WOMEN'S ISSUES AND POLITICS:
GETTING THE CHILDCARE ISSUE ONTO A MUNICIPAL POLITICAL AGENDA

by

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This thesis examines women's issues and the political agenda. Several factors affect the likelihood of a women's issue getting onto the formal political agenda of government (municipal, provincial, and federal). The nature of the issue (the degree to which it challenges the status quo) affects the political outcome: those issues which have fit into current and historical legislative patterns (such as welfare state guidelines) have been more successful. A patriarchal family ideology places limitations on the proper role of women: women have held primary responsibility for the care of children and family. Women's labour force participation creates parameters for government involvement in issues such as childcare. The lobbying and organizational skills of the political actors involved are prerequisites for gaining access to government decision-makers. While the entry of women into the political arena has not insured the entry of women's issues onto the political agenda, female politicians have been especially important in bringing women's issues forward for debate and action. However, government bureaucracy has often been a barrier in the implementation of legislation concerning women's issues.

I present a case study of a particular women's issue (childcare) at the municipal level of government. Five locations are examined in the Greater Vancouver area, using a combination of qualitative methods (personal interviews) and quantitative research
techniques (government statistics, official documents, and reports from a variety of community organizations). In spite of the steadily increasing labour force participation of women in all locations, the response of local governments to the childcare issue has varied greatly -- childcare is on Vancouver's political agenda but not that of the four district municipalities examined. Vancouver's involvement has been more comprehensive and longterm (more childcare spaces, an involved Social Planning Department, two task forces, a Children's Advocate, and buildings and sites for childcare purposes). The response of municipal councils continues to reflect patriarchal notions of the family (where childcare is a private, family responsibility). Alternatively, Vancouver council has recognized a permanent restructuring of the family and the ongoing involvement of the larger community in childcare. At the same time, the lobbying approach of Vancouver childcare advocates has followed long established patterns concerning childcare and governments -- the argument has been based on child welfare, not the rights or welfare of women.
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Chapter One

Introduction

Thesis problem

This thesis is about women's issues and the political agenda. I begin with the premise that issues of central importance to women are less frequently addressed on the formal political agendas of federal, provincial, and municipal governments. One reason for the relative absence of women's issues on formal political agendas may be that such issues are somehow less amenable to inclusion in traditional political dialogue. It may be the case that women's issues have certain characteristics which place them outside political favour and prevent them from being addressed by those holding political power. I explore whether there is any substance to the claim that women's issues are somehow 'foreign' to the political agenda.

While I focus specifically on childcare, the arguments I present are not peculiar to the childcare issue. Indeed, the politics of childcare resemble the politics of other women's issues such as reproductive control. Issues which affect the lives of women have historically been treated, and currently continue to be treated, similarly by various governments.

My research question is this: how does a women's issue get onto the political agenda? That is, what must occur in order to bring a women's issue forward to the formal political structure of government, to be formally considered by politicians? Other subsidiary questions relate to this basic question: i) what kinds
of issues make it onto the political agenda; ii) are there certain criteria which must be met in order to see an issue addressed; and iii) what are the implications in meeting those particular criteria?

I define a 'women's issue' as an issue which i) affects the lives of most women in a much more predominant manner than it affects the lives of most men, and which ii) reflects the conditions of women's lives in a patriarchal society (where men dominate the major social, political, and economic institutions). Examples of women's issues include pay equity, reproductive control, and childcare. I use the term 'feminist' issue interchangeably with 'women's' issue: women's issues address feminist concerns. The literature I reviewed often used those terms interchangeably, as did many of the people I interviewed. While not all women are feminists, women's issues (as used in this context) refer to issues which not only affect the lives of most women (whether feminist or not), but which also aim at addressing the social, political, and economic inequalities between men and women.

By 'political agenda', I mean the legislative and policy making work of the three formal levels of government: municipal, provincial, and federal. For a feminist issue to get onto the political agenda, government decision-makers must not only discuss the issue, but they must also act on it and move towards an equitable solution. There clearly are degrees of 'getting on the political agenda'. A first step concerns talking about the issue,
a second step involves policy formation, a third step requires legislation, while a fourth step concerns implementation. I am less concerned about the political rhetoric in step one and more concerned with the action in steps two to four.

**Thesis argument and outline**

I argue that several factors affect the likelihood of women's issues getting onto the political agenda. These factors include: a patriarchal family ideology (which historically and currently emphasizes the 'proper role of women'), the nature of the claim (i.e., how much it upsets the status quo), women's labour force participation, government bureaucracy, the lobbying and organizational skills of the political actors involved, and access to government decision-makers.

Some factors, however, are more influential than others. This means that even when certain conditions are met, such as organizational and lobbying skills, these may not be sufficient for getting the issue addressed at a government level. I will argue that both the nature of the claim and the ideological context outweigh organizational skills as factors of importance. At the same time, conditions influencing the political evolution of a women's issue tend to overlap and must be examined simultaneously.

The women's movement is not alone in attempting to have its concerns addressed in the formal political milieu. Other groups, from business lobbyists to environmental activists, try to influence the agenda of government. Pross (1986) has outlined some
factors which he argues affect the success of groups trying to inject their ideas into the political arena. These factors, which I review in Chapter Two, concern the degree of institutionalization of the group as well as the use of basic lobbying strategies. Institutionalization, for Pross, is an organizational capacity and includes bureaucratization.

While some of the general factors outlined by Pross are relevant to women's issues (e.g. organizational skills and lobbying techniques), my research indicates that bureaucratization is not relevant. Instead, they serve more to highlight a special condition that is confronted when addressing women's issues -- namely an ideological context that restricts the ways in which feminist issues can be promoted (i.e., the ideology of the patriarchal family). In Chapters Three and Four, I present a case study where I examine a specific women's issue (childcare) and show how this issue both has, and has not, been addressed at the local municipal level.

Women's issues and male-stream politics

Siltanen and Stanworth (1984) examine several assumptions in current political analysis in sociology and political science. These include the assumptions that women participate in politics less frequently and less forcefully, that their participation is less authentic, and that women's imperatives are 'moral' rather than political. They argue that these assumptions are a product of 'male-stream' analysis, and that such analysis is rooted in masculine experience, without sensitivity to gender: it fails to
recognize the political dimension in women's experience. Women's experience reflects a particular power relationship in which men dominate:

"Power is the capacity to shape or form social and political relations, i.e., the capacity to perpetuate a given order or to transform it (Siltanen and Stanworth, 1984, 14)."

They suggest women's political activity is not firmly rooted in either the private or public, and that it is important to examine the extent of overlap between the two.

My research examines an aspect of this overlap -- how women's 'private' issues get into the public domain of male-stream politics. To examine the 'career' of women's issues in the context of male-stream politics, I have chosen to focus on the issue of childcare as addressed (or not) in the formal arena of local, municipal politics. To do this, I trace some of the history of childcare policies, paying special attention to the jurisdictional responsibilities for childcare. At the municipal level, I use both official documents and statistics to provide an overview of the context in which childcare issues have been debated. Finally, I talk to a range of community actors about how the issue of childcare has been addressed. I focus both on what has been done, and on the silences surrounding the issue, trying to uncover the ways in which the childcare issue has been promoted and resisted in the formal setting of municipal decision-making.

Childcare has been advocated by a variety of groups, such as early childhood educators, childcare providers, and advocacy associations. Politicians have discussed childcare (while
electioneering), and business people have noted the necessity for the provision of childcare in order to avoid employee absenteeism. My research examines the treatment of the childcare issue by a particular group (local government officials in the Greater Vancouver area).

Women, women's issues, and the political agenda: a review

Several bodies of literature are concerned with women's issues and political agendas and I briefly outline them here. This literature helps to place my own arguments regarding childcare politics in a broad context, a context which includes both women themselves as political actors and the issues which are of importance in understanding the situation of women.

Initially I examined the three main bodies of feminist theory which attempt to explain the subordination of women: liberal, radical, and socialist feminist theory. This work helps place political demands in perspective (e.g., Jaggar, 1983). Most politics surrounding women's issues have a liberal feminist face. I also examined literature on the involvement of women in politics (e.g., Brodie, 1985; Kay, Lambert, Brown, and Curtis, 1987), and, while my research question emerged from this literature, my answers did not. My question concerning how women's issues get onto the political agenda arises in the debate involving the formal politics of female politicians and the informal politics of feminist activists (e.g., Vickers, 1989). Other recent research, specifically concerning women's issues and the political process, has provided additional background (e.g., Findlay, 1987; Burt,
Since the nineteenth century, much of the debate surrounding women and women's issues in Western Europe and North America has centered around the liberal feminist argument that women's oppression is rooted in their exclusion from the public domain (e.g., Jaggar, 1983; Donovan, 1986). The proposed remedy is to give women access to public institutions such as educational and political institutions. Liberal feminists argue that such access would fundamentally improve the situation of women.

However, even with women's increased entry into the public world of education, employment, and politics, many barriers to women's equality remain. Women still perform the bulk of the unpaid work of the home (Meissner et al, 1975; Walker and Woods, 1976; Luxton 1986). The average Canadian woman earns only 65.3 percent of the average Canadian male. Women are concentrated in a few major sectors of the economy including the service sector and helping professions. Only 13.2 percent of Members of Parliament and 14.4 percent of B.C.'s M.L.A.'s are women (Maille, 1990).

Women in politics: explanations

Women and politics has been an area of focus in the disciplines of political science and sociology over the past two decades in Canada and the United States. During the 1980's, the debate developed in several directions. Initially, it documented women's political role and examined women's relative absence in male-stream politics. Later research questioned our understanding of the nature of politics. Finally, several theorists developed a
critique of the methods used for studying women's role in politics.

Explanations of women's relative absence in male-stream politics focus on i) social resources, ii) family responsibilities, iii) cultural or socialization restraints, and iv) the relevance of women's issues. These same factors emerge also in the discussion of women's issues and the political process, but with a slightly different focus.

Many earlier studies argue that women lack the necessary social resources: they have a lower educational, occupational, and financial status compared to men, and are also absent in necessary social networks. Men and women get their political skills from different sources (men from professional experience and women from volunteerism) and at the same time, women have shorter political lives (Merritt, 1977). Over time, the SES ratings of politicians have increased at both the municipal and federal levels (Brodie, 1985; Guppy, Freeman, and Buchan, 1987). Thus, politicians are more strongly representative of the middle class than any other stratum of society.

Another argument for women's absence in formal politics concerns their family responsibilities or role restraints. Since women are traditionally assigned responsibility for child rearing, as well as household maintenance, this severely limits their time, energy, and financial capabilities. Rearing children prevents women from having equal political opportunities with men because of the time commitment and their lack of political experience while young (Lee, 1976). While local politics allows women to sidestep
some of the role restraints, it does not eliminate them (Kopinak, 1985). The ability for men and women to be able to share political decision-making equally is impossible as long as women are held primarily responsible for family (Pateman, 1979). The presence of children has a strong negative effect on women’s political activity but not men’s (Kay, Lambert, Brown, and Curtis, 1987).

Brodie (1985) argues that while women with childrearing and household responsibilities are constrained politically, this is not as debilitating or deterministic as previously thought. Women ‘harmonize’ their gender and political roles by waiting until their children have grown, entering municipal politics, and enlisting their spouses’ support. While Brodie may be correct in suggesting that women’s role should not be seen as deterministic, research surrounding women’s issues suggests that these adaptations bear little resemblance to harmony but greater resemblance to constraint.

The cultural or socialization restraints argument focuses on gender socialization -- from an early age, females are socialized to be passive rather than assertive, helpers rather than doers, and nurturant rather than competitive. A woman’s role lies in the private domain, while politics is in the public domain. When women do enter politics, they tend to do the routine housekeeping chores while men are more likely to form the elites. Male competitiveness and female fear of discrimination discourage many women from seeking public office (Lee, 1976). Self doubt and fear are among the constraints of female politicians (Brodie, 1985). While
women's election rates in Canadian municipal politics increased greatly between 1966-1982, women's role in municipal politics is much narrower than men's (Kopinak, 1985). Kopinak calls this moving "two steps forward", but then "one step backwards."

The fourth argument to explain women's absence in male-stream politics concerns the relevance of women's issues: women are more interested in broad social and cultural issues, such as war, pay equity, sexism, rape, and equality. These issues are often marginal to the more 'concrete' municipal concerns such as roads, sewers, police, and fire protection. This argument coincides with much of the 1980's debate on the meaning of 'political' and on whether or not women's concerns are truly political in the established framework (I discuss this further below).

Are women's issues relevant?

Naomi Black (1980) argues that the chief problem with women's politics is that it is invisible. It is invisible because it is local (municipal or action group focus), about women's issues (which are considered marginal), outside partisan politics, and seemingly ineffective. However, the goals of women's politics are quite extraordinary and clearly put women in competition with men.

The argument that the relevance of women's issues gets questioned in the formal political world is central to my research concerning childcare politics. If women's issues are seen as irrelevant, then these issues will lack credence in formal political circles and it will be difficult to have them considered
as items on the political agenda. Indeed, I think it is more difficult to get women's issues onto the political agenda than it is to get women into the political arena.

These issues concern subjects which are at the heart of women's subordination. They illustrate why it is so difficult for women to function as equals with men in society, and while middle class affluence allows some women to become politicians, the entry of these women into the political arena does not fundamentally challenge the status quo. Few major changes are likely to emerge from their 'politicising'. Bell Hooks' (1984) question ('with whom do you want to be equal?') challenges the assumptions of white middle class feminists. I agree with her that equality with white middle class men is not a true feminist goal. However, so far this has defined the parameters of women and formal politics. Addressing feminist issues moves beyond bringing women into male designed and directed institutions, it involves structural change.

Legislation that would give women control over reproductive decision-making, or quality affordable childcare services for all employed parents, or mandatory affirmative action legislation in all economic sectors would be legislation that would seriously undermine the patriarchal and capitalist values in our society. It is, in this light, not surprising that women's issues are only very slowly getting onto the political agenda.

In 1967, women's issues were at the center of Canada's Royal Commission on the Status of Women. Examining the content of the subsequent report (1970) and the outcome on recommendations
suggests that major women’s issues which would fundamentally alter the conditions of women’s lives (e.g., pay equity, reproductive control, and quality affordable childcare) have not successfully been incorporated into Canadian legislation.


This report brought forward a lengthy list of recommendations to improve the status of women. These included a wide range of issues, such as pension reform, fair employment practices, equal pay, welfare reform, abortion upon request, guaranteed annual income for the heads of single parent families, Senate reform, and criminal law reform. They also recommended a Status of Women council which would have funds available for undertaking feminist research, making policy proposals, and establishing programs.

Dawn Black (1990) has provided an assessment of the implementation of these recommendations. While partial implementation has occurred on some issues, those recommendations which would fundamentally improve the conditions of women have been absent. For example, the National Childcare Act has not been implemented. Findlay (1987) has provided an analysis of how government bureaucrats (largely male and non-feminist) have prevented the implementation of feminist goals. Having feminist activists within bureaucracy is a necessary condition for feminist action, but it is difficult for feminists to function within bureaucratic guidelines.

What is political?

Much of the 1980’s debate regarding women and politics focused
on the meaning of the political and some of that debate tries to make the cross-over between women and politics and women's issues and politics. Vickers argues that feminists "have failed to come to grips with the character of power and power relationships" (1980, 66). Siltanen and Stanworth (1984) argue that the demarcation between public and private is itself a political process. Burt's (1987) research indicates that Canadian men and women think differently about politics, men being more interested in holding office, having power, and making decisions while women are interested in making the political system more responsive. Kealey and Sangster (1989) argue that feminists now need to look at the methods used to analyze women's political thought and action. This requires a broader concept of politics as women's politics are located in both the world of formal politics and in the 'informal' separate world of feminist activism. Vickers (1989) suggests joining the two -- she calls it a double vision.

I think this joining of the two worlds of formal and informal politics is fundamental to most women's issues. Those activists who advocate legislation which gives women reproductive control or a national childcare policy designed to give all parents access to affordable childcare are calling for fundamental change. Such change would break down the barriers between men and women which exist now in government. Of course, if women were to be truly represented in government, the structure of government would have to change. Indeed it would have to change just to see working class men represented.
Women's issues and politics: some major factors

The debate concerning women's issues and politics emerges from more than one source: from the debate on women and formal politics, from the study of feminist activism, and from varied research on the condition of women in society. All are trying to understand women's subordinate position, but the angle from which each examines the situation of women differs. I outline some of these ideas here and then discuss them further in Chapter Two. I also refer to the childcare issue in particular and outline its historical context.

One of the areas to be examined with respect to feminist activism is bureaucracy. The nature of bureaucracy is fundamental to understanding lobbying and policy success with government. Government is a bureaucracy: it is a hierarchical structure in which some groups and individuals have authority over others. This must be taken into consideration when trying to understand the lobbying effectiveness of particular groups. While more women now hold positions within bureaucracies, change within these structures is slow and often reactionary (Ferguson, 1984). This has certainly been the case in the Canadian federal bureaucracy (as already noted). Although the federal government approved the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women (1970), those changes remain largely unimplemented. Findlay (1987) argues that the floundering on implementation has occurred within the federal bureaucracy (federal bureaucrats do not generally advocate feminist beliefs).
Other research to be discussed has focused on policy influence. Burt (1990) examines the policy influence of Canadian women’s groups and argues that policy which upsets the status quo is not successful in getting onto government agendas. Peattie and Rein (1983) show how the idea of the natural and the artificial has changed over time, and successful claims on government follow unwritten guidelines on what is natural.

