EDUCATIONAL BROKERING AND THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
WOMEN'S RESOURCES CENTRE - A CLIENT REACTION STUDY

by

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ABSTRACT

The focus of this investigation was on clients' reactions to the Drop-In Educational Brokering services of the University of British Columbia Women's Resources Centre. In order to assess the effectiveness of the Centre in meeting clients' needs, a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodology was employed. A questionnaire was developed and tested, and mailed to 215 people who had received brokering services between January and June of 1980. Sixty-six questionnaires were returned, for a response rate of 30%. In addition, 27 of the respondents were personally interviewed two to five months after completing the questionnaire.

The study went beyond inquiring about satisfactions with service to examine results of clients' associations with the Centre, including actions taken, affective outcomes, and lifestyle changes. The first stage of the statistical analysis resulted in frequency tables. Comments on the open-ended questions were analyzed for content as were the 27 interview protocols. These findings as well as the interviewer's perceptions and judgements supplement the statistical analysis.

Detailed findings about clients' characteristics, reasons for seeking out the service, ratings of satisfaction and helpfulness, needs, problems and outcomes are reported and discussed. Relationships among client characteristics, perceptions of service and outcomes are reported and a formulation about client empowerment and achievement of access to learning/educational, career/vocational opportunities is presented. The educational brokering approach, as practiced by the University of British Columbia was judged to be an
effective, worthwhile and appropriate way to meet the Centre's goals at this time in its continuing development.

Refinements in the definitions of the phenomenon of readiness for learning, client empowerment and the educational brokering process resulted from insights gained by analyzing the qualitative and quantitative findings. The hypothesis which emerged from this investigation is:

Educational Brokering services, offered in a supportive atmosphere and within the context of life planning can facilitate access for individuals to the career/vocational and educational/learning networks in the community. This is dependent upon two factors: (1) The individual characteristics which the client brings to the experience; and, (2) Strategies of the service which enhance the client's contribution. Furthermore, a third factor, the external aspects of the client's situation and the influence of society as a whole, play a mediating role.

A model of access depicting the interactions of these three factors within the context of the social milieu is presented.

The study confirms the observations of other investigations that adults learning needs have more instrumental and contingent rather than intrinsic value and, that the counselling component is a crucial aspect of the brokering service.

Implications of the findings of this study for adult education and the educational brokering approach are presented. Final recommendations for further investigation are included.

The study demonstrates a methodology for investigating a service-oriented approach to adult education in a field setting. It also provides information and insights about adult learning and its relationship to career and lifestyle needs.
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Acknowledgements

"We are midwives to each other."

Marilyn Ferguson,
The Aquarian Conspiracy

The women who completed questionnaires spoke for themselves and their silent sisters.

Those who participated in personal interviews taught me about the "counselling of equals". We learned from each other. Their names have been changed to insure their privacy but their statements are their own.

The administrative staff of the Women's Resources Centre, Anne Ironside and Ruth Sigal, offered support, encouragement and ideas.

The volunteer-associates welcomed me, accepted my comings and goings and shared their insights.

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This project was a collaborative effort among us all.
CHAPTER I
THE PROBLEM

The University of British Columbia Women's Resources Centre is engaged in an educational endeavor which represents one of the major educational innovations of the past decade. This direction is based on an expanded concept of the purpose of learning. No longer is education seen as only a socialization process of childhood.

Learning is now seen to be one means by which individuals come to understand, decide and act on changes in the surrounding world as well as changes in the life space of each person. (Toombs & Croyle, 1977, p. 1)

During the late sixties and seventies there was a renewed interest in the goal of lifelong learning and lifelong education throughout the world (Lowe, 1975). Defining the phenomenon of learning beyond school was a major task during the early seventies and constituted the first stage in coming to terms with this formulation of how learning and life interact. A second stage, identifying and stipulating learning needs of adults is still with us. The third stage, development of systems at all levels to satisfy these needs and interests is the current focus and that of the future.

During each of these stages, adult educators have been active in several ways. For example, considerable attention has been focused on examining participation (and non-participation) in adult education and adult learning. Recently, that focus has been sharpened and, the task of facilitating equitable access to
opportunities has become a particularly relevant one. The consensus seems to be that there is a need to link adult learners to appropriate learning resources. The educational brokering approach, utilized by the Women's Resources Centre, is an important element in the linking process and is becoming a widespread approach.

Referring to the information and advisement service which was the focus of his client-reaction study, Toombs notes:

"The Lifelong Learning Centre is at the forefront of efforts that aim at developing ways to identify, clarify, inform, and support the learning decisions of adult life whether they be connected with further education or with a career modification. (Toombs and Croyle, 1977, p.4)"

Principles and practices which emerge from these endeavors will be valuable in shaping public policy and personal understanding. This will, in turn, provide guidance and support to organizations that provide educational services for adult learners.

Women, as a group of adult learners, represent a unique challenge. Because of their child-bearing and child-rearing role and because of historical attitudes towards their participation in society, women are confronted with barriers to the educational and vocational systems (Ottawa, 1970). Changes in society today including a shift in women's expectations about their lives, decreased births and labour shortages as the economy expands, all have implications for educators.

Women's access programs and services are needed to overcome the effects of women's isolation and lack of information about educational opportunities. According to Diana Ironside of the
When UBC's Centre for Continuing Education first began to take an interest in providing special resources for women learners, its staff did not recognize the profound influence that women's programs would likely have on adult education itself in the late 70's and 80's. Such an influence is recognized now by leading Canadian adult education theorists and practitioners. (Ironside, 1980, p. 1)

This study focuses on women and their needs, factors which affect their access to the learning or educational and career or vocational networks in our society and, on the approach utilized to facilitate this access by the University of British Columbia Women's Resources Centre. In doing so, its purpose is to provide information about the effectiveness of the service, from the point of view of the women who use it, and some insights into how their association with the Centre affected their lives. Findings and implications for future planning are presented. This study is part of an ongoing process of evaluation of the Centre for purposes of decision making and funding.

At the outset, it should be stated that although the focus is on the needs and interests of women, this does not discount the needs of other disadvantaged groups in our society nor does it imply that men, as a group, are not also disadvantaged in other ways. Even though the situation for women is unique and solutions and services need to be tailored to their needs, the model on which the Women's Resources Centre operates, including educational brokering and peer counselling, may be appropriate for other endeavors as well.

The findings reported here and their implications for service are relevant to other similar types of settings and a broad range of needs. This description of how a women's access
centre operates to assist clients to gain more control over the direction of their lives, the reactions of the clients to this service and the implications derived, will be of interest to all those concerned with implementing the concept of lifelong learning in our society. The approach which is examined and the factors which influence its effectiveness in assisting people to realize their potential, whatever their aspirations and directions might be, can contribute towards a better understanding of the role of these services in adult learning and development.

Statement of Problem

Adult education has become an elitist endeavour. It has been found that the "have-nots", the low income, educationally disadvantaged, marginally employed populations, are not the principal participants in continuing education and training or clients of community support systems for life structure and career transitions (Paltridge and Regan, 1978).

Barriers to participation in adult education have come to be seen as consisting of a variety of interacting internal and external factors (McClosky, 1968). Efforts to explain these barriers have included a focus on the interaction between personal needs and social structure (Miller, 1967), participant/institution incongruence (Boshier, 1973), and cost (Benson and Hodgkinson, 1979). Demands for the dismantling of barriers impeding access to education have been made by those like Illich (1970) and Freire (1972) who seek to discourage the social apathy which inhibits participation. Educational
entitlement has been promoted by UNESCO (Faure, 1972) and OECD (1975).

Educational Brokering is an approach being increasingly utilized to connect potential adult learners to appropriate learning resources. Some, like Patricia Cross (1978), feel that brokering services and educational information centres constitute a missing link which will help close the gaps between potential learners and learning opportunities and between the educational "haves" and "have nots". Jacobson (1978) surveyed 350 centers which provide educational and career guidance for adults and found that at least a third of the clients were long-term unemployed, a far greater participation by the "have nots" than Paltridge reported.

Whether the task is to attract a higher proportion of the educationally disadvantaged, remove barriers to participation in adult education or, facilitate adult learning in general, the emergence of activities representing the third stage reflects increasing responsiveness to adult learning needs and interests (Cross, 1978). A host of "would-be" self directed learners are requesting assistance in their efforts (Gordon and Peters, 1974; Tough, 1978; Peterson and Hefferlin, 1975). The need seems to be for more and better information on educational opportunities and a wider range of counselling services than is now usually provided (Cross and Zusman, 1978). The emergence of brokering services represents a response to these needs as well. According to Cross, "One aspect of the linking function is already being performed by a service which is becoming increasingly effective and widespread - that of educational brokering" (1979, p.13).
Educational brokering, which involves the collection of information about adult learning opportunities and its effective dissemination through counselling, referral and advocacy services, has been described by Heffernan, Macy, and Vickers (1976) and has implications for ameliorating the embarrassing participation problem in adult education. This point is emphasized by Cross.

My personal conviction ... is that brokering services and Education Information Centers constitute our greatest hope for shaping the learning society to serve the needs of a democratic society. They are, in fact, the missing link that will help close the gaps between the educational "haves" and "have nots". (1979, p. 11)

Participation in educational opportunities by women during the last few years has increased dramatically. Between 1969 and 1975 the number of women participating in learning activities increased 45%, compared to an 18% increase for men (Boaz, 1978). By 1978, women constituted 54% of the non-vocational students in British Columbia colleges and institutes (Zimmerman and Trew, 1979). An increase in the number of part time women learners who tend to be older than traditional full time students has been noted.

For those interested in encouraging more equitable participation by women in educational opportunities and the career/employment networks in our society, these trends are encouraging. A closer look at these statistics however, shows that these women belong to the same elite group of 20 to 40 year old, white, highly educated, upper middle class group which educational institutions have been serving. Even though women represent the largest increase in participation in adult
education by a minority group (Cross, 1979), this phenomenon has involved primarily white women with college degrees and family incomes of $25,000 a year and over, reinforcing the picture of adult education as elitist and becoming more so. Access to learning opportunities for other women is still needed.

According to Zimmerman and Trew,

...the increase in women's participation does not necessarily mean that their needs are being met, or that sufficient access to post-secondary institutions is available to women who are potential learners. (1979, p.15)

In examining the barriers inhibiting women from continuing their education Willis concluded that,

...while there has been a great proliferation of educational programs geared to women, there has been virtually no change in the provision of educational services necessary in order for a woman to access learning in the first place. (1977, p.4)

The concept of educational brokering represents a fresh and exciting approach to the old problem of facilitating access to learning and career opportunities for men and women in a variety of walks of life. Because brokering services have potential for meeting these needs, an examination of their emerging forms and the effects of their services is of importance for the field of adult education and its increased understanding of adult learning.

Focus of the Study

The focus of this study is the interface between a women's resources centre and the concept of educational brokering. Because both are in fledgling states of development, the interplay between them can have implications for the future of
According to Patricia Cross, one of the three general functions of an educational brokering operation is:

Facilitating access for underserved groups and advocacy for the special needs of adult learners because they are adults. (Cross, 1978, p.11)

The phrase, because they are adults refers to the fact that the educational system has been youth-oriented, and for the most part, inappropriate to the needs of those who have adult social roles. Similarly, the overall function of a women's access centre may be described as: Facilitating access to educational or learning and vocational or career opportunities, a process that includes assessment, advisement and advocacy for the special needs of women learners because they are women. The first and foremost purpose of a women's access centre is to address the special and unique needs of this disadvantaged group. The way in which the Women's Resources Centre presently operates is based on this emerging educational paradigm which emphasizes self-directedness. The services are intended to facilitate the linking of women to appropriate learning resources.

Since it was established in 1972, when it was located on the third floor of the Vancouver Public Library, the Women's Resources Centre has grown and changed. From its fledgling role as a community place for women "to think about their lives", the Centre has evolved to its present form. It now consists of an educational brokering service, offered within the context of life-planning and supplemented by a variety of other individual and group programs and services. This natural maturation process was nurtured by people who continually allowed the
Centre's services to change and be redirected in response to community needs. This evolution, the present philosophy, services, programs, facilities, staffing, clients, and possible future directions, have been thoroughly described. A recent report of a study in which the Women's Resources Centre was one of four models for counselling services in three countries under investigation states:

The uniqueness of the centre...derives from the major emphasis it places on small group self-development programs and one-to-one life planning interviews and the major role played in the reception, information-giving, referral and vocational planning function by the volunteer associates.

The Women's Resources Centre exists to help women change their lives. It functions as an independent program, able to refer clients to any agencies or educational programs that appear to meet clients' needs without any pressure to refer to UBC, its parent body or to act as a recruitment device to attract students into UBC programs.

While WRC does not exhibit a feminist orientation particularly, nor "lay on" its clients a feminist ideology, its philosophy and services are based firmly on feminist principles; hopefully the staff and volunteers demonstrate these principles in their relation with each other and with clients.

The centre tries to avoid a crisis intervention image; it promotes education as the means of changing women's lives, using learning opportunities, information, life planning, vocational counselling and advocacy, all as strategies of change. (Ironside, 1980, p. 6)

This study is intended to reflect clients' reactions to the current focus described above. However, change and complexity always outrun our powers of description and even as these findings are presented, the services of the centre continue to evolve daily.

In this study the focus is on the core brokering services of the centre, offered by the drop-in service rather than on the
program component. This service is described as follows:

The drop-in centre focuses on information-giving and assisting clients to begin to identify their life and career objectives and to select needed resources or learning opportunities in the community. Since most adults feel, initially at least, that their need is for information to help them select suitable opportunities rather than in-depth psychological counselling, the emphasis in the drop-in is on welcoming clients. Selected and trained volunteers greet new clients and perform as peer counsellors and brokers, helping women to identify their needs and use the information files and vocational planning materials. Aware of many learning and training opportunities in the community, the volunteer many help a client match her needs with available resources or she may refer a client to the life planning service, the vocational planning centre, or to an educational program or workshop in the centre or elsewhere. (Ironside, 1980, p. 7)

Clients' reactions to this service, including satisfaction with information and assistance received, and impacts resulting from association with the Women's Resources Centre are the basis of the results described and discussed.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to assess the effectiveness of the educational brokering services of the University of British Columbia Women's Resources Centre in providing access for women to educational or learning and vocational or career opportunities. Specifically, the following questions were explored:

1. Who were the clients?
2. What were their reasons for seeking out the service?
3. How effective have the services been in meeting their needs?
   and,
4. What impacts did the clients attribute to their association
with the services?
The first major purpose of the study was to demonstrate how a brokering service may be evaluated by conducting a client-reaction study of this particular Centre. The second major purpose of this project was to search for features and characteristics of this operation which may provide guidance to other similar types of services.

Significance of the Study

In addition to providing practical information and recommendations for the operation of the Women's Resources Centre, the significance of this study can be seen in terms of its potential contribution to the growing body of knowledge relating to the practice of educational brokering. Since this is a comparatively new approach, there is a need for "in-depth analyses of the operations and impacts of 'learning facilitation services' like educational brokering programs" (NCEB, Mar/Apr 1979).

Hopefully, this study will contribute to an increased understanding of the relationship between the concept of educational brokering and the services of women's access centres. Furthermore, by focusing attention on this approach as a practical and effective way of facilitating access for women in this particular setting, the study may encourage others to investigate its potential for addressing the problems of providing equal opportunity for participation in lifelong learning for a variety of adults. Canadian adult educators, like their American and European counterparts, may be encouraged
to view the participation problem in terms of access and seriously consider implementing the concept of educational brokering. It may very well be "...the single most important link in addressing the joint concerns of equal opportunity and the effective utilization of learning resources" (Cross, 1979, p.13).
CHAPTER II

REVIEWS OF RELATED LITERATURE

The review of literature will be considered under two major headings: educational brokering, and women's needs for access programs and services. The literature pertaining to evaluation of educational brokering will be considered in Chapter III.

Educational Brokering

The concept of educational brokering has been making an impact in the United States over the past few years. The concluding statement in the final report on lifelong learning submitted to Congress by the Assistant Secretary for Education of Health, Education, and Welfare (1977), entitled "Individuals, Learning Opportunities and Public Policy: A Lifelong Learning Perspective", states,

Because these services have potential for being learner-oriented and for servicing the needs of people of all ages, such 'brokering' services are particularly encouraging for lifelong learning.... This is an excellent example of an area which, without taking on a massive funding role, judicious support from the Federal government, with effective dissemination to the community, could have a significant impact nationally.

Specific references to the brokering approach are made in this report in relation to various client groups and their needs. These included women, the aging, low income groups and minorites.

The National Center for Educational Brokering Bulletin (February, 1979) discussed the spread of the brokering idea and reported that of 302 organizations identified at that time, 131 were non-profit independent agencies supported by diverse
federal, state and/or private funding. Thirty of these were women's centers, designed specifically for women returning to school or to the labour market.

The educational information centre or brokering concept is not purely a North American phenomenon. The first Annual Report of the Educational Guidance Centre for Adults (Nov. 1978) in Hatfield, Hertfordshire, England, describes the beginnings and operation of a service similar to that of educational brokering. It is also geared to the learning needs of adults within the context of their life situations. The report states:

The need for improved access to continuing education was recognized by the government sponsored Russell Report (Adult Education, A Plan for Development, 1973) and the Venables Report (The Open University Committee on Continuing Education, 1976). The Russell Report emphasised the value of an 'adequate information service' which should contain three elements:
- access to information on educational and cultural activities;
- ready contact with existing counselling services;
- provision of an opportunity for the individual to clarify choices for himself through discussion with an adult education counsellor. (p.1)

The services described closely resemble those emerging in North America.

**Defining Educational Brokering**

This comparatively new approach involves the collection of information about adult learning opportunities and its effective dissemination through the counselling, referral, and advocacy programs of educational brokering services (Cross, 1979). A broker is defined by Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (1977) as, "one who acts as an intermediary". The term educational brokering was coined by Heffernan, Macy, and Vickers (1976). They described the functions of the educational broker as:
- helping client define goals through self-assessment, value clarification, occupational exploration, and long-term planning;
- helping client set objectives for further education, through making decisions about needed competencies and/or credentials;
- helping client to select appropriate learning experiences based on complete information about all available learning resources;
- helping client gain access to appropriate learning opportunities through facilitating admission, financial aid, recognition for prior learning, and so on. (Cross, 1978, p.10)

These functions have been supported and expanded by various study groups making recommendations to state and federal agencies about the access of adults to learning resources. Cross (1978) collected 44 sets of recommendations and developed a classification scheme. The major headings are as follows:

I. Information
   A. Creation of a data bank of learning resources
   B. Dissemination to help people locate appropriate learning opportunities
   C. Advertising and promotional efforts to attract learners to educational institutions

II. Counselling Services
   A. Creation of comprehensive counselling services
   B. Making counselling services easily accessible to adults
   C. Development of mechanisms and/or counselling services to match learner needs with learning resources
   D. Development of counsellor training programs

III. Provision of Support Services

IV. Access and Advocacy
   A. Improving access for everyone
   B. Special recruitment efforts for underserved groups
   C. Advocacy for access to educational institutions
   D. Creating more flexible admissions criteria and procedures

V. Financial Aid
   A. Establishing equity in fees
   B. Evaluating previous learning for credit
   C. Providing opportunities for credit-by-examination
There seems to be some consistency in the way in which practitioners and planners are conceptualizing the linking process and three general functions have been identified:

1. Facilitating access to the appropriate learning resources, a process that includes access for underserved groups and advocacy for the special needs of adult learners because they are adults.
2. Providing information to adult learners about available learning resources and about themselves and their strengths and weaknesses.
3. Providing counselling and referral services designed to assist learners in planning and match learner needs to appropriate learning resources. (Cross, 1978, p. 11)

Implications of Educational Brokering

The advantages of employing educational brokering services are cited by Cross (1979) as:

1. Appropriately located, educational brokering services benefit the less advantaged segments of society somewhat more than today's relatively advantaged adults, who obviously already know about existing opportunities. Thus brokering services begin to address the current inequities in adult education.

2. Information and referral centers help colleges and other educational providers utilize their resources more fully, while getting across the message that the learning society consists of a rich variety of learning options provided by schools and colleges, industry and unions, churches and YMCA's, the military and the media, and anyone else who has knowledge to share.

3. Well-managed comprehensive information systems of available educational opportunities help state and community planners provide for the needs of adult learners, while reducing overlap and waste. (p. 12)

Research on Educational Brokering

Prior to 1974, few studies had been made of the needs for, operations of, and impacts of brokering-type services. The earliest major set of design and activities reports were those generated in connection with the National Institute of Education
- sponsored Career Education Project in Providence, completed in 1975, and the follow-up studies by Arbeiter, Aslanian, et al (1976). The first substantial agency self-study was completed at the Regional Learning Service (RLS) in Syracuse, in 1977. Client characteristics, use of services, satisfactions, decisions made and counseling impacts of the first three years of RSL operations were the principal focus.

Early in 1978, a doctoral dissertation focused on educational brokering. Helen L. Harkness in Texas, surveyed 135 programs in the NCEB Directory of Educational Information and Counseling Services. This work examined organizational development variables and problems encountered by new agencies. Three issues emerged as central to program success: flexibility and responsiveness in service, maintaining clarity of purpose while meeting diverse needs, and securing stable and dependable funding.

Other studies done during this period were either other forms of agency self-study eg. the Regional Counseling Center of South-eastern Connecticut, or outside evaluators' reports of federal projects, like the Educational Opportunities Center Studies and yearly reports, or the evaluation study of the Alabama Open Learning Program (AOLP).

Beginning in about 1976 however, a number of independent researchers began to examine brokering-type operations in a more systematic way, either via case-study formats or through large-scale surveys of the field, with an eye toward evaluation and analysis rather than simple description. According to an analysis of over 30 state studies of lifelong learning, the patterns of needs and participation were quite consistent from
study to study (Cross, 1978). Cross pointed out that it was time to move on from descriptive studies - demographic variables, learning interests, barriers, resources available - to in-depth analyses of the operations and impacts of learning facilitation services like educational brokering programs. The following four examples represent attempts to meet the need for greater depth in the study of brokering-type operations.

The MAUT-Bayesian Project (Murphy, Piotroski and Pintrich, 1978)

The two purposes of this project were to test the multi-attribute Utility Inventory and to develop the appropriate Bayesian statistical analysis. Data was collected from five educational brokerage centres funded by FIPSE on agency goals, alternative means for achieving goals, goal achievement criteria and their related measures. The evaluation strategy was to involve as many persons as possible connected with the agency decision-making at different levels in order to correlate actual planning and evaluation processes.

The MAUT-Bayesian strategy was found to be effective in helping staff clarify goals and specify measures of performance. It provided a means for ongoing assessments of agency activities. Substantive findings of the project indicated that there was strong agreement on agency goals and that goal attainment, measured by site-common and site-specific measures was high. Although the means of attaining goals were varied, the fulfillment of the overall array of FIPSE goals of brokering was quite good. The most important goals expressed were:

Providing services based on individuals' needs (educational, occupational, personal) rather than on institutions' needs; Enables individuals to take advantage of the entire range of post-secondary education and career options in a serious way
throughout life; Providing comprehensive information about options and provides referral services; Provides client advocacy; Fosters increased access to work and jobs, recreational activities.

The final report also includes an exhaustive listing of specific performance measures and measures and techniques for assessment of agency goal achievement.

The Mid-Career Change Project (Paltridge and Regan, 1978)

This project surveyed over 1000 students in mid-career transition who were involved in educational or training programs in seven field sites - three rural, three large urban and, one medium sized city. Characteristics of persons in transition and the kinds of support services which they utilized were the focus of the study. Career changers were found to be highly motivated and goal oriented. Most were working towards careers which would be more personally and professionally fulfilling, better paying and more secure. Over 40% were in the $20,000 or above income level, 74% were married; most were employed, occupationally mobile and optimistic. Thus, the "have-nots" - the low income, educationally disadvantaged, marginally-employed populations - were not the principal participants in continuing education and training or clients of the community support services for life-structure and career transitions.

Four distinctly different forms of community organizations for providing career-change support services were found. They were:

1. Lay citizen councils who sought to develop counselling and information support services and to expand educational opportunities for adults;
2. Consortia of postsecondary institutions which established cooperative educational programs and support services to assist mid-career changers;
3. Community service organizations which served as brokers between individuals and educational resources;
and,
4. Institutionally-sponsored educational brokers which provided career counselling and information on community-wide educational or training opportunities.

The formats utilized by these different services included: telephone, walk-in agencies, libraries, and programmed learning. Students were found to be best informed of career goals in communities where "neutral or independent career counselling services were available."

Most of the community-based support services had financial problems. None existed solely on locally-generated income, client fees or surcharges; most had to request public support, primarily state tax funds. The single factor which marked the survival capacity of an agency was its ability to gain public funding support.

Adult Career Advocates Training Program (Jacobson, 1978)

This project surveyed 350 Centres which provide educational and career guidance for adults. The prime focus included description of clients and needs, locales, services, organizations, staffing and funding, and identification of successful or exemplary practices.

The findings on clients were similar to those of Paltridge. The typical client was a white woman under 45, most were interested in employment-related information; different income groups were served by different kinds of agencies (those earning under $5,000 were served by federal agencies and school districts, those earning between $5,000 and $10,000 were served by social service agencies, community colleges, consortia and libraries; those earning over $10,000 use libraries, self-help or profit-making agencies.
Jacobson also found that at least a third of the clients were long-term unemployed, a far greater participation by the "haves-nots" than Paltridge found.

Public funds were received by 57% of the agencies. This was supplemented by private support and participant fees. Charges per client were small; 58% did not charge at all; 70% charged less than $5.

Staff were found to be highly educated. Seventy percent of full-time staff, 58% of part-time staff and 35% of volunteers had degrees beyond the B.A. Most had some prior counselling or human service work experience and were engaged in some form of inservice training. Staff size and part-time/full-time composition varied widely. Eleven centres had no full-timers, one had 54, most (81%) had six or less. Seventy-two centres had no part-timers, one had 100, and 37 reported having seven or less.

Three problems areas were consistently cited - funding, marketing and evaluation. It was felt that multi-funding sources must be coordinated if centres are to provide services at no or low cost. An inability to reach target populations and the use of effective marketing skills to do so was seen as an essential activity. The difficulties of instituting effective ongoing evaluation procedures was frequently cited and the need for followup evaluation was emphasized.

The Client Reaction Analysis (Toombs, 1977) was a study of the Lifelong Learning Center at the Public Library in Reading, Pennsylvania which provides information and counselling services to over 3000 persons a year. The study goes beyond demographic and descriptive variables to questions about clients'
satisfaction with the services provided by two full-time professional staff (a librarian and a counsellor) and about actions taken as a result of their contact.

Respondents reported high degrees of satisfaction with the accessibility of services, quality of information and rated their interaction with the staff the most positively. A common characteristic of clients was found to be a "readiness" to take some kind of action and this was thought to be related to job dissatisfaction and/or general discomfort with their life situations. Clients expressed appreciation for the time spent in counselling and the helpfulness of individual attention in their development of life and work plans.

Even in the short six-week follow-up period of Toombs' study, outcomes for clients were noticeable. Of 155 respondents, 101 had taken some definite action that was in some way related to their association with the Lifelong Learning Center. Specific changes mentioned were enrollment in educational programs, a new job, job upgrading, continuing search for job or college information and actual application to college as well as broadening life interests. Toombs' observations indicated that "Information about education and careers is useful and its value is multiplied by a counseling setting in which the user finds understanding, support and guidance for decisions that lead to action" (Toombs, 1977, p.43).

These four studies have been described in detail because they represent research methods currently being utilized and provide findings about the effectiveness of the educational brokering approach. These have implications for the evaluation
of the services of the Women's Resources Centre and its impact on clients, including the role of facilitating access for women to the educational/learning and career/vocational networks in our society. The evaluation strategy utilized in this study is based on such considerations and is described in Chapter III.

Women and Access

The literature pertaining to participation in adult education, lifelong learning, self-directed learning, and educational brokering provides some insight into the learning needs of adults today and ideas about how these can be better met. Specific needs of women have also been alluded to. Because of their life circumstances which may include child-bearing and child-rearing, women tend to be outside the educational and vocational systems as they are now constituted. Women encounter special problems in moving between family, student and work life. Literature discussing these difficulties and efforts aimed at ameliorating them will be reviewed.

The women's movement has been instrumental in pointing out instances of discrimination against women and in increasing public awareness of society's past failures in meeting the needs of this group. The Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada (1968) held special hearings throughout Canada and initiated forty special studies. The resulting report set forth four principles:

Women should be free to choose whether or not to take employment outside their homes ... 

The care of children is a responsibility to be shared by the mother, the father and society...
Society has a responsibility for women because of pregnancy and childbirth, and special treatment related to maternity will always be necessary...

In certain areas women will for an interim period require special treatment to overcome the adverse effects of discriminatory practices. (p. xii)

In addition, recommendation 83 was specifically directed to adult educators:

We recommend that the provinces and territories and all post-secondary educational institutions develop programmes to meet the special needs for continuing education of women with family responsibilities. (p. 406)

The changing role of women has already had a dramatic impact on educational interest and participation. In the United States, between 1969 and 1975, the number of women learners increased 45%, compared to an 18% increase for men (Boaz, 1978). Between a third and a half of all American colleges and universities offer programs for non-traditional students, many of whom are women (Ruyle and Geirselman, 1974). As pointed out earlier, the trend locally is similar (Zimmerman and Trew, 1979).

The limited literature available pertaining to the educational needs of women, especially the problems associated with learners returning to school, indicates that many of these needs are still unmet. A survey of programers across Canada about their perceptions of barriers which women faced was conducted by Willis in 1977. The returns from British Columbia mentioned the following difficulties:

1. Lack of re-training and re-entry programs
2. Lack of life skills, value clarification and confidence building courses
3. Lack of adequate counselling, career guidance and career
planning services

4. Lack of flexible hours for programs, i.e. part-time programs in the day

5. Lack of adequate babysitting and child care, or financial help for same

6. Lack of financial help for part-time students, and women on family benefits

7. Lack of adequate information or co-ordination of information, especially on education, women's employment, legislation availability of support services

8. Lack of adequate career counselling in public school especially in the area of non-traditional careers

Several of these perceived barriers (2,3,6,7) could be directly addressed by a brokering type of service and others (1,4,5) could be addressed indirectly by the advocacy role of a women's access centre.

Additional findings about perceptions of goals, needs and barriers by learners and providers resulting from six other studies which focused on distinct sub-populations are summarized in Table 1 and 2. Although respondents cited a variety of goals and educational needs, barriers commonly related to lack of support services, flexibility in institutional offerings, lack of information and counselling and low self-esteem.

These are shown in Table 2. The relationship between self-esteem, sex-role orientation, and perceived spouse support for a return to school was explored by Rice (1969). She studied 60 mature women seeking continuing education counselling, administering measures of self-esteem, sex-role orientation and spouse support for a return to school or work. Women who were low on self-esteem or non-traditional in sex role orientation projected significantly greater instrumental spouse support upon
Table 1
Summary of Educational/Learning Needs Perceived by Learners and Providers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational opportunities and programs</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Academic ¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Credit and non-credit¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Personal development, self-fulfillment, self-identity self-esteem¹,²,³,⁴,⁵</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Career and vocational upgrading²,⁶</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Professional development⁷</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Preparation for employment⁶, career change², and job re-entry¹,³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Study skills²,³,⁶</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Training and retraining programs⁴</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Support services²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Financial assistance²,³,⁶</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Counselling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Life, career and educational⁶</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Lack of confidence and role and family conflicts⁵</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Life and career planning⁶</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Achieving independence⁶</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Involvement outside the home⁵</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Volunteer work⁵</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Admission to non-traditional occupational courses⁴</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Community women not presently participating in post-secondary institutions (Krakauer, 1976)
² Mature urban students (Steele, 1974)
³ Rural women with limited means (Richard, 1976)
⁴ Sole support mothers (Vander Voet, 1978)
⁵ Women learners presently attending post-secondary institutions (Ladan and Crooks, 1974)
⁶ Women learners' perceived barriers (Brandenberg, 1974)

their return to school than did women who were high on self-esteem or traditional in sex role orientation. Self-esteem and sex role orientation were unrelated however, to the actual instrumental spouse support that the subjects reported receiving. This study focused attention on the fact that
### Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lack of</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Lack of Adequate child care</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Adequate, sensitive and locally available counselling</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Flexibility in locations of courses, time tabling, programming</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Part-time opportunities for study</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Financial assistance (particularly for one-parent families)</td>
<td>2, 3, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Time</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Transportation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Study skills</td>
<td>2, 3, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Spouse and Family Support</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Self-esteem</td>
<td>3, 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other**

1. Anxiety about learning

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1. Community women not presently participating in post-secondary institutions (Krakauer, 1976)
2. Mature urban students (Steele, 1974)
3. Rural women with limited means (Richard, 1976)
4. Sole support mothers (Vander Voet, 1978)
5. Women learners presently attending post-secondary institutions (Ladan and Crooks, 1975)
6. Women learners' perceived barriers (Brandenberg, 1974)

Dispositional and situational as well as institutional barriers can powerfully affect a return to school. Understanding these problems and their interaction can aid counsellors and others dealing with the many women now returning to college campuses and/or using women's access services.

A variety of special programs and services in universities and colleges and the community have been developed to smooth the transition of women from home to work and to school (Astin, 1976; Thom, Ironside, and Hendry, 1975; Zimmerman and Trew, 1979). The success of these types of programs has also been documented (Long, 1978; Conry et al, 1978). However, the demographic data from these studies points out that, in general,
the same elite group of well-educated, economically and socially advantaged middle aged group is being served.

