 8

This old fashioned image, as noted by Adam: "...wasn't very accepted was it? It was looked on as being a bit 'way out', a bit sort of hippyish". Indeed the desire not to be associated with the early farmers was understandable because, as Tracey and Ben's description of the local reaction to their conversion sixteen years ago testifies, the unacceptable image of organic farming led to their isolation from the mainstream farming community:

Tracey: "[Ben] was the conversation stopper. Because we rent some land from the Berkley Estate we go down and pay the rent and when he first went into organic they'd be saying, "he's really strange" you know knit your own sandals brigade. We were really weird. And they'd all be talking and then he would walk in and everything would go quiet."

Ben: "That was the sort of thing you had to put up with in those days when I converted. It's different now of course because it's acceptable."

Tracey and Ben, farm 20

Therefore, despite the 'green' image that organic status conveys, these farmers constructed a division between themselves and "the environmentalists and all those other wallies" (Charles, farm 11). Instead they argued, as in the following quote from Morgan, that 'traditional' farmers have always been sympathetic to the environment: "A lot of stuff is talked by people who are organic and green and its all very commendable but in some ways I get quite annoyed because it's ways that real country people have always looked at things, ways we've always looked at things" (Morgan, farm 3). Thus Morgan, in common with the other 'instrumentalist' organic farmers, dissociates himself from "green" people and aligns himself with traditional farmers ("real country people"); in doing so they retain

their own sense of belonging within agriculture and remain acceptable to the wider farming community.

In addition to equating organic farming with traditional farming most of the farmers also claimed that the process of converting their farms had not been difficult due to the similarity between organic farming and the way in which they had farmed before:

> *Adrian: "I mean we're half in the ESA[12], we're right on the border, we've been in that for five years..."*
>
> *Alexander: "That partly persuaded us..."*
>
> *Adrian: "We didn't put fertiliser on these grounds anyway..."*
>
> *Alexander: "So we were half way there."*
>
> *Adrian and Alexander, farm 12*

> *"It's basically the same, we were farming in a very traditional way anyway. The main reason why we turned over to organic status was because we were more or less farming organically anyway. So there was very little change and very little problems."*
>
> *Daniel, farm 17*

> *"We weren't really very conventional before; I mean it wasn't a big thing."*
>
> *James, farm 14*

> *"Well we were nearly there anyway so it wasn't a hard process."*
>
> *Harry, farm 22*

> *"...when we went into it we discovered that really we were, we'd been farming very near organically anyway."*
>
> *Morgan, farm 3*

[12]The Environmentally Sensitive Areas Scheme (ESA) is an agri-environment scheme that was introduced in 1987 to offer incentives to encourage farmers to adopt agricultural practices which would safeguard and enhance parts of England with particularly high landscape, wildlife or historic value. One of the twenty-two ESA's in England is the Cotswold Hills in Gloucestershire (DEFRA 2005b).

The choice to farm organically could potentially be viewed as a criticism of conventional farming, and thus of their conventional peers and their own way of life prior to turning organic. Therefore by lessening the perceived difference between organic and conventional farming systems they both conciliate the conventional community and justify their own actions prior to converting. In other words it is a way of safeguarding their own pride as well as reducing the likelihood of alienation from the farming community.

Despite the 'instrumentalist' farmers converting predominantly for financial reasons, for most of them the initial expectations of financial return have not been realised.

> *"I mean it doesn't help that the price is dropping rapidly on arable crops at the moment the beef prices seem to be holding up but I think it's because there's just more and more people doing it."*
>
> *Charles, farm 11*

> *"Of course it was a lot better several years ago when the prices were so good. You could think well all that effort that you put in it was worth it. It's getting quite demoralising. You put all this extra effort into it, extra work and everything and are not getting anything out."*
>
> *Joan, farm 8*

Some of the farmers, such as Michael, spoke of the likelihood that organic farmers will start dropping out of certification if the financial situation continued:

> *"It's basically the same as conventional now, nearly as bad. You know there's quite a few I would say who would go out of organic farming. I think there's people who would've gone out by now if it hadn't been for the fact that they were tied in to the grant scheme for five years, especially with milking."*
>
> *Michael, farm 15*

However, despite the difficult economic situation and the fact that some believed that farmers would be dropping out of certification, on the whole the farmers asserted that they would rather not return to conventional farming unless they were forced to do so financially:

> *"I mean it is just the right thing to do there is no doubt about it. At one stage in some of the darkest moments I might have thought that perhaps we*

ought to go back to conventional but now it just wouldn't even cross my mind."

Ben, farm 20

Alexander: "It would be reluctantly if we did have to go back to conventional.

Adrian: "It would"

Adrian and Alexander, farm 12

This suggests that a change has occurred in their farming values since they converted. It will be argued in the sub-section below that since converting these farmers have undergone shifts in their farming values due to the practice of organic farming. These shifts are initiated by organic farming having different parameters for defining agricultural success from those dominant within conventional farming. These measures enable changes to occur in the expression of farming values due to two overall effects: by directly instigating changes in the farmers' mindsets, causing them to express themselves in new ways; and by providing a different space in which farmers are more able to express beliefs which previously were suppressed by the conventions of mainstream farming systems.

7.3.2 Reconstructing farming identity

This sub-section will demonstrate how the 'instrumentalist' farmers reconstructed aspects of their farming values in order to accommodate their conversion to organic farming. It will show how this process involved accepting different measures of success and expressing different values. It will then go on to explore the idea suggested by one farmer that becoming a successful organic farmer required a shift in 'mindset'.

Adopting different measures of success

One of the significant measures of success within conventional farming is productivity and the ability to increase it. This continual pressure to produce higher yields within conventional farming was noted by a number of the farmers such as Alexander and Adrian:

Alexander: "Well we've got friends that are carrying on conventional farming and they're still expanding all the time sort of two hundred and fifty cows and a big parlour. They're going ahead. They think we're stuck in a rut staying at the same level and..."

Adrian: "Yes if you're not having cows and milking more cows you're getting left behind."

Alexander: "Yes but everybody sees that to be in it for the future you've got to expand, everything's expansion. It applies to corn, everything's under pressure. They've got to get bigger, got to rent more ground."

Alexander and Adrian, farm 12

However, the farmers were negative about this push for increased production within conventional agriculture, defining it as being nonsensical both economically and with regard to the limitations of natural systems. Michael, for example, spoke of natural limitations in terms of protein levels in livestock rations:

"I've always had the attitude that Miller's have been spinning you a tale for years and years and years and years and years. And they have [they say] "You put x amount of feed into a cow it'll give more milk, but it doesn't. I mean if you come to the, you just need a balance between the two, its ridiculous. I mean back in the seventies and eighties the more you put in the more you'll get out you know. That was the theory. And then what they were doing at the time, the millers, they were just putting all sorts into the ration. I mean they used to put in the ration, which was a really high protein feed but only about three percent of it was digestible by a cow. And yet it came out on the ticket that it was really high protein. They did all sorts of things that were unnecessary, chicken manure and lord knows what else. Ridiculous."

Michael, farm 15

Charles also spoke of natural limits, but expressed the idea in terms of the limitations of soil fertility in the face of continual chemical usage:

"You know the land can only dish out x amount and if you keep pouring chemicals and fertiliser into it to get everything it is not going to work in the long term."

Charles, farm 11

James referred to the limitations of livestock and how trying to maximise production from cows leads to problems: "We're not into pushing cows to get the maximum amount out of them. The more you push cows the more problems you get, any farmer, if they are honest, they will say that." Farmers not only criticised the pressure to maximise production for ignoring the limitations of natural systems but also in terms of its' misguided economic rationale:

> *"I mean [conventional farmers] now are really intensive, but I mean they are intensive and they don't seem to realise that if they were to cut back and not be so intensive that they wouldn't need to be because they're trying to buy the profit and it doesn't work. It's the same with milk, you can produce five and a half to six thousand litres without spending anything hardly but as soon as you start going for seven or eight thousand litres what it costs to get the extra two thousand litres is your profit gone."*
>
> *Nick, interview 5*

Nick's assertion that producing higher yield incurs extra costs was in accordance with comments from other farmers; Adrian spoke of the extra labour costs and Ben of the higher vets bills:

> *"Because these big farms, four hundred cows, he gets a good price for his milk but their labour bill is two hundred and ten thousand. You know, I would say we're doing better than they are but its all relative..."*
>
> *Adrian, farm 12*

> *"And vets bills have gone down since we've been organic that's another thing. When we were milking years ago our vets bills kept creeping up because the more animals are put under pressure to produce the more illness you get and now they are not under pressure so we don't get vets bills."*
>
> *Ben, farm 20*

The culture of expansion and increasing production is part of the dominant paradigm within mainstream agriculture and its acceptance forms part of conventionally held farming values. Therefore the rejection of this school of thought by organic farmers and its dismissal as misguided can be seen as an indicator that different values are prevalent within organic farming, in which other aspects of production are accounted for when

considering a farm's productivity. Rather than aiming to maximise production the farmers spoke of the quality of their produce, and their aim of balancing their farming systems:

> *"We don't buy in...there's no need to buy in. Its been a closed herd, a closed flock and very much a closed farm you know everything that's been produced has been consumed on the farm as much as possible. So we actually buy in from say Millers etc very little."*
>
> *Daniel, farm 17*

While organic farming places less emphasis on maximising productivity than conventional farming it places more emphasis upon other measures of success such as environmental indicators. The pride with which some farmers spoke of the increase in wildlife and soil quality on their farms indicated that these alternative measures of success contribute towards the reconstruction of farming identity that is initiated by farming organically. Adam, for example, described how there was "more life" in their land since converting to organic farming:

> *"My son ploughed up some red clover that had been down for five years. And he said the clover roots were that long where they'd worked the ground and when it ploughed, it used to plough really sort of sodden and no life in it, and now there's more life come back in the land again because there's no chemical going on it. You notice the difference; I mean the soil is more like soil rather than sludge. I mean you can tell the difference I mean we ploughed that little field up there the other day and you look at that and it looks really nice the soil now."*
>
> *Adam, farm 10*

Other farmers, such as Ben, were proud of the amount and variety of wildlife living on their land:

> *"You see the increase in the wildflowers and the wildlife and things. We've got flowers and things around here that you don't really get and birds, it's incredible. I mean that orchard it doesn't look much at the moment but it just comes alive. I mean theres long eared owls around here, barn owls, little owls, tawny owls you name it we've got it."*
>
> *Ben, farm 20*

In some cases it was clear that the changes were not necessarily expected, as was the case with Charles: "Actually the surprising thing is, the longer you keep at it the better the crops get and the soil structure gets better and theres more birds around. We have these people who come and do bird surveys and there's more and more around." The surprise and pleasure with which the changes are greeted strengthens the contention that organic farming can act as an instigator of change within individuals, leading to a deeper commitment to the organic principles than when they first considered conversion, as confirmed by Morgan when he said simply: "Since we've been organic we believe in it more."

Expressing new values

It has been shown above that the 'instrumentalist' farmers adopted the new measures of success and that some expressed their commitment to the organic principles. In this section it will be shown how this acceptance of a different agricultural philosophy has impacts upon the values expressed by the farmers.

The fact that they are no longer so reliant on external inputs than when they were conventional provided a new source of pride for the farmers. Adam felt that "you have to think more" in organic farming as farmers cannot fall back on the use of sprays to solve problems. Ian agreed saying that:

> *"I think you need to plan further ahead in organic farming. In conventional farming if you do something wrong there's always something in a bag or a bottle that puts it right but you can't rely on that with organic farming. You've got to go back to basics with rotations and things like that. You've got to think more about what you're doing....there are a lot more basic farming principles you find with organic really more than conventional. I think you've got to be a better farmer to be a good organic farmer."*
>
> *Ian, farm 21*

Farmers such as George spoke of feeling more in control than when farming conventionally:

"You're much more in charge of what goes on than before. Because before you are always getting told, "put this on or that on" but now you've got to work out how to do it. It's much more interesting and you're more in charge really I think."

George, farm 19

In addition to gaining more control George hinted that the autonomy of organic farming also leads to a sense of freedom from the "chemical treadmill":

"I mean say you couldn't carry on organic farming, if I had to go back into conventional farming I'd find that a lot of the inputs that I was using on the sort of chemical treadmill you could do away with just using different rotations. Not that I want to but say you had to or something, you had gone back to basics and you'd do it a hell of a lot differently to how I had been doing it. You know you don't realise what a treadmill you were on until you've stopped. And looking back the amount of spray and stuff that we used to buy, the money we must have wasted over the years you know it's quite frightening."

George, farm 19

It is ironic that organic farming's rejection of artificial inputs, employed conventionally to gain domination and control over the land, can give farmers a greater sense of control over their lives. The philosophical ideal that promotes working with natural systems in preference to attempting to control them is referred to by Charles:

"You go back to basics and you let the land look after you instead of you trying to structure the land it all works in your favour. So it's fairly relaxed and easy and saves a vast amount of money on machines as well."

Charles, farm 11

There is a suggestion, in Charles's comment, that there exists a link between adopting the organic approach to farming and being "relaxed". He later went on to say: "I mean you get quite a sort of feel good factor out of it really that's the nice bit." The same idea, that organic farmers are somehow more relaxed and happier than their conventional counterparts, was a theme that was repeated by other farmers. Ian, for example, said that he was "... enjoying organic farming better than I did conventional because it's more of a challenge". Other farmers were in agreement:

Chloe[13]: "I think they're into their work more, I think they enjoy farming more because they enjoy what they are producing. I don't know... they always seem to be happier."

Mathew: "Yes I mean you've taken on a new challenge but I think you accept that you're not going to be a millionaire although some of the long term ones are doing really well."

Chloe and Mathew, farm 18

"They don't seem to be the ones who moan so much, they are the ones who sort of look for another angle really rather than sit around in meetings moaning and groaning about everything."

George, farm 19

The lack of pressure within organic farming was explained by Adrian when he contrasted the laid back nature of organic dairy farming with the "rat race" of conventional dairying:

" It's a bit of a rat race you know when you are milking cows you've got to keep milking more and more to sort of keep up.... Once you go back to conventional you're back in that rat race again. We'll feel we ought to be milking more cows then. Because there will be all the bigger farms out there and it's alright if you're getting paid a good organic price because you can stand it but if you're in conventional milk you'll be forced to milk more cows. If you're a bigger farmer you'll get better terms...they'd rather send a tanker to pick up a massive amount of milk than go and pick up a little bit of milk. Economics, you know, you're under pressure to "oh I can get a better price by milking more cows and sending more milk". And off it goes again."

Adrian, farm 12

[13] Chloe, Mathew's wife, contributed to the interview for a few minutes whilst she was unloading her weekly shopping

Thus Adrian's decision with his brother to farm organically can be seen partly as an act of resistance against the pressure they felt in conventional dairying. In becoming organic they feel that they "...just made it easier for ourselves. We were keeping well over three hundred animals and its made life a bit easier for ourselves by less numbers of cattle, not so heavily stocked." Another reason for farmers suggesting that their life had become more relaxed since converting to organic farming, as was the case for George, is that the increased income has enabled some farmers to take on employees:

> *"The way I was going conventionally it was just a one-man band. You sort of end up more on your own doing everything trying to prop everything up on your own and gradually as we've got more into the organic thing I've found that I've got more money to take on people like Nick's son and things like that you know which makes life a lot easier."*
>
> *George, farm 19*

Taking on new staff contrasts sharply with the situation in much of conventional agriculture as George described: ""There are a lot of places where there is nobody involved with farming at all. The contractors come in and do it all and then disappear again." As well as reducing a farmer's workload, taking on employees has the added impact of reducing the isolated nature of farming.

Adopting an organic 'mindset'

The potential impacts of organic farming as described above demonstrate that its adoption can lead to shifts in behaviour and outlook. George claimed that since converting to organic farming his "mindset" had altered:

> *"A lot of NFU stuff isn't quite relevant now I've gone organic. They've opened up a lot more but when you go to a meeting you realise you've become a completely different mindset to most of the people who are still carrying on doing what they've always done. It's quite intriguing really. [Organic farming] is more of a holistic sort of thing; it's all more joined up one thing sort of offsets the other really. Yes, I've had to totally change the way I think about it all. You know you look at all my relations who are still in conventional farming and it's completely different, you know, the way you view it. It's quite interesting really."*
>
> *George, farm 19*

George spoke of organic farming being "more of a holistic sort of thing" than conventional farming. Thus adopting organic farming can lead to farmer viewing their farming system as a whole. This whole systems approach is not compatible with the dominant paradigm of conventional farming and thus farming values have to adapt in order to accommodate the new approach.

Organic farmers who were not considered to have altered their mindset since converting were regarded as being unsuccessful in adapting to the organic philosophy:

> *"There are organic farmers trying to push seven or eight thousand litres and it's not the way they should be going. I think there's quite a few people that have gone into organic milk in the last three or four years that have gone into organic milk solely for the price, which was twenty-nine and half pence. And they're still trying to farm conventionally. They haven't got the attitude."*
>
> *Michael, farm 15*

It was recognised, however, that acquiring the organic "attitude" is a gradual process. James spoke of a relative who converted recently and "hasn't sort of changed at all yet. You can see he's got a lot to learn you know. The more you go on the more you realise that it is a bit more involved than just not using chemicals." As Nick explained, new converts to organic farming have to turn their back on the mindset of forever pushing for increased yield:

> *"I think a lot of them have failed to understand the organic principle. You know I went to one of these farm discussion things about three months ago and they were still feeding a very expensive organic cake and pushing for yield. And I sort of come home thinking well what are they bothering for you know. They were still trying to farm as they were, but just saying they were organic. You can't really do it. You know the system isn't designed really for high yielding. But they are just so fixed in this that, you know, well it's like everything in this world isn't it? If you're big they all think its better, and its not."*
>
> *Nick, farm 5*

Despite accepting that it is possible for farmers to change it was also suggested that there are farmers who would never adapt their mindset and that these farmers would not remain organic for long:

"But what I do think as well is if people go in to it for the wrong reasons like just for the grant, I would say they wouldn't be so successful because you've got to believe in it up here to make it successful in all ways because as I say if you don't actually believe in it then you won't overcome the problems that you are bound to encounter. So they'll just come up against a problem and just go and use antibiotics or something whereas there are other ways round."

