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Space and Status

A whole history remains to be written of spaces—which would at the same time be the history of powers— . . . from the great strategies of geo-politics to the little tactics of the habitat.

—Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*

Throughout history and across cultures, architectural and geographic spatial arrangements have reinforced status differences between women and men. The "little tactics of the habitat," viewed through the lenses of gender and status, are the subjects of this inquiry. Women and men are spatially segregated in ways that reduce women's access to knowledge and thereby reinforce women's lower status relative to men's. "Gendered spaces" separate women from knowledge used by men to produce and reproduce power and privilege.

Sociologists agree that, whether determined by the relationship to the means of production, as proposed by Marx, or by "social estimations of honor," as proposed by Weber, status is unequally distributed among members of society and that men as a group are universally accorded higher status than women as a group (Blumberg 1984; Collins 1971; Huber 1990; Whyte 1978a). Status distinctions among groups of people constitute the stratification (social ranking) system of a society. Women's status is thus a component of gender stratification, as is men's status. "Women's status" and "gender stratification" are used interchangeably throughout this book to designate women's status in relation to men's. "Gender" refers to the socially and culturally constructed distinctions that accompany biological differences associated with a person's sex. While biological differences are constant over time and across cultures (i.e., there are only two sexes), the social implications of gender differences vary historically and socially.

Women and men typically have different status in regard to control of property, control of labor, and political participation. A variety of explanations exists for the persistence of gender stratification. Most theories are based on biological, economic, psychological, or social interpretations (Chafetz 1990). Our understanding of the tenacity of gender inequalities, however, can be improved by considering the architectural and geographic spatial contexts within which they occur. Spatial arrangements between the sexes are socially created, and when they provide access to valued knowledge for men while reducing access to that knowledge for women, the organization of space may perpetuate status differences. The "daily-life environment"

of gendered spaces thus acts to transmit inequality (Dear and Wolch 1989, 6). To quote geographer Doreen Massey, "It is not just that the spatial is socially constructed; the social is spatially constructed too" (Massey 1984a, 6).

The history of higher education in America provides an example of the spatial contexts with which gender relations are entwined. Colleges were closed to women until the late nineteenth century because physicians believed that school attendance endangered women's health and jeopardized their ability to bear children (Rosenberg 1982, 5; Rothman and Rothman 1987). In 1837 Mary Lyon defended her creation of the first college for women, Mt. Holyoke, by citing its role in "the preparation of the Daughters of the Land to be good mothers" (Watson 1977, 134). Mt. Holyoke was built in rural Massachusetts to protect its students from the vices of big cities (Horowitz 1984).

An initial status difference (the fact that few women were physicians and none sat on college admissions boards) translated into the exclusion of women from colleges. Spatial segregation, in turn, reduced women's ability to enter the prestigious medical profession to challenge prevailing assumptions about the suitability of educating women. The location of knowledge in a place inaccessible to women reinforced the existing gender stratification system that relegated women to the private sphere and men to the public sphere.

A few pioneering women gained access to higher education, initially through segregated women's colleges. They entered a different world from that of men's colleges such as Harvard, Amherst, and the University of Virginia, which consisted of separate buildings clustered together around common ground. Male students moved from chapel to classroom to their rooms; dormitories had several entrances; rooms were grouped around stairwells instead of on a single corridor; and faculty lived in separate dwellings or off the campus entirely. In contrast, the first women's colleges were single large buildings that housed and fed faculty and students in addition to providing space for classrooms, laboratories, chapel, and library under the same roof. Compared to the relative freedom of dispersed surroundings enjoyed by men, women were enclosed and secluded in a single structure that made constant supervision possible (Horowitz 1984, 4–22).

Women eventually entered coeducational institutions with men. Initially, though, they were relegated to segregated classrooms (Woody [1929] 1974, 2:285) or to coordinate (i.e., "sister") colleges on separate campuses (Newcomer 1959, 40). Spatial barriers finally disappeared as coeducation became increasingly acceptable. As women attended the same schools and learned the same curricula as men, their public status began to improve—most notably with the right to vote granted by the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920.

Thus, both geographic distance and architectural design established boundaries between the knowledge available to women and that available to men. The existing stratification system depended on an ideology of women's delicate health to deny them access to college. These resultant spatial arrangements, in turn, made it difficult for women to challenge the status quo. Once spatial barriers were breached, however, the stratification system began to change.

The Social Construction of Space

Geographic. Geographers have been the most vocal advocates of the integration of space into social theories. It is not sensible, they argue, to separate social and spatial processes: to "explain why something occurs is to explain why it occurs where it does" (Sack 1980, 70). Space is essential to social science; spatial relations exist only because social processes exist. The spatial and social aspects of a phenomenon are inseparable (Massey 1984a, 3; Dear and Wolch 1989).

Among sociologists and geographers who have addressed the spatial perspective are Durkheim (1915) on the social construction of space, Goffman (1959) on the presentation of front-stage versus backstage behavior, Reskin (1988) on the devaluation of women's work, and Harvey (1973) on urban planning. Harvey identifies the city as a crucible in which the sociological and geographical imaginations become most compatible. The tendency to compartmentalize the shape of the city from the activities that constitute it should be avoided, since spaces and actions are different ways of thinking about the same thing (Harvey 1973, 26). The difficulty in achiev-

ing a synthesis is that social scientists do not yet possess a language adequate to the simultaneous occurrence of spatial form and social processes.

Part of the difficulty in establishing a common language is the tendency to think in causal terms: do spatial arrangements *cause* certain social outcomes or do social processes create spatial differentiation? Geographers are the first to point out the folly of "spatial fetishism," or the idea that social structure is determined by spatial relations (Massey 1984b, 53; Urry 1985, 28). Yet it is also true that once spatial forms are created, they tend to become institutionalized and in some ways influence future social processes (Harvey 1973, 27). Although space is constructed by social behavior at a particular point in time, its legacy may persist (seemingly as an absolute) to shape the behavior of future generations.