Ideology and the patriarchal family model are important elements in the discussion on women’s issues. Many theorists look to the family to understand women’s oppression (e.g. Luxton, 1980; Ursel, 1984). Abortion politics has much to do with middle class ideals of the family and the fundamental role of women as mothers (e.g. Lovenduski and Outshoorn, 1986). Defending childcare on the basis of child welfare left feminist activists in Toronto vulnerable to ideological attack and red baiting following World War II (Prentice, 1989).

Women’s labour force participation has been a primary focus in debates involving women. While many working class women have always been employed out of necessity, the overall numbers of women employed has been relatively small throughout much of this century (See Table 1). In 1901, women’s labour force participation rate was 14.4% and grew slowly but steadily throughout this century (with a major fluctuation during World War II) up to 57.9% in 1989. It is not surprising that women’s labour force participation has been discussed frequently as employment status is important in defining a person’s socio-economic well-being. However, it is only
one aspect of women's lives. Family responsibilities interact heavily with women's labour force participation.

I refer next to a debate which overlaps with my discussion of women's issues and politics: the debate surrounding women as a reserve army of labour which has been used in attempts to explain women's changing employment patterns. Emerging from this debate is evidence that in order to understand the condition of women, more emphasis needs to be given to the ideological factors involved, the sexual division of labour in the family, and childcare as a primary responsibility of women. These factors greatly affect women's lives.

Women as a 'Reserve Army of Labour'

One of the most frequently used concepts in explaining women's labour force participation is the Marxian concept of a reserve army of labour. Connelly (1978) argues that women are a reserve army of labour, having the three primary characteristics of being competitive, available, and cheap. Bruegel (1979), on the other hand, identifies disposability as the prime characteristic of a reserve army of labour and argues that women are a 'disposable' reserve. Yanz and Smith (1983) argue that too much emphasis has been placed on defining a concept and fitting women into the concept rather than trying to understand how women directly relate to the broader theory of capitalist accumulation. In each case, however, the concept of a reserve army of labour tends to conceptually separate family relations and capitalist relations and this separation is problematic.
My purpose here is not to review all the arguments surrounding women as a reserve army of labour but to emphasize a few points which indicate a connection between women's vulnerable position within the labour force and the politics surrounding women's issues such as the childcare issue.

One of the most crucial elements in women's paid work over the last century in Canada, Britain, and the United States is the increasing integration of women into the paid work force. While women have formerly gone in and out of the labour force in greater numbers, now the majority of women are 'permanently' employed. This includes women with young children (who are most likely to leave regular employment), and both working class and middle class women. Because of the nature of global economics, economic booms and recessions, and increasing lay-offs even in white collar sectors, very few people can be said to be 'permanently' employed and I use the term cautiously. However, my argument is that the majority of women are now employed most of the time. The fundamental fact is that paid employment is an economic imperative for individuals, even in two-parent families. Women must be seen as permanent rather than temporary employees, and family responsibilities such as childcare must be seen in light of this.

The debate surrounding women as a reserve army of labour examines economic factors without looking closely at the ideological implications of women's employment. While economic factors which affect women's labour force participation have changed (e.g. women have increasingly been employed in the
expanding service sector), ideological factors have not changed so rapidly. The ideology that women's true place is in the home continues, as does the ideology of the family wage (the idea that the male breadwinner's earnings will support the entire family). Some theorists now suggest that the family wage may never have been a reality for many and that it has been used more as an ideology to bar women from male jobs and to keep women's wages low (Barrett & McIntosh, 1980). While many legal barriers which barred women's employment in male sectors have fallen, women's wages still fall far below men's wages. Women's economic insecurity along with the ideological hold of the traditional family combine to make women's position very tenuous.

How 'work' has been viewed is problematic because it does not include the full picture of women's lives. Even though the majority of women are now employed, the division of labour in the home has changed little, if at all. Women are still expected to perform the majority of the work of raising children, household maintenance, and servicing other family members such as the elderly and sick children. Even if capitalism undermines the material basis of patriarchy within the family by drawing women into wage labour, patriarchal ideology in the family remains strong (Power, 1983). It is this patriarchal ideology and the sexual division of labour which continue to affect how women participate in the labour force.

Patriarchal ideology: some considerations

An examination of how the issue of childcare has emerged in
the Western European and North American context provides information not only of relevance to this particular issue but to other women's issues as well. What becomes apparent in such an examination is the widespread assumption within government debates and actions on the proper role of women. Women's primary role is as mothers, with secondary consideration given to their role as wage earners, even in times and places where women are assumed to be in the labour force. The overriding assumption has been, and continues to be, that women have a primary responsibility towards the home, as mothers and as household providers.

Several points need to be considered to understand the government's position in addressing women's role as mothers. First, over the past two centuries, the conditions and expectations around the care of children have changed drastically. Much more time is now devoted to the educational and psychological development of children, and mothers in particular have become increasingly important in caring for children (Tilly and Scott, 1978; Aries, 1965). Second, government assistance towards mothers caring for children has most often focused on the needs of children rather than the needs of mothers (Ursel, 1984; Jenson, 1986). For example, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, maternal leave laws were designed to prevent infant deaths, not to address the oppressive conditions of women's lives. Women are only indirectly implicated, as childbearers. Third, women's expected role in the labour force creates the parameters under which childcare is or is not provided (Jenson, 1986; Burt, Code, and
Dorney, 1988). Where women are not necessarily seen as wage workers (as has been the case in Britain and Canada), middle class charity organizations have provided temporary care for the children of needy employed working class mothers. This care has had a definite welfare focus. While women were drawn into the labour force in large numbers during World War II -- and the federal government passed legislation which assisted in the provision of childcare -- women's recruitment into wartime industry was not a fundamental challenge to their proper role nor were there any major concessions made regarding their right to work for pay (Pierson, 1986). Fourth, childcare is governed under the Canada Assistance Plan (1966) and retains the welfare focus of earlier years. This affects how the provision of childcare is viewed in general and sets limits on government action.

The Canada Assistance Plan (CAP) sets out the funding formula between federal and provincial governments. The federal government funds up to 50 percent of the cost of those programs designed for the "lessening, removal, or prevention of the causes and effects of poverty, child neglect, or dependence on public assistance" (Canada Assistance Plan, quoted in Marcy Cohen et al, 1973, 56). Programs which do not qualify under these criteria must be covered entirely by the provincial government. A report on daycare by the United Way notes that since the CAP funding formula confines support to families who qualify based on social and economic criteria, this "reinforces the concept of daycare as a service confined to situations of social pathology and economic need" (Responsible
Daycare, 1981, 6). Since the mid-1970's, the major portion of participation by the B.C. government has been in the form of daycare subsidies with strict guidelines concerning financial need (See Chapter 3 for further details).

Trying to understand the childcare issue in particular involves an examination of women's lives in a broader context. Explaining the subordination of women is a complicated process, and the discussion has taken several turns over the past two decades. Some research has focused on specific aspects of women's lives. Now, several researchers also question the method of research: how we do research affects what we learn.

Methodology: some considerations

Theorists such as Jill Vickers and Dorothy Smith provide a methodological critique of the study of women and politics. Methodology is not just 'techniques' but has specific historical and ideological contexts. Vickers (1989) suggests that the normal integration approach (quantitative research which examines how women fit into the present political structure), has been the basis for the majority of research to date including her own, but that we also need qualitative research to lay a basis for women's politics. She asks whether women are apathetic (as their continuing absence in many areas of formal politics might suggest) or are the really important questions being decided elsewhere. Dorothy Smith (1987) argues that the 'relations of ruling', including the power structure of government, are based in a gender division of labour and that the gender subtext has been invisible. Women's
experiences and interests have not been represented.

The methodology I have used for my own research has been primarily qualitative (personal interviews) but I complement that with some quantitative analysis (e.g., the use of federal, provincial, and municipal statistics). I have examined how the childcare issue gets onto a municipal agenda in the Greater Vancouver area, using five local governments for my analysis -- the City of Vancouver and four District Municipalities: North Vancouver DM, Richmond DM, Surrey DM, and Langley DM. I discuss my methodology in further detail in Chapters Three and Four.

The childcare issue is an issue which holds particular importance for women because they presently and historically have been primarily responsible for the care of children, family, and household. Also, using a local government setting allows me to examine this issue at the grass roots level where problems originate and in which individuals and groups often begin to seek solutions. Local governments are more accessible to people compared to senior levels of government. At the same time, women are better represented at the municipal government level compared to either provincial or federal levels (Brodie, 1985). The greater presence of women on government seats could conceivably improve the chances of bringing a women's issue forward.

Holding personal interviews has enabled me to gather a variety of information "from where women actually live and operate" (Smith, 1987). These interviews have effectively provided reasons for the childcare issue gaining prominence in one area but not another,
particularly with respect to ideological concerns. Rather than applying my data to an already established framework which may not incorporate those concerns, this method of research allows me to question why women and their issues have not been 'fitting in' to the established political framework or to the established political typologies.

Conclusion

Examining how women's issues get addressed at the formal political level is part of a broad picture of understanding the subordination of women. To address women's subordination means asking fundamental questions about how our society is organized: in government, families, and employment. Any major improvements in the condition of women require a fundamental reorganization of how people think and organize their lives.

The extent to which women's issues can get onto the political agenda depends on the extent to which those in control allow government to change. How influential feminist activists can be in forcing change depends on many factors, but two of the most important are the extent to which they are able to upset the ideological and socio-economic parameters of the status quo. The childcare issue may get on a political agenda, but under what auspices? How the issue gets formulated helps to determine the extent of change in women's lives.
Chapter Two

Lobbying the Government: Strategies and Tactics

This chapter examines why some issues have been successfully added to the formal political agenda. I look at what criteria these successful issues share and then at what might be special about women's issues, that is, what makes it more difficult for women's issues to be more fully integrated onto the political agenda. Once I have examined the success rates on other issues, and the lobbying techniques used by their advocates, I will be better able to analyze my own data concerning the childcare issue in the Greater Vancouver area.

I use research by Pross (1986) as a backdrop for my examination of issue success rates. Pross outlines factors which he considers important in the lobbying effectiveness of a variety of Canadian organizations. These factors concern the degree of institutionalization of the group as well as the acquisition of basic lobbying strategies. I then examine other research which looks specifically at women's issues and their success rates in getting onto political agendas. This latter research focuses on the nature of the issue (how much it upsets the status quo) and the ideological constraints, as well as an array of lobbying skills similar to those outlined by Pross.

Why some groups lobby successfully (according to Pross)

Pross (1986) discusses group politics and public policy. He examines a variety of pressure groups within Canadian politics (including environmental activists, business organizations, and
trade unions) and looks at who gets involved, how involvement occurs, where it occurs, the importance of pressure groups, and the effectiveness of certain tactics.

He argues that policy formation occurs in 'policy making communities'. Due to the complexity of our modern political and economic institutions, specialization occurs throughout the policy system and only major issues actually get discussed by Cabinet or government leaders. Typically, policy gets developed in a specialized bureaucratic system. He describes a policy community as a 'special public' which acts as an intermediary between the general public and the government. Policy communities consist of a variety of government agencies and institutionalized interest groups as well as issue oriented pressure groups who bring the issues of the public at large to the attention of government decision makers. The government relies on the policy community to study issues, debate the options, propose legislation, and make arrangements for its implementation.

Pross argues that policy is seldom the result of general public discussion. Instead, support is generated in a policy community, often under the lead of a government official. In general, this loose coalition moves toward the public at large, not vice versa.

Pressure groups are an integral part of the policy community. They help evaluate policy, create opinion, and articulate the concerns of those they represent.

Pressure groups perform the same functions wherever they are found. They promote the interests of their members.
They communicate between members and the state. They legitimate the demands their members make on the state and the public policies they support. They regulate their members and they assist the state to administer policies and programs (Pross, 1986, 84).

According to Pross, pressure groups work within the framework established by government and they must adopt an institutionalized, bureaucratic structure to have policy success with government. Their method of organization and patterns of behaviour are part of the process by which they contribute to the formation of policy. Both institutionalization and bureaucratization are prime components in Pross's criteria for policy success.

Pross places groups on a continuum according to their degree of institutionalization -- beginning with issue-oriented groups and proceeding to fledgling, mature, and institutionalized. Their organizational capacity is "the key to the exploitation of power" (Pross, 1986, 114). Good organization means organizing bureaucratically and thinking in bureaucratic terms. It includes a formal structure, clearly defined roles, adequate resources, a collective memory, rules governing behaviour, and procedures for reaching decisions.

Pross also argues that basic lobbying strategies are essential prerequisites for getting issues onto the political agenda. These strategies include knowing where to lobby, understanding your target, being professional, and avoiding confrontation. A group needs to identify the appropriate government agencies and departments (know where to lobby). They should anticipate certain obstacles and be familiar with important policies, programs, and
problems (understand their target). Working with government is a process of collective bargaining and a friendly relationship can ensure that the group will be called upon to make input into important decision-making. At the same time, becoming part of a bureaucracy and getting a foothold on a government agenda requires being professional. For Pross this means doing your homework, writing briefs that are well-prepared and effectively organized, making presentations with 'facts at your fingertips', and 'not whining or making outrageous demands' (Pross, 1986, 143).

One of the continual debates in lobbying circles is the cooperation-confrontation debate. While Pross argues that avoiding confrontation is a basic lobbying skill, he also acknowledges the successful lobbying of certain subgroups who have used confrontation when their ideological views have differed with government. He argues that there is a close connection between the ideology of a group and its plan of action. When a group's ideological viewpoint fits with the government's viewpoint, then it is effective to work directly with government, but when there is ideological resistance, confrontation can be more effective.

According to Pross's continuum, issue-oriented groups are least likely to be effective in having their concerns addressed by government. Those attributes which are prerequisites for getting on the government agenda (cohesion, funds, structure, and the capacity to prepare briefs and make presentations) are often formidable barriers to small groups with few resources. He refers to the problems of small issue-oriented groups:
Access to the policy process, even at the local level, is hard to obtain because they do not understand the bureaucratic ways of policy-makers, because the trappings of democracy are beyond their means, or because their plight is too banal to stir a flicker of interest among crusading journalists (Pross, 1986, 131).

While basic lobbying strategies are considered important by most researchers who have examined the lobbying and policy successes of various groups, researchers do not agree on the importance of institutionalization or bureaucratization. The remainder of this chapter examines feminist research which specifically focuses on the lobbying and policy successes of groups who are attempting to get women's issues onto the political agenda. While these groups share some of Pross's criteria for success, other considerations take precedence.

**Lobbying strategies: feminist perspectives**

Some of the factors considered important by Pross are also stressed by feminist researchers, especially the basic lobbying skills which must be seen as prerequisites for effective lobbying. Pross refers to knowing where to lobby, understanding your target, and being professional. The feminist research which I examined largely incorporates those factors (being professional in writing briefs and making presentations is considered standard procedure). However, this research often steps beyond Pross's guidelines. For example, understanding your target is not just anticipating obstacles, being familiar with problems or policies, and being friendly collective bargainers -- it also means having access to politicians. Environmental factors play a role, since the political, economic, and social climate affect lobbying
effectiveness. Additional factors such as outside group support and an ability to compromise and accept incremental change are also considered important in lobbying for women's issues.

Kome (1989) provides a guide to taking political action. She argues for the importance of organized and collective action, including goal-setting, gathering allies, media contact, brainstorming, presenting briefs, organizing public meetings, and persistence ('eternal vigilance'). Identifying the proper jurisdiction is often a very difficult task:

Pinning responsibility where it belongs can be more complicated than you'd expect. Jurisdiction is often murky (Kome, 1989, 10).

She also notes the importance of being specific. She suggests, for example, that instead of asking a politician 'what is your position on childcare?', identify a specific recommendation of a taskforce and then ask the politician 'what will you do regarding its implementation?' (Kome, 43). In general, Kome is arguing for professional skills, understanding government, and targeting effectively.

Costain (1988) identifies three factors which are necessary for women's movement advocates to gain initial access to the policy system. The first is external pressure on the movement which is sufficient to break down the resistance of members to lobbying. The second factor is the presence of outside groups to help with the lobbying effort. These groups are not only helpful, but they also establish the parameters within which change occurs. The third factor is the presence of members of government who support
your cause. This is particularly important in gaining access to a legislative body.

Gelb and Palley (1979) also identify several factors which affect interest groups making an impact on the government policy system. They too indicate the importance of broad based support (outside groups are important in helping with the lobbying effort) and a network which provides access to government decision makers. They identify other factors, including the ability to compromise and the ability to define success as incremental change (similar to Pross's guidelines for co-operation and collective bargaining). More importantly, they stress the importance of promoting issues that do not challenge basic values or divide supporters. In their analysis of the policy system, role equity rather than role change reaps more successes. This is not surprising considering that role change is a basic challenge to the way people think and live their lives.