The current development of Women's Access Centres in British Columbia represents a trend towards meeting women's needs in a manner which takes into consideration the barriers they perceive. Moreover, the offering of educational brokering services at these centres has the potential to cut across socio-economic and educational differences to alleviate barriers. That is, such an approach has the potential to attract a wider cross-section of the population than either women's access programs or other adult education programs do.

Women's access programs and services may be defined as "... those programs and services which enable women to adapt to the changing role of women in Canadian society and prepare them for their new responsibilities" (Ironside, 1979, p.1). The objectives of such programs and services are to teach women to:

- locate the learning resources that will help them achieve their goals (educational brokering),
- plan their lives, e.g. clarify life goals, learn to problem solve the combining of family roles with work, student life or community responsibilities, and;
- utilize existing educational facilities to best advantage.

That is, "Women's access programs are concerned with providing educational information and counselling to alleviate the social isolation of women and integrate them into society" (Ironside, 1979 p.1).

Women's access Centres like the University of British Columbia Women's Resources Centre are becoming an effective vehicle for providing some of these needed services. The use of educational brokering in the core drop-in service of the
Centre is a timely innovative way of increasing access for clients to the educational and career networks of our society. This approach is intended to address the obstacles by offering advocacy, advisement, and referral services and most importantly, to do so by helping women become participants in a process of self-directed learning rather than merely being passive recipients of a service.

The significant aspect of this approach is that it represents an earlier link in the chain which can connect needs to resources than a program does. For those who are unclear about their goals or options, it offers a starting point, without which they may have difficulty making progress towards goals or even initiating appropriate goals.

In summarizing the literature relating to women and access, it becomes apparent that because of the changes in society and in women's expectations about their lives, women have become the new client group for educators. However, because they encounter special problems, "...women need services to assist them to locate and utilize educational opportunities and work out ways to raise children while being a student or worker" (Ironside, 1979, p.2). An action-oriented self help approach, based on up-to-date concepts on the psychology of women is needed. Educational brokering provides the practical guidelines for such an approach.
Summary

The literature indicates that adult education is an elitist endeavour and is becoming more so. Attempts to influence participation rates have not been instrumental in changing this picture to any great degree. The increasing realization that participation is a multi-variate phenomenon and the utilization of approaches such as educational brokering and the provision of community information services are seen as valuable links in the chain of lifelong learning and in connecting adult learners to appropriate learning resources.

The increasing participation rate for women is a reflection of their changing role in society. The reality of this trend is that it represents an increasing disparity between advantaged and disadvantaged women. Many barriers to true access for women to the educational and vocational networks in our society still exist. Women's access centres offer programs and services intended to alleviate these barriers and educational brokering is playing a significant role in the evolution of these services.

Research and evaluation of the brokering approach and its impacts and effectiveness is in the beginning stages. However, preliminary findings indicate that it is becoming an increasingly effective way to facilitate access for a broad cross-section of the population to a variety of learning and vocational opportunities.

This examination of the services of the Women's Resources Centre was based on clients' perceptions and impacts. Chapter III describes the evaluation strategy which was chosen and the philosophy and considerations on which it was based.
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

Overview of the Evaluation Rationale and Strategy

The strategy of this evaluation was based on several considerations. These included: the characteristics of effective evaluation and the research mode on which it is based; the methods and criteria currently being used to evaluate educational brokering; and, the characteristics and evaluation needs of the University of British Columbia Women's Resources Centre. Each will be discussed in turn by referring to related literature.

Evaluation and Research

William Toombs makes some useful distinctions between reporting, evaluation and research and their different audiences, purposes and procedures.

Reporting is part of an on-going accountability or monitoring function; evaluation entails assessments, judgements and benchmark data, and research explores areas of uncertainty or conceptualizations for new initiatives. (NCEB Bulletin, Mar/Apr 1979)

This investigation and the discussion of the findings, contains elements of each of these three factors.

Previously, Michael Scriven expressed strong views about the differences between "straight" research and evaluation research. He pointed out that,

...the basic distinction seems to be that evaluation research must produce as a conclusion exactly the kind of statement that social scientists have for years been taught is illegitimate; a judgement of value, worth, or merit. (Scriven, 1972, p.2)

He goes on to say, "That is the great scientific and philosophical significance of evaluation research" (p.2). Based
on this view which is also shared by others eg. Fathy, 1980, this study makes judgements about the effectiveness of the service under consideration. Inductions about possible relationships between adults' learning needs and the concept and practice of educational brokering are also made.

The user's perceptions of the effectiveness of the service and their self-reports about the impacts which they attribute to their association with the Centre constitute the basis for these judgements and inductions. This focus on client perceptions is based on the view that while there may be some disparity between the perceived situation and the veridical one, for the client, his or her perception is the reality (Stern, 1970). This heuristic mode of research is grounded in the experiencing person's consciousness. Consequently, the survey instruments and methodology were designed to obtain information from clients in an unbiased way by offering a variety of opportunities for clients to respond.

The information and insights gained resulted from a combination of self reports and interviewer judgments. This design was chosen for two reasons. First, because of the exploratory nature of the investigation and since crucial variables relating to the educational brokering approach and its effects are still in the early stages of development, the use of a purely psychometric approach would have been premature. Secondly, It has been pointed out that when interventions which may affect the complex relationship between cognition, emotion and behaviour are investigated, the utilization of self-report measures are most appropriate (Epstein, in press, p.7).
Evaluation of Educational Brokering Services

The focus of the Women's Resources Centre is educational rather than therapeutic. Since the centre defines itself as an educational brokering service, the choice of an appropriate research design was influenced by the kinds of assessment activities which are being conducted by other brokering operations eg. Toombs, 1977. Since the brokering phenomenon is a relatively recent approach, few guidelines exist for the evaluation of such services. Because they are comprised of many different but interrelated activities including information-giving, counselling, assessment and advocacy, whose effects are not easily measured by traditional evaluation designs, the investigative approach needed to be multiform and differentiated.

The effects of this type of service may have different outcomes - economic, social, and personal and operate at several different levels - the individual, the family, and the community. While it is unrealistic to attempt to measure all of the brokering functions independently, it is also fruitless to use "fuzzily humanistic" goal statements as criteria. "Teaching people 'how to learn' is simply not enough to go on" (NCEB Bulletin, Spring 1977). Also, the impacts of brokering are difficult to isolate since people are being influenced concurrently by many other factors. Further, the effects produced by brokering services are not always simple, overt or obvious, as has been pointed out elsewhere,

Career changes or enrollment in degree programs - much less the heavier 'taking control over one's life' decisions - do not happen overnight. The more meaningful performance indicators cannot always be
hard data. (NCEB Bulletin, Spring 1977)

In the past, three approaches to the task have been employed. Needs analysis has been most popular in recent years. The services of an organization are assessed by how well its activities serve the needs of a particular group. Needs are determined by survey, interview or inferences drawn from demographic information. These studies have been popular and as Cross (1979) has pointed out, the point of redundancy has been reached.

A second approach, which has been employed here, is a focus on clients' satisfaction with services and actions taken as a result of that service. According to Toombs, who has shown leadership in this direction,

Difficult though they are to construct, these studies provide invaluable feedback for confirmation and planning. The most effective studies in this class are longitudinal, individual, case designs which are both expensive to conduct and difficult to analyze. (Toombs, 1980, p. 2)

A third and more recent development is a focus on the organization itself (Toombs, 1980). The organizational effectiveness of an operation is examined in terms of structure, policy and process. While this was not within the scope of the present study, it may be the next logical step in examining the services of the Women's Resources Centre.

In spite of the fact that there are neither simple nor single outcome indicators, three categories of criteria have been identified and are currently being utilized in evaluation studies by brokerages to convey to clients and other audiences
the nature of their operations. These are:

1. Basic Data - typical demographic breakdowns to provide data about client characteristics for comparison purposes and breakdowns related to needs categories

2. Cost Data - related to time spent on various brokering activities

3. Qualitative Data - defined in terms of criteria related to the core brokering functions including information-giving, referral, counselling, assessment and advocacy.

In addition, the agency's impact can be judged in terms of the marketplace; that is, value and credibility as seen by the consumers of brokering agencies' products - businesses, schools and agencies. This impact as well as the consideration of cost data (category 2) is outside the scope of this study which focuses on client characteristics, reactions and results (categories 1 and 3).

In doing so, the study responded to Cross's challenge to move beyond the demographic and descriptive variables to assess clients' satisfactions with the services and actions taken as a result. Toombs (1977) pointed out that clients receiving services at the Lifelong Learning Centre in Reading, Pa., exhibited a readiness towards making changes in their lives. This apparently resulted from a variety of factors such as recent health problems, changes in family structure or employment situation, or dissatisfaction with some aspect of their lifestyle. It seems that the recognition and utilization of the clients' readiness or teachable moment accounted for "...some definite action that was in some way related to the association with the center" (p.34) in 101 of the 155 respondents.
These findings gave credibility to the intention of this study to assess outcomes resulting from the utilization of the services of the Women's Resources Centre. Whether the readiness factor was a significant element in the effectiveness of the services has implications for practice. Toombs points out that readiness might be a condition worth assessing during the early interview sessions. Followup with those who present high readiness might encourage more effective use of limited time and resources.

The very nature of educational brokering, requires that assessments of this service utilize a wide variety of perspectives. Since the effectiveness of the services is largely dependent upon the success of the interaction between the client and the provider, a simple cause-effect relationship between variables cannot be established. Rather, the overall effect of the service, including the interactive effects between the utility of the information, the quality of the interaction with staff, and the appropriateness of referral must be considered.

Attempts to incorporate such a wholistic or transactional position in scientific activities are not new. Lewin (1936) and Stern (1970) pointed out the need to address whole situations - the state of both person and environment. Murray (1938) attempted to incorporate this approach in his need/press model. Boshier (1978) pointed out that the weakness of Miller's force field (1967) was its inability to convert the theory into research operations.

To assess the wholistic effect of the Lifelong Learning Centers' services Toombs and Croyle (1977) and Toombs (1978) asked respondents to submit global judgements about two subjects
the experience with the Centre, "The way it all turned out", and how they felt about "life as a whole". Using a seven point scale developed by Withey and Andrews (1975) for a national study of social indicators, Toombs made comparisons and found that there were twice as many responses in the "mostly dissatisfied" category among the Lifelong Learning Center clients as there are in the population at large.

From this data he suggested that people who come to the Center may have specific needs for information and recommendations for action but they also carry with them feelings of discomfort and dissatisfaction about their life situation. This may explain why such a high value was attached to the quality of the interaction, the concern and nurturing attitudes, exhibited by the counsellors and sensed by the clients. Since these considerations are germane to the nature of the Women's Resources Centre and its operations, this study followed Toombs' leadership and incorporated similar global measures.

Another important aspect of this study, as with Toombs' work, is the delayed follow-up period. The client-reaction studies of the Lifelong Learning Centres in Reading (Toombs & Croyle, 1977), and Philadelphia (Toombs, 1978) incorporated a six week follow up period. This study of the educational brokering services of the Women's Resources Centre is also based on client reactions and the follow-up period was approximately three months for the questionnaire and five months for the interviews. Several features of Toombs' studies are incorporated in this study (with permission). However, it has been adapted to the unique aspects of the Women's Resources
Centre and includes additional features which explore further questions of particular interest to the staff of the centre.

**Evaluating the Women's Resources Centre**

The focus of this study was on the drop-in core services of the Women's Resources Centre. This brokering service is staffed by a pool of selected and trained volunteer associates. Operating as peer counsellors, the volunteers' function is to assess clients' needs with them. For those who come to the Centre for purposes of exploration, an educational brokering interview is conducted. This counselling role is translated into "self-help" and women who have more serious problems are referred to professional staff.

In his report of the evaluation of the Lifelong Learning Centres, Toombs (1977), noted that.

> The central and most valuable asset of the Center as perceived by the sample of clients is the interpersonal exchange with the staff. The positive qualities of this encounter for client decision making, for the shared humanity and concern it transmitted to clients, and for the attention to individual interests perceived by the clients - these are reflected in every measure of reaction whether ratings, comments, or interviews. (p. 1)

Thus, the role of the volunteer in the delivery of services and clients' perceptions of the effectiveness of that role were crucial elements to consider in planning this evaluation.

The Centre's overall purpose, the promotion of self-directed learning, was also a central consideration in planning the study. According to Knowles, (1975, p. 18)

> In its broadest meaning, 'self-directed learning' describes a process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate
learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes. He goes on to say that self-directed learning, rather than going on in isolation, usually takes place in association with various kinds of helpers, such as teachers, tutors, mentors, resource people, and peers. According to Patricia Cross (1978, p. 43),

...the goals of the learning society is to make adults stronger, better-informed, more self-directed learners; it is not to make learners increasingly dependent on others to tell them what, when, where, and how to learn. Educators have a vital role to play in this effort. Research indicates that adult learners do want and need help. In particular, they need help in planning and utilizing learning activities that will help them to reach their goals.

The mission of educational brokering and the central goal of the Women's Resources Centre is to facilitate this connection, termed the 'missing link' by Cross. An important aspect of this study was to assess how well this goal was being met.

Another way of defining the goals of the Women's Resources Centre and the focus of the evaluation was to consider the Centres' mandate in terms of access. Even though the Centre is affiliated with an educational institution, it is community-based and attempts to operate by facilitating access for clients to a broad range of vocational/career as well as educational/learning opportunities in the community. Specifically, the core educational brokering services, including the brokering interview, are intended to increase clients' access to learning/educational and career/vocational networks. For purposes of this study, this can be seen as resulting in the client having:

- increased self-esteem, self-confidence leading to personal empowerment,
- a tentative action plan or knowing her next step, and,
- the necessary information or the knowledge of where
to find it, in order to move ahead with her plans. How well these aims were realized, whether the clients saw themselves as participants in a process of self-directed learning or merely as passive recipients of a service, and how the various aspects of the service, including interaction with the staff, were central considerations in planning the study. More specific aspects of the design will be detailed next.

Design of the Study

A variety of options for design and approach have been employed in evaluating educational brokering operations. Arbeiter (1976) designed his study of the Career Education Project in Rhode Island around the idea of a "demand" for counselling arising from a population "in transiton". The Regional Learning Services of Central New York State study concentrated on educational needs, interests, and outcomes (Kordalewski, 1977). Gooler (1977) recommended that quality, access, relevancy to needs and expectations, and impact be considered when non-traditional programs are examined.

The design of this evaluation study relied heavily on Toombs' studies of client reactions (1977 and 1978). This study and those of Toombs, both utilized the identified educational brokering indicators, focused on client reactions and impacts, and included measures of global effects and allowed for subjective client response.

In tailoring the design to the particular needs of the Women's Resources Centre, consideration was given to findings of previous investigations that pertained to the aspects under
consideration in this study. For example, a recent evaluation of the overall operation of the Centre (Conry et al, 1978) pointed out that the Centre appeared to be serving well-educated, middle and upper-middle class women and asked the question, "Does the Centre wish to broaden its scope so as in fact to serve all classes of women" (p.iv)? The answer, according to the staff of the Centre, is "yes" and there is presently an increased emphasis on strengthening the core brokering function in order to attract a wider cross-section of the population. To monitor this the Centre instituted a procedure for routine recording of clients' biodemographic data.

The Conry evaluation also found that the Centre

...presents a unique viable program which currently meets the needs of a particular group of women. The programs and services offered by the Women's Resources Centre are healthy and managed by capable and committed individuals. (p. iv)

The drop-in (brokering) function was included by requesting that all women who visited the Centre over a twelve day period, complete a questionnaire. Questions centered around demographic information, awareness of Centre, reasons for visit, whether or not the desired information or advice was obtained, feeling of being welcome, whether client would visit again and suggestions for improvement. The present study was intended to build on Conry's assessment of the drop-in services by focusing on those clients who had participated in a brokering interview.

The study was planned and carried out in three phases. Phase I was initiated in January 1980 and consisted of recording names, addresses and other basic information about clients who participated in a "brokering interview". Volunteer-associates were asked to utilize an already existing data sheet to collect
this information. During this phase, the procedure became more routine than was the normal practice because of the requirements of the study. However, even though there were approximately 300 drop-ins per month at the Centre during January through June, a total of only 215 data sheets were completed over the six month period. This discrepancy was due to several factors. Some drop-ins did not participate in a brokering interview, coming for specific information or for other reasons such as noon hour events which were not relevant to the study. The nature of the service, particularly the issue of confidentiality, and the reluctance of the volunteer associates to ask a client who was upset to provide such additional information also affected the completion of these. Finally, it was often very busy at the Centre and volunteer associates forgot, or chose not to take the time to complete the data sheets.

Phase II was initiated in March 1980 and involved mailing a questionnaire to all of the clients on whom a data sheet had been completed. A total of 215 questionnaires were mailed to clients approximately two to three months after their visit to the Centre. Reminder cards were mailed to those who had not returned their questionnaires within a month. The return rate was 30%, (66), an adequate but somewhat disappointing response.

Phase III involved personal interviews with those who indicated their willingness to participate by noting this on the returned questionnaire. The researcher personally interviewed 27 women during June, July, August and September, 1980, approximately two to five months after their initial visit to the Centre. Interviews usually took place in the homes of the women. Three clients preferred to meet the interviewer at the
Centre and two other interviews took place at community locations of mutual convenience. Interviews generally lasted from 30 minutes to 1 1/2 hours.

The way in which the interviews were conducted has relevance for interpretation of the findings. According to Zweig (1965),

The art of interviewing is a branch of a larger art, the art of conversation. An interview is a special kind of conversation. It is fully utilitarian, purposeful, functional, directed and channelled, with roles clearly divided between two or more persons...it can be carried on in a completely mechanical way; it can be made a mere appliance, and its practitioners sheer robots or recording machines.

But the act of interviewing does not need to sink to the level of mechanicalness. It can be a graceful and joyful act, enjoyed by the two sides and suffered by neither. What is more, my contention is that unless it becomes such an act, it will only fail in its main function. One cannot conduct an interview by bombarding one’s victim with a barrage of questions, which is only tiresome and tiring for both sides. The only way is to make an interview an enjoyable social act, both for the interviewer and the respondent, a two-way traffic, so that the respondent feels not a 'victim' but a true partner, a true conversationalist. (p.265)

Consequently, the approach used in this study was to allow the client to set the tone of the interview, proceeding according to her lead. The purpose in doing so was to gain opinions and perceptions which may not have been elicited by the prepared questions. The schedule and the other instruments were used as tools to stimulate and sometimes guide discussion and were usually completed in the process. At other times, responses were recorded immediately after the interview was completed.

As the interviews progressed, the researcher gained insight and understanding of clients' needs and issues which affected
whether or not plans were able to be put into effect. This reinforced the appropriateness of the approach and the encounters became two-way exchanges where the interviewer often reinforced a plan, clarified an idea or legitimized a concern. This bi-directionality of influence has been described by Michael Snow of Kansas University (McCoy, 1977) as the "counselling of equals" and termed "bouleutics", derived from the Greek term for a senate of peers. Many of the formulations presented in this study resulted from this mode of interaction and, the way in which counsellors (or researchers, in this case), learn from their clients was a germane consideration in conducting the interviews. It should also be kept in mind when findings are analyzed.

Instrument Development

The Questionnaire (Appendix A)

A questionnaire was designed to collect information about several aspects of the clients' association with the centre. Part I asked about clients' reasons for visiting the Centre and the helpfulness of the services in providing needed information and assistance.

Satisfactions with the services were questioned in terms of accessibility of the Centre, interaction with the staff and, usefulness of the information provided. One global question about "The way it all turned out", was included to provide information about the overall satisfaction level of the experience. Part I also allowed for open-ended comments regarding particular satisfactions and dissatisfactions.
Part II sought information relating to actions, further plans and general improvements which may have resulted from the association with the Centre. Opportunity was provided for additional items to be added and for elaboration. In addition, possible barriers to achievement of results were presented and respondents were asked to indicate whether or not these affected their progress in moving ahead with their plans.

Part III asked whether clients had encouraged others to use the services of the Centre and provided an opportunity for additional comments and recommendations as well as to indicate their willingness to participate in a personal interview.

Part IV requested some background information and the final question asked how clients felt about "Life as a Whole". This question was included in order to compare responses with those on Toombs' studies as well as those of an American national sample. Additional insights regarding satisfactions and needs were also gained from the responses to this question.

**Pilot Testing**

The final version of the questionnaire resulted from changes made after pilot testing with 33 volunteer-associates. The initial version proved to be too long and involved and consequently, several sections were removed and administered during the personal interviews. Placement of other items was changed and some questions were shortened. The resulting instrument incorporated ideas and suggestions for content and format from a variety of sources including staff of the Centre, previous studies and consultants in research and evaluation.
design.

The Interview Schedule (Appendix B)

Survey data was supplemented by in-depth interviews, in order to gain more understanding of such questions as why a person expressed interest in taking steps but failed to follow through. This approach is being increasingly suggested in the literature pertaining to evaluation of non-traditional programs and services (Cross & Zusman, 1977). In addition, phase III interviews were also used to pick up unanticipated side effects, both positive and negative, which might have been quite unrelated to the goals of the service. It was hoped that these would provide additional evaluative insights into the operation.

More specifically, the interviews were designed to facilitate two purposes:

1. The identification of networking effects, or the sources which direct women to the centre and the pathways which lead to community learning resources. Information about the successes or failures of previous and subsequent contacts in meeting a client's needs could enhance understanding of how the service works.

2. The exploration of how the experience fitted into the larger framework of the woman's life. The "readiness" phenomenon, other life experiences related to the contact with the Centre, expectations of further association with the Centre and the issue of "disposable" income were explored.

The interview schedule was adapted from that used by Toombs. Additional instruments, rating goals of the Centre, affective outcomes and readiness for self-directed learning were also
administered to the 27 clients interviewed.

The Analytic Approach

Data from the questionnaire, interview schedule and the other instruments administered was summarized in frequency tables. The quantitative findings reported in Chapter IV are based on this first stage of analysis.

Comments on the open-ended questions were analyzed for content and grouped for discussion under appropriate classifications. The 27 interview protocols were content analyzed and key phrases introduced to illustrate particular points under each of the variables. Illustrations of specific cases are also presented to further elaborate on and supplement these findings. The information gained from the interviews, including the instruments administered rating helpfulness of the services and approaches, affective outcomes, readiness for self-directed learning and the mapping of networking effects, is reported in a descriptive manner. The purpose of these qualitative aspects is to supplement the hard data with the interviewer's perceptions and judgements. The stages of the brokering process formulated and presented in Chapter IV incorporate many of these these aspects.

A second stage of analysis involved a search for relationships between various subgroups of the sample as well as

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1 The Readiness for Self-Directed Learning Scale developed in Florida by Lucy M. Guglielmino, Ed.D. was employed with her permission. Although the complete instrument contains 58 items, the version employed here contained only 39. Since inter-item correlations proved to be high, scores reported may be considered to be representative of those which would have resulted from the administration of the entire set of items.
some of the variables. Pearson correlations, breakdowns and crosstabulations were run on all of the rated items using biodemographic variables and feelings about "Life as a Whole" as the control (dependent) variables. Relationships between such aspects as needs and problems identified were also sought. In addition, scores on the Readiness for Self-Directed Learning Scale and judgements about networking effects and transition state for the 27 clients interviewed were included in the search. Values of Pearson, Chi Square, Fisher's exact test and T Values were examined. Values in the range of p=.05 were taken as clues to differences and associations and are reported in a descriptive manner.

Finally, in analyzing the data, making judgements about the merits of the service, and formulating recommendations, the unique context in which these services operate was taken into consideration. The fact that the Women's Resources Centre is a low budget operation, run by volunteers was important to consider when the results were compared with those of Toombs' studies which reflected the satisfactions and impacts resulting from services provided by paid professionals.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS - PART I

THE WOMEN'S RESOURCES CENTRE

ONE MODEL OF EDUCATIONAL BROKERING

The findings of this study are presented in two parts. The first purpose of the project was to examine the services of the Women's Resources Centre in order to discover how one model of educational brokering operates. The results of this investigation, including accompanying discussion and recommendations are presented within the context of four general questions:

1. Who were the clients?

2. What were the clients' reasons for seeking out the service?

3. How effective have the services been in meeting the clients' needs? and,

4. What impacts and results are attributed to the clients' association with the Centre?

The information and insights gained in each of these areas are used to amplify and qualify subsequent findings. In other words, the results discussed in relation to each question build on those of the previous issues.

In addition, particular features of the service are described as the findings pertaining to each of them are discussed. Observations are tied into those gained from other investigations of similar services and adult education literature whenever possible. Implications and recommendations for service are suggested.

The results and discussion are based on responses to the questionnaire as well as information gained through the personal interviews. Selected quotes from clients and summaries of open-
ended responses are included to augment the statistical analysis. These are also intended to illustrate some of the important responses which, although not necessarily expressed often, are nevertheless highly significant as an encapsulation of a wider reality affecting many clients. Additional categorization of open-ended responses, profiles of clients and descriptions of related issues and ideas are presented in the appendices.

Chapter V provides additional findings resulting from inquiries about the ways in which learning and life interact and how the brokering process can facilitate access to learning or educational and career or vocational opportunities.

The Clients

The clients who participated in this study represent a self-selected sample of women who visited the Centre during the six month period between January and June, 1980. Questionnaires were mailed to those drop-ins who had participated in an educational brokering interview with a volunteer-associate and on whom a data sheet was completed.

1 Respondents do not represent a true cross section of the women who visited the Centre for several reasons. First, the actual completion of the data sheet, although seen as routine record-keeping by the administration of the centre, often did not take place. In some cases, the volunteer-associates' concerns for the confidentiality and sensitivity of their interaction with the client resulted in this task being perceived as interfering with service. Also, during busy times or if a client was distraught, the forms were neglected. Consequently, the 215 data sheets which were completed during the six month period represented the total number of clients on whom basic information, necessary for mailing was available.

Although these factors do not impair the validity of individual answers, they point to a note of caution regarding generalization to the clients of the Women's Resources Centre who are not represented.
This interview generally lasted a minimum of 20 to 30 minutes and consisted of three components:

1. Eliciting appropriate information about the client's needs and purpose in visiting the centre,
2. Exploring the client's situation with her and outlining possible options, and;
3. Providing related community information and/or contacts.

Questionnaires were mailed to all 215 clients. Since the recorded information often consisted of only the name, address and phone number of the clients, no comparison of the biodemographic characteristics, needs and interests of these 66 respondents could be made. (63 were included in the statistical analysis). Although this response rate (30%) was somewhat disappointing, it is adequate for this type of mailing.

In order to make the best possible use of the data collected, findings are presented in a descriptive, interpretive manner, emphasizing the contribution of the personal interviews in supplementing and explaining the results of the statistical analysis. Since over half (54%) of the respondents expressed interest in participating in a personal interview, it seems that the association with the Centre was of some consequence to this portion of the sample. Information gained from the 27 clients actually interviewed enhances understanding of the responses to the questionnaire and how the Centre served these particular clients.

In order to understand the findings about the clients' reasons for visiting the Centre, their satisfactions with the service they received, and the outcomes of their association with the Centre, it is necessary to first examine the characteristics of the respondents. Tables 3, 4 and 5 present an
overview of these. However, some additional interpretation may be useful.

Age

The ages of those who returned questionnaires ranged from 19 to 67. The mean age was 35.5. The fact that 72% were between 19 and 40 ties in with the reasons for visiting the Centre which will be discussed later.

Marital Status

The higher proportion of clients in the unmarried categories (61%) also ties in with the high percentage of those seeking vocational guidance.

Geographical Location

Proximity to the Centre seems to be important. Seventy percent of the sample resided within the city of Vancouver, while only 30% came from other areas of Greater Vancouver.

Education

The clients participating in this study were highly educated. Sixty-seven percent had at least one year of college or university. Four or more years of college was reported by 28% and 14% had done post graduate work. This is not surprising considering that previous educational attainment is the single most predictable factor in relation to interest and participation in further learning (Cross & Zusman, 1977).

Number of Children

The fact that 67% of the sample had no children and of those who did, no child was younger than three years of age, also explains the high level of interest in vocational/career issues. In addition, 8 of the 21 women who do have children
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>34</td>
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<tr>
<td>married</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>separated/divorced</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>widowed</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
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<td>common law</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
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<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burnaby</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richmond</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
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<td>3</td>
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<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>grade 9, 10, or 11</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>63</td>
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* Percentages in this and subsequent tables have been adjusted to reflect only valid responses to the question.
reported that they are the sole support of their children, necessitating them to be gainfully employed.

**Occupation**

Table 4 shows the current occupational status of the respondents. Over half were employed either full time or part time. Of the 25 who were not in paid employment, 16 were actively seeking paid employment. Only 20 (32%) reported their current status as other than paid employment or seeking

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<td>full time</td>
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<tr>
<td>part time</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>63</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<th>Occupations of Paid Employed</th>
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<td>clerical/officer</td>
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<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>service (eg. waitress)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>technical/professional</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>supervisory/administrative</td>
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</tr>
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<td>sales clerk</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social service</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>business/self-employed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<th>Other</th>
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<tr>
<td>unemployed (seeking employment)</td>
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<td>53</td>
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<tr>
<td>student</td>
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<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>volunteer</td>
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<td>homemaker</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>69</td>
<td>119 *</td>
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</tbody>
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* Totals are greater than 100% since multiple responses were allowed.
employment. These are very approximate figures since some categories overlap with each other.

Of the 36 who were in paid employment, over half (58%) held jobs in the clerical or service categories. Another 5% were sales clerks. In spite of the high educational level reported (67% had at least one year of college), only 37% held jobs in the technical/professional, supervisory, social service or self-employed categories.

Income

Table 5 shows family and personal income ranges. A family income ranging from less than $5,000 to over $50,000 annually, was reported by 27 respondents (43%). Twenty-four of these

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Level</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $5,000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5,001 - $15,000</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15,001 - $25,000</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,001 - $35,000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,001 - $50,000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over $50,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not in family setting</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>63</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Level</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $5,000</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5,001 - $15,000</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15,001 - $25,000</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No personal income</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>63</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
women also reported having some personal income. Another 34 (54%), reported personal income only, indicating that they were self-supporting. The personal income range was a smaller one than that for family income (less than $5,000 to $25,000). Only two women in this sample reported having no personal income at all and another three did not respond to the income question.

Life as a Whole

The question of whether those who seek adult counselling are motivated to do so in some measure by feelings of dissatisfaction with their lives, has been previously posed (Toombs, 1977). Table 6 provides a comparison between the responses to this question by those in Toombs' two studies, a national sample (Andrews and Withey, 1976), and the clients of the Women's Resources Centre. The higher percentages of

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feelings about Life as a Whole</th>
<th>National Sample</th>
<th>Philadelphia L.L.C.</th>
<th>Reading L.L.C.</th>
<th>Vancouver W.R.C.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. delighted</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. pleased</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. mostly satisfied</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. mixed</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. mostly dissatisfied</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. unhappy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. terrible</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mean</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sample size</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

responses in the "mostly satisfied" and "mixed" categories in the counselling Centres' samples, compared with higher percentages of responses in the "delighted" and "pleased"
categories of the national sample seems to indicate that those who came to the Centres were less satisfied with their lives than the general population. The especially high response to the "mixed" category (41%) by the women in this study may be related to the fact that many were in transition periods and that their visit to the Centre was related to a change in the pattern of their lives. This will be further discussed in the next section dealing with reasons for visiting the Centre.

Additional Findings

The answers on the questionnaire provided a general description of respondents. Personal interviews with 27 of these clients resulted in an elaboration and clarification of many of the responses. In spite of the apparent similarities among the clients, a wide range of lifestyles and personalities was encountered. While one interview took place in a luxurious British Properties home, another was conducted in a modest, sparsely-furnished east-end apartment. Some interviews reflected the moods of the clients' previous responses to the question about "Life as a Whole" while others did not. Several explained that they had since moved from that position.

Three or four of the middle aged women differed markedly in their expectations of and reactions to the services of the centre, even though they shared similar demographic characteristics (age, widowed, self supporting, living alone, having grown children). Their diverse backgrounds, experiences and interests made for a variety of current concerns, each very different from that of the others. Similarly, young women in their 20's, earning fairly low salaries and living on their own,
had quite individual expectations of the Centre. In almost every case, when the information which had been gained from the Questionnaire was examined in light of the personal encounter, an expanded perspective of the characteristics of the client was gained. As a result, it became consistently clear that needs for information and assistance as well as reactions to services received, related more to a client's particular situation than to characteristics which she may have in common with cohorts.
Discussion and Recommendations

In summarizing data related to question 1, it is necessary to point out that this study could not assess the centre's role in providing equal access for all women in the community to the services and the resulting learning opportunities. One can only speculate about those not represented in this sample. Because we have no information about the non-respondents or about those who did not complete data sheets to begin with, it is not possible to make judgements about the cross-section of the population who utilize the services of the centre. This is unfortunate since one of the latent functions of the brokering approach is to attract the undereducated and those in the lower socio-economic segments of the population. For example, one wonders whether there really are no visits from mothers of young children or women with less than a grade eight education. In order for the Centre's experience to add to our knowledge about brokering operations and who they serve, this type of information is required. Therefore, the following recommendation is offered.

Recommendation 1

In order for the Women's Resources Centre to assess whether or not it is serving a broad cross-section of women in Vancouver, routine procedures to record such basic data as age, education, occupation and income, should be instituted.

This needs to be done in a way which will not threaten clients' needs for confidentiality and which will not interfere with service nor undermine the rapport which volunteer-associates seek to establish with clients. Implementation of this procedure would also enable the Centre to provide some type
of follow up service for selected clients.