Ben, farm 20

"But I think there are more of us now in this last wave of conversions of conventional farmers, and I hope most of us are doing it because we believe in it and not because they see a quick buck. And I've seen both kinds of farmers and the quick buck ones will go quite quickly. It's just the damage they do to the integrity of organics in the long term that worries me."

Mathew, farm 18

Therefore it would seem that whether or not farmers remain certified is in part influenced by their receptiveness to adopting the different values and approach required in order to accommodate an organic mindset.

7.3.3 Summary of section 7.3

This section has explored how the farmers who adopted an 'instrumentalist' approach to organic farming negotiated their identity as organic farmers. It has shown how the farmers defended conventional farming whilst also being critical of farmers who do not change their approach when they farm organically. Conventional farming was protected by defining their decision to convert within pragmatic parameters as well as by drawing attention to the similarities between the two types of farming system. However, the focus on increasing production within conventional farming was criticised and the farmers demonstrated how they had adapted their own 'mindsets' in order to accommodate the change to organic farming. However, despite some of the 'instrumentalist' farmers showing that they were embracing certain aspects of the organic ideology, principally related to production issues, they did not express interest in the social aspects of the organic ideology. This is what principally differentiates them from the 'idealist' farmers, who will be discussed in the proceeding section.

7.4 'Idealist' organic farming identity

Within this section the characteristics of the organic farmers who comprise the 'idealist' category will be discussed. For eighteen of the forty one participants organic farming was primarily a choice based on personally held social and environmental convictions. Of these farmers eleven were new entrants to farming who were not from a family farming background and had not previously farmed conventionally. Thus, unlike those participants from an agricultural lineage, being organic was likely to be central to their new values as farmers.

Entering the agricultural community as both organic farmers and new entrants to agriculture allowed these individuals to shape and express their values in a manner that was relatively unbound by the conventions that acted to constrain farmers who convert from conventional to organic production. Of the seven farmers who *were* from farming backgrounds four were women who, in the very act of choosing to take on the role of farmer, were challenging the agricultural community's traditional expectations of farming women. Thus it can be deduced that the agricultural values formed and expressed by these individuals had the potential to vary significantly from those expressed by the 'instrumentalist' farmers. The personal values which led to the 'idealist' farmers choosing to farm organically will be discussed below.

7.4.1 Reaffirming personal identity

This sub-section will demonstrate how the decision to farm organically by the 'idealist' farmers was framed by a range of social and environmental concerns. It will show how the 'idealist' farmers felt that these values made them distinct from other, more pragmatic, organic farmers, and how some argued that because of this organic farming was becoming divided into two different factions.

Social and environmental rationale for farming organically

The farmers explained their original decisions to farm organically, and their ongoing commitment to the production system, predominantly through a range of social and

environmental concerns not necessarily specific to agriculture. Recurrent themes were concerns for animal welfare, the use of chemicals, the environment and human health. It was clear that the act of farming organically was a way of articulating and appeasing their concerns. The strength of feeling displayed by the farmers regarding their conviction in choosing organic production was as apparent in the farmers who had converted from conventional production as in the new entrants to agriculture.

Deidre, for example, explained that one of her motivations for converting her farm to organic production was that she had wanted to "do something about" intensive livestock production:

> *"I was very keen on trying to do something about animal welfare particularly in the pig and poultry sector. I hadn't come across intensive pig and poultry until I did my degree because we didn't do that here and I was pretty shocked. I'm not squeamish at all I mean I've spent half my life in abattoirs and all the rest of it but I really did not like the way that pigs and poultry were being reared and wanted to do something about that."*
>
> *Deidre, farm 32*

Similarly, Doreen and Julie spoke of how choosing to start organic farming was partly a reaction to how they felt about the use of chemicals in conventional farming:

> *"It seemed [organic farming] was the answer to my disquiet really about what was going on. But as I say I didn't know anything about farming but I had picked something up: it just felt wrong to produce with chemicals."*
>
> *Doreen, farm 2*

> *"I mean I was a hippy, I was a sixties hippy and totally anti anything to do with chemicals. Because of their effect on people, the environment, everything, everything. It just struck me as completely unnatural and I just didn't want to put that rubbish in me, on my vegetables."*
>
> *Julie, farm 30*

Others were more specific regarding their disquiet over chemical usage, citing health implications as their foremost concern, and in particular the health of children. Victoria had been particularly motivated by the possible impacts of chemical residues in food on her own children's health:

"I have no wish to eat something full of growth promoters when I know that but that's personal, you know. But there is no way I'd give my children that because I, you know, pigs carry stuff through in their system, that's why there's no longer swill allowed for them and things like that. So I, you know, maybe I am wrong but I could not be convinced that some part of that growth promoter is not going through that meat to the children or to whoever eats it."

Victoria, farm 4

In other instances the assumption that organic food is healthier in general, rather than specifically due to the absence of chemicals, was identified as a motivating factor. Boyd, for example, explained that he and his wife Morwenna had started to consider the impact of food "quality" upon personal health after one of their children was born with disabilities:

"I mean, one of the subconscious motives for us is having a handicapped child. You think about well was it anything to do with what we ate, or whatever, and you begin to realise that there is a huge connection between the quality of food that people actually eat and the quality of the environment that they live in that determines their overall health and so on."

Boyd, farm 6

Jim described in less personal terms how he also became committed to organic farming partly due to health concerns:

"If you've lived in the States you become very aware about certain lobby groups out there, polluted ground water, disasters where people have hidden stocks of chemicals that they couldn't do anything with so they go and dig a big hole and put them in the ground and then it has polluted the groundwater. There are a lot of private wells in the States, there isn't a big private water system and so people have unwittingly been sold that land for houses, wells have been put in, kids have been damaged, died because they are more susceptible. It's the health side."

Jim, farm 25

Jim also explained how he became so concerned over the use of chemicals in conventional farming that he had sold his first farm when he realised that it would not be feasible to farm it organically:

> *"I was talking to Helen Browning[14] back then, this is fifteen years ago, looking at ways of developing organic markets. But on what I was doing there it wasn't big enough and there were no organic producers around then, no organic markets and unless you've got enough land you can't get an organic rotation going. My response was to sell the place. I couldn't do it so I got out of the place."*
>
> *Jim, farm 25*

Constructing difference within organic farming

The 'idealist' farmers were keen to show their values made them distinctive from less idealistically motivated farmers, such as the 'instrumentalist' farmers within the research:

> *"We went in for thoroughly ethical reasons if you like, whereas, going on various courses and talking to other farmers who were perhaps converting, some of them I don't feel are committed to the organic ethics really, they are perhaps converting part of their farm just to see how it will pay financially. Which, you know, is important, you've got to you know in this day and age and it's tricky for us all....but that is perhaps one difference. We thought through it ethically first and always somehow automatically went in that direction because it seemed right."*
>
> *Morwenna, farm 6*

Morwenna contrasted her own ethical decision to farm organically with those farmers whose decision is primarily financial. Other farmers also made the same differentiation. Despite taking care not to condemn such farmers, the different approaches were seen as creating a division within organic farming:

> *"I think that what there may end up being is almost a divide between the big, commercial operations farming organically....and the smaller people like myself that are much more into the traditional idea of organic farming."*
>
> *Elaine, farm 31*

[14] Helen Browning is a high profile organic farmer who runs a nationally successful meat marketing business.

Thus the farmers assumed that their own approach to organic farming was different from those who had not taken on board the wider implications of the organic philosophy beyond the regulations regarding production standards. Their conviction was, as summed up by Hans, that: "You can't just do organic farming because it earns you better bread and butter." This view parallels the idea of it being necessary to adopt an organic 'mindset' if you are to become successful as an organic farmer, as suggested by some of the 'instrumentalist' farmers. However, the 'idealist' farmers took a different view of how to define successful organic farming, and in so doing went further in adopting the organic ideology than the 'instrumentalist' farmers. The 'idealist' farmers were distinct in that they accorded high importance to the social principles of the organic ideology.

7.4.2 Constructing farming identity with the 'organic mindset'

Within this sub-section it will be shown how the 'idealist' farmers applied their values to approach the practice of organic farming holistically. The 'idealist' farmers were different from the 'instrumentalist' farmers in that they did not need to learn how to have an organic mindset because it was already a part of their belief system and therefore came 'naturally' to them. It will also show how they rejected the past 'muck and magic' image of organic farming in order to construct a more legitimate image based on science. Finally it will demonstrate how the social principles of the organic ideology were important to the 'idealist' farmers, and how they attempted to integrate them into their approach to organic farming.

Approaching organic farming holistically

In the case of the 'idealist' farmers, it is largely their values regarding environmental and social concerns that drive their desire to farm organically. However, these various concerns were not considered in isolation, but rather they were all seen as being interrelated, and connected to the fundamental nature of the organic system. This conception, of viewing organic farming as part of a broader holistic agenda encompassing wider issues that extend beyond agriculture makes their approach distinct from the 'instrumentalist' organic farmers. This conception began with their approach to organic farming itself which was automatically viewed as a system in which everything is

connected and works together as a whole. Rik, for example, explained that the systemic nature of the production system itself is what particularly draws him to organic farming:

> *"The beauty and the attraction of farming organically, certainly for me is the whole thing about it being a system, it all sort of works together and all the bits fit together to get you to that end result. So if you start trying to look at things in isolation it doesn't really work and I think that's possibly where having the vision if you like of where you want to be helps. Because it allows you to say well this is why we're doing this to get to that because if you try and take it into little bits you get frustrated and it doesn't really work."*
>
> *Rik, farm 13*

Rik implies that the ability to see the farm system as a whole rather than as broken into discrete units is necessary in order to succeed as an organic farmer. Megan explained that she found it surprising that others do not approach organic farming in this manner: "It is that thing of understanding the farm and the whole process of the whole system as well. It's seeing it all as being connected. I assume that everybody knows that things are connected and actually they don't necessarily view it that way. So I think, hang on!"

As indicated above the organic philosophy of the 'idealist' farmers was not only applied at the farm level but also had wider implications, extending its influence over their entire worldview, as Elaine's description below testifies:

> *"I'd like to think that it was an intellectual way of coming round to it, to organic farming. I suppose now, and I feel differently now than I did when we first started, but I think now its all this feeling that the environment, nature, the human race and every other animal that exists all have to exist on one planet and we're interconnected in ways that we don't appreciate and that the power of nature and the environment on the human race and every other species is quite enormous and I don't think that the belief that we can tame that is sustainable."*
>
> *Elaine, farm 31*

For Elaine adopting organic farming enabled her to demonstrate in a practical manner her rejection of the domination and control of nature, an approach that she considered unsustainable. Deidre concurred with this view that organic farming is less dominating and therefore more sustainable, or "balanced": "It's actually a much less macho way of

farming. It's much less about domination and much more about working with nature to create a result which is a more balanced result for everybody."

It is apparent therefore that the 'idealist' organic farmers consider taking on the organic principles as a way of working *with* nature. The ideal of working with natural systems seems to 'come naturally' to these farmers; Megan explained, for example, that her conviction to farm organically is a "gut feel", going on to suggest that it would not make sense to her to farm in any other manner:

> *"I can't see farming with a natural system, doing something that's a natural system to do it in any other way than that which supports and actually works with a natural system. [Not doing so] seems to be counter-productive to me, it doesn't seem to be healthy or sensible or it seems very short-term and irresponsible."*
>
> *Megan, farm 7*

The belief that farming organically is the "sensible" way to farm was repeated by a number of other 'idealist' farmers such as Daniel who said simply that he: "just thought, 'well it is sensible thinking'". Boyd felt that being motivated to farm organically due to its interconnectedness was somehow self-evident for people such as themselves, to the extent that it was "instinctive" rather than conscious:

> *"You know [linking soil health and human health] goes right back to the founders of the Soil Association who were thinking along those lines. And I think most of us, well most of the people that we know do tend to think along those lines, but we don't kind of talk about that because it's instinctive, if I can put it that way."*
>
> *Boyd, farm 6*

Using science to reject the 'muck and magic' image

However, despite employing the argument that organic farming was in some way an intuitive choice for them to make they were emphatic that their actual practices of organic farming were based on logic and careful management, as Morwenna joked: "it's not all muck and magic you see!" Thus, as for the 'instrumentalist' farmers, distancing themselves from the image acquired by organic farming in the sixties and seventies is

important in establishing their identities as serious organic farmers. In the following light-hearted discussion about the television program 'The Good Life'[15] Boyd and Morwenna demonstrate their refusal to accept such an association:

> *Boyd: "We see programs like the Good Life[15] and so on, and I've got to say it really seriously pisses us off."*
>
> *Morwenna: "You shouldn't say that on tape Boyd."*
>
> *Boyd: "They're idiots; they really don't know what they're doing. You know we're not doing it because we want to escape from society."*
>
> *Morwenna: "You would if you lived in Surbiton."*
>
> *Boyd: "Well yes, maybe...but I mean we're doing it more because we'd like society to you know, look after itself a bit better, I think that's perhaps the way to look at it."*
>
> *Boyd and Morwenna, farm 6*

Due to their emotive reasons for farming organically it is perhaps more likely that the 'idealist' farmers would be associated with such an image. However, as argued by Megan, choosing organic production may have been an instinctive choice for her but her arguments are robust and practical when it comes to the management of her farm:

> *"I suppose [choosing organic farming] is a gut feel, but that doesn't mean gut feeling as in benign neglect. For instance, what we are doing here is in rotation we are ripping up pastures that are old and unproductive grass and putting down appropriate long-term leys. We try and have the optimum number of cattle that are really well bedded and make the optimum quantity of composted manure. We are interested in having a vibrant living organism. There's also room within that for things that are you know...bits of traditional limestone pasture that we don't want to touch. It's a matter of natural integration. We are trying for the best of both worlds I suppose. We are trying for optimum productivity from a natural system to give you a healthy soil and healthy people and caring for your environment....It is I suppose just an instinctual response, but I can also stand up for it in production terms."*
>
> *Megan, farm 7*

[15] 'The Good Life' is a popular English television sitcom produced during the 1970s, at the time of the 'back to the land' movement. It features a married couple, Tom and Barbara Good, who live in a town called Surbiton. They attempt to lead a self-sufficient lifestyle by turning their home into a farm-cum-allotment, much to the chagrin of their conservative neighbours (British Broadcasting Corporation 2005).

Interestingly, unlike the 'instrumentalist' farmers, who negotiated the rejection of organic farming's past image by relating organic farming to traditional methods of agriculture, the 'idealist' farmers rejected the link with tradition. Instead the 'idealist' farmers stressed the importance of science and modern techniques to their management systems. Deidre, for example, explained that when she undertook organic farming she saw it as a technical challenge to which she could apply her scientific training:

> *"It seemed to me to be a wonderful technical challenge and I came at it to a degree from a scientific perspective as well thinking I want to see if I can make this work.... I just wanted to see how fast we could run without taking the steroids or whatever. [It was] a real technical challenge that I found really intriguing and really felt there was something there to get my teeth stuck into, that there would be a lifetimes work in actually trying to develop the system and seeing if it could work. I mean initially you know we were about evaluating the system you know would it work? We ran trials for the first couple of years we didn't run headlong into converting the farm.... I thought it looks like a good way to farm, a better way to farm, let's see if it is."*
>
> *Deidre, farm 32*

Deidre effectively claims that she set out to prove correct her instinct that organic farming was a "better way to farm". In other words, in an assertion echoing that of Megan, although she acknowledged that the choice to convert her farm was initially based on instinct, the system that she subsequently developed can stand up to scientific evaluation. Importantly, Deidre also commented that the financial viability of her farm proved that organic farming does not have to be either "a rich man's hobby or a hippy's dream". The use of science in developing organic production was claimed by other farmers such as Boyd who contrasted his approach to overcoming problems with that of "traditional farming families":

> *"And maybe the other thing that's important is that people like us as we're sort of doing the job and we come upon a problem will just go to the textbooks, because I think most of the people we know are, have got training in some science or other so they'd automatically go and try and find out what the latest research was saying. Whereas again your sort of traditional farming family would try and sort things out the way they've always sorted it out."*
>
> *Boyd, farm 6*

The implication seems to be that the organic systems developed by himself, and other 'people like him', will be more scientifically rigorous and progressive than those developed by farmers from a agricultural background who, the argument goes, are less likely to be open to or able to access new scientific ideas. As argued by Morwenna, the 'idealist' farmers did not view organic farming as "going back to nature" and they felt that "it is beginning to dawn on everybody who goes into it that it involves more science, not less". The application of science is seen as helping to explain how everything links together within the organic system and thus is in line with the holistic viewpoints of these farmers (although arguably some ways of applying science take a more segmented approach and thus actually would run contrary to a holistic approach).