Rather than thinking in terms of causality, Harvey proposes that space and social relations are so intricately linked that the two concepts should be considered complementary instead of mutually exclusive. Although it is necessary to break into the interactive system at some point to test hypotheses, whether one chooses spatial form as the input and social processes as the output or vice versa should be a matter of convenience (Harvey 1973, 46). Harvey suggests that instead of talking about either space or society causing certain outcomes, or the continuous interaction of space and society, efforts be made to "translate results generated in one language (say a social process language) into another language (the spatial form language). It is rather like translating from a geometric result to an algebraic result . . . both languages amount to different ways of saying the same thing" (Harvey 1973, 46–47). In other words, it is fruitless to try to isolate space from social processes in order to say that one "causes" the other. A more constructive approach is to acknowledge their interdependence, acknowledge how one tries to separate the two for analytic purposes, and then reintegrate the two. A geographer might emphasize a *spatial*-social language, while a sociologist might emphasize a *socio*-spatial language of explanation.

My hypothesis is that initial status differences between women and men create certain types of gendered spaces and that institutionalized spatial segregation then reinforces prevailing male advantages. While it would be simplistic to argue that spatial segregation causes gender stratification, it would be equally simplistic to ignore the possibility that spatial segregation

reinforces gender stratification and thus that modifying spatial arrangements, by definition, alters social processes.

Feminist geographers have been pioneers on the frontier of theories about space and gender. In an article titled "City and Home: Urban Housing and the Sexual Division of Space," McDowell (1983) argues that urban structure in capitalist societies reflects the construction of space into masculine centers of production and feminine suburbs of reproduction (see also Mackenzie and Rose 1983; Saegert 1980; and Zelinsky, Monk, and Hanson 1982). The "home as haven" constituting a separate sphere for women, however, becomes less appropriate as more women enter the labor force.

According to feminist geographers, a thorough analysis of gender and space would recognize that definitions of femininity and masculinity are constructed in particular places—most notably the home, workplace, and community—and the reciprocity of these spheres of influence should be acknowledged in analyzing status differences between the sexes. Expectations of how men and women should behave in the home are negotiated not only there but also at work, at school, and at social events (Bowlby, Foord, and McDowell 1986). The power of feminist geography is its ability to reveal the spatial dimension of gender distinctions that separate spheres of production from spheres of reproduction and assign greater value to the productive sphere (Bowlby, Foord, and Mackenzie 1982).

Architectural. Architectural space also plays a role in maintaining status distinctions by gender. The spatial structure of buildings embodies knowledge of social relations, or the taken-for-granted rules that govern relations of individuals to each other and to society (Hillier and Hanson 1984, 184). Thus, dwellings reflect ideals and realities about relationships between women and men within the family and in society. The space outside the home becomes the arena in which social relations (i.e., status) are produced, while the space inside the home becomes that in which social relations are reproduced. Gender-status distinctions therefore are played out within the home as well as outside of it (Hillier and Hanson 1984, 257–61).

The use of architecture to reinforce prevailing patterns of privilege and to assert power is a concept dating from the eighteenth century with Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon (from the Greek, for all-seeing). A circular building of cell-like partitions, the Panopticon had at its center a tower allowing a

supervisor to observe the occupants of each room. A window at the rear of each cell illuminated the occupant, and side walls prevented contact of occupants with each other. Such surveillance and separation inhibited the contagion of criminal behavior (in prisons), disease (in hospitals), or insanity (in asylums) (Foucault 1977, 200; Philo 1989).*

The Panopticon was "polyvalent in its applications," an architectural system that existed independently of its specific uses. Foucault described it as a machine which could produce the relationships of power and subjection. "It is a type of location of bodies in space, of distribution of individuals in relation to one another, of hierarchical organization, of disposition of centers and channels of power . . . which can be implemented in hospitals, workshops, schools, prisons" (Foucault 1977, 202; see also Evans 1982, 198–206).

Prisons are the clearest examples of space being used to reinforce a hierarchy and to assert power, yet some schools of the eighteenth century were also built on panoptic principles. The École Militaire, designed by the architect Gabriel, was "an apparatus for observation": rooms were small cells distributed along a corridor so that every ten students had an officer's room on each side. Every room had a chest-level window in the corridor wall for surveillance, and students were confined to their rooms through the night. Teachers dined at raised tables to supervise meals, and latrines had half-doors so the heads and legs of students could be seen. Side walls were sufficiently high, however, that students could not see each other (Foucault 1977, 173).

Bentham also was concerned with those "melancholy abodes appropriate to the reception of the insane." He proposed that madhouses erected according to his guidelines could have beneficial effects on the mentally ill (Philo 1989, 265). Architect William Stark's proposal for the Glasgow Asylum (in 1816) followed Bentham's design, adding distinctions by gender, class, and

*Speaking tubes between the central tower and each cell, a feature of the first "Penitentiary Panopticon" drawn by Willey Reveley in 1791, eventually were abandoned because they allowed two-way communication. Such a system was contrary to the control of information intended to flow only from the less powerful inhabitants at the periphery of the building to the powerful at its center (Evans 1982, 208).

