

Chapter One

Putting Women in their Place: Women in the Historiography of Geography

The kind of knowledge that emerges from a discipline depends very much on who produces that knowledge, what methods are used to procure knowledge, and what purposes knowledge is acquired for

Monk & Hanson 1982: 12

Introduction

This book is intended to offer a new perspective on the history of British geography by focusing on the geographical work of women from 1850 to 1970. In broad terms, historical studies allow us to trace the development of geographical ideas and can shed light on the nature and practice of geography today. As Holloway has argued, 'The study of history is important if we are to understand why society is organized the way it is and *how we can use our understanding of the past to become agents of change in the present*' (2005: 2, my emphasis). Understanding the social construction of a discipline's history also allows us to engage with that history epistemologically, to examine what is and is not accepted as 'knowledge' and how this defines membership of and practice within the academy. Women have been omitted largely from histories of geography (Domosh 1991a); and histories of geography that fail to consider what has been 'left out' – 'what has been constructed as not-geography' – tell only a partial story (Rose 1995).

Recent histories of British geography have stressed the role of enlightenment thought (Livingstone 1992; Livingstone & Withers 1999; Mayhew 2000) and the role of imperialism (Bell *et al.* 1995; Driver 2001). Others have traced shifts in theoretical and methodological schools of thought principally in the twentieth century (Cloke, Philo & Sadler 1991; Johnston & Sidaway 2004) or 'key thinkers' (Hubbard *et al.* 2004). Most of these have

been consciously written in contrast to an earlier institutional approach to the discipline's history (e.g. Mill 1930; Freeman 1960; Brown 1980). All of these approaches have brought new insight to understanding the ways in which geographical knowledge has been shaped, and are to be welcomed, not least in bringing a more 'critical' approach to understanding the history of geography, typically grounded in the contextual history approach blended with theoretical underpinnings ranging from Kuhn to Foucault to Marx. Whilst these studies have addressed feminism as a post-1980s' school of thought, which has been significant in drawing attention to the underrepresentation of women and gender as an analytical concept, feminist approaches to the historiography of geography have been given little space. Feminist historiography has been articulated by Domosh (1991a,b), Rose (1993, 1995) Blunt and Rose (1994), Bell and McEwan (1996), the Women and Geography Study Group (1997), McEwan (1998a,b), Monk (2004, 2007), Maddrell (1997, 2004a, 2006, 2007, 2008) and others,¹ but there has been no sustained work to explicate the issues raised by these shorter engagements. As has been argued recently of political geography, 'The marginalisation – and even exclusion – of gender and of feminist perspectives has yielded a field that is partial in the understandings and knowledges produced within it' (Peake, Staeheli & Koffman 2004: 1). There remains a need for 'documenting and explaining the gendering of knowledge production in geography in general, and how this is reflected in different places' (Blumen & Bar-Gal 2006: 350).

This introduction will include five elements: (i) it will address the current place of women within the historiography of geography; (ii) it will discuss a 'more-than-contextual' approach to blending contextual and feminist approaches to history; (iii) the relationship between theoretical framing and methodologies will be explained, e.g. processes of selection, biographical approaches, oral history and reading texts such as obituaries and reviews; (iv) key contextual factors 1850–1970 will be indicated; and (v) central themes which emerge in women's geographical work will be outlined.

Women *qua* Women

Is it desirable or possible to discuss 'women' as a group, as women per se? Whilst the prevailing feminist discourse of the 1970s represented an image of a universal sisterhood which needed only to recognise itself and unite in order to counter discrimination, by the mid-1990s feminist theory and practice increasingly recognised the diversity amongst and between women. This was partly as a product of feminism being caught in a tension between its modernist roots and critiques of modernism, and partly resulting from the awareness of the differences or 'horizontal hostilities' (Pratt & Hanson

1994) between women – largely resulting from postmodern and postcolonial feminist critique which highlighted differences between women according to socioeconomic class, race, sexuality etc. (see Liu 1991; Mills 1991; Nicholson & Fraser 1990). The salience of gender as an analytical category and basis for common interests has been fiercely debated within and beyond geography undermining earlier confidence in *the* feminist project and necessitating the recognition of a number of *feminisms*, which in turn stress diversity and difference (see McDowell 1993a; Women and Geography Study Group 1997). However, the celebration of difference can obscure relations of power (Bondi 1990) including the hierarchy of white male privilege that has informed the creation of western intellectual tradition (Bordo 1990). These theoretical and political negotiations have led feminists to raise a number of questions, such as how to combine postmodern critiques of meta-narratives with the social-critical power of feminism/s? (Fraser & Nicholson 1990); how to refuse separation, but insist on non-identity? (McDowell 1993b). It is argued here that it is possible within a feminist historiography to blend strategic gendered subjectivity in methodology: i.e. to focus on women, within an analytical framework that acknowledges difference in its complexity. The different women geographers studied in this volume occupy different positions in time and space, in social class, education and politics. They have complex locations in relation to one another and to the institutions and discourses of geographical thought and practice, and this is what will be ‘mapped out’ in the following chapters. The complexity of the positionality and subjectivity of women travellers such as Mary Kingsley has been well documented by authors such as Mills (1991), Blunt (1994) McEwan (1998a) and Kearns (1998) (see Chapter Four). The same is true of women producing geographical work within the geographical establishment, for example Marion Newbigin (see Chapter Three) was both at the heart of a geographical institution and a producer of geographical knowledge, whilst simultaneously relatively marginalised from the growing university sector and the geographical establishment of the Royal Geographical Society (Maddrell 1997).

Rather than ascribing to an essentialised notion of gender, what is needed is a theoretical and methodological approach which recognises the *discursive* construction of ‘feminine’ in relation to ‘masculine’ and the common gendered social processes and strictures experienced by women in particular times and places through the cipher of ‘feminine’. It is important to recognise that women in different places at different times know and experience the world, including their gender, in different ways. This last point is crucial to an account of women geographers which ranges from the mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth century. For example it would be easy to argue that the current geographical discourse, including the ‘cultural turn’ and social, political and economic geographies of a wide variety of spheres including

work, home, leisure and identity renders a focus on the gendered construction of knowledge unnecessary. However, to take such a position would, at least, neglect the contextual experience of geographers working in the nineteenth and early-to-mid twentieth century, for whom gender was one of the most significant categories in terms of their access to education and employment, as well as being contextual to the production and reception of their work. It is important to remember the particular gendered social mores which combined with those of class and race in the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth-century, resulting in institutional and symbolic discrimination (see the section on contextual approaches below). Historians struggling with the representation of *women* in different histories have accepted the ‘ontological experience of women as shaky’ (Alberti 2002: 104) but recognise the need to continue the project of ‘writing women into history’. Within the historiography of geography there is a methodological need to focus on women as subjects at this point, but a theoretical need to recognise their different experiences. Generalisations may be drawn from their individual experiences, but not universalisations.