By arguing that organic farming requires a degree of scientific knowledge and that "...you have to think *more* carefully about why you're doing everything and how everything links together" (Morwenna, farm 6) they can validate their claim as farmers. By denying that farming organically requires 'innate' knowledge passed down through generations of farmers and instead requires a level of education and a certain approach to thinking about the farming system enables those from different backgrounds to legitimately become farmers. Rowan, in the following comment, argued for his identity as a farmer despite his lack of agricultural lineage:

> *"And now I can say after seventeen, eighteen years of farming I can actually say you don't need to be a farmer's son or a farmer's daughter for that matter to come and do it. I can do it. I can look around and I can see, sure I can see things that I haven't done quite right and that need improving but I think that is part of life itself, but I can see that I know what I am doing."*
>
> *Rowan, farm 24*

It can be argued then that the nature of organic farming, by placing emphasis upon a systems approach, enables people who would not normally be accepted as farmers, including women, to take on that role.

Realising the social principles

To varying degrees realising the wider social and cultural implications of organic agriculture were important to the identities of the 'idealist' farmers. In this respect their approach differed significantly from that of the 'instrumentalist' organic farmers. Deidre spoke about the importance of the "cultural element" of organic farming:

> *"I think the other side that works alongside [organic farming] is the whole cultural element of it and I think that is quite important too and easily forgotten. I think as rural society starts to break down or changes very dramatically I think some of that sort of the cultural side of it, the need for it is becoming apparent. Whether its things like, the organic sector has got very involved with things like arts and music locally and nationally bringing a lot of that into play, to see that as part of the whole philosophy, part of that whole attitude."*
>
> *Deidre, farm 32*

Hans felt that building links with the local community was important and looked upon doing so as an additional form of production:

> *"I think it's a very important aspect in the way that you can reach out with your farm....You are actually reaching out into the community, the local community. You can say you produce social contacts, you produce links with the local community and I think that is very important for everybody."*
>
> *Hans, farm 16*

A number of the farmers felt that it was part of their duty as organic farmers to educate the public about the organic produce that they are buying as explained by Rik:

> *"Well how can you possibly stand there on the one hand and say, "well I'm producing this and I think you should all buy it" but not be happy to tell somebody why they should buy it, or why you're doing it and what is different. I mean it still might not necessarily convince everybody, we're not sort of completely in cloud cuckoo land that we assume that just because we get them all there they will say, "oh right well we should do it like that". But it's all part of it...you know if we want people to buy more organic food we've got to tell them why they should be doing it. "*
>
> *Rik, farm 13*

Morwenna and Natalie were of the same opinion as Rik regarding educating customers about organic farming, and they both explained that they take the opportunity to educate their customers when they are direct selling. Morwenna said that she is "always talking about traceability and things like this, and lack of food miles and stuff like that". Whereas Natalie specifically mentioned that she likes to disseminate healthy recipes for using her vegetables:

> *"And then the education side because I'd been a teacher so yes I am very interested in that and you know through the farmers' markets you know people ask me questions and also educating them about how they can use vegetables; how to cook them to, I mean I don't sort of say, "well this is the way to cook them to preserve nutrients" but you know when you are talking about recipes, I mean all the recipes I give use methods that are designed to not cook them too long to preserve the nutrients."*
>
> *Natalie, farm 33*

In addition to taking opportunities to educate her customers Natalie also allowed her farm to be used as an educational resource by local schools:

> *"We have started a link with the local high school; so they come over once a year and do soil sampling and so on within their science department and I had primary school teachers over here last year to think about how they could use the farm within the syllabus. So I am doing all that kind of stuff as well."*
>
> *Natalie, farm 33*

Natalie's project, which directly uses her farm as an educational tool, was not unique amongst this group of farmers. Indeed several of them mentioned plans to incorporate educational projects within their farm systems. Megan, for example, was enthused by the idea of providing a resource for school children by converting a derelict barn into an educational centre:

"I want to try and do something in education. I want to try and do something where we help actually set up a program for school children. And I would say that was a social impulse, I'm not thinking that it's going to make me a fortune. What we would like to have is a this sort of multipurpose classroom and what we put on the planning thing is rural studies we thought that was low key enough. But what I think I'm talking about is having a classroom facility so that if you had groups of children they'd have somewhere to go when it rained, they'd have toilets and they'd have you know that kind of thing. And somewhere where they could do their worksheets or have a discussion. So that's what I would like to do with that building."

Megan, farm 7

Boyd and Morwenna also had educational plans for their farm, but they wanted to organise and run courses for adults along with a group of other organic farmers as is explained in the exchange below:

Morwenna: "I mean we might eventually try and run short courses here...weekend courses. Well it's only a theoretical idea at the moment but [we would do it with] a few others in the [marketing] group because between us there's quite a bit of training."

Boyd: "Well when you think about it yes, you and Hannah, she's got agricultural livestock training, you've got plant training. Trudy has got a first degree and an MSc in plant pathology; she's really up to speed on that, Howard trained in agriculture generally at Reading...Justin's a geologist which is actually quite important. And I'm trained in systems engineering, which is about how you put everything together. So we keep thinking that we ought to..."

Morwenna: "We've got the holiday cottage you see which would sleep four. We wouldn't have a lot of people at a time but it would just be a sort of trial run say for a weekend to see how it worked out. It could bring in some extra money and it would be interesting and valuable wouldn't it?"

Boyd and Morwenna, farm 6

As Morwenna suggested when she commented that the educational plans would be "valuable", these projects are not simply about generating more income for the farms but are also driven by moral concerns and a genuine desire to disseminate information about organic production. Megan, for example, articulated her motivations as follows:

> *"Kids access things through the computer from the very early age and they live this virtual life. They don't actually know what it is to shovel cow shit or touch a calf or collect eggs from a nest box you know, they don't get connected. So what I want to do, you're going to get my life story here, what I want to do is run some kind of an education project that presents those kinds of opportunities to children. And whether I'd want to do that if I wasn't an organic farmer I can't tell you. But maybe the level on which I have nothing to hide plays an impact you know? I really feel I have nothing to hide in the way in which the food is produced here, there's nothing to hide. You know I can stand for anything that people eat that's grown here or is produced here because I know that it's okay."*
>
> *Megan, farm 7*

A similar desire, to bring people closer to the source of their food, and the same assertion, that adherence to the organic system means that there is nothing to hide, were stated by Deidre when she spoke of the "open door policy" that she operates on her farm:

> *"We have an open door policy and people can come and look round any time, any time of the day or night; on any day of the year they are welcome to have a ramble around the place. The whole principle of what we are trying to do is you know we never have anything to hide. We may have problems, I am not saying we never have anything go wrong but we have nothing that we are ever ashamed of or want to keep hidden...So its that sense of openness and we want people to understand more about farming, not a sentimental, romantic picture of everything skipping round a field but actually a much more real understanding of the things we have to do and the compromises we have to make and the difficulties....I think very few people have a realistic, visceral understanding of what farming is about and what the natural world is about actually I think very few people have that because they are so shut off from it actually with their central heating and their cars and their...and you know its very easy for even us to get cut off from it sometimes if you're not careful."*
>
> *Deidre, farm 32*

Conceiving and developing this type of project, superfluous as they are to the actual production system itself, is a way of the 'idealist' farmers realising their approach to the organic ideology in a practical way. Unlike the 'instrumentalist' farmers, these individuals see organic farming as more than a production system and as having wider implications than positive on-farm impacts, and instigating educational projects is a way of demonstrating this conviction.

7.4.3 Summary of section 7.4

This section has explored how the farmers comprising the 'idealist' category approached organic farming. Firstly it has shown how they chose organic farming primarily due to a range of social and environmental convictions. Organic farming was a way for them to tackle these issues in a practical way. Their social and environmental concerns led them to adopt a holistic approach to organic farming. The 'idealist' farmers felt that it was this approach that distinguished them from more pragmatic farmers. However, despite their intuitive choice, they stressed that they applied a scientific approach to the practice of organic farming. Finally this section described how the farmers attempted to practically integrate the social aspects of the organic ideology within their broader farm systems. The following section will show how the approach of the majority of the 'idealist' farmers, one in which all aspects of the organic ideology are taken into account, was conceptualised as being 'feminised'.

7.5 Feminising the organic ideology

In this section the notion that organic farming has 'natural' connections with femininity will be discussed. Twenty one of the forty one participants made comments that specifically associated women (rather than men) with the practice of organic farming due to supposed inherent characteristics related to femininity. Most of these farmers fall into the 'idealist' category in their approach to the organic philosophy. These comments mostly arose in the context of discussion about how the interviewee's experiences of the organic community differed from their experiences and/or expectations of the conventional farming community. In contrast to the 'idealist' farmer, the majority of the 'instrumentalist' farmers did not make a specific connection between femininity and organic farming, and rather they saw the higher involvement of women in organic farming as due to structural factors.

7.5.1 A 'natural' association

The farmers felt that there was more likely to be a greater involvement of women in organic farming than conventional farming. These assumptions regarding the involvement

of women in organic farming were based on both their actual experience of the organic community as well as their own gut feeling. Rik, for example, compared his current experience of managing an organic farm with his previous experiences of managing conventional farms:

> *"I would say [organic farming is] very different to conventional. Because I think that most of the farms that I ever was associated with before were all very much male. I certainly know more women that have got an active role in organic farming than I know in conventional farming. "*
>
> *Rik, farm 13*

Elaine drew on her experiences of dealing with both organic and conventional farming in her past job as a fresh produce buyer for a supermarket in expressing her opinion that:

> *"[Organic farming is] considerably different to conventional farms, certainly in the farms that I was dealing with you often found that the women were involved whereas on the non-organic farms that would be rare. That would be rare. The women were definitely more involved."*
>
> *Elaine, farm 31*

Mathew made a distinction between the involvement of women on organic farms, which he did not think was any different to conventional farms, and within organic agriculture more widely, in which he felt that women would be more involved:

> *"Farmers wise no but organics wise yes. I've had inspections from the Soil Association: two-thirds women, Elm Farm: woman, Helen Browning. I mean yes, very female orientated I think."*
>
> *Mathew, farm 18*

Other farmers had not necessarily experienced a wide range of farms and therefore could not comment on any actual differences in the involvement of women between organic and conventional farms. Nonetheless their perception was that organic farming would have a greater involvement of women. Thus, despite not necessarily having personal experiences to verify their opinions, these farmers were more able to associate women with organic farming than conventional farming. Conventional agriculture was seen as being dominating and mechanical, and consequently unlikely to attract women:

"I think conventional farming is very much about right knock it on the head and stomp it down with that chemical, or Commando, you just need to look at the adverts I mean its extraordinary. I think its all about driving big tractors and all that kind of stuff. Obviously whenever I make these comments its not to be exclusive because there are many women who are much more mechanically focused and probably have a much more domineering mindset and a lot of men who are more you know...its still an actual debate, the sexes aren't really being cut in that way. But I think that women are instinctively drawn towards producing food in a more appropriate way rather than forcing it, I think they are just a bit more in tune with it."

Deidre, farm 32

The same assumption as that made by Deidre is revealed in the following three quotes in which the farmers state that women are more likely to be 'naturally' drawn to farming organically:

"I suppose [organic farming] is not so much a natural choice for a man as it would be a natural choice of women."

Rowan, farm 24

"And I just think [organic farming] is more natural to them. And that sounds like a very strange thing to say but I think it's very much logical and sensible as far as women are concerned."

Deidre, farm 32

"I would have guessed that if you wanted to go into farming as a female, in organics you would do it quite naturally."

Doreen, farm 2

The farmers explained this perceived phenomenon using essentialist arguments that linked women with nature, such as perceptions regarding women's concern for the environment and animal welfare as well as their supposed greater awareness of health related issues due to connections with children and family life. Pivotal to these arguments was the belief that women have a natural tendency to see things as a whole, an approach which corresponds with the organic ideology.

7.5.2 Women and family health

Women were seen to have a greater awareness of the impact of diet upon health. This awareness was perceived as being linked to their close association with children and providing food for their families. In the following discussion Mathew called upon his wife, Chloe, who had just returned from the supermarket, to explain his hunch that women are more involved in organic production:

> *Mathew: "But why women? Is it the purist bit or is it the Earth Mother bit?"*
>
> *Chloe: "It's the lets feed my children on healthy food bit."*
>
> *Mathew: "Is that what it is?"*
>
> *Chloe: "What turns up in the supermarkets is naff."*
>
> *Mathew: "Could be right."*
>
> *Chloe: "You know they go for food that is generally healthier, not everybody does but a lot of women do. If we all had enough money and had the option then you know we probably would do it. It's nicer food on the whole."*
>
> *Mathew: "There you are, women cook, women choose the ingredients, women choose organic farming."*
>
> *Chloe and Mathew, farm 18*

Chloe suggested that women are naturally interested in organic food due to their desire to nurture their families, thus assuming a direct link between women and food provision. The same supposition was made by Elaine when she spoke about "motherly instinct":

> *"...women, because they are usually a mother and they have that protective motherly instinct with their children and want to protect them from everything and the thought that they must give them what is the very best they possibly can and because organic is completely natural so that has got to be better. You know I think there is all this...women are more conscious of food. Not just eating it, but they're more conscious of what they're providing for their families: health, cooking that sort of thing."*
>
> *Elaine, farm 31*

The link made between women and food provision was extended in order to explain their perceived greater involvement in organic farming. It was assumed that this role would lead to them, naturally, choosing organic farming over conventional farming:

> *Hannah: "Because [women] are concerned about their food and their families that interest is probably a key driver as to why somebody would choose to do [organic farming]."*
>
> *Mark: "If you looked at male and female role models in terms of bringing up children and nutrition I think the research would show that women are far more concerned about the quality of food that they are giving to their children and so it might be that. It might be something connected to that because they have that need, desire to ensure the quality that they are giving."*
>
> *Hannah and Mark, farm 26*

Thus women's involvement in organic farming is linked by these farmers to their traditional domestic roles of childcare and food provision. Men, in contrast, were depicted as not automatically having the same approach:

> *"...the other thing is the whole thing about sort of part of the inherent thing about organic farming is food quality and sort of health issues and I think again that women are perhaps a little bit more in touch with that. I know we've got four children and my wife will sort of click onto that bit of what's going on quicker than perhaps I did. Because as a man you tend to be very blinkered and everything's sort of "well I've got to do this and I've got to do that" and maybe that's a different take on things so [women] associate with the organic system better from that point of view."*
>
> *Rik, farm 13*

So, the argument goes, women are naturally more in tune with the organic system than men due to their less "blinkered" approach to life. Doreen made an even more explicit link between women's biological ability to bear children and the holistic nature of organic systems:

> *"...if you're talking about gender prejudice a woman would've had an easier time in the organic movement than in [conventional farming] because it's a holistic approach where the aim is not just to make money, the aim is to improve the environment and produce healthy food, which of course produces healthy babies which is what women are about, and really ultimately what the planet is about."*

Doreen, farm 2

It is assumed, therefore, that due to its holism organic farming is inherently more 'female-friendly' than conventional farming. Doreen went further in making a direct association between the planet i.e. nature, and women when she stated "[healthy babies are] what women are about and really ultimately what the planet is about".

7.5.3 Women and the environment

The ostensible connection between women and nature also formed the backbone to assertions that women have a greater level of concern for the environment; a further argument used to explain why women would naturally choose organic production. In the following two quotes the farmers state how women are more concerned (than men) about the environment:

> *"I suppose women are more sort of protective towards the environment you know global warming and all the rest of it, which we've got to put up with in the future. You know Greenham Common it was all women that marched wasn't it? Generally I think they are more concerned."*
>
> *Ian, farm 21*

> *"I suppose women are meant to care more for the environment and stuff like that. I think they do."*
>
> *Melanie, farm 21*

The notion that women are more "concerned" and "protective" towards the environment than men was seen by Joan as a reason why the organic movement might wish to encourage women to become involved; presumably because they bring a more caring element to organic farming:

> *"I should imagine [the organic movement] would like to see a lot of women in, because you tend to think that women are more sensitive to animals and the environment. So I should imagine they would like to see more women."*
>
> *Joan, farm 8*

The words employed to describe women's concern for the environment draw upon traditional notions of femininity, such as being caring, concerned, protective and sensitive.

