

Tourism and Development in Ballyhoura: Women's Business?

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Abstract: Tourism and other kinds of local development have become important elements in generating employment in rural Ireland. Yet, despite a commitment to local participation and to gender auditing, women are typically under-represented in structures promoting tourism and other kinds of development at local level (Kearney, *et al.*, 1995). Using documentary evidence, this paper first describes this phenomenon in one particular area (*viz.*, Ballyhoura). Second, drawing on O'Connell's (1987) work, it suggests that this pattern reflects the subtle nature and limits of patriarchal control. Third, drawing on interview material with a sample of women who were individual shareholders in the Ballyhoura Failte Co-operative, it suggests that this control involves the selective obscuring of gender in particular contexts, and the selective discounting of the structural realities of power and money. Finally, the article highlights those factors which play a part in modifying some of the consequences, but not the consensual reality, of such control.

I INTRODUCTION

Tourism has come very much into focus in Ireland since 1989 when it was specifically targeted by the National Development Plan 1989-1993 (1989, p. 61) as a sector for development. With the help of the European Regional Development Fund, £300 million was made available for investment in tourism in the 1989-1993 period. The Operational Programme for Tourism 1994-1999 (Department of Tourism and Trade, 1994) describes it as

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a £2 billion a year industry which is targeted for an investment of £652 million over the 1994-1999 period. The Operational Programme for Tourism, 1994-1999 (Department of Tourism and Trade, 1994) noted that by 1993, roughly 91,000 people were fully employed in tourism and related sectors, with such jobs accounting for roughly half of the net increase in national employment between 1988-1993. Furthermore, they estimated that in that period, its share of GNP went from 5.8 per cent to 7 per cent.

Tourism is seen as very much part of a rural development initiative. European policy on rural development in the 1990s has stressed the importance of local initiatives in the tourism and related areas. The Leader I Initiative (Liaisons entre actions développement de l'économie rurale) was launched by the EU Commission in Ireland in 1991 as a way of facilitating such local development with a budget of £35 million (Kearney, *et al.*, 1995). Despite the commitment to gender auditing structural funds, as well as the central importance of women in many aspects of local rural development, and the predominantly female nature of service employment in general, and tourism in particular, little attention has been paid to the gender dimension of such rural development policies. This pattern is not peculiar to Ireland. Thus, the Consultants in the Fourth Joint Oireachtas Committee Report (1994) having reviewed literature across Europe, noted that the role rural women are capable of, and wish to play, was not being addressed in either the design or the implementation of rural development policies. They argued that if this issue was not tackled, rural development policy would not only continue to be unequal but would also be ineffective.

This paper looks at one particular geographical area (*viz.* Ballyhoura) which not only received Leader I funding, but also had an established profile as a centre for community effort and adult education pre-dating that funding. Using documentary material, the proportion of women who are participating in structures promoting tourism and other kinds of development in that area is described. Particular attention is paid to the position of women within those structures which are intended to reflect the local community, since the very rationale of the Leader initiative is that it uses local participation and local ideas to create local employment. Ballyhoura is unusual in so far as there is a well known and widely respected Chief Executive there, who is a woman. It will be argued that her presence has mitigated the impact of the under-representation of women in specific ways.

This under-representation of women in those structures promoting tourism and other kinds of development in Ballyhoura could arguably be explained by a variety of specific historical factors peculiar to this area, such as the way committees were constituted; the evolution of the structures from a tourism co-operative to a more broadly based development agency, etc. However, in

view of the consistency with which similar patterns have emerged nationally and internationally, the paper will suggest that these patterns are indicative of the existence of a subtle patriarchal control mechanism which involves the selective obscuring of gender in particular contexts, and the selective endorsement of a perspective which discounts the structural reality of power and money. This control is seen as "consensual control" (Ransome, 1992) in the sense that it is willingly assented to by those who are subject to it.

The existence of such mechanisms is deduced from interviews with a sample (N = 33) of individual female shareholders in Ballyhoura Failte (the local Tourism Co-operative). It will be shown that in areas where men had power and/or where the recognition of "difference" might erode men's power, the whole issue of gender was obscured. Thus, for example, the women did not "notice" that women were under-represented in positions of power in those structures promoting tourism and other kinds of development in Ballyhoura. They stressed that their interests were "the same as everyone else's" in terms of employment creating initiatives. They felt uncomfortable with the idea of strategies which would create employment specifically for women, and/or with those which would positively discriminate in favour of women at the level of committees, training and employment. On the other hand, however, gender differences were recognised in other contexts. Thus, they saw tourism structures such as Ballyhoura Failte, the local Tourism Co-operative which did not disburse Leader funding, as much more relevant to women than those structures related to Ballyhoura Development, which had Leader funds to distribute. The ideas the women put forward as regards the future development of the area were very much home and family based (and reflected their own particular gendered position in Irish society). Furthermore, the strategies they identified to facilitate women's employment (including enterprise grants for women; an adviser for women; and subsidies/allowances for child care costs) reflected the fact that they typically did not have ready access to cash, had responsibility for child care, etc. They felt comfortable identifying confidence building but not quotas as a way of facilitating women's employment. They did not seem to see the "world" in terms of power and/or money. Indeed, overwhelmingly they did not even "notice" that Ballyhoura Development had Leader funds. In addition to implicitly perpetuating an equation between men, power and money in the wider area of tourism and other kinds of development, these women's perceptions of their own rural community tourism initiatives as making a "real" (i.e., economic) contribution to the household finances, reflected an implicit devaluing of their contributions as housewives, mothers, farm workers and members of local groups and associations.

It has been widely recognised that patriarchal power is likely to be

differently experienced by women of different classes and races. Hence, the characteristics of the women who were interviewed in this study will be described in this paper. It is clear that as middle aged, relatively well-educated women, predominantly married to farmers with 100 acres or more, they are not typical of rural women generally, or indeed of farm wives. They are not atypical, however, in terms of their low level of participation in paid employment and their low level of farm ownership. Like most Irish married women, their relationship with the economic system is mediated through their husbands. Their participation in rural community tourism thus potentially contains within itself the genesis of resistance (Benton, 1981) since such activities give these women economic resources as well as a sense of meaning and identity which transcends their familial identity.

The paper is thus a speculative exploration of the subtle nature and limits of consensual patriarchal control, such control being seen as explaining the over-representation of men in local structures promoting tourism and other kinds of development in one area (viz. Ballyhoura).

II THE DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

It has been well established that women are particularly unlikely to be represented on boards or committees which are making decisions about local development projects. O'Malley's work (1992) showed that in the pilot programme for Integrated Rural Development in 12 rural areas in Ireland in 1988-90, women made up only 15 per cent (21/146) of the total number of Core Group members deciding on and implementing local development projects. Kearney, *et al.* (1995) found that in the case of Leader I schemes, women's involvement at Board level was very small. Furthermore only 10 per cent of all directors were women, with almost two thirds of the Boards having at most one female director. It has also been recognised that this is ironical since:

many of the initiatives are in areas where traditionally women have played a leading role e.g., agri-tourism, recreation and leisure and alternative agriculture (Dorgan, *et al.*, 1994, p. 21)

Yet despite a commitment to gender auditing structural funds, strategies to tackle this have typically not been put in place.

It will be shown that similar trends emerged in Ballyhoura. Ballyhoura includes an area within roughly a 20 mile radius of Kilfinane and embraces parts of Limerick, Cork and Tipperary. The area has no clearly defined geographical or other boundaries (although for the purposes of Leader funding, these have been identified). The area was specifically selected because of

its established profile as a centre for community effort and adult education, pre-dating Leader I funding. With the co-operation of the Manager of the Ballyhoura Failte Society (who is also the Chief Executive of Ballyhoura Development Ltd.) and the Project Manager of Ballyhoura Development Ltd., it was possible to document the involvement of women in the structures associated with tourism and other kinds of development in this area.