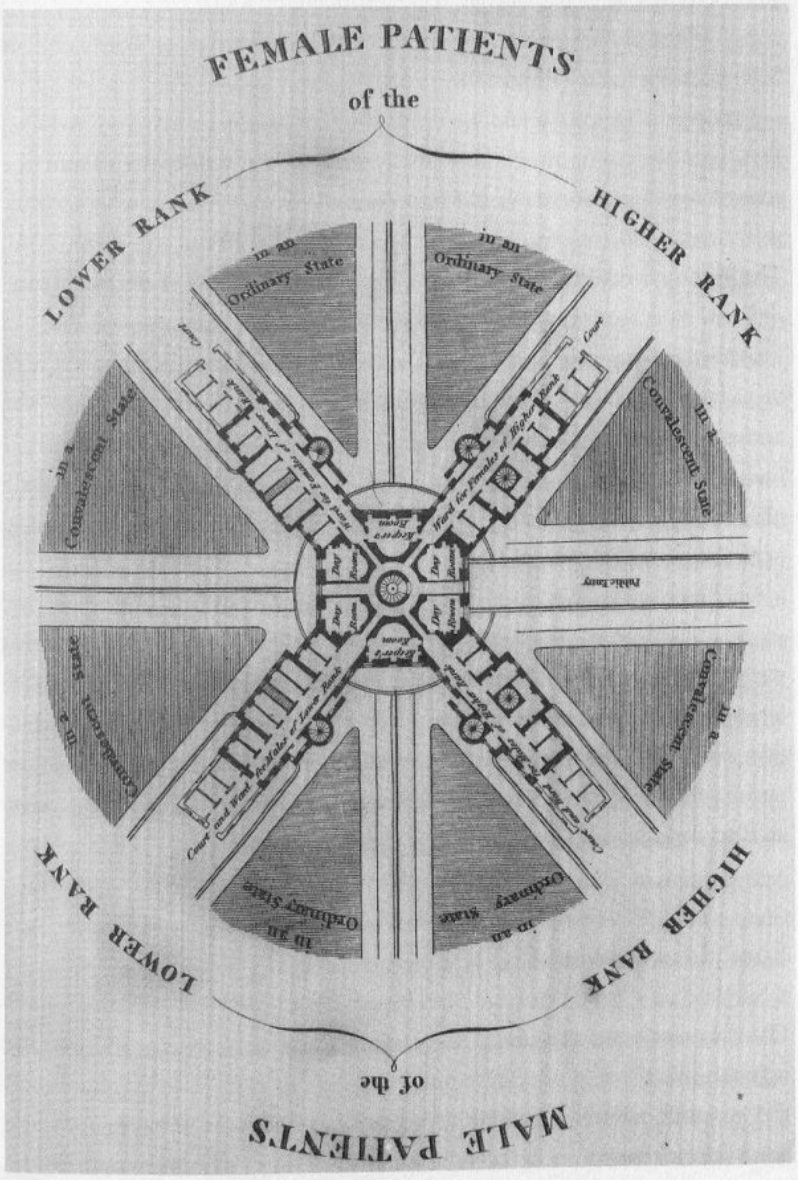


Fig. 1.1. William Stark's preliminary panoptic plan for the Glasgow Asylum divides space by gender, social class, and degree of illness. Reproduced from "Third Report from the Committee on Madhouses in England," *Parliamentary Reports* 6 (1816): 361, by permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library.

level of illness. Men and women were separated, by social rank, into separate wings of the asylum depending on whether they were in an "ordinary" or "convalescent" state (Philo 1989, 268).

Panoptic principles could be applied to schools, prisons, and asylums; Bentham also recognized their application to the workplace. From the central tower a manager could supervise all his employees, whether they were nurses, doctors, foremen, teachers, or warders (Foucault 1977, 204). The manager could judge workers, alter their behavior if necessary, and deliver new instructions. One of the design's special advantages was that "an inspector arriving unexpectedly at the center of the Panopticon will be able to judge at a glance, without anything being concealed from him, how the entire establishment is functioning" (Foucault 1977, 204). The manager had full view of the workers, while workers did not know if they were being observed. In this way the Panopticon reinforced the prevailing relationship between management and labor.

In the creation of new products, and in order to improve productivity, steps in the process of manufacturing were divided into components with a corresponding division of the labor force. The ability to compartmentalize labor *and* workers enabled managers to control the entire process of production, while workers understood only their own contribution rather than the entire process. Spatial control reinforced control of knowledge, which operated to deter labor from organizing against management.

Spatial Institutions

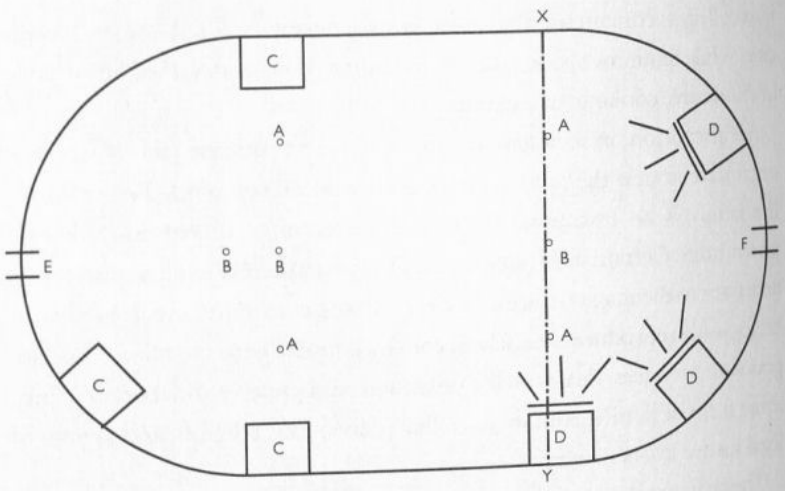
Over the course of the life cycle, everyone experiences one or more of the institutions of family, education, and the labor force. If we are to understand the systemic nature of gender stratification, it is to the interplay of these institutions that we must look (Brinton 1988). Equally important are the spaces within which institutional activities occur. Families must be analyzed in the context of dwellings, education in the context of schools, and labor in the context of workplaces. These "spatial institutions" form barriers to women's acquisition of knowledge by assigning women and men to different gendered spaces. Masculine spaces (such as nineteenth-century Amer-

ican colleges) contain socially valued knowledge of theology, law, and medicine, while feminine spaces (such as the home) contain devalued knowledge of child care, cooking, and cleaning.

An institution, in sociological terms, refers to a patterned set of activities organized around the production of certain social outcomes. For example, the family is an institution because it is organized to reproduce future generations. Certain institutions are universal and evolve to fill requirements necessary to the maintenance of society. All societies must have the ability to biologically reproduce themselves, convey knowledge to members, produce goods and services, deal with the unknown, and preserve social order. Thus, some form of family, education, military, economy, religion, and system of legal justice exists in every society.

The activities that constitute institutions, of course, occur in specific places. Families live in homes, while education and religion are carried out in schools and churches. There is some overlap in institutions and the spaces they occupy. Educational and religious instruction, for example, may take place in the home, as does economic production in nonindustrial societies. Yet if one were to assign a primary spatial context to each major institution, the family would occupy the dwelling, education the school, economy the workplace, religion the church, and the legal system a courthouse. This book addresses the relationship between gender stratification and the spatial institutions of the family/dwelling, education/school, and labor force/workplace.