Women’s Place and Placing Women in the Historiography of Geography

Part of a good conceptual history is the recovery of forgotten ideas and personalities

Godlewska 1999: 9

A survey of the literature addressing women’s absence from the history of geography and historical women ‘geographers’ will give a foundation to answering the question of why such a history as this is needed, a theme which will be returned to in the conclusion of this book. Domosh’s (1991a) ground-breaking paper made several key points. She argued that attempts to contextualise the history of geography had ignored the gendered construction of much of that history; that something of women’s contribution to the formation of geographical knowledge can be seen in the work of Victorian women travellers; that all women and some men were excluded from the class of ‘geographer’ because their views and activities did not conform to standards of what was acceptable as ‘scientific’ geography. Domosh further argued that gender relations and representations are integral to the social construction of knowledge and demonstrated how the social fabric influences the history of geography through the practices, discourse and the legitimisation of knowledge within the subject. Looking particularly at Victorian women travellers, Domosh asked whether the social conditions in which women operated and conducted their exploration

constituted a 'woman's way of knowing', which has undertones of essentialism, but the most significant question Domosh posed was to ask what implications the recovery of women's geographical knowledge would have for the reconstruction of geography?

Stoddart, in response to Domosh's case for a feminist historiography of geography, argued that whilst there were women geographers who merited the attention of historians of the subject, a feminist perspective was divisive and unnecessary because these women had 'looked after themselves, their careers and their scholarship perfectly well without such [feminist] assistance' (1991: 485). The fact that the women geographers Stoddart himself identifies as meriting attention (Semple, Somerville, Newbigin, Ormsby and Taylor), with the exception of the first two, are all missing or reduced to fleeting references in existing histories of geography, seems to suggest otherwise. Furthermore, whilst Domosh argued that Victorian women travellers such as Isabella Bird contributed to geographical knowledge, Stoddart argued that they could not be seen as geographers because they took no measurements, failing to see that defining geography epistemologically as a science of measurement (and the exclusion of those who did not take measurements) was precisely what Domosh was challenging. As will be seen in Chapter Two, Isabella Bird and numerous other women took courses in surveying when these became open to them at the Royal Geographical Society and subsequently took field measurements in the course of their travels, but this was far from the sum of their geographical observations. Equally there were women (and men) who gathered information, recorded their observations and experiences of places, but took no measurements as such. The notion of a singular 'woman's way of knowing' would be questioned today in the light of developments in feminist and gender theory in the 1990s, but the question of how women's gendered status and socialisation influenced their access to geographical knowledge and institutions, and in turn influenced how they saw the world geographically is a theme which will recur throughout succeeding chapters. Ultimately, Domosh's argument that the inclusion of women's work in the history of geography could make the subject more *inclusionary*, more 'human', lies at the heart of this book.

In *Feminism and Geography*, Rose (1993) argued that women were historically marginalised as producers and subjects of geographical knowledge and that subsequent histories focusing on 'great men' – 'geography's paternal lines of descent' – produces a disciplinary territory from which the feminine is excluded. Rose noted that the erasure of 'outsiders' in a given disciplinary tradition 'also works to erase the practice of exclusion itself. Their complete invisibility makes the practice of their exclusion vanish' (1995: 414), exclusion being achieved through accepted power relations which legitimise the work of some and de-legitimise the work of others.

Rose concluded, 'it seems that, even if we can no longer be certain exactly what geography was in the past, in virtually all histories of geographical knowledges one apparently incontrovertible fact remains: geography, whatever it was, was almost always done by men' (Rose 1995: 414). This view was echoed by the Women and Geography Study Group's (1997) analysis of the visual representation at the Royal Geographical Society through portraits of past presidents and key Fellows; although Kobayashi (1995: 194), while critiquing Livingstone's (1992) lack of attention to women's geographical work, acknowledged that 'it is difficult to find works by women in a discipline that has been so male dominated'.

However, there can be a difference between how a discipline, its history, and institutions are *represented* in retrospect and the empirical detail of a given time, place and body of work. Rose argued for a multiple space for the history of geographical thought: 'We need an analytic space which can articulate boundaries, distinctions and disjuncture instead of erasing them, a space which can acknowledge exclusion as intrinsic to the processes of inclusion, a space through which the difference that gender makes to the production of geographical knowledges can be recognised' (1995: 416). This book may not fully address these criteria, but in excavating and explicating women's geographical work it represents a liminal space in the history of geographical thought, a bridge to more gender-inclusive historiographies of geography.

Where Have All the Women Gone?

A cursory glance at the histories of geographical institutions shows that the *Scottish Geographical Magazine* was edited by women from 1902 to 1939; women were members of the Royal Scottish and Manchester geographical societies from their foundation in 1884 and the Royal Geographical Society belatedly from 1913;² and approximately 15% of the original members of the Institute of British Geographers founded by university lecturers in 1933 were women (Maddrell 2004a). Women incontrovertibly were 'doers of geography' before 1970, which leaves one to ask two key questions: *what* were they doing? And *why* does so little of it feature in our disciplinary histories?

The women who have frequented the pages of existing histories are Mary Somerville (Mill 1930; Freeman 1960, 1980; Gregory 1988; Livingstone 1992); Marion Newbigin (Freeman 1960, 1976b; Dickinson 1969, 1976; Livingstone 1992) and Eva Taylor (Taylor 1957; Dickinson 1976; Freeman 1976b; Livingstone 1992; Heffernan 2003); the American geographer Ellen Churchill Semple also has a similar pattern of appearances (Maddrell 2004a). This shows the importance of this small group of women but equally demonstrates the reiterative nature of disciplinary histories, whereby key

characters are re-inscribed in successive accounts. It also raises the issue of whether an author's work is mentioned or engaged with within histories; for example, of the three British women listed above, Livingstone (1992) discusses only Somerville's work in any detail. Whether by 'omission or commission' (Domosh 1991a), women have been shown to be absent from the histories of geography. Although there have been a number of studies characterised as having a 'critical' approach to the history of geographical knowledge, which is 'sensitive to the ways in which geographical knowledge has been implicated in relationships of power' (Driver 1992: 23) and although studies of individual women or events have provided windows on women's 'place' in and contribution to geography as a discipline (e.g. Blunt 1994; Bell & McEwan 1996; Maddrell 1997; Guelke & Morin 2001; Matless & Cameron 2006), there is little sense of an overview of the work of women geographers in Britain. Critical feminist approaches to histories of geography may be well rehearsed (McEwan 1998a), but a great deal more work is needed to substantiate women's part within the subject, and an understanding of the different work of women travellers, academics, educationalists and authors is absent from our understanding of the development of geography. Jan Monk (1998, 2003, 2004, 2007) has shown there are rich archives to be mined in the case of American women geographers and that these illustrate the varied experiences of different groups of women within specific geographical institutions; the same is true for British women geographers as a whole, even if the quality and quantity of sources for individuals might vary (see Bell & McEwan 1996; Maddrell 1997, 2004a-h).