The Tourism Co-operative (Ballyhoura Failte) emerged in 1986 from a background of strong community involvement in the area, associated with Kilfinane Development Association and the educational and recreational activities of Kilfinane Education Centre, assisted by Shannon Development, the then YEA and ACOT (Keane and Quinn, 1990). The founder members were described (Fox, 1993a, p. 1) as "four accommodation providers, two farmers offering educational visits and Kilfinane Education Centre". Under Leader I, £1.46 million was received, and it was estimated that up to December 1993, this had generated 47 jobs (27 full-time, 18 part-time, and 2 seasonal). The tourist industry in this traditionally non-tourist area was estimated to be worth £100,000 in 1986, and £1.8 million in 1994, providing 3 per cent of the income in the area in 1994 (Fox, 1994).

In this section we will look at women's participation in the structures which have fuelled this development. These include Ballyhoura Failte, the Tourism Co-operative, which is responsible for marketing, tourism information, activity development, as well as more general issues related to tourism policy, strategies; and Ballyhoura Development, which is now the overall "engine" for development, involved in framing business plans, distributing Leader funds, etc. A number of other committees are associated with these two structures and these will be discussed below.

Membership of the Tourism Co-Operative (i.e., Ballyhoura Failte) is open to individuals, groups and statutory agencies. In 1994 there were a total of 113 individual shareholders in Ballyhoura Failte, of which 76 (67%) were women. Such individual shareholders are typically involved in Bed and Breakfast, Visitor Farms, Self Catering, etc. The structure representing all shareholders (including individual shareholders) is the Ballyhoura Failte Management Committee. In 1994 the Ballyhoura Failte Management Committee consisted of 14 members, of whom 7 were women. This is in fact the structure where women are most strongly represented. It is also a structure which does not disburse Leader funds. Furthermore, even in this case, the apparent 50 per cent representation of women needs to be seen in the context of the fact that the 14 members included three community representatives (all men) and a statutory representative (a woman). Thus, when we look at the ratio between representation on the Ballyhoura Failte Management Committee and individual share ownership, men are clearly over-represented,

i.e., the ratio being 4:37 men, as compared with 6:76 women.

In addition to individual shareholders in Ballyhoura Failte, it is possible for groups or communities to take out group membership and 37 have done so. Nominees from each of the groups make up the Community Consultative Committee. In 1994, 34 of the 37 had identified nominees and, of these, 10 were women and 24 were men (29% women). Hence, quite clearly, as Community representatives and members of the Community Consultative Committee, women are effectively under-represented even in the structures of Ballyhoura Failte.

In the late 1980s a sub-committee of Ballyhoura Failte called the Ballyhoura Development Board was established to act as an "engine" for development in Ballyhoura. Its structure was formally laid down, with the possibility of including non-voting members. The Ballyhoura Development Board draws its membership from Ballyhoura Failte (4 nominees), from the Community Consultative Committee (4 nominees), from corporate/private organisations (2 nominees) and from designated statutory bodies (7 nominees). In 1992, the Ballyhoura Development Board ceased to be a sub-committee of Ballyhoura Failte, having acquired £1.46 million of Leader I funding to implement "an integrated plan with strategies in tourism, education, town and village renewal, small and medium enterprises and agriculture and forestry" (Doody, 1993, p. 4; see also Keane and Quinn, 1990; Fox, 1992; 1993a and b).

In 1994 membership of the Ballyhoura Development Board consisted of 17 voting and 2 non-voting members, in addition to 3 executive members (i.e., the Manager, Ballyhoura Failte Society (who is also the Chief Executive of Ballyhoura Development); Projects Manager Ballyhoura Development and the Accountant). In 1994 women made up 14 per cent (3/22) of the Board (1 female executive; 1 female representative of Ballyhoura Failte; and 1 female non-voting member).

The male/female composition of the Ballyhoura Development Board in 1994 reflects the fact that the 7 nominees of the Statutory Bodies (i.e., Shannon Development; Limerick Co. Council; Teagasc; Coillte Teo; FAS; Limerick VEC and CERT) are all male; that the 2 nominees of the corporate/private sector (Dairygold and Golden Vale) are also male; that the 4 nominees of the Consultative Committee sent forward to the Board are male; as are 3 of the 4 members sent forward by the Ballyhoura Failte Management Committee. Hence, in fact, of the 17 voting members, only 1 of those on the Ballyhoura Development Board is a woman. The situation is ameliorated by the fact that of the 3 executive members, 1 (the Chief Executive of Ballyhoura Development), is a woman; and that 1 of the 2 non-voting members is a woman. Nevertheless, the net effect is that women still only constitute 14 per cent of the total membership of Ballyhoura Development Board.

This Board is particularly important in so far as, on foot of putting forward a Ballyhoura Multi-Sectoral Business Plan with a proposed Rural Tourism Investment of £1.46m, it was selected for funding under the then EC Leader I Programme in 1992 (Fox, 1993b). The Board has spawned a number of committees which deal with specific aspects of the project (Fox, 1992). Overwhelmingly the people on these committees are members, or nominees, of the Board, thereby further underlining the importance of Board membership.

One of the most important of these committees (and the one which meets most frequently, i.e., 2 meetings per month) is the Project Appeals Committee. It can decide on funding for projects up to £20,000. Of the 8 members on that Committee in 1994, only 1 (the Chief Executive of Ballyhoura Development Ltd.) is a woman. A similar pattern exists on the Ballyhoura Executive Committee who meet every 3 to 4 weeks, where of the 5 members only 1 (the Chief Executive mentioned above) is a woman; the Ballyhoura Enterprise Support Team which meets once a month, where of the 10 members, only 1 (the same Chief Executive) is a woman; the Finance Committee which meets every 2 months, where of the 6 members, only 1 (the same Chief Executive) is a woman. There are 3 women amongst the 6 people on the Education and Training Committee (including the same Chief Executive); and there are 4 women amongst the 20 people on the Ballyhoura Agricultural Committee (including the same Chief Executive) but this Committee only meets every 5-6 months. Hence, of the major Committees spawned by the Ballyhoura Development Board, none has more than a female representation of 25 per cent, and in fact if the Chief Executive of Ballyhoura Development were not a woman, it is arguable that there would be no woman at all on 4 of the 6 committees, since she is the only woman currently on them.

Quite clearly then, although Ballyhoura is strongly committed to co-operative and community development and although women, through their involvement in Ballyhoura Failte have had experience of co-operative involvement and organisational structures; and although they remain the predominant group concerned with Rural Community Tourism in the area (which was a major focus of Leader I funding), they are severely under-represented in the multi-sectoral development structures associated with Ballyhoura Development. These are the structures which disburse EU funding. They are also under-represented at Management Committee level in Ballyhoura Failte (the Tourism Co-operative) albeit that the pattern here is less extreme than in the case of Ballyhoura Development: indeed it is suggested that this is not unrelated to the very different level of resources available to the two structures.

There is an increasing awareness of the need to gender-proof all Structural Fund programmes. The first report of the Monitoring Committee on the

Implementation of the Recommendations of the Second Commission on the Status of Women indicated that:

In general it is the intention that the relevant departments and agencies will ensure that measures and programmes under the structural funds will comply with the principle that there will be no direct or indirect discrimination on grounds of gender ... (Department of Equality & Law Reform, 1994, p. 25).

This has been reflected in the recommendation to applicants for Leader II funding "to take account of equality of opportunity in assessing applications for aid"; they "are directed not to grant aid a project or applicant group which operates any policy of discrimination on grounds of gender ... even if that discrimination is not complained of" (Department of Agriculture, 1994). This raises a number of issues including what constitutes direct or indirect discrimination in a highly gendered society, given the effects of past discrimination on access to resources, confidence, representation on grant awarding bodies, etc. The nature of the mechanisms to be put in place to alter the patterns of representation (e.g., targets or quotas) and to monitor their effects have only begun to be identified.