Demographic characteristics can be useful in assessing whether or not a program or service is attracting certain segments of the population. However, their practical utility for planning and evaluation has been questioned. It has been pointed out that demographic variables are not uniquely descriptive of needs and interests nor reasons for seeking out a service or program (Cross & Zusman, 1977). Therefore, in discussing the findings of this study, the focus will be on identifying commonalities of need, interest or problem area within the client group.

It is tempting to fall into the trap of describing the typical client in this sample as a single woman between the ages of 20 and 40, childless, living in the City of Vancouver, earning less than $15,000 a year, and employed in a clerical position with which she is dissatisfied because of her high educational level. In addition, it might be added that she has mixed feelings about her life as a whole. Although many of the women in this sample share these features, very little could be gained from generalizing to such an extent. In fact, responses to the second major question, about clients' reasons for seeking out the services of the Centre, which are examined next, show a wide diversity of need not suggested by these common features.
Clients' Reasons for Visiting

In discussing and presenting findings related to clients' needs, interests and expectations (of the Women's Resources Centre), both individual client characteristics and demographic commonalities across clients are considered. General reasons for seeking out the services are reported in three categories: career/vocational, educational and lifestyle interests. Clients' statements describing individual needs within these categories are also included. All responses to this question are categorized and presented in appendix C.

Career/Vocational Guidance

A majority of clients came to the Centre for vocational or career guidance. Interest in this area was expressed by 49 of the 63 respondents (78%). Some wanted help in choosing a career path. Some requested an assessment of their interests and aptitudes. Others wanted information about the job market and about requirements and qualifications for different occupations. General reasons such as "Looking for help in choosing a career", were typical.

Assistance in securing employment was requested by some who hoped the Centre could provide them with specific leads. Others wanted help with building up their self-confidence in order to re-enter the work force after an absence of several years. Many expressed dissatisfaction with their present occupations and lack of career direction, seeking guidance in making a change. One client's need was, "To discuss career plans, how to get into another field as I didn't enjoy being a secretary after 10+ years and felt limited as far as advancement opportunities were
concerned." Some expressed specific needs for information, others wanted to explore possibilities.

Educational Information and Guidance

A need for educational guidance was expressed by 10 of the 63 respondents (16%). Even though this was a much smaller proportion of clients than those interested in career related assistance, it represented the second largest specific category. Many of the needs expressed in the previous category were related to further education or training. Information about educational qualifications for various jobs was a common request. The availability of training programs and personal suitability for certain fields needed exploration by both those wishing to begin on a career path as well as those seeking to make a change.

Other interests in this category were specifically learning-centered. These related to career interests only indirectly. For example, "Looking for information regarding psychological testing, aptitude test, etc. to help me make a decision about my major for my university degree", was one client's reason for coming to the centre.

Personal and lifestyle Guidance

This category included a variety of responses ranging from a need for assistance in dealing with personal problems or emotional distress to a request for lifestyle evaluation. A total of 24 (39%) of the responses fell into this category. (Because some of the reasons fell into more than one category and some respondents gave more than one reason, the total of the responses is more than 100%).

The needs in this category were less straightforward and
more general. For example, one client said she needed "to speak with somebody able to help me clarify my priorities in life, and cope with them in an ordered and reasonable way." Also, she felt "very depressed and lost". Some needs in this area overlapped with those in the other two categories. One woman was looking for work or volunteer involvement because she "Could not stand retirement". Another client's statement was, "I felt a need to change some facets of my life and did not know what options (on career and personal levels), were available in Vancouver for women." This statement reflects the motivation of a variety of clients for visiting the centre, especially those who were new to the city.

Further information about the level of interest in each of these three categories is provided in the next section (Table 7 indicates specific needs for information and assistance in each area). It was not surprising that 82%, 22 of the 27 women, indicated they were in transition in some aspect of their lives. Responses of 63 clients to the question about life as a whole also indicated that clients coming to counselling and information centres tend to be less satisfied with their lives than the general population. Table 6 showed that the clients of the Women's Resources Centre and the two Lifelong Learning Centres reported feeling "mixed" or "dissatisfied" more often than those in the national sample.

Several common issues seemed to underly the previously reported needs and reasons for visiting the Centre. In describing how the motivation for their visit was related to "a change in the pattern of their lives", these clients raised many
of the current issues with which their contemporaries are struggling. The changing role of women in our society today and the growing awareness of how this phenomenon can and does touch their individual lives, emerged as a significant factor in their search for directions. For some, it influenced how they were dealing with lifestage transitions - achieving independence, handling midlife transition and career change and facing retirement and old age. Many referred to their personal relationships, and in particular, the men in their lives. The nature of these relationships, the expectations they present and the ways in which the women are redefining their roles, were most definitely a part of their process of exploration.

Whether clients' needs and reasons for visiting the Centre were related to career, educational or personal issues, or whether or not they were in transition, one common theme tended to emerge. The single, most frequently mentioned reason for choosing to seek assistance or information from the Women's Resources Centre in lieu of utilizing other resources, related to the fact that it was a Women's Centre. Clients felt that, because they were women, their concerns, needs and interests, whatever they might be, would be accepted, respected and dealt with in a realistic manner. They would be understood, and would not have to do a lot of explaining manner. They would be understood, and would not have to do a lot of explaining about the difficulties they were experiencing. The following comments
illustrate these expectations:

I did not have to do a lot of explaining why I felt 'put down' by the male 'manpower' counsellor when he suggested I brush up on my typing skills. I told him I did not intend to discount my professional experience and was not prepared to settle for a clerical job. I was able to share this in the group and we had a good laugh.

When I'm in a new city, I go to a Women's Centre. It helps me find out about resources and you always know you'll be welcome and people will be friendly, just because you're a woman. I went to the Women's Centre at the University of Hawaii - my husband couldn't understand why I wanted to do that.

The pressures of my job were getting me down. I was promoted from a clerical to a supervisory position and was finding it stressful. I can't discuss this at work. I know the Centre should understand this from the point of view of being a woman.

In general, the clients indicated that they came to the Women's Resources Centre because they did not feel free to discuss many of their concerns in other settings. This reticence to raise issues that were affecting their lives was not a problem at the Centre because, as one client put it, "that is what they are there for".
Discussion and Recommendations

These findings increase our understanding of the client's reasons for seeking out the services of the Women's Resources Centre in several ways. Some insights into their motivations have been gained and two main features have emerged. The first, refers to the idea that because of being in transition in some aspect of their lives, many of these clients exhibited a readiness to make changes. The second is the common expectation that the clients had of receiving empathic acceptance and appropriate acceptance because they were coming to a women's centre.

Readiness

Why some people exhibit this phenomenon of readiness and others do not, cannot yet be fully explained (Arbeiter, 1979), but it is beginning to be defined (Toombs, 1977) and identified. The high percentage of clients who indicated that their visit to the Centre was related to some change in the pattern of their lives, can be seen as part of a larger phenomenon. Thirty-six percent of the American population between the ages of 16 and 65 are said to be in transition, either "actual" (unemployed and looking for work), or "anticipatory" (dissatisfied with a current job and considering a new career), (Arbeiter, 1978)

Moveover, a further increase in the in-transition population can be expected because of two factors: continued lowering of sex and race barriers to the movement of qualified workers into jobs, and, continued national concern about other artificial barriers to employment, including educational and credential requirements not related to job performance. These are
particularly pertinent to women and the situation in Canada will parallels that of the United States.

In spite of the fact that this self-selected sample may not be representative of women who generally visit the Centre, the high percentage of adults in transition can provide the centre with useful information about this type of client's needs. Most of the subjects in Arbeiter's study who were identified as being in transition wished to change fields or change their level or status in their present field. Financial need was the prime motivating factor and a desire to seek more interesting work and advance professionally was also present. Biodemographic characteristics of adults in transition did not seem to differ from adults not in transition, except that those in transition were slightly younger.

One of the things that educators have learned about adult life stages is that transition phases between periods of comparative stability hold potential for growth and development. It is at these crucial times that adults either move ahead or regress to a previous, more comfortable stage. When people in transition pass a crisis point, they enter a state of readiness to make changes in their lives. William Toombs, in personal communication with the researcher, described this state as "...having one's act together, putting one's life in order, to the point where it is possible to pursue a new line of education or explore different employment." A client in transition, demonstrating this aspect of readiness, represents a person for whom the services of the Centre may be especially helpful. The role of a counselling centre, converting information into an action strategy to support client
development, may be a particularly appropriate approach for these clients.

Both the "readiness" and "action strategy" concepts have implications for practice for the Women's Resources Centre. The 22 clients (82%) who reported being in transition, exhibit a form of readiness to utilize services to further their goals. Previous studies have also suggested that some clients come to information and counselling centres in high states of readiness. (Toombs, 1977) Since a "get-on-with-it" environment where the client is encouraged to develop an action plan is already a part of the approach of the Women's Resources Centre, the service could be better tailored to the needs of these clients if they could be identified at the outset.

**Recommendation 2**

The initial assessment of a client's needs for service should involve identifying those who are in either active or anticipatory states of transition so that an appropriate approach can be initiated.

In order to do so, a distinction needs to be made between types of clients. Those who come to the Centre for some specific piece of information rather than to explore possibilities or those who are in personal crisis, would not fall into the active or anticipatory transition category. This recommendation singles out the in-transition group because they are the most visible group in this study and may be those who can use the educational brokering services to best advantage. The implementation of this procedure can result in a more deliberate effort to assess clients' needs and offer appropriate assistance. Since this is a practice already carried out on an intuitive basis by many of the staff, its standardization and
routinization makes sense.

A Women's Centre

A second factor relating to clients' reasons for visiting the Women's Resources Centre also emerged from the investigation. A need to identify and deal with issues, problems, and self-concepts which affect their ability to make plans and decisions, was commonly expressed. Although this group of clients represented a variety of different career and lifestyle interests, they were dealing with some similar issues. The single most common feature which emerged from clients' reasons for seeking out the services of the Centre was the expectation that they would receive appropriate and helpful service because they were women. Their hopes were for implicit acceptance and understanding.

Whether their concerns and needs were for vocational, educational, or personal guidance, or whether they were dealing with issues of discrimination, self-identity or role definition, this expectation cut across all others. Knowing this, we can derive several implications for the Centre for planning, publicity and service. Since approximately 300 women visit the Centre each month, marketing of the services and programs is not a major problem. This ability of the Centre to readily attract clients may be partially explained by the tapping of this commonality of need. The feminist movement has promoted an awareness in recent years that women as a disadvantaged group have common concerns and needs with which they can help each other. The collaborative rather than competitive attitude of women towards each other which has emerged, also draws women to
Centres. The fact that so many clients expressed interest in this aspect of the Centre underscores its relevance as a resource for today's women. It also suggests the focus for continued efforts in making the services of the Centre known.

Another implication relates to the actual provision of service. When clients come with expectations of being accepted and understood, communication is enhanced and rapport can be more quickly established. Thus, even though the brokering interview may be a brief, one-time encounter, the exchange can represent a meaningful experience for the client. The positive attitude of the client, coupled with the empathy of the peer counsellor, can result in mutually beneficial interaction. Several clients expressed this ambience and their accounts during the personal interviews, about their association with the Centre reflected this. A similar rapport developed during some of the research interviews. In fact, this resulted in the identification of this commonality of purpose in visiting the Centre.

Finally, it is important to consider this motivation when planning to extend the Centre's services to men. Since it seems to be a key to why women choose to avail themselves of the services, the women's focus should be retained. This does not imply that the model on which the Centre operates is only appropriate for a women's centre. Rather, whatever the purpose of a service, the commonality of need within the intended client should be tapped if that service is to be utilized by them. If the centre was to lose its focus on women's needs and issues, it would also lose a valuable drawing card.
Recommendation 3

In considering any changes in the services, the Women's Resources Centre should, in the words of a client, "Keep it a Women's Centre. Make sure that services are first offered to women, i.e. psychological tests, lifeplanning for women only, so that there is no waiting time while men are being given the service."

Summary

The reasons which prompted women to seek out the services of the Women's Resources Centre suggest that their expectations of the service centre around career, educational and lifestyle interests but will also be quite individual. Many clients will come with a positive attitude towards the Centre and the hopes for information and assistance may be very high. These various needs, the aspect of "readiness" which some clients exhibit and the fairly common expectation of empathic understanding will all affect the clients' reactions to their association with the Centre and to the services they actually receive.

This data, along with the responses to the question about "Life as a Whole", suggests that people who come to these Centres may have specific needs for information and recommendations for action but, "... they also carry with them feelings of discomfort and dissatisfaction about their life situation" (Toombs, 1977, p. 39). Although Toombs found no evidence of major life crises to be met, this is not the case here. These women were dealing with divorce, abortion, unemployment, relocation, life stage and career transitions as well as illness and other crises. As Toombs (1977) points out, "These fragments of data go far toward explaining why such a high value was attached to the quality of the interaction, the concern and nurturing attitudes, exhibited by the counsellors and sensed by
the clients" (p. 39). We shall find, in examining the findings in the subsequent section that this is also very much the case with this particular group of clients.
Effectiveness of the Services in Meeting Clients' Needs

As we have seen, clients have high hopes and expectations for services from the Women's Resources Centre. Even though their needs seemed to fit into some general categories, they were also uniquely individual. How well did the services which they actually received measure up for these women? For those who were in transition, were the services appropriate for their state of readiness to make changes and useful in helping them move ahead? Did the expectations of empathic understanding of the issues they were dealing with because they were women materialize? The results which are presented in this section are intended to provide some answers to these questions.

Most of the findings reflect the responses of 63 clients to several lines of investigation. First, specific and overall reactions to three aspects of the drop-in service are examined. These include: accessibility of the Centre, interaction with the staff and, the information exchange and referral service. Reactions to the stated goals of the Centre by 29 staff members and 27 clients are reported next. Third, respondents' specific needs for information and assistance in each of the three areas of interest - career, education and lifestyle - are examined in order to assess how well these were met. Some reactions to the brokering process itself and to the group services, an extension of the brokering service, are also presented. The discussion section which follows attempts to tie together the various findings and provide some indications of how well the services have been able to connect clients needs with appropriate resources. Recommendations intended to reinforce present
practices as well as supplement and modify service are offered.

Satisfaction with the Drop-In Service

Respondents had an opportunity to rate their satisfaction with various aspects of the Drop-In service in relation to the accessibility of the Centre and its services, the interaction with the staff, and the information and referral they received. It is interesting to note that several items, possibly the most crucial factors of the service, were responded to more often than the others. Ninety percent of the respondents rated the following:

1. The amount of time the staff gave.
2. The hours of operation.
3. The opportunity to explain fully what your needs and interests were.
4. The competence of the person who worked with you.
5. The location of the Centre.
6. The willingness of the volunteer to listen.
7. The amount of attention the staff gave.
8. The way it all turned out.
9. The level of comfort you felt in discussing your needs with the staff.
10. The specific information you expected to get.

The response rate to the entire set of items in general was high. Except for the item on the Usefulness of the Vocational Planning Manual and the Resume Kit, all items were responded to by at least 60% of the clients.

Table 7 provides detailed information about the satisfaction with each of the features as well as means for the three general aspects of the service. (The lower the mean, the higher the satisfaction). The percentage of non-respondents for each item is included.
Table 7
Clients' Satisfaction with "Drop-in" Services (N=63)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Not Stated (%)</th>
<th>Very Satisfied (1)</th>
<th>Satisfied (2)</th>
<th>Neither (3)</th>
<th>Dissatisfied (4)</th>
<th>Very Dissatisfied (5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Interaction with Staff (Overall mean - 1.8)**
1. The willingness of the volunteer to listen.
   - 5 57 29 12 2 -
2. The amount of attention the staff gave.
   - 5 55 30 13 2 -
3. The amount of time the staff gave.
   - 2 51 31 15 3 -
4. The competence of the person who worked with you.
   - 3 38 30 25 8 -
5. The level of comfort you felt.
   - 8 43 31 16 7 3

**Accessibility of the Centre (overall mean - 1.9)**
1. The telephone contact.
   - 29 38 42 18 2 -
2. The location of the Centre.
   - 5 42 42 13 3 -
3. The opportunity to explain.
   - 3 42 34 16 8 -
4. The hours of operation.
   - 5 27 51 15 5 2
5. The number of visits.
   - 14 26 37 28 9 -

**Information Exchange (overall mean - 2.1)**
   - 44 37 37 26 - -
2. The usefulness of the Resume Kit.
   - 71 38 39 17 6 -
3. The accuracy of the information.
   - 14 23 54 19 2 2
4. Timeliness of the information.
   - 16 27 45 15 9 4
5. The services at the offices, agencies or persons to whom you were referred.
   - 37 24 43 23 5 5
6. The specific information you wanted.
   - 10 19 35 23 18 5

**The Way It All Turned Out (overall mean - 2)**
   - 5 30 25 20 17 8
The highest satisfaction level was expressed with three aspects of the service, all pertaining to interaction with the staff. These were: items 1, 6, and 7 in the previous list. When the "very satisfied" and "satisfied" responses are considered together, two additional items are included; the telephone contact and the location of the Centre. Eighty percent of those who responded to these five highly rated items were either "very satisfied" or "satisfied".

In grouping the features together under the three general aspects of the service, a slightly different picture emerges. Although the overall mean satisfaction ratings for each category are fairly close, ranging from 1.8 to 2, when the responses which fell into the less positive categories are considered, there are ranges of rating worth noting. Of those who were "very dissatisfied" with some aspect of the service, only 2% pertained to accessibility (hours of operation) and 3% to interaction with the staff. However, 16% were very dissatisfied with some aspect of the information exchange. Table 7 shows more specific dissatisfactions. When considering both the "dissatisfied" and "very dissatisfied" categories this difference is still present but less pronounced. Thus, the most common area of dissatisfaction with the services of the Centre was with the Information Exchange aspects, while the Interaction with Staff category received the least negative and the most positive responses.

Overall Satisfaction

In separating out these aspects of the service we gain specifically focused feedback but we also lose something. The global question about The Way it all turned out, is an attempt
to gain an overall perspective. The global effect of the experience with the Centre is a combination of all the separate aspects but it also reflects more than that. It is an intuitive response to a question about overall value or worth of the experience with the Centre.

This question received a slightly less than "satisfied" mean response of 2.5. There was a large range of response to this item however, from 30% in the "very satisfied" category to 8% who were "very dissatisfied". Thus, even though many of the individual aspects of the service were rated high, the overall reaction to it suggests that some of the initial promise did not materialize for at least 25% of the respondents.

Additional insights into the satisfaction expressed by the clients with these services can be gained by examining the open-ended responses to the invitation to describe any other parts of the visit to the "Drop-In" Centre about which they felt particularly satisfied or dissatisfied. These are presented in Appendix D.

Before drawing any implications from the reactions to these aspects of the service, it may be useful to examine how the goals and purposes of the Centre were perceived and how well the services measured up in relation to them.

Reactions to the Goals

The 27 clients interviewed were presented with a list of goals on which the services of the Centre are based. Six items pertained to products and seven to processes or approaches offered by the Centre. Respondents were asked to identify those services they had received and to rate their helpfulness on a four point scale from "very helpful" to "of no help". Twenty-
nine staff members also participated in a similar exercise, indicating which of the services they generally provided and how helpful they saw it as being for the client. Table 8 provides a comparison of the responses of staff and clients. Their perceptions of the purposes of the Centre and their ratings of helpfulness for each of the services are also shown.

**Services Used or Provided**

A higher percentage of staff indicated they provided services than the percentage of clients who acknowledged receiving them. This is understandable when we consider that staff are not only committed to the goals but are also more familiar with the range of services that are available to clients. Also, some of the clients do not need all of the services whereas staff responded in relation to what they generally offer.

Staff consistently
Table 8
Reactions to Goals
A Comparison Between Staff (N=29) and Clients (N=27)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals of Service</th>
<th>Service Reported</th>
<th>Very Helpful</th>
<th>Service Rated Mod. Helpful</th>
<th>Slightly Helpful</th>
<th>Of no Help</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>St. Cl. (n)</td>
<td>St. Cl. (Percent)</td>
<td>St. Cl.</td>
<td>St. Cl.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Products</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Information</td>
<td>29 23</td>
<td>83 47</td>
<td>17 22</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Materials</td>
<td>25 17</td>
<td>72 70</td>
<td>28 18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Counselling Services</td>
<td>29 15</td>
<td>79 47</td>
<td>21 33</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Referral</td>
<td>29 9</td>
<td>79 44</td>
<td>17 33</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Programs</td>
<td>26 17</td>
<td>88 59</td>
<td>12 41</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approaches</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Acceptance</td>
<td>29 24</td>
<td>86 58</td>
<td>10 33</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Clarifying Needs</td>
<td>29 21</td>
<td>79 47</td>
<td>21 24</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Identifying Abilities</td>
<td>29 20</td>
<td>90 50</td>
<td>10 30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Self- Responsibility in decision making</td>
<td>29 24</td>
<td>76 46</td>
<td>24 38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Identifying Alternatives</td>
<td>29 14</td>
<td>69 43</td>
<td>28 43</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Encouraging self-directedness</td>
<td>26 17</td>
<td>50 47</td>
<td>46 41</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Promoting control of life direction</td>
<td>27 14</td>
<td>67 43</td>
<td>22 50</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

St. Refers to staff.
Cl. Refers to clients.
reported providing most of the services except for **advocacy**. Nine claimed they had not had an opportunity to provide this service. (None of the clients reported receiving this service, possibly because they did not require it. One interviewee did report on the success of advocacy provided on her behalf by the University of British Columbia Women's Students Office, and, since it is one of the core brokering functions, the question of why advocacy was the last provided and least received service needs to be further explored.¹)

More clients reported receiving **Information** than any other product. Only nine of the clients reported receiving **Referral**. Four of the approaches offered — acceptance, assistance in explaining and clarifying needs, encouragement to make one's own decisions and identifying strengths — were received by more than 20 of the 27 clients. Except for the discrepancies noted, the clients seem to be receiving the services which the staff reported providing. Moreover, in identifying that they received

¹ The discrepancies between the responses to the goal of advocacy and the responses to the other product goals on the part of both staff and clients requires some interpretation. This particular function, rather than operating on an individual level as the others do, is mainly carried out by the directors of the Centre. In serving on university committees, collaborating with the community and communicating with government, they fulfill this role for the Centre on behalf of women in general. Interpreting women's needs and how the services and programs of the Centre contribute towards meeting these, results in benefits for individuals. Attitudes and understandings which are promoted help to open doors to educational and vocational opportunities in the community.

Even though the advocacy role does not appear to be a strong one when individual volunteer-client interactions are examined, it is considered to be important by the Centre. The fact that the Women's Resources Centre experience has provided a model for the province, resulting in government assistance being given to Women's Access Centres throughout the province indicates that the advocacy role has had some impact.
these services, particularly the approaches, clients show an awareness of being involved in a process of self-directed learning. Of the 17 who recognized themselves as being involved in this process, rather than passive recipients of a service, 15 felt that it was helpful to them - a reasonable indication that this central goal and overall purpose of the Centre's approach is being met.

**Helpfulness of Services**

In examining the ratings of helpfulness by those staff who provided service and those clients who received it, some additional interesting comparisons can be made. The staff rated all of the products as either "very helpful" or "moderately helpful", except for **Referral** and **Advocacy** which were rated "slightly helpful" by 3% and 5% respectively. This less positive rating was explained in the open-ended responses as being due to a lack of follow-up procedures so that judgements about this were difficult to make.

The staff rated all of the processes or approaches as "very helpful" or "moderately helpful" with a few exceptions. Three staff rated item 7, assistance with control of life direction, as only "slightly helpful", and one staff member also rated three additional items - acceptance, pointing out alternatives and encouraging self-directed learning as "slightly helpful". Explanations for this included the qualification that these approaches are only helpful if the client is motivated to accept them.

In looking at the clients' ratings, a more detailed picture emerges. Ratings in general were high, but slightly lower than
those of the staff. The most positively rated products were Materials and Programs. These, as well as the approaches of Acceptance, encouragement of self-directedness, and assistance in gaining more control of life direction, were rated "very helpful" or "moderately helpful" by over 88%. It seems that the expectation of empathic acceptance was realized by a majority of clients (24 of the 27). Furthermore, an overwhelming 91% found this approach helpful either "moderately" or "very" helpful.

The responses in the less positive categories may provide some clues to some of the gaps in service which were suggested earlier. Three people indicated that the information they received was "of no help", while four found it to be only "slightly helpful". A few ratings in these categories for some of the approaches and a few other products also indicate some disparity between expectations and actual satisfactions.

Additional Comments

Both staff and clients were given the opportunity to provide additional comments about the goals of the Centre and to suggest additions to the services and approaches. These responses are presented in Appendix E and included the following:

Suggestions from Staff

1. Follow-up with specific clients, perhaps those requiring additional support or encouragement, by even a brief telephone call would enable staff to obtain feedback about the results of their service and offer additional assistance to the client.

2. The vocational/career guidance could be improved by offering more practical assistance with job placement, and better information about different careers. A contact network with agencies and educational institutions and a hook-up with the Canadian Immigration and Employment Commission (formerly
Manpower) to available jobs, were seen as "... bridges that would make the connection from 'now' to the future so much easier for the client."

3. A wholistic approach including an emphasis on counselling and information in the areas of lifeplanning, nutrition and exercise needs to be offered.

4. Physical rearrangement of the setting to provide quieter, more private areas for conversation were suggested as a way of enhancing the role of the volunteer-associate counsellor.

5. Broadening the background of the pool of volunteer-associates, ethnically and socio-economically, could increase rapport with clients.

6. More women need to be made aware of the services.

Suggestions from Clients

1. The need for follow up and ongoing contact with the Centre on a more formalized basis was expressed.

2. Vocational/career guidance could be improved by providing more practical information about different careers and where to find out about them. Assistance in obtaining employment and preparing for positions in management, was also requested.

3. More assistance in sorting out uncertainties and exploring alternatives before suggesting solutions or programs was requested.

4. Specific services such as legal advice or confidence building assistance would be useful.

The suggestions of the staff and the clients parallel each other in several areas. The need for follow up procedures and for more practical assistance in career/vocational guidance were mentioned by both groups.

The reactions to the goals of service by these 27 clients reinforced some of the earlier findings. Again, the most positive reactions were to those aspects of the service which related to Interaction with the Staff. Strongest dissatisfactions showed up in relation to the Information Exchange aspects. More information about gaps and areas where the information exchange may be improved is gained by examining
the responses reported in the next section and looking at specific needs for information and assistance.
Specific Needs for Information and Assistance

So far, in assessing how well the services of the Women's Resources Centre have been meeting the needs of this particular group of clients, we have gained general impressions about clients' satisfaction with various aspects of the service and their overall feelings about the association with the Centre. We have also seen how the stated goals and purposes of the Centre were perceived by the staff and some of the clients. More specific needs for information and assistance and how well these were met will now be considered.

Respondents were asked to indicate whether their needs were included in those listed under three categories - career, educational, or lifestyle interests. An opportunity to add additional items was provided. In addition, clients were asked to rate the helpfulness of the Centre in relation to each of the needs identified by the client. Table 9 provides detailed information about these responses on a five-point scale from "extremely helpful" to "of no help".

Needs Identified

The frequency with which specific needs were identified in each of the interest areas is shown in Table 9. The value of these figures is not derived from absolutes but from comparisons between them. For example, career/employment interests were again a priority for most respondents (55%), while educational and lifestyle interests were identified by 21% and 26% respectively, as their priority of interest.
Table 9
Meeting Needs for Information and Assistance (N=63)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interest Areas</th>
<th>Does not Apply to (1)</th>
<th>Extrem. Helpful (2)</th>
<th>Very Helpful (3)</th>
<th>Mod. Helpful (4)</th>
<th>Slightly Helpful (5)</th>
<th>Of no Help (5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Career/Employment Interests (mean rating = 3.06)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyzing job situation</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarifying employment goals</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning employment goals</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning for a lifelong career</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploring aptitudes, interests and abilities</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning how to job hunt</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-entering the job market</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing a resume</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploring part-time work</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploring volunteer work</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Educational Interests (Mean rating = 3.4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job-related training</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completing high school</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational or Technical programs</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College or university programs</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Interest of personal development programs</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial aid for Education</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit for life experience</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(adjusted %)
### Table 9 (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interest Areas</th>
<th>Does not Apply to (%)</th>
<th>Extrem. Helpful (1)</th>
<th>Very Helpful (2)</th>
<th>Mod. Helpful (3)</th>
<th>Slightly Helpful (4)</th>
<th>Of no Help (5)</th>
<th>(adjusted %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Requirements to enter different programs</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal suitability for different programs</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Lifestyle Interests (Mean rating = 3.3)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dealing with Stress</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolving a Family Situation</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Development</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coping with depression or loneliness</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving nutrition or exercise habits</td>
<td>92</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolving financial issues</td>
<td>91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding out about community support services</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessing my personal Lifestyle</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploring Life goals and Lifeplaning</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Within the categories, the most interest was shown in the following:

A. Career/Employment Interests
   - Exploring aptitudes, interests and abilities
   - Clarifying Employment Goals
   - Planning Employment Goals
   - Analyzing my job situation

B. Educational Interests
   - College or University Programs
   - General Interest or Personal Development Programs
     - Personal Suitability for different programs

C. Lifestyle Interests
   - Personal Development
   - Exploring Life goals and Life Planning
   - Coping with Depression or Loneliness
   - Assessing my Personal Lifestyle

Since these emerged as needs which were identified more frequently than others, it will be interesting to see how clients rated the information and assistance received in relation to these needs.

Ratings of Helpfulness

In examining the ratings of helpfulness, mean scores for each of the three general categories were calculated by summing the means of the specific items and dividing by the total of the items in each category. The scores arrived at were fairly similar: 3.06, 3.4, and 3.34 for categories A, B, and C respectively. This indicates that, on the whole, assistance received in each general area was rated as moderately helpful.

However, the ratings for specific needs ranged from 2.6 for writing a resume, to 5 for improving nutrition or exercise habits. Because of the small number of responses to some of the items, these comparisons are not too useful. It is more helpful
to examine the most positively and negatively rated items.

The assistance received with each of the following was rated "extremely helpful" or "very helpful" by 50% or more of those clients who identified them as needs: analyzing my job situation, learning how to job hunt, re-entering the job market, resume writing, job-related training, personal development, dealing with stress, and finding out about community resources. Two of these are noteworthy in that they also appeared on the list of most frequently identified needs - personal development, and analyzing my job situation.

The least help was received with the following: completing high school, requirements to enter different programs, financial aid for education, resolving financial issues, and planning for a lifelong career. Sixty-four percent or more of those who identified these as needs indicated that they had received little or no help with them. It is interesting that none of these appear on the list of most frequently identified needs.

The service provided in relation to those needs which were identified more frequently than the others was slightly more positively rated than that of the total list. The mean was 2.9 compared with an overall mean of 3.2. In other words, the information and assistance received with the needs which were of interest to the most clients, was rated more positively than that of the entire set of items. Thus, the Centre seems to be doing a good job in gearing the services to the interests of the clients.
Connecting Needs to Resources

Having the right information is a necessary and crucial factor in the learning process. For example, knowing that good nutrition and proper exercise can actually enhance one's ability to cope with the stresses of daily living, that having a well written resume is an important tool for job hunting, or that a particular ability is required for a certain occupation is useful. Knowledge such as this is necessary to begin the process of moving away from an unsatisfactory position, or realistically appraising a position in order to enhance, accept or decide to make changes in it.

In fact, providing adults with appropriate information is crucial in offering a relevant service since, as previously noted, adults are more interested in "information" than "counselling". However, when clients are faced with such an array of alternatives information sources — files, computers, pamphlets and brochures — it can be overwhelming. They need and want guidance to quickly to find what is applicable to them. This is where the role of the brokering agent becomes important. Familiarity with the clients' needs, and knowledge about where to find specific information can mean the difference between whether or not that information is utilized.

But even pertinent information is not enough. Most of our self-defeating and maladaptive behavior occurs in spite of the fact that we know better. The failure of informational programs to influence behaviour in the fields of nutrition, smoking cessation, stress management, and parenting are common examples. We are now coming to realize more and more, that, for information to be utilized appropriately by an individual, it
must be applied and transferred to his/her particular situation.

Often the person is able to move ahead and do this on their own. Sometimes this process is catalyzed by events that occur spontaneously. For example, one client's decision to pursue further education came about as a result of a chance interchange. When attending a workshop - "Options for Women" - she received information about alternatives. It was during the discussion of this information with another conference participant that she came to her decision. It resulted from a remark by the other woman, "If you have the qualifications, why not try for the best you can?" "It's funny how these little incidents can change our lives," reported this client.

The information component is a necessary element to be sure. The application of this information and the ability to utilize it in making plans is an equally important ingredient. Referring to the service provided by the Lifelong Learning Centre in Pennsylvania, Toombs points out that going beyond providing information and support in an accessible environment is the key. "The point not to be missed here is that the Centre offers not only information and support but also assistance to clients with the decisions about how to best use information for their own purposes" (Toombs, 1977, p.29). The Women's Resources Centre recognizes the importance of providing opportunities for personal goal setting, application of newly learned skills and behaviours and for practicing these in protected situations.

In order to assess how well the Women's Resources Centre has been able to assist clients to make the connection between their interests and needs and available resources, comments and suggestions regarding both the group services and the brokering
process have been analyzed. These, along with statements made during the personal interviews, provide valuable information in the clients' own words.