Historians of women have been engaged with the subject of women 'entering male professional terrain' since the 1970s (Morantz-Sanchez 1995: 201), chronicling women's exclusion and inclusion and their negotiation of patriarchal institutions and masculinist cultures (Witz 1992; Wallach Scott 1992; Woollacott 1998) – but there is no such chronicle in the history of geography. This is not an argument for hagiographic recovery of nineteenth- and twentieth-century geographical 'heroines', but rather for an awareness of a largely invisible group and the nuances their work brings to our understanding of 'geography', the workings of the geographical community, and its discourses. The stories here are of some of the women working within geography in Britain 1850–1970, and whilst a single volume could not include all female producers and communicators of geographical knowledge, it is hoped that this beginning will encourage further engagement with women's place in the history and epistemology of geography.

Historiographies are always theoretically fraught (what Livingstone (1992) described in his own case as 'situated messiness'), they are complex and each 'reflects the partialities of its author' (Heffernan 2003: 4); considering women as subjects and objects in geography is no exception. Given their relative invisibility in received histories of the subject, there is a strategic

need to assert gendered subjectivity in order to focus on women as a group in an attempt to address their absence from the historiography of geography. However, in doing so one must be conscious of the tension between this approach and recognising the socially constructed nature of gender and subjectivity. My approach adopted here combines feminist and contextual readings of the historiography of geography, in order to consider the 'place' or complex location/s of the women working in geography in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. It is important not simply to look at what work women undertook at different times in British history but also to look at 'the ways in which dominant ideas concerning femininity, women's roles, gender, class and, to some extent, race, have dictated the types of work deemed suitable for women; the value placed on women's work, the status of women workers and the strategies that women have employed to challenge these dominant ideas' (Holloway 2005: 3). In many ways these are the evolving social relations experienced by 'women geographers' (whatever their form of work), which I am trying to trace here.

Complex Locations and Embodied Genealogy: More-than-Contextual History

The contextual view has normalised within historical geographical writing as a result of the work of scholars such as Stoddart (1981), Driver (1988, 1992, 2001), Livingstone (1979, 1990, 1991, 1992) and Bell (1993, 1995b). By placing the changing practices of geographical thought in relation to ideas and practices external to the discipline, contextual approaches to history identified the relation between texts and context, i.e. the social construction of knowledge and sought to avoid the assumptions of Whiggish accounts of the development of the subject. Recognising the inevitable influences of present interests and selectivity of historical sources, Livingstone (1992) called for geographers to give heed to social context, metaphysical assumptions, professional aspirations and ideological allegiances, and goes on to suggest asking: what role did geography play in past society? Was geography used by particular groups for political, religious or economic purposes? Who benefited and who lost out by the introduction of new theory? Why were particular theories generated, welcomed, outlawed? Godlewska (1999: 9) similarly argues that conceptual history rests on asking basic questions about individuals' lives and work, such as 'What were their key ideas? Which were the decisive influences shaping not only their ideas but the method and presentational form of their work? ... What was, and what has been, the impact of their ideas and approaches to problems?'. She also points out that answering these questions requires extensive research and that this has been done for too few past geographers. It is hoped that

this volume will contribute to answering these and related questions for the women geographers studied here.

However important, the contextual approach has limitations which are recognised by proponents (e.g. Driver 1992; Livingstone 1990, 1992) and it should not be seen as a theoretical and methodological panacea (ibid.). Contextual historians can fall into the trap of presentism, e.g. judging preceding scholars for not using the contextual approach; they can be guilty of overdetermining context, or be so wary of these traps that they fail to mention any reference to continuity or development of ideas. Using a contextual approach also raises the question of 'which context?' (Skinner 1969): it is crucial that the appropriate context is chosen for a given study. Neglect of issues relating to the social construction of gender within the historiography of geography is a function of selectivity of context, which has resulted in an intentionally or unintentionally masculinist account of the subject's development: both Stoddart (1991) and Livingstone (1995) acknowledge that women's work did not fit with their interests/framing of their particular histories of the discipline. Driver (1992: 36) has suggested that 'It might be argued that the ultimate fiction of "contextual" history consists less in its separation of "texts" and "contexts", than in its continual silence on the mediating role of the historian'.

Contextual material is vital when considering the place of women in the historiography of geography, but it is theoretically insufficient for interrogating the complexities of their gendered place/s. Rather what is needed is a context-sensitive feminist approach to interrogate the individual lives and work of women geographers. The numerous women considered in this book had different backgrounds, positions, strategies and achievements, but share in common that we know too little of them and their work. It is necessary to focus on these women as women, in order to constitute an inclusionary historiography, but also to combine feminist with materialist, postmodern and postcolonial forms of analysis in order to begin to understand the complexity of their lives and the character of the work they produced. This inevitably means combining theoretical approaches in a pragmatic discourse, with tailored methods and multiple categories, i.e. starting with them as women but going on to recognise in their differences the specificity of the 'politics of [their] location' (Rich, cited by Blunt & Rose 1994: 7) and multiple, fragmentary locations (Mohanty 1987), which result in 'less essentialist and more critical readings of the geography they produced' (McEwan 1998a).

Feminist History

A brief survey of feminist historical studies of other disciplines gives some sense of what feminist approaches to historiography can offer. A focus on

women in history emerged from the 1970s as part of a more socially inclusionary approach to history, but had important (if neglected) precursors in the work of Alice Clark's (1919) study of seventeenth-century working women and Mary Beard's (1946) account of women in the discipline of history (Smith 1986, Alberti 2002). The 1970s' approaches to women's history tended to fall under the headings of 'women worthies', 'women's contribution' and 'victimology studies' (Harding 1986). Whilst inroads could be made into a predominantly masculine representation of history, these approaches all accepted given categories of subject matter and epistemology: women worthies tended to be thin on the ground, privileged and/or atypical, recording women's contribution requires accepting categories defined by male values and practices, and victimology studies can obscure the agency of women (ibid.). Evidence suggests that attempting to write women into existing categories is naive (Wallach Scott 1988), e.g. the periodisation of history organised around men's (public) activities makes many women's activities invisible (Harding 1986) and women's absence from history needs to be seen in relation to disciplinary power structures (Alberti 2002). The underrepresentation of women was a particular 'scholarly concern' for the editors of the 2004 *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (ODNB)* given the 1882–1900 volumes' focus on 'the male, the metropolitan and the celebrated' (Baigent 2004): only 4.3% of entries in the *Concise ODNB* and 12% in the 1980s *Supplement* addressed the biographies of women. Even then too many of those few entries for women in the nineteenth century for example, related to women who were considered eccentric or notorious while the likes of important educationalists were underrepresented (Mitchell 1995). Aside from the issue of often scant sources, the key issue was conceptual: 'It is crucial to ensure that the criteria for selection are not being set in such a way to limit the recognition of women' (Garnett 1995). It is only by theorising gender as a category of analysis that new perspectives will be gained on old questions, new questions will arise and women will become visible as active participants in history (Wallach Scott 1996). Part of this reconceptualising in the *ODNB* related to acknowledging the 'complexity of the relation between public and private lives, and of establishing a proper balance between multiple roles of a subject', e.g. women silversmiths whose private role in their family company became public only after the death of their spouse (Garnett 1995).