However, the Ballyhoura experience implicitly suggests that the impact of the under-representation of women in these structures may be modified by the identity of the Chief Executive. In Ballyhoura, the Chief Executive of Ballyhoura Development is a woman who is well known and widely respected. The presence of a woman in such a position is very unusual (Kearney, *et al.*, 1995) and reflects a wider societal pattern involving the under-representation of women in managerial positions in Irish society (see O'Connor, 1995a; Mahon, 1994; Garavan, 1994). It is suggested that her presence as the (female) Chief Executive of Ballyhoura Development and her participation in a wide variety of key committees has an important effect on limiting the extent and nature of patriarchal control within Ballyhoura Development.

It is suggested that this occurs in two ways: first by affecting the relative proportion of men and women who are offered funding, and second by affecting the proportion of men and women who are actually employed consequent on Leader initiatives. The first suggestion rests on the idea that, within a highly gendered society, women's ideas as regards development are likely to be seen by male boards as "less viable", "less attractive", but this perception may be altered by the active presence of a women-orientated Chief Executive. The second idea focuses on the fact that there is clear evidence that the creation of paid employment for women as opposed to men has not been seen as a priority by State structures (Pyle, 1990; Mahon, 1994).

O'Donovan and Curtin (1991) have also noted that in Ireland, national and regional industrial development policies have typically reflected ideologies which have regarded women's employment needs as secondary. Indeed, this very assumption is evident in Breathnach (1992) and Breathnach *et alii.* (1994) conclusion that despite the disproportionate employment of women in the tourist industry, the development of this area should be "challenged"; the implication being that initiatives which provide employment to women are less important than (male) industrial jobs. Such ideological positions seem particularly questionable in view of Whelan *et alii.* (1991) finding that married women who are working full-time in the home are twice as likely as those who are in paid employment to experience psychological distress. It is, however, compatible with an obscuring of the very real importance of women's paid employment and the implications of this. (See Blackwell, 1987; and more recently, Shortall, 1991; Byrne, 1994, O'Hara, 1993 and 1994). Once again, the presence of an active Chief Executive might well affect these tendencies, and hence impact on the balance of male/female jobs created.

First then in Ballyhoura, the documentary evidence showed that, under Leader I, up to the period of 30th April, 1994, just under 1 in 5 of all offers (i.e., 19%: 34/175) were made to women. Kearney, *et al.* (1995) showed that nationally the average was very similar: 20 per cent of the project promoters being women. They noted that there was a wide range of variation between areas (70% to 40%). Kearney, *et al.* (1995) also noted that in those areas where roughly one-third of the project promoters were women, an attempt was being made to involve women in rural development. The picture is complicated by the existence of community and co-operative projects. In Ballyhoura, when community and co-operative projects were excluded in the present examination of the documentary evidence just 1 in 3 letters of offer were made to women.

It is not possible to say why women are under-represented as promoters, although clearly the lack of awareness of the structures with Leader funds (which will be shown in this study) is not helpful. Equally, their typical difficulty in getting access to matching funds (reflected in this study in their desire for Enterprise Grants) may be a factor. Indeed, there was indirect support for this idea in so far as in the area of rural tourism (the most common type of project for women) the documentary material showed that half the offers were to "private" projects; whereas in the case of agriculture and forestry (the most common type of project for men) more than four-fifths of the offers were to "private" projects (Fox, 1994). In this context, it is also perhaps worth noting that attempts by the Chief Executive to solve the problem of matching funds by a local lottery generating a revolving fund (O'Connor, 1995b) had not been accepted under Leader I although it was

being proposed again for Leader II. Such an arrangement would be of particular value to women whose access to resources is typically indirect. Again, the impact of the female Chief Executive may not be unrelated to such initiatives.

The examination of the second indicator of the limits of patriarchal control was even more striking. The documentary evidence showed that in Ballyhoura up to December 1993, 57 per cent of all the jobs created went to women (i.e., half of the full time (15/27) and three-fifths (12/20) of the part time/seasonal jobs). This was considerably higher than the pattern which emerged across Leader I projects taken as a whole (i.e., 39%). Kearney, *et al.* (1995) do not provide a breakdown by gender and part time/full time. They do note that the proportion of jobs which went to women varied from 21 per cent to 64 per cent. Hence quite clearly Ballyhoura is at the top end of the continuum, and although one cannot prove this, it seems plausible to regard the Chief Executive as an important element in modifying the impact of a patriarchal bias favouring male employment. Nevertheless, her presence and energy cannot be regarded as a satisfactory solution to the issue of female representation in the structures promoting tourism and other kinds of development in Ballyhoura.

III THEORETICAL CONTEXT

As outlined in the introduction, it is suggested that the under-representation of women in those local structures promoting tourism and other kinds of development in Ballyhoura is part of a very much wider phenomenon, and that it reflects and reinforces a pattern of consensual patriarchal control. This control is extremely subtle and involves the obscuring of gender, and particularly the relationship between gender and power and/or money in particular contexts. At the heart of it lies the idea that the dominant group has established hegemonic control (Ransome, 1992) and that one of the ways through which such control is legitimated is by obscuring its gendered nature. This paper draws on the work of Connell (1987) who sees the ability to define situations and identities in a particular way as a key element in patriarchal control. He sees the relationship between legitimate power (i.e., authority) and masculinity as a crucial element in maintaining and legitimating consensual patriarchal control. He suggests that the most effective way of maintaining such control is by those involved not even perceiving it. In this situation, gender differences become obscured, irrelevant, invisible. Thus, within a society where "difference" is not valued, women will happily collude with the notion that "their interests are the same as everyone else's", that "anyone can sit on a committee", etc. Within such a context, a focus on

gender may be perceived by women as effectively an attempt to demean them. Here, however, it is argued that it is a subtle mechanism of patriarchal control since the obscuring of gender typically facilitates men's interests. It will be argued that in situations where the recognition of "difference" would be in women's interests (e.g., in breaking the link between "women and tourism" and "men and development") it does not occur. Furthermore, in situations where women attempt to specify their "difference" and to affirm the reality of their gendered lives, the difference is negatively valued. It is important to stress that such patriarchal control is not seen as total. Benton (1981) has argued that the seeds of individual resistance are inevitably generated by the complexity of individuals' actual experiences. These processes can also be identified in Ballyhoura. The key point, however, is that they are occurring within a context where male access to power and resources is seen by women as unproblematic — indeed it is not "seen" at all.

Patriarchy has been defined by Hartmann (1981, p. 14) as "a set of social relations between men which have a material base, and which, though hierarchical, establish or create interdependence and solidarity among men that enable them to dominate women". Hartmann focuses on the material basis of patriarchy but it is equally important to stress the perceived legitimacy of this arrangement and particularly the legitimacy of male access to economic resources, to positions within the public arena, to the ability to formulate rules and regulations, etc., on the basis of gender. This pattern is typically taken-for-granted in a patriarchal society, and seen as an "inevitable" consequence of a "natural" order which is reflected in and validated by ideas about "men's place", "masculinity", etc. With a small number of notable exceptions (such as Pyle, 1990; Shortall, 1991; Mahon, 1994) the nature of this reality has barely begun to be described by academics in Ireland.

Feminist theory over the past fifteen years has been particularly concerned with the relationship between capitalism, patriarchy and race, and their implications as regards women's experience of inequality, exploitation, oppression, marginalisation, etc. (see Tong, 1992; Walby, 1990). As noted by Barker and Roberts (1993) less attention has been paid to a theory of power which illuminates the way in which patriarchal control is exercised and legitimated within particular contexts, such as the community or indeed, the State. This paper is seen as a contribution to this debate.

This issue was earlier identified in Lukes' (1974) classic depiction of a three dimensional view of power. He highlighted the fact that power can be exercised very subtly. Thus, it can come into play not only in overriding the preferences of another person (the one dimensional view); but for example in controlling the items on an agenda, and hence in affecting even the kinds of options or decisions which are perceived to exist (the two dimensional view).

At an even more fundamental level, he suggested that power could be exercised by groups or individuals getting others to want to do what is effectively against their "real interests" (the three dimensional view).