7.5.4 Women and animals

Traditional notions of femininity were also drawn upon when the farmers explained the association they make between women and work with animals. It was argued that women have a natural affinity with animals, and therefore they prefer organic farming due to its high standards of animal welfare. In the following quote James, who employed a herdswoman, explained how women are good with animals:

> *"I think [women have] got strengths on the livestock side, I think women are usually very good with animals. It all sounds a bit sort of like I'm categorising but I think women are very good with animals, I think women are very good at things like calf rearing."*
>
> *James, farm 14*

Again, as with their assumptions regarding women and the environment, this traditional association was not challenged by the farmers, and rather it was reinforced through their explanatory use of stereotypical feminine qualities, as in the following quote in which Ian explained that women have got "patience":

> *"Women are generally better at working with stock I find than men. Women do tend to work better because I think they've got a lot of patience you see."*
>
> *Ian, farm 21*

These assumptions about female characteristics were naturalised by connecting their care for animals with the natural "instinct" of women to bear children:

> *"But I think when women are involved in farming then they make a good job of looking after the animals. They are conscientious in what they do and well I expect it's just the mothering instinct."*
>
> *Joan, farm 8*

Val also made the connection between bearing children and caring for animals, and also assumed that, in the same way that women want the best for their children, women

naturally want the best for their animals and therefore are likely to choose organic production:

> *"I think that there's a lot of women are good with stock...I don't know, because I haven't got any children, well I have but they're four-legged, whether that's because of a maternal thing...whether women are more, are better at looking after the animals so because of that they want a better quality of life for them and less factory approach and then that's heading all towards being organic."*
>
> *Val, farm 1*

In all of these statements there is the underlying expectation that men do not instinctively feel the same desire as women to care for animals. This view was embodied by Morwenna when she explained the different, highly traditional gendered roles that she and Boyd described observing in the process of lambing, as being "the natural complementation":

> *Boyd: "I was thinking about the sheep courses and so on that we've been on, I think...what tended to happen is that whereas both sexes did the sheep management overall you know, doing their feet and drenching them and so on, it was usually the men that got the lambs out, did the actual physical lambing if a ewe needed help. But it was the women who look after the lambs after that, because I've got to admit it they're just, they have more patience, and they were just better at getting lambs that seriously wanted to die to persuade them that it wasn't a good idea and they should hang on for a bit."*
>
> *Morwenna: "So things like regular bottling, I don't think the majority of men, you know it sounds a bit sexist, but the majority of men do not like doing that: the natural complementation, that sort of thing."*
>
> *Boyd and Morwenna, farm 6*

7.5.5 Women and a holistic approach

At the source of the various arguments being marshalled by the farmers was the underlying assertion that the organic ideology itself, in which system components are viewed as a whole, make it a form of farming that is inherently suited to women. Effectively, in making this supposition, the farmers were suggesting that the organic philosophy denotes a more feminine approach to agriculture than the more masculine ideals of conventional farming. However, this supposition draws upon traditional,

essentialist assumptions about the meaning of femininity, and therefore also masculinity, which to some may be considered regressive rather than progressive. Rik, for example drew on traditional assumptions about women's lack of interest in the specificity of scientific factors of production when he explained why becoming involved in organic farming is attractive to women:

> *"[Organic farming] allows you to say "well this is why we're doing this to get to that" because if you try and take it into little bits you get frustrated and it doesn't really work. And I think maybe its easier for a number of women to have that kind of view of "right well that's where I want to be and I don't need to know exactly about all the intricacies of whether that cow will produce that amount of milk or how many chickens we've got to have to do that. But that's where I think we should be"... And maybe that's not as easy to do; the opportunity isn't there within conventional agriculture to get that kind of systems approach. Its all the bits together I guess, and maybe its just something that fits better with a female idea perhaps, they find they can do something with it and can run with it....And yes when you sort of look around there are a number of people who are doing it from a female point of view and that is good."*
>
> *Rik, farm 13*

However, the "systems approach" described by Rik can also be understood as an alternative way of describing the holistic scientific approach discussed in sub-section 7.4.2, and used by 'idealists' as a means of ridding organic farming of the regressive 'muck and magic' image. Likewise, Elaine used essentialism - in the form of women's emotionality- to explain why she feels they are able to take on board the holistic nature of organic farming:

> *"I think if you are interested in organic farming and interested therefore in environment and what you eat and how that affects you and all the sort of things that kind of all go in together; often that is quite an emotional, inside you thing and I think often women can feel that more strongly. I'm generalising here but I also think that people that tend to have that view of the environment and the importance of it tend to not have such a stereotyped view of the male and female role; and so the two go together."*
>
> *Elaine, farm 31*

Elaine suggested that there may be an association between those individuals who adopt an 'emotional' approach to organic farming and having a progressive approach to the

division of on-farm roles. Chapter Eight will show how the results of this research support claims for such an association.

This analysis has shown that some farmers argued that women are more naturally in tune with the requirements of the organic ideology than men, due to inherent feminine characteristics that are in accordance with the organic philosophy. The argument therefore follows that when male farmers successfully adopt the organic ideology they are expressing characteristics traditionally associated with women. Such a line of argument suggests that organic farming can be seen as more 'feminine' than conventional farming; a characteristic that not only makes it potentially a more accessible area of farming to women but also to men whose gender identities do not fit in with the macho culture that has been shown to dominate much of mainstream agriculture. This idea will be discussed within the following sub-section.

7.5.6 Men and organic farming: expressing feminine characteristics

It was asserted by the majority of the 'idealist' farmers and a minority of the 'instrumentalist' farmers that the holism of organic farming makes it intrinsically suited to females. However, an interesting idea which further developed this line of thinking was suggested by Deidre. Deidre argued that the organic philosophy also appealed directly to "slightly gentler men":

> *"...I know a lot of slightly gentler men who have been drawn to the organic thing. And then of course we had the big boom commercially a few years ago when we started being taken more seriously and then farmers of all hues and colours started farming organically. I think that was really interesting because I think what has happened, and this has been borne out by some Danish research, is that the system does actually change the person a bit. And a lot of them you quite often see, I've seen one in a press release this morning, someone saying that you know, "our yields are really good and its fantastic because I really do find organic a much nicer way to farm". You know and this is someone who converted just for the business opportunity and yet a lot of them are now feeling quite chuffed with what they have managed to achieve. It's a bit sort of like you know winning the marathon without the need for drugs. So I think it does shift their attitude slightly."*
>
> *Deidre, farm 32*

Although the idea that a different type of man may be attracted to organic farming was not put forward by other farmers, the suggestion that male farmers who convert from conventional farming can adapt their mindset to fully embrace the organic approach was more widespread. Participants such as Megan, for example, argued that farmers who initially convert for economic reasons can be changed through farming organically:

> *"Sometimes they have made the transition purely for economic reasons, purely because they see a niche market, they have to up the margins, they've got to survive, and they've decided to go organic. And then actually what happens is there's a change that works on them, it's quite subtle, they get other things from it as well and they're kind of relieved to find that there's something they can believe in as well as live by."*
>
> *Megan, farm 7*

This type of idea is supported by an earlier discussion in which it was argued that some of the farmers in the interview sample who had converted to organic farming from conventional farming underwent a shift in their mindset which enabled them to take on board the holistic approach of organic farming. Rather than seeing organic farming as creating a new side to the farmers, Deidre suggested that organic farming provides them with the freedom to express aspects of their identity that had previously been suppressed within the conventional farming environment:

> *"I think with men there is much more ego involved and they are much more caught up with their toys, and their tractors and all this kind of thing it's just a different mentality. That's not to say there are not plenty of men who can't cross over and be extremely sensitive organic farmers and I think their minds are opened by becoming organic farmers and it brings out a side to them which they've had to suppress in order to become farmers in the first place."*
>
> *Deidre, farm 32*

Thus Deidre proposed that the less dominating ethos of organic farming provides the legitimacy to some male farmers to express a more "sensitive" i.e. more feminine side of their identity. She believed that it is those farmers who are open to adapting their mindset, who will go on to become successful organic farmers:

"...now I think you're getting people who are already very skilled conventional farmers going into organics and they're breaking new ground and they are teaching us new tricks. So I think they can be very good farmers as long as they are not so cynical that they can't get into the mindset. You do have to change your mindset I mean organic farming above all else is an attitude towards the natural world and the way we grow our food and its actually if you are prepared over the first two or three years to change your mindset but keep that ability that you've got as a good conventional farmer I think you'll do really well."

Deidre, farm 32

When Deidre referred to organic farming being "an attitude to the natural world" she was referring to its holistic approach. The same contrast between the organic and conventional approach was made by Peter. However, he chose to employ an overtly sexualised metaphor of Mother Earth; contrasting the "serving" nature of the organic, and specifically the biodynamic, approach with the "exploiting" nature of the conventional approach:

"All farming is of a female quality in terms of the animals and the whole aspect of the earth itself; the earth itself is a female in terms of Mother Earth ...I was going to say offering I hope it's not politically incorrect but there's an element of offering in it...In a sense I feel that here there is the offering on the one side and there is a serving element of humanity on the other side. It should be a serving role that man takes...rather than the opposite which is an exploiting kind of role where it is more that the earth serves us but I think really that is impossible to me, it doesn't fit with the female quality that is there either. It isn't as though you can just give away if you had lots to give and if you had spare, but you don't have that. And that is the real difference between conventional farming and biodynamic farming. I think that the organics if you like are coming much closer. I think the organics to me seems more a way of looking differently at conventional. It is perhaps more sustainable but in the end I do feel that biodynamics as an idea has more to offer and goes that step further. It is really holistic which I think organic farming really isn't."

Rowan, farm 24

Rowan stressed that the biodynamic approach to organic farming is more holistic than other forms of organic farming. However, what is interesting is that in doing so he revealed his personal philosophical approach, which presumably forms his rationale for choosing biodynamic farming, in which he drew very heavily upon the association of women and nature. The connections made by Rowan between femininity and nature are

the strongest of all the farmers interviewed. This suggests, although further research is needed to explore this, that the more holistic approach of biodynamic farming can promote a less progressive approach to gender than an organic approach which is less holistic. Indeed this is backed up to an extent by this research which found that gender roles within the biodynamic communities are amongst the least progressive within the 'traditional transformed' category.

7.5.7 Denying the association of organic farming and femininity

Although the association of organic farming with femininity was made to some degree by the majority of 'idealist' farmers a small minority held opposing views. While these farmers did assert that there was a greater involvement of women in organic farming their explanations for the perceived phenomenon were markedly different to those expressed above. Rather than using explanations that drew upon women's biology, they used different, more practical arguments. Trudy, for example, acknowledged the association of women with nature but dismissed it in favour of an alternative explanation:

> *"I can't really think that women are more into thinking about the environment or animal welfare because there are plenty of men who are really into that, it would seem strange to me that more women thought about the issues than men so I was trying to think about it from another way. So perhaps more women are trying to get into farming and that's an easier way of getting in....perhaps it is easier to get into organic farming as a female. Perhaps there are more opportunities, there are more opportunities I should imagine for doing voluntary work and that's always a way in. So if you don't come from a farming background and you need experience you'll probably find it easier to gain that on an organic farm than conventional."*
>
> *Trudy, farm 23*

Thus Trudy not only refused to accept that concern for the environment and animal welfare was split along gender lines, but also that women are specifically drawn to organic farming rather than conventional. Instead she chose to explain the greater involvement of women in terms of its accessibility to people from outside of agriculture. Megan, who had been a Soil Association inspector for a number of years, was similar in her rejection of a particular association between women and organic agriculture:

"There are a few women who've got hold of the idea of organic farming; it's inspired them, they've taken it on as a project. But perhaps they would've been inspired to farm anyway. [The idea] that there's something in it that speaks to women...they might find it satisfying, but then so do a lot of men who have farmed conventionally and have made the transition."

Megan, farm 7

Megan drew upon the link between organic farming and on-farm food-related diversification enterprises to explain the greater involvement of women. Thus the involvement of women was explained using a traditional notion of female roles:

"I would think that probably organic in its nature would lead quite naturally to diversification and maybe on-farm processing and that quite a few women who weren't involved in daily farm work, like you know mucking out and feeding, would perhaps be involved in the production of finished goods from the farm. So you see quite a lot of dairying where women end up making yogurt and cheese, ice cream, things like that, quite a lot of processing. "

Megan, farm 7

In an explanation using similar traditional assumptions about gender roles Daniel used the parallel between organic farming and small-scale farming to explain the involvement of women:

"Well there are bound to be [more women] because organic farming is supposedly small-scale farming. Initially it was small-scale farming so that means husband and wife if you like...and you only have to listen to the Archers with Tony and Pat and that tells you all you want to know. She does the running round and he does the milking. And small-scale farming will always be that way, because you are not going to make a mint from it. You are not talking about big business here, you are talking just you know, survival tactics....Of course it is [related to scale] to a certain extent. I mean you are never going to get a lady who's going to sit on a combine for twelve hours a day on a twenty thousand-acre cereal farm. It doesn't happen. But you might get a lady whose going to help you out lambing thirty or forty ewes and look after a few fowls and run a stall."

Daniel, farm 17

Like Trudy, Megan and Daniel, the majority of the 'instrumentalist' farmers did not make a specific association between women and organic farming. However, in contrast to the three 'idealist' farmers discussed above, they did not even acknowledge that other people

may make such an association. In explanations echoing that of Daniel, any perceived differences in the involvement of women were attributed to the type and scale of farm that characterises organic farming. Organic farms were largely seen as relatively small mixed family farms which 'naturally' demand a certain type of input from farm women. Indeed, earlier empirical research has demonstrated a greater involvement of women on small, livestock farms.

7.5.7 Summary of section 7.5

This sub-section has demonstrated how a range of farmers, mostly those expressing an 'idealist' organic ideology, drew upon the notion of women's connection with nature in order to explain their perceived higher involvement within organic farming than conventional farming. For the most part, women were seen as being 'naturally' in tune with aspects of the organic ideology. This was the dominant but not the only view since a small number of farmers, both 'idealist' and instrumentalist', actively disputed the congruence between femininity and organic farming.

7.6 Summary and discussion of the results presented in Chapter Seven

In this final section of Chapter Seven the results that have been presented within this chapter will be summarised and then discussed. The discussion will consider Chapter Seven in relation to its contribution towards answering the following research question: Does the ideological standpoint of organic farming encourage the expression of distinctive forms of gender roles, relations and identities?

7.6.1 Summary

This chapter has presented interview material exploring how the organic farmers interpreted the organic ideology. The first section described how, through the analysis of the interviews, the farmers were categorised into two different types according to their ideological orientation: either 'instrumentalist' or 'idealist'. The next two sections went on to provide detailed accounts of the characteristics of the two different types. It was shown how the 'instrumentalist' farmers indicated that they gradually shifted their approach and

started to adopt the organic ideology after they had begun farming organically. However, they concentrated specifically on production issues rather than also taking account of the social issues. In contrast, the 'idealist' farmers automatically adopted the organic ideology due to its correspondence with their belief system. Moreover they also placed an emphasis upon the social aspects of organic farming; for the 'idealist' farmers organic farming was more than just another form of production.

The final section went on to show that in order to successfully adopt the organic philosophy just over half of the organic practitioners, mostly of an 'idealist' orientation, felt that an individual requires a particular approach, embodied by certain characteristics traditionally associated with femininity due to women's biology. This represents an approach to farming which, rather than striving to dominate and control production, attempts to work holistically within the farm system, or 'with nature'. Thus organic farming was associated with femininity and a holistic worldview, in contrast with conventional farming which was associated with masculinity and a mechanistic worldview. Further to this it was suggested that when male farmers successfully adopt this approach they are expressing characteristics traditionally seen as feminine.

An alternative way of conceptualising the perceived higher involvement of women in organic farming was also suggested. This alternative argument rejected the association with women's biology and instead explained their involvement using practical features of organic farming. For example, it was suggested that it was easier to gain experience in organic farming than in conventional farming for people who are not from a farming background. Also, structural factors such as the smaller size of organic farms, and the likelihood that they diversify into food-related enterprises were suggested as increasing the involvement of women.

7.6.2 Discussion

The claims made regarding women's 'natural' association with organic farming discussed above; which draw upon traditional notions of femininity to make claims for women's purported concern for the environment, animal welfare, family health and ability to see things as a whole; can be seen as echoing the approach of the 'idealist' farmers. Therefore

in this view an 'idealist' approach to organic farming, which adopts both the productive and social aspects of the organic ideology, can be interpreted as a feminine approach and thus organic farming is viewed as inherently feminine. 'Instrumentalist' farmers do not 'naturally' adopt this approach. However, some male 'instrumentalist' farmers have been shown to gradually adopt an organic mindset, distancing them from conventional farming and validating the more 'feminine' approach of organic farming.

This position could be interpreted as resonating with essentialism in that it draws upon essential biological difference between men and women (McDowell and Sharp 1999), in particular women's ability to bear children, in order to explain the perception that they are 'naturally' attracted to the organic ideology. However, by understanding gender as being socially constructed and the related assumptions that men and women are equal and different from each other, it is possible to interpret the position taken by the farmers as a 'feminine principle' (Bjorkhaug forthcoming). In this way, the interpretation of organic farming as 'feminine', and the resulting approach to the organic farming system, can be adopted by both women and men, although not all women necessarily hold such values.

The discussion of the farmers' approach to the organic ideology, in particular the correlation between 'idealist' organic farmers and conceptualising the organic ideology as feminine, suggests the possibility that organic farming may encourage the expression of distinctive forms of gender roles, relations and identities. However, in order to explore this further it is necessary to consider the relationship between the farmers' approach to the organic ideology and their approach to on-farm gender roles. The following chapter will perform this function by drawing together and discussing the findings presented in Chapters Six and Seven.

Chapter 8

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

8.1 Introduction

The final chapter of the thesis provides further discussion of the results of this research, draws some conclusions and reflects upon its capacity to inform new research agendas. The first two sections will discuss the research, with section 8.2 dealing with the findings of the content analysis and section 8.3 being concerned with the interview analysis. The final part of section 8.3 will consider if there is a relationship between the ideological approach of the organic farmers and the type of gender roles adopted on their farms. Section 8.4 will reintroduce the notion of 'third space' as a way of conceptualising the findings of the research. The following section, 8.5, will go on to consider the implications of the research for the social agenda of the organic movement and section 8.6 will suggest a number of potential areas of research which could build upon the findings. Finally, section 8.7 will make some concluding remarks.

8.2 Alternative representations of agricultural gender identities

This aim of this section is to summarise and draw conclusions from the results of the content analysis of organic periodicals in order to answer the following research question: How have gender roles, relations and identities within the organic agriculture movement been represented throughout its history? As described within Chapter two, the 'conventional' agricultural media typically represents men and women in highly traditional, dichotomised roles (Morris and Evans 2001). Women are marginalised within accounts of farming, and where they do appear their reproductive roles and relationship to the (male) farmer are emphasised (Walter and Wilson 1996). Representations of men, on the other hand, dominate the publications and act to reinforce the gendering of agriculture as a masculine space (Liepins 1998c). The representations of men and women within the publications analysed within this research were less obviously dualistic. Although depictions of the conventional dominant agricultural gender identities were prevalent

within all of the publications, there were also depictions that unsettled such traditional representations, suggesting that organic publications can be channels for representing alternative versions of agricultural masculinities and femininities. It is these alternative representations that will be discussed below.