Numerous disciplines have begun to address the question of gendering of their histories and unearthing/resurrecting formerly prominent but since obscured women is characteristic of a feminist reworking of any branch of history (Darling & Whitworth 2007). Part of this has been a critique of the ways in which western epistemologies or accepted 'ways of knowing' are gendered. Francis Bacon's seventeenth-century rhetorical description of scientific knowledge as the figurative domination of the female body of

nature has been widely criticised on two key counts. Firstly, for its explicit oppositional dualism in which male, rationality and culture is placed in relation to female, irrationality and nature. Secondly for its implicit metaphor of domination and exploitation of nature/the female (see Fox Keller 1984; Jacobus *et al.* 1990; Rose 1993). Feminist work on the history and practice of science in the 1980s and 1990s was effective in contributing to debates about the social construction of knowledge and pushing the debates to question not only the privileging of discourses of 'objectivity' in science, but also the gendered character of those discourses (see Fox Keller 1984; Harding 1986, 1991; Haraway 1989, 1991). This led Harding and Haraway to argue for the recognition of the positionality of the researcher and that knowledge production is situated within individual, professional, disciplinary, social, economic and political contexts. It was further argued that acknowledgement of a researcher's positionality (e.g. the Feminist Standpoint) results in a more honest position than those who purport to have no positionality. Whilst Butler's (1990) notion of performative gender in *Gender Trouble* challenged the simplistic gender dualism implicit in the Feminist Standpoint position, the political necessity to speak as and for women persists (Alberti 2002). Fox Keller's statement about science can still be applied to geography: 'we cannot properly understand the development of modern science [geography] without attending to the role played by metaphors of gender in the formulation of the particular set of values, aims, and goals embodied in the scientific [geographical] enterprise' (1984: 43).

Recent historiographies of science have highlighted individual, symbolic and institutional mechanisms for excluding or marginalising women. The Royal Society, founded in 1662, did not admit women until 1945 when Marjory Stephenson and Kathleen Lonsdale were elected; Hertha Ayrton had been allowed to give her own lecture in 1904 but was rejected for fellowship on the grounds that she was married! (Fara 2004). Fara's study of women and science in the enlightenment has shown that women were active in scientific work in the eighteenth century, but have been excluded from traditional historical records. Women had access to science while it was conducted primarily in the domestic arena, but were barred from metropolitan institutional bodies because of gender. Women typically collaborated with male family members; those roles were often supportive and sometimes an extension of domestic roles, often time-demanding processes such as logging, calculating and filtering (Fara 2004). Fara's detailed work has both expanded the arena of scientific knowledge production to include the domestic, and undermined the trope of single-minded heroic endeavour in science.

Within the history of art, counterbalancing the emphasis on fine art and certain genres within that heading go some way towards redressing gender imbalances (Garnett 1995). Similarly within historical studies of business,

medicine and science, wider arenas of action have been recognised beyond male-dominated professional and institutional organisations (ibid.). Other studies have gone on to suggest that existing ways of thinking about historical significance need rethinking. In *Women Medievalists and the Academy*, Chance (2005) has articulated ways in which the academy resisted female excellence, but also shows how numerous women medievalists in the nineteenth and early to mid-twentieth centuries used creative alliances and strategies in order to maintain their work. Some were supported by extraordinary male mentors; for others their work was subordinate to their husband's career and/or family life, but they participated in joint work and/or had a 'late flowering' of their individual work; some women worked as librarians on the fringe of research; others who were rejected by academia worked outside it, using private means for supporting their academic work through mundane day jobs; women who had homosexual relationships were usually free of the childcare responsibilities of their married counterparts, but risked double marginalisation within the academy (Chance 2005). In the case of architecture, it was found that there were relatively few 'great women architects' who would meet the 'women worthies' category and this led to reconceptualising what it meant to 'make' a building, i.e. that an architect did not work in a vacuum but was influenced by many actors including planners, social reformers, lobbyists, writers etc. (Darling & Whitworth 2007).

In the same way, the production of geographical knowledge is not limited to the academic researcher in the twentieth century any more than it was to the explorer in the nineteenth; there are a whole range of ways in which geographical knowledge was 'produced' and 'received', with 'producers' ranging from school teachers to travellers, popular writers, educational legislators, planners, conservationists, national and local geographical society members, and academics. The boundaries of who counts as a geographer is a political decision within the discipline (as Domosh (1991a,b) and Stoddart (1991) demonstrated), and although these boundaries have been stretched in relation to individuals in the history of geography, applying this approach to this study of women's geographical work will help to cast a wide net and catch female contributors who might otherwise be omitted. Those who held office in geographical societies, those who taught at universities and those who wrote influential texts will be represented here, but so too will the work of school teachers, teacher trainers, non-academic authors and those who might be called public servants, both 'major' and 'minor' figures. Perhaps what is most shocking about the omission of women in the historiography of geography is not simply that there were so many women engaged with geographical work, but that so many of them *were within the academy*, were university lecturers, society members and officers, and authors. These women need no stretching of traditional disciplinary boundaries to include them, yet they have been largely expunged from histories. Gender as an

analytical concept is vital to understanding this process of marginalisation and exclusion. As Smith noted within the discipline of history: ‘Studies of one or two great historians per generation often serve to make up historiography, but while we examine “objectivity”, we rarely consider the shape of historiography itself and what it has meant to the profession to have its achievements exemplified in the biographies of a handful of great authors’ (1996: 547).

In her study of women in science Fox Keller (1982) argued that women should gain access to what has been denied them (including a place in disciplinary histories), but at the same time legitimate areas of scientific culture previously rejected as ‘feminine’ and therefore ‘unscientific’. Feminist work challenges masculine categories and values, as well as identifying ways in which space has been central to both masculinist power and feminist resistance (Blunt & Rose 1994). This includes the spaces of geographical institutions, educational establishments, textual space in the world of publishing and critical review, but also what Rose (1995) has described as the space or ‘territory’ encompassed by our disciplinary tradition as seen in histories of geography. Geographical knowledge is not merely the data and theory contained under the heading of ‘geography’, but also a discursive formation ‘... a specific way of knowing the world’ that is a product of a constellation of concepts, practices and institutions (Driver & Rose 1992).