The Family and Segregated Dwellings. Nonindustrial societies often separate women and men within the dwelling (P. Oliver 1987). In a typical Purum house, for example, domestic space is divided into right/left, male/female quarters, with higher value attributed to areas and objects associated with right/male and lower value associated with left/female (Sciama 1981, 91). Dwellings of the South American Jivaro Indians demonstrate a similar pattern, with the women's entrance at the left end of the rectangular hut and a men's entrance at the right end; women's beds and men's beds are arranged at their respective ends of the *jivaria* (Stirling 1938). The traditional courtyard pattern of the Nigerian Hausa (used by both Muslim and non-Muslim families) also differentiates men's from women's spaces (Moughtin 1985, 56). Traditional Muslim households are divided into the *anderun* at the back for the women and the *birun* at the front for men (Khatib-Chahidi 1981).



PLAN

A = LATERAL POSTS B = CENTRAL POSTS C = WOMEN'S BEDS
D = MEN'S BEDS E = WOMEN'S ENTRANCE F = MEN'S ENTRANCE

Fig. 1.2. The men's and women's entrances are at opposite ends of the South American *jivaria*. Adapted from Stirling (1938).

A variety of cultural, religious, and ideological reasons have been used throughout history to justify gender segregation. Muslims, for example, believe that women should not come into contact with men who are potential marriage partners. The system of purdah was developed to keep women secluded in the home in a space safe from unregulated sexual contact, yet it also served to restrict women's educational and economic opportunities. Muslim women therefore have lower status outside the home, compared with women in less sexually segregated societies (Mandelbaum 1988).

Nineteenth-century America and Great Britain had less overt forms of sexual spatial segregation than nonindustrial societies. They were still characterized, however, by gendered spaces. The ideal Victorian home contained a drawing room for ladies and smoking and billiard rooms for gentlemen; the "growlery" was the husband's retreat from domesticity (Franklin 1981; Girouard 1979; Kerr [1871] 1972; Wright 1985). Contemporary American society has been characterized by reduced levels of gender segregation within the dwelling. An era of open floorplans was

ushered in by Frank Lloyd Wright's "Usonian" home, and today many high-priced suburban houses are built with "great rooms" in which men, women, and children all share the same space during part of each day.

Education and Segregated Schools. In nonindustrial societies, ceremonial men's huts are the locus of formal education. The huts are places in which men teach boys the techniques of hunting, fishing, warfare, and religious rituals. Initiation rites accompanying passage through the age-set require the proper execution of a series of tasks set forth by the elders. Since girls and women are not allowed to enter the hut, they are excluded from avenues of formal education (Bateson 1958; Hogbin 1970; Maybury-Lewis 1967).

For example, secret musical instruments are kept in men's houses and represent a source of power over women. The Iatmul and Wogeo men of New Guinea (Bateson 1958; Hogbin 1970) and the Suiai of the Solomon Islands (D. Oliver 1955) possess flutes or slit-gongs, while Brazilian Shavante men learn songs not taught to women (Maybury-Lewis 1967). During initiation into the men's club of the Wogeo Islanders, boys are told they are hearing monsters that will swallow them. Once the boys pass their initiation rites, they are told by the men: "There were no supernatural beings, only flutes. . . . These were the mysteries that must be hidden from the women. In a few years the boys would be taught how to play the tunes. The entire affair had been invented long ago by the culture heroes to turn children into men—*to separate them from their mothers*" (Hogbin 1970, 110; emphasis added). The power of the musical instruments is insured only as long as they are kept secret from the women. Ceremonial huts create the geographic distance between men and women that facilitates preservation of musical knowledge for men.

Schools are the loci of formal education in American society. Just as ceremonial men's huts are places in which boys learn to hunt and fight in nonindustrial societies, schools are the places in which, until relatively recently, occupational skills were conveyed only to boys. Excluding girls from schools—elementary through college—insured that, as a group, women would be less able than men to read, write, and cipher. Paths to public status therefore were limited. Elementary and high schools became sexually integrated as industrialization proceeded, but American colleges did not become coeducational until the late nineteenth century. Women did not begin to

enter places of higher education in large numbers until the mid-twentieth century (Solomon 1985).* Spatial segregation thereby reduced women's access to knowledge and likely had a greater negative association with women's status than the form of dwellings.

The Labor Force and the Segregated Workplace. The division of labor in nonindustrial societies is simultaneously spatial and gendered. Men and women tend to perform different tasks divided fairly consistently along gender role stereotypes: men hunt, and women cook and care for children (Murdock and Provost 1973). Since hunting typically occurs far from the dwelling, while cooking and child care occur close to it, spatial distinctions are an integral part of the gender division of labor.

Such spatial arrangements may also be related to gender stratification. Men's labor is more universally valued because men tend to distribute excess goods (from a successful hunt, for example) to families outside the immediate household, while women prepare food primarily within the family (Friedl 1975). To the extent that women do not accompany men to learn hunting skills, the reciprocity between spatial segregation and gender stratification is reinforced. The initial reason for women not learning to hunt—immobility due to responsibility for child care—becomes obscured as spatial segregation insures that few women acquire the ability to hunt.

Segregated workplaces also exist in industrialized societies. When American women began to enter the labor force in the nineteenth century, the relatively few jobs open to them were highly segregated by gender. Domestic service and teaching were acceptable female occupations, but factory and clerical work were controversial because they placed women in the same spaces as men. Women in typically male occupations, however, earned more and had higher status than women in typically female occupations (Aron 1987).

Today, when more than one-half of American women are in the labor force, they still work in a small number of occupations and in places separate from men (Baron and Bielby 1985; Reskin and Hartmann 1986; A. M. Scott

*By 1870 approximately 200 colleges in the United States were educating almost 11,000 women, but they constituted fewer than 1 percent of all women aged 18 to 21 (Solomon 1985, 62).

1986). "Thus in modern workplaces there are not only men's and women's jobs but also men's and women's spaces" (J. W. Scott 1982, 176). In an era in which the majority of women's and men's daily lives are spent outside the dwelling, and to the extent that they do not share the same workplace, contact between the sexes is reduced. Since public status derives at least partially from occupational skills, many of which are learned on the job, workplace segregation contributes to women's lower status. Once again, access to knowledge and spatial relations mediate the status of women.