Before discussing further the importance of the status quo, its relationship with basic values, and what is considered natural and acceptable, I want to discuss two other items: i) access to government, and ii) the bureaucratic structure of government. These are important considerations in the feminist research I examined concerning effective lobbying, and they relate to both "women and politics" and "women's issues and politics." Effective lobbying includes not only connecting with politicians who support your cause, but also functioning within a government framework.

In the case of women's issues, it is often assumed that female
politicians will automatically play the role of advocate but the situation is not so simple. Female politicians have certainly been important in voicing the concerns of feminist activists, but, at the same time, the aims of feminist activists do not necessarily coincide with the aims of many politicians -- male or female.

Access to government: some considerations

A commonly held belief within liberal feminism is that the position of women will improve with greater access to the political system. This would include increasing the numerical representation of women within mainstream politics. The underlying assumption is that once women are part of the political system, the condition of women in general will improve. However, as more women have gained important political positions, and the condition of women has not appreciably changed, some theorists have come to question the validity of the liberal feminist argument. Several points need to be considered to place this lack of change in perspective.

In Canada, women are relatively new to the world of politics and are still removed from political and economic power, particularly from most powerful Cabinet posts. While not all female politicians have feminist concerns or have chosen to be involved in government action on women's issues, Canadian legislation which deals with women's issues has most often been introduced by women parliamentarians. Since 1971, there have been 10 Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women but only 2 of those have been women. This ministry is not a favored post and has had major constraints: it has most often lacked the resources to
be effective (e.g. support staff, funding), it has been marginalized from important government decision making, and it has been met with strong Cabinet resistance to any change in women's status (Burt, Code, & Dorney, 1988, 150).

In general, although women's groups have lobbied government, their effectiveness as a lobby has been limited. A 1984 survey of women's groups indicates that while 76 percent of the groups had lobbied government, only 19 percent had some success in influencing government and 25 percent indicated that government officials acted in a hostile manner (Burt, Code, & Dorney, 1988).

Some theorists argue that women elected to high government offices do not generally come from the Women's Movement, nor do they necessarily share feminist beliefs.

Throughout the Western world, women are being elected and appointed to high posts in political parties; these women do not always come from women's movements, and come even less frequently from within feminism, although they do recognize its impact. Their image is not an appealing one - neither for women generally, who do not necessarily vote for them, nor the feminists, who do not see them as their point of reference (Cohen & De Giorgio, 1989, 24).

A different set of criteria often shape the aims of women entering formal politics and the aims of feminist activists. To be elected, female politicians need to fit into the already defined political system. It is not unlikely that they would share some of the values of their male counterparts, nor is it unlikely that they would spend considerable effort trying to follow the already established rules of the political game -- such as following party policy or accepting the established hierarchy of important issues. On the other hand, feminist activists often challenge fundamental
aspects of the present political system. They are more likely to question party policy and fight to place feminist concerns on the agenda.

Feminist activists in Canada and the United States have helped create important changes in state policies and action. In the United States, the women's movement (which followed the civil rights movement) brought general recognition of the legitimacy of women's rights and created a general expectation that something would be done (Freeman, 1975). In Canada, the initial thrust of the women's movement in the 1960's brought to the forefront the blatant discriminatory practices affecting women. State response was to act in a general defence of equality rights and create an atmosphere of the state publicly responding to women's demands (Findlay, 1987). Indeed, many women responded favourably to the report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women (1970).

While the women's movement was successful in pressuring the Canadian government to represent women's interests, and the government did respond with a formal set of recommendations regarding the status of women, the state has been successful in constructing the policy making process in such a way that it has been able to 'control women's demands and limit reform' (Findlay, 1987). For example, the recommendations of the Status of Women report were approved in principle only by the Cabinet in 1972. It is not surprising that feminist activists formed NAC (National Action Committee on the Status of Women) as a watchdog on government action at that time, foreseeing the problem of
government resistance.

An examination of the Canadian state over the past two decades indicates that the response of government is not the result of negotiations between two equal groups -- those representing feminist interests and those representing government. Rather, it has been a struggle between the state and feminists as to how the state would define women's interests and integrate them into the inherently unequal structure (Findlay, 1987). While initially the state was vulnerable to the requests of feminists, and it was politically expedient to make a public response, the parameters of change as put forward by state policy have been limited.

Responsiveness was limited to brief periods and was almost entirely due to converging political forces at a particular moment rather than reflecting any rational commitment to women's equality (Findlay, 1987, 33).

Findlay (1987) argues that by the late 1970's, government response to feminist demands was more and more guarded. Those demands which would fundamentally challenge state policy and most effectively change the subordinate position of women were noticeably absent in government response (demands for abortion, daycare, and mandatory affirmative action). She suggests that feminist activists have gained little access to government policy makers, and when they have been present, they have acted more as token consultants. Many decisions are made at the state bureaucratic level, and at this level feminist interests are generally absent.

Because of the frequent lack of agreement between feminist
activists and politicians, it becomes increasingly important to have access to key people in important positions who will facilitate the necessary policy changes and help bring about action. While this facilitation process is often dependent on specific politicians, trade union activists and feminist activists have also been important players (e.g., in the case of British abortion politics).

Successful lobbying usually entails financial resources, effective communication (both within a group and with the public at large), political contacts, and a presence within the political arena. This is much more easily accomplished as a coalition. Rarely is an organized interest so influential that it can achieve its policy goals on its own (Boneparth & Stoper, 1988; Lovenduski, 1986). However, while alignments can be effective in bringing about important changes within a relatively short period of time, they often disband or the key people are removed from decision making positions. As a result, coalitions frequently shift membership.

Both key politicians and political coalitions become important factors in accessing government. While the politicians are helpful in doing particular advocacy work, coalitions provide a broad base of support -- a factor which is important in dealing with an entrenched bureaucratic structure. In the next section, I examine government bureaucracy and some of the bureaucratic problems confronted by those lobbying government.
Government as bureaucracy

As outlined earlier, one of Pross’s major considerations in lobbying effectiveness concerns bureaucratic organizational capacity. Those groups which become more institutionalized and bureaucratized have more success. In this section, I discuss arguments put forward by feminist researchers concerning bureaucracy in general and consider the particular case of the Canadian federal government bureaucracy. Feminist arguments differ from those put forward by Pross. Indeed, most feminist organizations have non-hierarchical structures. At the same time, government is bureaucratic and those who lobby government must deal with bureaucracy.

Bureaucracy is inherently hierarchical and is designed to maintain the present power structure. A bureaucratic structure routinely places people and specific interests in a hierarchy, and many feminists argue that women’s concerns are part of what gets routinely dominated.

While the liberal feminist challenge has been to give women access to public institutions, this assumes that major changes will occur within the bureaucratic structure to create more equality for women. The possibility for such change may be minimal.

Women need power in order to change society, but power within bureaucracies is not change-making power. The organized forms and discourse of bureaucratic capitalism institutionalize modes of domination that recreate the very patterns of oppression that feminism arose to combat (Ferguson, 1984, 203).

Other feminists have argued that improving the conditions of women’s lives requires rejecting the hierarchical division of
labour which is at the heart of bureaucracy and bureaucratic capitalism. Various alternatives have been tried which attempt to keep the division of labour horizontal rather than vertical. However, these often present difficulties around decision making, intensity of interaction, and levels of capability.

Even with these attempts to restructure hierarchies, the reality is that government is bureaucratic. Those who want to do business with government must learn to function within the framework of government bureaucracy. Thus, an important skill in reaching feminist goals is being able to deal with bureaucracy without being co-opted by it. This means maintaining appropriate offices so that government officials have points of contact for exchange of information, grants, etc., without adopting the government’s structure. This is a difficult challenge.

Feminists cannot turn their backs on public bureaucrats because the decisions of bureaucrats affect the lives of women. Each is part of the larger system. By choosing to opt out of the system, a group (whether feminist or not) will lose its public viability and its public voice. At the same time, by choosing to work within the bureaucracy, a group becomes part of a hierarchical system. Hopes that major changes will occur with the entry of women onto the bureaucratic stage are often ‘naive and pious hopes’.

To ‘liberate’ women so that they may take an ‘equal’ place in staffing other oppressive institutions and share an ‘equal’ role in perpetuating other kinds of subordination would be a pyrrhic victory indeed (Ferguson, 1984, 122).
The incorporation of women into positions of power in public institutions often enlarges the bureaucratic hierarchy without challenging the structure of the hierarchy. As long as one group is primarily concerned with exercising power, another will be concerned with coping with that power held over them. Women are among those who have power held over them and bureaucracy is an effective means of control.

Relying on women in executive positions to be the leaders on women’s issues is often fruitless. They do not generally have the mandate to deal with women’s issues, and they are often bound by administrative guidelines which circumvent feminist concerns. At the same time, many are political appointees. They must choose between losing the support of women’s groups and losing their jobs (Boneparth & Stoper, 1988).

While a bureaucratic structure in general is problematic for many feminists, the Canadian government bureaucracy has particular problems. I will address some of these concerns in the remainder of this section.

Government bureaucracy has had a large effect on how the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women have been implemented. While the recommendations were quite far-reaching, their implementation has been marred by a series of problems. Women’s Programs were initially led by feminist activists, but by the late 1970’s they were led by state bureaucrats who had very little interest in the concerns of feminist activists (Findlay, 1987). The state has been able to
limit reforms, even though women were initially brought in on the policy making process.

Findlay (1987) documents several instances of how senior management has subordinated women's issues. She argues that any feminist proposals that made it to Cabinet level (e.g., a National Daycare Act) were met with "willful misunderstanding or friendly ridicule", and while now such exchanges are more often correctly labeled as sexual harassment, at this point they were considered "natural" (ibid: 39). Also, the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women (CACSW), which was established in 1973, has been prone to the abuses of political patronage. The Departments of Justice, Health and Welfare, Secretary of State, and Employment and Immigration have been involved with the implementation of recommendations but those positions have tended to be filled with public servants who have been unwilling to challenge existing procedures and priorities. They have not been rooted in the Women's Movement. Barriers developed between the Women's Programs and the Women's Movement, and in 1976 the Office of the Coordinator of the Status of Women was removed. Also, between 1976-1979, Women's Programs became more accountable to government and to the 'primacy of bureaucratic rules, regulations, and procedures'.

Findlay argues that successful challenges to state bureaucracy depend on feminists inside the state maintaining contact with the Women's Movement. If decisions are left to civil servants, the representation of women suffers greatly: relying on the state to represent women's interests leads to limited reform. The
government's initial support more likely indicates a response to overwhelming evidence of women's inequality at a time when many governments were dealing with human rights issues. Not to respond at all would have been impolitic.

At times when the State is more vulnerable to women's demands, feminists can play a more active role in the development of state proposals to promote women's equality. Taking advantage of the state's need for legitimation, they can establish feminist alternatives to the bureaucratic mode of operating that reinforces patterns of inequality, or advocate policies that challenge the ideology of capitalism and patriarchy (Findlay, 1987, 48).

As Findlay notes, the government may only occasionally allow changes which challenge prevailing ideology. However, ideology becomes a major concern with women's issues: it is central to government decision making. How this occurs relates to what is considered normal and acceptable: when the demands step beyond current ideological guidelines (as women's issues generally do), that upsets the status quo and the response is frequently negative.

While Pross briefly includes ideology in his analysis of lobbying effectiveness, it is not a major variable. The most important variable in his research is organizational capacity (bureaucratization and institutionalization) -- a factor which has not been important in the feminist research I examined. However, another factor (concerning ideology and the status quo) has been discussed frequently by feminists. Researchers describe it in a variety of ways: the perceived legitimacy of the issue, the degree to which it challenges the idea of the natural, the extent to which it challenges basic values, its degree of normalcy, and the level
to which it demands role change rather than role equity. The underlying theme is that policy influence is much greater where the issue does not threaten the status quo. Policy which is threatening is usually met with much government resistance. In the next section, I discuss maintaining the status quo.

Maintaining the status quo: implications for lobbying effectiveness

In analyzing policy influence, it is important to consider variables which incorporate the environment in which an issue is brought forward. These include social, economic, and political variables -- conditions which often cross national boundaries. These conditions provide an indication of how well an issue will be received not only by government but by the public at large. I first discuss these environmental factors, for they create the parameters around which an issue is perceived and presented. Then I discuss specific concerns, such as role equity, what is perceived as natural, and issue legitimacy.

The North American social climate of the 1960's was idealistic and forward looking. In general, the economic climate in the 1960's and 1970's was more favorable for social programs than the 1980's (in the United States in 1971, Congress passed a childcare bill which was to lay the groundwork for future action). However, by the late 1970's, restraint and government cutbacks were widespread and Congressional action on the childcare issue ceased. By the 1980's, Reagan promoted 'a strong family' rather than government support for childcare.
In Canada, federal government expenditure on childcare was highest during the mid 1970's. The increased federal spending coincided with the election of an N.D.P. government in B.C., which opted into the federal-provincial cost sharing programs. This allowed for increased capital expenditures on childcare.

At the same time, the political climate also influences campaigns and the effectiveness of lobbying. During the 1970's, many feminist ideas appeared as legitimate concerns (e.g., concerns around pay equity, violence against women, and women's professional status). By the early 1980's, recession, as well as a backlash against feminist lobbies, affected the degree of influence a group could have.

Underlying the changing social, political, and economic climate is a fundamental consideration which limits the effectiveness of a feminist lobby. In general, policy influence is restricted to areas which are non-threatening to the status quo. The chance of lobbying effectively is greater when the issue has low visibility, fits with current values, and has narrow concerns (i.e., the policy does not fundamentally challenge how people's lives are organized [Boneparth & Stoper, 1988]). The success rate is lower if it is highly visible, controversial, and wide-ranging. Issues such as childcare, reproductive control, and pay equity, are more highly visible and controversial than others. Each of these issues is challenging to the status quo.

As noted earlier, policy making which is incremental tends to be more successful, but, quite importantly, this entails fitting
into other issues and not fundamentally challenging prevailing ideologies. The history of childcare policy in Canada and United States follows a pattern of avoiding any major ideological restructuring.

(Childcare) has never been recognized as a fundamental right for working women, but rather has been provided reluctantly and often temporarily as a solution to other problems such as labor shortages or welfare dependency. Thus, the style of incremental policy-making, while permitting social change in established policy areas, inhibits the process of change when the demand is for policy in new realms (Boneparth & Stoper, 1988, 10).

Boneparth and Stoper (1988) suggest that an important distinction in analyzing policy success with respect to women’s issues is the distinction between role equity and role change. Role equity is a general principle and is not necessarily threatening to the status quo: it fits into our general liberal democratic principles. Role change, however, is a fundamental change in how men and women organize their lives and challenges our basic traditional sex role ideology.

While the women’s movement has grown significantly in professionalism and effectiveness in the past two decades, the present economic, social, and political climate puts feminists on the defensive at the federal level and creates a demand for new strategies at the lower levels of government and in the private sector (Boneparth & Stoper, 1988). Women’s groups have confronted many obstacles in their lobbying efforts: gaining access to policy makers, building credibility, and persuading office holders to represent women’s interests. A major step in overcoming these
obstacles seems to lie in not challenging the status quo. However, that clearly undermines feminist aims.

Peattie and Rein (1983) examine the structure of institutionalized roles. These roles involve a division between what is seen as 'natural' and what is seen as 'artificial'. Historically, certain social roles and institutions have become accepted as natural. For example, the family is considered the natural institution for rearing children and the natural division of labour has women rearing the children. On the other hand, policy is seen as artificial. It is socially constructed and varies over time. The boundary between the natural and the artificial shifts with time and reflects the interaction between various ideas, interests, and actions.

Placing women's issues on political agendas involves a shifting of this boundary between what is perceived as the natural and the artificial. The claims women make often fundamentally challenge the accepted norm of what is seen as natural. Claims have an element of right or entitlement and must be seen in light of social convention: they confer income, position, and status. Often, one needs a certain level of status just to make a claim.

While women's claims are interwoven with other changes occurring in society, they must also deal with the accepted norms and ideas of the society. In many ways, women are challenging the idea of the natural to a greater extent than many other social movements.

Feminism raises new issues and new claiming categories. The involvement of women with domestic and interpersonal
work leads feminists to create turbulence in all sorts of existing social arrangements to a degree not nearly as characteristic of other claiming movements (Peattie & Rein, 1983, 109).

Bringing women's issues out into the political forefront is challenging many of our ideas of what is natural. It challenges the validity of the underlying premise of what is women's natural place and natural role. Thus, influencing policy on women's issues -- an area which is threatening to the status quo -- is, not surprisingly, a difficult task.

The lobbying efforts of Canadian feminists in the early 1980's regarding the wording of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms is indicative of the parameters for success on women's issues. Their success was limited to strengthening government commitment to legal equality rights for women (Burt, 1988). Such action does not undermine basic values and the idea of the natural. Barriers which go beyond legal equality rights were not broken down at this time.

The Charter was an equal rights issue, and therefore less likely to provoke controversy than moral issues like abortion, or redistributive issues like pensions for housewives or daycare (Burt, 1988, 80).