Reactions to the Brokering Process

The brokering interview in which the clients in this study participated involves overlapping stages which may include: initial assessment of the clients' needs, provision of support and encouragement for exploration and assessment of goals and directions, assessment of strengths and abilities in relation to these, provision of appropriate information and resources and, facilitating the networking process as well as making provision for follow up and reassessment of progress. In order for this process to proceed, several visits to the Centre for individual as well as group sessions and explorations of resources in the community are usually required. Ideally, this should be part of an individualized overall plan for the client who wanting this type of assistance.

Deficiencies and gaps in this process are apparent from the clients' comments and these seem to explain some of the dissatisfactions with the information and referral service expressed previously. Clients are requesting, "In general, more in depth guidance with more specific information available to be of effective individual use." In order to determine how the services can be modified to better accomplish this goal, the brokering process will be examined by breaking it down into its phases. Clients' comments about experiences in each of these stages are included, along with a brief description of the service offered and the clients' range of needs in each stage.
Suggestions for improved service are implicit. More explicit recommendations resulting from these findings will be presented later.

1. Initial Assessment

Since women come to the Centre for a variety of reasons, some of which fall into the casual drop-in or information-seeking category, not requiring a brokering interview, the task of making an initial assessment about an appropriate approach for each client can be a most difficult one for the staff. After identifying those for whom a brokering interview is indicated, a further challenge involves determining the stages of exploration in which they are currently engaged. A woman may already be quite clear about her goals and directions and want to explore resources even though it may be her first visit to the Centre. Others may be uncertain about their needs and reasons for visiting the Centre. Thus, it is a sorting out time for both client and volunteer. However, regardless of the motivation or the stage in which the client is, there is a common need. As one client put it, "It was important to me that I was made to feel welcome at the Centre and that my concerns were legitimate."

Underlying this common need however, are crucial individual differences. For some, like Jan, the initial visit to the Centre may be a very significant one. Jan is an apprentice painter. Although she finds the work challenging and promising in terms of future remuneration, she has doubts about how she measures up compared to the men in the field. She was also wondering how she will be able to handle the roles of wife and mother as well as maintain the physical stamina required for her
work. She had been considering coming to the Centre to discuss these concerns for some time in order to explore other employment possibilities but an upsetting incident on the job triggered the actual visit. Unfortunately her experience that day was unfruitful and in her words, "I didn't know what I wanted (from the Centre) and left feeling the same."

Like Jan, a woman may be in an emotional state, not knowing what to expect from the Centre but counting on getting some "help". A client of this type requires a very different kind of reception than does a casual drop-in or information-seeker. One of the responsibilities of the staff is to make this selective judgement about the needs of the client at the outset, offering appropriate service. For the most part, the volunteers carry out these assessments daily, in a most competent manner. However, some of the clients' comments indicated that this aspect of the service could have been improved for them. For example, one client said, "I got sort or a 'Tower of Babel' feeling", on her first visit to the Centre. When asked to elaborate, she described the atmosphere as being cold and said she felt overwhelmed by the activity and the array of informational material.

In sifting through some of the reactions to the initial assessment stage, it seems that those who expressed dissatisfaction were unhappy about the lack of individual attention they received. When asked how the service could have been more helpful one client responded, "If the woman had actually listened to what I had to say, instead of saying what she wanted to say". Another comment was, "Some of the counsellors weren't what I needed - couldn't listen." During
this initial encounter, regardless of whether the client is just beginning a process of exploration or is further along, two aspects seem to be particularly important - the atmosphere and the interaction with the staff. On the whole, comments indicated that the initial reception given to clients is the area in which the volunteer-associates really shine and, once a mutual understanding of the focus of a client's visit is gained, the interaction can proceed. For those who indicate that they wish to discuss general issues or specific concerns, a more deliberate consideration of needs and interests begins.

2. Exploration of Needs and Interest

The initial exchange with a woman often moves directly into a closer examination of her needs and interests. Assisting a client to explain and explore what she is thinking and feeling is one of the crucial aspects of the process. The importance of taking the time to thoroughly explore the client's situation with her before offering suggestions or information was pointed out by one of the volunteer associates at the outset of this investigation. She explained that, a client's underlying concerns will often surface only after reviewing her situation several times. The importance of this approach is reinforced by findings that the clients' reasons for seeking out the services of the Women's Resources Centre are often related to issues of self-confidence, sex-role stereotyping or sex discrimination and while the client may be seeking out the career or education related information or assistance she requires, she is also hoping for empathic understanding in dealing with these related issues.
The need for a more exploratory approach is apparent from the comments of some of the clients. One suggestion was that staff should, "Take more time to explore why a person is there, even if they seem certain about what they want." Another advised, "Try to focus on the specific needs of the person coming to the Centre. Several visits could be required before the specific needs are determined." Frustration at not finding this kind of assistance is evident in another client's comment, "Unless I go into the Centre with a specific problem I go 'blind'. The attitude that 'You're doing fine. What do you need?' is not helpful. I would like to explore things more. I've never gotten anything more than picking up a bunch of brochures." Clearly, these clients are pointing out a gap in the service they received.

Since it is the Centre's aim to offer individualized assistance, the approach of the staff should be examined to determine why some clients who require a more exploratory approach are not receiving it. If staff can legitimize the client's position - her uncertainty and confusion - and recognize that it has been a major step for her to seek assistance she is more likely to feel okay about being unclear about goals and directions. In the words of Virginia Griffin,

> When you hear, accept, and legitimize a person's position early on, he or she is freed to be more flexible and to change and grow away from that position. When a person has no need to fight for his stance to be known or to defend it against attack, he can move away from it without losing face or self-esteem. (Griffin, 1978, p.7)

The fact that assistance is available to help her move along from this position needs to be communicated. When a client
begins to identify some plans and interests, some goals and directions can begin to be formulated.

3. Defining Goals and Directions

The comments of several clients indicated a need for more assistance in formulating goals and directions. Again, emphasis needs to be placed on sorting out clients' priorities and alternatives in relation to their strengths and abilities before solutions are suggested. It is useful to keep in mind the idea that, "If we want to help people change, it is important that we don't push or pull them - just walk together" (Fergusen, 1980, p. 258).

One young woman, having just completed her B.A., needed to decide whether to enter the work force or continue on to graduate school. Since she has a young child and her husband was earning a modest income, there were several issues involved. Also, she had very little idea of the types of jobs which were available for someone with her qualifications. She was not assisted to explore these options. In her words,

I needed some one-to-one goal clarification help and possibly some assertiveness training so I can speak up when I find myself being steered in the wrong direction. I ended up in a job-finding group which didn't help me very much.

This was an example of connecting a clients' needs to an inappropriate resource as well as failing to fully explore them with her in the first place.

Others also expressed disappointment with the assistance they received with this task. Some other comments were: "My problem is with an inability to state needs." "It would have been useful to see a list of 'needs' and be better able to say
what I was after." Since clients themselves often do not know what they need to know or what the possibilities are, asking for, "some counselling for people who come in 'a total blank'. Those of us who we want to change or improve something but do not know exactly what something is." Furthermore, clients often do not know what to expect in the way of assistance or service from the Centre. Having a tool to assist the client in pinpointing interests and needs, such as the list in the questionnaire used in this study, could assist both the counsellor and client to zero in on her particular interest areas and initiate some focusing of directions. Some type of assistance with exploration of goals or self-assessment can be useful at this stage. The important thing is to communicate to the client that the action or service suggested is for purposes of exploration.

4. **Resourcing - Identifying information sources and obtaining information**

Identifying appropriate sources of information or referral, once the area of need and some general goals have been established is one of the most crucial aspects of the process. The dissatisfactions with the information exchange service indicate that clients want more specific assistance in finding out about courses, job opportunities and contacts in their particular areas of interest. Moreover, they want this information to be relevant to themselves, their abilities, interests and backgounds. One client's attempt to explain her
needs was as follows:

The counsellor could have told me, by an aptitude test, if I was a good secretary or might have explained where to acquire a good job. For example, should I join a union, work for the government, or consider what companies have the best pension plan?

Clients also want information about themselves, their abilities, strengths and weaknesses so that they can make appropriate choices. The Centre attempts to assist clients in acquiring this kind of knowledge by offering a psychological testing service. One client's reaction to this service was as follows:

I was most unhappy about the results of my psychological testing. The psychologist merely affirmed what I already know about myself, when I was expecting more in the way of job counselling. I know more about the availability of many services than she does. It seemed like more of a survey than a service. I found the whole process most disappointing. Why is there no follow-up after the testing as to jobs, what is available, and where there is need? Many questions on my personal data were not even explored. Why were they asked?

This client's experience points out a need for a more coordinated effort between the psychological testing and the brokering service in order to help the client make the connection between her particular qualities and the practical aspects of career/vocational planning.

Some clients were disappointed with the resources which were offered. One client reported, "I took the job finding course. It was helpful but limited for my needs." Another said, "I did not gain any knowledge except about a nutrition course which is always helpful." A suggestion that "Specific information about the job market in one's field would motivate you to seek out resources to meet your own needs," was offered. Some indicated that the Centre should go a step further and
"Offer a job finding service, and not be just another referral agency." Another concurred and described her experience as follows:

I visited the Women's Resources Centre twice in the months of February and March when I was down from Prince George. I was hoping to get some specific leads for jobs, which I discovered is not one of its services. The chats I had were beneficial to the effect that I felt better psychologically about not being successful in landing a job. However, that was the only benefit I felt.

Some of the expectations in this area are in conflict with the Centre's goals. Two aspects of the resourcing service seem to contradict each other. On the one hand, clients want specific information from the Centre, about a host of interest areas. Alternately, the Centre can be a lead in or first step to the wider community and information services which exist elsewhere. The dilemma is where to focus efforts. Building up an information bank on a variety of topics and developing referral networks that tie in with community resources are both current endeavors of the Centre. There is a need to consider this dual role of the agency and how it may be reconciled. The next phase of the brokering process - Networking may offer some ideas.

5. **Networking or Making Contact**

The term "networking" in current, popular use, refers to the process of making contacts and pursuing leads in order to obtain needed information, tap resources, or find out about opportunities. The awareness of such a process and that one can pursue contacts for one's own benefit was a learning experience for some clients. This is described in more detail in part IV
of this report. The networking idea takes us one step further than the resourcing stage does in facilitating self-directed learning. The focus is on assisting clients to learn the process so that they can do their own resourcing and networking more effectively.

The comments of many clients suggest that they want this kind of assistance from the Centre, and that they would like to see the Centre promote more networking opportunities. For example, one client said, "I needed contacts with people in related fields, women in the arts, the Centre should keep a file of clients seeking jobs. I just heard about a job that was not suitable for me but may have been for someone else." Another suggestion was: "Bring together people in similar circumstances, i.e. arrange a meeting of welfare (single) women seeking employment to meet others to discuss problems encountered."

Others felt that the Centre should go beyond simply facilitating contacts and become directly involved in organizing interest and action groups.

I feel, while the Women's Resources Centre may be helpful to certain individuals, it lacks the power, or ability to help women directly in obtaining employment. I would like to see this organization help women to organize themselves into unions, for domestics, waitresses, office workers, beauty operators; in short, areas generally relegated to female employees. Show women they don't have to take a $4.00 per hour job while our male counterparts make double or more our salary.

The networking idea also holds promise for supplementing the service of the Centre to better meet clients needs. As we shall see in examining the results achieved and the impacts of the association with the Centre for some clients, networking has been very effective. When people have been able to sort out
goals and directions, and feel confident about how their energies are being channeled, an understanding of and knowledge of networking can be an extremely effective way of making those connections that enable them to move ahead with plans, whatever they may be.

6. **Reassessing Progress and Goals**

   The preceding phases of the brokering process have been presented in a step by step manner. However, in reality, this process is a cyclical rather than a linear one. As clients proceed through the process, identifying and clarifying needs and goals, initial perceptions may change. As resources are explored, and information gained about the practicalities of the situation, changes in directions may result. Therefore, it is important that the client have an opportunity to reassess her priorities and goals as she learns more about herself and her options. This step is not necessarily the end of the process as reassessment may lead to other areas of exploration.

   Comments about this stage of the process related to the need for follow up and to re-establish contact with the Centre. For example, one client said, "I enjoyed the two groups in which I participated. However, I find that there is no real follow up. I realize how difficult this is to do but being a person who lacks self discipline and self confidence, I would have found it most beneficial." Although clients are invited to return to the Centre, often no definite arrangements are made to continue the process.

   Enquiring about expectations of further association with the Centre, and how the clients felt about the number of visits
they had made, provided some reactions to the service in this phase. The number of visits made to the Centre by the 27 clients who were interviewed ranged from one (5 clients) to 35 (1 client). The most common number of visits were one, two, and four, each being reported by 5 different clients. Four clients made five and six visits while three came only three times. Another three clients visited a total of eight times and one person reported having made 10 visits. One person that she had been to the Centre over 35 times during the past two years.

In response to being asked how they felt about the number of visits they had made to the Centre, 20 (74%) said that they expected further association with the Centre. Seven (26%) did not. Of those who expected further association, 7 felt that the Centre should have taken some initiative for encouraging them to return and 13 felt that it was up to them to return if they wished. Those who expressed reluctance to take the initiative, were uncertain if they were welcome to do so, or felt they required some further encouragement such as a scheduled follow up session of the group to pursue resources. Even those who felt comfortable about taking the initiative, indicated that for some, the Centre should take the initiative in arranging for follow up visits.

Several reasons for wanting further association were given. Clients wanted to browse through the resource files to find out about different occupations and to find out about other programs offered. More interpretation of psychological tests, life planning interviews and critiques of resumes were also given as reason for returning. Some qualified their interest in obtaining additional service. "Would like to have a
relationship with a particular person rather than tell my story again to someone else." Others wanted additional association but were unsure of the form this might take. "Wanted more assistance, don't know in what capacity - disappointed with information I got." For a few, continued association was a matter of course. "It's an ongoing process." Two other reasons were to explore volunteer employment with the Centre and to provide the Centre with feedback and express satisfaction with the service.

Most of these clients were prepared to be self-directed in seeking out further association with the Centre in relation to their continuing needs. However, seven (35%) felt that the Centre should take more initiative in encouraging follow up visits. Considering that this particular group of clients was probably highly motivated and self-directed, there is perhaps even higher percentage of clients for whom some more specific validation for returning might be indicated. One of the ways in which clients are encouraged to continue their process of learning is by participating in a group offered by the Centre. In doing so, a client's needs for further involvement and assistance may be met. Further assistance with the previous stages of the brokering process may also be forthcoming from the group experience. Reactions to this extension of the service may offer some additional insights.

Reactions to the Group Services

Even though the focus of this study is on the Drop-In educational brokering services of the Centre - counselling, information exchange, and referral, the reactions of the clients
to some of the group programs are pertinent to our enquiry. Information and advisement Centres seem to offer a better service when there is some kind of on-site routine activity beyond counselling, according to Toombs. "Typically some kind of training function to build skills by workshops or to offer job search classes seems to give a sense of continuity to the work." (Toombs, 1979) The Women's Resources Centre extends its services in this way. During January to June when this study was underway, 13 (24%) of the clients in this sample, took part in a three to five session vocational planning group. An additional 5 (9%) were enrolled in a similar life planning group.

Several other types of groups are also offered at the Centre including job finding, confidence building and most recently, a health oriented lifestyle planning group. Women's programs sponsored by the Centre for Continuing Education are also offered at the Centre throughout the year. The ongoing three-session groups run by volunteer-associates at the centre are particularly effective in attracting clients since they are usually available within a short time, do not involve a long-term commitment and are reasonably priced. These groups are seen as an extension of the brokering process in a group setting rather than as courses and as such, need to be considered in this study.

Clues to the service offered in these groups and reactions to them were offered by the clients who participated. Comments pertained to several aspects of the experience.
1. The Group Leaders

Comments about the leaders were generally positive:

The group leaders were friendly. However, there were too many of them. (3 for a group of 5 clients at the first and last session) The individuals were more than adequate. It was the sheer numbers that scattered thought with three leaders giving input at once. Two should be a maximum for this small group.

The instructors were excellently prepared and easy to open up with.

The women who led the groups were marvelous, practical, the information and advice was positive and 'right on'.

2. The Role Play

The reactions to the use of the role play technique were mixed.

Some examples are:

Enjoyed some of the real life role play situations in the job planning workshop.

Was particularly satisfied with interaction in role playing of mock interview with a prospective employer.

I found the role playing in the last session disconcerting and if I had been prewarned I would have been better prepared.

I question the value of role playing.

3. The Benefits

Most comments were very positive. One client said, "The job hunting course was excellent and helped my self-esteem."

Another was very happy with her experience and exclaimed, "God, people are wonderful - so brave. The group was very helpful, people opened up."

4. Dissatisfactions and Suggestions for improvement

The diverse needs of the group members was seen as a weakness by one client and her comment was, "Suggest more screening for people taking groups - two women did not continue - they were in crisis and came only once. There is no follow up. Some people
in the group had other focuses." The need to focus more on social structures, as well as on individual psychological needs was pointed out by one client. "The job hunting group should be in a larger context - with more awareness of the system." Other suggestions included: "Should have a group for people who don't have problems with work etc. but feel that something is not right." One client wanted, "time during the sessions to read university calendars or other information at the Centre". Other dissatisfactions were expressed as follows: "It was unrealistic to be expected to identify goals - too personal, too many games eg. life tree. Too many different needs in group"; "The career planning/job hunting course was very good but the group was too large and the course was too short"; and, "The delay in holding of the group sessions that go along with the job hunting manual was dissapointing. This has been delayed until the end of September for me and I visited the Centre in June."

5. Testimonials

Some comments like the following example were very positive:

There were shining moments for me (in the group). I was so depressed at the time. Each time I went to the group I felt so much better. I realized I was not the only one with problems. It gave me confidence to be assertive with my mother re 'guilt traps'. I will go back for more.

The group programs seem to have been a valuable adjunct to the service for these clients. The atmosphere of friendliness and sharing promoted by the leaders as well as opportunities for testing out plans and ideas were valued. Others indicated they were able to see their own situations in a more positive way when they discovered that others had problems too - often more
serious than theirs. Confirmation of self-confidence and of "being on the right track" were also mentioned as outcomes of the group experience.

This completes the presentation of findings in this section. The discussion which follows will tie together related findings in different areas in order to make some generalizations and formulate objectives which will reflect the major reactions of the clients.
Discussion and Recommendations

The clients' reactions to the services of the Women's Resources Centre can be best understood by viewing their search and the accompanying visits to the Centre as a process. At the outset, there may be uncertainty and doubt about possibilities and directions as well as unfamiliarity with the Centre and its services. Whether clients are considering a job or career change, are in emotional upheaval or facing a life stage transition, it is helpful to remember that people faced with change typically follow a pattern of initial disorientation, followed by gathering of resources to assess what is of value in the old and the new, and finally, a higher level of functioning.

The responses discussed in this section reflect this search and these uncertainties and the satisfaction with assistance received. They also identify gaps and point out areas where services can be modified to address unmet needs.

The clients' reactions resulted from several different lines of inquiry. Some of the same information and insights appear in several places and reinforce each other. Others seem to be isolated instances of opinion. In order to tie together some of these interrelated findings, and offer some recommendations which will reflect general and specific reactions to the service, the discussion will first address the satisfaction with the three aspects of the service which were explored — assessibility, interaction with the staff and information exchange. The significance of the reactions for different clients with varying needs will be discussed. Secondly, the discussion will deal with the critical aspect of
connecting needs to resources.

A brief description of various aspects of the service and how they presently operate will be included so that the findings can be better understood. The recommendations which are presented in each section, are intended to serve two purposes—reinforcing present practices identified as helpful and improving services identifying as having gaps.

The three aspects of the Drop-In Service under consideration operate as a package. However, in singling out components of these we have been able to identify differences in levels of satisfaction and some deficiencies. In particular, more assistance was requested in obtaining specific information about career and educational possibilities and with self-assessment. Some dissatisfaction was expressed with the physical set up, lack of privacy and hours of operation. Some elaboration of each of these aspects of the service as well as accompanying recommendations for improved service follow.

Accessibility

One client's comment about the Centre was, "I felt comfortable with the atmosphere—formal, yet somehow informal." This was a typical reaction, understandably so since much time, care and attention has gone into developing this aspect of the service. Diana Ironside describes this process and the result:

...in 1977 the WRC found two rooms upstairs over a store a little further along Robson Street from the library, very near in fact to the new Robson Square, an almost ideal location. It took months of walking around the area to find the space and the rental was high, $5,000 annually for each room, one of which the UBC Centre for Continuing Education pays for to house its classes and programs. The Centre's name is on the sidewalk notice board at the building's entrance, and the two large rooms can be screened off to make two
small meeting rooms, often used for staff meetings, small group counselling sessions and various programs and courses. The main room, entered by a short flight of stairs from the street, provides a very large and bright space for four desks and working areas for volunteers; a lounge with sofa, chairs, coffee table and an area for coffee/tea making, a display table, bulletin boards and shelves for an impressive collection of brochures, pamphlets and other resource materials, a mini-library, in fact, and a "job-hunting" resource centre of vocational files, course descriptions and other manuals, called the Vocational Planning Centre.

Leading off this large room is a small office for one-to-one interviewing and psychological testing; it contains the information files. A washroom is attached to each of the large rooms and telephones, chalk-boards and flip charts are available. (Ironside, 1980, p. 4)

This setting sounds almost ideal and yet, other reactions to it were varied. These are presented in Appendix D. Dissatisfactions expressed related mainly to lack of privacy and hours of operation. Some comments were as follows: "I felt that everyone in the Centre would be aware of my problem", "More private areas for conversing with volunteer if drop-in is seeking privacy and confidentiality", "I wish the Centre could stay open after 4 p.m. until 7 p.m. on weekdays", "The hours are not geared to working women." As a result, two recommendations are:

Recommendation 4

The needs of the clients for privacy should be considered more closely. The staff should rearrange the existing space or choose more private areas for individual conversations.

This would also solve the problems of interruptions by other drop-ins or classes having breaks. Since this recommendation is fairly specific and straightforward and since it was previously suggested (Conry, 1978) it should be given priority.

Recommendation 5

The Centre should consider extending its hours to better serve working women.
Perhaps a new group of volunteers could be recruited to staff the facilities during the early evening. The present 4 p.m. closing time prevents people from dropping in after work. Lunch hours are often too short to get to the Centre and even though the Centre is open one evening a week and Saturdays, this does not meet the needs of those who work downtown.

Interaction with the Staff

In this study and in the studies of the Lifelong Learning Centres, the strongest favourable ratings, the fewest unsatisfactory ratings and the fewest "no answers", were given on questions relating to relationships with the staff. Some examples of clients' comments are: "Receptive staff, wanting to be of assistance", They took time to put you at ease with coffee", "A good listener, pleasant personality, an understanding kind women", and, "The counsellor didn't mind if I cried." More comments are presented in Appendix D.

These findings are interesting and encouraging for the Women's Resources Centre since the Lifelong Learning Centres were staffed by professionals while this Centre utilizes volunteer-associates. The peer-counselling model on which the service is based is described as follows:

The use of the Peer Counselling model is based on the work of Margaret Rioch of the National Institute of Mental Health who showed that women with shared life experience and some training in listening skills and psychodynamics make good counsellors. Our experience bears this out.

In the Women's Resources Centre, the Volunteer-Associates function as educational brokers, using their peer counselling skills to assist women to locate learning resources and map out action plans. The Volunteer-Associates are taught to view women in the context of their lives and to consider the social, emotional, physical and intellectual aspects of functioning. An important part of the training
consists of understanding the place of peer counselling in the counselling team and knowing when referral is appropriate. Emphasis is placed on the ethical dimension of human service. The Women's Resources Centre makes extensive use of adult education theory and practice to prepare women for their changed role in society. (Ironside, 1979, p. 17)

In terms of providing satisfaction with service, this model is indeed working. In fact, the spirit which the volunteer associate brings to her role is probably one of the most valuable strengths of the service and a factor which is reflected unmistakably in the comments of the clients. The recommendations presented are intended to enhance this role by providing suggestions for supplementing it.

The present group of volunteer-associates represents a variety of age ranges, backgrounds and socio-economic levels. However, as a previous study indicated, (Conry, 1978) the Centre is primarily staffed by middle and upper-middle class women. Concerns about the possible difficulty which some clients may have in relating to the volunteers was expressed at that time. These have emerged again. One volunteer wondered how the flash of diamonds around the Centre affected clients who were poor. Another concern related to how well the present staff could assist a very poor woman or a lesbian woman coming to the Centre. In order to promote a more appropriate match up between clients' needs and staff characteristics, two recommendations are:

**Recommendation 6**

The staff of the Women's Resources Centre should attempt to match up the clients' characteristics with those of a volunteer associate who is similar or who may have knowledge in the clients' area of interest.
For example, some older clients feel that a volunteer closer to their own age could relate better to their needs. One comment was, "Try to match ages. At 59 one doesn't feel comfortable discussing one's life with a 20 year old." Also, since some volunteers are more familiar with various aspects of the service (vocational planning, health promotion, etc.) it seems reasonable to try to achieve this.

This process could be part of the initial assessment phase or result from the exploration of a client's needs and interests. An interview with a different volunteer could be offered at the next visit, which could be scheduled accordingly.

Recommendation 7

Recruit additional volunteers to staff the Centre during the late afternoon or early evening hours.

Since it has already been recommended that the Centre extend its hours to better serve women who work downtown, this recommendation would serve two purposes. As well as solving the staffing problem of extended hours, it would provide a different composition of staff since those who would be available at this time would probably be working at jobs during the day and offer the needed supplement to the pool of volunteers in terms of socio-economic status, lifestyle, resources and role models. Naturally, the recruitment of these new volunteers would have to proceed as carefully and their orientation would need to be as thorough as that which is presently practiced with the daytime staff.

Instituting these two recommendations would address two aspects of the Centre which are seen by some as shortcomings. The services would be more individualized and would offer some
control over the pairing of a client with a suitable volunteer. Secondly, the services would be geared to a broader range of women and their varying needs.

The quality of the interaction with the staff is important at all stages of service. However, as reflected by the clients' comments, it is probably more crucial during the beginning stages of their association with the Centre. The following recommendations, therefore, pertain mainly to the initial stages of the brokering process:

**Recommendation 8**

Staff should focus more attention on the initial assessment and exploratory phases of the service so that information and resources are not offered prematurely and consequently not utilized by clients.

It has already been recommended that a distinction between clients' varying needs during the initial contact (either in person or by telephone) be made. Once that has been done, more attention needs to be focused on offering an appropriate reception and approach. For example, those seeking specific information or assistance within a limited time frame should have that provided if possible. The casual drop-in should be oriented to the resources and allowed to browse with the knowledge that a volunteer is available should she wish to pursue or discuss anything. The client in crisis or the woman wishing to discuss a concerning situation should be offered a private place to converse, with support, warmth and attention. The client who indicates an interest in further exploration of any kind, should be offered a brokering interview. All of these different types of clients should be made aware of the availability of further service according to their needs and
invited to return if they wish.

Recommendation 9

Clients for whom a brokering interview is indicated should be offered an appropriate "entry-strategy" or approach, depending on their particular stage of exploration.

This can be done during the initial exploratory stage by listening, reflecting, encouraging elaboration and generally assisting the clients to express themselves. Appropriate strategies include allowing time and insuring a quiet place for the exchange. If the client is uncertain about her goals or directions, the fact that this is a common feeling and a legitimate one should be communicated. The possibilities for service from the Centre should be outlined, with the assistance of printed materials that she can take away with her. An appropriate next step should be agreed upon.

In order to assist the volunteer in implementing these two recommendations, another is suggested:

Recommendation 10

Training and orientation sessions for volunteer-associates should focus on the initial stages of the brokering process and the importance of offering the approaches listed in the goals of the Centre under "processes" during these stages should be stressed.

These training sessions should stress that clients' needs are such that they may enter the brokering process at any point. Their readiness to act or explore possibilities will depend on a variety of individual factors. Therefore, while being aware of the overall process, and that some clients may proceed in an orderly fashion from the initial assessment stage to the follow-up phase, volunteers also need to be aware that some clients will present themselves having already embarked on some
of these activities. By understanding individual differences and the rationale of the overall process, staff will be more confident in assessing the needs of the client, including the stage she is in and her state of readiness to move on. They will then be able to offer an appropriate approach which may involve a supportive or a more action-oriented strategy.

By focusing on the interaction with the staff in the preliminary stages of the brokering process, these recommendations and their implementation can result in more positive feelings and less disappointment with this aspect of the service.

Information and Referral

Since Information was the service most frequently received by those clients who reacted to the goals of the Centre and since it received the least favourable ratings in terms of both satisfaction and usefulness, the Centre should focus its efforts on improving the information exchange and referral aspects of the brokering service. Needs for information generally fall into two categories: Information about one's self and information about career or educational opportunities. In assisting clients to define goals and directions, both types of knowledge are required.

One of the ways in which the Centre assists clients is by reacting to their plans. A women may test out her ideas to see if they are realistic. She may require confirmation that her direction is appropriate and that her particular plan of action fits. Clients sometimes come to the Centre with unrealistic plans and hopes, presenting a challenge for the peer-counsellor
who does not wish to discourage but cannot encourage what she sees as a completely unrealistic goal. In order to identify strengths and abilities and formulate goals in relation to these some assistance besides a counsellor's confirmation or opinion is useful. Assessment of "personal competencies" and "testing of strengths and weaknesses" ranks high on the list of services that adults would like provided (Cross, 1978, p.36).

Since adults give high priority to self-assessment, the Women's Resources Centre should examine its services in this area. The psychological testing service which the centre presently offers does not seem to be adequate to meet this need. Reactions of clients who have utilized it indicate that it confirmed what they already knew about themselves but did not reveal anything new. Also, there seems to be a gap in assisting clients with transferring the information gained from the tests to their own situation. Connecting their particular abilities to the requirements of a career area remains an unfilled need. For these reasons and because the cost of $60 is out of range for many clients, the staff of the Centre do not often recommend the testing service.

Recommendation 11

The Women's Resources Centre should reassess its role in assisting clients to obtain knowledge about themselves, their strengths and abilities and in relating these to educational and career goals by:
1. Reviewing the present psychological testing service provided and co-ordinate this service with the brokering process.
2. Referring clients to assessment services in the community (C.E.I.C. offers testing free of charge for those seeking employment or vocational training).
3. Developing additional ways to assist clients in self-assessment, both at the Centre and by referral to other career counselling services.

Another way in which the Centre can and does assist clients
to define their needs and interests is by providing them with information about the possibilities for assistance from the Centre. Adults are generally unaware of the range of programs and services available to them in the community and it is one of the brokers' functions to make these known in relation to the clients' particular needs and interests. Similarly, clients coming to the Centre often do not know about the range of services offered. One client noted, "I had no idea the Centre offered all of this until I received this form." She suggested, "perhaps a form similar to this prior to counselling as well as after could be used."

**Recommendation 12**

The Women's Resources Centre should develop and employ an assessment tool to assist those that are unclear about their needs or unfamiliar with what the Centre has to offer. This would consist of a listing of career, educational and lifestyle interests and the services offered by the Centre.

Using such a tool would help clients to define goals and directions and assess some of their own needs for information and assistance. It would also assist the counsellor in providing appropriate resources whether the needs are for self-assessment, counselling or related to career or education. Once these needs have been identified, and a client's resources assessed, the role of the Centre is to either provide the information for the client or assist her in obtaining it. Clients' comments about this service during the resourcing and networking phases indicated that there were some shortcomings. Since some needs were identified as being of interest to more clients than others, efforts to improve the information service should focus on these.
Recommendation 13

The Women's Resources Centre should focus its efforts to provide information and referral services in the eleven areas of need which were most frequently identified. These include:

A. Career/Vocational Interests
1. Exploring aptitudes, interests and abilities.
2. Clarifying employment goals.
3. Planning employment goals.
4. Analyzing the job situation.

B. Educational Interests
1. College or university programs
2. General interest or personal development programs
3. Personal suitability for different programs.

C. Lifestyle Interests
1. Personal development
2. Exploring life goals and life planning
3. Coping with depression or loneliness

Recommendation 14

The Women's Resources Centre should examine the ways in which it provides the following eight services which received the most positive ratings so that these approaches could also be used to benefit other areas:

1. Analyzing my job situation.
2. Learning how to job hunt.
3. Re-entering the job market.
4. Resume writing.
5. Job-related training.
6. Personal development.
7. Dealing with stress; and,
8. Finding out about community resources.

Two of these, analyzing a client's job situation and providing opportunities for personal development, should receive particular attention since they were also included in the list of items of most interest. The centre should continue to focus on these two areas.

Recommendation 15

The Women's Resources Centre should examine ways in which it provides information and assistance with five interest areas which received the least positive ratings:

1. Completion of high school.
2. Determining requirements to enter different programs.
4. Resolving financial issues; and,
5. Planning for a life-long career.

The Centre should examine whether or not these services are part of its goals and to what extent they require concentrated efforts to improve them.

Implementation of these three recommendations would address some of the previously mentioned dissatisfactions. Even though it has not been possible to connect these shortcomings with those which were mentioned earlier, these efforts would probably result in clients receiving better service. It would also enable the Centre to focus limited resources and set priorities so that plans can be made to maintain effective service and supplement deficiencies.

Other ways in which the service provided during the resourcing and networking phases of the brokering process could be improved were suggested by clients and staff and included an emphasis on career/vocational guidance.

Recommendation 16

The Women's Resources Centre should consider offering more practical assistance to clients in securing employment by direct communication with the Canadian Immigration and Employment Commission (Women's Employment Project) in order to provide clients with information about available jobs.