The present study uses comparative and historical analyses to explore the intersection of gender, space, and status in nonindustrial societies and in the United States. "Nonindustrial societies" refer to those dependent on hunting and gathering, horticulture, agriculture, or fishing as their means of livelihood. Information on nonindustrial societies is based on ethnographies provided primarily by anthropologists. The first part of the book uses quantitative cross-cultural data for nonindustrial societies and the second part uses qualitative historical data for the United States to trace changes in the relationship between gender stratification and spatial institutions. The two parts are connected by their common emphasis on spatial institutions, but no attempt is made to imply an evolutionary sequence of development. Two different approaches, one more quantitative and comparative, the other more qualitative and historical, help address the complexity of the relationship between gender stratification and spatial arrangements. Neither of these approaches proves a theory of space and status in the empirical sense. Rather, a combination of data from a variety of sources and quite different analytical techniques are used to construct a plausible and rich interpretation of the confluence of status, gender, and space.

Space, Knowledge, and Secrecy

Spatial segregation is one of the mechanisms by which a group with greater power can maintain its advantage over a group with less power. By controlling access to knowledge and resources through the control of space, the

dominant group's ability to retain and reinforce its position is enhanced. Thus, spatial boundaries contribute to the unequal status of women. For women to become more knowledgeable, they must also change places.

Many types of knowledge exist, only some of which is highly valued. "Masculine" knowledge is almost universally more prestigious than "feminine" knowledge. Men's ability to hunt in nonindustrial societies is therefore more highly valued than women's ability to gather, although women's efforts actually provide more of the household's food (Friedl 1975). In advanced industrialized societies, math and science skills (at which men excel) are more highly valued than verbal and relationship skills (at which women excel).

Shared knowledge can bind the members of society together. Well-known origin myths, for example, create solidarity around a group identity. Knowledge can also separate the members of society, however. Every society restricts some types of knowledge to certain members. Successful hunting techniques are known only to a few men in nonindustrial societies, just as medical expertise is known only to an elite few in advanced industrial societies. Sometimes the distribution of knowledge is controlled through institutionalized gate-keeping organizations (such as a men's hut or the American Medical Association). Thus, every society possesses differently valued knowledge that theoretically is available to all members but in reality is not.

Use of language among the Endo of Kenya is a case in point. Women and men are thought to have a different relation to language, with women having less mastery and control of what they say. To be male among the Endo means being in command of language. Anthropologist Henrietta Moore (1986, 164–65) identifies knowledge, like language, as a male attribute. Although some older women may be regarded as knowledgeable, they do not possess the special social knowledge which is the preserve of men. Adult status is achieved only by the acquisition of esoteric knowledge through rites of passage. Language and knowledge together "construct a discourse of power" regulating gender relations. Since women possess neither language skills nor social (male) knowledge, they are excluded from political and ritual power.

The group with less-valued knowledge may contest the legitimacy of its

unequal distribution. Nineteenth-century American feminists, for example, fought vigorously to open medical colleges to women. Many other examples exist of women (both white and black) organizing to open schools, achieve the vote, and join labor unions (Foner 1988; Kessler-Harris 1982; Flexner 1975). The long battles accompanying each of these efforts demonstrate how contentious acquiring access to knowledge can be. Those with valued knowledge are the most powerful, which buttresses their ability to define their knowledge as the most prestigious and to maintain control of it. Knowledge thus forms the basis for a stratification system.

Moore (1986, 83, 120) recognizes the relationships among knowledge, power, and space in her analysis of domestic space as the "text" within which movement and action are analogous to speaking and reading (i.e., interpreting) a literary text. The organization of space is "both product and producer" of existing social and economic relations: "Spatial representations express in their own logic the power relations between different groups; they are therefore active instruments in the production and reproduction of the social order. The ability to provide interpretations of a spatial text . . . is political, because the power to impose the principles of representation of reality—which is no more than the construction of those principles—is a political power" (H. Moore 1986, 89).

Spatial barriers become established and then institutionalized for reasons that have little to do (manifestly) with power, but which tend to maintain prevailing advantages. This is because space is a "morphic language," one of the means by which society is interpreted by its members (Hillier and Hanson 1984, 198). The reciprocity between space and status arises from the constant renegotiation and re-creation of the existing stratification system. Bourdieu (1977) proposes that the power of a dominant group lies in its ability to control constructions of reality that reinforce its own status so that subordinate groups accept the social order and their own place in it. The powerful cannot maintain their positions without the cooperation of the less powerful. If a given stratification system is to persist, then, both powerful and less-powerful groups must be engaged in its constant renegotiation and re-creation. Women in nonindustrial societies who observed taboos barring them from ceremonial men's huts and women in nineteenth-century America who accepted the medical opinion that they should not attend college

were as engaged in upholding gendered power differentials as were men. From Moore's perspective, "the dominated are as involved in the use and maintenance of power as the dominant, because there are no available forms of discourse which do not appeal to the given categories, divisions and values which simultaneously produce and expose the relations of power" (H. Moore 1986, 194).

Thus, women and men together create spatial segregation and stratification systems. Both sexes subscribe to the spatial arrangements that reinforce differential access to knowledge, resources, and power: men because it serves their interests, and women because they may perceive no alternative. In fact, greater and lesser degrees of cooperation exist within stratification systems. Some women may believe in the legitimacy of their lower status due to strong ideological pressures or religious creeds. Other women may participate in a stratification system because they have little choice (e.g., if they have not received the training necessary for more prestigious status). Still other women struggle against the prevailing system, calling for the right to vote, equal pay for equal work, and reproductive freedom. Most status differences are reinforced by subtle forms of spatial segregation. Instead of being visibly manifest in spatial barriers, status hierarchies often are determined in secret. Secrets, in turn, are preserved often through spatial boundaries.

The Role of Secrecy. Place, power, and knowledge interact to create secrecy. In "The Secret Society," Georg Simmel made the following observation: "The secret is not only a means under whose protection the material purposes of a group may be furthered; often, conversely, the very formation of a group is designed to guarantee the secrecy of certain contents. This occurs in the special type of secret societies whose substance is a secret doctrine, some theoretical, mystical, or religious *knowledge*. Here, secrecy is its own sociological purpose: certain insights must not penetrate into the masses; those who know form a community in order to guarantee mutual secrecy to one another" (Wolff 1950, 355; emphasis in original).