There are considerable difficulties involved in operationalising Lukes' ideas (recognised indeed by himself: Lukes, 1986). Those difficulties which are implicit in the identification of the "real interests" of the subordinate group have been described by Benton (1981, p. 182) as reflecting what he calls "the paradox of emancipation", i.e.,

If the autonomy of subordinate groups (classes) is to be respected, then emancipation is out of the question; whereas if emancipation is to be brought about, it cannot be self-emancipation.

He has tried to find a way round this dilemma by suggesting that implicit in the diversity of people's own experiences lies the possibility of a transformation in their consciousness, and the identification of identities and interests which are opposed to patriarchal control:

A woman who has been socially constituted as a member of a family and identifies with her position and role within that family may also, through contact with feminist ideas and organizations, come to acquire partially or even wholly, conflicting identifications, and so come to deploy a new conception of her interest which, under at least some circumstances, may issue in courses of action inconsistent with her identity as a member of a family. (Benton, 1981, p. 181)

Benton's work thus suggests the theoretical possibility of limits to patriarchal control and is compatible with Foucault's (1980, p. 95) notion that "where there is power, there is resistance".

This paper is also influenced by the work of Davies (1995) who has suggested that the representation by men of women's interests in the public area is in itself a particularly important element in the definition of masculinity and hence a key issue within a patriarchy. She suggests that it is linked with a concept of femininity which is premised on female withdrawal from such areas, on remaining in the private sphere and/or dependent of the protection of a man. In this perspective the continuance of men's ability to represent women's interests in the public arena constitutes a way through which "greatness" can be achieved by men and their own self interested desires for power obscured:

In pursuit of a cause, the struggle for power is ennobled and becomes worthy. The man with the cause is the hero, the leader, the one who can achieve true greatness. (Davies, 1995, p. 32)

The area for such representation is of course very much wider in the case of middle class than working class men. However, overall, the legitimacy of men's ability to represent women in the public arena is a crucial element in patriarchal control, precisely because it is important in men's own definition of themselves. Yet it is obvious that in many ways it sits uneasily with the concept of a participatory democracy which is implicit in the whole idea of local development. It is also clear that increasingly in Western Society the appropriateness of black people being represented by whites; unemployed people by those who are employed; disabled by able bodied people, etc., is being challenged. Within this context the appropriateness of men representing women is essentially fragile.

As noted earlier, patriarchal control is never total. In this context, the sheer existence of the (female) Chief Executive Officer, and her efficiency and effectiveness can be seen as a way of quietly resisting such control. Indeed, one might argue that in so far as one focused simply on the male/female composition of those employed consequent on Leader I initiatives, then the identity of the Chief Executive is more important than the composition of the Boards and related committees. Such an argument, however, neglects the local participatory character of rural development initiatives such as Leader, and their claim to legitimacy on this basis. It also neglects the importance of the wider issues related to the negative evaluation of "difference" implicit in a patriarchy.

Within a highly gendered society such as Ireland, the life experiences of men and women are typically very different. Only a minority of married women, but a majority of married men are in paid employment and resources such as land, are typically in male ownership rather than in women's own or joint ownership (National Report on Ireland, 1994). In this context, women's own day-to-day experiences highlight the reality of the differences in their lives and priorities. There is evidence that, in certain contexts, women recognise this difference and value it. Thus, the MRBI Survey (1992) showed that the majority of the women in that study saw feminism as "ensuring that the things in life which women value receive full consideration in how the society and economy develops", and in "developing a society in such a way that women play a part". Typically, however, although femininity is defined in terms of unpaid love labour (Lynch, 1989) in the home and in the community, the real societal value attached to such work is questionable. This was vividly illustrated by the fact that the Matrimonial Homes Bill (1993) providing for joint ownership of the family home to a spouse who had not been in paid employment was found to be unconstitutional on the grounds that the mandatory nature of joint ownership, which would over-rule any prior agreement that might have been made by the spouses, constituted an

unjustified interference in the authority of the family.

In the Ballyhoura study even for these middle class, essentially affluent women their rural community tourism initiatives constituted an important source of independent income. Thus, although, on the one hand, these women did not "notice" which organisational structures controlled economic resources (and hence implicitly subscribed to a view that such resources were irrelevant); on the other hand, they saw their own rural community tourism initiatives as valuable because they made a "real" (i.e., economic) contribution to the household finances. Thus, the obscuring of economic realities applied only to particular contexts, and did so in a way that did not favour women.

You may find a place as long as you simulate the norm and hide your difference. We will know you are different and continue ultimately to treat you as different, but if you yourself specify your difference, your claim to equality will be nil. (Cockburn, 1991, p. 219)

This paper is concerned with exploring the subtle mechanisms of consensual patriarchal control through an examination of the replies of a sample of women shareholders in Ballyhoura.

It is to more detailed examination of the sample that we now turn.

IV THE INTERVIEW SAMPLE

A random sample of the 76 individual women who were shareholders in the local Tourism Co-operative (Ballyhoura Failte) provided the data which are used to explore what has been described as patriarchal control mechanisms. Of the 33 women selected, interviews were completed with 30 respondents (2 were unobtainable due to holidays, and 1 was unavailable when contacted).

The overwhelming majority (90%: 27/30) of the respondents were married and had children. The age range covered almost the entire spectrum (25 years to 60 years+), although more than two-thirds were in their 40s and 50s. For the most part, particularly taking into account their age (and the well established association between age and educational level in Ireland), they were well-educated. Virtually the entire group had some kind of post-primary education, with just under one-third having finished their full time education at Third level (i.e., with a degree, a teaching or a nursing qualification).

The overwhelming majority (87%: 26/30) of those interviewed were actively involved in some aspect which they defined as rural community tourism. Marital status was not related to such activity. Typically those who had not yet become actively involved intended to do so shortly and so are included in the remainder of the discussion. Thirty-five activities were described in this

way, with roughly a quarter (i.e., 7) of the respondents being involved in two or more such enterprises. As can be seen from Table 1, by far the most common type of activity (undertaken by 37% of the sample) was keeping students, a "homestay" type of programme for foreign students and/or agricultural students. The majority of the respondents who were involved in this type of activity were also involved in some other aspect. Amongst the sample as a whole, Bed and Breakfast was the next most common type of activity (involving 1 in 3 of the respondents). Self Catering and to a lesser extent Farm Visits and/or Activity Holidays were also mentioned, as well as involvement in the pub trade.

Table 1: *Percentage Distribution of Respondents in Terms of their Type of Involvement in Rural Community Tourism in Ballyhoura*

<i>Keeping Students</i>	<i>Self-Catering</i>	<i>Bed & Breakfast incl. Guesthouse and Farmhouse Accom.</i>	<i>Farm Visits and/or Activity Hols.</i>	<i>Pub</i>	<i>No Active Involvement</i>
37% (11)	23% (7)	33% (10)	13% (4)	10% (3)	13% (4)

Note: Since some respondents were involved in more than 1 type of activity, percentages do not add up to 100%.

Almost half of the respondents had been tourist providers for between 3-5 years. There was, however, a wide variation in length of involvement, with 10 per cent being involved for a very long time (more than 21 years); 13 per cent for less than 2 years and the remainder for 6-11 years. A sizeable majority (5/30) were members of at least one other local tourist organisation (i.e., Mitchelstown; the Glen of Aherlow; Lough Gur Development; Fermoy). A further 2 women had served on the Ballyhoura Failte Management Committee. These numbers, however, are too small to warrant detailed analysis.

The majority of respondents (70%: 21/70) said that they would like to develop/expand their own Rural Community Tourism enterprise. When they were asked in what way, the majority referred specifically to expanding accommodation and/or meals, catering for more people/doing more bed and breakfast and taking more students. However, of those in this sample, only 13 per cent (4/30) applied for Leader I funds. Three of these applications were for cottage improvements/renovations. Typically the applications were for £10,000; and only 1 respondent was completely clear that the source was Leader. The low level of application by these female shareholders was confirmed by documentary evidence (Fox, 1994) which showed that 14 per cent (11/76) of the female Ballyhoura Failte Shareholders received letters of offer: a virtually identical proportion to those in this sample (13%: 4/30) who

indicated that they applied for funds.