This would result in more practical assistance, more opportunities for advocacy as well as supplementing the services of that agency. Since clients expressed a lack of assistance in exploring goals and abilities at C.E.E.C. A coordination of efforts could enhance the services of both agencies.

Recommendation 17

The Women's Resources Centre should improve its contact networks with community agencies and educational institutions. A computerized educational
brokering hook up with educational institutions would enable the Centre to provide current, relevant information more efficiently.

In focusing on reactions to such external environmental aspects of the service as physical surroundings, hours of operation, availability of specific information and even interaction with the staff, we court the danger of becoming caught up in assessing measures of comfort and neglecting the more crucial aspect of facilitating a connection for the client between her needs and the available resources. Satisfactions with services are important and may be a prerequisite for achieving results, but it is the impact of the service which tells the final story.

If clients actually move towards their goals, as an outcome of specific assistance they receive, the importance of the comfort aspects pale as the more catalytic measures are recognized. One client addressed this distinction when she wondered if the services were more "optics than real". Moreover, it has been suggested that external factors such as physical environment and problems such as transportation loom larger for those who seek out services, or participate in educational programs because of deficiencies they feel rather than for reasons relating to growth and development (Boshier, 1973).

The satisfaction ratings need to be considered in relation to this knowledge. Knowing that, for some, the initial reception, the convenience of visiting the Centre and the friendliness of the staff, are more crucial than for others, has practical implications for service. Those who are more growth-
motivated exhibit a different form of "readiness" than those who come because of some problem or deficiency they feel. This difference makes sense when we imagine how each of these two groups must feel about themselves when first approaching the Centre. Thus, the following recommendation is offered.

**Recommendation 18**

During the initial assessment of the client's needs, the staff of the Women's Resources Centre should also assess the client's reason for visiting the Centre in terms of growth or deficiency motivation.

This can provide practical guidelines for tailoring services to the needs of the client. Ways to accomplish this initial assessment of a client's motivation and needs should also be formulated and introduced to the staff at orientations and ongoing workshops.

In light of the skills and abilities of the volunteer-associates whom in offering a welcoming reception, this recommendation and the others which deal with the volunteer's role, may appear superfluous. However, when we consider the different emphases which clients place on the initial reception, these recommendations serve two purposes: (1) Promotion of improved judgements about how to spend limited time with a client so that service can be better geared to varying needs, and (2) Confirmation of a strength inherent in the qualities of the volunteer associates and the service they provide.

Having made these initial assessments, and having offered appropriate approaches, the staff can take the next step and focus on more action-oriented strategies for those who can benefit from them - connecting their needs to available resources.
Connecting Needs to Resources

The services of the Women's Resources Centre operate on the premise that acceptance and understanding, including legitimizing a client's position, can free her to move on. Making information and resources available can also encourage her to do so. The staff utilize these strategies very well as we have seen from the previous discussion. However, the service goes a step further. A proactive, gentle "get-on-with-it" attitude supplements and extends these approaches.

In outlining the phases of the brokering process the shortcomings which clients have experienced have been highlighted. However, there is potential for offering a service which is both comprehensive and individualized by tailoring the approach to the characteristics of the client and her current stage of exploration. As the client progresses through each of these stages with the counsellor, in a cyclical rather than linear fashion, it is important that the woman leaves each encounter knowing her next step. Whether this relates to the initial assessment stage or one of the more advanced points, it should be a clear goal, mutually agreed upon. Provision for reporting back, either in person or by telephone, should be made as indicated.

Instituting this more deliberate approach to service would alleviate some of the hit or miss aspects of the service which have resulted in the dissatisfactions. The role of the counsellor in each of these phases is one of facilitating the process by cutting through the wide array of available information to identify those resources, programs or services which are appropriate for each individual at whatever stage she
happens to be and then assisting her in making use of them. In short, the role consists of assessment, advisement, referral, information and advocacy as indicated.

The necessity for clients to make several visits to the Centre as well as to other community resources in order to engage in the brokering process has been implicit in the previous discussion. It was also implied by previous recommendations which suggested matching up clients with suitable counsellors. Even though women are welcome to return at any time, we have seen that many of them are reluctant to do so. Others are unsure of what further services the Centre might offer them. Since the suggestion that more specific follow-up provisions be included in the service came up again and again, in comments made by both clients and staff, an explicit recommendation is in order.

Recommendation 19

The Women's Resources Centre should institute more specific procedures for follow-up services for selected clients

Some suggestions as to how this might be implemented are:

1. Volunteers could routinely set up an appointment for a client to return to the Centre to meet with the same or a more suitable staff member.

2. A telephone call could be planned by client or volunteer to check back.

3. A record of the client's needs and interests could be kept on file so that she could be contacted when and if suitable contacts or resources emerge. This would also provide information for other volunteer associates who sees her at her
next visit.
Implementation of these suggestions may pose some practical problems but instituting follow-up procedures may be the single most effective way in which the service of the Centre can be improved for certain types of clients - those for whom a brokering process is indicated.

A follow-up procedure for specific clients, perhaps those requiring additional support or encouragement consisting of even a brief telephone call could also enable staff to obtain feedback about the results of service and they could then offer additional assistance as required. However, the Centre may be ambivalent about implementing such a recommendation. Since there is a fine line between offering an adequate service and promoting dependence, and as the purpose of the Centre is to promote self-directedness and the utilization of community resources, it has no desire to be all things to all women. Whether or not this goal would be jeopardized by instituting this recommendation is dependent upon the ways in which it is done.

If the previously outlined brokering process and the accompanying recommendations are accepted, the follow up aspect must of course, be an integral part of that approach. Clients for whom that process is set in motion, should receive this encouragement to continue with it. Other clients like Allie who are regular visitors to the Centre might also be identified and better assisted if they were offered an opportunity to return at a specific time for a specific purpose. Like Allie, who has been to the Centre over 25 times during the past two years, and says that she likes to peruse the brochures and browse, but also
states that she, "never got any more help than picking up a bunch of brochures," some habitual visitors may be motivated to move ahead with their exploration or take action. Because some clients have needs exemplified by Allie whose statements reflect both a request for more assistance and and difficulty in accepting it, a further recommendation is in order:

**Recommendation 20**

Regular habitual visitors to the Women's Resources Centre should also be identified and offered some specific follow-up service.

Since these women are familiar with the Centre their visit may even go unnoticed. One wonders if their persistence is a request for more assistance which they are unable to articulate.

The intent of these two recommendations for follow up procedures, is to improve the quality of service to clients who are presently utilizing it. Whether to invest time and energy into doing so rather than in recruiting more clients by additional outreach and promotion of the Centre are questions that the staff will need to consider.

The question about how effective the services of the Women's Resources Centre have been in meeting the clients' needs was succinctly answered by one client this way: "Overall, I have enjoyed my association with the Centre. I felt it was supportive in providing direction and by explaining your situation, you saw it more objectively and could make your own decision." We have examined an array of findings about many aspects of the service and formulated a host of specific recommendations. Putting these elements back together, and looking at some of the reactions to the service as a whole, we begin to understand how it works. Since adults often experience
personal and environmental difficulties making changes in their lives, feeling locked in to certain patterns, roles and expectations, any decision to change must be preceded by the development of a comprehensive view of one's situation.

The very significant role of a service such as that of the Women's Resources Centre is to provide "both the information and psychological support for a synoptic view of one's life. That can abet and inform, but not make or even co-erce, the decision of individuals" (Toombs, 1977, p.7). If this service can be provided in conjunction with an existing state of readiness on the part of the client which may be the result of an already initiated process of transition and facilitated by rapport with the counsellors, the role of the Centre may be one of opening doors for some clients by offering an appropriate action strategy. Discussion of the responses to the final major question to be considered in this report, "What impacts or results can be attributed to the clients' association with the Centre?" illustrates how some clients have indeed moved ahead with plans, made changes in their lives, and gained new perspectives on their situations.
Impacts of Clients' Association with the Women's Resources Centre.

The previous section identified some deficiencies, unmet needs and dissatisfactions. Although these were presented within a context of overall satisfaction and a positive reaction to the services in general, it was the shortcomings to which most of the recommendations were addressed. Now, in looking at the results or impacts of the services for these clients and how the experience fitted into the broader framework of the women's lives, there is a different mood—almost one of celebration. The response to this line of questioning reflect optimism and hope, even though this may be tempered with reality factors.

Outcomes: Actions, Plans, General Improvements

Table 10 provides a picture of three types of results which clients attributed to their association with the Centre. Seventy-three percent (46 of the 63 clients) reported having taken some definite action. Another 16% (10) reported that they also had plans underway or had experienced general lifestyle improvements.

The most frequently reported outcomes in each category were:

A. Actions Taken

Approximately 25% of those who responded reported having improved their income, enrolled in school, college, general interest or personal development programs, attended a vocational planning group at the Centre or contacted a community resource to meet their needs. The following actions were reported most frequently (They were mentioned by 15 to 23 percent of the
Table 10
Results Attributed to Clients' Association with the Women's Resources Centre (N=63)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>N Responses</th>
<th>% (yes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Actions Taken</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started my first job</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Got a job after being out of the job market for a period of time</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled in job training program</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved my income</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled in school, college or university</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled in general interest or personal development program</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended vocational Planning group at the Centre</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved living arrangements</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had life-planning interview</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered for life-planning workshop</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved family or marital relationships</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved diet or exercise habits</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended noon hour events at the Centre</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Took psychological tests</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sought personal counselling</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contacted a community resource to meet my need</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

continued next page
Table 10 (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. Plans Underway</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making plans for job change</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making plans for further education</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>41</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making plans for lifestyle change</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Still gathering information</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>71</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C. General Improvements</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I now know where to find the information I need</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>71</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I now know more about myself, my strengths and alternatives</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My life interests have broadened</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel more satisfied with my present situation</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I now feel more in control of the direction of my life</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My goals have been clarified</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>54</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am now more likely to seek assistance when I need it</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

respondents): got a job after being out of the job market for some time, improved living arrangements, took psychological tests or sought personal counselling. Fifty-nine percent of those interviewed said that they had taken some actions that were based on their visit to the Women's Resources Centre.

B. Plans Underway

Seventy percent of the respondents reported that they were still gathering information about alternatives. In discussing this during the interviews, 22 of the 27 clients stated they had made other important decisions since their visit to the Centre and 12 of these claimed they had been influenced by the visit.
C. General Improvements

Seventy-nine percent reported that they are now more likely to seek assistance when they need it and 71% said they now know where to find the information they need. Sixty-three percent reported that they know more about themselves, their strengths and alternatives and feel more in control of the direction of their lives.

The response pattern indicates that the results are part of a process which consists of changing attitudes and feelings, ongoing information-gathering and planning. Although most of the responses fell into the planning, exploring stages, others indicated that many clients had also taken some definite actions.

Affective Outcomes

Additional information about changes in attitudes and feelings about themselves and others and about life in general was gained from the 27 clients interviewed. Table 11 shows a mean increase in positive affective outcomes of 13 to 25 points, from a starting point of 100. When individual responses are examined it becomes apparent that there was not always a change in every item. Some stayed the same and a few decreased. One client explained her decreases as follows:

My contentment decreased to 80 because I came to the realization that I wanted more for myself, as a woman and independent person than I had previously desired, especially in terms of career and financial stability. My optimism decreased to 75 after the job-training program because prospects for employment looked bleak. My enthusiasm decreased to 80 because I did not feel that there were many options, again employment did not look positive, career possibilities did not look positive either.
Table 11

Affective Outcomes Resulting from Clients' Association with the Women's Resources Centre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Increased from 100 to (mean scores)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Feelings of Self-worth</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Self-Confidence</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Self-understanding</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Knowledge</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Contentment</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Assertiveness</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Optimism</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Enthusiasm</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Realistic Outlook</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. General Wellbeing</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My feelings of wellbeing decreased to 95. I felt that I had to go through major changes in order to become, a financially secure and independent woman.

This woman's self-understanding increased to 125, knowledge, to 150, assertiveness to 130, and realistic outlook to 125.

The overall picture for most of the clients was one of improved feelings of wellbeing and general outlook on life resulting from their association with the Centre. In fact, several indicated that they would now choose a more positive response to the question "How do you feel about your life as a whole?" than they previously did on the initial questionnaire.

Problems

The attainment of results and initiation of changes, or the failure to do so, may depend on other factors besides the association with the Women's Resources Centre. Clients were asked to identify problems or barriers which might prevent them from moving ahead with their plans. Table 12 shows those factors most frequently identified as problems. The degree of
difficulty presented by each factor, for those who identified it

Table 12
Problems in moving ahead with Plans (N=63)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Seen as Problem (%)</th>
<th>Presents a Difficulty (%)</th>
<th>A real Barrier (Adjusted %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Lack of counselling &amp; information services.</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Lack of Self-confidence</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Lack of knowledge about personal talents and goals</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Lack of money</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Transportation problems</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Lack of support from family or spouse</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Lack of child care or other support services</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Lack of flexible programs or part time opportunities</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Lack of recognition for previous education or experience</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Unhappy feelings about school</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Lack of information about opportunities</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Location of programs or employment</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Not enough time</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

as a problem, is also indicated. Three of these were identified by a higher percentage of clients than any others: lack of Self-Confidence (89%), lack of knowledge about personal talents and goals (82%), and lack of information about opportunities (79%). Two additional problem areas were also identified by at least 70% of the clients. These were lack of counselling and information services, and lack of money.

Those who identified problems were asked to rate them as difficulties or barriers. Several barriers were mentioned.
Lack of self-confidence was identified as a barrier by more people than any other problem (22). Lack of knowledge about personal talents and goals was a close second. (21). Eighteen people felt that lack of recognition for previous education or experience was a barrier for them and 15 cited lack of money. For 5 people, lack of child care and other support services was a barrier.

Several additional problems were also mentioned: "Lack of specific information on how to apply my skills, abilities and interests, ie. courses, job opportunities", "My problem is the inability to clearly state needs", "Management of time available", "Energy (may be connected to number 2)", "Depression", "I'm confused", "An attitude of, 'I don't deserve to be what I want'".

In order to supplement the responses gained from the 63 respondents to the questionnaire, the 27 interviewees were asked to elaborate on any problems they still needed to solve before they could act on suggestions or plans. Eighty percent claimed they had continuing problems. The following problem areas and the accompanying comments add to our understanding of the previously listed difficulties and barriers and how they affect the women's progress.

1. Lack of Information, Knowledge and training

Deficiencies in management, communication and technical skills, such as typing, were mentioned. Lack of knowledge about personal abilities and suitability for different occupations as well as not having the prerequisites to enter educational programs were also stated as continuing problems. Lack of
awareness and information on women's issues and how these can affect their lives was also mentioned by some clients.

2. Financial and other Problems

Several clients expressed the need to find ways to finance further education. For example, some planned to apply for student grants, secure part-time employment or manage on less money. Others who were interested in programs like Women in Management or psychological testing services found them out of their reach financially.

The continuing problem of organizing home responsibilities and making suitable child-care arrangements prevented some women from moving ahead with plans as quickly as they wanted to. Others needed to make practical changes such as move residence and a few noted that the routine of work made it difficult to find time to explore other possibilities.

3. Self-Confidence and Motivation

Some clients stated that they continued to lack the self-confidence and motivation required to move ahead with their plans. A need to develop more maturity before tackling an academic program as well as self-doubts regarding schooling from the past were also mentioned. Worry about personal problems also interfered with plans for some.

4. Relationships

"Maintaining and resolving my relationship with my husband as I continue to change and sort myself out", was a problem mentioned by one client and an underlying concern for others as well.
Connecting Outcomes to the Association with the Centre

In spite of these continuing problems, a majority of the clients who were interviewed seemed to be moving ahead with their plans. Next, we will consider more closely how the outcomes may be connected to the association with the Centre.

In response to this line of questioning, 16 of the 27 (59%) said that they had acted on suggestions that came out of the experience with the Centre. Of the 22 (85%) who said they had faced other important challenges since their contact with the Centre, 12 (55%) indicated that their experience with the Centre counselling had positively affected their ability to deal with these constructively. An increased understanding of the results reported and the possible relationships between outcomes and the association with the Women's Resources Centre was also gained from responses to the question, "Has your association with the Women's Resources Centre affected you in some way which has not been mentioned?" Several common factors emerged and are summarized and illustrated as follows:

1. Some felt they had gained increased self-confidence to act on their own ideas and were more self-accepting. For example:

   I'm still going through a difficult personal journey but I now am more accepting of who and what I am, which is different from society's expectation. Day to day life problems seem less crucial - life is a bit easier now.

Others found asking for help less difficult and one client's ability to accept a referral for personal counselling at the Pastoral Institute "... has changed my life and lifted a great
burden."

2. Others became aware of encouragement, support and the availability of future assistance. Several comments were as follows:

Now that I know the Centre and the people I am more likely to go to workshops or return if I need more assistance – it's better than a friend. I now know that when I feel bad I can pick up the phone and call or go there. Knowing that the Centre is there gives me support in this (Handling a difficult situation). What it did for me was to make me realize that many women have the same problems I have. I was not alone.

The feeling that "...if I do need help in certain areas, it will be available" was also expressed.

3. Self-directedness and motivation was also increased. Some clients received the encouragement and stimulation they needed to initiate and continue explorations, seek counselling or make a move. One client said, "I have stopped waiting. The job I have at this point is not exactly what I want but I am working towards where I want to go. The Centre helped me to get going and do something."

4. New ideas and insights were also gained. Clients gained information and new perspectives in such areas as parenting, women's issues, problems with relationships and handling a job interview. One client was able to eliminate some unrealistic options by looking at Calenders at the Centre rather than "...trying to contact all those places." Another discovered "The idea that one could make contacts for beneficial purposes". These comments illustrate the Center's wide range of influence on its clients. They also indicate how the Centre influenced their ability to move ahead with different aspects of their lives. A closer examination of how the association with the
Centre fitted into the larger framework of the women's lives follows.

The larger Context of the Women's Lives

The Women's Resources Centre offers its services within the context of an overall life planning framework. Up to this point we have examined several aspects of the Service. Clients' needs and the helpfulness of the Centre in providing appropriate information and assistance with career, educational and lifestyle concerns have been described. We have separated out goals, both products and processes, in order to assess their influences. We have also enquired about continuing problems and pointed out some connections between clients' outcomes and their experience with the Centre. Now, in order to do justice to the central purpose of the service, (promoting self directed learning), some findings and observations about how the experience fitted into the larger framework of the women's lives will be presented.

The personal interviews provided some indication of how clients saw their association with the Centre in terms of their current life situation. In talking with the first few clients, it became apparent that, for the most part, these women represented successes in terms of the goals of the Women's Resources Centre. The majority of the 27 clients who participated in the interviews which were conducted 2 to 5 months after the initial visit to the Centre, reported having moved ahead in some area of their lives. They had either clarified goals and directions or some of their needs had been resolved.
Some clients recognized that what they were really involved in was a process of 'learning how to learn' and were able to articulate this. They were developing new perspectives which could result in changes. They recognized that knowing how to pursue resources and contacts as well as seeing their situation within the larger context of women's status in society was personally important to them. This awareness influenced their explorations and enabled them to clarify their goals and purposes, resulting in a realization of personal power. As each of the interviews progressed, this quality, when it was present, manifested itself in different ways. Illustrations are presented in Appendix F.

As these results emerged, it became apparent that certain features of the association with the Centre may have facilitated their learning and growth. Consequently, each interview was allowed to proceed in an unstructured manner, and each client was encouraged to "tell her story". Yet, the questions on the interview schedule were often answered in the process. The perspectives gained from the interviews resulted in an increased understanding of the "readiness" phenomenon and a clearer understanding of why women come to the Centre at particular times in their lives. These findings will be discussed in terms of: networking effects, clients' search for meaningful goals, their consciousness of the status of women and its effect on their lives, and a realization of personal power.
Networking Effects

One of the purposes of the personal interviews was to map out a picture of some of the networks which lead women to the Centre as well as those resources which are tapped after their contact. When questioned about how they knew about the services of the Centre and why they decided to visit, the responses were varied. Women's Resources Centre brochures and Centre for Continuing Education Calenders were most often mentioned. Female friends, neighbours or co-workers as well as newspaper or magazine articles about the Centre were also sources of information. Several people dropped in after seeing the sign on the street. Others said they always knew it was there, and a couple of people purposely sought out the Centre because they had been in contact with a similar centre in another city. A few were referred by professionals, i.e. a nurse on a psychiatric ward, and an instructor of an assertiveness class.

A. Sources Leading to the Centre

The 27 clients interviewed were asked if they had contacted other sources for assistance before calling the Centre. Some had already shopped around a great deal before contacting the Centre. A variety of resources and agencies had been contacted by 78% of the women. These included:

1. Employment agencies

Both government and private agencies had been utilized by those seeking vocational counselling, training or employment. Employment and Immigration Canada including the Women's Employment project was most frequently mentioned.

2. Employers

Companies and agencies were contacted directly by those seeking employment in a particular field.
3. Educational Counselling and Student Employment Services

The University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University and various community colleges had been approached about requirements for particular programs and information about employment in related fields.

4. Educational programs

Some had completed exploratory workshops or volunteer training programs at various community locations.

5. Friends, Acquaintances, family and colleagues

Many had made useful contacts through word of mouth.

6. Personal Counselling

A few were receiving personal counselling by Family Service agencies or psychiatric services or had done so in the recent past.

7. Other

A variety of other contacts and services including assessment tests, service at other Women's Centres and participation in a group on depression, at the University of British Columbia psychiatry department, were mentioned.

The helpfulness of these resources varied markedly. Some ran into dead ends. Others found new directions in their search. Most had not received sufficient information and assistance and thus their eventual contact with the Centre resulted.

Several women definitely saw the Women's Resources Centre as their first step in making contact with the kinds of resources they might need to solve a problem or explore possibilities. Two comments were as follows:

I came straight here. Last time I needed help, this was the place I found it. I feel good about the Centre. It was the logical place to come. I was sure that someone could help.

I had been to Women's Centres in other places (California), and when I returned to Vancouver after an absence of 11 years, I knew that I would get sympathy and understanding at the Women's Resources Centre as well as help in 'cutting through red tape'.
B. Sources contacted after the Women's Resources Centre

These clients were also asked whether they got in touch with other offices, agencies, or persons after contacting the Women's Resources Centre. Eighty-two per cent of the interviewees reported making contact with a variety of resources. These included all of those previously mentioned. In addition, some had been sponsored in training opportunities such as clerical "brush-up", and a Women's Exploratory Apprenticeship training program. Others had registered in programs such as Interior Design, Real Estate Sales, and Flight Attendant Training. Still others had discovered growth Centres like Cold Mountain Institute and community support groups eg. LIFE (Living is for Everyone) - a group for widowed, divorced or separated people. On the whole, their results seemed to be more action-oriented than those activities previously mentioned which were more exploratory in nature.

Most people had difficulty recalling whether or not their actions had resulted from a referral or suggestion from a counsellor or from someone in the group in which they had participated at the Centre. Some stated that they had already initiated some of their contacts and plans before visiting the Centre but that they had received additional ideas and motivation there. In collecting this information, and relating it to possible "networking patterns", little connection was found between the ways in which clients heard about the Centre, the resources they contacted before visiting the Centre, and the contacts they made afterwards. Except for a few isolated cases where personal counselling services were utilized, it is difficult to establish which actions occurred as a result of
direct referral by the Women's Resources Centre and which were a part of an already initiated process of exploration.

What did emerge is a more general picture of the possible role of the Women's Resources Centre in a process of "personal networking", which was unique to each individual client. By charting a path beginning with a client's existing networks, and her reasons for visiting the Centre, then identifying the resources she utilized both at the Centre and elsewhere, it was possible to identify new and continuing networks as well as resulting learnings and actions. In mapping out this path with the client, the contribution of the Women's Resources Centre to this process seemed to fall into three possible categories:

1. Initiation of important networking including direct referrals or specific learning resulting in action;
2. Facilitation of an already initiated process of networking (Support and encouragement were seen as catalysts for this process); and,
3. The Clients' networking was not affected by the services or programs of the Women's Resources Centre.

Of the 27 clients whose networking processes were examined only one fell into the first category, 11 into the second, and 7 into the third. Another 7 seemed to have been influenced by both the initiation and facilitation roles. A description of Melanie's introduction to the networking process and the Centre's influence is presented in Appendix F.

Viewing the networking effects of the services in this way has implications for the way in which the educational brokering interview is defined and conducted. If indeed, the influence of the Centre can be seen as contributing toward a client's
personal networking process, a better understanding of the relationship between the services and the goals can be gained by redefining the educational brokering interview in terms of the networking idea. This has been outlined in the previous section and specific recommendations will be presented later.
A Search for Meaningful Goals

Clients who were successful in moving ahead with their plans were often characterized by an awareness that one can engage in a process of personal networking which can help in attaining one's goals. They seemed to know how to explore resources and pursue contacts. Another critical feature, which was implicit for some, was made explicit for the researcher by Lynda. She pointed out that before one can make a decision about goals and directions, whether these involve meeting new people, embarking on an educational program or making career plans, it is necessary to be aware of underlying reasons for the particular goals or decisions. She emphasized that for her, examining the reasons behind plans for action in terms of her philosophy of life and her spiritual needs is a necessary first step. The one thing which she felt the Centre lacked was an opportunity to do this.

Lynda felt that staff should help clients sort out their reasons for wanting to pursue certain aims before assisting them in formulating goals or encouraging actions. A group service for this purpose was suggested. This theme was previously discussed and it has been recommended that clients be offered more opportunities to explore before solutions are offered. Several illustrations of clients' searches for meaningful goals, including Lynda's, and the role which the Women's Resources Centre played for each are given in Appendix F.
Personal Power

Some of these women were able to develop the insight, self-knowledge, and self-understanding necessary to find meaning in their pursuits. This component can be described as the realization of one's personal power. As Pam said, "Knowing what I don't want to do, makes it easier to explore more realistic possibilities." Molly's discovery was reflected by her statement that, "I now know how I feel when I'm doing something that isn't right for me" and also represents learning that has resulted in empowerment for her. This characteristic repeatedly emerged as a distinguishing feature of those clients who had made strides since completing the questionnaire, and was notably absent in others who did not seem to be getting anywhere. Some clients' increased self-understanding and ability to control the directions of their lives was related to an awareness of women's issues and how these affected their lives.

The Status of Women

As we have seen, most clients indicated that their reasons for seeking out the services of the Women's Resources Centre related to the fact that it was a women's centre. For some, this resulted in a general positive attitude towards the service they expected. Others, were specifically interested in women's issues. Several suggested that the Centre should be more socially and politically active regarding women's issues. For example, Barbara suggested that there should be "More focus on social structure as well as individual psychological needs. For example, the job hunting group should operate within a larger context so that women gain more awareness of the system." One
client's views in this area were particularly strong. She commented, "I've been angered by the narrowness and lack of political consciousness at the Centre. Your emphasis is far too individually psychological with little sociological and political content." Allie's suggestion was that the Centre provide more of a forum for women's ideas and discussion about issues, that affect them such as the abortion issue which recently split hospital boards into pro life and pro choice factions. Another suggestion was for more outreach services and the establishment of a Centre in the East end. Ollie felt that the Centre should offer assistance to young prostitutes and become involved in research into the prostitution problem in Vancouver.

Other clients expressed appreciation for the focus on contemporary women's issues. One client was, "...revitalized by the contact with a progressive women's group. I've been working with people not involved in this area (in business offices)." Ollie, who had been active in the women's movement in the East, saw the Centre as "...an inspiration to me, to see as a recipient of service how important the feminist movement has been to establish these centres and therefore to improve the status of women."

Still others acknowledged the importance of knowing that the support is there, if and when they may need it. One woman reported, "I hadn't necessarily taken advantage of all the Centre offers but knowing that it and its services are there have affected me in an astonishingly positive way." Another said, "I realized that others were also searching and felt no confidence in their abilities after being at home with children
for years. It helps to know others feel the same." For Elaine, an American woman who had recently come to Vancouver, the fact that support and assistance was available was "a bit of factor" in her decision to return (She had gone home for an extended visit which had involved a separation from her husband). She appreciated the collaborative, supportive aspects of the Centre, having experienced a more competitive, confrontative approach in Boston and New York. Several personal accounts of how their raised consciousness of women's issues affected the progress of clients like Elaine and Melinda and how this resulted from their association with the Women's Resources Centre are also provided in Appendix F.

**Life Stage Transitions**

For some clients the search for meaning was a prerequisite to making a commitment to a goal and to feeling that the effort required to reach this goal was worthwhile. Finding meaning often resulted from a personal learning process about the clients' expectations of themselves, their strengths and abilities and about the need to listen to their intuition as well as consider the practical realities of their life situation. Some women were also involved in a similar sorting out process, specifically related to their personal life stage transitions. Each seems to have arrived at a point where a valuable learning resulted and moreover, she was ready to put this into effect to further her purposes. Some appeared to be on the brink - unsure about moving ahead but discontent about remaining where they are. A closer look at these women's situations may provide the Centre with some clues as to how
people at these junctures can be assisted.

Throughout the interviews it became apparent that these women were facing challenges of achieving independence, coming to terms with childhood relationships and taking on adult responsibilities. Pam and Rose, two women in their 40's who had been busy with family responsibilities over the last few years were now looking toward career pursuits. The experiences of two older women, Eileen and Ollie, add to these examples of how women of all ages are facing the challenges of life stage transitions. These clients came to the Centre because they were facing changes in their lives for which they had no guidelines. Two had been widowed in their 50's, their children were grown and they were on their own, and needed to rebuild their lives on an independent basis. For more elaboration see appendix F.

Their quiet courage, dignity and sense of independence as they examined alternatives was most impressive and brings to mind the comments of another capable woman. Senator Florence Bird, alias Anne Francis, CBC news commentator, journalist, author, social reformer, and chairman of the historic and infamous Royal Commission on the Status of Women discusses this time of her life. "The last years have taught me a great deal. I'm seventy-two, that's the way it is, and I'm a widow. I never wanted to be a widow and I never wanted to be old." She pinpoints the challenge and the reality when she says, "You know, you must take the hurdles as they come, because the next one will be higher, and if you're not prepared, you'll bump yourself and break your neck."
Summary

This discussion of how the association with the Centre affected the larger framework of these women's lives and the illustrations presented in Appendix F, are intended to add to our understanding of how the services affected individual clients. They also demonstrate how the service acts as a catalyst for an already existing process of resourcing, networking and self-directed learning. The Centre can learn a great deal from its clients about their needs and the type of service which is useful for different women at different times.

Implications for service arising from these examples, also relate to the "readiness" phenomenon. The characteristics of those clients who demonstrate success imply that encouraging the development of these qualities as well as recognizing when they are present can help the client move ahead. This belief constitutes the basis for the recommendations which follow. Before presenting these, two final types of findings are reported.

Clients' Endorsement of the Centre

In the questionnaire clients were asked how often they had informed others about the services of the Women's Resources Centre, and/or recommended the services to others. The fact that 97% reported conveying information to others and 81% reported actually recommending the services, reflects a positive attitude towards the Centre and what it has to offer. "Very often counseling activities are regarded as therapeutic rather than normative. Such a view creates an attitude that one seeks
counseling only when something is wrong" (Toombs & Croyle, 1977 p. 43). According to Toombs, a high degree of endorsement such as this, probably reflects the view of this type of operation as "...generally useful and positive rather than remedial". This is an encouraging interpretation when we consider that "Such a normative view of counselling activity has been difficult to achieve in most counseling operations" (p.43).

The Last Word - Doorknobbers

In communications of all types, the "doorknob" phenomenon can often provide the essence of what a person really wants to say. Counsellors have noticed that as an interview is terminated, the client, with hand on door handle may turn and say something like, "What I really wanted to talk about was..." The patient, leaving the physician's office may say, "By the way, I forgot to mention ..." In the process of saying their goodbye's friends may begin their "real" conversations.

Picking up this final comment was part of the procedure for the personal interview. Oftentimes, this tactic, which involved waiting and allowing the client to terminate the interview at the door with a final statement was rewarded. The following is a sample of comments received as the interview was terminating:

I think the Women's Resources Centre is of most value to women who lack spouse and family support.

I really enjoyed it.

I had a suspicion I was right. I wanted someone to say to me, 'You're not a dumby.'

I was impressed with the positive emotional support offered. The lack of competitive feeling, non-judgemental attitudes, not playing one woman off against another. It gave me a general feeling of
wellbeing.

It was a positive experience. There are a lot of women out there - a lot of us who need this kind of service. I have recommended it.

The recurring theme was one of positive affirmation of the Centre's importance as a service to women, particularly to those in greater need than themselves. This type of "doorknob" response, rather than a reference to shortcomings, sums up the experience for these clients in a very positive manner.
Discussion and Recommendations

In assessing the outcomes and the impacts of service, it was found that the majority of clients had taken some definite action as a result of their association with the Centre. Oftentimes this consisted of more than one type of action. Considering the short time which elapsed between the visit to the Centre and the completion of the questionnaire, this is quite remarkable. Even more encouraging are the reports of plans underway and general improvements which indicate that an even higher proportion of clients are engaged in a process of change which they attribute at least in part, to their association with the Centre. The reported affective outcomes reinforce this.

For many clients, the encounter with the Centre and its services was comparatively brief. And, since there were only two or three months between the time of service and the reporting of these results, it seems reasonable to surmise as Toombs did, that, "Many of them were apparently ready to act in some way and the contact became a crystallizing or precipitating factor" (1977, p. 36). Consequently, he suggests that readiness might be a condition worth assessing during the early interview sessions.