Significantly, women were featured in almost half of the articles in a variety of roles; whereas some were depicted in traditional roles, others were featured as farmers or as performing leadership roles. Indeed, regularly throughout the timescale of the sample, articles appeared that focused upon particular high profile women within the organic movement, most notably Lady Eve Balfour and Helen Browning, amongst others. These women were accorded a high degree of respect and status within the articles, apparently reflecting their importance within the organic agriculture movement. Such notable women have not been documented as appearing within conventional publications and their absence is indicative of the lack of women in high profile and leadership positions within the conventional farming arena more generally, as shown by research conducted in Australia (Alston and Wilkinson 1998; Pini 2002). It also supports the claim by Inhetveen (1998, p. 278) that "[organic] farming has - in contrast to conventional cropping methods - a nearly uninterrupted...history of female pioneers".

Furthermore, unlike findings from the conventional agricultural media in which women are placed in "the less-strategic middle or back pages...associated with domestic and community affairs" (Liepins 1998c, p. 379), articles featuring women were found throughout the content of the magazines, and were not confined to particular sections aimed specifically at women. Integrating, rather than marginalising, women within organic publications is seen as an illustration of their status within the organic movement, in which their roles, traditional or otherwise, are deemed important and central. Thus, although traditional representations were dominant, femininity was represented as multi-faceted. This diversity in the representation of women, suggests a more progressive approach to gender identity than is evinced in the conventional agricultural print media. Nevertheless, conceptualisations of the earth as feminine were also prevalent. Such associations draw upon a view of femininity in which female biology, notably its capacity to bear children, is used to suggest links with nature. Although this view celebrates

traditional aspects of femininity, it can be interpreted as essentialist and therefore regressive (Archambault 1993; Jackson 1993).

Alongside traditional representations of masculinity, the organic publications also depicted men in non-traditional ways. For example, there were some visual images that depicted men performing reproductive roles, such as looking after children, and characteristics traditionally perceived as feminine were sometimes made in reference to men. Thus, as with the representation of women within the publications, men were depicted as crossing over traditional boundaries between dichotomous conceptualisations of masculinity and femininity. This contrasts with the conventional farming media, which continues to produce depictions of men that correspond with hegemonic agricultural masculinity (Brandth 1995).

The organic movement, as represented by publications produced by its member organisations, has portrayed gender roles, relations and identities in different, contradictory ways. Traditional representations of men and women, corresponding with those found in the conventional agricultural media, were dominant. However, alternative representations, challenging traditional notions of agricultural masculinity and femininity, were also evident. These apparent inconsistencies can be seen as echoing those that have been recognised as prevailing within the organic farming movement more broadly. Reed (2001) has identified an unresolved tension within the organic movement between "those looking for an older, 'traditional' countryside and those looking for a radically new arrangement", and goes on to claim that the "combination of looking to the past and the future within the same movement often leads the British organic movement to appear to be both pre- and post-modern" (p. 142). The same theme is adopted by Kaltoft (2001) who identifies the organic farming movement as being composed of individuals with highly disparate conceptualisations of modern society, including: pre-modern (organic farming as a lifestyle "impossible to choose, since it is so inseparable from tradition"), classical modern (organic farming as "a technical means of solving environmental problems") and reflexive modern (organic farming as "sharing the choice of lifestyle, a choice based on different values, of which they are fully aware"). Of particular interest to the analysis presented within this thesis is that Kaltoft identifies one pre-modern organic (biodynamic)

farmer as being "completely intolerant towards farmers' wives wishing for independent careers" (Kaltoft 2001, p. 151). Evidently, the organic agriculture movement has been identified as attracting individuals who adopt a range of approaches to modern society, and therefore who are likely to have varying approaches towards gender roles, relations and their own gender identities; as is reflected within the results of the content analysis conducted for this thesis.

8.3 The paradox of gender identities in organic farming

The aim of this section is to summarise and draw conclusions from the results of the interviews with organic farmers in order to answer the following two research questions: How are gender roles, relations and identities constructed and maintained on organic farms? Does the ideological standpoint of organic farming encourage the representation and construction of distinctive gender roles, relations and identities? Chapter Two drew upon previous research to demonstrate the highly traditional division of labour that dominates conventional agriculture. Furthermore, it was argued that agricultural gender identity is built upon traditional notions of masculinity and femininity, in which masculinity is associated with power and dominion over nature and femininity is associated with submissiveness and proximity to nature. It conceptualised the dominant gender identities expressed within conventional agriculture as structured according to dualistic notions of masculinity and femininity. The notion that this particular version of agricultural gender identities dominates conventional farming has been employed throughout this research as a point of reference to reflect upon the gender identities expressed within organic agriculture. However, it was suggested in Chapter Three that the organic ideology poses a potential challenge to the hierarchical separation of nature and culture and therefore organic agriculture may provide a space for alternative expressions of masculinity and femininity. This section will consider this proposition in the light of the results presented within this thesis.

8.3.1 Shifting the boundaries of on-farm gender roles and relations

As presented within Chapter Six, three distinct types of farm households were constructed from the interview analysis according to similarities in their gender roles and relations.

This typology is conceptualised as being dynamic with the three categories falling at progressive points along a continuum. They were developed from the data, using the traditional agricultural division of labour, as discussed in Chapter Two, as the point of departure. The three categories are as follows:

- **Traditional transposed** - Mirrors the traditional framework that dominates conventional agriculture

- **Traditional transformed** - The traditional framework forms the basic structure, but gender roles have an element of flexibility

- **Traditional transcended** - The traditional framework does not obviously persist, and gender roles are highly interchangeable

Rather than being conceived as static categories, these types represent the dynamic processes of transposition, transformation and transcendence. The three categories are not necessarily a factor of organic farming per se, and indeed it is recognised that the categorisation scheme could equally apply to other forms of alternative farming. Nevertheless, it was argued that particular features of organic farming can exert an influence on the on-farm division of labour and therefore reinforce the positioning of organic farmers within the categories. In particular, three aspects of organic farming were identified which acted to retrench traditional gender roles, primarily within the 'traditional transposed' category, and to a lesser extent within the 'traditional transformed' category. The three features of organic farming identified as reinforcing traditional gender roles were: the increase in administrative work due to the record keeping required for compliance with the organic standards; the role of hand weeding, created on some farms as a direct result of farming organically; and the association of organic farming with local marketing and direct selling.

However, despite the apparent ability of organic farming to reinforce the traditional gender division of labour, and therefore traditional gender identities, a diversity of gender roles, relations and identities were identified on the organic farms within the research. They ranged from farms paralleling the hegemonic patterns within conventional

agriculture, through farms on which traditional gender roles, relations and identities were performed in a flexible manner, to farms on which traditional patterns were not at all discernable. The organic farms within the 'traditional transposed' and 'traditional transcended' categories included a proportion of women choosing to work as primary farmers, and women undertaking farm work traditionally associated with masculinity. Therefore, through farming organically some women reconstruct femininity by adopting positions traditionally associated with men. The fact that organic farming is more knowledge intensive than conventional farming (Morgan and Murdoch 2000), suggests that traditionally gendered bodily images that act to restrict female tasks within conventional agriculture (Bryant 1999a) potentially have less influence. Indeed, there is some evidence for this from the research, which found women performing roles traditionally associated with men, such as tractor driving, managing farms and taking stock to market/slaughter. Therefore, it follows that the construction of women's gender identities are less restricted within the places and spaces of organic agriculture. However, the majority of the women performing these roles did so whilst maintaining aspects of traditional femininity, such as performing reproductive work and other traditionally feminine activities. In this way, it can be argued that the reconstruction of femininity within organic farming occurs in a way that maintains the gendered hierarchy.

These findings correspond with the results of the content analysis, which revealed that although 'traditional' representations of masculinity and femininity dominated, there was diversity in the representation of masculinity and femininity by the UK organic agricultural print media. The content analysis mirrored the everyday practice of organic farming by showing how hegemonic agricultural gender identities were represented in the organic periodicals alongside alternative versions. In this way the organic periodicals can be seen as reflecting and reinforcing the gender roles, relations and identities performed on organic farms.

8.3.2 Feminising the organic ideology

Chapter Seven showed how two types of farmer, 'instrumentalist' and 'idealist', were constructed from the interviews regarding their approach taken towards the organic ideology. The 'instrumentalist' farmers had previously farmed conventionally and therefore their approach to the organic ideology was influenced by their past experiences of the conventional agricultural community. These farmers grounded their conversion to organic production primarily, and often exclusively, in economic terms. Echoing findings from Ireland (Tovey 1999), these farmers emphasised the similarities between their new organic systems and their previous systems of production or 'traditional' farming, thereby conceptualising organic farming in such a way that was not threatening to conventional agriculture. Moreover, again resonating with Tovey's (1999) findings, they were keen to distance themselves from the earlier, more socially-minded organic farmers. In this way, organic farming was emphasised as a choice that was made using sound economic rationales.

However, for many of the 'instrumentalist' farmers financial rewards for converting to organic production had not been forthcoming. Despite this, they did not wish to return to conventional production. This contradiction has also been identified in Danish farmers reverting from organic to conventional farming, which suggests that "the sympathetic feelings towards organic agriculture...arise from negative consequences experienced in the context of the ongoing modernisation in agriculture and associations of organic farming as representing an alternative mode of development" (Kaltoft and Risgaard forthcoming 2005). This suggests that farming organically has provided them with the opportunity to change their approach. This apparent change is attributed to their variable adoption of an organic mindset, whereby different parameters for success are accepted in order to flourish within the organic farming paradigm. The organic mindset involves accepting the limitations of natural systems and conceptualising the farm system holistically. Indeed, it has been suggested that this process requires farmers to "forget much of the knowledge they have acquired in intensive production" (Morgan and Murdoch 2000, p. 167). The farmers in this research claimed that they had to 'think more' to farm organically, in line

with Morgan and Murdoch's (2000, p. 171) definition of organic farming as being "knowledge rather than input intensive".

The majority of the 'idealist' farmers were new entrants to agriculture when they started the process of organic conversion. They chose to farm organically primarily to satisfy personally held social and environmental principles, which were encompassed within their holistic approach to organic farming. Thus, for these farmers the organic mindset did not need to be learnt and rather was a part of their belief system concerned with altering the organisation of social relations with nature (Tovey 2002). Therefore, their holistic approach differed from that developed by the 'instrumentalist' farmers, in that it moved beyond a sole concern with the on-farm system to a concern with the wider, social implications of organic farming. In this way their views can be understood as corresponding more closely than the 'instrumentalist' farmers with the social aims of the organic ideology. Although the majority of the 'idealist' farmers are women, some men also fall into the category, thus challenging previous one-dimensional associations made between women's role as care-givers and corresponding gender-specific values connected to environment, community and the adoption of alternative agriculture systems (See Chiappe and Butler Flora 1998; Meares 1997).

The opinion was expressed by the majority of the farmers that they would expect the involvement of more women throughout organic agriculture than conventional agriculture. The reasoning employed by most of the 'idealist' farmers for this perceived phenomenon was that organic farming is a 'natural' choice for women, a view that drew substance from conceptualisations that linked women's biology, traditional feminine characteristics and affinity to the organic ideology. In this view, which corresponds with theories of feminine values (Bjorkhaug forthcoming 2005), women have a higher concern for the environment and animal welfare than men, as well as a greater awareness of health-related issues, attributed to their connections with maternity and family life. Furthermore, women were conceptualised as 'naturally' seeing things holistically, and therefore 'naturally' being in tune with the organic ideology and, presumably, more able to adopt the organic mindset. Thus an essentialist understanding of women was adopted by the farmers in order to code organic farming as a more feminine form of agriculture than conventional farming.

This research found that organic farmers of both ideological types asserted that the organic ideology requires farmers to adopt an alternative mindset, a mindset that the 'idealist' farmers coded as feminine. This suggests that the ideology of organic farming might correspond with the idea of the feminine management principle in which women are understood to have a more holistic attitude, while men are more concerned with economic output than ecological principles (Bjorkhaug forthcoming 2005). The organic mindset promotes working holistically with nature, rather than attempting to control nature. Therefore, male farmers are presented with the opportunity to articulate different values, and potentially express different sides to their masculinities, rather than the hegemonic masculinity associated with conventional agriculture. Also, organic farming can be seen as providing a space in which men with alternative masculinities can practice agriculture. This is supported by research by Peter et al. (2000) on sustainable agriculture groups in Iowa, US, which drew upon the distinction between the concepts of monologic and dialogic masculinity: 'monologic masculinity' is a conventional masculinity with rigid and polarised gender expectations and clear distinctions of men and women's activities; 'dialogic masculinity' represented different definitions of work and success, less need to control nature and greater openness. The research found that "not only does sustainable ideology lead to more dialogic masculinity, but dialogic masculine identities are drawn more toward sustainable practices" (Peter et al. 2000, p. 217). Furthermore, the organic mindset promotes characteristics that are traditionally associated with women and feminine values. In this way it can be seen as providing a space within agriculture in which traditionally feminine characteristics, and therefore women, are more highly valued. By expressing the organic ideology through the practice of organic agriculture, a farmer is adopting measures of success based on traditional constructions of femininity and perceived connections with nature. In this way organic farming can be conceptualised as a feminised form of agriculture.

In this conceptualisation gender identities expressed within the practice of organic farming can be understood as being related to the organic mindset which draws upon an essential link made between femininity, nature and the organic ideology. The traditional feminine characteristics and values drawn upon in making this link are posited as a prerequisite of successful organic farming, and therefore as desirable and valued traits. Farmers who

adopt the organic mindset are considered to be good organic farmers. In taking up the organic mindset, these farmers can therefore be conceptualised as adopting traditionally feminine values and characteristics and in the process the hierarchy of the masculine-feminine binary is unsettled.

8.3.3 Relating gender roles, relations, identities and the organic ideology

Chapter Six discussed the gender roles and relations on the farms within the research, and Chapter Seven showed how the farmers' approach to organic farming was influenced by their interpretation of the organic ideology. This sub-section will discuss the intersection of the farmers' role-types with their ideological-types (see Table 8.1) in order to explore the relationship between the two factors and to answer the research question: Does the ideological standpoint of organic farming encourage the expression of distinctive forms of gender roles, relations and identities?

The following relationships can be identified between the farmers' on-farm division of labour and their ideological approach to organic farming, as illustrated by Table 8.1 (below):

- 'Instrumentalist' farmers are most likely to display 'traditional transposed' farm labour patterns
- 'Idealist' farmers are most likely to display 'traditional transformed' farm labour patterns

Table 8.1: Relationship between the farmers' ideological types and their on-farm role-types

	Instrumentalist		Idealist	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Traditional transcended	26-Mark	26-Hannah		1-Val 28-Sally 30-Julie 32-Deidre
Traditional transformed	5-Nick 21-Ian	8-Joan	6-Boyd 16-Hans 24-Rowan	2-Doreen 4-Victoria 6-Morwenna 7-Megan 21-Melanie 23-Trudy 31-Elaine
Traditional transposed	3-Morgan 9-Callum 10-Adam 11-Charles 12-Adrian 12-Alexander 14-James 15-Michael 18-Mathew 19-George 20-Ben 22-Harry	3-Diane 9-Gillian 10-Linda 20-Tracey 27-Emma 29-Jane	13-Rik 17-Daniel 25-Jim	33-Natalie

The apparent relationships between gender roles, relations, identities and organic ideology as demonstrated in Table 8.1 suggest that farmers who take a more inclusive approach to the organic ideology are more likely to adopt 'progressive' work patterns and gender relations on their farms, and conversely, farmers who take a less inclusive approach to the organic ideology are more likely to adopt 'traditional' work patterns and gender relations on their farms. The 'idealist' farmers, the majority of whom are women, see organic farming as more than a form of production; it incorporates their social concerns relating to society more widely, and provides them with a practical framework for expressing their beliefs, echoing the findings of research conducted by Pedersen and Kjærgård (2004) in Denmark. It is possible that the female 'idealist' farmers' reflections on the wider place of organic agriculture in society could be linked to their responsibilities in the domestic sphere which provides them with a different vantage point to men (Chiappe and Butler- Flora 1998). This could also be true of the male 'idealist' farmers who also fall within the 'traditional transformed' category and therefore take a more flexible approach to masculine and feminine roles, in particular Rowan and Hans whose roles within their Camphill communities include caring work. However, as the farmers in the 'traditional transformed' category demonstrate, and as argued by Trauger (2004b), a farmer's relationship with the environment and their community are specific to space and place and therefore cannot be simply reduced to social positions and notions of traditional roles. Indeed, the outcome of the intersection of ideological approach and role-type suggests that individuals concerned with the wider implications of organic farming are likely to have a more flexible attitude to the relative roles of men and women in agriculture; although women's reproductive roles remain largely unaffected. However, despite this more progressive outlook, most 'idealist' farmers conceptualised organic farming as a feminised form of agriculture, a construction that relies upon making an essentialist link between women and nature.