A critical study of the representation of women poets in the 1930s shows an interesting parallel with the relative absence of women geographers. Jane Dowson (1995: 296) has demonstrated that ‘women were as involved in the process of producing poetry as women today seem to be, and that the poets are not obscure, but have been obscured by literary histories’. These were not closet but public and paid writers; however, whilst socially accepted, their work was not the subject of *critical engagement* and as a consequence, not written up in histories. In the chapters that follow there will be an emphasis on the *reception* of women’s geographical work as well as the context of its production.

Placing Texts in Context

The production and reception of geographical and other texts is crucial to understanding the development of a discipline. Debates within contextual history and literary theory concerning the relationship between texts and contexts, knowledge and power; authorial intention and alternative readings; make surveys of geographical literature complex – and in many ways problematic – but nonetheless rewarding. The opposition of traditional Marxist and poststructuralist theory has resulted in the undesirable

entrenched dichotomy of texts being identified as respectively either fulfilling a narrow range of determinate functions transparently dictated by the workings of capitalism or as some pure space of discourse beyond the world (Driver 1992). Similarly, the frequent characterisation of histories as either 'internal, cognitive history' or 'external, contextual history' (Glick 1984: 280), has been challenged and an acknowledgement of the creation of geographical knowledge through discourse allows an alternative to this conventional dichotomy, thereby avoiding a caricature of knowledge as 'pure' or 'corrupt', when all knowledge has been subject to external and internal influences. If knowledge is discursively constructed then an understanding of institutions and practices is vital to the historical project (Driver & Rose 1992; Wallach Scott 1988). Discourses work in social contexts with material consequences: this is both the site and content of 'new' self-critical discursive historiography of geography (Driver & Rose 1992). An attempt made here to draw on both perspectives in conjunction with feminist theory to allow for the intersection of socioeconomic, cultural and political practices with gender as well as recognising the active role of texts in producing as well as reproducing ideologies and power relations. See Table 1.1 for a selection of key dates that indicate some of the social and political events and legislation which impacted on women's rights and constructions of gender.³

Foucault's discussion of power and knowledge has been central to much of the debate on the significance of texts, particularly his key argument about the reciprocal nature of these two: power produces knowledge and knowledge presupposes and constitutes the relations of power in a transformative process (what Said (1978: 32) describes as the 'increasingly profitable dialectic of information and control'). Largely influenced by this Foucaultian view it is widely accepted that texts are not mere reflectors of the material world but are relations of power in themselves (e.g. Said 1978; Mills 1991; Driver 1992; Matless 1992). Understanding the context of the production and reception of geographical texts in the form of publications is central to this project. Foucault argues the question (and therefore the strategy) is to consider 'what it means for them [statements] to have appeared when and where they did ... (Foucault 1972: 109). Pearce (1991) describes this as a text's location in the cultural complexity of the specific moment in its historical production, arguing that 'It is not the contradictions within a text that reveal its ideological complexity, but rather the historical discourse by which that text is inscribed (1991: 24). However, a postmodern suspicion of transcendental themes and an awareness of knowledge as a situated social practice raises questions regarding the mechanistic interpretation of the relationship between text and context (Driver 1992; Skinner 1969): cultural concepts lack transparent and shared meanings (Wallach Scott 1988). The recognition of the instability and contestation of meanings facilitates and demands an examination of the politics behind the

Table 1.1 Key dates 1850–1971

<i>Date</i>	<i>Key event, legislation etc.</i>
1832	First Parliamentary Reform Bill
1848–9	Queens College and Bedford College founded for women
1853–6	Crimean War
1857	Matrimonial Clauses Act
1864–9	Contagious Diseases Acts
1867	Second Parliamentary Reform Bill
1869	Endowed Schools Act extended benefits to independent girls' schools
1870	Elementary Education Act
1870 (England and Wales)	Married Women's Property Act
1881 (Scotland)	Married Women's Property Act
1874	Women's Trade Union League (WTUL)
1876	Enabling Act allowed universities to award degrees to women
1878	Women permitted to take degrees at the University of London
1884	1884 Third Parliamentary Reform Bill
1886	Infants Act
1892	Four Scottish universities admitted women to degrees
1893	University of Wales admitted women to degrees
1897	National Union of Women's Suffrage Society (NUWSS)
1900–2	First and Second South African Wars
1903	Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU)
1909	League for Opposing Women's Suffrage
1914–18	First World War
1918	Representation of the People Bill entitled women over 30 years of age and home owners to vote
1919	Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act
1926	General Strike
1928	Universal Suffrage
1939–45	Second World War
1944	Education Act
1958	Removal of marriage bar in civil service and teaching
1969	First polytechnics designated
1970	Equal Opportunities Act
1971	Open University courses start

Source: After Blunt & Willis, 2

conflictual processes that establish those meanings, including the politics of gender, all of which is pertinent to the analysis of the reception of women's geographical work. The use of biography is part of a wider contextual approach to situating historical subjects and is particularly important here as it helps to situate individual careers and publications and other geographical work in relation to the specificity of an individual's education, upbringing, politics or life history. Biography will be discussed in detail under the heading of methodology below.

Methodology: A Note on Selection, Sources, Representation and Ethics

Following an explanation of the biographical approach, four categories of sources which merit particular note as both useful and problematic are discussed: the use of archives, oral histories, obituaries and reviews of publications.

Using a contextual (auto)biographical approach

Autobiography, whether in textual or oral form, represents a conscious form of *self*-representation within that frame. Anne Buttimer pioneered the use of autobiography in studying the intersection of individual lives and geographical thought and practice through the Dialogue Project conducted with Torsten Hågerstrand in Lund in the 1970s. Since then it has been used by the American Association of Geographers filmed interview series, Blunt's (2005) exploration of the 'hidden histories' of Anglo-Indians, and much other qualitative work. Biographical studies within geography and geographical thought have also been developed by a number of geographers including Daniels and Nash's (2004) discussion of the relationship between life histories and life geographies and Thomas' (2004) study of Lady Curzon, where she stresses the synergy achieved between understanding a biographical subject in relation to friendship and family networks *and* wider social, economic and political networks or contexts. Barnes (2001) used a related contextual biographical approach to interrogate individuals' roles in shifts in disciplinary practice around the quantitative revolution in relation to their specific life trajectories as well as wider intellectual and socioeconomic and political contexts. Among other things, the autobiographical approach helps the researcher to identify and understand the 'diversity of keys' at play within the discipline, and how the use of stories facilitates understanding of other 'worlds' as well as critically reflecting on one's own 'story' (Buttimer 1983).