Some the findings of this study have also suggested that the concept of readiness can be partially defined in terms of a client's reasons for seeking out the services of the Centre and their expectations of these services. Appropriate strategies for assessing and utilizing this readiness have been suggested
so that follow up for those presenting high readiness could be planned, using limited time and resources more effectively.

Since the clients in this study seem to represent a group of adults who are in transition and ready to make changes in their lives, further possible components of readiness were investigated during the personal interviews. In exploring how the experience fitted into the larger framework of the women's lives, several factors emerged. These included: having meaningful goals, self-awareness and self-knowledge, a consciousness of women's issues and how these touch their lives, and particularly, an understanding of the networking process. In addition, self-esteem, or the awareness of personal power seemed to be an important factor in how these women felt about what they were doing. All of these can be seen as components of readiness and have implications for the planning of appropriate helping strategies.

The clients who exhibited these features and connected them to their association with the Centre have provided us with an increased understanding of the role of the Women's Resources Centre. Their experiences suggest that readiness, as well as being a pre-existing characteristic of the client, can also be stimulated through exposure to better models of performance, higher levels of aspiration and self-diagnostic procedures. For example, David McClelland (1970) has suggested a set of strategies for helping adults develop achievement motives. Herein lies the rationale and power of the brokering process, including the group services. The significant aspects include the fact that it is offered within the context of life-planning and embodies the exemplar role of the volunteer-associates.
Pertinent aspects of each of these features of the service are singled out for recommendations, based on the findings just presented.

The reactions of these clients have reinforced some of the present practices and suggested how these may be extended. The Centre's focus on the strengths and positive aspects of a woman's life reflects the philosophy that people need to be trusted and supported to dismantle their own barriers, and the suggested strategies are based on this theme.

Affective Outcomes

The Women's Resources Centre is committed to a philosophy shared by the growing number of self-help movements which emphasize attitude rather than behaviour. The Centre hopes to promote an attitude of self-directedness in the client so that she sees herself as a learner, directing her own process rather than being the passive recipient of a service. The reactions of these clients reinforce the idea that,

...only that which is deeply felt can change us.
Rational arguments alone cannot penetrate the layers of fear and conditioning that comprise our crippling belief systems...Communication must not only be wide but deep. (Ferguson, 1980, p. 35)

According to Toombs, "Changes in feelings may well be the crucial element in adult life changes" (1977, p. 14). The feeling component has been featured in each aspect of the previous discussion. Clients' reasons for visiting the Centre, their attitudes toward the Centre as a resource for women and especially their interaction with the staff have included an emotional component. In fact, the emotional energy and
freshness which the volunteer associate brings to the role because, according to the Centre's Director, "she is on the cutting edge of her own learning", is seen as a valuable aspect of the peer counselling approach. The comments of the clients about the support and encouragement they value in both the individual and group contact, bears out the importance of this caring aspect of the service.

Since the exemplar role of the volunteer associate seems to be a valuable feature of assisting clients with behaviour change, in both individual and group encounters, some recommendations relating to this role are indicated. There are two aspects to this feature of the service and each is addressed in turn. First, the realization that the example of those who are not too dissimilar in knowledge and ability can motivate others like themselves to learn and change is not new (Rioch, 1963), and has been part of adult education practice for some time (Rogers, 1971). However, it is a unique approach in educational brokering operations and is being recommended for other information and counselling centres. "Peer counsellors can facilitate clients' movement towards autonomy since they are models of 'self-directing learners' themselves" (Ironside, 1980, p. 8). The exemplar role of the peer-counsellors is also seen as a valuable aspect of the services by health professionals such as physicians and psychiatrists who refer women to the Centre because of this healthy influence.

**Recommendation 21**

The Women's Resources Centre should retain its peer counselling model since it represents one of the basic strengths of the service.

Peer counsellors may or may not be paid workers. In this
case, the use of volunteer-associates as peer counsellors is also an asset and a valuable feature of the Centre. In this way, more clients can be served. The volunteers are also involved in public relations and outreach activities, an important aspect of the Centre.

**Recommendation 22**

The Women's Resources Centre should continue to orient and employ volunteer associates as peer-counsellors and to involve them in all aspects of the Centre's operation. Because they are not regular paid employees but work approximately one day a week, the volunteer brings energy and freshness to the role.

The effectiveness of the volunteer-associate's role in the group services is also noteworthy. One client's comment illustrated this very well. She pointed out that one of the most useful things about the vocational planning group experience was the example set by the leaders.

There were three or four and as they told us of their experiences and showed how they handled different situations, it helped me to see that I could be like that too. They didn't put us down or anything by this but just seeing them and hearing them talk about their situations was helpful. There was a good supportive feeling in the group.

**Recommendation 23**

Volunteer-associates should continue to offer groups as an extension of the brokering service. Leaders should continue to be assigned in relation to the resources which they can offer a particular type of group since the credibility of the leader proved to be an important part of the value of the group experience.
The Group Services

Since the group services themselves are seen as important by the clients, they should be maintained and supplemented. Many of the comments centered around the beneficial aspects of the groups in which clients had participated. Suggestions about how these could be improved were also offered. Besides offering an opportunity for role modeling, the groups helped clients apply information to their own situations, explore goals and encouraged networking within a supportive environment. Because of the valuable aspects of the group services, and the requests for additional groups which emerged from these clients, several recommendations are offered:

Recommendation 24

Additional groups should be offered from time to time in such areas as confidence building or goal exploration.

There seems to be a need for a group for those who are not ready to set goals and simply want to explore ideas and possibilities. In light of the fact that lack of self-confidence was identified as a problem in moving ahead with plans by more clients than any other factor, the group service should focus on confidence building and related themes such as assertiveness, identification of strengths and goal clarification. Since many of the reactions to the group experiences indicated that the support was helpful in building self-confidence, these services appear to be most useful.

Clients also expressed satisfaction with being able to register for a group on the spot, while they were motivated to do so. It also enabled them to leave the Centre, having a
specific "next step" in mind. Those who registered for vocational planning also were able to go away with a manual in hand - a concrete result of their visit.

**Recommendation 25**

Group services should continue to be offered on an ad hoc basis throughout the year rather than becoming regularly scheduled 'courses'.

One of the criticisms of the groups was that the members represented too much diversity of need. Others said they had been steered into the job finding group before they were ready to be a job seeker. Since groups are not always available when clients visit the Centre, they may be offered a group that is not exactly appropriate. If names of clients with different needs were kept on file so that groups could be more readily formed, different types could be offered more frequently. This procedure is practiced at present for the more frequently offered groups but could also be adopted for groups such as 'confidence building', which are less in demand.

**Recommendation 26**

Clients should be more carefully assigned to groups so that they reflect more commonality of need and so that the focus of the group is appropriate.

Clients' requests for more opportunity for personal networking suggest the need for another type of group service.

**Recommendation 27**

Offer a drop-in group service specifically for women who wish to discuss common concerns, make contacts or identify resources with others in similar circumstances.

A volunteer could take responsibility for facilitating the interaction of these sub-networks which could be offered in such areas as: re-entering the work force, related fields of
employment, current issues, or age cohorts. Monthly noon-hour or evening sessions could be organized by interested clients. This activity could lead to resource identification, mutual support and assistance, friendship and possibly social action. The present noon-hour events could evolve into ongoing groups.

Personal Networking

A more proactive stance in assisting clients with personal networking on an individual basis is also needed. Since the networking process proved to be an effective way for clients to achieve results, the Centre should strengthen its services in this area.

Recommendation 28

The Women's Resources Centre should assist clients with the personal networking process by including it as part of the brokering approach explaining the idea as well as assisting the client with the process.

Recommendation 29

The Women's Resources Centre should serve as a clearing house for interests and needs and matching these up with available resources.

Recommendation 30

Since most of the personal networking activities were related to career/vocational interests, the Women's Resources Centre should assist clients in tying in with the Vancouver Women's Network and the Women in Management Programs sponsored by the University of British Columbia Centre for Continuing Education.
Women's Issues

The suggestion that the Women's Resources Centre should play a more socially and politically active role as an advocate for women in career/vocational matters as well as provide a forum for discussion of issues has been made by several clients. This, they feel would supplement the Centre's individual psychological focus. Since the Centre's mandate is an educational one and since other women's organizations in Vancouver offer a social action approach, the goals and directions of the Women's Resources Centre need to be affirmed and communicated to clients.

However, since outreach and advocacy as well as a feminist orientation and an awareness of contemporary women's issues are an integral part of the service, the expectation that the Centre should engage in more social action is understandable. The Centre's purpose is to strengthen an individual's ability to meet her own various challenges, whether these are personal or related to society's inequalities. The following recommendations are intended to reinforce the Centre's mandate as well as meet clients' needs for social and political awareness and involvement.

Recommendation 31

The Women's Resources Centre should provide more specific opportunities for people to find out about and discuss current issues that relate to women and provide information about ways in which people can become more personally involved in political or social action.

Since an awareness of the status of women has been a factor in enabling clients to gain more understanding about how related issues affect their lives, more emphasis on this aspect of
service seems to be indicated. A current issues notice board and a regularly scheduled discussion time would provide an opportunity for both men and women to become more knowledgable and discover ways of becoming more involved in the issues. Communication with other women's groups who are more action-oriented could be facilitated.

Financial Information and Assistance

Lack of money was cited as a problem by 70% of the respondents and for 40% of these clients it was a real barrier. Because the amount of disposable income which may be available for self-development may be very small or negligible for many women, the issue of money was further explored during the personal interviews. Perhaps the most revealing insight into the relationship between this problem and the financial aspects of pursuing further education can be gained from Jill's point of view. After she decided to return to university she sought a part time job to pay for her books and tuition. She explained that there was no pressure from her husband to do so and that this was her own decision. Since they have two children whose education will require financing in the near future, she felt that this was the most sensible approach. "It was for my own sense of self", she said.

This reticence to view family income as being justifiably available for personal development seems to be common among women who work in the home. Another attitude which emerged was the reluctance to allocate personal income towards education or vocational upgrading. Interests in learning to manage money and become involved in investing and real estate were also common. Economic independence was the goal of some.
The problem of money seems to be two-fold. The actual lack of extra funds because of limited income or other priorities for funds is coupled with the attitude that financial outlay for personal educational pursuits is not appropriate. In other words, it is difficult for women to justify spending money on their own career or self-development even though they realize that it may result in a monetary advantage in the future. Considering these attitudes and since assistance with financial matters was identified as an area of weakness in the services, an increased focus on the economic aspects of life planning is in order.

Recommendation 32

Information and assistance with financial and economic aspects of career, educational and lifestyle planning should become an increased part of the services of the Women's Resources Centre.

The Life Planning Focus

It seems that one of the greatest strengths of the service of the Women's Resources Centre is its willingness to assist clients in making plans and decisions within the context of their overall lives. Not just another referral agency, it's services assist women to examine their roles and assess how they can fit together most appropriately for the present and the future. This process can begin with the brokering interview and is extended by the individual and group life planning service.

Some of the findings of this study are pertinent to the emerging directions of the Women's Resources Centre and University of British Columbia's plans to offer a lifestyle
planning outreach service. The Women's Resources Centre's beginning efforts in this area of service and clients' elaborations of how their association with the Centre did and can influence their total life situation can help guide these future plans. It was interesting to note that 25 (39%) of the respondents to the questionnaire indicated an interest in receiving information and assistance with lifestyle needs. Specifically, responses expressed a need for assistance with personal development, exploring life goals and life planning, coping with depression and loneliness, and assessing personal lifestyles. Because the services of the Centre in this category are the least developed and least known, the number of clients who reported using them was small, and the helpfulness of the Centre difficult to assess.

The relationship between health, stress and learning is being increasingly examined. Recent findings include the notion that "Stress resistant people have a specific set of attitudes toward life - an openness to change, a feeling of involvement in whatever they're doing, and a sense of control over their lives" (Pines, 1980, p.34). Encouraging clients to build on their strengths and gain more control over the direction of their lives has become a focus of the Centre. Recently, efforts to do so have included development of a stress management, health promotion program "Toward a Healthy Lifestyle". Several of the peer counsellors have also been using this wholistic focus in their work with individual clients. This is a future direction for the Centre.

UBC is designing 'changing lifestyle' programs now in the areas of health and nutrition, a critical community problem. This new emphasis in educational
programs workshops, counselling and information delivery will enrich the existing services of the WRC, not replace them; the services now offered to women and later to men will continue to be the core of the Centre. (Ironside, 1980, p. 26)

In the words of Marilyn Ferguson, "If we are not learning and teaching we are not awake and alive. Learning is not only like health, it is health" (1980, p. 282). The Women's Resources Centre's recent focus on self-care, lifestyle education and health promotion can result in a service which will be aimed at making a connection between learning and everyday life - possibly a prerequisite for preventing and managing stress and gaining control over the direction of one's life.

Recommendation 33

The Women's Resources Centre's recent focus on self-care lifestyle education, and health promotion is a relevant and timely one and should be promoted and continued.
Summary

The array of results which have been described present a variety of challenges for the educational brokering services of the Women's Resources Centre. Clients need to be given an appropriate initial reception, assisted in exploring possibilities and provided with pertinent information about resources. They also need to be given an opportunity to reassess their needs and receive continuing support and assistance. Moreover, the degree of emphasis to be placed on each of these aspects of service varies in relation to whether a client is in transition, in crisis or a casual information seeker, or whether she is growth or deficiency motivated. It also varies according to the stage of exploration in which she happens to be as well as with different personal and life stage needs and interests presented. How can a service be geared to accommodate such a variety of requirements? Furthermore, how can staff be assisted to offer service geared to such diverse needs?

The recommendations which have been formulated and are presented in this report may be seen as overwhelming. When consideration is given to the diversity of the operation, the erratic nature of the drop-ins, the lack of private space, the often crowded facilities and the voluntary aspect of the staffing, the generally positive reactions of the clients to the service and the impacts of the association for women is most remarkable. The reality of the situation is simply that the present resources of the Centre are being strained. Oftentimes daily tally sheets remain for the next day's staff to complete because of a rash of drop-in's at closing time. The irony of the situation is that as the value and uniqueness of the service
becomes known, more women are referred to the Centre and more come on their own volition. As this happens, service cannot continue to be individualized and thorough. The recommendations which suggest an even more comprehensive service, tailored to individual needs, probably represent an unrealistic expectation of the present resources of the Centre. Consequently, two final recommendations are offered:

**Recommendation 34**

The administration of the University of British Columbia Centre for Continuing Education should recognize the value and success of the innovative approach offered by the Women's Resources Centre reflected by the reactions of the clients by providing needed clerical and other support services.

This would enable the staff of the Centre to implement some of these recommendations in order to address the dissatisfactions and deficiencies in service which have been identified.

In implementing this recommendation, the Centre for Continuing Education would recognize the potential of the Women's Resources Centre to offer leadership as a model for other Centres, not only women's access services but also, educational information and counselling operations in general. The uniqueness of its volunteer-associate peer counselling approach should be protected. If this staffing strategy is exploited by expecting workers to operate in an atmosphere of frustration and overwork, burnout and rapid turnover can only result - making for less quality in service. When this study was initiated, the average number of drop-in's was approximately 300 a month. One year later, the January figure was 400. The resources have not been significantly increased over this time.
In order for the Centre to move ahead, meet the increased challenges presented by clients' increased needs for service and continue to evolve to meet changing community needs, its day to day operation needs to be assessed.

**Recommendation 35**

The next step in the ongoing evaluation of the Women's Resources Centre should be an examination of the Organizational Aspects and how they affect service.

The attributes associated with organizational effectiveness in a sample of 28 Educational Information and Counselling Centres in Pennsylvania were examined in a recent study (Toombs, 1980). The components included were legitimacy, funding, staff, clients, connections and information. The implementation of many of the recommendations in this report will probably depend how these aspects operate together. Therefore, a similar inquiry into the operation of the Women's Resources Centre is recommended as a logical and timely next step in the ongoing evaluation of the Centre and its educational brokering service.

The philosophy on which the Women's Resources Centre was established was as follows:

Individuals' problems differ from each other and the handicaps and restrictions of women in Vancouver and Canada are changing almost daily. ... The essential nature of the Centre, its working principle, is one of adapting to rather than defining women's needs. (Hendry, 1975, p.6)

At this time, this philosophy still reflects the aims of the Centre. Furthermore, the way in which the Women's Resources Centre has evolved and its present alignment with the educational brokering approach, seems to have resulted in effective service for these particular clients. The findings
presented in this chapter confirm that the approach is 'working' in many ways, and seems to be appropriate for the Centre at this particular time. Chapter V will report additional findings resulting from the second stage of analysis and relate and discuss some implications for educational brokering and adult learning and development.
CHAPTER V.

RESULTS - PART II

EDUCATIONAL BROKERING AND ADULT LEARNING

Stage II of the Analysis involved a search for relationships between clients' characteristics, needs, perceptions of service and outcomes. This resulted in findings in several areas. These will be reported and discussed in relation to satisfactions with service, needs and interests, results, problems, biodemographic characteristics and responses to the question about "Life as a Whole". Additional information gained from the 27 clients interviewed and the relationship between their perceptions of the service and their characteristics will also be presented and discussed. Since the investigation of relationships between these factors was of an exploratory nature, and considering the small number of cases, relationships in the range of \( p = .05 \) will be reported in a descriptive manner.

Stage II Analysis - 63 Cases

After distributions were determined, the following variables were recoded to facilitate crosstabulations: age, marital status (married and common-law were combined, two widows were excluded), numbers of needs, results and problems. Figure 1 presents an overview of the relationships discovered from analysis of the questionnaire data. For purposes of clarity, interrelationships between variables in the same category are not shown.
Figure 1. Statistically Significant Relationships between Ratings of Service, Outcomes and Clients' Characteristics (N=63)
Satisfactions with Service

In order to make comparisons between a large number of items and since inter-item correlations between specific aspects of the drop-in service and overall satisfaction were high (p<.001), mean scores were calculated. Responses in each of three areas - accessibility, interaction with the staff, and the information exchange - were summed and divided by the number of items in each category to obtain a mean satisfaction score across items for each of the three areas. These new variables, along with responses to the question about overall satisfaction, "The way it all turned out", were correlated and crosstabulated with a variety of other variables. Table 13 shows the results of these intercorrelations. Correlation coefficients have been rounded to two places, decimals omitted, in this and the following tables.

Several significant relationships were found between clients' satisfactions with the various aspects of the drop-in service and their ratings of helpfulness of the information and assistance they received with career, educational and lifestyle needs (see Table 13). Satisfaction with two aspects of the service - accessibility and interaction with the staff - was found to be significantly correlated with the number of problems clients identified. That is, the more problems clients perceived in moving ahead with their plans, the more likely they were to be dissatisfied with these two features.
Table 13

Intercorrelations between Ratings of Satisfaction and Helpfulness, Outcomes, Number of Problems and Feelings about Life as Whole

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<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
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<td>Satisfactions with &quot;Drop-in&quot;</td>
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<td>2. Interaction with Staff</td>
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<td>3. Information Exchange</td>
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<td>4. Career/vocational</td>
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<td>5. Educational</td>
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<td>60</td>
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<td>6. Lifestyle</td>
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<td>7. The Way It all Turned out</td>
<td>43</td>
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<td>9. Plans and General Improvements</td>
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<td>11. Feelings about Life as a Whole</td>
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Correlation Coefficients are rounded to 2 places, decimals omitted.

Coefficients are significant at alpha=.05.

* Coefficients are not significant at alpha=.05.

Coefficients could not be calculated.

Sample sizes vary according to response patterns characterizing pairs of variables (minimum=25, maximum=63).
No significant relationships between satisfaction with a third feature of the drop-in - the information exchange nor between overall satisfaction and number of problems were found.

**Needs for Information and Assistance**

In order to compare ratings of helpfulness with other aspects of service, mean scores for each category of need were calculated by summing the responses and dividing by the number of items in each. These scores were then correlated and crosstabulated with the other rated variables and selected client characteristics.

Besides being associated with satisfaction, ratings of helpfulness were linked with the number of outcomes reported. That is, those who were most helped by the service reported the most results, both actions and plans while those who reported fewer results also rated the help they received less positively (See table 13).

No significant relationships were found between the number of problems identified and the ratings of helpfulness with the information and assistance received with either career or lifestyle needs. However, a weak relationship (p=.07) was found between the number of problems and the ratings pertaining to educational needs. That is, the more problems that were identified, the less positive the ratings were and vice versa. Other patterns of relationship between needs and problems will be further elaborated when specific problems are considered.

The number of needs identified by clients was also

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1 Negative correlations result from the way in which rating scales for satisfaction and helpfulness were constructed. This has been taken into consideration in reporting findings.
considered in each category. A positive relationship was discovered between the number of problems and the number of needs for information and assistance in the educational and lifestyle categories was discovered. No such relationship for the career/vocational category was found. Those who had a high number of educational needs also had a high number of lifestyle and career needs and vice versa. No significant relationship between the number of career needs and the number of lifestyle needs was found.

Outcomes

A definite relationship between the number of outcomes reported and the number of problems clients identified in moving ahead with their plans was discovered. It seems that those who were able to achieve some of their goals did so in spite of these problems. Further achievements may have been hampered by the continuing problems. The correlation between the number of actions taken and the number of problems was slightly lower than that between the number of plans underway and number of problems. This suggests that those with more problems may still be in the planning stages.

The number of outcomes resulting from clients' association with the Women's Resources Centre was highly correlated with their satisfaction with the service and, as already mentioned, their ratings of helpfulness. That is, those who were more satisfied and more pleased with the information and assistance they received also seemed to achieve more results - actions, planning steps, and general life improvements.
Problems

The search for relationships between problems and needs resulted from an admonishment that too much emphasis has been placed on looking for relationships between biodemographic characteristics and needs or outcomes. A more promising direction seems to be determining common features among potential adult learners. That is, do those with certain needs, such as for career-related information and assistance, identify similar problems (such as lack of knowledge about talents and goals)? Are there common barriers faced by those with common goals?

As already reported, the number of problems identified was related to several aspects of service. In order to gain a better understanding of the relationships between specific problems, clients' characteristics, and their perceptions of service, each problem was considered independently. No connection between specific problems and the number of career or educational needs was discovered.

However, those who identified certain problems generally had more needs in the lifestyle category. These problems were: lack of self-confidence, lack of personal knowledge, lack of money, transportation problems, lack of family support, lack of other support services, locations of programs, and lack of time. In all of these comparisons, those who identified a specific problem also identified four or more lifestyle needs. Those who did not identify these problems generally had fewer lifestyle needs.

In looking at the ratings of helpfulness in each of the
categories, few relationships to specific problems were found. However, those who identified lack of counselling and information services, lack of self-confidence, and lack of personal knowledge as problems tended to show less positive ratings more often. Other differences related to clients' characteristics and will be discussed in the next section.

**Biodemographic Characteristics**

In order to answer the question "Which of the factors which clients bring with them as part of their backgrounds seem to make a difference in how they perceive the services and what they do as a result of the association with the Centre?" a search was made among the various rated variables and results for trends, patterns and commonalities between these and factors such as age, education, marital status, or whether or not the client was in paid employment.

**Age**

A relationship between age and satisfaction with the accessibility of the Centre was found (p=.050). The older the client, the more satisfied with this aspect she tended to be.

The older the clients, the fewer problems they identified in moving ahead with their plans. Conversely, the younger clients identified more problems (p=.002).

Although no other statistically significant relationships were found between age and any of the other variables, a close examination of the figures showed that age made a difference in the identification of certain problems. At least eight specific problems were identified more often by those in the 19 - 39 age
group. These were:

1. Lack of self-confidence
2. Lack of money
3. Transportation
4. Lack of spouse and family support
5. Lack of program flexibility
6. Feelings about school
7. Lack of programs, and
8. Lack of support services.

No pattern of age difference was associated with any of the other problems not mentioned above.

Age was also a factor in relation to group attendance - 84% of those who attended the vocational planning group were between 19 and 39 while only 70% of the total sample fell into this age group.

Marital Status

No significant relationships between marital status, satisfaction with service, or number of problems identified was discovered. However, the citing of certain problems seemed to related to marital status.

Lack of self-confidence was more frequently identified as a problem by single (40%) and married (36%) clients than by those who were either divorced or separated (23%). Lack of money was cited as a problem by 75% of both the single and divorced or separated clients while only 52% of the married clients did so. Of the 66% of the sample who identified this as a problem, 43% were single, 31% married, and 26% separated or divorced.

Transportation seemed to pose more of a problems for
singles while lack of family support was identified as a difficulty more often by divorced or separated clients than by those who were married. Similarly, lack of support services such as child care was more of a problem to this group as well. Eleven of the 12 clients in this category also cited lack of information about opportunities as a problem.

Those in the divorced or separated category also reported more actions taken as a result of the association with the Centre than the single or married clients did.

Singles were over-represented by those who attended the vocational planning group. (54% compared to 39% in overall sample). Over half the single clients attended this group program.

Education

No pattern of relationships was found between education and satisfactions, needs, results, or the number of problems identified with only a few exceptions. Of those who attended the vocational planning group program, 39% had one or more years of college while only 24% of those who did not attend had as high an educational level. Those who cited lack of support services as a problem all had at least one year of college.

Paid Employment

There were no apparent differences in the satisfaction ratings nor in attendance at the vocational planning (job hunting) program between those in paid employment and those not in paid employment. There were some differences between these
two groups however. Those not in paid employment rated the helpfulness with career/vocational needs less positively. That is, 54% found the information and assistance they received in this category only 'slightly helpful' or 'of no help' while only 19% of those in paid employment responded in this way.

In considering the problems identified, several differences emerged. Of those who cited **lack of self-confidence** 66% were in paid employment, 34% were not. Of those who did not identify this as a problem, only 29% were in paid employment. **Lack of personal knowledge** was identified by the same percentages in each group as above, and only 36% of those who did not identify this as a problem were in paid employment. **Lack of family support** was cited more often by those in paid employment (71%) than those not (29%). Eighty percent of those who cited **Lack of support services** were in paid employment as were 71% of those who cited **time**. To summarize, those in paid employment seemed to find that personal psychological factors and practical aspects constituted problems for them.

Those in paid employment also reported 1/3 more outcomes of the action type than those not in paid employment.

**Life as a Whole**

Another characteristic which clients bring with them is their attitude towards life as a whole. Does a generally positive orientation to life make a difference to how service is perceived? Do those with a negative view of their life situation express more dissatisfaction with service? Does this influence outcomes or the problems identified by the client? In order to answer these questions, clients' responses to this item
were correlated with satisfactions, needs, results and problems.¹

As Table 13 shows, Feelings about "Life as a Whole" were highly correlated with overall satisfaction and in particular, satisfaction with the information exchange and with ratings of helpfulness with educational and lifestyle needs. That is, those with more positive orientations to life were also more positive in their ratings of these factors.

As the number of problems identified increased, so did dissatisfaction with life.

Although no statistically significant relationship was found between the identification of specific problems and feelings about life, for each of the 13 problems, those who cited the factor as a difficulty or barrier tended to respond in the negative end of the scale compared to those who did not identify a part factor as a problem. For example, those who cited lack of self-confidence, lack of personal knowledge, lack of money, lack of spouse and family support, lack of support services, lack of program flexibility, feelings about school and location of programs as problems also rated their feelings about life as a whole as "mixed" or less satisfied.

Those who attended the group programs fell into the 'mixed' or 'dissatisfied' categories slightly more often than those who did not (70% vs 51% in the vocational planning group and 60% vs

¹ Responses to this question should be considered in light of the fact that this opinion was not independently assessed. Even though the question was placed at the end of the questionnaire and clients responded to it after completing the sections on satisfaction, helpfulness, outcomes, problems and biodemographic information, their responses may have been influenced by their previous answers.
41% in the lifeplanning group).

These findings about the relationship between clients' feelings about Life as a whole, support those of Toombs who also found that people who were generally dissatisfied with life were more likely to be less pleased with 'The way it all turned out', and that those who checked an action result tended to be more pleased with life.
Stage II Analysis - 27 Cases

Additional information about the perceived helpfulness of services, number of visits, affective outcomes, networking effects and readiness for self-directed learning was gained during the interviews. A search was conducted for possible relationships between the rated variables, results and problems and these additional variables. Figure 2 provides an overview of the significant relationships discovered between variables in each category. As in figure 1, interrelationships between variables in the same category are not shown.

Services and Approaches

As explained in chapter IV, during the interviews, clients were asked to rate the helpfulness of the Centre's services and the ways in which they were provided. In order to determine if these ratings were related to previously reported ratings of satisfaction and outcomes, Pearson correlations were run. Table 14 provides details of the results. A positive correlation between overall satisfaction and ratings of helpfulness of four aspects of the service was found. That is, those who found the counselling (3) and the program (6) components useful, and those who were helped by the approaches which encouraged self-responsibility (10) and pointed out alternatives (11), also were pleased with "How it all turned out".
Table 14

Correlations among Ratings of Helpfulness of Services and Approaches and their Correlations with Outcomes and Overall satisfaction

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<tr>
<td>1. Information</td>
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<td>57</td>
<td>-37</td>
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<td>49</td>
<td>7. Acceptance</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>29</td>
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<td>8. Clarifying Needs</td>
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<td>9. Identifying Abilities</td>
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<td>5. Advocacy</td>
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<td>6. Programs</td>
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<td>12. Encouraging Self-directedness</td>
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<td>13. Promoting control of life Direction</td>
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Correlation coefficients are rounded to 2 places, decimals omitted.
Coefficients are significant at alpha=.05.
Coefficients are not significant at alpha=.05.
Coefficients could not be calculated.
Sample sizes vary according to response patterns characterizing pairs of variables (minimum=6 maximum=26)
Figure 2. Statistically Significant Relationships between Ratings of Service, Outcomes and Client Characteristics (N=27)
Networking Effects

Chapter IV also described the process which was used to assess clients' networking effects. Four possibilities were identified:

1. Clients' networking was not affected;
2. Important networking was initiated; 3. The existing process was facilitated; or,
4. Clients' networking was both initiated and facilitated.

Cross tabulations between networking effects and ratings of services and approaches resulted in the discovery of a relationship between facilitation of networking and the positive rating of one approach - helping a client identify her strengths and abilities and make plans to build on these (9) (Chi Square=18.16 with 10 degrees of freedom, p=.052). Since most of the expectant cell values were too small on the first series of cross-tabulations, tests of statistical significance could not be carried out for many of the combinations of items.

To facilitate the search for further possible relationships, responses for each of these two variables were reduced to two categories (networking not affected or affected and a positive or negative rating of helpfulness) so that biserial tables could be produced. This resulted in the emergence of a significant relationship between the promotion of networking (either initiation or facilitation), and the helpfulness of two strategies of service - peer counselling (3) (Chi Square=11.62 with 2 degrees of freedom, p=.003)¹ and encouraging a client to make her own decisions (10) (Chi

¹ This statistic results from Fisher's exact test which is not affected by small expected cell frequencies.
Square=4.73 with 1 degree of freedom, p=.0297).

Although no other statistically significant relationships could be established, a pattern of responses across most of the services characterized those whose networking was either initiated or facilitated by their association with the Centre. The trend was for those deemed to have a networking effect to report more positive ratings while those who did not have a networking effect provided more negative ratings. The percentage of responses in the positive and negative categories for each group were summed and the total divided by the number of services in order to arrive at the mean score. When this score for the negative responses was subtracted from that for the positive responses, a substantial difference was discovered between the two groups. That is, the group which derived a networking effect, rated the services and approaches positively more often than negatively and the difference between the the percentages was 61.5. The other group had a difference of only 11.5. Thus, overall the difference between these two groups' ratings was 50 percentage points.

The **Number of Outcomes** was also related to some of the services and approaches. The more **outcomes** reported, the more positive were the ratings of helpfulness for two services - counselling (3) and programs (6) and three approaches - showing acceptance (7), encouraging self-responsibility in decision making (10), and pointing out alternatives (11). This was true for both types of outcomes - actions taken and plans and general improvements (except for programs (6)). That is, the positive rating of programs (6) and an additional aspect, the information service (1) was significantly correlated with the planning type
of outcome. In other words, those who rated these two services as being helpful reported fewer outcomes in this category than those who found them less helpful. Table 14 provides figures.

Affective Outcomes

A search for possible relationships between ratings of satisfaction, helpfulness and outcomes, as well as selected biodemographic characteristics and changes in attitudes or feelings (affective outcomes) was conducted. In order to facilitate these intercorrelations and cross-tabulations, a mean score was calculated for affective outcomes by summing the scores of the individual items and dividing by 10. (Intercorrelations between items was high (p<.002). Correlations between this mean score and ratings of helpfulness of services and approaches resulted in several findings.

Two types of service - counselling (3) and programs, (6) were significantly related to affective outcomes and number of outcomes (both actions and plans) as was the case with Overall satisfaction. Two others were more weakly related - Information and referral (p<.09). The first three were negatively correlated, indicating that those who reported greater degrees of change in attitudes and feelings, found these more helpful than those who reported a lesser degree of attitude change. Referral however, was rated as less helpful by those who reported higher degrees of affective outcomes.

Two approaches were also significantly related to affective outcomes - acceptance (7) and encouragement of self-responsibility (10). These were negatively correlated, indicating that those who achieved the most changes in attitude
rated their helpfulness more positively.

**Affective Outcomes**

In addition to the relationships with services and approaches already mentioned, affective outcomes were found to be positively correlated with the **number** of other outcomes reported. Those who reported a higher degree of affective outcome also reported a greater number of both actions taken \( (p = .001) \) and plans underway, including general improvements \( (p = .004) \).

The number of visits clients made to the Centre was also positively correlated with the degree of attitude change reported \( (p = .04) \).