Burt's analysis of this lobby indicates that Costain's three factors for policy success were present (an impetus for action, group support, and the presence of supportive women legislators). At the same time, she stresses an additional factor: the perceived legitimacy of the group's goals. Women's legal rights were seen as legitimate. Politically sensitive issues, however, are much more difficult to get endorsed as these redistributive demands go beyond government commitment.
Burt (1990) examines the organizational continuum developed by Pross (1986) and applies it to 144 Canadian women's groups. She examines four types of women's groups (traditional, Status of Women, service, and shelter groups) and uses four analytical categories from the Pross continuum (objectives, organization, media orientation, and access orientation). These women's groups, like Pross's groups, are institutionalized on some dimensions but not others. Traditional women's groups and the Status of Women groups are more institutionalized according to these measurements. Institutionalization, in her analysis, does not improve policy access nor policy influence and challenges the idea that groups must become bureaucratic in order to have influence.

What appears more important is the nature of the issue. Those issues which challenge gender roles receive less co-operation. While Pross suggests that issue orientation is an occasional correlate of policy influence, Burt's study of women's groups suggests that issue orientation is at least as important as organizational development. The type of policy claim or issue may hold greater influence on issues which are not considered 'normal or acceptable'.

Pross (1990) challenges Burt's methodology in her study of women's groups and again stresses the importance of institutionalization. At the same time, he acknowledges the difficulty surrounding claims that conflict with prevailing ideology. He also argues that influence further depends on the state's capacity to debate those claims or issues. Smaller claims
are more feasible not only for ideological reasons but because they are administrable.

I think the state's willingness and capability to debate women's issues does relate to ideology and administrability, but the latter reflects the former. It is not easy to administer new claims that fundamentally challenge the assumptions of the established order. It is much easier to recognize women's rights to equality as a matter of principle than it is to pass legislation which changes women's economic and moral powers vis-a-vis men. Daycare, reproductive rights, and pay equity challenge those powers. There is more evidence to support the argument that a major barrier in policy success on women's issues is that those issues generally threaten the present power structure.

In the final section, I consider current ideological implications affecting the politics of women's issues and the ability of activists to upset the status quo. While the shape of the family continues to change, the ideological context often remains the same. The form which political action takes relates to ideology and established norms.

The status quo, patriarchal ideology, and the connection with current political action

Many theorists point to the family and motherhood as being at the center of women's subordinate position (e.g. Luxton, 1980, 1982; Ursel, 1984; Maroney and Luxton, 1987).

The family is a contested zone. It is at the centre of the struggle for women's liberation and it is the place where the right wing has staked out, preparing for battle (Luxton, 1982, 113).
Conceptualizing motherhood as an institution places it in social and historical context, and helps to clarify aims of the Women's Movement (e.g., reproductive control). As mothers, women get defined as moral guardians and become responsible for many of the moral aspects of society. At the same time, women's reproductive role has often been "invisible" and consequently has been untheorized or undertheorized.

Because reproduction, ultimately the only source of labour, is assumed, untheorized and hence unnoticed, its internal operation is taken for granted and small variations or even large ones over long periods are seen only as reactive, never active forces in history (Ursel, 1984, 267).

Understanding the position of women must include an examination of their role within the family and as mothers. Women's role in the family also affects their political activities and I examine that connection here.

As already noted, women's work within the family includes procreation, rearing children, servicing family members, and household maintenance. Because these activities are so intricately connected, it is difficult and somewhat ineffective to discuss one aspect without indicating how each overlaps with another aspect, whether that lies inside or outside the family. Discussing women's role as childbearers without acknowledging how intricately it has become connected with childrearing, or household maintenance without childrearing, is shortsighted. Similarly, discussing women's labour force participation or political action, without acknowledging childcare or the division of labour within the home, is also incomplete.
Families are not monolithic entities but take on a variety of forms (Eichler, 1983). Family patterns continue to change rapidly, as divorce and remarriage occur.

Approximately half of all Canadian households experience some form of parental-spousal discrepancy, either in the form of children living in a husband-wife family not being the biological children of one or both of the spouses, or of children living in one-parent households, or of an adult being a parent of a child who does not live in his or her household (Eichler, 238).

While the patterns in family life continue to change, an underlying theme which has not fundamentally changed is the subordinate position of women within the family. Even where women are the heads of single parent households, many problems exist including the high incidence of poverty among such families.

Women are intricately tied to the maintenance of family and household without having control over the means of support for the family.

The material basis of patriarchy has always been male control of the resources that are essential to the maintenance of the family (Ursel, 1984, 282).

Women’s vulnerability in this respect affects how they carry out their role, what they see as options, and how they make decisions on such matters as employment, abortion, and childcare. Women must make decisions which have large financial commitments without the necessary financial security. At the same time, those decisions are made within very entrenched expectations surrounding what a 'good woman' and a 'good mother' is.

The present system, in which women do the majority of unpaid reproductive work, operates in the best interests of production and
of men in general. Employers benefit from not having to concern themselves with the maintenance of family. Employers and husbands also benefit from a strong ideology which encourages or coerces women into a very imbalanced division of labour. The costs of family remain largely privatized, while at the same time, the family serves as the institution which provides for the physical and ideological reproduction of the sex gender system (Ursel, 1984; Luxton, 1980, 1982).

Sexist ideology restricts the advancement of women with respect to employment opportunities, pay equity, family activities, and political decision making powers. This ideology benefits those in control. It is, therefore, hardly surprising that challenges to women's present role are met with resistance, whether this resistance is stated outright or hidden in the language of 'a threat to the family' or 'a crime against God and country'.

A key underlying theme in childcare politics is that childcare is a private family responsibility (except perhaps in very needy situations). At the same time, 'family responsibility' can often be interpreted to mean women's responsibility. Canadian welfare state legislation makes gender role assumptions, such as the assumption that women's primary role is as mothers. Childcare, as laid out under the Canada Assistance Plan (1966), is aimed at relieving extreme poverty and government dependence.

Luxton (1982) argues that a major victory of feminism has been to show that the ideal family does not correspond to the reality of family life, especially from the women's point of view. Women's
role in the family is not 'natural' but socially constructed and involves real work, albeit unpaid. That work is integral to keeping the whole economy going and is fundamentally tied to assumptions about normal life. Altering the family and the division of labour within and outside the home means challenging very entrenched gender relations. Tradition and economic clout are on the side of a continuation of the present allocation of labour.

Resisting assigned gender roles is a long and difficult task. Any changes which challenge the allocation of work within the home are generally met with resistance. This resistance lies on a continuum which includes verbal abuse, anger, financial insecurity, psychological intimidation, and physical violence.

When women's struggle moves beyond the home, it necessarily moves into the realm of politics, and the world of formal politics contains many of the gender role assumptions that exist in the family. Understanding the actions of family members or politicians requires deciphering the underlying ideology.

The sexual division of labour permeates how people carry on their work, exercise power, and understand their world. Basic to understanding politics and women's issues is understanding how sex divisions exist in capitalist production and reproduction, paid work and unpaid work, and the home and place of employment. At the same time, the particular form the division of labour takes depends on class position (e.g., it has been much more common for working class women to be employed full time than it has for middle class women).
Both class and gender divisions affect how people make decisions: the 'free' wage labourer has limited leverage in making decisions about his/her job situation just as women rarely 'freely' choose to get married and have babies. The socialization which females undergo in society strongly encourages women to adopt this role. Even less choice is involved for women in rearing the children once those children are born. In both situations, limited choice borders on coercion. Understanding political demands means understanding the social and ideological parameters under which people must make decisions.

An analysis of women's political action must take into consideration not only the acquisition of political skills, such as professionalism and accessing government officials, but also ideological concerns. The form that political action takes will depend on what is perceived as politically feasible. Feminist activism is particularly prone to being confrontational for the issues frequently involve ideological upheaval. When there is a way to circumvent this ideological wrangling, it may be more politically expedient to take the less confrontational course of action. I think childcare politics is such a case.

In the past, childcare advocates have argued from the point of view of the welfare of children -- without consideration for the health, rights, or welfare of women. It may follow that current political action is more likely to be effective if argued similarly. How the childcare issue has been approached in the Greater Vancouver area supports the premise that child welfare
should be at the center of childcare advocacy. In Chapters Three and Four, I present a case study of Greater Vancouver childcare politics and indicate connections with other childcare advocacy and policy.

Summary

This chapter examines the criteria for the lobbying effectiveness of various groups. Pross (1986) analyses a variety of Canadian organizations (e.g., environmental groups, business organizations, and trade unions) and argues that the organizational capacity (or degree of institutionalization and bureaucratization) is the key component in lobbying effectiveness. At the same time, basic lobbying strategies (being professional, knowing where to lobby, understanding your target, and avoiding confrontation) are important.

Some feminist researchers support Pross's claims regarding lobbying skills (e.g., Kome, 1989). Other feminist researchers argue that, while basic lobbying strategies are important prerequisites for lobbying effectiveness, other considerations take precedence. These include the nature of the claim (the degree to which it upsets the status quo) and ideological concerns. Gelb and Palley (1979) argue that not challenging basic values is important. Boneparth and Stoper (1988) suggest that, while role equity does not challenge traditional sex role ideology, role change does -- issues which challenge sex roles are generally met with resistance. Peattie and Rein (1983) examine the division between what is perceived as 'natural' and what is 'artificial'. Burt (1988, 1990)
suggests that lobbying for legal equality rights for women has been successful; however, issues which have challenged gender roles (pay equity, reproductive control by women, and childcare) have not been successful because of the nature of the issue. Issue orientation is at least as important as organizational capacity in predicting the lobbying effectiveness of women’s groups.

Two other concerns relate to lobbying effectiveness, according to feminist researchers. These are access to government (including gaining the support of key politicians) and the nature of bureaucracy. Ferguson (1984) suggests that the power women gain within bureaucracy is minimal. Findlay (1987) examines the Canadian government bureaucracy and argues that state bureaucrats have undermined the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women.

To understand political activism on women’s issues requires taking into consideration the nature of the issue, the ideological parameters, and the history of the issue. The most likely pattern for feminist activists to follow is a path of least resistance -- and this path is one of ideological acceptability.
Chapter Three

Overview of Childcare Developments in Greater Vancouver

Introduction

In order to understand the development of childcare politics, it is important to have some background information on what has occurred concerning childcare in the particular locality under consideration. This chapter provides some structural guidelines on the development of childcare in Greater Vancouver. I discuss my method for gathering statistical information on childcare developments and then describe the setting in which the debate on childcare has taken place. To do this, I outline the major differences in response between the five locations covered by my research (Vancouver and four District Municipalities) and then discuss the structural context of that response. In Chapter Four, I discuss my methodology for gathering information from a variety of people connected with the childcare issue and present the major themes which emerged during those interviews.

The five localities covered by this research include the City of Vancouver and four district municipalities (North Vancouver DM, Richmond DM, Surrey DM, and Langley DM). While Vancouver was noticeably involved with the childcare issue (and therefore became part of my research), involvement by other locations in the Greater Vancouver area was not as apparent. The four municipalities were chosen randomly in order to get an impression of childcare politics in the general area surrounding Vancouver. Each location operates under its own jurisdiction, and, therefore, would have its own
childcare policy. Constraints of time and money prevented me from expanding my work beyond these five locations.

Method for Gathering Statistical Information

General information was gathered from a variety of sources: task force reports, municipal papers and reports, historical papers available through municipal offices or community groups, position papers of community groups, and council minutes. These sources provided background information for each locality.

More specifically, statistical information for the City of Vancouver and the four municipalities was gathered from several sources which I outline next. Statistics Canada reports, dating from 1971 to 1986, provided information on labour force participation rates, family median incomes, incidence of low income families, family composition, and age composition. Municipal employees were contacted for information on the composition of councils since 1970, so that the relative number of council positions held by men and women could be tabulated. Health Departments and Community Care Facilities Licensing Board employees were contacted concerning the number of licensed childcare spaces in each area. While current figures are available, earlier statistics on licensed childcare spaces were not kept. Information was gathered from municipal reports on the per capita revenue and expenditures for Vancouver and the municipalities. Detailed information from the legal statutes governing Vancouver and the municipalities is also provided.
Overview of response to the childcare issue in Greater Vancouver

The response of the City of Vancouver to the childcare issue has been appreciably different from that of the four District Municipalities. I first discuss indicators of Vancouver’s greater response and then provide important contextual information concerning the response.

Vancouver has responded to the childcare issue in a more comprehensive and longterm manner than the four municipalities. Indicators of this greater response include the creation of more licensed childcare spaces and the continued and more direct involvement of City Council. This includes the involvement of its Social Planning Department, the acquisition of buildings and sites for childcare purposes, the creation of two Task Forces, and the introduction of a position for a Children’s Advocate.

Vancouver’s Greater Response: Indicators

Vancouver has developed a greater number of licensed childcare spaces relative to its child population than the four municipalities. Table 2 presents figures gathered from Community Care Facilities Licensing officers in the five areas, along with census data. These figures indicate that Vancouver averages 7.4 children per licensed childcare space while the municipalities vary from 8.1 (North Vancouver) to 20.9 children per licensed childcare space (Surrey).

While licensed childcare spaces do not represent the only care being provided — indeed estimates from the B.C. and federal Daycare Action Coalitions and the federal task force on childcare
all indicate that this may only represent about 10-20 percent of the children in care -- this is the form of care for which there are regulations on quality of care and for which government subsidies are available. Licensing gives the assurance that the facility meets government standards: caregivers have received proper training, the building meets acceptable health and safety standards, and the overall program is approved by those knowledgeable in the field.

Vancouver has involved its Social Planning Department in the provision of childcare services. This occurs through the community services branch of the department. Social planners have been involved in both task forces on childcare (1983 and 1988) and have been given the mandate by council to provide information on childcare services in both cases. Thus city employees are being paid to assist in the provision of childcare by providing informational services.

Social Planning Departments have not been as extensively involved in the four municipalities. While Richmond and North Vancouver departments have produced reports on childcare in the past decade, they have not created task forces which would give a more comprehensive analysis. Also, action by council on recommendations put forward has been minimal in Richmond and is currently under consideration in North Vancouver. During 1990, North Vancouver organized a childcare needs assessment and the report was presented to council during the late fall, 1990. Surrey has only recently created a Social Planning Department and
Langley does not yet have one.

Vancouver acquired several buildings and sites for childcare during the 1970's. The majority of capital grants that have been available to childcare centers in the past 20 years occurred during the early to mid 1970's as a result of action taken by the provincial (NDP) government between 1972 and 1975. The provincial government opted into federal cost-sharing programs under the Canada Assistance Plan (CAP). In particular they established the Capital and Equipment Grants program which allowed a $20,000 capital grant for the establishment of a childcare center and a $2,500 grant for equipment.

Even by 1975, however, the provincial Annual Report acknowledges problems surrounding inflation:

The $20,000 capital grant in 1973 went a long way toward establishing a new daycare center, but today it represents less than half the amount required. For this reason, a special allocation of $527,000 was made to purchase 12 prefabricated units. 1

As the report details, these centers were made available to cities/municipalities in exchange for their making land available, offering utility hook-ups, landscaping, and contributing to outdoor equipment.

Vancouver secured 10 of the 12 portables available at this time, with Kelowna and Sparwood getting one unit each. While this acquisition of childcare centers was facilitated by Vancouver having recently completed a city land and building inventory, council was still required to vote to relinquish city property for childcare purposes. By 1975, centers were operating on 9 of the 10
sites. This program required a 'partnership' between the city and the provincial government. According to the 1975-76 Annual Report:

In all areas, there was considerable local participation and contributions on the part of city, municipal, and school board officials, and community and parent volunteers. 2

However, as reported in the 1976-77 Annual Report, the Capital and Equipment Grant program for new daycare development saw a 'slowing down of expansion in 1975' and 'was suspended in 1976'. Instead, $36,865 was spent in what the report refers to as 'high priority areas'. Needless to say, this amount fell far short of the funding necessary to establish new centers or even maintain those already in existence.

In 1981-82, a new provincial program covering start-up, expansion, relocation, and emergency repair was instigated. In 1982-83, approximately $395 thousand was distributed under these guidelines, decreasing to $87 thousand in 1985-86 and increasing to $221.6 thousand in 1987-88. By the 1980’s, these dollars represented not only a reduced buying power but the number of centers applying for assistance had increased, thus making the amount available to any one center much smaller.

What is particularly relevant here is that Vancouver acquired buildings and sites, which comprise a very large portion of childcare costs, at the most optimum funding time in the past 20 years. Vancouver's willingness to co-operate with provincial guidelines at this time has had very beneficial repercussions for the city due to inflation and the disappearance of capital grants.
Table 3 provides an examination of provincial expenditures in the area of childcare and helps to place the importance of this early funding into perspective. Dollar figures are available in the Annual Reports of the Department of Rehabilitation and Social Improvement (1970-1972), the Department of Human Resources (1972-1976), the Ministry of Human Resources (1976-1986), and the Ministry of Social Services and Housing (1986-1988). At a first glance, it would appear that provincial government funding has increased considerably. In 1970-71, the provincial government contributed approximately $1.2 million; this increased to $13.7 million by 1974-75, then decreased to $10.3 million in 1976-77 and rose to the mid seventies level again by the end of the 1970’s. Over the 1980’s the total expenditure in current dollars rose to $36.5 million in 1987-88.