Autobiographies can complement formal archive-based histories addressing the history of geography and the social construction of its thought and

practice. Furthermore, an understanding of an individual's schooling, home and other formative influences can shed a different light on her/his own position in relation to the practice of geography (Buttimer 1983). As Chance (2005: xxx) noted on autobiographical sources from women medievalists: 'rare glimpses of the woman scholar herself offer unusual insights into her own perceptions of her life and career' which cannot be found in published work. If our sources are confined to the formal output of geographers, we have a limited perspective: 'What he or she may write in books and journals yields an image of discrete knowledge products, but may yield little understanding of the intellectual processes unfolding within that person's life' (Buttimer 1983: 3). Biographies are increasingly recognised as significant in the history of ideas and biographical excerpts or sketches are being incorporated into individual studies in the history of geography, as well as other texts (e.g. Cloke, Philo & Sadler 1991; Women and Geography Study Group 1997, 2004; Hubbard *et al.* 2004), echoing Freeman's (1960) *A Hundred Years of Geography* which included an appendix of biographical sketches.

In this study, where possible, autobiographical interviews were undertaken with geographers who were working prior to 1970, but inevitably the majority of women discussed in this book have long since died. Of those known/thought to be still living, a few have proved untraceable and a few have not responded to invitations to participate. Where autobiographical interviews were not possible, biographies have been pieced together, from the oral histories of others where relevant, from an individual's papers where these exist, from public records such as birth and death certificates, obituaries, employment records, geographical and institutional archives, publications and secondary sources. These sources have also been used to give these women 'voice', principally through the reproduction of their own words, but this requires recognition of both the fragmentary and multiple character of those 'voices' found in different textual forms of self-representation (Woollacott 1998).

The (auto)biographical approach allows one to see 'women using agency, not as some abstract or undefined expression of autonomy, but in specific instances of creative resistance, self-promoting complicity and wilful discursive self-formulation' (Woollacott 1998: 338). The majority of the women studied in this volume were white and middle class, but few left significant personal archives of correspondence or diaries, leaving their subjectivity as something to be excavated and teased out through the institutional archives of geographical societies, university records, publications and obituaries. This involves taking these texts (often professional texts) and interrogating them for clues 'as to meanings for the subjects' sense of themselves, and looking for patterns of language and points of reference' (Woollacott 1998: 333). Written subjective constructions vary according to the form of writing or speaking – that is, a different slant on an individual's subjectivity can be gleaned from reports, academic papers, interviews, speeches and policy

documents (Woollacott 1998). Whilst studying individuals through their self-representation facilitates the reading of the personal in the professional, inevitably it must be seen (as indeed must all biography) as partial and fragmentary (Wollacott 1998). However, it does at the same time accommodate the historically specific, the varied and even contradictory subjectivities on the part of individual women, and women collectively, as they negotiated their complex position/s within geography as travellers, academics, authors and educationalists.

With these detailed biographies, an image of what Braidotti (1994) calls the 'embodied genealogy' of each individual, begins to emerge – the specificity of the lived, female bodily experience, within masculine modes of thought, practice and values. But as Braidotti has suggested, any sense of unity is based on recognition of the complexity of individual positionality, not a universalised image of sisterhood. Where there are 'rhizomatic connections' (Deleuze & Guattari 1988: 7) between women, hidden or otherwise, their own differences and connections to practices and discourses will be contested from other subject positions (Gedalof 1996), not least in placing their work in the context of their 'invisible' markers of white western thought. All this gives a hint of new and challenging perspectives on women in geography and geography as a whole. As Baigent (2004: 545) noted, using a biographical approach 'puts geography firmly in its place. That place is not just embedded in an economic and political context but in a personal one ...' These biographical studies raise difficult theoretical questions about the politics of the women's location and where we place them in more inclusive histories of the discipline (see Rose 1995). The presence of these women problematises representation of geography as a masculinist endeavour. If they were accepted/incorporated into the discipline, do we deny their agency or accept the constraints on their agency? It also complicates our perception of some of the so-called 'founding fathers' of modern geography, men like Mackinder, Herbertson, Roxby and Fleure who appointed the first-generation women to university posts (see Chapters Four and Five). These questions will be returned to in the conclusion.

Inevitably the material evidence of women's geographical work has varied in quantity and quality and this will be apparent in the range of sources used when discussing and analysing a particular individual's work. I have tried to reach a balance between covering a range of individual women and employing as wide and detailed sources as are available. The result is that there is a huge discrepancy in terms of sources and material on different individuals, but I have retained the commitment to a contextual biographical approach because I believe it to be the most effective in giving a sense of an individual's work in personal and professional context. However, no matter how detailed the sources, it is not possible to reconstruct an 'authentic' inner experience of the lives of women from the past (Alberti 2002), there

always has to be at least a note of qualification and speculation. I have also persisted in including ‘minor’ figures to keep the study representative of the breadth of geographical work and practice, reflecting a view that there is as much to be learned from so-called ‘minor’ as ‘major’ figures in the discipline (Livingstone 1992; Guelke & Morin 2001; Lorimer 2003; Maddrell 2004a, 2006). I cannot pretend that there has been equal information available on the subjects discussed here, but hope that a balance is achieved between those with large archive sources and those who have given detailed autobiographical accounts, and between ‘major’ and ‘minor’ figures, indeed that this crude dichotomy is at least blurred, if not eradicated. It is also my hope that the reader will appreciate the nuance which is brought to the bigger picture by the numerous shorter biographies as much as the nuances found within more detailed biographies.

Archives

... history is not merely a project of fact retrieval ... but also a set of complex processes of selection, interpretation, and even creative invention – processes set in motion by, among other things, one’s personal encounter with the archive, the history of the archive itself, and the pressure of the contemporary moment on one’s reading of what is to be found there

Burton 2005: 8

Archives represent the field for historical research (Burton 2005) and this study is no different. Widespread archive sources have been used including public records (birth, marriage, death and probate records); personal archives (e.g. the Taylor and Campbell collections at the British Library, the Smee papers at the Northamptonshire Record Office, and the Sylvester and Davies papers at the National Library of Wales); numerous departmental minutes and employment records (especially from universities); and geographical society records (from the Royal Geographical Society-Institute of British Geographers, the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, the Geographical Association and the Liverpool, Manchester and Tyneside geographical societies). Archives can offer wonderful insight to the processes of an appointment or publication, an individual or institution’s character or reputation, but they have to be used in light of their limitations. These limitations have been well articulated within and beyond the discipline of geography, but I would like to highlight a few key points here. Drawing on Derrida’s *Archive Fever*, Withers (2002) demonstrates how the etymology and associated status of archives varies across languages/countries, indicative of the ways in which the contents of archives, and the interpretation of those

contents, are always *mediated* by their contexts. This does not only apply to the archives of the establishment, as Mayall's (2005) account of a British suffragette movement demonstrates, the archives of counter-hegemonic groups can be equally susceptible to the imperative of a particular historical narrative.

In recent years canonical notions of what archives are and how they should be accessed and used have been challenged by new forms of archives and overtly political use of their contents (Burton 2005). Furthermore, the identification of formal archive material as 'fiction', and fiction as archive has challenged the ontological status of the archive in history (*ibid.*). While feminist scholars have played a part in questioning the status of the archive as unmediated 'truth teller', they have also contributed to extending the boundaries of what constitutes as 'archive', e.g. Burton (2003) on the domestic house as archive, and materials previously considered peripheral have been prioritised in a 're-ordering the archive' (Thomas 2004) in order to access marginalised material on female subjects.