The most significant relationship, in terms of the number of farm households, is that 'instrumentalists' are most likely to demonstrate a 'traditional transposed' approach

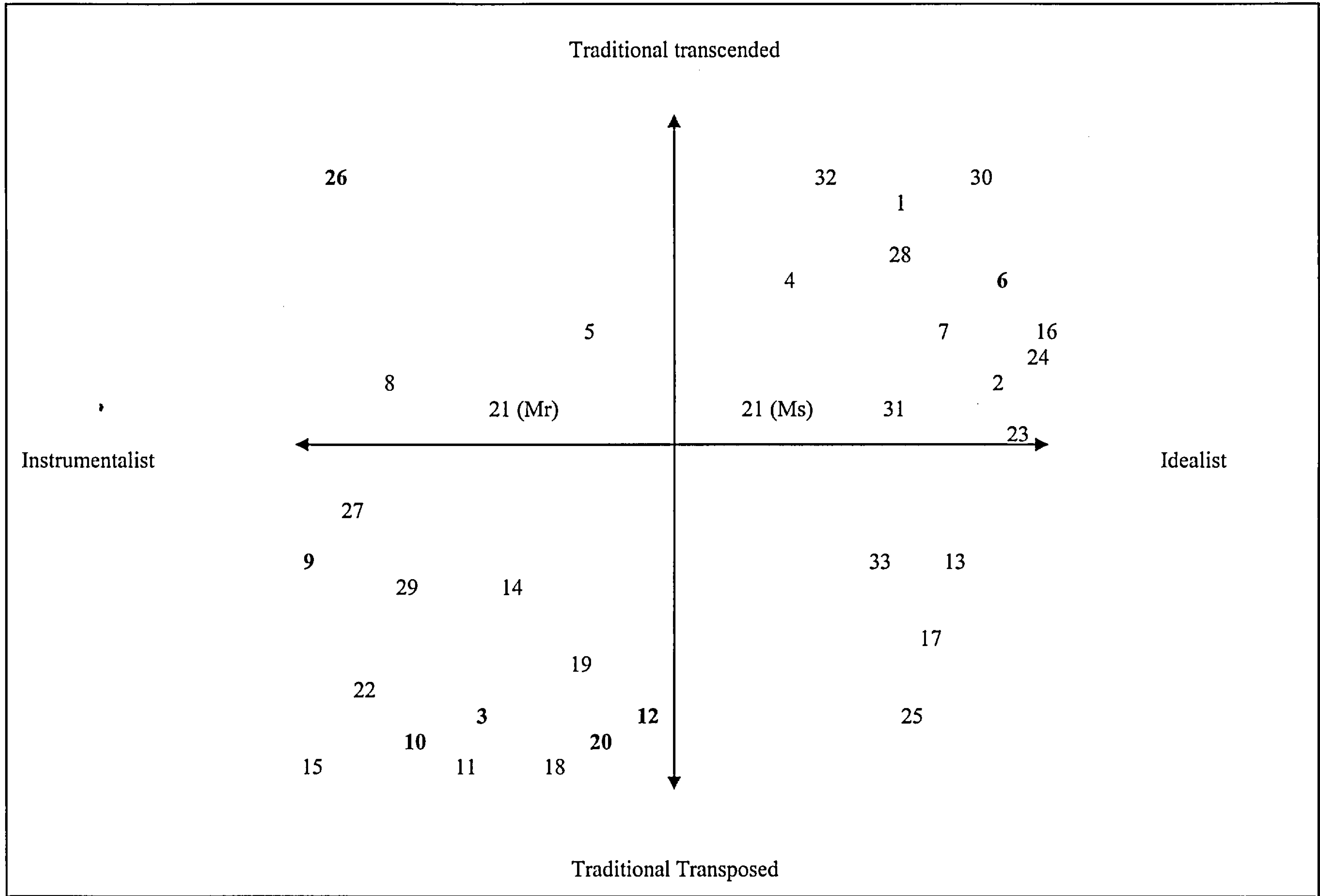

***Table 8.2: The dynamic relationship between the farmers' ideological types and their on-farm role-types** (1=individual, **1**=couple)*

to gender roles and relations. This suggests, therefore, that 'traditional' gender roles and relations are foremost within the organic sector. The 'instrumentalist' farmers, the majority of whom are men, see organic farming as a way of reconfirming their status as traditional farmers acting as guardians of the countryside. However, although it was the productive issues of organic farming that had first engaged them, there was evidence from the interviews that some 'instrumentalist' farmers had started to take on board some of the broader aspects of the organic ideology directly related to production, such as conceptualising the farm holistically and initiating local and direct marketing schemes. This shows the dynamism of the categories, and how it is possible for farmers to move both within and between them. Table 8.2 illustrates this dynamic nature by depicting the farm households plotted on an axis rather than within discrete categories. Within Table 8.2 the farm households are plotted on a continuous scale between 'traditional transposed' or 'traditional transcended', intersected by the degree to which the farmers expressed 'idealist' and 'instrumentalist' organic ideologies. The position of each household within the table is determined relatively, based upon the information derived from the interviews. In this way it is possible to see how the two typologies developed within this thesis intersect with each other.

However, although this research has shown that farmers can move within and between the two ideological categories 'idealist' and 'instrumentalist', the extent to which movement occurs within and between the household gender role categories is less clear. Indeed the research suggests that these are largely predetermined, being more dependent upon the personal background of individuals than the practice and ideology of organic farming per se. This indicates that it is more difficult for the organic agriculture movement to influence an individuals approach to the social aspects of the organic ideology, in particular gender roles and relations, than their approach to aspects of the organic ideology related more directly to on-farm production issues, such as farming holistically and the development of local marketing schemes. At a time when the composition of the organic farming community is continuing to change, from being dominated by newcomers to agriculture to being dominated by converted conventional farmers, this finding has a potentially

important impact upon the social agenda of the organic movement, as will be discussed in section 8.5.

8.3.4 Summary of section 8.3

This research has found that although 'traditional' gender roles and relations do prevail, there is nevertheless a high degree of diversity and difference in the representation, negotiation and expression of gender roles, relations and identities within the space of organic agriculture. The diversity that has been revealed is not represented effectively by dichotomous constructions of masculinity and femininity. Furthermore, a discernable pattern has been identified between the farmers' organic ideology and their on-farm gender division of labour, whereby 'idealist' farmers were shown to have a less traditional approach to the gender division of labour compared to 'instrumentalist' farmers. It is possible to conjecture that this relationship occurs in line with the unsettling of the masculine-feminine binary as discussed in sub-section 8.3.2. A farmer who fully adopts the organic ideology has a mindset in which the farm system is seen as a whole and nature as something to work alongside; a mindset that is dependent upon the farmer accepting the feminine values of organic farming. Also, male farmers who have an 'instrumentalist' ideology have been shown to alter their mindset after converting to organic farming by taking on board the productive aspects of the organic ideology, in which they view their relationship with nature as one of cooperation rather than control, paralleling the findings of Peter et al. (2000). In this way organic farming can be seen as a space in which male farmers are encouraged to express a more feminised version of masculinity, rather than being encouraged to perform the hegemonic masculinity that dominates conventional agriculture. Therefore organic farming attracts men with different masculinities to those that dominate conventional agriculture, as well as potentially stimulating changes in the expression of masculinities in male farmers who convert from conventional agriculture.

As shown in sub-section 8.3.3, the results of the research presented in this thesis suggest that a relationship exists between the degree to which the farmers adopted the organic ideology and having a progressive approach to on-farm division of labour in which traditional masculine and feminine roles are blurred and reconfigured. However, it also

suggests that 'idealists' organic ideology is constructed using traditional conceptualisations of femininity that reify the association of women and nature, an association that is problematic to most forms of feminism. Thus, the organic farmers within this study offer a paradox, in that the most progressive approaches to the gender division of labour were negotiated by those who adopted an essentialist view of women. Crucially, however, in their view, nature is to be worked with rather than dominated and the traditionally feminine roles are valued rather than seen as subordinate to masculine roles. In this way, as with the findings of a study regarding women taking up British allotments (Buckingham 2005), gender stereotypes are both reinforced and challenged in complex ways. This finding also challenges feminist assumptions about the distinction between what is 'progressive' and 'regressive' (or 'traditional') with respect to achieving the goal of emancipation. Clearly it is not possible, therefore, to represent this paradox lying at the heart of organic farming by employing a dualistic framework, such as that which has been used to represent conventional agriculture.

The less dualistic approach towards the relationship between nature and culture is pivotal to understanding the relative status of women within the organic movement, the apparent changes in 'instrumentalist' farmers' organic ideology and their expression of alternative gender identities to those that dominate conventional agriculture. Therefore, it can be conjectured that the configuration of gender roles, relations and identities within organic farming are dependant upon individual farmers' interpretations of the organic ideology. It is likely that if their interpretation is one which encompasses the social aims of the organic ideology then they are also likely to bring an alternative approach to the negotiation of gender roles, relations and identities to the practice of organic farming. The following section will propose a conceptualisation of organic farming which is able to make sense of the research findings, without rejecting the problematic explanations put forward by the farmers themselves yet also remaining true to the feminist position adopted throughout the research process.

8.4 Organic farming as a 'third space'

The outcomes of this research appear to pose a predicament to a thesis that has adopted a theoretical framework grounded in feminist geography. Indeed, in allowing the data to 'speak for itself' it has, in some respects, undermined its own feminist position. As discussed in the previous sections, the farmers drew upon essentialism in order to make sense of what they saw as women's unusually high involvement within organic farming compared to agriculture as a whole. Therefore, a key finding of this research has been that the ideology of members of the organic agriculture movement has the potential to unsettle dualisms by employing a paradoxical essentialism in which gender and nature are conflated in a non-hierarchical fashion. This essentialism sees certain attributes that are constructed as 'feminine' (but potentially attributable to men and women) as being naturally compatible with the organic ideology (which is perceived as being closer to nature/more natural than conventional agriculture). In order to conceptualise these findings in a way which overcomes the thorny issue of essentialism this section will reintroduce the notion of 'third space' as a way of making sense of these contradictory positions, without resorting to ecofeminist theories of women's biology or social location.

This research has shown that both men and women adopt 'idealist' approaches towards the organic ideology, in which nature and society are seen as intertwined. Therefore, it cannot accept the argument that women possess particular characteristics that make them 'naturally' compatible with organic farming because, as is clearly demonstrated by this research, so do some men. Moreover there are two further problems with this argument: it relies upon seeing women as a coherent group, a view rejected by the theoretical orientation of the research framework of this thesis; and, in associating women with nature it necessarily draws upon the nature/culture binary, a view also rejected by the theoretical orientation of this thesis. However, it is possible to accept that particular characteristics *traditionally* associated with femininity due to the prevalence of the agrarian ideology, which are grounded in women's biology and social location, are drawn upon in 'idealist' interpretations of the organic ideology. Therefore, it is also posited that the organic ideology itself is grounded in these traditional notions of femininity. Although a fundamental association of women and organic farming is rejected, the underlying

argument which makes links between traditional agrarian notions of femininity and the organic ideology is accepted.

As demonstrated in section 8.3, it is not possible to represent the paradox lying at the heart of the construction of gender identity in organic farming by employing a dualistic framework, such as that which has been used to interpret gender identities in conventional agriculture. Therefore, the notion of 'third space' is proposed as a method of conceptualising the complex relationship between gender identity and organic farming. The theoretical idea of 'third space' has developed as one way of escaping the "tyranny of dualisms" (Pile 1994, p. 264) that restricts analysis to the centre/margin:

> *The third space is a politics; a space which avoids the politics of polarity and enables the construction of new radical allegiances to oppose structures of authority. [Third space] also represents alternative geographies, which bring together space, politics and hybrid identities.*
>
> *(Pile 1994, p. 271)*

Third space is a metaphor for "marginalised spaces of resistance" that transcend and challenge binary distinctions, to provide more complex spaces in which different kinds of identity can be enacted (Cloke and Johnston 2005, p. 14). They are spaces that confuse binaries and instead allow fluidity, flexibility and multiplicity in the negotiation of identities, which therefore contain more than simple combinations of the original dualities (Soja and Hooper 1993). In this way:

> *Third spaces thus combine the material and the symbolic to elude the politics of polarised binaries and to enable the emergence of radical new allegiances by which old structures of authority can be challenged by new ways of thinking and new emancipatory practices.*
>
> *(Cloke and Johnston 2005, p. 15)*

Organic farming, as discussed within Chapter Three, can be conceived as potentially providing a 'third space' for gender identity within agriculture. Organic agriculture is a marginal form of agriculture, in which the elements of public discourse and space occupied by the organic movement, recombine with elements of personal politics and

private space within organic farms to create a third space in which alternative, fluid gender identities are negotiated. These alternative gender identities draw upon hegemonic agricultural gender identity, but in a way that neither attempts a reversal of the original binary oppositions of agricultural masculinity and femininity, nor creates opposing structures. Rather the aim is to:

> *...break down and disorder the binary itself, to reject the simple structure of closed dualisms through a (sympathetic) deconstruction and reconstitution that allows for radical openness, flexibility and multiplicity. The key step is to recognise and occupy new and alternative geographies - a 'thirdspace' of political choice - different but not detached entirely from the geographies defined by the original binary oppositions...*
>
> *(Soja and Hooper 1993, p. 198)*

Therefore, the multiple reconfigurations of gender identity made possible by the space of organic farming, which blur the dualistic notions of 'traditional' and 'progressive' gender identities, are accommodated. In this way it overcomes the problem, identified by Pile (1994, p. 273), in which "...the desire for power is seen as a wholesome wish, necessary to fulfil certain universally reasonable aims: emancipation, freedom, justice, equality, and so on. Yet...some seemingly emancipatory claims are founded on a particular experience of knowledge, which is hierarchical and requires a marginalised object of study". Conceptualising the expression of gender identities in organic farming as third space helps to refute feminist understanding of emancipatory progress as unidirectional, and the associated branding of the adoption of traditional roles by farm women as necessarily regressive and undesirable. In this way the apparent paradox of a feminised organic ideology is interpreted as being illustrative of the negotiation of a 'third space' by members of the organic movement, in which alternative masculine and feminine gender identities are able to be expressed, beyond the strict confines of binary oppositions.

8.5 Implications for the social agenda of the organic agriculture movement

The aim of this section is to draw together all of the findings of the research in order to answer the final research question: To what extent do the gender roles, relations and

identities observed contribute to the broad social objectives of the organic agriculture movement? Chapter Three argued that the organic agriculture movement has had an identifiable social agenda throughout its history. It was posited that the 'Principle Aims of Organic Agriculture' as dictated by IFOAM, represent an organic ideology towards which those farmers who are *fully committed* members of the organic movement would aspire. The organic ideology was shown to have an explicit social intent as outlined in the following two 'Principle Aims':

- To recognise the wider social and ecological impact of and within the organic production and processing system.
- To support the establishment of an entire production, processing and distribution chain which is both socially just and ecologically responsible.

(IFOAM 2005a)

Furthermore it was shown that the organic movement, as represented by IFOAM, has specifically targeted gender within its ongoing discussions regarding the role of 'social justice' and 'sustainability' within organic agriculture.

This thesis has argued that the organic movement, through its espousal of an organic ideology in which the hierarchical dualism of nature and culture is unsettled, encourages its adherents to adopt holistic agricultural systems in which traditional boundaries are blurred. In this way the organic movement can be seen as exerting an influence over the mindset of those practicing organic farming. As discussed in Chapter Six, the majority of the 'idealist' farmers had ongoing projects which they related to the social principles of organic farming, demonstrating their emphasis on the intertwining of society and nature. Moreover, a number of them expressed a desire to further develop such projects in the future. These ongoing and planned projects encompassed social issues regarding the role of direct and local marketing, education, community development and cooperative labour and marketing configurations. Importantly, these projects were specifically cited as being related to the social principles of the organic ideology rather than just for financial reasons. Indeed, in a number of instances the poor economic potential of the schemes was

highlighted by the individuals. This reflects the findings of Tovey's (2002) study of Irish organic farmers for whom a key concern identified was social relationships regarding labour or customers. Following Tovey, it is argued that this concern is related to their commitment to a "holistic vision which sees nature and society as intertwined (and food, or food production, as a significant mediator between the two)" (Tovey 2002, p. 6). This suggests that the feminine influence of the organic ideology as identified within this thesis encourages organic farmers to integrate the social objectives of the organic movement into their farming systems.

In addition to the organic ideology providing a space within agriculture for 'idealist' farmers with prior sympathies with this holistic approach and a progressive approach to masculine and feminine roles, the 'instrumentalist' farmers, who were initially unreceptive to the organic ideology, claimed to have gradually adopted a more holistic approach, which, it is suggested, subsequently impacted upon the plurality of their gender identities and their expression of 'feminine' characteristics. However, the research does not suggest that these changes will impact upon the negotiation of on-farm gender roles and relations by 'instrumentalist' farmers. This finding echoes earlier criticisms of the sustainable agriculture movement, which have argued that despite its alleged social agenda (which, it should be noted, is less explicit than that of organic farming), the attention granted to social issues, and specifically patriarchal gender relations, remain inadequate within the sector.

Within sustainable agriculture in general, as within conventional agriculture, women do not always have the same opportunities as men to give voice to their potentially alternative perspective due to differential power relationships, and thus "gender roles on the farm and in the farm community affect not only what knowledge is created and exchanged, but also who participates in that exchange" (Hassanein 1997, p. 256). This concern is echoed by Meares (1997) whose study of family farms in Minnesota, USA, found that access to the personal transformative potential of sustainable agriculture was gendered, and that the transition from conventional farming impacted less upon the quality of life of the women involved than the men. This factor, she argued, lessened the potential impact of the sustainable agriculture movement in its aim of bringing about societal change:

...social movements such as the sustainable agriculture movement cannot plough ahead simply on the basis of mobilizing more and more resources. It must pause to understand how it is socially constructed, based on the social locations of its participants....making a transition to sustainable agriculture, personal transformation, and thus societal transformation as it is envisioned by the sustainable agriculture movement, is potentially circumscribed by inattention to the meaning-constructing participant and the way in which its participants' lives are socially constructed by gender.