However, using constant dollars, which takes into account inflation and thus the purchasing power of the dollar, a different story emerges. Using 1970 constant dollars, the provincial contribution decreases enormously after the mid 1970’s. Between 1970-71 and 1974-75, provincial expenditures grew from $1.2 million to $9.9 million. However, provincial expenditures then decreased and remained below the 1974-75 level until 1987-88. Thus the ability of childcare centers to meet rising costs, let alone establish new centers, is negligible.

An important indicator of Vancouver council’s response to the childcare issue was the creation of two task forces, the 1983 Task Force on Day Care and the 1988 Task Force on Children. While the
creation of the task forces provides initial educational material on the issue, the implementation of recommendations from these two task forces have helped considerably to secure a place for the childcare issue on the city's political agenda.

The 1983 Mayor's Task Force on Daycare reviewed the availability and quality of daycare services in the City and provided recommendations for future improvements. It focused on daycare capacity (type of daycare, centers, and spaces), the administration of daycare, funding issues, the development of the Daycare Information Service, and the City's role in daycare, including its Health and Social Planning Departments. The report of the Task Force notes that while the majority of funding comes directly from the provincial government for daycare services, Vancouver has provided direct grants to the City Hall Daycare Society for construction and to Dial Daycare for start-up. In general, this task force provided an overview of daycare services and created an awareness to some of the major issues.

The second task force -- the Mayor's Task Force on Children -- went further in examining the childcare issue within the city and made much more extensive recommendations than previously. It took the issue of provision for children from the narrower focus of daycare to the broader focus of children's needs overall. While daycare remained a major concern, the issue evolved to another level which included policy surrounding planning, schooling, licensing, health, cultural activities, and advocacy.

The report of the Daycare Committee of the 1988 Task Force
states that Vancouver must "value and support the needs of its families... and must recognize the role of childcare as a vital community service". The final report of the whole task force states that "it is time to adjust our priorities so that we more carefully consider our children in our planning decisions". It identifies and outlines the positive steps already taken by Vancouver City Council, the actions necessary for improvements, policy needs, and advocacy positions with respect to the provincial and federal governments. Thus, this task force has shown the extent to which the childcare issue has already been placed on the municipal agenda and provided extensive information on how the city can improve on its present record.

All of the recommendations of the 1988 task force were unanimously passed in council. These include the creation of the position of a Children's Advocate, translation services, educational programs, the involvement of the Social Planning Department in providing data on the city's children, the development of planning policy which automatically takes into consideration the needs of children, increased health and licensing services, and the establishment of a City advocacy role vis-a-vis Parks, School Board, and senior governments.

One of the most important outcomes of the 1988 task force was the creation of the position of Children's Advocate, a move which received strong recommendation in the task force report. The role of the Children's Advocate was modeled along the lines of the Business Advocate, a position created previously to provide a
liaison between the business community and the City, and which has been deemed very successful. This position is designed so that the City recognizes the presence of children, their needs, and the City’s responsibilities towards providing for those needs.

The objective of this individual (is) to endeavour to ensure that children’s needs are taken into account in a formal and consistent manner during the planning stages of all activities under Civic jurisdiction. 5

In September, 1990, the Children’s Advocate submitted a comprehensive civic Daycare Policy and Program Implementation Plan to the Social Planning Department, and subsequently to the City Manager and Council. This report contains detailed information for an overall childcare strategy for the city, recognizing the presence of women in the labour force as a 'permanent fixture of Canadian Society', the critical shortage of childcare services, the social and economic returns on quality childhood programs, childcare as a core community need, and the city’s overall commitment to quality services and facilities for all its citizens. The report encourages the city to provide ongoing financial assistance for childcare services and programs while acknowledging the difficulties surrounding government mandates: it is not the mandate for municipal governments to finance childcare services, but the federal and provincial governments. It also stresses the need for their continued lobbying with senior levels of government to provide funding and to remove the present employability status of single parents with dependent children in the Provincial GAIN regulations which requires that they find employment. Thus, this report argues for the rights and needs of children, the inclusion
of local government in the lobbying with senior governments, and
the financial support of local government because of senior
government resistance and in spite of their official mandate.
Women enter into the issue only so far as they are 'permanent'
members of the labour force and no longer available for the
provision of childcare.

Summary

All of these factors -- childcare spaces, the involvement of
the Social Planning Department, the acquisition of buildings and
sites, the creation of two task forces and unanimous passing of
their recommendations, and the creation of the position of
Children's Advocate -- help to indicate Vancouver's response to the
childcare issue. Together they show that Vancouver has
incorporated several concerns surrounding childcare and children
into their formal policy and acted on recommendations. The extent
to which Vancouver City Council has gone to place childcare and the
needs of children onto their agenda is greater than that of the
municipalities examined. Vancouver has 7.4 children per licensed
childcare space, while the municipalities range from 8.1 children
per licensed childcare space in North Vancouver to 20.9 children
per licensed childcare space in Surrey. Vancouver's council has
given its Social Planning Department the mandate to provide
informational services on childcare. It opted into provincial cost
sharing programs in the early 1970's which proved to be the optimum
time financially, and was able to benefit from the capital grants
available between 1972-1975. Using 1970 constant dollars, the
provincial contribution to childcare increased from $1.2 million in 1970-71 to $9.9 million in 1974-75, then decreased considerably and did not reach the mid-1970’s level again until 1987-88. Finally, the creation of the position of the Children’s Advocate has been very helpful in promoting the needs of children at the council level and in local government as a whole, while acknowledging the presence of women in the labour force as a 'permanent fixture'.

Vancouver’s Greater Response: The Structural Context

The Vancouver Charter vs. the Municipal Act

A recurring theme with respect to explaining Vancouver’s greater response to the childcare issue, and one which produced very contradictory statements from those interviewed (see Chapter Four), surrounds legal statutes. Vancouver operates under its own Charter while the municipalities operate under the Municipal Act. Both the Charter and Municipal Act are provincial statutes. While many of those interviewed in the course of this research state that Vancouver’s greater involvement in childcare is because Vancouver has its own Charter that gives it a mandate to become involved in Social Services, this does not appear to be a viable explanation.

During the 1930’s, social services gradually started becoming a provincial responsibility where previously they had been a municipal mandate (Bish, 1987). This was the case for Vancouver and the municipalities. By 1970, the majority of social services were being provided by the province in both cases. Vancouver does not have a specific mandate to look after its own social services, nor do the municipalities. Yet the political will to provide
assistance in facilitating the creation and maintenance of childcare facilities is much greater in Vancouver.

Vancouver does have greater financial capability (compared to the municipalities) because it has a more diverse tax base, assessed values, and levies. Both the per capita revenue and per capita expenditure are higher in Vancouver. Municipal statistics for 1984 indicate that Vancouver’s revenue is $756 per capita while the municipalities vary from $425 per capita in Langley, $433 per capita in North Vancouver, $455 per capita in Surrey, and to $579 per capita in Richmond (See Table 4). However, greater revenue in itself does not guarantee that money would go towards childcare services or any other social service. The Vancouver councillors interviewed frequently noted the limited budget for spending on any social service. In the municipalities, lack of mandate (rather than lack of finances) was more frequently cited during interviews as a reason for municipal inaction on the childcare issue. Also, the municipalities did not cost share with the provincial government during the 1970’s when additional funding was available. It is not that money is not important, but that it does not appear to be the most important reason for inaction on the childcare issue by the municipalities. Political will is also very relevant.

Both the Vancouver Charter and the Municipal Act provide for the acquisition of real property for municipal purposes. While neither specifically refers to childcare facilities as an example of municipal use, they both contain guidelines which would be applicable to childcare facilities. The Vancouver Charter states
that Council can provide money for the acquisition of real property for facilities such as libraries, museums, public schools, recreation centers, and "any other buildings or premises required for municipal purposes" [Section 204 (j)]. If childcare facilities were considered necessary and important in satisfying a public need, they would qualify as a 'municipal purpose'.

The Municipal Act states that a council, in providing community services, may "acquire, accept, and hold any property in the municipality for pleasure, recreation, or community uses of the public..." [Section 679 (1) (a)]. It can make rules and regulations governing the operation, control, and use of the property, and can lease or rent the property. Such a lease may be granted for 5 years without the assent of electors or for 20 years with the assent [Section 679 (1) (2)]. A municipality can also designate zones and regulate within zones with respect to "the use of land, buildings, and structures" [Section 682 (4)].

Both the Charter and the Municipal Act make provisions for development plans and official community plans. In Vancouver, council can make development plans that relate to the whole or part of the city and can "designate sites for parks, schools, and public buildings" [Section 561]. They can make zoning bylaws [Section 565] and must hold public hearings [Section 566]. Similarly, under the Municipal Act, a council can produce official community plans which state the policies of the local government respecting proposed land use. They can state the proposed location and type of public facilities, and if they include a matter which is
normally not under their jurisdiction, they can state their 'broad objective' [Section 945 (1) (2) & (5)]. As with Vancouver, a municipal council must provide public hearings. In both situations, council can set priorities with respect to land use, public facilities, and zoning.

Thus, the wording of the Act suggests that a municipality has considerable leeway in the ownership and use of property. There are no particular rulings with respect to the acquisition and use of municipal land which would be more restrictive for a municipal council compared to Vancouver city council.

A municipal council may also operate, improve, and use buildings on its own property [as specified under 679 (1) (a)] and can make agreements with the School Board to construct, operate, or use jointly facilities for community use on either School Board or municipal land. This is relevant with respect to out-of-school care facilities as well as some preschool activities which could use school property as sites for facilities. Once again, there is scope for the municipality to act if the political will is there.

Under the Charter, Vancouver can give grants to "any organization deemed by the Council to be contributing to the culture, beautification, health or welfare of the city" [Section 206 (j)]. Under the Municipal Act, council can grant aid to "an organization considered by council to be contributing to the general interest and advantage of the municipality" [Section 269 (h)]. In both cases, a response to the need for childcare is feasible: in Vancouver, childcare qualifies as a concern for the
general health and welfare of those living in the City; in a municipality, childcare could contribute to the 'general interest and advantage' of the municipality.

Vancouver has given grants to specific daycares (City Hall, Mount Pleasant, False Creek, and Champlain Heights), but such instances of direct grants are rare in the municipalities. In interviews, the reason often given by both members of councils and representatives of community groups is that the municipality does not want to get involved in funding something which is a provincial jurisdiction. Yet childcare is not officially in Vancouver's jurisdiction either. While Vancouver does not as a rule 'provide social services', it has responded differently to very similar guidelines concerning facilitating the provision of such services. The general welfare of the community in Vancouver includes provision for childcare while in the municipalities, assisting with childcare services does not appear to conform to the 'general interest and advantage of the municipality'. Since childcare has been primarily the responsibility of women, it follows that the groups most disadvantaged by a lack of municipal response to the need for childcare facilities are women and children.

In Vancouver, council can appoint a Board of Administration and give it executive or administrative powers normally exercisable by council [Section 162 (a)]. In a municipality, council can delegate a commission with administrative powers of council to administer property held by the municipality [Section 688 (1)]. In both situations, council can delegate powers to a board for
administrative purposes. If a council considers helping to facilitate the provision of childcare facilities important to the community as a whole, legally they can do so.

Both legal statutes, the Charter and the Municipal Act, have taxation powers and treat the taxation of non-profit organizations similarly. The effect, however, is different. Under the Charter, wherever council can regulate, license, or tax persons carrying on a business, trade, profession, or other occupation, it has the power to discriminate between groups or classes regarding the tax to be paid and the terms under which a group can carry on a business, trade, profession, or occupation [Section 203 (b)].

The taxation of childcare facilities in Vancouver is not as great a problem as it is for several facilities in the municipalities. Through the action of City Council, the Vancouver Parks Board, and the Vancouver School Board, several facilities pay only a nominal taxation fee. This exists for non-profit organizations and Vancouver has encouraged the establishment of non-profit childcare rather than private businesses. Also, as noted, Vancouver has since the early 1970's made an effort to provide assistance in the acquisition of buildings and sites for the provision of non-profit childcare. This coincides with its taxation powers surrounding non-profit organizations.

Under the Municipal Act, councils can exempt from taxation land and improvements or both when "not being operated for profit or gain and owned by a charitable or philanthropic organization supported in whole or in part by public funds" [Section 400 (c)].
However, childcare facilities in the four municipalities have had difficulties getting tax exemptions because they have been classified as businesses. Operating under a commercial business license is very onerous for a childcare center whose sources of revenue are primarily limited to government subsidies to the very low income parents and the childcare fees paid by (other) parents. At the same time, municipalities are not assisting in the provision of organized non-profit childcare which would allow for greater municipal assistance under the Municipal Act.

In addition to the powers of a municipal council as outlined under the Municipal Act, the minister responsible for municipal affairs can confer additional powers regarding the disposition of assets [Section 288] and the Lieutenant Governor can bestow additional powers to preserve and promote the "welfare of the inhabitants" [Section 289]. It would appear that not only are the municipalities not curtailed by the Municipal Act in facilitating the provision of childcare facilities, they could also apply to the minister or Lieutenant Governor for more powers if the political will was there. Indeed, Bish (1987) indicates that:

While local governments do not possess home rule, the Municipal Act in 1936 listed 266 voluntary functions for cities, towns, and district municipalities and few constraints have been exercised if a municipality had a good reason for wishing to undertake some new function (Bish, 1987, 16).

Women’s Labour Force Participation

Vancouver’s involvement in childcare reflects women’s labour force participation rates as well as federal and provincial social policy. Canadian census data show that in 1971 Vancouver women had
a higher labour force participation rate than women in the four municipalities (See Table 5). (Rates for women with young children were not available.) Vancouver women’s labour force participation rate was 47.6 percent while Richmond’s rate was 44.1 percent, North Vancouver’s was 41.9 percent, Langley’s was 36.1 percent, and Surrey’s was 35.3 percent.

At a time when governments at both the federal and provincial levels were first coming to grips with an increasing number of women in the labour force, more Vancouver women were already employed. This was a particularly crucial time period with respect to the availability of funding from federal and provincial sources. During the first half of the 1970’s, a shift was occurring nationally in the field of childcare. Capital grants were available which allowed for the establishment of many childcare services. Within B.C. also, this marks a time of rapid growth, peaking in 1974-75.

Labour force participation on its own, however, cannot explain Vancouver’s greater response to childcare. By 1976, women’s employment rate was almost identical in Vancouver, North Vancouver, and Richmond (just under 50 percent). More importantly, North Vancouver and Richmond led Vancouver in both 1981 and 1986. In 1981, North Vancouver’s rate was 60.4 percent and Richmond’s rate was 60.2 percent, while Vancouver’s was only 57.3 percent. In 1986, North Vancouver’s rate rose to 63.5 percent and Richmond’s rate to 63.0 percent, but Vancouver’s rate was lower at 60.1 percent. However, those other two municipalities did not follow
the same patterns of response to an increasing need for childcare.  

**Childcare as a Welfare Issue**

While childcare is a relatively new concern on any Canadian political agenda, it has primarily held a welfare focus as it did when it was a service provided by charitable organizations earlier (See Chapters One and Two). Both the federal guidelines under the Canada Assistance Plan and the provincial mandate as laid out under social services view childcare as a service to be provided under pathological conditions.

With federal and provincial policy focusing so strongly on the aspect of poverty, it is significant that Vancouver has a higher incidence of low income families. It has maintained a mid-range to low Family Median Income since the early 1970’s, and had a considerably higher incidence of Low Income Families in both 1981 and 1986 (See Tables F and G). North Vancouver, on the other hand, has consistently had the highest Family Median Income and the lowest incidence of Low Income Families. Richmond continues in a mid-range on both measurements throughout the same time period. Thus, there are more families in Vancouver that would qualify for the childcare subsidies which are based on financial need.

Table 6 indicates that in 1971, Vancouver’s family median income was $9,029, with North Vancouver at $12,479 and Richmond at $10,231. Surrey and Langley were below Vancouver at this point. In both 1981 and 1986, Vancouver had the lowest family median income. In 1981, Vancouver’s family median income was $25,525, while North Vancouver was $36,567; Richmond was $30,922; Langley
was $27,711; and Surrey was $26,229. In 1986, Vancouver’s family median income was $32,428, while North Vancouver was $48,153; Richmond was $40,506; Langley was $36,463; and Surrey was $33,861.

Table 7 indicates that there were more low income families in Vancouver than in any of the municipalities in both 1981 and 1986. In 1981, 14.3 percent of Vancouver families were low income, while North Vancouver’s rate was 6.3 percent; Langley’s rate was 7.2 percent; Richmond’s rate was 7.9 percent; and Surrey’s rate was 12.6 percent. In 1986, 19.4 percent of Vancouver families were low income, while North Vancouver’s rate was 7.5 percent; Langley’s was 10.4 percent; Richmond’s was 11.1 percent; and Surrey’s was 16.5 percent.