As much as archives can reveal they can also obscure: they can represent past (and present) power relations and can reiterate exclusion from that power, they are often fragmented and need to be placed in the context of their production (see Barnett 1998; Withers 2002; Pohlandt-McCormick 2005 for example), not least in their most recent incarnation as online resources (Burton 2005). Many archive records have been found for the women discussed here, but the uneven availability of sources has represented a challenge in both the over- and underrepresentation of individuals. Accessing records for geographers who have died since 1970 has also been unpredictable and dealt with in different ways by different institutions ranging from refusal to answering selected questions, to full access. Wherever archive materials have been found, I have taken this as an *opportunity* to engage with that individual's personal/geographical biography. Just as imperial archives have been used to support recent indigenous land claims (Perry 2005) and other emancipatory endeavours, primary archive sources are recognised and relevant materials in the contemporary as well as historical feminist project. In the case of this particular project, archives have contributed much to the substantiation of individual stories and women's collective status as long-standing, varied and productive tillers of geographical territory rather than as recently arrived stakeholders.

Oral histories

Oral histories are part of the biographical approach adopted here and are used to give autobiographical 'voice' and biographical commentary from those who studied or worked with the women geographers discussed.

As Withers (2004: 317) has argued, although far from unproblematic, 'Attention to memory and to the different forms taken by memory's representation can ... offer insight into questions of geography's reception: what geographical knowledge meant, and for whom it meant, in historical context'. Oral histories, as part of that memory process and representation, can demonstrate the limitations of preceding historiographies (Roque Ramirez 2005) and have been a popular methodology in feminist work across disciplines because they allow the subject to speak in their own words, they can reveal 'hidden' aspects to history not 'visible' in textual forms, especially the personal memories of everyday experience (Blunt 2005). Despite this, there is a persistent view that oral histories are undermined by their subjectivity, but this implies: (i) that written sources are not subjective and (ii) that 'subjective' sources are invalid (Burton 2005). Portelli has argued that it is impossible to separate occurrences from how they are remembered: 'subjectivity is as much the business of history as the more visible 'facts' – what the informant believes is indeed a historical fact (that is, the fact that he or she believes it) just as much as what 'really happened' (Portelli 1981: 100, cited by Kirk 2003: 130). I have used oral history accounts to bring an alternative perspective to that gleaned from written sources (see Buttimer 1983). These accounts have to be recognised as based on a particular positionality, but when triangulated with other sources (which must also be recognised as 'positional'), they provide invaluable insight and detail to an individual's biography, personality and experience of the arena of geography and geographical knowledge. The use of multiple 'lenses' allows a rounded, 'three-dimensional' perspective (Kanner *et al.* 1997: lvi). I undertook 12 oral history interviews, most of which were taped and transcribed; they were shaped with a series of biographical and career questions, including areas previously identified as significant (e.g. teaching and research balance, pastoral responsibilities, mentoring and fieldwork) and a final section explicitly addressed gendered experience. These interviews were forms of professional self-representation and self-storying, which were novel to most of those interviewed, and several expressed concern that they were not telling me what I wanted, presupposing a particular agenda on my part. Despite reassurances that I was interested in *their* story, nonetheless, knowledge of the wider story I was bringing together and the questions I used to frame interviews inevitably influenced the telling of interviewees' stories (Sidaway (1997) echoes this experience). These formal interviews were supplemented by many informal oral history accounts and personal communications from colleagues or students of the women geographers discussed here.

Using oral histories raises ethical as well as methodological questions. Occasionally I was told things 'off the record' which I respected, although rather like a court of law, comments may be struck from the official record,

it is harder to obliterate them from one's mind and remove all influence from the verdict. Very occasionally I felt an interviewee may have told me personal details which they may have been happy to tell me, but not necessarily intended for public consumption, and I have either double-checked with them or made an editorial choice to anonymise these responses in general rather than individual accounts. I also decided that while I would cite comments from others on women who were deceased, I would not cite those on living women, relying on published and public sources alongside their own interview material. Conscious that by writing about them I was (re)placing these women in the public arena in an unforeseen and/or unpredictable way, both of these decisions were made in order to respect the privacy of those who had contributed so much to this study. These ethical dilemmas are everyday occurrences for qualitative researchers, but are less familiar in the setting of historiography, suggesting this is the point at which historiography blurs with the ethnography of geographical practice.

Obituaries and reviews

Obituaries are a form of textual memorial, sometimes referred to as 'the first draft of history'. They are a very compact form of biography, which within the geographical community are usually written by someone who knew the deceased well (often a colleague and/or friend), although earlier shorter notices were often anonymous and attribution policy varies with the publication. *The Times* has always had a policy of anonymous authorship for obituaries and Brunskill (2005) argues the main advantage of this is that the obituary will be written and read about the deceased's life rather than their relation to the author. However, this is frustrating to a contextual discursive approach when the relationship between author and subject is central to interpreting the text.

Obituaries usually conform to the dictum 'don't speak ill of the dead' and are generally celebratory accounts of someone's life, which can be explicitly or implicitly hagiographic. However, there is an art to reading between the lines in obituaries and there are particular words and phrases which are heavy with subtext, such as 'a determined character', 'not always easy', 'could be difficult', which can be used to signal a more complex subject position of the deceased and this will be returned to in the conclusion. Length of obituaries tends to reflect a combination of the fame of the person both during their career and at their time of death (and the difference between these two can be significant for women who may have a long retirement), the complexity of their professional lives and detailed knowledge of this, and – of growing significance in academic journals – the often limited space available within publications for obituaries. Obituaries for the same

person may vary in style according to the publication, for example one written for *The Times* or *Transactions* may be quite formal, stressing the chronological facts of life and career, others in local newspapers or departmental newsletters may stress the more personal characteristics. However, there can be a reiterative element in multiple obituaries, sometimes because they have been written by the same author, or one obituarist has sourced details from another and not quite escaped from the original's structure, omissions, turn of phrase or evaluation. Although I have been aware of these issues, it does not guarantee that I have escaped these reiterative traps myself. Whilst multiple obituaries have been used wherever possible, in many cases they have had limited comparative value.