**Overall satisfaction** was negatively correlated with affective outcomes \( (p = .017) \), indicating that those who rated this more positively reported a larger degree of change in attitudes.

Changes in attitudes and feelings also seemed to bear a strong relationship to the interviewer's judgements of **networking effects**. Those whose networking was judged to be either initiated, facilitated or both, reported significantly higher degrees of changed attitudes and feelings \( (\text{Chi Square} = 13.80 \text{ with 2 degrees of freedom, } p = .001) \).

**Networking Effects**

As already reported, several relationships between networking effects and ratings of helpfulness of services and approaches, as well as affective outcomes were discovered. In addition, a significant relationship between the influence of the Centre on the clients' process of networking and the **number**
of outcomes reported was apparent. For both actions taken and plans or general improvements noted, those whose association with the Centre had no effect on their networking process, reported fewer results. Conversely, those whose networking had been initiated and/or facilitated by the support and encouragement of the Centre reported more results. This was statistically significant for both actions (chi square=7.28 with 2 degrees of freedom, p=.026) and plans (chi square=7.30 with 2 degrees of freedom, p=.025). Table 15 provides a comparison between the percentage and number of clients in each group who reported achieving results. The difference between the

Table 15
Crosstabulation between Networking Effects, "In-Transition" State and Number of Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Number of Results *</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Actions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Plans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n 0 1-3 4-9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>General</td>
<td>0 1-6 7-11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Improvements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Not affected</td>
<td>7 43 57 --</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>29 57 14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Affected</td>
<td>19 5 58 37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-- 47 53</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"In-Transition"

| 1. No             | 5 40 40 20           |          |          |          | 20 60 20 |
| 2. Yes            | 22 14 59 27          |          |          |          | 5 50 46 |

* Expressed as percentages.

n=Total number of cases in each category.

percentages in each group reporting "no results" of either type is also interesting. Whether these changes or goals resulted from the association with the Centre's networking effect is difficult to say. The relationship between these two factors,
however, is noteworthy.

Readiness for Self-directed Learning

The Readiness for Self-Directed Learning scale which was completed by 27 clients during the interviews, was scored by the LERTAP computer program. Three digit scores for each client resulted and ranged from a low of 119 to a high of 186. This range, compared to the scores obtained from other populations, was relatively high, indicating that, on the whole, this particular group of clients was highly self-directed. Comparing the scores of six clients whose networking was not affected by their association with the Women's Resources Centre (mean score was 136) with those of the 18 clients whose networking was either initiated and/or facilitated, (mean score was 156) the difference was found to be statistically significant (T value=2.62, 22 degrees of freedom, p=.016).

Whether the influence of the Centre promoted this, or whether the characteristics of the clients affected how they used the Centre's assistance cannot be determined from this data. However, the possible reciprocal relationships between effects of a process such as networking and the self-directedness of the learner presents interesting possibilities for further study as in the case of the relationship between affective outcomes and networking.

No other significant relationships were discovered between these scores and age, education or feelings about life as a whole. However, those in paid employment scored higher in self-directedness than those not in paid employment (mean was 142 vs 125). Also, clients who were either single or separated or
divorced also scored higher than married clients (means were 146, 148 and 124 respectively). The overall mean was 138. These relationships did not prove to be statistically significant because of the wide spread of scores in each category. However, the mean scores for these different groups are appreciably different and nevertheless, an interesting finding.

In Transition

Those who were in transition in some aspect of their lives or whose networking was affected by their association with the Centre, reported a higher incidence of results, both actions and plans or general improvements. Like those whose networking was not affected, those who were not in transition, reported a higher incidence of "no results". As previously mentioned, the relationships between the networking effects experienced by the 27 clients and the number of results reported was found to be significant. However, in this case, since only 5 clients were not in transition, the expected size of the cell values was too small to do an appropriate statistical test to determine a possible relationship between "in transition" state and number of results. Table 15 also provides a comparison between these factors and an indication of possible relationships.

Number of Visits

In addition to the link between number of visits clients made to the Centre and affective outcomes, it was also found that those who visited more often, reported a higher number of outcomes in the planning or general improvements category. No relationships between the number of visits and actions taken or
overall satisfaction emerged.
Discussion

The relationships which emerged from stage II of the analysis have confirmed many of the formulations which were presented in Chapter IV. The idea that cognitive, affective and behavioural factors are inter-related aspects of an individual's learning process has been demonstrated. The possible existence of reciprocal relationships between needs, interests, attitudes and outcomes have been previously suggested by Michenbaum and Butler (1979, p. 35). "A cycle is established whereby affect, cognition and behaviour all interact and feed upon each other."

This phenomenon was most evident when the experiences of the clients of the Women's Resources Centre were analysed. The Findings resulting from this second stage of analysis will be discussed within this context under three headings - educational brokering and the networking process, mediating factors, and implications for practice.

Educational Brokering and the Networking Process

Chapter IV also presented a formulation of the educational brokering process which incorporated elements of another process which has come to be commonly termed "networking". The use of the networking process was found to be crucial in enabling clients to make the connections between the information exchange aspects of the service and the outcomes resulting from their association with the Centre. Three aspects of the networking idea were found to be important in enabling clients to use the information for their own purposes. These were:

1. An understanding of the concept of networking;
2. An awareness of the existence of a network of beneficial
contacts which could be pursued to further one's aims; and,
3. Self-confidence and motivation to pursue this network including the identification of resources and the actual procedures of making contact.

The description of the process of educational brokering presented in Chapter IV resulted from the findings of the first stage of analysis and the interviews with the clients. In particular, Melanie's description of how she became aware of the existence of a networking process and how she began to use it, presented in Appendix F illustrates the way in which educational brokering and networking can operate together and are in effect, aspects of the same total process.

Stage II of the analysis has provided additional findings which reinforce the formulation presented in Chapter IV. The emergence of significant relationships between the networking effect resulting from clients' associations with the Women's Resources Centre and their ratings of helpfulness of some of the services provide additional insights into how the process works. The importance of the interplay between various elements is also reinforced. For example, those whose networking was facilitated, found that the assistance they received to take responsibility for making their own decisions was very helpful. Those whose networking was both initiated and facilitated reported that the peer counselling service was very helpful. Further, the relationships between networking effects and both affective outcomes and outcomes of the action and planning type were also significantly related. Clearly, the integration of the networking process into the brokering approach seems to be part of the effectiveness of the approach of the Women's Resources
Mediating Factors

The relationships between clients' characteristics, their perceptions and the outcomes they reported indicate that there are variables which tend to act as mediating factors between the strategies of service and their effects. That is, they moderate the process. For example, those who exhibited readiness to make changes in their lives, were able to make better use of the service for their own purposes than those who did not. Further, the perception of problems did not necessarily interfere with clients' achievements of results, confirming the idea that people can solve their own difficulties, given the required encouragement and support. Finally, those who felt more positive about their lives as a whole and those who perceived more problems were less satisfied with the service and also found it less helpful.

Implications for Practice

The relationships which were discovered between the number of outcomes - actions, plans and general improvements - together with the degree of attitude change (affective outcomes), and the ratings of services underscore the importance of several strategies of service. Specifically, since two services (peer counselling and program offerings) as well as three approaches (offering acceptance of clients' concerns, encouraging self-responsibility in decision-making, and pointing out alternatives including the exploration of options) stand out as the important aspects of service for these particular clients.

The fact that those who felt more positive about their lives as a whole and those who perceived more problems were less
satisfied with the service and also found it less helpful, reinforces the need for an individualized approach during the initial reception phase of the process. Identification of these clients as well as those who exhibit more aspects of readiness to progress also reinforces the implications for practice already discussed.

While supplementing the information on which the previous recommendations were based, the findings of stage II of the analysis also provide some additional understanding of adults' learning needs and the potential value of the broker's role in responding to these. The conviction that the provision of information alone is not sufficient to successfully assist adults in making career, educational or lifestyle decisions is unmistakably reinforced. The counselling, referral, advocacy and supportive, self-directive aspects of the service all operate together. The importance of on-site service in all of these areas is clearly demonstrated.

The final chapter attempts to draw the findings of Chapter IV and V together and formulate a model of access which illustrates how the individual characteristics of the client, the strategies of the service and external factors can operate together to achieve client empowerment.
CHAPTER VI
CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS, FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

The purpose of the study was to investigate the utility and appropriateness of the educational brokering approach in facilitating access for adults to the career/vocational, educational/learning networks in the community. This was done by evaluating the effectiveness of the University of British Columbia Women's Resources Centre drop-in services. The educational brokering approach represents an attempt to connect learners' needs to available learning resources and, in particular, to serve the disadvantaged. Women as a group have historically been disadvantaged and even though participation rates for women in education are increasing, their learning needs are still largely unmet.

Since the brokering phenomenon is relatively new, few guidelines exist for its evaluation. A client reaction study, based on previously identified criteria and designed to meet the needs of the Women's Resources Centre was conducted. Information was gained from 63 respondents about satisfactions, helpfulness and outcomes of service. Additional information about how the experience related to the larger framework of the women's lives, networking effects, readiness of self-directed learning and changed attitudes and feelings was obtained from 27 clients interviewed.

An array of findings have been reported and discussed in Chapters IV and V. Concepts have been refined and elaborated. Some formulations have been presented. This final chapter ties
together loose ends, presents conclusions and their implications, resulting in some final recommendations. Statements of limitations and contributions of the study are also included.

Conclusions

The educational brokering approach, as practiced by the University of British Columbia Women's Resources Centre was found to be effective and worthwhile. The findings confirm that the approach is 'working' in many ways, and seems to be appropriate for the Centre at this particular time in its continuing development.

These types of investigations usually raise more questions than they answer. Their value is in terms of confirmation of directions, philosophy, and intuitive perceptions about the value and worth of the service. They can also provide information and insights for planning and policy decisions. The findings have been presented in a way which is intended to facilitate these two purposes. The satisfaction levels with various aspects of the service and the reported actions and results including affective outcomes, are a substantive testimony to "what's going right" with the Centre.

Interspersed with this information are qualifying statements and suggestions for improving and extending the service. In addition, the interpretation of the findings, especially in relation to how the association with the Centre related to the larger framework of the women's lives, raises additional implications for future directions and provides further confirmation of present practices.
The discovery of relationships between variables such as affective outcomes, self-directedness and networking effects, along with insights gained during the personal interviews, enabled refinements in the definitions of readiness, client empowerment, and the brokering process to be made.

The hypothesis which has emerged from this investigation is:

Educational brokering services, offered in supportive atmosphere and within the context of life planning can facilitate access for individuals to the career/vocational, educational/learning networks in the community. This is dependent upon two factors:
1. The individual characteristics which the client brings to the experience, and;
2. Strategies of the service which enhance the client's contribution.
Furthermore, a third factor, the external aspects of the client's situation plays a mediating role as does the societal context.

In other words, the results of this investigation have shed light on ways in which the process of educational brokering can influence people and assist them in capitalizing on opportunities for learning and growth in a variety of areas of their lives. Two aspects which influence this process have emerged. It seems that clients' characteristics and external factors such as problems they encounter and events which occur bear a relationship to whether or not people are able to move towards appropriate goals. When these three factors interact in a positive way, within the context of a receptive social system, a phenomenon of "empowerment" seems to occur and access to opportunities for learning/education, career/vocation and lifestyle improvements can be achieved. Figure 3 depicts this interaction and its effect.
Figure 3. Interacting Aspects of Access

Each of these components require some elaboration.

1. The social, legal, economic system in which all of the other factors operate represents the context in which the process takes place and is influenced by it. The context can also be influenced by the process, especially the advocacy function of brokering.

2. Individual Characteristics

The differences in motivational orientations, the awareness of empathic acceptance, the degree of self-directedness and self-esteem, and the knowledge of and ability to employ the networking process, have all been shown to influence clients' perceptions of the helpfulness of the services of the Women's Resources Centre. The readiness concept and its relationship to bring in transition in some aspect of their lives also affected how clients made use of the service. The unique characteristics
which individuals bring to the experience seem to influence both the external aspects of their situation and the way in which service is perceived and utilized.

3. Strategies of Service

The phases of the brokering process which have been outlined and the importance of tailoring these to the clients' stages of exploration has been emphasized. When this happens, external aspects such as practical problems are mediated and clients' characteristics are tapped and/or enhanced to promote their development.

4. External Factors

For some, perceived problems or practical difficulties constitute insurmountable obstacles. For others whose individual characteristics are different or who have been influenced by the strategies of the service, these external factors play a less important role. In either case, external factors can be seen as a mediating variable between the characteristics of the individual and the strategies of service.

5. Access or Client Empowerment

The hoped-for outcome of an effective brokering service for a client who either possesses or develops the qualities required to utilize the service, is represented by the intersection of the other areas. External factors can enhance an individual's readiness and/or be dealt with by intervention of the advocacy role or by strengthening the individual's resources. When all three factors interact in a synergistic manner and enhance each other, within a receptive social milieu, the outcome may be seen as achievement of access or client empowerment. Those for whom the factors interact in a positive way seem to feel in control
of the direction of their lives and the actions and plans they report show that they are moving ahead.

6. Partial Access

When only two of the factors interact varying degrees of success may be achieved, depending on the components.

This model of access or empowerment has emerged gradually from the cumulative effect of the findings - both qualitative and quantitative. It is presented as a tentative, oversimplified representation of a multi-variate phenomenon. The model suggests a variety of possibilities for further investigation including the following:

1. Replicate this study with a larger number of clients, reduce the number of items on the questionnaire (those showing high inter-item correlations can be collapsed to a few items or one overall question), and/or use a different setting.

2. Construct a study to search for specific relationships between the three aspects - individual characteristics, strategies of service and external factors - (or two of them), in order to construct profiles of potential learners. For example, clients with similar learning needs and interests, service requirements, or barriers could be identified. This approach is an alternative to the emphasis on common demographic characteristics.

3. Refine the components of each of the three categories by using a subtractive research strategy which allows for the omission of several factors in various combinations to get at interactional effects.

4. Conduct a more in-depth case study investigation utilizing an unstructured interview technique and a qualitative
methodology. This type of study, conducted by a skilled and sensitive interviewer could bring new insights and generate new hypotheses that would further move beyond description toward explanation.

5. Collect data about biodemographic characteristics of clients who use brokering services so that comparisons with those enrolling in educational programs can be made. There continues to be a need to ascertain whether or not these services are actually attracting the educationally and/or socio-economically disadvantaged.

**Implications**

Some findings related to these particular clients, their reasons for seeking out the services and the outcomes which resulted from their association with the Centre are significant and transferable to other settings and other similar client groups. Two principal conclusions have implications for the field of practice.

1. The findings of this study confirm Toombs' observation that, "For adults it appears education may have less intrinsic value, but more instrumental and contingent importance" (1978, p. 21). That is, clients who have sought out the services are often most interested in the immediate job situation and their interest in education relates to this. This has clear implications for the focus of the service.

2. Counselling has also been reconfirmed as being a crucial aspect of the information service, not simply an adjunct to it. "Impersonal files, computer terminal, print materials have their place, but the adults who have the initiative to contact Centers
are looking for more than information" (Toombs, 1978, p. 21).

This finding is possibly the most significant outcome of this and other similar types of investigations, in terms of guiding the planning, development and institution of brokering services. It is understandable in times of budgetary restraint that planners might discount the importance of the counselling function. Counselling services offered by individual educational institutions which can be used on a referral basis may be seen as constituting an adequate alternative to on-site counselling service. The experience of brokering services indicates otherwise. The importance of offering each phase of the brokering process as part of a comprehensive on-site service in order to achieve client empowerment has been demonstrated by this study and is well documented (Heffernan, 1980).

This study has emphatically pointed out that information alone is not enough. This has immediate implications for the proposal of a consortium of educational institutions in Vancouver, British Columbia. While this group has shown leadership by cooperatively planning and establishing a Downtown Education Centre and an accompanying educational information service, the absence of an on-site assessment and advisement component is disappointing. Similarly, the long range plan for a province-wide computerized information access service is commendable but again the counselling component is notably absent.

Limitations

Several limitations of the study can be noted:
1. It was not possible to obtain a control group who had not
utilized the brokering services. Respondents and self-selected interviewees were probably more highly motivated to plan and institute change. Therefore, generalizations about women, or adults as a whole cannot be made.

2. The small number in the sample (especially the clients interviewed) prevented some of the tests for statistical significance from being carried out and consequently, some of the findings represent patterns characterizing certain types of clients rather than resulting from the analysis of hard data.

3. The sample represented a highly educated, upper middle class group of women. The study has not been able to assess the ability of the Women's Resources Centre to attract the educationally, economically or psychologically disadvantaged women of the Vancouver area and consequently cannot make judgements about how well the approach serves these groups. Therefore, generalizations about educational brokering and its suitability for serving the disadvantaged in general, cannot be made. However, its effectiveness in serving the clients in this sample who may be seen as members of a disadvantaged group, because they are women, has been shown.

**Final Recommendations**

In aligning itself with the service-oriented educational brokering model, the future of the Women's Resources Centre will be influenced by the directions in which such operations are evolving. By choosing paths and actions which are appropriate for its unique goals and purposes, the Women's Resources Centre has the potential to continue to adapt to the changing needs of its clients as well as move on to address the deficiencies which
have been identified.

Since the services are presently being provided in the form of a low budget, volunteer run operation, this model must accept responsibility for both the strengths and shortcomings of the service. The central issues raised by this client-reaction study center around the questions of how the Women's Resources Centre can retain the positive aspects of its approach while adapting its service to address the deficiencies which have been pointed out. Considering the Centre's resources, are the goals realistic?

In order to address these issues it is useful to look at the directions in which other similar operations are going. There are many forces prodding the Centre and new services are springing up around it. This makes it necessary for the Women's Resources Centre to constantly redefine its services in relation to its mandate. In order to continue to evolve in a way that allows the Centre to retain its relevancy, offering appropriate service to the women of Vancouver, and live up to its potential, two principal paths are suggested:

1. Implementation of the recommendations set forth in this report, including an examination of the organizational aspects of the Centre; and,

2. Re-evaluation of the Centre's role in relation to the rest of the community.

The present resources, philosophy and priorities of the centre need to be considered. How these can be enhanced and supplemented by other emerging services such as the downtown consortium, Vancouver Women's Network and various community college programs and services needs to be explored.

In fact, two crucial factors will affect the future
directions of the brokering movement in general and can also guide the development of the Women's Resources Centre. These are: (a) Changing funding patterns; and, (b) The trend towards computerization of information services.

The May/June 1981 issue of the NCEB Bulletin reported that the $15 million appropriated for Title I of the Higher Education Act, "Education Outreach Programs", which includes the Educational Information Centres program and continuing education programs in the United States, for the fiscal year of 1981, has been rescinded. This means that state governments will not receive the funds they were expecting for the coming fiscal year for these purposes. According to William Toombs, this cut in budget will all but extinguish the brokering movement in the U.S. He feels that it will go on through efforts of individuals and of local resource support and reports that Pennsylvania plans to link counselling with manpower programs as a survival strategy (Toombs, 1981).

The same issue of the Bulletin includes an article by Marilyn Jacobson on "Delivering Career Information and counselling by Computer". Computerization of career counselling services is a timely development that has potential for assisting the individual in making informed choices when selecting or changing careers. The point that computers do not replace humans is emphasized. "In essence, the computer frees the counselor from the task connected with information gathering and processing and permits him/her to focus on the more affective aspects of career choice" (p.2).

These two parallel developments suggest directions for the local situation in British Columbia. The main shortcomings of
the Women's Resources Centre identified by this study were in the information exchange aspects of the service. This state of affairs could be alleviated by the Centre's affiliation with the Downtown Education Centre's plans for a computerized information system. The experience of the Women's Resources Centre with the counselling aspect of the service which was identified as a strength, could also complement the consortium's proposal, contributing the crucial component which is presently missing. Moreover, these two services are already located in close physical proximity. With some compromise on both sides, and with sensitive leadership, the province of British Columbia could demonstrate how the use of computer technology, coupled with the support and encouragement of human contact can promote client empowerment and lead to access for adults and youth to career-related learning opportunities.

**Contribution of the Study**

This study has attempted to provide timely, appropriate, reliable information and insights into the operation of the educational brokering services of the Women's Resources Centre. Its intent was to provide a basis for making decisions regarding the future direction of the Centre. These should be directed at retaining the positive aspects of the service which have been highlighted. At the same time, the deficiencies which have been noted should be addressed. If so, it is likely that the Women's Resources Centre will continue to meet the unique and changing needs of women in Vancouver and provide a model for the facilitation of adult learning and development.

The study can also make a broader contribution to the field
of adult education and in particular to the direction of practice exemplified by the brokering approach. Several ways in which the interlocking relationships between employment, education and living under various conditions of everyday life can be investigated have been demonstrated. Instruments and methods of evaluating the brokering phenomenon have been developed. Based on guidelines provided by previous studies, these have been refined and extended. The use of a combined qualitative and quantitative approach to study a complex problem has also been illustrated.

The method in which the study was carried out provides a model of how practitioners and researchers can meet in the field setting. Since this is the most appropriate way in which to address questions about how learning and life interact and examine the process by which adults learn and change, it is a timely contribution.

By examining one model of educational brokering which focused on the needs of a specific group, the study was able to pinpoint particular strengths of the approach in a specific setting. For example, by pointing out that the credibility of the service for these particular clients resulted from its relevance to their commonality of need, because they were women, services aimed at other client groups can be similarly focused. That is, the intended client group needs to feel an affinity with the philosophical context of the service, if it is to be perceived as potentially helpful. By focusing on this community based, outreach service to women, the study illustrates how innovative programs and services which have been developed can be applied to serving other client groups. By discovering how
and why they are successful, these forerunner services can provided guidelines for planning.

Finally, it is hoped that this project will provide impetus for other efforts which follow and both influence practice and stimulate further investigation.
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Appendix A

Phase I Questionnaire
UNIVERSITY OF B.C.
WOMEN'S RESOURCES CENTRE
CLIENT — REACTION STUDY

Part I — NEEDS AND SATISFACTION

A. Please think back to the time of your first contact with the Women's Resources Centre and your visit to the “drop-in” services.

What were your reasons for coming to the Centre?

How satisfied were you with the following? Please circle the appropriate number.

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<th></th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Very Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Does not Apply to me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>1</td>
<td>The hours of operation.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>The amount of time the staff gave to you.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>The usefulness of the</td>
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<td></td>
<td>a) Vocational planning manual;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>b) Resume kit.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>The location of the Centre.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>The willingness of the volunteer to listen.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>The amount of attention the staff gave.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>The competence of the person who worked with you.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>The opportunity to explain fully what your needs and interests were.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The specific information you expected to get.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>The number of visits you made to the Centre.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>The accuracy of the information you received.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>The timeliness of the information. Was it up to date?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>The services at the offices, agencies or persons to whom you were referred by the Centre.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>The level of comfort you felt in discussing your needs with the staff.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>The way it all turned out. (your visit and the results).</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Please describe any other parts of your visit to the “drop-in” Centre about which you may feel

Particularly Satisfied

Particularly Dissatisfied
When you first contacted the Women’s Resources Centre, your needs for information or assistance may have been in one of the following areas.

If so, please indicate how helpful the Centre was to you by placing a ☑ in the appropriate space.

If an item does not apply to you, ☑ the first category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Women’s Resources Centre was</th>
<th>Does not Apply to</th>
<th>Extremely Helpful</th>
<th>Very Helpful</th>
<th>Moderately Helpful</th>
<th>Slightly Helpful</th>
<th>Of no help</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Career/Employment Interests</td>
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<td>Analyzing my job situation</td>
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<td>Clarifying my employment goals</td>
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<td>Planning my employment goals</td>
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<td>Planning for a lifelong career</td>
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<td>Exploring aptitudes, interests</td>
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<td>and abilities</td>
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<td>Learning how to job hunt</td>
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<td>Re-entering the job market</td>
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<td>Writing a Resumé</td>
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<td>Exploring part-time employment</td>
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<td>Exploring volunteer employment</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<td>2. Educational Interests</td>
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<td>Job-related training</td>
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<td>Completing high school</td>
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<td>Credit for life experience</td>
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<td>(volunteer work, homemaking, etc.)</td>
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<td>Requirements to enter different</td>
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<td>3. Lifestyle Interests</td>
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<td>Dealing with stress</td>
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<td>Resolving a family situation</td>
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<td>Personal development</td>
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<td>Coping with depression or</td>
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<td>Improving nutrition or exercise</td>
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<td>Resolving financial issues</td>
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<td>Finding out about Community</td>
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<td>Support Services (counselling,</td>
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<td>parenting, child care, groups for</td>
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<td>single parents, widows, etc.)</td>
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<td>Assessing my personal lifestyle</td>
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<td>Exploring life goals and life</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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</table>
Part II — Results

A. Please look over the following list of Results which might have developed from your association with the Women's Resources Centre.

Indicate whether or not each result applies to you by checking "no" or "yes".

Actions resulting from my association with the Women's Resources Centre.

1. Started my first job.  
2. Got a job after being out of the job market for a period of time. 
3. Enrolled in job training program
4. Improved my income.
5. Enrolled in school, college or university. 
6. Enrolled in general interest or personal development program. 
7. Attended vocational planning group at the Centre. 
8. Improved living arrangements.
9. Had life-planning interview.
10. Registered for life-planning workshop.
11. Improved family or marital relationships.
12. Improved diet or exercise habits.
13. Attended noon-hour events at Centre.
14. Took psychological tests.
15. Sought personal counselling.
16. Contacted a community resource to meet my need. 
17. Other ________________________________

Plans Underway as a result of my association with the Women's Resources Centre

18. Making plans for job change.
19. Making plans for further education.
20. Making plans for lifestyle change.

General Improvements resulting from my association with the Women's Resources Centre

22. I now know where to find the information I need.
23. I now know more about myself, my strengths, and my alternatives.
24. My life interests have broadened.
25. I feel more satisfied with my present situation.
26. I now feel more in control of the direction of my life.
27. My goals have been clarified.
28. I am now more likely to seek assistance when I need it.

B. Has your association with the Women's Resources Centre affected you in some way which has not been mentioned? If so, please describe how.

_______________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________
C. The following is a list of possible barriers which may have prevented you from achieving some of the results you wanted or in moving ahead with your plans. Please read through them and indicate whether each applies to you by placing a √ in the appropriate space.

1. Lack of counselling and information services for career or educational guidance
2. Lack of self-confidence.
3. Lack of knowledge about personal talents and goals.
4. Lack of money.
5. Transportation problems.
6. Lack of support and encouragement from family or spouse.
7. Lack of child care or other support services.
8. Lack of flexible programs or part time opportunities.
9. Lack of recognition for previous education or experience.
10. Unhappy feelings about school.
11. Lack of information about opportunities.
12. Location of programs or employment.
14. Other?

Part III
A. Knowing about the services of the Women's Resources Centre may be of use to others (Please circle one).

1. How often have you told someone about the Centre?
   Three or more times
   Once or twice
   Never

2. How often have you recommended that someone visit the Centre?
   Three or more times
   Once or twice
   Never

B. Please add any recommendations that might improve the service the Centre could offer to others.

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

C. Are you willing to help us further by participating in a 30 to 45 minute interview during June, July or August at a time and place of your convenience?

☐ No, I am not ☐ Yes, please call me to set up an appointment.

My name is _____________________________
My telephone is ___________________________

In considering this, please remember that your answers to this questionnaire, as well as those in the interview, will be seen and analyzed only by the survey project coordinator. Your participation is strictly confidential.
In order to find out if the services of the Women's Resources Centre are being used by women from different walks of life, and so that we can find out which groups are not being served, we require some additional information from you.

1. What is your age? _____ years

2. Where do you live?
   ____ Vancouver
   ____ North Vancouver
   ____ West Vancouver
   ____ Burnaby
   ____ Richmond
   ____ Other
   Where? ______________________

3. Are you:
   ____ single (never been married)?
   ____ married?
   ____ separated or divorced?
   ____ widowed?
   ____ in a common law relationship?

4. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
   ____ grade 8 or less
   ____ grade 9, 10, or 11
   ____ grade 12 graduation
   ____ one year of post-secondary, trade or technical school
   (What program/certificate? _____________________________)
   ____ two years of post-secondary, trade or technical school
   (What program/certificate? _____________________________)
   ____ three years of post-secondary, trade or technical school
   (What program/certificate? _____________________________)
   ____ One to three years of college or university
   (diploma? no yes, in _____________________________)
   ____ Four or more years of college or University
   (Degree? no yes, in _____________________________)
   ____ Some post graduate University Education
   (Advanced Degree? no yes, in _____________________________)

5. Do you have any children?
   [ ] no   [ ] yes
   How many? ______
   What are their ages? ______________________

6. Are you the sole supporter of any:
   children? [ ] no   [ ] yes
   How many? ______
   parents? [ ] no   [ ] yes
   How many? ______
   others? [ ] no   [ ] yes
   How many? ______

7. Are you in paid employment at this time?
   [ ] no   [ ] yes
   What is your current status?
   ____ Unemployed? (seeking employment)
   ____ Student
   ____ Volunteer employment
   ____ Homemaker
   ____ other
   What is your job?
   part time ______
   full time ______

8. Please ◆ the level of your family income in 1979.
   ____ less than $5,000
   ____ $ 5,001 — $15,000
   ____ $15,001 — $25,000
   ____ $25,001 — $35,000
   ____ $35,001 — $50,000
   ____ over $50,000

   Please ◆ the level of your personal income in 1979.
   ____ less than $5,000
   ____ $ 5,001 — $15,000
   ____ $15,001 — $25,000
   ____ $25,001 — $35,000
   ____ $35,001 — $50,000
   ____ over $50,000

One final Question!

How do you feel about your Life as a Whole?

Delighted 1  Pleased 2  Mostly Satisfied 3  Mixed 4  Mostly Dissatisfied 5  Unhappy 6  Terrible 7

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. In order for this study to provide us with information which can result in improved services for women in our community, it is important to have as many questionnaires as possible completed and returned.

Please return yours as soon as you can, in the enclosed postpaid envelope so that your opinions will be included in our study.

Good luck!
Appendix B

Phase II Instruments and Interview Schedule
WOMEN'S RESOURCES CENTRE
Client-Reaction Study
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Your answers on the questionnaire were helpful in telling us how the Centre operates. However, this kind of service is quite new and we would like to know how the experience with the Centre fitted into your own life. We are not trying to evaluate anything you did. We do need information about how useful the contact might have been to you.

1. What were your reasons for coming to the Centre?
   a) Did some change in the pattern of your life influence your decision to contact the W.R.C.? (Ask about crisis such as health problems, family, job change etc.; natural transitions—change in role or family structure; chronic dissatisfaction; or state of "readiness").
      Yes ___
      No. What did motivate contact with the Centre? (Ask about networks leading to Centre.)

2. Did you visit the Centre more than once?
   Yes. How often? _________
   No. (go to 3)

3. Did you expect further association with the Centre?
   Yes. Why? _________
   Who should have taken the initiative for this? _________
   No.

4. Did you contact other sources for assistance before calling the Centre?
   No. (go to 5)
   Yes.
   Which sources? _________
   Were they helpful?
   No. (go to 5)
   Yes. In what ways?
5. **After contacting the Centre did you get in touch with other offices, agencies, or persons?**

   No. Why not?

   Yes. Were these offices suggested by the Centre Counsellors?
   Yes. What prompted your decision to contact them?

6. **After visiting the Centre did you talk over the information you received and the experience you had with anyone?**

   No. (go to 7)

   Yes. Who?

   Did he/she offer any additional information or suggestions?
   No. (go to 7)

   Yes. What were they?

7. **Did you act on any of the suggestions that came out of the experience with the Centre?**

   No. (Go to 8)

   Yes. How?

8. **Have you faced other important challenges or decisions since you contacted the Centre?**

   No. (go to 9)

   Yes. What were they?

   What did you do?

   Did your experience with the Centre counselling have anything to do with your handling of those challenges or decisions and your ability to deal with them?

   No. (go to 9)

   Yes. In what way?

9. **Are there still other problems to be solved before you can act on any of your plans or the suggestions given to you by the Centre or referral agencies?**

   (Explore issue of money)

   No. (go to 10)

   Yes. What are they?
10. Do you feel that there are other services the Centre should offer to people who come in for information or counselling?  
   no. (go to 11)  
   yes. What would these be?  

11. Would you like to share any other ideas, feelings, or suggestions about how the Centre fitted into your recent experiences?  
   no. (go to 12)  
   yes.  

12. Reactions to Goals of Women's Resources Centre  

   The following is a list of some of the Services offered by the Women's Resources Centre.  
   a) Please indicate whether or not you received each of these services by checking "yes" or "no".  
   b) If your answer was "yes", please indicate how helpful that particular service was to you by placing a check in the appropriate space.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Rec'd</th>
<th>Very Helpful</th>
<th>Mod. Helpful</th>
<th>Slightly Helpful</th>
<th>Of no help</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

A.  
   1. To provide information about community resources (pamphlets, calendars of educational institutions, etc)  
      _yes_ | _no_  
   2. To provide materials such as the Resume kit and Vocational Planning Manual.  
      _yes_ | _no_  
   3. To provide Services such as peer counselling (with volunteer) lifeplanning interviews, psychological testing.  
      _yes_ | _no_  
   4. To offer referral to community resources for information or assistance.  
      _yes_ | _no_  
   5. To provide advocacy (to act on your behalf) when you require direct, practical assistance to approach an agency or person.  
      _yes_ | _no_  
   6. To provide programs such as lifeplanning groups, vocational planning groups, assertion training, noon-hour events, etc.  
      _yes_ | _no_  

B. Was there some other service which would have been helpful to you?

No. ________
Yes. Please indicate below.