It is perhaps worth noting that, in indicating why they had not applied, references were made, for example, to what was perceived as the insufficiently large scale of their proposed activity and/or its perceived lack of employment potential:

I asked generally about the possibilities of getting a grant but was told that jobs must come out of it.

There was talk of me doing up old buildings but I didn't think that what I was doing was big enough.

Others were put off by what they saw as the need to have an ensuite in the bedrooms in order to get a grant, while still others approached Ballyhoura Failte (rather than Ballyhoura Development) for Leader funds.

More than half of the women in this sample were involved in other kinds of on-site economic activities — mainly but not exclusively farms. More than half of the sample (54%: 15/27) who had a partner alive, described his main occupation as a farmer. The husbands of those who were married were virtually all middle class, three-quarters in fact being in Social Class 1 and 2 (using the Irish Central Statistics Office classification schema). Furthermore, the predominantly middle class nature of their husbands' class position persisted when one focused on those who were not farmers (see Table 2). Not surprisingly perhaps the overwhelming majority of the women said that they had access to a car (during the day: 87%; and during the evening: 87%) and to a phone (97%).

Roughly a quarter (27%: 8/30) of the respondents themselves were involved in off-farm paid employment — mainly full time (5/8) — and overwhelmingly

Table 2: *Husband's Current Social Class Position¹ (Assessed Using the CSO Classification Schema)*

	<i>Social Class</i>	<i>Including Farmers %/N</i>	<i>Excluding All Farmers %/N</i>
1	Higher professional, higher managerial, proprietors employing others and farmers with 200+ acres	33 (9)	38 (5)
2	Lower professional, lower managerial, proprietors without employees and farmers with 100-199 acres	41 (11)	23 (3)
3	Other non-manual and farmers with 50-99 acres	19 (5)	31 (4)
4	Skilled manual and farmers with 30-49 acres	7 (2)	8 (1)
	<i>Total</i>	100 (27)	100 (13)

¹Excluding widowed and single: N = 3.

in the clerical, teaching or nursing area, i.e., typically female activities (Blackwell, 1989). In addition to their involvement in Rural Community Tourism and/or in various other economic activities, more than half (57%) of the women were involved in at least one other aspect of community life. Similar sort of trends emerged from the interviews done by Dorgan, *et al.* (1994) in contributing to the Fourth Joint Oireachtas Report on Women and Rural Development. In the present study the sheer range of such involvement was very wide and included, for example, the Irish Country Women's Association; the Flower Club; the Ladies Club; the Association for the Mentally Handicapped; the Historical Society; the GAA; the Drama Society; the Church Group; a Slimming Group; the Parents Council/School Board; the Tidy Towns Group; Bridge, etc.

As one might expect in view of their age, four-fifths of the respondents had no children under 5 years old; and more than half (57%) had none in the 5-15 age group. Two-fifths (43%) had children over 15 years old in the house who were still in full time education; while one-third (33%) of the respondents had children who had finished school but were still living at home. The mean number of children was 3.9. Large families (5+ children) were characteristic of a sizeable minority (i.e., more than one-third of the sample). However, the most common number of children was 3 or 4 and this was characteristic of 40 per cent of the sample.

The overwhelming majority (90%) of the sample agreed strongly with the statement that "financial control should be shared because marriage is an equal partnership" but the house was in joint ownership in the case of only roughly half of the couples (13/27). Where it was in sole ownership, it was six times more likely to be in their husband's name than in their own (see Table 3). Similar trends emerged as regards the farm, with less than 1 in 3 of those who had farms having it in joint ownership; and husbands being three times more likely than wives to have sole ownership.

When they were asked whether or not they felt differently about the money they earned as compared with "other money that comes into the household", more than three-fifths (62%: 16/27) said that they did, the most common explanations being "I earned it myself; it gives you independence"; "it gives you a feeling that you are playing your part"; "gives you a sense of contributing"; "I like to have my own: would you like to be solely dependent on someone else?". When they were asked "Has the fact that you are bringing in some money made any difference or not really", just under half (45%: 12/26) said that it did. Amongst this group, the most common types of explanations offered were that "You feel better about it", "once its your own you don't feel guilty"; "you don't feel so bad spending on the house". Hence, implicit in their replies was the idea that in some way they felt that they were not

Table 3: *Percentage Distribution of Respondents¹ in Terms of Ownership of Family Home and/or Farm*

	<i>Family Home</i>	<i>Farm Ownership</i>
	<i>%/N</i>	<i>%/N</i>
Joint	48 (13)	29 (5)
Husband	41 (11)	35 (6)
Wife	7 (2)	12 (2)
Other	— (0)	23 (4)
Don't Know	4 (1)	—
Total	100 (27)	99 (17)

¹Focusing on those who were still married (i.e., not widowed or single).

contributing enough without such activities. There was also a feeling that in some way their desire “to keep up the house” was perceived as a personal luxury and that their work as housewives, mothers, farm and community workers was valueless. Ironically then, these women’s participation in the economic area of tourism and other kinds of development reflected their perception that they needed to do something “extra” in view of their commitment to marriage as an economic partnership.

In this context it is perhaps not surprising that when the respondents were asked what happened to the money they earned from their various enterprises, nearly two-thirds (63%) indicated that in the past year most of that money was reinvested in the enterprise. In fact, since the majority of the enterprises involved domestic settings, most was spent on doing up the house, buying new furniture, curtains, etc. (see Table 4). These patterns also existed when one looked at their general responses indicating the overall uses of the money they earned.

The picture which emerges then is of a sample of women who are middle aged and well-educated, whose children are for the most part “off hand”, who are married to middle class men; and who are active in both the economic and non-economic areas of community life, but who for the most part do not have access to a salary of their own or to joint ownership of the farm. Only roughly half of them have joint ownership of the family home. Paradoxically, their involvement in rural community tourism was associated with their endorsement of the idea of marriage as a partnership and with their desire to “pull their weight” within that partnership in economic terms. They brought to the public organisational arena those perceptions which had arguably enabled them to survive within the domestic one, viz., a recognition of women’s “place” and an obscuring of issues related to the relationship between gender and power.

Table 4: *Percentage Distribution of Respondents' Replies Indicating (a) Overall Uses¹ of Money Earned Other Than Through Paid Employment; (b) What Most of It Was Spent on in the Past Year*

	Overall Uses %/N	Most Money %/N
Goes into general housekeeping	41 (11)	15 (4)
Children's education	15 (4)	4 (1)
Holidays	15 (4)	—
Personal spending money	15 (4)	7 (2)
Further investment in enterprise	74 (20)	63 (17)
Routine childminding	4 (1)	4 (1)
Household bills, mortgage	11 (3)	—
Other	11 (3)	7 (2)

¹Note some respondents mentioned more than one response so percentages do not add up to 100%. Mean number of responses = 1.9.

It is to a more detailed exploration of the reality of that consensual control that we now turn.

V THE REALITY AND LIMITS OF CONSENSUAL PATRIARCHAL CONTROL: THE INTERVIEW DATA

The whole question of women's (actual) under-representation in the structures promoting tourism and other kinds of development in Ballyhoura was not even potentially an issue for the overwhelming majority of these women. It is suggested that this reflected the selective obscuring of gender in particular contexts and the selective endorsement of a perspective which discounted the structural reality of power and/or money. These women saw the "appropriate" area for women as tourism (not development) and they did not "notice" the different positions of the structures promoting these in relation to funding. They assumed (incorrectly in fact) that there were "lots of women" at the top table; and on key committees; that their interests were "the same as everyone else's" and they dismissed "special" measures to facilitate women's employment or their representation on Committees. Their organisational naïveté was reflected in, and reinforced by, the lack of salience these structures or their funding had in their minds. Yet their lives were gendered, and this reality was recognised in particular contexts (viz., where it was not seen as undermining men's ability to represent them and/or men's relationship with power or money).