Simmel did not specifically address the relationship between secrecy and spatial segregation, although he acknowledged the role of seclusion in reinforcing secrecy's effects. He singled out "certain secret orders among nature peoples" as an example of a secluded secret society. Such societies were characterized by separate huts that were symbolically different from the

surrounding dwellings. They were composed only of men and their essential purpose was to emphasize the differentiation of men from women (Wolff 1950, 364). Members of the secret order wore masks, and women were forbidden to approach them. If women discovered that the actors were their husbands, the orders lost their "whole significance" and became "harmless mummeries" (Wolff 1950, 364). In other words, spatial distance reinforced knowledge differences between women and men. When that distance was breached, men lost some of their power over women.

In *Economy and Society*, Max Weber recognized explicitly this relationship between spatial segregation and gender stratification. His study of nonindustrial societies identified men's houses as repositories of power from which women were excluded (Weber [1921] 1978, 907). Men gathered there for religious ceremonies and initiation rites and to make major decisions affecting the village. Women were barred from participation—and thereby barred from training in the practical and symbolic skills necessary for leadership positions.

Among the Taos Pueblo Indians, the link between men's clubs, secrecy, and power is equally explicit. The *kiva* is an underground chamber used as a meeting place by secret societies; it is the training ground for leaders in religious and political ceremonies crucial to the transmission of the Indians' oral culture. Women may hold auxiliary *kiva* membership and enter the chambers to cook and clean, but they do not have access to the esoteric information shared by men. The *lulina* ("The Old People") control the behavior of others through their knowledge and use of *kiva* secrets. The system of *kiva* apprenticeship "denies major political participation to those who do not have the proper religious training and bars them from access to religious knowledge. In other words, religious knowledge is a prerequisite for secular office-holding at the senior level. Nontraditionalists cannot gain technical or formal power, and secrecy prevents them from learning the underpinnings of certain political acts because the rationale of such acts is frequently attributed to religious reasons" (Brandt 1980, 139).

Knowledge, Secrecy, and Women's Status. Several examples of spatially segregated institutions in American history exist to illustrate how separating women from sources of knowledge influences women's status. The first is the college, in which very few women were enrolled until after World War II.

When higher education first opened to women, it took the form of spatially segregated women's colleges. Women did not gain the training necessary for careers outside the home until the end of the nineteenth century, when professional programs became coeducational. Bitter controversy ensued over women's rights to share the same space and the same knowledge with men. The battle over coeducation in state universities began in 1862 and did not end for over a century. Such intense resistance to gender integration reflects the perceived costs to the powerful group of sharing space and knowledge with the less powerful.

The second "men's club" was the labor union. When the Knights of Labor (organized in 1869 as a secret society) opened its doors to women in the 1880s, about 10 percent of its membership was female. The proportion of women in unions declined after the Knights of Labor disbanded in 1886 (Kessler-Harris 1982, 86). Women constituted approximately 2 percent of union membership in 1900, although 18 percent of the labor force was female at that time (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1975, 127). One reason for the decline in the proportion of female participation was that union meetings were often held in saloons that excluded women (Kessler-Harris 1982, 152, 158).

Labor unions served one of the same educational functions for blue-collar workers that colleges did for white-collar workers, as the following passage suggests: "Skilled trades had traditionally been a province of unionized craftsmen who jealously guarded access to training in their fields. Though women frequently taught each other, and occasionally managed to 'steal' a trade from a willing male relative, they were rarely admitted to the requisite apprenticeships. Where they managed to acquire skills and posed a threat to male workers, craft unions sometimes grudgingly helped women to form separate, affiliated unions" (Kessler-Harris 1982, 171). In both Great Britain and the United States, labor unions have actively discouraged women from gaining technical expertise crucial to success in blue-collar jobs (Bradley 1989; Cockburn 1983).

Predominantly male unions, like predominantly male colleges, retained control of information until their "secrets" were discovered by a few pioneering women. When that happened, separate organizations—*separate places*—were created in which women were segregated from men. Whether

that contributed to a different curriculum, as it did in colleges, or in lack of access to apprenticeships, as it did in unions, the result was a lack of female access to masculine knowledge and status. Lack of status, in turn, reduced women's ability to sexually integrate places of knowledge.

Information control is thus a way to control prestige, power, and wealth. The role of secrecy in maintaining social control is suggested by the following passage: "Social divisiveness which is generated by conflicting interests creates the social conditions under which secrecy thrives. To the extent that secrecy denies social actors information which might reveal that they are exploited, or manipulated by others, to that extent then secrecy promotes order" (Tefft 1980, 67). As long as the medical profession was closed to women, for example, men like Dr. Edward Clarke could warn women that higher education would damage their health (Rosenberg 1982, 5). Only after numbers of women had risked becoming educated and continued to lead healthy lives was the ill-health myth abandoned. The period in which that assumption was being challenged was a period of turmoil in regard to gender stratification, however. Dr. Clarke's ideas existed side by side with the ideas of the first feminist convention at Seneca Falls and women's entry into the labor force. Once the "secrets" of higher education were released to women, their suspicions of the causes of their lower status were confirmed, threatening the social order that dictated private spheres for women and public spheres for men.

Theories of Gender Stratification

The numerous theories of gender stratification proposed by anthropologists, economists, psychologists, and sociologists shed light on the relationship among knowledge, place, and power. From an institutional perspective, the majority of theories can be classified into those that focus on the family and those that look to the economy for explanations. Simply stated, the former argue that characteristics of individuals (supply) contribute most strongly to gender-status distinctions, while the latter claim that economic structure (demand) shapes gender-status distinctions. Marxist-feminist theories bridge family and economic explanations.

The Family. Family-centered explanations for nonindustrial societies are grounded in lineage descent patterns and marital residence. There have been conflicting interpretations of the effects of postmarital residence and type of descent on women's status (Whyte 1978a). Generally, matrilineal descent and matrilocal residence are associated with higher status for women since the bride continues to live near her female kin, who can provide economic and political support. Patrilineal descent and patrilocal residence require the woman to move to her husband's kin group after marriage, thus allowing men to appropriate women's labor and solidify male dominance (Blumberg 1984).

In both nonindustrial and industrialized societies, socialization takes place primarily within the family and contributes to different life options for girls and boys (Maccoby and Jacklin 1974; Stockard and Johnson 1980). Whether due to men's psychological need to distance themselves from women (Mead 1949), to the internalization of gender-appropriate roles resulting from different parent-child interaction (Chodorow 1978), or to developing a different ethic of relationships over rules (Gilligan 1982), women and men are socialized in ways that reproduce lower status for women.