(Meares 1997, p. 45)

In her recent book 'Agrarian dreams: the paradox of organic farming in California' Guthman argues that the organic movement has fallen "woefully short of addressing the social justice issues that are often assumed to be part and parcel of organic farming" (Guthman 2004b, p. 2). Guthman's critique of organic farming echoes earlier assessments of the sustainable agriculture movement more widely, in which it was disparaged for not taking account of the social aspects of production. In a series of publications Allen and Sachs (1992a; 1992b; 1993) identified a number of social 'problems' which have been neglected by the sustainable agriculture movement, despite their contribution to the lack of sustainability in conventional food and agriculture systems, including gender issues. Of particular interest to this discussion is that Allen and Sachs suggest that the sustainable agriculture movement has not attended to the patriarchal relations operating within family farms:

Traditional gender roles are reified in discussions of sustainable agriculture, whether women are included or simply overlooked. Populist visions of sustainable agriculture see the family farm as the ideal organisational structure for sustainable agriculture, but generally do not discuss gender roles within the farm family....The fact that family farms are based on patriarchal relations is not problematised by the sustainable agriculture movement.

(Allen and Sachs 1992b, p. 580)

Although Allen and Sachs discussion was concerned with sustainable agriculture rather than having a specific focus upon organic agriculture, their comments are illuminating nonetheless and indeed they are perhaps more salient for the organic movement, which has specified that 'social justice' is integral to the organic ideology. Guthman (2004b, p.

174) makes direct use of Allen and Sachs argument in her appraisal of the Californian organic movement, identifying the movements uncritical support for the small-scale family farm as being a significant problem, in part due to it taking "as perfectly unproblematic [the] patriarchal exploitation of women's...labour".

This research provides empirical evidence in support of Guthman's claim. Indeed, it draws attention to the discrepancy between the language employed by the organic movement and the practices performed by organic farmers. It appears that the organic movement has not allowed for the changes in structure caused by the influx of farmers converting from conventional production. Indeed, it has shown that although the organic ideology can impact upon their approach towards farming practices (mainly due to the perceived congruence with 'traditional' farming) it is less able to influence their approach to gender roles and relations, which also remain 'traditional'.

8.6 Informing research agendas

This research has built upon a strong body of work that has developed around gender and agriculture. However, the use of organic farming as the analytical focus is undeveloped internationally and indeed entirely original in the UK context. Thus the research was designed as exploratory and partially intended to open up avenues for further research. It also adds to the growing, albeit still limited, body of social science research that is concerned with the social dimensions of organic farming.

This thesis has provided an initial insight into how the less dualistic ideology of the organic movement can influence the gender identities expressed within organic farming, as represented within its publications and negotiated by organic farmers. Furthermore, it has developed a theoretical framework that uses the concept of 'third space' to represent the diversity and complexity of the gender identities found, and to show how organic farming potentially disrupts gendered dualisms. There are two broad areas of possible future research related to this thesis: firstly, studies that further consider the influence of the organic ideology upon the gender identities expressed within organic agriculture; and, secondly, studies that employ the theoretical framework to explore other alternative forms

of agriculture. With this in mind, below are four specific recommendations for further research:

Firstly, although the research is considered to be representative of organic farmers within the sample frame, the geographical focus of the research was necessarily limited. Therefore, a logical extension to the research would be to conduct similar research within contrasting agricultural areas. However, due to the broad range of farm-types and sizes included within this study, it is recommended that the areas chosen be particularly distinctive in terms of the prevalent farm types. Furthermore, it would be interesting to intersect a study of gender identity with the notion of 'conventionalisation', whereby organic farms are arguably becoming increasingly integrated into conventional modes of production and exchange (see Chapter 3 for a discussion of this). A study contrasting the gender identities on 'conventionalised' organic farms and those with a specific focus on direct marketing would be pertinent.

Secondly, the sample of organic farmers included members of the Biodynamic Agricultural Association (BDAA). However, the number of biodynamic farmers interviewed was limited by the geographical boundaries of the study. Despite these limitations, the research findings suggest that the biodynamic farmers' philosophical orientation differed from that of the other farmers, with particular impacts upon the expression of gender identity. It would be interesting to develop this part of the research as a separate strand of enquiry, particularly in the light of anecdotal evidence that increasing numbers of organic farmers are considering introducing biodynamic practices. An exploration of the biodynamic approach towards the relationship between gender and nature, and how this impacts upon the division of labour and gender identities would be of particular interest, being an area of research that would feed into debates currently ongoing within the wider academic community.

Thirdly, CSA, as discussed briefly in Chapter 3, is a form of agriculture that places a central focus upon the social relations of the production process, particularly regarding the process of exchange and the organisation of labour. However, the farms involved in CSA do not necessarily have to be operating a 'sustainable' farming system and certainly do not

have to be certified organic. An extension to this research could explore the plausibility of conceptualising CSA as a 'third space' with respect to the disruption of gendered dualisms. This would be particularly interesting because many of the farms involved in CSA would be classed as 'conventional' in terms of their production system.

Fourthly, the current concerns of the organic movement include a focus upon their commitment to social justice, and how to incorporate their theoretical interest in the concept within their standards. Within this debate the issues surrounding gender and the status of women have been highlighted as matters of particular concern. Thus the subject of this research is relevant to the organic movement's contemporary concerns, and could potentially further its understanding of the complexities surrounding gender identity and organic farming. However, it is recommended that further research be undertaken with the specific aim of informing this ongoing policy debate within the organic movement.

8.7 Concluding remarks

Research into agricultural gender roles, relations and identities has tended to study conventional forms of agriculture, and whilst alternative agricultural systems have received some attention, a singular focus on organic farming, as an example of a specific form of alternative agriculture, has been particularly neglected. This is despite the organic agriculture movement having an ideological approach which suggests it provides a space that facilitates the expression of alternative forms of gender roles, relations and identities to those identified as being dominant within conventional agriculture. Furthermore, the rapid growth of the organic farming sector combined with positive projections for its future, mean that any such differences could potentially become more significant and influential within agriculture as a whole.

There have been a small number of studies undertaken into the negotiation of agricultural gender identities, which either incorporate organic farming within their analysis or focus on it exclusively. The research for this thesis differed from previous studies in being UK-based and involving an analysis of women *and* men. However, above all, the originality of this thesis has been to critically assess how the organic agriculture movement's 'progressive' ideological standpoint is interpreted in practice, by considering gendered

representations within its literature; exploring organic farmers' perceptions of the relationship between gender and the organic ideology; and elucidating the negotiation of gender roles, relations and identities on organic farms.

This thesis has shown that whilst organic agriculture is largely dominated by traditional representations and constructions of gender roles, relations and identities, it does, however, also provide a space for a significant proportion of more 'progressive' types. Moreover, the more 'progressive' gender identities can be seen as being distinctive to organic farming and shaped by the ideological orientation of the organic agriculture movement. The distinctiveness of the majority of the 'progressive' gender identities is, however, paradoxical, as it draws upon highly traditional, essentialist notions of femininity in which parallels are constructed between femininity and nature. However, because the ideology of the organic agriculture movement promotes working with rather than controlling nature, the traditionally feminine values associated with nature are valued and respected. These feminine values identified as providing the basis for the distinctive forms of gender identities in organic farming can be adopted by both men and women. Therefore, as well as providing a legitimising space in agriculture for women, organic farming also provides a space in which men can express alternative masculinities to those that dominate conventional agriculture. However, the research has also highlighted that the influence of the organic ideology may not extend to the negotiation of more progressive gender roles on more 'traditional' organic farms. Therefore, organic farming may ultimately work more progressively for men than women.

This thesis has performed a number of useful functions. Firstly, it has provided an initial exploration of the representation and negotiation of gender roles, relations and identities within the context of UK organic farming. In so doing, it has contributed to feminist understandings of agricultural gender identities, and shown how they may be more complex and fractured than has previously been recognised. Secondly, it has added to the broader social science debate about the social aspects of organic agriculture. Finally, it has contributed to the wider academic debate of identity and dualisms, by providing a further example of a marginalised third space in which dualistic structures can be drawn upon, destabilised or reconfigured.

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Appendix A: Pro forma

Article	
Mag no. and date	
Page no.	
Author - sex / name	male/female
Title	
Topic	
Style of content	
Featured organic activity	
Location	
Type of activity	
Details given	

Featured individual - personal information	
Sex	male / female
Titles used (in order)	
Age	
Personal status - e.g. Mother, Father, friend	
Work status - voluntary + profess	
Characters: physical	
personality	
parental	
professional	
References made to other people in relation to individual	

Education	
Life history	

Featured individual/s- information regarding the featured organic activity as depicted by article	
Relationship to organic movement	
Role within activity & type of role	

Spaces and places occupied	
Opinions re activity	
Quotes by individual/about individual relating to activity	
Comments	

Supporting photographs
Additional quotes
Synopsis

Appendix B: Coding dictionary

Field name	Code
ARTICLE DETAILS	
Case number	4 digits starting with a number denoting the magazine (1=FW, 2=LE, 3=OF and 4=SF) followed by the individual number of the case
Category of article	1 organic farm profile
	2 organic horticulture/gardening
	3 technical/financial issues
	4 nutrition/health/cooking
	5 education
	6 research
	7 organic businesses (non-agricultural)
	8 organic movement - individuals
	9 organic movement - history
	10 marketing
Year of publication	1 1940-49
	2 1950-59
	3 1960-69
	4 1970-79
	5 1980-84
	6 1985-89
	7 1990-94
	8 1995-99
	9 2000 +
Title	text entry
Number of pages	actual number

Sex of author	1 male
	2 female
	3 male and female
	4 anonymous
Style of content	1 descriptive
	2 biographical
	3 autobiographical
	4 narrative
	5 interview
	6 opinion

FEATURED ACTIVITY

Location	1 England
	2 Wales
	3 Scotland
	4 Europe
	5 North America
	6 'Southern' country
	7 not located
Type of activity	1 organic farming
	2 organic horticulture/gardening
	3 organic farm visits
	4 organic education or research
	5 job within organic movement
	6 health related/organic food
	7 not applicable
Details	text entry

FEATURED INDIVIDUAL: PERSONAL INFORMATION

Sex	1 male
	2 female
	3 male and female - married or living as married
	4 male and female - unrelated
Title used	1 Mr
	2 Mrs
	3 Mr and Mrs
	4 Miss
	5 professional
	6 titled
	7 none used
Age	1 stated
	2 not stated
Personal status	number of refs from 0-3
Work status: 'productive'	
	1 organic farmer/manager
	2 gardener/horticulturalist
	3 partner or works in team with farmer on organic farm
	4 within organic agriculture but not on an organic farm
	5 within organic movement but not organic agriculture
	6 professional occupation outside organic movement
	7 non-professional occupation outside organic movement
	8 voluntary work within organic movement
	9 voluntary work outside organic movement
	10 not specified

'reproductive' (referred to)	1 yes 2 no
Characterisations: physical	actual number
Characterisations: personality	
-masculine	actual number
-feminine	actual number
-neutral	actual number
Characterisations: parental	actual number
Characterisations: professional	actual number
References made to others:	
spouse	1 yes 2 no
children	1 yes 2 no
siblings	1 yes 2 no
relatives	1 yes 2 no
friends	1 yes 2 no
parents	1 yes 2 no
Education:	
highest level mentioned	1 school 2 further education 3 higher education 4 post-graduate-education 5 specialist training 6 not referred to

	6 not referred to
agricultural	1 yes
	2 not stated
Life history	text entry

FEATURED INDIVIDUAL: ORGANIC ACTIVITY

Relationship to organic movement	1 involved in organic growing
	2 involved with organic farming organisations
	3 involved in organic movement but not organic growing
	4 pioneer of organics/founder member of organic organisation
	5 no direct link to the organic movement but has influence/relationship
Role within activity	1 on-farm work - productive
	2 on-farm work - reproductive
	3 on-farm work - productive and reproductive
	4 gardening/horticulture
	5 research and development
	6 educational
	7 marketing
	8 management of organic organisation
	9 general running of organic organisation
	10 not applicable
Type of role within activity	1 leader/autonomous
	2 team member
	3 helper
	4 unclear
Spaces and places occupied	1 outdoors on-farm

3 outdoors working for organic organisation/doing organic research/ involved in organic education

4 indoors working for organic organisation/doing organic research/ involved in organic education

5 garden

6 market, shop or kitchen

7 overseas travel

8 outdoors other

9 indoors other

10 not applicable

Opinions re activity	text entry
Quotes re activity	text entry
Comments	text entry

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Supporting photographs	text entry
Quotes	text entry
Synopsis	text entry

Appendix C: Letter of introduction

Dear

I am a research student at the Countryside and Community Research Unit, University of Gloucestershire. My research is seeking to understand how the application of organic methods and principles affect the traditional roles of men and women within farming. I am interested in speaking to people who are directly involved with an organic farm, about their work and their involvement in organic agriculture.

I am writing to ask whether you would be interested in taking part in this research. If possible, I would like to interview the adults who play an active part in running your farm, both in the home (if applicable) and in the field. It would be appreciated if I could conduct separate interviews, but I do understand that this may not be convenient. Each interview would take place at your farm and last about one hour. The information that I am given will be confidential, as all names of people and of the farm will be changed when I write up my thesis. Naturally, this will also apply when I share the information with anyone else.

Although I am not actually from a farming background I grew up in a rural part of Shropshire and my training was in agriculture. During the course of my studies I became very interested in organic farming and subsequently chose to work on an organic farm during my sandwich year. My involvement in the farms local marketing scheme, and visits to other farms running similar enterprises led to my current interest in the social issues surrounding organic agriculture. I was then lucky enough to be offered the chance to do this research where I can pursue the subject in greater depth.

I will be in touch soon to find out whether you and others on the farm would like to participate in these interviews. If you decide that you would, then we can arrange a

convenient time for me to visit you. I am happy to make more than one visit if all of the interviews cannot be done on the same day. Please feel free to ask me any further questions that you may have about the research.

I look forward to speaking to you shortly.

Yours sincerely

Genevieve Groom

(01452) 506152

Appendix D: Telephone prompt sheet

Introduction

Hello, my name is Genevieve Groom and I am a research student at Gloucestershire University. You may remember receiving a letter from me sometime in the last few days asking if you would be interested in taking part in my research into work patterns on organic farms. Is now a good time to talk to you or would you like me to call back at a better time?

No, do not remember letter

My research is looking at how work is organised between men and women on organic farms. I contacted you because I would like, If possible, to interview all of the adults who play an active part in running your farm, within the home and out in the field. I would come to your farm to do the interviews and they would each last about an hour. Any information that you give me will be confidential - you will remain anonymous, as I will change your names and the name of your farm.

Yes, remember letter

Have they made a decision?

Do they want any more information?

Who will I be interviewing?

Can I interview you separately?

When is a good day and time?

Will everyone be interviewed at once or do I need to make more than one visit?

Could I have directions to the farm?

Is it okay if I record the interview on tape? Only I will listen to them.

Appendix E: Interview schedule

Organic philosophy - Questions and prompts

What were your original motives for entering organic farming? - *economic/ environmental/ public opinion of farming/ lifelong interest*

How involved were you in the decision to start organic farming? - *initial idea/ gathering information/ receiving advice*

Has your commitment to the principles of organic farming altered since you first made the decision to start organic farming? - *level of interest in organic issues/ belief in organic system/ wider issues*

Has your farming system altered further since you first achieved certification (may not be relevant if land was already certified) - how and why? - *implementation of new ecological farming practices such as composting, green manuring, cover-crops/ marketing methods/ new staff/ addition or removal of enterprises*

What are the most important aspects of organic farming to you now?

Do you see organic farming as part of a social movement/ more than just another form of production? - *social standards/ social roles e.g. rural development, local marketing, positive globilisation, fair trade, gender aspects, public health and education, land ownership/ level of importance/ how implemented on farm*

IFOAM claim that 'attitudes to gender are very progressive in the organic movement giving women equal rights and respect' - do you agree with this?

Personal information - Questions and prompts

What is your educational background? - *age left school/ further education/ higher education/ professional training*

What is your age group? - *20s, 30s, etc.*

How long have you been involved in farming/agriculture?

What was your previous occupation (if relevant)?

How long have you been farming organically (if relevant)?

What title do you use officially to describe what you do on the farm? - *housewife/ farmer/ organic farmer/ farm worker/ administrator*

Work within the farm - on farm, in house, within family - Questions and prompts

(All participants)

What are your main areas of responsibility?

Are there any other tasks you are involved with?

Are there any tasks that you never do?

Are you involved in long-term management decisions?

Are you happy with the work that you do for the farm?

Is there any aspect of your work that you would like to change?

Do you think that men and women are better or more suited to certain tasks?

(Non-converters)

Did you think about how tasks should be divided up between members of the family before you started farming?

Have these ideas changed since you actually started farming?

Do you think that other farms (organic and non-organic) divide the tasks differently?

(Converters)

Since conversion to organic farming has your workload and the way you divide tasks on the farm changed in any way? - *new staff (more women), more people management, new enterprises, different organisation*

Do you think that the division of tasks between family members is organised differently on other farms (organic and non-organic)?

Farms with extra labour

What skills/ characteristics do you look for in your employees? - *Guy Watson*

What tasks do your different farm workers perform and why? - *weeding, planting, tractor work, operating machinery, packing shed, delivery rounds, animals*

Do you think that male and female employees are better or more suited to certain jobs on the farm?