Because of the way the sample was selected, all of the respondents were

shareholders in Ballyhoura Failte and, as previously mentioned, the majority were actively involved in some aspect which they defined as rural community tourism. Not too surprisingly then, the majority (90%: 27/30) of the sample were aware of the existence of Ballyhoura Failte. (Such awareness was not related to their current involvement in these activities.) Overwhelmingly the image of Ballyhoura Failte involved tourism. Since they saw themselves as part of the tourism sector, they saw Ballyhoura Failte as relevant to them. Half (53%) referred to the role of Ballyhoura Failte in attracting visitors and promoting tourism. Others referred to specific aspects of this activity, such as, for example, providing alternatives to agriculture, or attracting foreign and agricultural students (11%); marketing the area (4%) and generally bringing "work and life to Kilfinane" (10%), etc.

The majority (73%: 22/30) of those interviewed also said that they knew of the existence of Ballyhoura Development. However, when they were asked what they knew about it, just over a quarter said that they really only knew the name (see Table 5). Roughly one-third saw it as helping small industry, developing local business and/or restoring buildings. Such activities were not in their mind linked with tourism, the sector with which they identified. Furthermore, even those who saw it as being concerned with tourism (14%) referred to it in the context of cycling/parks/walks rather than food and accommodation. Only 14 per cent of those who knew of its existence (and 10% of the total sample) referred to funds or specifically to Leader in the context of Ballyhoura Development. Thus, because of the way they saw Ballyhoura Development, it was perceived as less relevant to them than Ballyhoura Failte. Hence, they were unlikely to see the fact that many of the developments they wanted in their own enterprises could be facilitated by Ballyhoura Development's Leader funds.

Furthermore, when they were specifically asked whether they saw Ballyhoura Failte and Ballyhoura Development as the same or different, half said that they saw them as "the same"; a further small group (10%) said that they

Table 5: *Percentage Distribution of Respondents¹ in Terms of What They Know About Ballyhoura Development*

<i>Just Know the Name</i>	<i>Helping Small Industry/ Local Business</i>	<i>Restoring Buildings/ Improving Kilfinane</i>	<i>Encouraging "Off the Track" Tourism (Cycling/ Parks/Walks)</i>	<i>Concerned with Rural Development</i>	<i>Creating Employment</i>	<i>Leader Funding</i>
%/N	%/N	%/N	%/N	%/N	%/N	%/N
27 (6)	23 (5)	9 (2)	14 (3)	5 (1)	9 (2)	14 (3)

¹N = 22: excluding those (N = 8) who do not know of its existence.

did not know. Hence, because the majority were confused and/or vague about the distinctions between the two structures, they were not even aware of the fact that they were lacking any information. Even amongst those who saw Ballyhoura Failte and Ballyhoura Development as different (32% of the total sample), 2 out of 3 specifically referred to the fact that as they saw it, Ballyhoura Failte's objectives revolved around tourism, and Ballyhoura Development's around industry and/or town development. Hence, from their point of view as tourism providers, Ballyhoura Development was simply not relevant.

Of course, various tourist related activities can be seen as part of a local development programme. Indeed, in many discourses (e.g., the National Development Plan 1989-93) this is exactly what happens. The crucial point, however, that is being made here is that in the eyes of these women: "tourism is women, development is different". In one sense this perception matters little. In another sense such a perception is highly significant since Leader funds are allocated by Ballyhoura Development which is also the "vehicle" for the future development in the area. Thus, despite their educational level, their involvement in the local community, their participation in Rural Community Tourism and/or in other kinds of economic activities, these women showed a surprising level of naïveté about the organisational structures in their own community: a naïveté which, in a sense, militates against the possibility that individually or collectively they can or will be as involved as they might be in the economic development of the area.

In this context, the over-representation of men on the Ballyhoura Development Board and on its related committees makes sense. It can be seen as reflecting and/or reinforcing a lack of appreciation of the relevance of Ballyhoura Development to women's own ideas about possible economic developments in Ballyhoura. Indeed perhaps the single most important fact was that only 10 per cent of the total sample appeared to have "noticed" that Ballyhoura Development distributed Leader funds, whereas Ballyhoura Failte did not. In so far as they were aware of Ballyhoura Failte and/or Ballyhoura Development, it was Ballyhoura Failte with its concern with tourism which they saw as relevant to them.

The situation was exacerbated by the similarity in the names (i.e., Ballyhoura Development and Ballyhoura Failte) and by the fact that both organisations use the same logo (viz. Ballyhoura Country); that both are managed by the same person; and that historically (up to 1992) the Ballyhoura Development Board was a sub-committee of Ballyhoura Failte. However, Dorgan, *et al.* (1994, p. 70) also found that, in their study of a sample of women active in various rural organisations, between 46 per cent and 96 per cent had no knowledge of the specific national and EU programmes operating

in rural areas. Leader in that study was the best known programme, although only 9 per cent had detailed knowledge of it. Thus, it is quite clear that nationally and locally there is a deficit in women's knowledge of funding programmes and in their perceived relevance to them.

To further explore this issue they were asked about the representation of women on the various committees associated with development and/or tourism in Ballyhoura. Thus they were asked: "Are women involved at all in Ballyhoura Development?". The majority of the respondents (90%) said that they were and they were then asked in what way they were involved. Roughly a quarter (28%) of those who felt that women were involved named one or two strong competent women who were highly visible (such as the Chief Executive of Ballyhoura Development) and said that since these were "at the top table", they assumed there must be others there. A further group (16%), possibly confusing Ballyhoura Failte Management Committee and Ballyhoura Development Board, said that "women were at least 50/50 at the top table" — some even going so far as to say that they had most of the jobs on the Committees; while others (16%) felt that women were involved "at every level", Chair, Secretary, Committees and projects. One in 5 completely ignored issues related to power and referred to the fact that they saw "lots of them at meetings", that they were providers and secretaries (see Table 6).

Table 6: *Percentage Distribution of Respondents' Replies to the Question: "In What Way are Women Involved in Ballyhoura Development?"*

<i>Know 1 or 2 at "Top Table" So Must be More %/N</i>	<i>Women at Least 50/50 on Top Tables "As Much as Men" %/N</i>	<i>At every Level: Chair/Sec/ Committee and Projects %/N</i>	<i>Lots at Meetings/ Providers/ Secretaries %/N</i>	<i>Yes but few on Board %/N</i>	<i>In the Background %/N</i>	<i>Other %/N</i>
28 (7)	16 (4)	16 (4)	20 (5)	8 (2)	4 (1)	8 (2)

Thus, effectively for the majority of the women in this sample, the whole question of women's under-representation at the "top table" of Ballyhoura Development was not an issue, since they did not perceive it. Not too surprisingly perhaps then, when they were asked whether or not they saw women as affecting its future direction, 91 per cent (22/24) of those who had an opinion said that they did; while 81 per cent (17/21) of those who had an opinion saw women as being involved in making decisions about the allocation of funds in Ballyhoura Development. More than half (55%: 15/27) felt that women's involvement as regards influencing the future direction of the project had not changed over time, while a further third felt that there

were more women now and/or that women were more visible now than in the past.

For only a quarter of the women in this sample was women's under-representation on the Ballyhoura Development Board even potentially an issue. Of this group, some (i.e., 10% of the total sample) did not see women as being involved in Ballyhoura Development. In addition, 1 in 8 of the respondents (12% of the total sample) noted that women were involved but that there were very few on the Board or that they were in the background. (This is the situation which actually exists.) These patterns can be seen as reflecting the existence of patriarchal control mechanisms at a very fundamental level. The Ballyhoura experience thus nicely illustrates how women's under-representation in community structures of relevance to them may not be perceived, even by a group who are highly involved in community life.

Recognising, however, that their reply to the question about women's involvement in Ballyhoura Development left open the possibility that they did not refer to committees and/or to women's presence on them, because they saw the focus of the question as lying elsewhere, the respondents were specifically asked about their awareness of the existence of all the major committees linked to Ballyhoura Development and to Ballyhoura Failte and about women's representation on them. In general, their awareness of them was very low (see Table 7).