Closely tied to socialization is women's responsibility for domestic tasks. Cooking, cleaning, and child care—the "messiness" of daily life that exposes women to continuous interruptions—have been proposed as one reason women occupy the private sphere while men dominate the public arena (Lamphere 1987). Nonindustrial societies in which fathers are regularly involved in domestic life and spend time with children are less rigidly stratified by gender than societies with absent fathers (Coltrane 1988). In advanced industrial society, moreover, the traditional division of labor inside the home reduces the probability that women will earn high wages outside the home (Berk 1985; Boulding 1976).

The effects of socialization and responsibility for domestic tasks, of course, can be interpreted in a number of different ways. The functionalist approach to gender stratification, represented by Parsons and Bales's (1955) theory of instrumental and expressive roles within the family, proposes that men are the instrumental providers of wealth (forming the primary link with the economic system), while women are the expressive caretakers of emotional needs within the home. The theory does not explain why such gender differentiation should lead to unequal prestige for men and women.

Gutentag and Secord's (1983) sex-ratio theory is essentially a demographic explanation with origins in fertility differences. They argue that women's social status is highest in societies where the sex ratio is low (i.e., when there is a surplus of women) and lowest in societies where the sex ratio is high (i.e., when women are in scarce supply). When there are "too many women" to find husbands and adopt traditional roles as wives and mothers, alternatives such as higher education and labor force participation become more socially acceptable for women.

Sherry Ortner (1974) proposes that the ideological basis of gender stratification is the almost universal identification of women with natural reproductive processes and men with cultural processes. As long as societies value culture (in the form of technological manipulation of the environment) over nature, masculine attributes will be valued over feminine attributes and women's status will be lower than men's. Thus, reproductive roles of women in the family create archetypes of gender relations outside the family.

The Economy. Economy-centered explanations for gender inequalities in nonindustrial societies are those dealing with women's contribution to subsistence. Recent ethnographic studies have verified the importance of women's economic control of property and labor in regard to their social status. Sanday's (1981) study of 156 cultures, Blumberg's (1984) research on sixty-one nonindustrial societies, and Friedl's (1975) review of six cultures all stress the importance of women's contributions to economic production as predictors of their status.

The type of economic subsistence characteristic of a culture also has been shown to affect gender stratification. According to numerous studies, women's status in nonindustrial societies is highest where hunting and gathering takes precedence and lowest in agricultural societies (Blumberg 1984; Chafetz 1984; Huber and Spitze 1983). The degree of gender inequality is low in hunting and gathering societies because little surplus exists on which to base a stratification system. Through gathering, women contribute a large share of food to the household more routinely than do men, who are only sporadically successful at hunting. To the extent that women distribute food only within the household and men distribute any surplus outside the household, however, men have higher status than women (Friedl 1975). By the time societies develop through the horticultural stage

and into the agricultural, technology (in the form of the plow and heavy draft animals) reduces women's contribution to production in relation to men's. Women's lower subsistence contribution to the household and the evolution of land as the major form of wealth interact to increase the level of gender stratification (Huber and Spitze 1983).

Among industrial societies, human capital and occupational segregation explanations trace women's lower status to their position in the labor force. Human capitalists argue that women and men invest differently in market skills and thus reap differential rewards (Mincer and Polachek 1974). Men, for example, are more likely to invest many years in training to become surgeons, while women are more likely to invest fewer years to become nurses. This interpretation of women's lower wages relative to men's has been challenged by researchers, most notably on the issue of "depreciation" of human capital (i.e., on the length of time it takes to regain skills on reentry into the labor force) (Corcoran and Duncan 1979; see Bianchi and Spain 1986, 188–95).

Another explanation for women's lower earnings and occupational status relative to men's is occupational segregation that creates "men's jobs" and "women's jobs." According to this explanation, women are paid less than men because they enter more poorly paid occupations. High levels of occupational segregation by gender exist in all industrialized societies and perpetuate earnings differences (Reskin 1984; Reskin and Hartmann 1986; Roos 1985).

A purely demographic explanation of women's lower status in the workplace is Kanter's (1977) theory of the "token woman." She proposes that women who are in a significant minority in their work organizations will suffer predictable losses of status relative to men who are in the majority. Token women face performance pressures (e.g., higher visibility of errors and attention to discrepant characteristics such as dress) that highlight their lack of organizational power. Kanter suggests that when women and men are more proportionately balanced in the workplace, women's status will improve.

Marxist-Feminist Interpretations. Marxist-feminist analyses link familial and economic explanations of gender stratification. Engels ([1884] 1942) traced the "world historical defeat of the female sex" to changes in

erty. The concept of "paternity" was established to include the possession of women and children so that private goods could be passed from one generation to the next. According to Engels, with the advent of private property and the patriarchal family, women were transformed from independent household managers to subordinate workers in privately "male-owned" families.

Marxist-feminists argue that patriarchy and capitalism interact to insure that women are oppressed because of both their gender and class (Beneria and Roldan 1987; Crompton and Mann 1986). Radical feminists define patriarchy as a male hierarchical ordering of society, based on biological differences, which is manifested through men's control of women's labor and sexuality (specifically in regard to reproduction) (Eisenstein 1979; Hartmann 1981). Patriarchy is institutionalized in the nuclear family and becomes the model for men's power in other realms (Clawson 1980; Rowbotham 1973). In capitalist societies, the material basis of patriarchy consists of men's control of well-paid jobs (Hartmann 1976). Nonetheless, Marxist-feminists argue that patriarchy precedes capitalism as a form of women's oppression (Eisenstein 1979, 25), even though patriarchy and capitalism cannot be separated as explanations for women's status in industrial societies.

Steven Goldberg's *Inevitability of Patriarchy* (1974) attributes male dominance to biological factors. Goldberg argues that hormones make men more aggressive than women and thus more successful in a competitive world. Collins (1971) also proposes that biology operates to men's advantage: their physical strength helps men gain and maintain a dominant position, while women must rely on personal attraction to bargain in the marriage market for higher-status males. Both Goldberg and Collins perceive men's higher status to be grounded in biology translating into power on the societal scale. Patriarchy is based on social advantages derived from men's physical strength. Those advantages influence the negotiation of power within the family, thus forming a model for male alliances and dominance outside the family.