Some of the ways in which the Women's Resources Centre tries to offer its services are listed below.

a) Please indicate whether or not you received each of these kinds of assistance by checking "yes" or "no".

b) If your answer is "yes" please indicate how helpful that particular assistance was to you by placing a check in the appropriate space.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Rec'd</th>
<th>Very Helpful</th>
<th>Mod. Helpful</th>
<th>Slightly Helpful</th>
<th>Of no help</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Showing acceptance of a client's concerns.</td>
<td><em>yes</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Helping a client explain and clarify her needs.</td>
<td><em>yes</em></td>
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<td>3. Helping a client see her strengths and abilities and make plans to build on these.</td>
<td><em>yes</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Encouraging a client to make her own decisions.</td>
<td><em>yes</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Pointing out alternative courses of action and exploring options with her.</td>
<td><em>yes</em></td>
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<td>6. Encouraging a client to begin a process of self-directed learning which she can carry on in the future.</td>
<td><em>yes</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Assisting a client in gaining more control of the direction of her life.</td>
<td><em>yes</em></td>
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B. Was there some other way in which the staff of the Centre could have been more helpful to you?

No. ________
Yes. ________

Please describe below.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
The Way you Look at Things or your feelings towards yourself and your life may have been influenced by your contact with the Centre. If so, please indicate in what way by scoring each item above or below 100. If you feel the same as you did when you first visited the Centre, give yourself 100.

For example:

If your self-confidence has increased, you may want to score yourself like this  

or

If you now feel less self-confident, it might look like  

or

If there has been no change, you might mark it like this  

Using any numbers you wish between 0 and 200, please consider the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decreased</th>
<th>Stayed the Same (100)</th>
<th>Increased</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>155</td>
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<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>100</td>
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Decreased to Stayed the Same (100) Increased to

1. Your feelings of Self-worth have
2. Your Self-confidence has
3. Your Self-understanding has
4. Your knowledge has
5. Your Contentment has
6. Your Assertiveness has
7. Your Optimism has
8. Your Enthusiasm has
9. Your Realistic outlook has
10. Your general feelings of Wellbeing have
DOORKNOB COMMENTS (Recorded immediately after interview)
INSTRUCTIONS: This is a questionnaire designed to gather data on learning preferences and attitudes towards learning. After reading each item, please indicate the degree to which you feel that statement is true of you. Please read each choice carefully and circle the number of the response which best expresses your feeling. 

There is no time limit for the questionnaire. Try not to spend too much time on any one item, however. Your first reaction to the question will usually be the most accurate.

## RESPONSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEMS</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
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<th>5</th>
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<tr>
<td>I'm looking forward to learning as long as I'm living.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I know what I want to learn.</td>
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<tr>
<td>When I see something that I don't understand, I stay away from it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>If there is something I want to learn, I can figure out a way to learn it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I love to learn.</td>
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<tr>
<td>It takes me a while to get started on new projects.</td>
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<tr>
<td>In a classroom, I expect the teacher to tell all class members exactly what to do at all times.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I believe that thinking about who you are, where you are, and where you are going should be a major part of every person's education.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I don't work very well on my own.</td>
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</table>
10. If I discover a need for information that I don't have, I know where to go to get it.

11. I can learn things on my own better than most people.

12. Even if I have a great idea, I can't seem to develop a plan for making it work.

13. In a learning experience, I prefer to take part in deciding what will be learned and how.

14. Difficult study doesn't bother me if I'm interested in something.

15. No one but me is truly responsible for what I learn.

16. I can tell whether I'm learning something well or not.

17. There are so many things I want to learn that I wish there were more hours in a day.

18. If there is something I have decided to learn, I can find time for it, no matter how busy I am.

19. Understanding what I read is a problem for me.

20. If I don't learn, it's not my fault.

21. I know when I need to learn more about something.

22. If I can understand something well enough to get a good grade on a test, it doesn't bother me if I still have questions about it.

23. I think libraries are boring places.

24. The people I admire most are always learning new things.
25. I can think of many different ways to learn about a new topic.

26. I try to relate what I am learning to my long-term goals.

27. I am capable of learning for myself almost anything I might need to know.

28. I really enjoy tracking down the answer to a question.

29. I don’t like dealing with questions where there is not one right answer.

30. I have a lot of curiosity about things.

31. I’ll be glad when I’m finished learning.

32. I’m not as interested in learning as some other people seem to be.

33. I don’t have any problem with basic study skills.

34. I like to try new things, even if I’m not sure how they will turn out.

35. I don’t like it when people who really know what they’re doing point out mistakes that I am making.

36. I’m good at thinking of unusual ways to do things.

37. I like to think about the future.

38. I’m better than most people are at trying to find out the things I need to know.

39. I think of problems as challenges, not stopsigns.

40. I can make myself do what I think I should.
Appendix C

Clients' Reasons for Visiting
Appendix C

Clients' Reasons for Visiting the Women's Resources Centre.

Respondents to Questionnaire

A. Career/vocational Guidance

1. Identifying a career path or suitable vocation:

"looking for help in choosing a career";

"I was confused about career planning";

"I needed guidance in job 'availability' to me and what kind of jobs I would enjoy".

2. Exploring the job market and personal suitability for different vocations:

"To find out about what jobs or further education was available, suitable for my interests and background";

"I wanted to know whether I am in the right track or career";

"For job focusing";

"Looking for help assessing job market and in finding out what type of job I might be able to get and might want";

"To get an idea of the kind of jobs open to my qualifications";

"To try to explore further avenues to obtain work in the areas in which I have training and experience".

3. Specific assistance in securing employment:

"I was told that the Centre could possible help me in finding work";

"I required assistance in being more creative in the job-searching process that I was beginning";

"I was having difficulty finding a job";

"Trouble finding employment, had just quit an unfulfilling job, now what do I do?"

4. Assistance in re-entering the work force:

"As a secretary just starting into business after 20 years of looking after a family I would like information on improving my career and myself to make my budget balance";

"I thought I might like to re-enter the work force"; "Attempting
to get back into the work force and requiring a buildup of self-confidence";

"Returning to work force after 17 years absence. Recently separated and need moral support".

5. Guidance in making a career change:

"I wanted help and guidance in making a job change";

"Looking for a career change";

"Career counselling";

"To seek information about changing my career";

"To obtain ideas on career change and more personal involvement in helping others";

"I heard about it's existence from my Doctor - at that time I was thinking of changing my line of work";

"To discuss career plans - how to get into another field as I didn't enjoy being a secretary after 10+ years and felt limited as far as advancement opportunities";

"Was unsatisfied with my present job but unsure of what to do as a replacement";

"Search for information regarding new career directions";

"Career change due to boredom and stagnation - direction, guidance, education and information resources";

"I was dissatisfied with my job and my attitude towards my job and life. I felt I had no 'career' direction in my life"; "I was thinking of changing jobs from science to social work or ?".

B. Educational Information and Guidance

"Career counselling, assertiveness training"; "I wanted some guidance re continuing my education and some directional guidance";

"Looking for information regarding psychology test ie. aptitude etc. to help me make a decision about my major for my university degree";

"Changing my career wondering what was available - education etc., referred by a girl friend"; "mainly to get some information about courses but more important, I think, to get some support from other women who might understand what I was going through";

"To find out about further education (as a mature student)"; "Needed to compile information on women and non-traditional occupations, equal employment opportunities";
"Find out about schooling, also what facilities in Vancouver as new to city".

C. Personal/lifestyle Guidance

"I needed a more objective view and feedback from someone who had nothing (I hope) to gain or lose from this exchange. Too many subjective friends and opinions. 'I told you so' complex";

"I had some problems in my job";

"Limbo - took the job-hunting course to get ideas. Came to see if there was such a thing";

"Emotional distress";

"Having left my home, friends and an excellent job in Europe to marry a Canadian, I arrived here to find that he had, for some reason still unknown to me, changed his mind";

"Need to speak with somebody able to help me clarify my priorities in life, and cope with them in an ordered and reasonable way. Also, because I felt very depressed and lost";

"I felt a need to change some facets of my life and did not know what options - on career and personal levels - were available in Vancouver for women";

"Personal counselling"; "A desire to change my vocation and life-style but little sense of direction"; "Contact. I was new to Vancouver and wished to find out about discussion groups and miscellaneous information";

"A lack of knowledge about the direction my life could/should take";

"Looking for work or volunteer work, could not stand retirement"; "So that you would help me appraise my lifestyle and work out ways to change it";

"Curiosity. Wished to compare with other centers I had looked into in Oakland and Concord, California";

"Heard about job hunters program. Signed up for 'life support' group and job hunting";

"I just arrived back in Vancouver after 6 years travelling in the far east. I need work.";

"New in the city, looking for a job, have referred many women to many Women's Resource Centres across Canada - this time it was my turn to go for help."
Interviewees in Transition

1. Life-stage or Career Transition

"Unemployed after an extended holiday. Opportunity to re-examine career directions before seeking employment. Recently married".

"Empty nest syndrome. Finished involvement with children's activities."

"Children are older and all in school now. Looking for involvements outside the home."

"Widowed 5 years ago, recently moved here from the East to make a new start."

"Was on social assistance for years. Finally completed B.A. part time while caring for two children. Decided it was time to get out and do something rather than continue on social assistance."

"The first step back to normal living for me after a bout of depression."

"Going through a process of consciousness-raising regarding women's issues resulting from the job I have been doing. I've been a day-care supervisor, like the work but resent the low pay and low status in society. I also see the single parent mothers struggling. I want to explore the trades, they offer better pay."

2. Chronic Dissatisfaction with Present Situation

"Unsatisfactory work relationships, career muddle."

"Felt unsettled about direction of my work. It was a time of my life when I was unsure about where to go."

"Was bored with clerical job, dissatisfied, became ill, decided to go back to university."

"Career change, have been in secretarial for for 10 years and want to move into a management position. I'm trying to become qualified for this in a realistic way."

3. Upheaval and Changes in Pattern of Life

"My husband is now a student, my children are in school. I feel I should take some financial responsibility."

"I'm unemployed, was depressed after abortion."

"I was in crisis after my marriage plans fell through. I had left a well paying job and my home in Europe to relocate."

"I was divorced and moved here from the East. I needed to get
re-employed. I was a teacher. What else can I do?

"I was a new resident to the West End. I had quit my job and was taking time to look around."

"I was widowed for the second time a year ago. I moved to Vancouver from the Island recently. I'm financially well off but want to be involved in some meaningful pursuit."

"I was feeling very low - depressed about two dead-end directions over the last few years. I needed to find a suitable direction for a career and education."

"Recently moved here from Alberta. Was a new start for me, freed from social responsibilities, children in school, time to develop me."

"Moved here from New York two years ago because of my husband's career transition. Have been trying to sort out my career directions and become employed ever since. There are fewer opportunities for me here. Cultural and social differences still are a problem for me."

"I'm going through a divorce. I began preparing myself for work a few years ago, I saw the writing on the wall. I need to evaluate my job potential."

"I was trying to decide whether to carry on with grad school or look for work. Wanted to find out what opportunities were available for a B.A. in psychology."

"Recently returned after living in California for 11 years. Divorce. Knew Women's Resources Centre could help me with 'red tape'."

"I have personal problems and was dissatisfied with my career direction."
Appendix D

Responses to Part I, B

Question: Please describe any other parts of your visit to the "drop-in Centre about which you may feel particularly satisfied or particularly dissatisfied.

Responses:

Accessibility

"I would like to have felt I could come in and sit around, find someone to talk to. The staff seemed busy and I felt in their way."

"It was great to be able to drop in to a place one knew was staffed with friendly people, who were aware of the 'status of women'."

"Too much of an upper middle class university professor's wife emphasis to the environment. The Volunteers appear to be living comfortably off husband's income. Almost no political consciousness."

"I got sort of a 'Tower of Babel Feeling'. (Prolific duplication of information, overwhelming, too much activity, cold atmosphere).

"Initial telephone contact - particularly satisfied."

"Most recently, having found myself without a place to live, I dropped in and got coffee, sympathy and the chance to get somewhat calmed and organized."

"Lack of privacy. Felt that everyone in the Centre would be aware of my problem. This did not really occur on my first contact but if I was very sensitive about something I would feel uncomfortable and hesitate to say freely what was going on. This may only be my misunderstanding - I do not know if there are smaller private areas in which to discuss problems."

"More privacy needed - overheard by others."

"Atmosphere could be warmer, brighter, - a bit dull, like an office."

"Availability of coffee, tea, reading and informational materials, welcomeness."

"The Centre is a very 'unprivate' place for discussion."

"The Centre should be used more often in the evenings so that people who work during the day can use it."

"Longer hours."
"The hours are not geared to working women."

"I wish the Centre could stay open after 4 p.m. until 7 p.m. on weekdays."

"More private areas for conversing with volunteer if drop-in is seeking privacy and confidentiality."

**Interaction with the Staff**

"If my replies seem inconsistent, it is because the first person I spoke to was unsatisfactory. Only by my own persistence did I finally get on the right track. Since that poor beginning, I have found everyone else at the Centre excellent. Thus I have discounted my experience with that first person in my present feelings about the Centre."

"I found the staff to be generally enlightened interested people who wanted to help. The first time I dropped in the assistant seemed to be annoyed that I asked for a particular pamphlet and didn't seem to want to bother looking for it."

"The positive moral support and friendliness of the counsellors was of infinitesimal help at a crisis point."

"The second counsellor I spoke to had too much of an expressed bias when I discussed my conflict with my superior. I felt I was being manipulated somewhat and the advice given was not appropriate to my present assertiveness level. I felt more distraught after that."

"My initial visit, dropping in to see what the Centre was about was very pleasant and informative. Kathleen is a lovely person."

"Receptive staff, wanting to be of assistance."

"Initial contact volunteer was very encouraging and well informed."

"It was important to me that I was made to feel welcome at the Centre and that my concerns were legitimate."

"I had just started to look for work when I dropped in at the Centre. I had a lovely chat with one of the girls and she seemed to think I was going about my job hunting in the right manner. The only thing she recommended I do was go and visit an employment agency which I did."

"Initial interview with Sandra". (particularly satisfied) Further visit - lack of assistance and information. Usefulness of Centre depends on counsellor?"

"Very friendly staff."

"The contact with the volunteers was particularly important to the professional staff, i.e. I felt a bit of a nuisance and a
bit silly."

Compasion and understanding given by those who work at the Centre."

"Took time to put you at ease with coffee."

"I did not like it when a third person was listening, without participating much in the conversation. I felt a little uncomfortable."

"The woman whom I talked with gave me a lot of encouragement about the new job I was going to start and advice on what to do."

"The lady I spoke to was interested in the same things as I had learned in the East and is the only person in Vancouver who understands me."

"A good listener, pleasant personality, an understanding, kind woman."

"The staff member who I talked to made me feel very comfortable and I felt she was giving me 100% of her attention."

"The counsellor didn't mind if I cried."

"It was very nice talking to unbiased people."

"Some of the counsellors weren't what I needed -- couldn't listen."

"Matching up ages between the client and volunteer would improve empathy."

"If the woman had actually listened to what I wanted to say instead of telling me what she wanted to say I would have received better service."

"Try to match ages. At 59 one doesn't feel comfortable discussing one's life with a 20 year old."

"For the first time in my life, I have been able to discuss any problems with relative strangers, and have discovered the enormous benefits of objective support backed up by experiences similar to my own."

Information and Referral

"There was access to a wide variety of pamphlets, easy to browse."

"I visited an employment agency which was recommended. I was dissapointed with them. I was there for maybe 10 minutes and was left with the impression that I had very little to offer in the job market. Since then I have been to a few other agencies where I received more attention and help."
"Recommended reading, What Color is your Parachute? very useful."

"Lack of information about jobs and the situation for women in the arts, especially fine arts."

"Got more information than expected."

"Information on resume writing from The College and University Placement Guide was excellent. This was extra information apart from the resume kit, which did not fit my needs."

"The amount and variety of brochures were of particular value to me."

"Received the information I needed."

"They did not tell me about other programs and services at the Centre."

Overall Reactions

"I was particularly satisfied with the whole Centre. What it did most for me was to make me realize that many women have the same problems that I have. I was not alone."

"I received the information I needed, was particularly satisfied with the willingness of the staff to help. I feel that the services provided by the Centre were very helpful. I would probably return if I was looking for further assistance."

"I have only visited once and gained the impression that it was primarily useful for women who needed help planning a career outside the home. I have already done all of the things recommended. i.e. returned to university to obtain B.C. teaching degree, used my experience in helping refugees etc., teaching emotionally disturbed teenage boys, autistic children etc. to try to obtain paid work. No luck."

"In my initial visit I was immediately made to feel comfortable and hopeful, which was very important to me at that time as I was very depressed and lacking in confidence. After accepting a few helpful suggestions I remember leaving the place with high anticipation of the first session of the course offered."

"The Centre particularly acted as my basic support system when I first came to Vancouver, that is, I found sympathy, understanding and a supportive ear that I could not find through my family or work acquaintances."

"Thoroughly enjoyed any lectures, workshops or sessions that I attended. The Center usually was able to give me just the stimulus I would need at the time. Sometimes the coffee ran out before I got there."
Appendix E

Reactions to Goals

Staff

A. Services

Question: Was there some other service which you think you could have offered which would have been useful to clients?

Responses:

1. A follow-up phone call.

2. I have only limited knowledge of the resources available -- therefore, several times I learned about services that could have been helpful after the fact.

3. More follow-up on certain specific clients.

4. Although the above mentioned services indicate "referral", the suggestion is that such referral is only for "information and assistance". One of our important services is emotional support for women who are depressed or disturbed, and, if necessary, referral to appropriate therapeutic services.

5. Information about possible careers, i.e. a list; teaching relaxation, body awareness.

6. With Heavy emphasis on non-traditional (vocational) career options for women and a desperate need for trained trades people, I'd like to see us offer group counselling in non-traditional areas (i.e. a series of exposure lecture/discussions on various trade areas.) Also, I think we should try to get a terminal link with Canadian Employment and Immigration Commission's CHOICE self-counselling computer program. Many schools now have these. How about WRC?

7. A Hook-in to jobs available in clients' area, i.e. a direct contact with Manpower (C.I.E.C.). A network of contacts for direct direct referral at all major agencies, educational institutions, etc. --both bridges that would make the connection from 'now' to the future so much easier for clients.


9. Looking at the client's health aspect which I find lacking. I think this will improve when we start the Health Group.

10. Lifestyle planning - including nutrition and exercise.
B. Approaches

Question: Is there some other way in which you think the staff of the Centre could be more helpful to clients?

Responses:

1. If, instead of being so thoroughly middle class, the associates were more of a mix, socio-economically and ethnically. We have lost promising newcomer associates because of our overtly middle-class image. Identification for disadvantaged clients isn't made easier by the flash of diamonds around the Centre.

2. A number of times I've been inadvertently interrupted during an interview with a client. These interruptions come from classes during coffee breaks and other drop-ins. I believe it would be helpful to designate and physically separate the private counselling spaces from the coffee areas, bulletin boards and phones. If you're considering a new space or location I'd suggest this be taken into consideration. Likewise, easy street access might make the Centre more physically and psychologically accessible to would-be clients. (If not, could we rearrange the present space a bit?)

3. I'm sure there are other was of helping and these will evolve through time.

4. By advertising we could reach more potential clients, and therefore be 'more helpful', period.

5. Information available about diet, exercise, stress, relaxation and their inter-relationship. Irrational beliefs awareness.

6. All of the answers above can be very helpful. To be so is largely dependent on the client's willingness and ability to be open to new (to her) ways of seeing her problems. This can be encouraged by the counsellor, but the responsibility rests with the clients.

7. More follow-up on certain specific clients.

8. I am not sure how it could be done - but - some follow-up with clients who have been in crisis (even just a phone call).

Clients

A. Services

Question: Was there some other service which would have been helpful to you?

Responses:

1. Direct confidence building, more extensive in job hunting course.
2. Possible legal advice of an objective nature.

3. Access to a math anxiety clinic.

4. Felt there should have been some ongoing group contact after completing the job hunting course.

5. I was able to use resume kit as a referral tool for the Women's Resources Centre.

6. A group for people who don't have problems (in present job, with money, with relationships) but feel that something intangible is wrong.

7. Vocational advice.

8. Courses overpriced. $80 - $100 not easy for a lot of people eg. basic English. (This does not refer to WRC offerings).

9. "Entry-level" group or service for those wanting to get into management positions.

10. Needed additional assistance with knowledgable person.

11. More practical information about them. (services)

B. Approaches

Question: Was there some other way in which the staff of the Centre could have been more helpful to you?

Responses:

1. Taken a bit more time with me personally.

2. By providing more viable alternatives to career problems, possibly more leaders who were more knowledgable of the work place.

3. It is helpful to be realistic and steer people into things they can use their background and experience for.

4. More exploring before signing up for a program.

5. When I told them I hate my job, don't know where to go or what to do, it was most helpful when someone said, "Everybody feels that way sometimes." I didn't feel alone and could then deal with it.

6. Follow-up would be useful.

7. To help a person who cannot specify one certain problem or articulate exactly what she wants (to do, to change etc.).

8. Would like to have seen more continuity of staff.

9. Dwell more on alternative courses of action
10. I did not need most of the above services but glad they are available to women.
Appendix F

The Larger Context of the Women's Lives

Meaningful Goals

Pam

Pam's account of her search for directions illustrates the importance that she attributed to having a meaningful goal. For her, it was the appropriateness of her goal in her own estimation that gave the process of working towards it meaning for her. At 47, she had come to an acceptance and understanding, not so much of a specific goal she wanted to pursue, but of other paths she no longer needed to be concerned with. Her explanation was,

I now know what I don't want to do. It's a relief not to feel that I should work towards being a social worker or teacher. My parents were both in business and I've come to realize that's where my skills are. I'm really enjoying the experience I'm getting in different offices now with 'Temporary Services'.

Because she wants to contribute to the family income on a more regular basis while her husband attends graduate school, Pam has become more economically oriented. Since some of her acquaintances have had a lack of success in finding employment in spite of academic credentials, she has stopped taking academic courses and is concentrating on learning business procedures. She is earning needed income at the same time. More importantly, she feels that her goals are now more realistic and although she does not want to remain in her present work situation permanently, it is a stepping stone in the right direction.

Molly

Being able to free herself from internalized role expectations as well as from those of others also resulted in a clarification of the meaning behind the goals which Molly is pursuing. She described two disappointing attempts to establish herself on a career path, and the discouragement she felt at embarking on any new plans.

When Molly visited the Centre that grey March day Molly was in a depressed state and found support and understanding from the volunteers. She also had an opportunity to talk with Ruth Sigal, coordinator of volunteers at the Centre. Her gently confrontative approach which included the admonishment that Molly was the only one who could ultimately decide what to do, was not well received at first. This had been noted on the questionnaire which Molly returned. At the time of the interview, four months later, however, Molly reported, "It was really what I needed at the time to shake me out of my depression and get on with making plans". She had been back to the Centre to thank Ruth.
Molly also changed her answer to the question about "Life as a Whole" from number 6 (unhappy) to number 3 (mostly satisfied). She described her present direction and goals as "feeling right" and thus having real meaning for her. Furthermore, she reported that she had learned a great deal about herself in the process and that the association with the Women's Resources Centre has been a catalyst for this.

Molly has now embarked on a program of graduate studies that she feels very good about and was able to reflect back on the two previous ventures with which she had been unhappy. Her most useful learning centered around the need to listen to her own intuition. She described the physical and mental discomfort she experienced each morning when she faced the task of running the business which she had started. She said, "I now know what fear feels like and will listen to this kind of sensing in the future. When she did pay more attention to what she was feeling and began to examine why she was pursuing certain goals, Molly, like Pam, came to a liberating discovery. In her words, "I found that when I did stop doing the things that were expected of me (mostly by my mother in England, so I thought), and being more 'myself', no one really cared. The consequences were not as formidable as I thought they would be." This newly gained self knowledge and self confidence resulted from listening to her intuitive feelings about the direction in which she was going and acting on them.

Rose

For those like Molly, and Pam who have made a commitment to a goal which they see as worthwhile and appropriate, the process of working towards that goal takes on meaning. Because the nature of their goal is an evolving one, and their directions are more general than specific, they tend to be able to pursue it in creative and flexible ways.

Rose is another woman who described herself as "feeling good about what she is doing" and even though she is not altogether sure where she will end up, she is convinced that her present pursuit is worthwhile and appropriate for her at this time. Rose's personal networking resulted in a job helping a friend run a photography business. Since her husband has enrolled in graduate school, and their children are schoolage, she feels that it is appropriate for her to contribute financially at this time. Even though her long term career goal is to establish her own business, she sees this job as being a useful learning experience towards that goal.

Sybelle

As we have seen, when the goal feels right, the process of working towards it seemed to take on meaning. For Sybelle however, the goal was unclear and seemed incongruous with her life. Her process clearly lacked meaning and commitment. Having completed her Bachelor's degree, and winning the Governor General's Gold Medal, she was faced with the task of deciding
whether to continue on to graduate work or seek employment. Because she has family responsibilities and is not geographically mobile, she doesn't have the option of carrying on her studies at another institution as she was advised to do.

Sybelle came to the Centre for some assistance in exploring employment possibilities in her field so that she could make her decision. She wanted help with goal clarification but unfortunately was prematurely steered into a job finding group. Having learned that she needs to be more assertive about her needs, and being unsuccessful in gathering information about opportunities her field, she returned to graduate school, utilizing the fellowship she had been awarded. She is continuing her explorations in a limited way while putting most of her time and energy into a task which has little meaning for her.

Sybelle's studies are in a very circumscribed field and, as she put it "There's not much demand for an expert in animal experimental psychology, except in an academic setting in a large Center." She really doesn't know what she will do when she graduates because of her domestic restrictions and continues to wonder if her sights should be redirected in a manner more congruent with the reality of her life. Since her male academic advisors do not understand her dilemma, she was especially disappointed that the service she received at the Women's Resources Centre was not more exploratory and empathic.

Consciousness of Women's Status

Melanie

For 26 year old Melanie, the association with the Women's Resources Centre was very timely. She has a degree in Family Science and was working in a daycare centre to gain experience with children and sort out future career goals. She became increasingly discontent with the low pay and low status of the job. Says Melanie, "I liked the work itself and felt that I was doing something important but came to realize it wasn't going to get me anywhere. The experience has really contributed to my consciousness being raised about the role of women in our society and the inequalities which exist." She became aware of the financial and other hardships of the parents of the children, most of whom were women on their own, as well as the reality of her own career situation.

This experience, along with the opportunity to discuss women's issues at the Centre have influenced Melanie's directions. She has become interested in the field of women's studies and plans to pursue this area of study. (The man she lives with has taken some courses in this field and their discussions have added to her interest.) Her more immediate plans center around getting into a trade. She has left her job and applied to the Women's Exploratory Apprenticeship Training (WEAT). Another action she plans to take which has resulted from her growing awareness of the status of women is to write to
companies whose advertising represents both a positive and negative influence on women's images.

In order to establish a connection between Melanie's goals and directions and her association with the Women's Resources Centre, she was asked to consider how this may have happened. Her response was, "I got the idea that one could make contacts for beneficial purposes." She explained that in the vocational planning group she became aware that such a process existed and then began to use it. When asked if she thought that she had previously done so without being aware of it, she said, "No, didn't know I could and didn't do it. Now I am aware and do it." Melanie's experience reinforced the idea that the networking concept can be a significant link in connecting needs to resources and that the awareness of the networking idea was important.

Empowerment

Jan

Jan's personal power consisted of a newly found feeling of autonomy and a developing competence in her work. At 23 she was on her own again after having lived with a man for the past four years. She was making her own decisions and thriving on her newly found freedom. While completing the self-directed learning readiness scale during our interview Jan recognized the changes she had experienced and remarked, "I wouldn't have answered these questions like this a year ago." When encouraged to elaborate, she described the process of regaining her autonomy which included not only the break up of her common law relationship but also the struggle to enter a male dominated occupation.

Jan recounted her experiences in applying for admission to the painters' apprentice program at Vancouver Vocational Institute. She lost three months waiting to be accepted for the program due to an error by one of the male counsellors at "manpower" (C.E.I.C.), who put her name down for the hair dressing program. "There was nothing further from my mind", said Jan. After completing the training program, her struggles began again. She had a difficult time finding employment as an apprentice because she was a woman. Finally, an employer took pity on her and referred her to a friend who needed a painter and she was hired.

Growing up in a small northern B.C. Community, where she didn't complete high school, Jan was not particularly knowledgable about the women's movement. Now she is well schooled in the practical realities of being a woman in a male dominated field of work. She is beginning to address some of the dilemmas that this situation presents for the future. One has the feeling that Jan is on her way to becoming a strong woman whatever path she chooses. Her charming lack of sophistication about feminist issues, coupled with the fact that she is an example of the need for equal opportunities for women,
made this interview a delight and opened up an awareness for the interviewer that there are a host of similar minded women in non-traditional pursuits who are coping with these practical issues on a daily basis. Jan's learning process and her present outlook brings to mind the idea that, "Every step we take on the road of freedom and responsibility makes the next step easier. Goals, programs, and time tables are less important than the engagement itself" (Fergusen, 1980, p. 224).

Sally

Sally is another young woman who demonstrated an enviable newly gained sense of "being her own person". At the time of her visit to the Women's Resources Centre, she was unemployed and looking for work. She had recently undergone an abortion and was at a cross-road in several areas of her life. She recalled her experience in the vocational planning group at the Centre. "I was so depressed at the time; each time I went I felt so much better as I came out. I realized that I was not the only one who had problems." Her learning included the realization that she could set longterm goals as well as seek employment for the short term. She began to realize that she could save to take training. She gained confidence in her own ideas and now feels that her plans to take a Real Estate Sales Training Program will be possible.

Sally also referred to "shining moments", significant events which occurred in the group. These constituted meaningful learnings for her. One outcome was "I'm more aware of guilt traps now and can be more assertive with my mother." Her optimism about the future and her increased confidence in her ability to influence her life's direction is reflected by her statement that, "Day to day problems seem less crucial, life's a bit easier now. I'm writing down my ideas, (a strategy learned in the group) and I have more confidence to act on my own ideas."

Kristin

The association with the Women's Resources Centre helped Kristin initiate actions which resulted in her getting a job after being unemployed and on social assistance for the past 12 years. "The job is not exactly what I want but I'm now working towards where I want to go. I've stopped waiting."

At 37 Kristin is still in the emotional turmoil which often characterizes the first half of a woman's life. She has received psychiatric help in dealing with her depression and is beginning to confront her relationships and deal with her feelings about her parents and the men in her life. She lives with her two teenage sons and has been a single parent since they were very young. While raising her children she completed her B.A. and now feels that it is time to "do something with my life".

Kristin came to the Women's Resources Centre at the suggestion of friends and the association, including
participation in two groups came at the right time for her. She says that the experience "got me going". Afterwards she drew up a resume and made it known to friends and acquaintances that she was job hunting. Her present employment resulted from this networking. Says Kristin, "I'm still not sure of my directions. It's not the Centre's fault, they did as much as they could." One gets the feeling that this woman is at last on her way to overcoming the obstacles she has been dealing with and her growing self understanding is most apparent when she acknowledges that "I still have down periods, but confront them more directly now."

Life Stage Transitions

Eileen

Eileen has been widowed twice. The first time her youngest child was 5 years of age and she knew what she had to do. Finding a job, being both a mother and father to her children and coping were difficult, but her options were clearcut. This time her youngest daughter is 16 and she is 59. She has more choices now about how to spend the rest of her life and in a sense, that makes it more difficult. In her words, "I can become a little old lady and do 'petite point' or find some more meaningful activity."

The reality of Eileen's situation is that she does have a variety of options since she is financially secure. The problem is that she is battling depression, coping with a weight problem and having difficulty making decisions. Having recently moved to Vancouver she has made several contacts and explored a variety of resources. Her visit to the Women's Resources Centre for guidance with lifestyle planning was unfortunately, not a fruitful experience. In her words,

When I went to the Centre I was depressed and still grieving my husband's death, and very negative about everything. I didn't know what I wanted or what I really was looking for. Perhaps if I went to the Centre now it would be a positive encounter. However, it might be of interest to you that I didn't come away with the impression that the Centre could be a valuable aid at some future time. There was no stimulus or incentive to go back.

Ollie

Ollie is 55 and was widowed five years ago. She came west to make a new start. She is very proud of her adult children and recounts with feeling, her many past involvements in school, community and homemaking activities. She has also been active in the field of Family Life Education and in the Women's movement. All of these have been on a voluntary basis.

Ollie describes herself as "self-educated". "Twenty-five
years of continuous education courses, all non-credit." After she found herself on her own, she decided to make a complete break and come to Vancouver. She came to the Women's Resources Centre because, "I was new in the city, looking for a job, have referred many women to many women's resources centres across Canada, this time it was my turn to go for help." Within three weeks of her visit to the Centre she had found a secretarial job and is looking forward to pursuing new interests.

Underneath the bravado that Ollie presents, a kind of disillusionment is apparent. Perhaps this is related to her decision to sever all her previous connections and start anew. In any case, her self imposed isolation after such a long period of family and community involvement, seems somewhat incongruous.

For many women in this age group, the return to being alone after raising a family is the reality of this time of their lives. Perhaps Ollie will decide to pursue past interests here and become involved with community projects. Perhaps she really wants a revised lifestyle. In either case, even though these times feel strange and unfamiliar for her, Ollie gives the impression that this is okay for now.