Labour in organic farming - Questions and prompts

Is the productive work different on organic farms? - *more physically intensive/ less mechanised/ type of marketing/ on-farm processing*

Do you think that this makes organic farming more open to certain people? - *women/ non farming background/ are women more suited to certain jobs*

Do you see organic farming as changing the traditional roles that men and women have had in farming?

Acquiring knowledge about organic farming - Questions and prompts

(all participants)

How do you learn about organic farming and keep abreast of current organic issues? - *magazines/ books/ official advice/ radio/ local groups/ friends and neighbours?*

Which people do you go to for advice on organic farming? - *other organic growers/ producer groups/ courses/ professional advisors/*

Who do you have regular contact with through your involvement in organic farming? - *customers/ local farmers/*

(Non- converters)

Are the people you encounter through being involved in organic farming what you expected? - *availability/ atmosphere/ mix of people/ usefulness/ provision of support/ information/ do you feel welcome*

(Converters)

Have you noticed a difference in the type of people that you encounter socially or professionally since converting? - *customers/ age of people/ numbers of women/ different ethnic groups/ type of educational and professional backgrounds/ different lifestyles*

Have you noticed that there are any other differences between organic and conventional people- why? *Friendliness/ more or less relaxed/ levels of enthusiasm/ level of support*

What effect do these differences have on your life? - *positive or negative/ sense of belonging/ friends - new or loss of old*

Off-farm activities - Questions and prompts

(all participants)

Do you have paid work off-farm? - *part-time or full-time/ skilled or unskilled*

Yes - How important is this work to you? - *economically / personally*

No - Why don't you work off-farm? - *don't need to/ don't want to/ childcare constraints/ lack of transport/ partner does not agree/ no suitable jobs/ too much work on farm*

Do you do any unpaid work off-farm? - *community groups / school/ caring for relatives/ church/ environmental*

Why do you do this voluntary work? - *enjoyment/ community reasons/ obligation*

Are you involved regularly in any other off-farm activities? - *WI/ clubs and societies/ sport/ related to children*

(Converters)

Have your off-farm work/activities changed since going organic? - *no longer need to work financially/ now need to work financially/ no time to work or do other activities off-farm due to increased work load on farm/ affordability of off-farm activities*

What impact have these changes had on your life? - *level of isolation/ opinion of peers/ enjoyment/ relaxation*

Future of organic farming - Questions and prompts

How do you see the future of your own farm? - *level of concern/ need to compromise principles/ changes need to be made/*

Are there any non-productive aspects of organic farming that you would like to develop further on your own farm? - *involvement with local community - farm walks, local school, talks/ local marketing schemes/ co-operating with other organic farmers/land in trust (biodynamic)*

Do you have any specific goals in this respect for the future?

How do you see the future of organic farming generally?

Appendix F: Interview prompt sheet A (non-converters)

Organic philosophy

- Motives
- Decision
- Commitment to principles
- Farming system changes since certification
- Most important aspects now
- Social movement or production

Personal details

- Education
- Age
- Time in organics
- Previous occupation

Work organisation around your own farm

- Main areas of responsibility
- Other involvement
- Long-term management
- Decision about division of labour
- Other farms
- Men and women suited to different tasks?

Work organisation generally within organic farming

- Productive work different
- Impacts
- Changing traditional roles in farming

Off-farm work and activities

- Paid off farm work
- Importance of this work
- Unpaid work off-farm

Organic farming community

- Information gathering
- Type of people
- Reception as female
- Differences if conventional
- Women -
  - involvement in organic farming
  - impact

- 'attitudes to gender are very progressive...equal rights and respect'??

Future of organic farming

- Future of own farm
- Non-productive development
- Specific goals
- Organic farming generally

Interview prompt sheet B (converters)

Organic philosophy

- Motives
- Decision
- Commitment to principles
- Farming system changes since certification
- Most important aspects now
- Social movement or production

Personal details

- Education
- Age
- Time in organics
- Previous occupation (if relevant)

Work organisation around your own farm

- Main areas of responsibility
- Other involvement/never
- Long-term management
- Changes since conversion
- Other farms
- Men and women suited to different tasks

Work organisation generally within organic farming

- Productive work different from con
- Impacts
- Changing traditional roles in farming

Off-farm work and activities

- Paid off farm work
- Importance of this work
- Unpaid work off-farm

- Changes since con

Organic farming community

- Information gathering
- Type of people - differences
- Reception as female compared to con
- Women -
    - involvement in organic farming compared to con
    - impact
    - 'attitudes to gender are very progressive...equal rights and respect'?

Future of organic farming

- Future of own farm
- Non-productive development
- Specific goals
- Organic farming generally

Appendix G: Farm information questionnaire

- What is the area of land that you farm?
- What % of this land is organic/non-organic/ in conversion?
- Do you own or rent the land?
- What agricultural enterprises do you have on your holding?
- How do you market your produce?
- Who are the people that work on the farm? - *full time/part time/family/ students/volunteers*
- How long have you had responsibility for this farm?
- How long has the farm been organic?

Appendix H: Table of statistical analyses

Variable	male, female & partner/ male & female	merge	valid chi-square	chi-square value	Fishers	significant	level of significance	Value of phi
Category of article	m+f+p	yes	no					
	m+f	yes	no					
Type of activity	m+f+p	yes	yes	47.482	no	yes	0.0001	0.469
	m+f	yes	yes	11.247	no	yes	0.010	0.241
Title of individual	m+f+p	yes	no					
,	m+f	yes	yes	3.938	no	no		
Age of individual	m+f+p	no	yes	4.041	no	no		
	m+f	no	yes	0.517	no	no		
Productive work status	m+f+p	yes	no					
	m+f	yes	yes	1.993	no	no		
Reproductive work status	m+f+p	no	yes	13.678	no	yes	0.001	0.252
	m+f	no	no	11.819	yes	yes	0.001	-0.264
Reference to spouse	m+f+p	no	yes	2.811	no	no		
	m+f	no	yes	0.508	no	no		
Reference to children	m+f+p	no	yes	3.193	no	no		
	m+f	no	yes	0.003	no	no		
Reference to parents	m+f+p	no	yes	0.859	no	no		
	m+f	no	no	0.294	yes	no		
Education - level	m+f+p	yes	yes	6.324	no	yes	0.042	0.179
	m+f	yes	yes	5.504	no	yes	0.019	0.171
	m+f+p	no	yes	3.585	no	no		

Education - agricultural	m+f+p	no	yes	3.585	no	no		
Importance of individual	m+f+p	no	yes	[illegible]	yes	yes	0.0001	0.373
	m+f	no	yes	0.107	no	no		
Relationship to organic movement	m+f+p	yes	yes	20.939	no	yes	0.002	0.297
	m+f	yes	yes	3.224	no	no		
Role in activity	m+f+p	yes	no					
	m+f	yes	no					
Role type	m+f+p	yes	no					
	m+f	yes	yes	10.038	no	yes	0.018	0.227
Additional role	m+f+p	yes	no					
	m+f	yes	no					
	m+f+p	yes	no					
	m+f	yes	yes	13.392	no	yes	0.020	0.263

Appendix I: Table of farmer information

	Name	Age	Marital status	Partner work details (if not interviewed)	Children	Off farm work	Education	Past work before took on farm	Farm background	Other
1	Val	40-49	married	full-time off - farm (agricultural engineer)	no	part-time (2.5 days) in office	agricultural college - home economics and farm secretarial course	office work	yes	husband from farming family Farm is passed down from her grandfather (brother runs her parents farm)
2	Doreen	60-69	married	full-time off - farm (accountant)	yes independent	NA	degree	psychotherapist/ pig farm labourer	no neither her or husband	husband not from farming family
3	Diane	60-69	married		yes independent	NA	secretarial college	farm secretary	yes	The farm is passed down from Frances's family.
	Morgan	60-69				NA	school	farm work for his parents	yes	
4	Victoria	40-49	divorced	NA	yes dependant	NA	A'levels	shoe making	yes	Her brother died and therefore did not take over the farm thus enabling her to take it on in his place.

										Farm is still legally her fathers
5	Nick	40-49	married	full- time on-farm	yes dependant	NA	school	farm labour	no	Farm is rented from wife's family
6	Morewenna	60-69	married		yes independent & dependant	NA - reliant on holiday cottage & pensions	degree (agricultural botany)	teacher	no	Although their children are adults one is disabled and still partly dependant on them. Both are retired
	Boyd	60-69					degree (engineering)	engineer and statistician	no	
7	Megan	40-49	co-habiting	full-time business consultant (based at farm)	yes independent and dependant	NA	degree (art)	farm work (first marriage to a farmer) SA inspector	no	partner is not from farming family
8	Joan	30-39	married	full-time off-farm (kitchen porter in hotel)	yes dependant	NA	agricultural college - day release	worked for auctioneers - farm sales	yes	husband is from farming family
9	Gillian	40-49	married		yes dependant	NA	school	farm work on parents farm	yes	This is the first farm they have owned (used to rent from council)
	Callum	40-49				NA	agricultural college	farm work as cow man	no	
10	Linda	60-69	married		yes independent	Contracting	school	worked on farm for husbands parents	yes	Farm passed down from Mr Babers family
	Adam	60-69				NA	school	worked on farm for parents	yes	
11	Charles	50-	married	homemaker	no	NA	agricultural	farm labour	yes	Wife has no

		59					college			input into productive work & not from a farm family. Farm inherited from family
12	Adrian	40-49	married	support assistant in school	yes dependant	NA	school	worked on farm for parents	yes	Brothers Both wives from farming families Farm passed down by their family
	Alexander	40-49	married	full-time on-farm	yes dependant	NA	school	worked on farm for parents	yes	
13	Rik	40-49	married	homemaker	yes dependant	NA	degree (agriculture)	Other farm management jobs (conventional farms)	yes	employed as full-time farm manager on large family owned farm Wife not from farming family
14	James	30-39	married	homemaker	yes dependant	NA	degree (agriculture)	NA	yes	employs full-time herdswoman Wife not from farming family

15	Michael	70+	married	homemaker	yes independent	NA	agricultural college	worked on farm for parents	yes	Retired. Employs 2 fulltime and also casual seasonal workers Wife from farming family Farm passed down by his family
16	Hans	30-39	married	works in Camphill community	no	NA	degree (bio-dynamics)	biodynamic farm work	no	Dutch Farm based on Camphill community Wife not from farming family
17	Daniel	50-59	co-habiting	works as a writer & rears rare breed poultry	no	NA	agricultural college	worked on farm for parents	yes	brother also works fulltime on farm and has one part-time employee Partner from farming family Farm passed down by his family
18	Mathew	50-59	married	full-time off - farm (nurse)	yes dependant	part-time building work - flexible	agricultural college	Engineering/ sold farm equipment for	yes	Was county chairman for NFU in 1996

						hours		college friend		Wife not from farming family Farm passed down by his family
19	George	40-49	married	part-time (runs own internet aromatherapy business from the farm)	no	NA	agricultural college	worked on farm for parents	yes	employs one man part-time on farm Wife from farming family Farm passed down by his family
20	Tracey	40-49	married		2 dependents	part-time care worker and runs business from farm selling herbal remedies for animals	school	shop work	no	son works on farm as apprentice and employ 1 man full-time Farm passed down by Mr Cullimore's family
	Ben	40-49			yes independent	NA	agricultural college	NA	yes	

21	Ian	50-59	married	fulltime off-farm (nurse)	yes independent	NA	agricultural college	worked on farm for parents	yes	daughter works on farm full-time (see interviewee 23) Wife not from farming family Farm passed down by his family
	Melanie	20-29	single	NA	none	NA	degree (agriculture and animal science)	NA	yes	Graduated year before Works on parents farm (see interviewee 22)
22	Harry	40-49	married	fulltime off-farm (teacher)	yes dependant	full-time (agricultural surveyor and land valuer)	degree	As current off-farm work details	yes	Employ a fulltime manager Wife not from farming family Farm passed down by his family
23	Trudy	30-39	married	full-time off-farm (carpenter)	no	part-time (local deli)	MSc (plant pathology)	plant scientist	no	Husband not from farming family
24	Rowan	30-39	married	works in the Camphill	no	NA	school	factory/farm work	no	Dutch Farm is based

				community						on a Camphill Community Wife is not from a farming family
25	Jim	50-59	married	full-time off-farm (NHS)	yes dependents	NA	agricultural college	worked on farms in USA	yes	Wife is not from farming family
26	Hannah	40-49	married		yes dependent & independent	full-time off-farm (agronomist - technical manager)	degree (agronomy)	See current off-farm work	no	
	Mark	40-49				full-time off-farm (head teacher)	degree (pharmacology)	See current off-farm work + pharmacologist	no	
27	Emma	40-49	married	full time on-farm	yes dependant	NA	teacher training (rural science) HND (natural resources and rural economy)	animal health officer	no	husband from farming background
28	Sally	30-39	co-habiting	part-time on farm + part-time off-farm (contract farm work)	yes dependant	NA	degree (nursing)	nurse/ farm work/factory work/lab work	no	partner not from farming background
29	Jane	30-39	married	full-time on farm	no	freelance economist/ consultant	degree (economics)	As current off farm work but full-time	no	husband from farm background & farm passed down his family
30	Julie	50-59	divorced	NA	yes independent	NA	degree (media studies)	film editor/ horticultural	no	1960s self confessed

								work		hippy Stated on the phone that she wasn't "into the feminist thing"
31	Elaine	50-59	married	full-time off-farm company director	no	part-time 'accountant'	A' levels	fresh produce buyer	no	Worked all over the world for M&S and Sainsbuys Husband not from farming background
32	Deidre	40-49	married	don't know	yes dependant	NA	degree (agriculture)	1 year MAFF research placement during degree	yes	Her only brother died when in teens. Farm passed down by her family
33	Natalie	50-59	married	full-time on farm	yes dependant	NA	teacher training (primary)	primary teacher/worked with environmental campaigner	no	husband is not from farm background

Appendix J: Table of farm information

	Cert.	Area (ha)	Organic/ conversion	Tenure	Inherited farm	ft / pt (primary farmer)	Off-farm work (household)	Regular employees (non-family)	Farm type	Diversified	Years farmed	Years convert
1	SA	5-19	org	own	yes	p/t	yes	no	cattle/sheep	none	21	<5
2	SA	20-49	org	own	no	p/t	yes	no	cattle/sheep	none	11	5-<10
3	SA	50-99	org &con	own/rent	yes	f/t	no	no	mixed	none	31	<5
4	SA	100+	org &con	own/rent	yes	f/t	no	yes	mixed	added-value	4	5-<10
5	SA	20-49	org	own	yes	f/t	no	no	mixed	direct sales	19	5-<10
6	SA	5-19	org	own	no	f/t	no	yes	mixed	lets/direct sales/added-value	10	5-<10
7	SA	50-99	org &con	own/rent	no	f/t	yes	no	mixed	lets	7	5-<10
8	SA	20-49	org	rent	no	f/t	yes	no	mixed	none	18	<5
9	SA	100+	con	own	no	f/t	no	no	mixed	direct sales	2	<5
10	SA	100+	org	own	yes	f/t	no	no	mixed	none	33	5-<10
11	SA	100+	org	own	yes	f/t	no	no	mixed	lets	20	5-<10
12	SA	100+	org	own/rent	yes	f/t	yes	no	dairy	none	24	<5

13	SA	100+	org	own	na	f/t	no	yes	mixed	lets/direct sales/added-value	10	10-<20
14	SA	100+	org	rent	no	f/t	no	yes	mixed	none	11	<5
15	SA	100+	org	own	yes	f/t	no	yes	mixed	none	30	<5
16	BDAA	5-19	org	in trust	na	f/t	no	yes	mixed	none	7	>=20
17	OFG	100+	org &con	rent	yes	f/t	yes	yes	mixed	direct sales	25	10-<20
18	SA	50-99	org/conv	own/rent	yes	p/t	yes	no	cattle/sheep	none	12	<5
19	SA	100+	org/conv	rent	yes	f/t	yes	yes	cattle/sheep	direct sales	25	<5
20	OFG	100+	org	own/rent	yes	f/t	yes	yes	cattle/sheep	direct sales	20	10-<20
21	OFG	50-99	org	rent	yes	f/t	yes	no	dairy	none	20	<5
22	OFG	50-99	org	own	yes	f/t	yes	yes	other	none	26	<5
23	SA	100+	org	own	no	p/t	yes	no	horticulture	direct sales/added value	3	10-<20
24	BDAA	20-49	org	in trust	na	f/t	no	yes	mixed	none	6	>=20
25	SA	20-49	org	own/rent	yes	f/t	yes	yes	pig + poultry	none		5-<10
26	SA	5-19	org/conv	own/rent	no	p/t	yes	no	cattle/sheep	lets	6	<5
27	OFG	20-49	org	rent	no	f/t	no	no	dairy	direct	18	<5

										sales/added value		
28	SA	0-4	org	rent	no	f/t	yes	no	horticulture	direct sales	4	<5
29	OFG	50-99	org	own	yes	f/t	yes	no	dairy	none	9	<5
30	BDAA	5-19	org	own	no	f/t	no	no	mixed	lets/direct sales/added-value	23	>=20
31	SA	5-19	org	own	no	p/t	yes	no	mixed	direct sales	4	<5
32	SA	100+	org	rent	yes	f/t	no	yes	mixed	direct sales/added value	17	10-<20
33	SA	0-4	org	rent	no	f/t	no	no	horticulture	direct sales	5	10-<20