Hence, quite clearly, for the majority of women in this sample the actual organisational structures involved in identifying priorities for development

Table 7: Respondents' Awareness of the Existence of Various Committees Linked to Ballyhoura Development and to Ballyhoura Failte

	<i>Mentioned Spontaneously</i>	<i>After Probing</i>	<i>Not Known</i>
	%/N	%/N	%/N
Ballyhoura Development Board	17 (5)	43 (13)	40 (12)
Ballyhoura Executive Committee	—	43 (13)	57 (17)
Project Approvals Committee	3 (1)	50 (15)	47 (14)
Finance Committee	10 (3)	47 (14)	43 (13)
Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resource Committee	3 (1)	50 (15)	47 (14)
Ballyhoura Enterprise Support Team	—	43 (13)	56 (17)
Education and Training Committee	10 (3)	50 (15)	40 (12)
Community Consultative Committee	20 (6)	10 (3)	70 (21)
Ballyhoura Failte Management Committee	23 (7)	70 (21)	7 (2)

and in evaluating and grant-aiding projects were simply not salient. Furthermore, with the exception of the Ballyhoura Failte Management Committee (i.e., the Management Committee of the Tourism Co-operative) roughly half of the respondents did not even recognise the names of these committees.

When attention was focused specifically on each of the various committees and respondents were asked whether or not there were women on that committee, in 8 of the 9 committees, the majority (60-80% of the respondents) either did not know whether women were involved and/or were unaware of the existence of the Committee in the first place (see Table 8). In this situation, obviously, feelings of dissatisfaction concerning the representation of women are highly unlikely to arise. It is effectively a non-issue.

Table 8: *Percentage Distribution of Respondents in Terms of the Perceived Existence of Women on Committees Linked to Ballyhoura Development and to Ballyhoura Failte*

Type of Board / Committee	Women Present	Women Not Present	Don't Know / and / or Unaware of Existence of Committees
	% / N	% / N	% / N
Ballyhoura Development Board	40 (12)	—	60 (18)
Ballyhoura Executive Committee	27 (8)	—	73 (22)
Project Approvals Committee	20 (6)	3 (1)	77 (23)
Finance Committee	23 (7)	3 (1)	73 (22)
Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Committee	17 (5)	—	83 (25)
Ballyhoura Enterprise Support Team	20 (6)	—	80 (24)
Education and Training Committee	37 (11)	3 (1)	60 (18)
Community Consultative Committee	7 (2)	7 (2)	87 (26)
Ballyhoura Failte Management Committee	63 (19)	7 (2)	30 (9)

It is, of course, possible that a sample of male shareholders in Ballyhoura Failte would be equally unaware of the structure and composition of these committees. In an important sense, however, this is not the issue. The significance of the women's lack of knowledge arises from the fact that they are under-represented in the structures and that this is not perceived as an issue. Its importance in the case of these women stems from the fact that it is seen as part of a wider process through which difference and the gendered

structural realities of power and money are obscured.

Similar sorts of perceptions emerged from other parts of the interview. Thus, roughly two-thirds of the total sample saw Ballyhoura Development (about which, as previously mentioned, most were confused or vague) as being either very interested or fairly interested in ideas put forward by women; in ideas likely to provide full-time employment for married women and in ideas likely to increase married women's income. Typically, however, they went on to stress that it was interested in *all* development, as if the whole question of whether or not it was interested in development which benefited women implied a sectional interest which they did not share.

It will be shown that only 17 per cent (5/30) saw positive discrimination as regards training/education as very important in facilitating women's employment, and even smaller proportions were in favour of positive discrimination on Committees (quotas) or as regards funding (see Table 11). Thus, it is clear that as they perceived it, they were the "same" as the men, and wanted no special favours. The fact that the outcome of such processes was that these local committees were in fact dominated by men was effectively not perceived by them.

The picture which emerges then clearly highlights women's assumptions that their interests are the same as everyone else's, their lack of awareness of organisational structures and their inability to differentiate between those which have Leader funds to disburse and those which do not, as well as their lack of any sense that they are disadvantaged by not being represented by women. These effectively ensure that their under-representation in the structures promoting tourism and development in Ballyhoura is seen as unproblematic. In the context of the paper it is seen as a reflection of a process of patriarchal control which creates in women an assent to their under-representation.

As previously mentioned, patriarchal control is highly unlikely ever to be total. The gendered nature of women's lives emerges clearly from the replies about the kinds of enterprises they would like to develop, and the kinds of training and other facilities which they see as important in facilitating their employment.

Almost half of those who had an opinion (10/21) said that they would be interested in developing new enterprises. When they were presented with a list and asked if they would be interested in developing enterprises in any of these areas, the types of areas many of them selected were closely related to their own experiences as housewives and/or women involved in tourism. Thus, 33 per cent said they would be interested in child care; 33 per cent referred to self catering; and 37 per cent to crafts. Sizeable minorities did refer to gender neutral areas: 37 per cent referring to activity holidays, and

27 per cent to agri-tourism. However, only a small group indicated that they would be interested in the development of small industrial enterprises (see Table 9), an area of predominantly male interest which has, interestingly, been recently targeted for special attention in Ballyhoura.

Table 9: *Percentage Distribution of Respondents Who Would be Interested in Developing New Enterprises in the Following Areas¹*

	%/N
Agriculture	10 (3)
Agri-tourism	27 (8)
Crafts	37 (11)
Rural Tourism	13 (4)
Homestays	20 (6)
Activity Holidays	37 (11)
Self Catering	33 (10)
Alternative Agri-businesses	7 (2)
Environmentally based development	3 (1)
Small industrial enterprises	16 (5)
Catering	20 (6)
Horticulture	20 (6)
Cheese	13 (4)
Child Care	33 (10)
Other	10 (3)

¹Some respondents mentioned more than one, so percentages do not add up to 100%.

It is possible that simply being presented with a list created the expectation that they should indicate an interest in developing new enterprises in these areas. However, there is some indirect evidence that this was not so, since more than three-fifths (63%) of them said that other women they knew would be interested in developing new enterprises (mean number of ideas mentioned being 1.6). No list was presented to them in this case. The ideas they put forward in this context were even more strongly gendered. The most common references related to self catering, bed and breakfast and/or farmhouse holidays, child care and arts and crafts — ideas which reflected their experiences as women and which were likely to have the effect of generating employment and/or income for women.

Three-quarters of the women had definite ideas (average = 2.2) about the types of new enterprises that could be developed in Ballyhoura. Almost half of the respondents referred to food related activities, including home baking, processed foods, organic and health foods; while a third mentioned craft related activities (including spinning, dyeing and craft shops). Almost two-thirds referred to the provision of a wide variety of facilities which were

mainly gendered, including amusement parks for children, horse and trap rides and a baby sitting service for visitors. Only one of their suggestions related to the development of industries (see Table 10).

Table 10: *Percentage Distribution of Respondents in Terms of Their Ideas About the Types of New Enterprises that Could be Developed in Ballyhoura*⁸

Craft Related Activities ¹	Food Related Activities ²	Various Kinds of Activity Hols ³	Hols Niches ⁴	Indoor/Outdoor		Industry	Other ⁷
				Swimming Pools and Facilities Generally ⁵	Horticultural Related Activities ⁶		
%/N	%/N	%/N	%/N	%/N	%/N	%/N	%/N
32 (8)	48 (12)	24 (6)	16 (4)	64 (16)	16 (4)	4 (1)	(1)

¹including craft workshops, spinning and dyeing

²including home baking, processed foods, organic and health foods

³including walking, golf, horse riding, festivals

⁴including "singles" hols, health hols, farmhouse rest hols

⁵including swimming pools, local castle, local entertainment, babysitting, etc., a cinema, hotel, music centre; horse & traps; an amusement park for children

⁶including production of herbs; cut flowers; other horticultural activities

⁷including guide books

⁸note percentages do not add up to 100% as most respondents mentioned more than 1 idea (i.e., mean = 2.2); N = 25; excluding those (n = 25) who had no ideas.