In sum, most explanations of gender stratification identify the family and/or ... as the foundation from which status differences arise. No ... consistently incorporate the spatial context

in which the activities constituting these institutions occur. Adding the spatial dimension of institutions helps form a new perspective on gender stratification by grounding abstract concepts in physical space.

The Spatial Perspective. Other social scientists have examined space in relation to gender, but few have focused on the interplay between spatial arrangements and women's status. Goffman (1977) proposed that gender segregation is fluid: men and women periodically separate into different places, but regroup in integrated spaces to carry out shared goals. Thorne (1989) cites gender segregation in schools as a component of childhood development for boys and girls. Ardener's (1981) edited volume titled *Women and Space* is an extensive collection of anthropological articles highlighting the importance of spatial arrangements. Finally, Rosaldo (1974) proposed nearly twenty years ago that women's status is lowest in societies with highly differentiated private and public spheres.

Emphasis on space and status weaves the threads of inquiry begun by other researchers into a common cloth. Thinking about gendered spaces meets a goal of feminist theory to reveal "how gender relations are constituted and experienced and how we think or, equally important, do not think about them" (Flax 1987, 622). This includes exploring gender relations in concrete situations that have spatial attributes. Space often is taken for granted or ignored, and not solely by theorists. Those who benefit from existing arrangements are particularly prone to this blind spot. Daniels (1975, 343) points out that ritual, manners, language, and separation of activities all are mechanisms by which systems of dominance and subordination are maintained: "Those in the superordinate status will find this structure undergirding their privileged condition natural or even virtually invisible." Those in the subordinate status may (or may not) recognize the disadvantage of the system.

This argument about space and status enables us to think more clearly about previously invisible relationships. I propose three hypotheses as plausible explanations for the maintenance of gender stratification over time and across cultures:

1. Varying degrees of gender segregation characterize social institu-

2. Gender stratification is reinforced by spatial segregation.
3. The greater the distance between women and sources of valued knowledge, the greater the gender stratification in the society.

Emphasis on access to knowledge is a critical component of the argument. Spatial arrangements would make no difference to stratification if all resources and knowledge were divided equally between "women's spaces" and "men's spaces." Yet that seldom happens. Stereotypically masculine knowledge in spatial institutions such as the workplace is accorded higher status than feminine knowledge associated with the home. The accessibility of valued knowledge is thus a central requirement of gender stratification theory (Brinton 1988). Spatial institutions sustain status inequalities when they regulate access to knowledge and resources differentially by gender. As geographers Bowlby, Foord, and McDowell (1986) point out, gender relationships are defined in particular places in ways that cumulatively reinforce status distinctions between women and men. Women's responsibilities for child care in the home influence ideas about appropriate "women's work" (e.g., teaching and nursing), which in turn contribute to women's lower wages relative to men's. Gendered spaces that create the greatest distance between women and sources of masculine knowledge therefore have the strongest association with gender stratification. We would thus expect that segregation within the home, a feminine space with the least socially valued knowledge, would be less clearly associated with women's status than segregated schools or workplaces.

A spatial approach forms one of the links between micro and macro levels of sociological analysis. Huber (1990, 1) proposes that a basic challenge of sociological theory is to explain "how persons affect collectivities and how collectivities affect persons over time." If one substitutes the word "space" for "collectivity," the question becomes "how do people constitute the spaces in which they carry out daily activities and how do those spatial arrangements affect their activities?"

The perspective of space and status does *not* attempt to explain the origin of gender stratification or how men initially occupy positions of higher status than women. Neither does it address why men try to retain their positions of power. Finally, this argument remains silent on whether the

relationship between spatial segregation and stratification results from the conscious efforts of individuals to dominate others, or even whether men and women are aware of gendered spaces. Rather, the perspective of space and status addresses the ways in which status differences are maintained (once in place) by the spatial relationships between men and women.

Conclusion

Over two decades ago, geographer Edward Soja lamented that "there has been no attempt to explore the spatial dimension of societal organization on a level equivalent to the extensive examination of kinship and contract relations" (Soja 1971, 8). He proposed that analysts study how location affects status and how status affects location. By 1989 Soja was more strident in his demand for the geographical dimension: "We must be insistently aware of how space can be made to hide consequences from us, how relations of power and discipline are inscribed into the apparently innocent spatiality of social life" (Soja 1989, 6).

The proposed relationship between space and status is grounded in the "structuration" approach, whereby the properties of a social system express themselves through daily activities at the same time those activities generate and reproduce structural properties of the social system. Institutions simultaneously shape individual behavior and are shaped by individuals' (intentional and unintentional) behavior. In this way, institutions are constantly created and re-created (Bourdieu 1977; Giddens 1979; Pred 1981).

Human geographer Allan Pred attempts to integrate structuration theory with time-geography by conceptualizing the production, reproduction, and transformation of social relations (especially power) in the context of specific locations in time and space (Pred 1981, 37). He argues that the daily behavior creating (and created by) institutions must take place within temporal and spatial boundaries. Spatial institutions such as dwellings, schools, and workplaces form these boundaries within which social relations interact with social structure.

Gendered spaces themselves shape, and are shaped by, daily activities. Once in place, they become taken for granted, unexamined, and seemingly

immutable. What *is* becomes what *ought* to be, which contributes to the maintenance of prevailing status differences (see Berger and Luckmann 1967; Pred 1981). Status often depends on the power to control some form of knowledge, whether it is scientific, religious, entrepreneurial, political, or psychological. "The possession of such knowledge by institutional power holders . . . is built up and modified through the details of everyday life" in specific places at specific times (Pred 1981, 47). To the extent that spatial arrangements buttress an unequal distribution of knowledge between women and men, they contribute to the maintenance of gender stratification.

The following examples of the relationship between spatial segregation and gender stratification are presented from a variety of sources. The status of an individual woman or man is not as critical to a study of gender stratification as the structures established to insure that men as a group or women as a group exercise power. Women's status relative to men's differs across cultures and over time, creating a continuum of power relationships rather than a dichotomy (Chafetz 1990; Huber and Spitze 1983; Lamphere 1987). The current work explores that continuum in relation to spatial segregation by gender, in particular to the reciprocity between the social construction of space and the spatial construction of social relations.