Reviews

Reviews of publications are vital references for understanding the critical reception of books and occasionally papers, although the latter more commonly elicit responses in short commentaries or more typically prior to 1950, letters to the journal of publication. Reviews represent a critical response to a given text at a particular time and place. However, recent work has shown how reviews can vary enormously according to context even within relatively bounded pockets of space and time (Livingstone 2005; Keighren 2006). This should not be surprising given the nature of reviews, but it underscores the importance of being aware of the ways in which reviews can take on a sort of 'textually fixed authority' (Blunt 1994) and the dangers of attributing too much to a given review. Readers' responses to literature are 'constrained by their ability to perceive, read and interpret as discursively constructed subjects' (Blunt 1994: 117) and this includes reviewers. Reviews are often relatively unmediated (they are not peer reviewed and often only receive minimal editorial intervention) and although the reviewer has to justify his/her evaluation of a given text, s/he is not free from existing predilections and interests. Indeed the review process can represent the veiled politics of disciplinary and institutional loyalties and rivalries, which can range from wishing to support or diminish the career or reputation of the author of the text, as well as reflecting the disciplinary status of the reviewers themselves. Reviews need to be read critically to evaluate whether they constitute a 'justified' position, compared with other reviews and a sense of sales or reprints of the text. Sales figures are often unattainable as publishing houses close or merge and records are lost or simply not kept in the long term, but numbers and dates of reprints and new editions give some sense of the ongoing demand for a particular book and citations also give some sense of the extent and ways in which others engaged with its content. Berg (2001: 511) has argued that the 'objective'

system of 'blind' peer reviewing papers for publication privileges a masculinist view of objectivity as 'disembodied, impartial, and unlocated'. Where sources are available, the evidence of the review process is discussed in the light of this claim.

Published reviews are the best source of critical response, but inevitably given the wide scope of this book it has not been possible to excavate the responses of every review for every publication and map the influence of each text through the discipline, as has been admirably demonstrated recently in the case of Semple's *Environmental Influence* (Keighren 2006). Even allowing for the ways in which the reception of a text can vary within one city (Livingstone 2005), reviews, although partial, provide a sense of a text's perceived strengths and weaknesses and are valuable as such.

It should also be noted that I am not taking 'geographical work' to refer only to textual output. For many geographers (male and female) working within the emerging academic discipline of the early twentieth century, undertaking writing a research paper or monograph was an impossible luxury: wide syllabuses had to be taught, lecture materials had to be researched and gathered, fieldwork organised, practical classes delivered and school texts written. Many inter-war geography lecturers considered university teaching both all important and all consuming. I have sought to respect the geographical work of those who published little or nothing by discussing their teaching and impact on their departments and students, again derived where possible from departmental records, published departmental reports, university archives (such as employment records), obituaries and oral histories.

Implications for the Historiography of Geography

This book is offered as a platform to explore further the historiography of geography armed with a knowledge of the range and character of geographical work produced by women between 1850 and 1970. These dates have been chosen to (roughly) encompass Mary Somerville's *Physical Geography* (1848) and Alice Garnett's tenures as president/vice president of the Institute of British Geographers, the Geographical Association and the Royal Geographical Society (1968–1970). It was also chosen to address the commonly held misapprehension of many contemporary geographers that women were not significant producers of knowledge prior to the 1970s. Whilst a single volume could not hope to include or address all female producers and communicators of geographical knowledge over a 120-year period, it is hoped that this beginning will encourage further exploration and engagement with a wider gender-sensitive history of geographical thought.

This work feminises the history of geography by repopulating it with women and providing a substantiation of their work that has been largely absent from disciplinary histories. It also raises questions about the practice of how geographical knowledge has been defined and how the history of the discipline has been constructed and reproduced. Gender inclusivity raises epistemological and ontological questions as well, which make it necessary to rethink the nature of our historiography. As Blunt and Rose have argued: 'It is crucial to locate women within the historiography of geography, but this act should question the very basis of that historiography rather than reproduce it, albeit in a revised form' (1994: 9). It is hoped that with the body of women's geographical work recovered/excavated here, there will never again be any justification for omitting women's geographical work from histories of British geographical thought and practice. It is also hoped that this study might exemplify the benefits of 'hidden' histories (Blunt 2005) and 'minor' figures (Livingstone 1992; Lorimer 2003) as well as demonstrating the processes by which work becomes marginalised in the course of making histories, not least by gendered discourses. The ways in which the historiography of geography might be framed differently will be returned to in the concluding chapter.

The following chapters are made up of more than 50 biographical studies, which are organised broadly according to type of geographical work (travel writing, educational, academic, etc.) and chronology. A brief biographical outline is followed by an analysis of the production and reception of each individual's geographical work. The key themes that thread through these biographies are: the number of women geographers and their presence in geographical societies and higher education; the subject and methodological groupings of those women within the discipline; their experience of war work; the significance of fieldwork to their geographical work; and issues of access, recognition and promotion within geographical institutions. A number of discursive constructions will also be examined: definitions of geography and geographical practice; negotiations of gender in women's writing; the role of gender in the production and reception of women's geographical work; and discourses of representing and memorialising women geographers. Each of these themes will be revisited in the Conclusion.

Fieldwork merits a particular note here for two key reasons; first, because it has been central to many debates about the epistemology and practice of geography; and secondly, because it has been associated with the masculinisation of the discipline. As Bracken and Mawdsley (2004: 280) note, 'Fieldwork has always been central to the enterprise and imaginary of geography', but it has become a contested space. The gendering and Eurocentric character of fieldwork has been debated within the discipline since the early 1990s (e.g. Domosh 1991a,b; Stoddart 1991; Driver 1992; Rose 1993;

Bee, Madge & Wellens 1998; McEwan 1998a, Maguire 1998). A question at the heart of these debates is whether fieldwork, especially in physical geography, is a masculinist domain? It has been argued that fieldwork is masculine by dint of a combination of epistemological grounding in scientific methods and an overemphasis on an 'initiation rites' element' (Rose 1993; Sparke 1996), which relies on personal physical attributes such as strength and fitness, which in turn are frequently associated with masculine cultural norms and competitiveness (as well as an assumption of able-bodiedness). Rose (1993) added to this the notion of 'aesthetic masculinity' seen in the privileging of the visual in both physical and human geography, the 'masculine gaze' being just as likely to feminise the landscape in human geography studies as the methods of the 'scientific method'. Constructions of fieldwork as masculinist have been helpful, not least in evaluating current field discourses and practices, but have also been criticised for being too simplistic (Powell 2002; Bracken & Mawdsley 2004). Broad arguments have been made about the exclusion of women from scientific geography in the nineteenth century as a result of the professionalisation of science and exclusion from the Royal Geographical Society (McEwan 1998a); empirical studies have demonstrated women's participation in contemporary physical geography (Dumayne-Peaty & Wellens 1998); and qualitative studies (e.g. Maguire 1998) have explored ways in which discursive constructs intersect with the practices of fieldwork. However, with the exceptions of Sack's (2004) and Monk's (2004, 2007) largely US studies, there has been little data collection on British women's pre-1970 fieldwork, or comparative analysis between the nineteenth century and the present geographical practices, as Powell's (2002) discussion of the historiography of fieldwork demonstrates. Evidence of extensive and varied field study in the following chapters makes a significant contribution to these ongoing debates concerning British women geographers and fieldwork.