The majority of recipients of childcare subsidies are single parent families. According to the Ministry of Human Resources Annual Reports, during 1974-75 and 1975-76, 70 percent of daycare subsidies went to single parent families. By 1976-77, this figure rose to 75 percent. During the 1980’s, the percent of subsidies going to single parent families remained high.

Vancouver has had a high percentage of single parent families compared to the municipalities. Table 8 shows Family Composition figures. While statistics on single parent families are not available for 1971, they are available in the 1981 and 1986 census data. Vancouver had a significantly higher percentage of single parent families for both census years compared to the municipalities. In 1981, while Vancouver had 31.9 percent single parent families, Surrey, North Vancouver, and Richmond followed at
a much lower rate (20.3 percent to 17.8 percent). In 1986, Vancouver had a 35.3 percent single parent family rate, considerably higher than Surrey, Richmond, and North Vancouver (23.7 percent to 19.4 percent). Langley, which has had the least public response to the childcare issue (based on its low number of childcare spaces and the almost total absence of any childcare issues on the municipal council agenda) has had a considerably lower percentage of single parent families compared to all other areas (12 percent in 1981 and 14.6 percent in 1986).

Since the majority of childcare funding since the mid-1970's has gone into childcare subsidies to poor single parent families, rather than into capital expenditures for childcare facilities, it is significant that Vancouver has such a large percentage of single parent families. There are more poor single parent families in Vancouver who are eligible for these subsidies than in the municipalities. The majority of these families are headed by women.

**Age composition** for the City of Vancouver and the four municipalities also follows a pattern. In all census years (1971, 1981, and 1986), Vancouver had fewer children as a percent of the total population (See Table 9). In 1971, Vancouver children represented only 19.5 percent of the population while the four municipalities hovered at 31.6 percent to 32.1 percent, just under one-third of the total population. In 1981, there was a wider range of age composition but Vancouver was substantially lower at 14.4 percent while the other municipalities ranged from
approximately 21 to 27 percent. In 1986, the gap narrowed between Vancouver and the others but Vancouver was still substantially lower at 14 percent: the others ranged from 20 to 26 percent.

In all three census years, Vancouver also has had a much higher rate of Seniors as a percent of the total population. In general, Vancouver has had a more diverse population. The municipalities, on the other hand, have had a high proportion of children. A preponderance of children, however, does not necessarily increase the likelihood of the childcare issue getting onto the political agenda. Other factors relating to social and economic need are more influential.

Summary

Legal statutes do not provide an explanation for the greater response by Vancouver to the childcare issue compared to the four municipalities. While Vancouver does operate under its own charter, and the municipalities under the Municipal Act, the legal parameters do not significantly vary. This is true of its powers with respect to the acquisition of real property, development, use of buildings, grants, and taxation powers. Neither the City of Vancouver nor the District Municipalities have a specific mandate for the coverage of social services.

A combination of factors — some of them structural — contribute to the childcare issue emerging on the political agenda in Vancouver. Vancouver had a high labour force participation rate for women in the early 1970's when the initial surge of childcare activity occurred provincially and nationally. It was able to
capitalize on the greater availability of federal and provincial funding at this time. However, both Richmond and North Vancouver women exceeded Vancouver women in their employment rates throughout the 1980’s.

Vancouver has had greater overall financial capability, but it also has had more low income families. It has consistently had a mid-range or lower median family income and a high proportion of single parent families. At the same time, the percentage of children has been greater in the municipalities compared to Vancouver.

Conclusion

The question then becomes why is the political will to respond to the need for childcare greater in Vancouver than in the four municipalities. Vancouver women’s labour force participation can help explain its early response but it cannot explain the overall municipal response from the mid-70’s onwards. While Vancouver does have a larger population that would qualify under welfare provisions, that does not provide a complete explanation. Childcare subsidies given to individual needy parents cannot explain such factors as the two Vancouver task forces (on daycare and children), Vancouver’s involvement in the acquisition and placement of childcare facilities during the 1970’s, or the creation of the position of Children’s Advocate. Other factors must also be relevant, and these are discussed in Chapter Four.
Chapter Four

Factors Affecting Greater Vancouver Childcare Politics:
Themes from Interviews

Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss several themes which emerged during interviews and indicate how they relate to other research in the area of women's issues and government. Previously, I outlined the historical importance of the patriarchal family (see Chapter One): patriarchal ideology is also an important factor in understanding childcare politics in Greater Vancouver. I have also outlined Pross's (1986) criteria for lobbying effectiveness, as well as arguments put forward by feminist researchers (see Chapter Two). In this research, while basic lobbying skills are important, other factors take precedence (particularly ideology). Before discussing my findings in detail, I will outline my research methodology and arguments.

Methodology: the Interview Phase

My methodology for examining the childcare issue in the Greater Vancouver area included face-to-face interviews and telephone interviews with local councillors and representatives of community resource groups involved with childcare, as well as municipal employees such as Health Department representatives, Social Planners, and representatives from Community Care Facilities Licensing Boards. Through the use of in-depth interviews, I have been able to gather a variety of ideas concerning local childcare politics. The format I used was open-ended questions: this format allowed those interviewed to discuss in detail factors which they
considered important and to raise concerns which had not been dealt with. The initial questions asked of interviewees concerned the major difficulties surrounding childcare and childcare policy, jurisdiction, influencing decision making on the issue, the effectiveness (or lack of effectiveness) of particular groups or lobbying methods, the nature of women's issues, and the consideration of childcare as a women's issue.

Among those interviewed from community groups were childcare advocates who have lobbied federal, provincial, and municipal governments, early childhood educators, project co-ordinators at Neighbourhood Houses, members of the Westcoast Child Care Umbrella Resource and Support Society, municipal employees, and representatives from groups which promote the care of children in the traditional family setting. Many of those chosen for interviews were immediately identifiable as involved with the issue -- in council minutes, task force reports, municipal papers, community group studies, or the media. Other names were suggested verbally through the initial contacts. Those councillors initially chosen were also immediately identifiable through the same sources. Other councillors were suggested as able to offer alternative viewpoints to the initial contacts. An effort was made to locate a balance of opinion among those interviewed. All members of community groups contacted agreed to an interview, while one councillor declined an interview.

I interviewed a total of 41 people: 26 face-to-face interviews and 15 telephone interviews. Among the face-to-face
interviewees were 12 councillors, 9 members of the childcare community, and 5 municipal employees/community workers. Those interviewed by telephone included 1 councillor, 5 members of the childcare community, 2 representatives of traditional family organizations, and 7 municipal employees/community workers. I offer direct quotations from 25 interviewees (about 60 percent) and chose those quotations to reflect not only clarity and variety but also to express the main themes which emerged during interviews. While these themes (and quotations) do not represent all the ideas discussed by those interviewed, they offer a cross-section of widely held opinion.

In the following pages, I use a three character alphanumerical notation to designate respondents. The first character, a letter, indicates city/municipality (V = Vancouver, N = North Vancouver, R = Richmond, S = Surrey, and L = Langley). The second character, a number, indicates the order in which (quoted) people in each subgroup were interviewed. Finally, the third character, a letter, indicates a person's position (either P for politician or C for citizen). A further breakdown of 'citizens' is provided in the text of the chapter (e.g., Social Planners, community service workers, and members of the childcare community).

This chapter is a discussion of the main themes: these ideas help to explain why the childcare issue has been addressed at the formal political level in Vancouver in a more comprehensive manner than it has been in the municipalities. My discussion is organized around five broad themes, as follows. First, the social and
political climate in which the issue emerges affects outcome: 
Vancouver's 'climate' has been favourable. Second, access to 
government is important and involves several factors including: i) 
jurisdiction (the municipal level of government is easily 
accessible although it lacks the primary mandate for childcare), 
ii) key politicians (the involvement of supportive female 
councillors is essential), and iii) basic lobbying skills 
(political and professional skills are important prerequisites for 
approaching government). Third, while effective lobbying requires 
that a childcare community be organized and cohesive, this does not 
necessarily mean adopting a bureaucratic structure. Fourth, the 
"proper role" of women is an important consideration (patriarchal 
ideology plays a more dominant role in the municipalities than in 
Vancouver). Fifth, childcare has not been viewed as a women's 
issue in Vancouver (indeed, childcare advocates have carefully 
avoided such an association).

The social and political climate

Whether an issue is favourably, or unfavourably, perceived by 
those in decision-making positions is at least partially affected 
by the social and political context in which the issue emerges. It 
was clear in my interviews that for Vancouver, the childcare issue 
developed within the context of a number of social issues (problems 
surrounding poverty, housing, congestion, noise, and safety). A 
Social Planner commented:

I think that Vancouver councils have been quite 
supportive (of social issues). You see it in the 
centers in the 70's and 80's. My sense is that 
there has been stronger support in Vancouver for
over a longer period, from successive councils, than there has been in other municipalities where we hear total refusal to even consider the concept of grants to social service agencies (V4C).

During the 1970's, several groups worked together to humanize the city and prevent it from acquiring many of the problems that were becoming prominent in large American cities. This meant having a broad cross-section of people -- including children -- in the center of the city, an area where problems of poverty, crime, and ghettos often develop.

During the 1970's, university faculty who were familiar with urban problems became involved with City Council as well as with a number of community groups (e.g. Walter Hardwick, Ken Denike). One Vancouver councillor interviewed has pointed to the Strathcona community group as an example of a politically active, broadly based grass roots organization whose actions and arguments reinforced what university professors were saying about liveable cities.

Several university people who had been studying American cities got involved at this time. They knew what was happening in U.S. cities and didn't want to see it happen here. They convinced others that something was wrong with the way the city was developing, and they got involved with other groups such as the Strathcona group (V5P).

Making cities liveable for children, and being cognizant about the problems of childcare, were part of a broader picture of social improvement.

As discussed in Chapter Three, Vancouver has had a larger percentage of low income families than the municipalities. This, too, has provided an impetus for council to get involved as senior
levels of government have identified childcare as a welfare issue. More Vancouver families have received childcare subsidies, which comprise the largest government contribution towards childcare services.

Access to government: municipal jurisdiction

One major difference between senior levels of government and municipal government is that a municipal council is accessible to the individual citizen, unlike the provincial legislature or federal parliament. Local government has been accessible to a variety of groups (including childcare advocates) in all five locations. While this does not differentiate Vancouver from the municipalities, it is an important precondition to consider when examining an aspect of local politics. Individuals can and do regularly make presentations to council (in all five locations), as comments from a variety of councillors indicate:

I think the municipal government has more credibility than the other levels of government... they can come and talk to us (R2P).

The mechanisms are in place to approach council (L2P).

The municipal level is the easiest one to access on any issue. We deal with federal and provincial issues because citizens can’t get access to those folk (V2P).

Because we’re the nearest, the most direct, and they can get at us the easiest, they’re trying to involve us all the time (S2P).

My examination of the childcare issue and municipal councils suggests that consideration of the issue does not usually extend beyond a brief discussion of siting or zoning for childcare facilities. One councillor commented:
The main approach is where are you going to put them and how can a municipality assist in that process... that’s usually the extent of the debate. A lot of these issues aren’t debated on a terribly high philosophical plane. I don’t want to disillusion you about the majesty of the intellect of the average councillor. It doesn’t get debated in that way. Part of it is you don’t have the time, and, secondly, it’s peripheral to the decision that you’ve got to make. Most of the debate is about whether this is a good location (S3P).

On the other hand, the formation of more comprehensive childcare policy (as has been evident in Vancouver) happens within ‘a policy making community’ consisting of those working in the field (e.g. daycare co-ordinators, early childhood educators), along with government employees (e.g. social planners, Health Department representatives), and one or more councillors. Councillors rely on the expertise of those working in the field not only to identify the problems but the important people as well. One councillor noted:

On the daycare side, I went to a couple of people in the community that I knew had been involved... and said you know the players, I don’t want political folks, I don’t want the regular people who participate. You know the players, you give me the names, and let’s try to cover all the bases - multicultural, academic, working in the field, special needs - and so they came up with names for me, and I just went with that (V3P).

Government funding can make a group vulnerable and manipulable, but at the same time walking that fine line of cooperation with government can give a group more gains than they might achieve without subsidization. In the case of childcare, government contributions in the form of direct grants, commissions or task forces, and/or research services are particularly important. This appears to be the case with the
Vancouver childcare community and the funding it has secured from City Council for Daycare Information services, for the West Coast Childcare umbrella organization, and for the position of the Children’s Advocate.

Those achievements have each increased the viability of this community in gaining a public presence and in putting its views forward not only to local government but very importantly to the provincial government as well. Some members of the Vancouver childcare community were recently named to a provincial task force on childcare needs. They now have an ‘in’ to the provincial government that they could not get earlier, as a Vancouver councillor noted:

The daycare community told me that from 1980 or 1981 until we started our task force in 1987 that they had never had a meeting not only with any cabinet minister who is responsible for their area, but also any deputy minister despite repeated requests - phonecalls, letters, every kind of request. They would never even meet with the daycare community. That’s not even getting to the next step of saying, well no, I don’t agree with you. They wouldn’t even talk to them. How can you start to change minds if you can’t access the system? (V3P).

Local government is the easiest level of government to access. While municipal funding assistance is limited, contact with a municipal council can also help in lobbying senior levels of government. Having access to government not only involves securing sufficient government funding in the form of task forces, grants, or research services so that a case can be made for the issue, it also means making contact with sympathetic politicians who will drive the issue along.
Access to government: the importance of supportive politicians

According to those interviewed, having key politicians on your side helps greatly in moving the issue along. When the issue personally affects -- or has personally affected -- a member of council, the issue takes on more importance. Thus, one of the factors which helps to give an issue a higher profile on the political agenda is the presence of a councillor (or councillors) who feels strongly about the issue, who vocalizes the concerns of advocates, and who in general facilitates the process of getting the issue onto the political agenda. This opinion was reiterated frequently, including the following comment from a former Vancouver councillor:

When there isn’t a broad base of support, you need someone to bulldog the issue. Childcare was such an issue earlier. Now it is more broadly accepted... there was an anti-daycare 'don’t warehouse your kids’ attitude, but now more prominent women need daycare and employers realize that if they want to keep well-qualified staff, they need to get involved (V5P).

Key politicians are particularly important in the early lobbying days for childcare services, before it gets a broad base of support, before it takes on a sufficient degree of middle class acceptability. Much of this work happens 'behind the scenes', away from council chambers, as this former councillor noted.

I think we did a fair bit of work to be sure that people understood. We didn’t want it to go to council too early, and any chance we got to speak to the aldermen we took, and the mayor was fully behind it. By the time it got to council, people knew that there was a fair bit of support for it and even if someone did not want to support it, they realized politically it wasn’t a smart thing to do, so I think it had support (V1P).

An analogy drawn by a Vancouver councillor quite aptly points
out the importance of personal interest in an issue:

If you scratch the surface of someone very vocal about monster houses, you'll probably find that he or she has a monster house going up next door (V3P).

In the case of childcare, for whom is this issue a 'monster' problem? Women. It is women who have had, and continue to have, the primary responsibility for the care of children. Women much more often than men have an increased awareness of the issue and an understanding of how it affects the lives of women, of children, and of families and communities in general. They are more likely to see the issue as an important consideration to place on the political agenda.

In Vancouver, it is female councillors who have primarily given the issue a profile and carried the issue along through the gauntlet of committee rooms (where childcare advocates and government officials meet), offices and 'living rooms' (where briefs get prepared), and council chambers (for final presentations and voting). A former Vancouver councillor noted:

The advantage in my view of having people on council prepared to work at this is that once people know that you're the person who will listen and who are interested in helping, then they say maybe I'll talk to Alderman X about that: she might have an idea about what we can do about that. And this person says I'll go talk to the mayor. They have an in. That has been a major role of the alderman (V1P).

While some men, both mayors and councillors, have supported the childcare issue, those most involved with the issue and facilitating changes have been women. Those politicians who have maintained direct and continuous involvement with seeing the work of a task force carried through, and those who have done the behind
the scenes work of winning over other members of council, have generally been women. Likewise, those who have brought the issue forward for discussion on council have most often been women.

A former Vancouver councillor noted the myriad of problems surrounding childcare such as licensing, teacher qualifications, subsidies, cut-off rates, and different levels of government. She thought that personal experience with those problems is what pushes a politician to get involved.

Who could begin to understand the intricacies of all those problems except someone who has been through it... Who wants to know about it except someone who has been through it? (V4P).

Partisan politics can also play a role. Having access to one politician who is sympathetic to your cause can give you other supporters from among that particular political organization. A Vancouver councillor noted:

She got support from that group; some of it is politics, they were all from the same political organization, and the mayor would be working with the chair of the School Board, and the Chair of the Parks Board, all the same political group. So when the mayor is for it, he’ll influence those other people... they had a good start with that group (V1P).

Since the presence of supportive politicians (partisan or not) is a necessary factor, and women have been particularly involved with the issue, it is important to consider the relative numbers of women on councils.