When they were specifically asked how *women's* employment could be developed in the area, 41 per cent (12/29) were puzzled and hesitant to identify specific areas. The overwhelming majority (17/29) of those who did identify particular areas either adverted to those which one could regard as "women's work" (e.g., crafts; home baking; child care; tea rooms; cheese making; cleaning); and/or to arrangements which would make it easier for them to balance domestic and non-domestic responsibilities (e.g., crèches; proper school transport; different attitudes to child care; more flexible hours). Thus, it is clear that the gendered reality of their lives emerge in particular contexts as Benton (1981) had suggested. These contexts are, however, ones which do not undermine or even challenge men's control over power or money.

It is highly possible that many of the ideas the women put forward would not be identified by male shareholders who might well think of activities which stemmed from, and/or which were likely to increase their own or a son's or brother's income. It is not surprising that people's ideas about development reflect their own experiences, and since in Ireland men's and women's experiences — particularly if they are married — are still very different, then one might expect their ideas to be different. Even articulating

this, however, is in a sense subversive in so far as it implicitly challenges men's ability to represent women's interests. Indeed, the identification of women's separate interests was explicitly resisted by some women who stressed that "there was no sexism in this area".

Such was their rejection of the depiction of themselves as a group who needed to represent themselves that they (as previously mentioned) overwhelmingly did not endorse the idea of positive discrimination on Committees as regards funding, training, etc., as a way of facilitating women's employment. However, when they were asked to indicate which — if any — of the various kinds of strategies they saw as very important in facilitating women's employment, the three which were mentioned most often were enterprise grants for women (63%), a local adviser/facilitator for women (43%) and subsidies/allowances for child care costs (33%). (See Table 11.) These reflect their very real gendered experiences as women who had little access to cash; little understanding of the structures promoting tourism and development, and day-to-day financial or practical responsibility for child care.

Table 11: *Percentage of Respondents Who See the Following as Very Important in Facilitating Women's Employment*¹

	%/N
Enterprise grants for women	63 (19)
Positive discrimination on Committees (quotas)	10 (3)
Positive discrimination as regards funding	7 (2)
Positive discrimination in training/education	17 (5)
Changes in the times/location of education or training courses	20 (6)
Local adviser/facilitator for women	43 (13)
Eligibility of women for Community Employment Scheme	23 (7)
Seed funding for new enterprises	27 (8)
Development of job opportunities in particular areas	10 (3)
Subsidies/allowances for child care costs	33 (10)
Other	7 (2)

¹Some respondents mentioned more than one, so percentages do not add up to 100%.

When they were specifically asked: "If local training were to be improved, which of these — if any — would you see as particularly important?", more than three-quarters (77%) selected confidence building. (See Table 12.) It is difficult to imagine similar trends emerging in reply to a similar question addressed to middle class men. The trends emerging in this study were very similar to those in Dorgan, *et alii*. (1994) survey for the Fourth Joint Oireachtas Committee's Report on Women and Rural Development. Thus, 63 per cent of the women in that survey (who were also active in rural

organisations) gave highest priority to assertiveness training. In that study, start your own business skills and marketing were the types of training courses which were next most widely endorsed: 54-55 per cent of all the replies giving them highest priority. Remarkably similar trends emerged in the present study, with more than half of the respondents seeing start your own business skills (67%); and marketing skills (60%) as very important.

Table 12: *Percentage of Respondents Indicating Who See the Following as Very Important If Local Training Were to be Improved*

	%/N
Confidence building	77 (23)
Computer skills	37 (11)
Accounting skills	20 (6)
Start your own business skills	67 (20)
Business expansion skills	30 (9)
Parenting/caring skills	23 (7)
Co-Operative development skills	10 (3)
Arts/Crafts	23 (7)
Marketing	60 (18)
Do-it-yourself skills	50 (15)
Other	10 (3)

¹Some respondents mentioned more than one, so percentages do not add up to 100%.

VI SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Tourism — both in a national context and within the specific parameters of one local community (viz. Ballyhoura), is increasingly seen as a source of employment and a focus of investment. This importance is reflected in the national prioritising of tourism as an area of development and in Leader I support for tourism and other development initiatives. Service industries in general, and tourism in particular, are largely female dominated in terms of employment. Yet women are and remain the “invisible players” in these areas.

Ballyhoura is no different from other areas in Ireland (or indeed from the public arena as a whole) in so far as women are under-represented in those structures which promote tourism and other kinds of development within the area. Thus, on the overall Board which directs development in the area (viz. the Ballyhoura Development Board) and which ultimately distributes Leader funding, women constitute 14 per cent of the total membership. On three of the most important Committees linked to the Board women make up between 12-20 per cent of the membership. However, these figures in fact reflect the

very active presence of the Chief Executive of Ballyhoura Development Ltd. who is the only woman on these three important Committees. Ballyhoura Failte is the Tourism Co-operative in the area. It does not distribute Leader funding. Women make up two-thirds of the individual membership of this tourism co-operative, and are more strongly represented on the Ballyhoura Failte Management Committee than on any of the other structures: constituting 50 per cent of those on it. When we look at the ratio between individual share ownership and representation even on this committee, men's over-representation becomes clear, the ratio being 4:37 for men, as compared with 6:76 for women. Nevertheless it is suggested that the fact that women are more strongly represented on it than on the Ballyhoura Development Board and its key committees is not coincidental; it reflects the differential access of the two structures to substantial Leader I funding.

The paper suggests that these patterns can be understood as reflecting and reinforcing a pattern of consensual control. Drawing on interview material with 30 women in the area who are shareholders in the local Rural Community Tourism Co-operative (viz. Ballyhoura Failte) it was possible to gain an insight into the consensual nature of this control. Thus, despite the fact that virtually all of these women had post-primary education, and roughly one-third had a degree or its equivalent; that on their own account and/or with their husband they were involved in a mosaic of economic and non-economic community activities, that they were shareholders in the tourism co-operative and wanted to develop/expand their own rural community tourism initiative, they were very unaware of the structures promoting tourism and/or other kinds of development in their area, and of the representation of women on them.

Thus, they were unclear about the distinction between Ballyhoura Failte (the Tourism Co-operative) and Ballyhoura Development Board (the overall structure administering the Leader funding). The very terms in which they defined the scope of Ballyhoura Development (in terms of industry, town development, etc.), were far less conducive to their identification with it than with Ballyhoura Failte. They perceived the world of grants, Leader, development as alien. Only 10 per cent of the total sample appeared to have "noticed" that Ballyhoura Development Board had Leader (EU) funds whereas Ballyhoura Failte did not. The majority of them appeared to be unaware of the Committee structures associated with Ballyhoura Development and/or of the representation of women on these Committees. They did not appear to see this "world" in terms of power structures and they did not see them as representing men's interests. Thus, they "assumed" that because they saw women at meetings, because women were involved as providers and secretaries, because they knew one or two women at the "top table", that

there must be more of them involved. They "assumed" that women's interests would be looked after — that they were in fact "no different to anyone else's interests" (that is, to the interests of the men who were predominantly in positions of power within such structures). Control is never total, however, and the gendered reality of women's day-to-day lives came to the fore in some contexts.

Thus, their ideas as regards the development both of their own enterprises, and more generally, as regards the initiation of new enterprises in the area were firmly rooted in their experiences as women, housekeepers and mothers (and such ideas would arguably be very unlikely to occur to men who had not had such experiences). Indeed, their very enthusiasm for the development of their rural community tourism activities reflected an (indirect) negative evaluation of their gendered lives since they saw these enterprises as enabling them to make a "real" economic contribution; to "pull their weight" economically within marriage.

Overwhelmingly the women in this study experienced no discrimination, they saw no conflicts of interests, there were no grievances, despite their under-representation in the structures promoting tourism and other kinds of development. The Ballyhoura experience illustrates the extent and limits of consensual patriarchal control. It raises issues about the nature of power, and the way in which it may subtly undercut economic development initiatives. It also raises issues about the cultural legitimacy of women representing themselves, particularly in structures which have substantial economic resources to disburse. Such issues are important if one is to understand why women, who have much to contribute, are largely absent from local structures promoting tourism and other kinds of development, and why this is not even seen by them as an issue.

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