An examination of the composition of councils for Vancouver, North Vancouver DM, Richmond DM, Surrey DM, and Langley DM indicates that Vancouver has had a higher overall percentage of women councillors than the four municipalities over the past 20
years (See Table 10). Vancouver has had approximately 25 percent female membership on council, nowhere near equal representation with men but higher than the rates of female representation in the municipalities. At the same time, however, Vancouver's female representation is not significantly higher than all the others: in fact, North Vancouver's overall female representation is close behind at 23 percent. Also, only in 10 of the 21 years examined has there been a higher percentage of women on council in Vancouver compared to other municipalities. Indeed, in the 1973-75 period when the NDP provincial government made more funds available and Vancouver council actively responded, North Vancouver, Richmond, and Surrey all had a greater proportion of women on council than did Vancouver.

This would suggest that the presence of women on council is not the only consideration. Merely having women on council does not automatically lead to their involvement on issues of importance to women. Their presence on council may be a necessary (but not sufficient) condition for action.

Access to government: basic lobbying skills

While understanding childcare includes a knowledge of child development (that held by early childhood educators, child specialists, daycare operators and workers, childcare coordinators, and parents), knowledge of the policy process is a different kind of information. It concerns knowing who to talk to (or 'target'), who makes the important decisions, where to go for help (which jurisdiction), and when to move (the correct timing).
Those wishing to influence government must be available for the committee work, meetings, presentations, and so on, that are all part of the political package.

An issue-oriented group, such as the childcare community, is much more likely to have a thorough understanding of daycare or child development than an understanding of the political process. Some municipal councillors commented on this, including this particular councillor.

People really don’t understand the political process... Many groups just talk among themselves -- they don’t talk to anybody who can make a difference (SIP).

Basic lobbying skills involve not only understanding the substantive issues in the field but also the political process of getting the issue out to the politicians.

A point brought out by a variety of those interviewed (including politicians, childcare activists, and municipal employees such as social planners) concerns the time commitment for lobbying. Those most directly affected by the childcare issue (parents, especially mothers) rarely have the time or energy to expend on organizing politically. Parents of young children are already exhausted without adding political meetings to their evening schedules -- particularly women, because the brunt of the responsibility for childcare lies on their shoulders.

Parents of preschool children are particularly involved with the everyday problems of childcare, but those parents are often the least likely to bring the issue forward. Because parent involvement on the boards of non-profit societies is often
mandatory, many parents are already adding meeting times to an already full schedule, making further availability for political action very unlikely. A former Vancouver councillor noted the problems in forming a coalition:

They were getting mothers with small children who needed the daycare to be on the daycare coalition, but mothers with small children are the last people who would have the energy for being on a board, and once their children are older, they aren’t generally interested (V5P).

This lack of parental involvement has repercussions when the issue is placed on the political agenda in the municipalities. Some childcare operators and members of municipal councils feel that the lack of parental involvement is a disadvantage: ‘if there was a louder outcry from parents, more would get done’ and ‘parents don’t organize themselves to voice their complaints’ are common refrains. Those childcare operators who do get involved with municipal governments tend to act unilaterally and come forward to council with a specific zoning or siting request. They do not get deeply involved with childcare politics.

Another lobbying requirement is making sure you’re ‘on target’, a skill which is crucial but, unfortunately, not straightforward. Pinning responsibility where it belongs is often difficult. It involves knowing both the proper jurisdiction, as well as who in particular makes the important decisions. This has been important in the childcare issue, as suggested by two municipal councillors.

You have to decide if that’s the right person to rant at and you’ve got to know what you want to rant about... and know what you want at the end (N1P).
It's a very confusing jurisdiction, and I find that because of the distance of the provincial government, and confusion of the different ministries, provincially and federally, that many people just don't know where to go (S1P).

On the other hand, comments from a childcare advocate in the Greater Vancouver area who finds lobbying 'easy', and has learned how to access ministers at the provincial and federal levels, indicates that she understands targeting government politicians.

I watch (the politicians) for awhile, watch what makes them tick. I set my sights on who I want to target and then watch them at events or when they're working. I have taken three years 'to cultivate' (a politician)... Having the nerve was the most important thing (V5C).

Issue-oriented groups spring up where there is a strong feeling about a particular situation and while they are often led by dedicated people, they are not necessarily politically experienced. They can often suffer from poor organization, a lack of cohesion, a fluid membership, and difficulties in formulating and reaching objectives (Pross, 1986). Some municipal councillors pointed out that childcare advocates in their municipalities are often novice lobbiers and need to learn about government organization.

In many instances, the daycare workers are not forceful people. They’re daycare workers, they don’t know how to lobby, don’t have the time, don’t have the money, they’re just trying to run a business (S1P).

Women have to organize -- and not just women, there are a lot of single fathers -- but they don't seem to see that they're fractured. They're all over the place, just managing, just trying to keep their heads above water (R1P).

A member of the Greater Vancouver childcare community also commented on the lack of political experience of some advocates.
Often people are naive. They don’t realize they are one of a series of issues... You have to go and listen to a council before actually bringing forward your issue... you can do more damage than good by presenting the wrong way, or the wrong day. Sometimes waiting is more effective (V5C).

Yet even if parents or individual daycare operators wish to see the issue get publicly addressed, and find the time and energy to do so, where to turn for help can be very confusing, as this municipal councillor indicated:

I think part of it is frustration. They don’t know where to go, where to start. I think you have to be extremely persistent; part of it is understanding the government. How do you approach a government for money? How do you lobby a government? Where do you start? (S1P).

Those from the childcare community who organize politically tend to be a rather select group who have learned to wade through the political quagmire out of necessity. They stand out within their own community and from parents as well. Many would argue that this is not unusual: political activists are rare. However, what is particularly relevant here is that a group which is crucially affected by the issue (i.e. parents, particularly mothers) is so silent.

Another aspect of lobbying effectiveness concerns incremental change. Movement within a government bureaucracy is generally very slow. Those working for change within such a system need to acknowledge the inherent difficulties and find progress in small steps. A North Vancouver councillor noted:

To be successful, you have to see the other side, and know where you want to go and know what realistically it’s possible to do (N1P).

Being pragmatic is part of the political process and results
in getting more accomplished. Without fighting for specific goals, the overall issue will not move forward but will merely get bogged down in the bureaucracy. A Vancouver councillor commented:

I said what I don’t want at the end is for you to say we want the world to be better for kids -- that means nothing in political terms. What I want is an action that I can go and fight for and argue behind the scenes, push and pull and try and get passed. Argue your case. Be specific. Prioritize. If you come and just say we need more daycare, nothing will happen in a bureaucracy. If you’ve got tiny steps, then you can push it through and actually get something done (V3P).

Yet this kind of incremental change assumes that there is nothing which fundamentally challenges the way people think and expect their world to function.

Several factors contribute to effective lobbying -- knowing the correct jurisdiction, targeting the right politicians, and timing appropriately. Political players must develop these skills. Another factor which is important in effective lobbying concerns how the individual actors work together as a group. While Pross suggested that a bureaucratic organizational capacity was important, my research indicates that what is important is that the lobbying group be cohesive and have a support network.

The childcare community: organized and cohesive but non-bureaucratic

Government organization is bureaucratic and it is important for a group to be able to establish sufficient organizational skills in order to function with government. Pross (1986) argues that a group which fails to organize effectively may win ‘a battle’ but not a ‘major campaign’. I would agree with him on this point:
the Vancouver childcare community has managed to organize effectively and acts as a relatively cohesive unit, unlike the childcare communities in the municipalities. While individual daycare operators do win individual zoning or siting battles in the municipalities, these are not 'major campaigns' in which childcare policy gets onto the municipal agenda in a more comprehensive and longterm manner.

However, while Pross argues that those organizational skills are developed within a bureaucratic structure, this does not appear to be the case with respect to the Vancouver childcare community. For example, a look at the Daycare Information Offices established by the Provincial Government in the 1970's indicates that while these offices operated initially in a similar manner in Vancouver and North Vancouver, Vancouver's office evolved differently. It became more entrenched, yet its structure did not become bureaucratic. It's mandate continued to expand, and it became a focal point for daycare services, programs, and inquiries. Members of the childcare community recognized its importance in holding their community and services together.

When provincial funds were discontinued in 1981, the childcare community lobbied to get municipal help, and the City of Vancouver responded with financial help to maintain the services provided through the Daycare Information office. During the early 1980's, this office received funding assistance from both the City of Vancouver and other sources. In 1987, the organization expanded into the Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre operated by the
Westcoast Child Care Umbrella Resource and Support Society, and as its 'umbrella' name suggests, it functions to place the various arms of the childcare community in close working contact with each other.

'Westcoast' is a co-ordinated facility run by a non-profit society and shares resources, support services, and housing with several organizations involved in the field of childcare. These organizations provide a variety of programs and services, such as daycare information services, early childhood multicultural services, a resource library, volunteer co-ordinating, and support services for families. Other organizations are also part of the resource centre facility. These include the Children's Services Employees Union of B.C., Early Childhood Educators of B.C., the B.C. Daycare Action Coalition, the School Age Child Care Association, and Western Canada Family Daycare Association of B.C. Westcoast is funded by three levels of government: the federal Child Care Initiatives Fund, Health and Welfare Canada, the Province of British Columbia, and the City of Vancouver.

This co-ordinated approach aims at reducing problems of funding, space, operating capabilities, isolation, low visibility within the community, and staffing while attempting to build a strong childcare infrastructure. They try to improve public awareness and provide support for the care and education of children. Joint activities, programs, and projects occur rather than a bureaucratic chain of command.

Cohesiveness is crucial in terms of a group making an impact.
on government policy. Westcoast and its predecessors have had the organizational capacity to function within a government bureaucracy. The Vancouver childcare community is cohesive as this Vancouver councillor pointed out:

The (childcare) advocacy group in Vancouver, it is surprising what a cohesive group they are... they have a very good network here (VIP).

They are easily identifiable and have earned a degree of legitimation within government circles. At the same time, they are not bureaucratic.

The Westcoast Child Care Centre, and its predecessor Information Daycare, have not only provided increased awareness of members of the childcare community to each other, but City Council is much more aware of them as a viable entity to speak for the childcare community as a whole. A former Vancouver councillor noted:

We put in the Daycare Information. We got funding, we knew it was a good idea but we had no way to get the money for it. We didn't have a source except city council and they said we don't fund daycare. But we did go to council, and we did get the money, and so we got it established. And once we got funding so that we could hire someone, we could put that into operation. Now that became a focal point, and if I am trying to think of a name or whatever, I can always phone X, everyone can phone X (VIP).

Daycare information services in North Vancouver evolved differently from Vancouver. While daycare information was initiated in a similar fashion to Vancouver -- by Family Services, augmented by the Junior League of Vancouver and the United Way -- it did not acquire the same organizational capacity to withstand the upcoming cutbacks. In 1973, the (NDP) provincial government
established a Daycare Information office there, similar to Vancouver's Daycare Information office, which provided information on subsidies, childcare services, group daycare, and training and support for family daycare. This was an umbrella organization which was linked to the volunteer service sector and with child abuse services. In general, it appeared to be a focal point of the community. In 1981, during a recession which brought staffing and budget cuts, the (Socred) provincial government took over the Daycare Information Office and, by 1984, it did not exist anymore. Their consulting arm and subsidies team became part of a Ministry resource team, and support for unlicensed Family Daycare, which had been doing social assessments, was lost.

Municipal government involvement throughout this time period was minimal, and the childcare community, which was active through the Daycare Information Office, was not cohesive enough to withstand the early 1980's cutbacks, nor was it inclined to go to the Municipal Council for support. A North Vancouver government employee who had been active in the childcare community commented:

The municipal council has only been involved when a particular center goes to council for help, usually for land or zoning... but it was very ad hoc, only when an immediate need was there (N1C).

In North Vancouver, those active in the childcare field, and parents needing childcare services, tended to act in a more individualistic fashion. At no time did the childcare community join forces to request municipal help, and eventually the Daycare Information office folded.

The municipal council was not involved; it was not their
jurisdiction and there was not a very loud interest in daycare in general. People are just interested when they need it -- for a short time. People here have the money to make their own arrangements. Private nanny arrangements are common... the Daycare Information Office died without a whimper (NIC).

Being organized and cohesive is important not only for a lobbying group to be able to approach government collectively, but it is also important for government officials to be able to identify the group and particular spokespersons. Pross (1986) suggests that a flow of information between members of the public and the government lends legitimacy to the policy formulated. This research supports that premise.

In Vancouver, several members of the childcare community, as well as government employees involved with childcare, participated on both major task forces (the 1983 Task Force on Daycare and the 1988 Task Force on Children). They were named to the task forces in a co-operative move between councillors and members of the childcare community. These two councillors commented on the interplay between community groups and themselves:

I said what I want to do is take all those people who are the experts in the community and just pick their brains, the ones who have for 20 years been working with kids -- they know what’s wrong, they know where the gaps are, where the overlaps are. What I need for them to do is to brainstorm and then tell me what to do... the last thing you need is a politician running things (V3P).

The main people were community group people that I went to. I knew the people who were working in the field and the people who were doing the advocacy work. I knew them from all sorts of contacts and from previously working with people... you know the people who speak out at meetings (V1P).

Once a group has gone through the initial struggle of being
recognized by government, they are in an advantageous position to reap more benefits. This has certainly been the case with the Vancouver childcare community and its evolution over the past 20 years. Participating with a government not only helps to get the group's wishes onto the political agenda, but it helps to create more cohesion in that particular community in general. Working together increases the awareness to mutual interests and leads to an increase in informal social ties as well. A social planner commented:

The same group that was on (the 1983) task force was pretty much on (the 1988) task force. We're sort of long time friends -- Langara, all the folks over at licensing and UBC. It's a pretty small community and, I think, cohesive (V4C).

According to Pross (1986), it is not uncommon for the different sectors of an issue-oriented group to have separate concerns and/or strategies. This is the case with respect to childcare. Group daycare has certain concerns such as affordable buildings and sites; family daycare has their own associations which deal with problems such as zoning and licensing requirements; preschool teachers are another distinct section; special needs workers come at the issue from yet another angle and often deal with different government ministries from any of the others.

However, one of the important points which separates the Vancouver childcare community and the municipalities is, once again, that overall cohesiveness as a group (i.e., the ability of the different sectors to have a common bond and support each other's cause). I will use Richmond as an example of a
municipality with several disconnected sectors within the childcare community. A councillor noted:

They’re not organized enough to be effective vis-a-vis other groups. Daycare operators and childcare educators haven’t been active here... it has not been a cohesive group (R1P).

A similar view was put forward by a member of the childcare community and a community service worker:

The Richmond Community Services Advisory Council set up a childcare committee as a subcommittee because there is no group that speaks out on childcare. There is the ECE (Early Childhood Educators) which is mainly preschool operators, but they tend to not come to meetings in the evenings... which is unfortunate because we don’t get much input from them. There is a Family Daycare Society but they again are providers of childcare and don’t do much in the way of advocacy work (R1C).

There have been many attempts to organize the childcare community but nothing successful until a couple months ago there was a workshop organized to get them all together (R2C).

Comments from a variety of people associated with the childcare issue (councillors, advocates, and municipal employees) seem to concur that the organizational capacity of a group is important in order to be effective with government. The variation lies in the form of organization. While Pross (1986) has suggested a bureaucratic structure, this research suggests a more horizontal (or 'umbrella') structure. Certainly the cohesiveness of a group is important, and, once a lobbying community is able to establish sufficient rapport to approach government, they are often in a position to reap more benefits. A support network is part of being cohesive, and it improves communication both within the group and between the group and government. However, cohesiveness does
not necessarily imply bureaucratic. In Greater Vancouver, the pattern adopted by two municipalities (North Vancouver and Richmond) indicates a more individualistic approach, rather than the united action of Vancouver.

Ideology, the status quo, and political will

A theme which developed during interviews, and which appears to be an important part of the childcare issue (here as well as elsewhere), concerns the patriarchal family. The ideology of the family affects how people formulate the problem and how they seek solutions. Many comments during interviews suggested that the lure of the traditional family is much stronger in the four municipalities than it has been in Vancouver.

These ideological concerns relate to arguments raised in other research concerning the importance of the status quo. That is, those issues which challenge the status quo (and ideology is part of the status quo) are frequently met with resistance from those in decision making positions.

The municipalities ('suburbs') tend to have more homogeneous cross-sections of people (each has a smaller range of socio-economic positions). Higher average family incomes occur in the municipalities (particularly North Vancouver and Richmond), as already noted. According to many of those interviewed, along with this homogeneity of socio-economic position comes a more conservative attitude -- an attitude which includes a much stronger focus on traditional family values and perspectives. For example, a municipal employee active in North Vancouver for several years,
who has been involved with the childcare issue there, commented:

Suburban women tend to be non-confrontational, though they are very involved with implementing social services in general. Why are they non-confrontational? Well, money, a conservative attitude... and also a lack of political tradition... Suburbs are ‘non-organic’ — they’re really a narrow cross-section of people... The idea is women and children at home and men come home from the office later. Even when suburban women are employed, they often identify themselves as homemakers (e.g., I know women who go home to make lunch for their children when other arrangements could be made) (N2C).

Family tradition and the idea that problems should be solved within the parameters of the individual family have been strong in Richmond. In the traditional family, women raise children: it is their private responsibility. The municipal council has been very reluctant to get involved with childcare: "they don’t want to get stuck with it" (R1P). A community worker who has been active in the implementation of a variety of community services commented:

The prevailing attitude here is that women should stay home and look after the kids... By the late 1970’s, childcare arrangements were being made in a very haphazard fashion. Arrangements were often dreadful and parents were desperate. They often didn’t see what was going on at the childcare place (R2C).

On a similar vein, a member of the childcare community commented:

The assumption of many people and a number of the people on council is that childcare is a family responsibility... That view was quite strongly expressed at one of the Community Services Advisory Council meetings. It was the individual family’s responsibility and people should stay home and raise their children. Others had made a sacrifice and today’s society is very materialistic and wanting luxury items (R1C).

It is not only a private family responsibility, it is a middle class value that only those in very needy situations should receive
assistance. Getting council involved would be asking them to step beyond this individualistic pattern of thinking, and so far the incentive does not appear to be there.

One of the first steps in any kind of change is awareness, recognition that a problem exists. While Richmond has had two studies during the 1980's to examine the childcare issue, action has not followed the recommendations. Some of those interviewed commented on the inaction:

The attitude in Richmond is that Richmond doesn't have the same problems as other places, like Vancouver for instance (R1C).

The community at large is just waking up to the issue that 'two working parents' is here to stay (R2C).

Langley also holds strong traditional values and aims at an "idealized way of raising children." Childcare has not become an issue. Instead, as one councillor noted, "water and sewer are the burning issues here" (L1P). Recently, a public workshop was held to examine people's concerns and expectations for the future of the municipality. This councillor commented:

You won't find one thing about daycare. These are the concerns they have: public meetings, retain rural characteristics... preserve the lilacs and pussywillows... no Surrey urban sprawl, a balance of rural and urban, this is what they want Langley to be in 20 years. They want green space; they want heritage buildings; adequate education, parks, facilities; liberty, freedom, and justice for all; a nursery -- but the kind where you grow tomatoes... We're going to have a big questionnaire go out but childcare won't be on that either. I would put it on if someone wanted it but no-one is saying anything (L1P).

Another Langley councillor commented on the "aura of motherhood" and that one of the issues that Langley has become
involved with is pregnant teenagers.

Naturally, you do the best because, quite frankly, you realize that yes, we can help this kid. Whether she keeps the baby or not is not the issue. The issue is if you can get her educated, then one, she might be able to migrate into the work force and become self-sufficient and maintain her child or she might decide on a more liberal education. (She might think) I love this kid so much, maybe the best thing for this kid is to put him or her into an adopted home, and maybe I’ll mature. It’s a very large sphere (L2P).

This comment fits well with the general history of childcare policy (that childcare should be provided to 'help out' in very needy situations).

Besides being associated with needy situations, childcare is also associated with traditional roles -- and maleness is a major concern in getting past the barriers of traditional roles. Boys playing with dolls and men becoming involved with raising children are not 'male' activities. One councillor commented that it is not advisable for boys to learn a 'mothering' role while young. While both mothering and fathering are important, the roles are different, and it is mothers who perform the traditional nurturing role. Homophobic fears were connected with crossing the unwritten guidelines for appropriate behaviour.

There's some discussion... if little Johnny plays with dolls in some predominant manner, is this going to affect little Johnny as far as being effeminate, will this affect him down the road? How many of the homosexuals that you end up with, is it because of some pattern in their childhood? I really don't know (L2P).

In Surrey, as in the other municipalities, childcare has not become an issue which affects men in the same way as women. Those interviewed all agreed that a large number of women are in the
labour force and that other forms of care are necessary. In spite of that, the belief in mothers caring for children remains strong for some. One councillor commented:

Mother is the best for our childcare. I don’t think anyone will argue with that, when they’re young up to four or five. Few people will argue with that. But there isn’t too much choice now. Thirty years ago there was a choice. Now a great many people are working today while their children are young, and they don’t really want to... Group care is a symptom of decay in our society (S2P).

Building on the mother-is-best argument is the idea that women are ‘innately’ more suitable to providing a nurturant family environment.

I say thank God there is a difference between men and women. There is a difference in mental texture if you want to call it. I’ve always gotten along well with women, I enjoy women, but I’m glad I’m a man, but I appreciate women and I appreciate that they’re different. They’re more caring. It’s not all culture because it runs through all cultures, so it can’t be any specific culture... it’s got to be innate rather than cultural (S2P).

With men not as affected by the issue as much as women, the issue lacks the force it would otherwise have, as this councillor argued:

If more men were given control or given responsibility for daycare, I believe it would be more of an issue. I feel very strongly that when men take on an issue, it becomes resolved (S1P).

Among those interviewed were representatives from two groups who promote traditional family values and childcare performed by at-home mothers. While neither of those groups have been directly involved with lobbying at the local level in any of the municipalities examined or in Vancouver, they have been involved
with lobbying at the provincial and federal levels.

These groups share much of the patriarchal viewpoint of government (as suggested by comments in this chapter). For example, they agree that government should differentiate between those who 'need' daycare and those who 'want' daycare. The government should be a safety net: not everyone is entitled to receive assistance regardless of income. Instead, childcare is the right and responsibility of the family. Government help should be non-intrusive and should not be showing preference for substitute care. At the same time, they argue that mothers want to stay home, as this comment indicates:

Women nurse their babies and so therefore they're more suitable for doing childcare. In our experience, women usually want to stay home. The mothers are the ones who want to stay home. It's free choice (S2C).

In Vancouver, where childcare has become an issue at the council level, the debate has broadened and moved away from the idea that the best environment is mother at home. That is no longer a major part of the debate as this former councillor noted:

If you talk to young parents, the whole thing is changing. They aren't going to enter into a big debate about whether we should have daycare. It just isn't a debate. It's more my generation who start to say the mother should be at home. I think the more it is discussed in these public forums, the more it becomes a community/society issue and I think that's good (VIP).

At the same time, militant action is rare in all the locations examined. I think one of the reasons for this lack of militancy is the ideological hold of the family. Women often feel guilt around the issue of childcare and family: the 'good mother'
role is not only hard to meet, it is also very hard to break, as one member of the childcare community commented.

I think there are a lot of people, even working in the field, that still have those really deep down feelings of being judged because of their own kids. That growth still hasn’t happened... I’m not sure that they’re even comfortable even talking with each other about the daycare that their children are in. You know, ‘I put my child in a daycare that I really don’t like’. It’s tough for a mother to admit to other people. The sad thing is if they would just admit it, everybody else would be saying ‘you know I’m in the same boat, what can we do about it?’ (L1C).

Political will is important in getting past this strong ideological barrier. It is involved in discussions which get bogged down in details such as jurisdictional disputes. While jurisdiction or money often appear to be the problem, I think the problem goes much deeper. This idea was supported by a Vancouver childcare advocate who has been active provincially and in the Greater Vancouver area:

I have consistently taken the point of view that the issue is a political one, not a structural one. One ministry needs to be given the responsibility to deliver to the citizens of this province a comprehensive childcare system. Once there is that political will, it doesn’t matter where you put it... It’s more important to get the political will than to name the ministry (V2C).

When traditional ways change, the ideas which held those patterns in place do not automatically change with them. While those ideas are often not articulated, they greatly affect how the issue gets formulated and what change occurs. A sufficient degree of political will is needed to pass effective legislation in spite of prevailing attitudes. The final section of this chapter deals with the manner in which the issue has been formulated in order to
get effective results (keeping in mind concerns such as patriarchal ideology). While childcare is an issue which particularly affects the lives of women, arguments put forward by childcare advocates do not necessarily make that connection.

Ownership of the issue: who is affected by the issue?

One way in which getting the childcare issue onto a political agenda differs from a 'non-women's' issue such as an environmental issue is that environmental problems are less selective in their effect on people. Problems of air pollutants, carcinogenic food additives, or a hole in the ozone layer directly affect a much broader cross-section of the population. The childcare issue, on the other hand, affects women and children in a more pronounced fashion. Perhaps, then, the increasingly high profile which the environment is getting is at least partially the result of more people being directly affected. At the same time, it is important that those in important decision making positions are particularly affected, as they are capable of giving the issue prominence.

For some time, farmworkers have been concerned about the health effects of handling pesticides, but this has not necessarily resulted in their concerns getting on political agendas. Now that a much broader cross-section of people see themselves as directly affected by pesticides and other carcinogenic substances (through food consumption), it has become a more important concern for the general population and subsequently for government. This issue, which was not getting a large political profile while it was a farmworkers' issue, now is on government agendas as an
environmental issue. Those who make decisions which would give the issue prominence are among those directly affected.

Women are like farmworkers in terms of their political influence and economic viability. Getting their concerns out into the open and acted upon is a slow process. One of the factors which will likely increase the importance of a women's issue is having it personally affect a broader cross-section of people (men as well as women), and in particular having it affect those in influential positions.

Several members of the childcare community, as well as councillors in the municipalities and Vancouver, mentioned the increased activity around employer sponsored daycare. Corporate employers (a male-dominated and high SES group) are becoming increasingly aware of and responsive to the issue of childcare as they lose the valuable productivity of highly trained and qualified female employees.

According to a recent research project sponsored through Douglas College and the University of B.C., more employers now realize that the lack of suitable daycare services is costing them money and valued employees (Ebner, 1990). The childcare issue is now becoming the concern of an influential male elite who are in a position to make decisions with financial ramifications. Because the issue is directly affecting them, they are beginning to see it as important enough to act on, at least in those situations which directly affect them and company profit.

What is particularly important for this discussion is that
action on the childcare issue occurs when it affects those in influential positions, either the politicians who control the public purse or the employers who are losing money due to their employees' lack of daycare services. With the former, the well-being of children in the community has become a primary focus, and with the latter, the economic well-being of major employers has become central.

In both situations, the problems occur during hours of employment. Childcare activists who pressure local governments argue that both parents are now employed and that the interests and rights of children to proper care must be upheld. Employers are becoming interested in an effort to reduce their losses resulting from employee (largely female and middle class) absenteeism and 'unreliability'. The overall division of labour within the family, and the inherent responsibility which women hold for family well-being, are not part of the debate.

Childcare "ownership"

My examination of the childcare issue in the Greater Vancouver area indicates that while the presence of women councillors is important to carry the childcare issue along, the issue does not get viewed as a women's issue by either those working in the childcare community or by councillors. In fact, one of the themes which emerged quite strongly and consistently in interviews of both childcare advocates and councillors is that childcare is not, and should not, be seen as a women's issue.

Instead, childcare is viewed (by those interviewed) in a
variety of ways: as a family issue, a parent issue, a community need, a social issue, a class issue, or a 'people problem'. Two Vancouver councillors who have been active in bringing the childcare issue forward to council argued:

I think it got on the Vancouver political agenda because it wasn't a women's issue... we have a very male, paternalistic, patriarchal system and they'd like to think often that it's a family issue... so put it on the agenda as a family issue. It's women who usually do the work to get it there ... but it wasn't seen as a women's issue in Vancouver. It wasn't the women's movement out there screaming about it (V4P).

Childcare will never get funded, it will never get attention, and it will never be adequately dealt with until we can convince people that this is not a women's issue. You'll get these nice little pats on the head -- and you go out with your $1,000 and you just do something terrific -- it just gets no validity as long as it's a women's issue (V3P).

Members of the Vancouver childcare community also indicate that childcare should not be seen as a women's issue.

It is very important that childcare be seen not as a women's issue, but as a family issue, for people to solve, not just women. I don't see NAC's involvement in childcare as necessarily advantageous (V1C).

Childcare as a women's issue -- that's a pile of garbage. Women don't make babies on their own... Childcare is a human or a people's issue (V3C).

Women bear the responsibility, adjust their lives, and are affected most by the lack of adequate service... it falls on the shoulders of mothers... but at the council level, childcare is less and less a women's issue (V2C).

The childcare issue, however, is generally raised by women. Those politicians who get involved have generally been women. Caring for children has not been a 'male' responsibility. It has not been a 'male' issue, as this former Vancouver councillor commented:
Previously, the childcare issue was always raised by women. Now, there are a few men who might say something. Before they would have been considered 'sissy'... I think women's issues in general don't get much attention from men (V5P).

Just as caring for children has been a female responsibility, the political work surrounding childcare has also largely been done by women -- although, for pragmatic reasons, women's role is often not acknowledged.

The fact that it is a women's issue and is not allowed to be articulated that way is a bit of a concern to me. I get sick of women doing all the work and getting none of the credit... but this is politics (V4P).

Those who become vocal about the childcare issue are usually personally affected (e.g., employers now becoming interested because of the impact of employee absenteeism). With more families having two wage earners, more fathers are becoming affected by the issue than previously. Those fathers who do get involved are often vocal about the issue. A Surrey government worker who has been active in the provision of social services, and who has observed the evolution of childcare needs, commented:

I've noticed for the last four years that more men are involved. More fathers are looking for daycare. They're eager to learn... and they're also more vocal than women (S1C).

Getting the childcare issue debated openly and acted on depends to a certain degree on the involvement of people who have economic or political power and who see childcare as an important issue. It has not been advantageous for childcare advocates to connect the issue with women (i.e., to make childcare a 'women's issue').
Summary

Several major themes emerged during interviews with those involved with the childcare issue in Greater Vancouver, and they help to explain why childcare has received more attention in Vancouver than in the four municipalities. These factors include the political climate, access to government, the cohesiveness of a group, patriarchal ideology, and ownership of the issue.

Access to government includes more than one aspect: municipal jurisdiction, key politicians, and basic lobbying skills. Municipal government is much more accessible to people than either the provincial or federal governments. At the same time, major policy decisions are made outside council and childcare advocates must work alongside politicians to see effective policy brought forward. In Vancouver, key politicians who have felt strongly about childcare have been important in carrying the issue along. They have vocalized the ideas of childcare advocates and have done the behind the scenes work. These 'bulldog' politicians have most often been women. However, the mere presence of women on council does not guarantee that a women's issue, such as childcare, will get addressed.

Understanding the political process is fundamental to any advocacy work. This includes knowing how to lobby, who to target, and when to act. The Vancouver childcare community has acted as a cohesive unit, though not a bureaucracy. Its members have established a support network, now centered in the Westcoast facility. The action on childcare, which has taken place in
Vancouver over the past two decades, has occurred in several small cumulative steps.

Patriarchal ideology has been much stronger in the four municipalities than in Vancouver. Suburbs tend to be more homogeneous and hold more conservative attitudes. The prevailing attitude in some areas is that women should stay home and look after the children: others aim at an idealized way of raising children. Political will is important in getting past this ideological hold.

In Vancouver, childcare has not been viewed as a women’s issue by either those doing advocacy work or the politicians. Instead, childcare has been seen as a family issue, a community need, or a social issue. The women’s movement has not been involved. Ownership of the issue includes not only being affected by the issue, but being in a position to have influence on decision making.
Chapter Five
Conclusion

While my research has focused on one particular women's issue (the childcare issue) at one particular level of government (the municipal level), I have made an effort to tie these findings into a broader picture of the politics of women's issues. I think that there is much overlap not only in jurisdiction but in perception of the issue and problems surrounding the issue.

The ability of childcare advocates to lobby effectively includes having access to government decision makers. This has previously been argued by Pross (1986), Burt (1988), and others. Many of those I interviewed indicated that the municipal level is the easiest of the three levels of government to access. Not only are local politicians easier to contact, it is relatively straightforward to make a presentation to council: on the other hand, M.L.A.'s and M.P.'s are often absent from their constituencies and private citizen presentations are not possible in the Legislature or House of Commons. However, many major decisions on childcare (e.g., funding and overall policy formation) occur at the senior levels of government. Therefore, using local politicians to your best advantage means not only convincing them that childcare relates to their municipal mandate, but using them as liaisons with senior government officials. The Vancouver childcare community has maintained contact with local politicians and has also used them as intermediaries with the provincial government.

Another aspect of access to government concerns the support of
individual politicians who will vocalize your concerns and in general facilitate the political process. In Vancouver's case, it has been female politicians who have carried the childcare issue along. Since the presence of female politicians is an important consideration in lobbying effectively, it is relevant that the representation of women in local government is greater overall than at either the provincial or federal levels of government (Brodie, 1985; Maille, 1990). Currently, the average number of seats held by women on Greater Vancouver councils is about 23 percent, while at the same time women represent only 13.2 percent of Members of Parliament and 14.4 percent of British Columbia's M.L.A.'s (Maille, 1990).

While those councillors who have carried the childcare issue along have almost invariably been women, the presence of women does not ensure action. Overall, the average percentage of seats held by female councillors in Vancouver has been greater than in the municipalities, but not significantly greater than two of the municipalities. We must also consider that in only 10 of the past 21 years has the percentage of women on council been greater in Vancouver than in the municipalities. Also, during the mid-1970's when Vancouver council responded more emphatically to provincial government childcare incentives, three municipal councils had a greater female representation than Vancouver. These findings suggest that other variables need also to be considered.

Several researchers suggest that basic lobbying skills (e.g., professionalism, well prepared briefs and presentations, and the
ability to identify the proper jurisdiction) are essential in order to be heard by government (Pross, 1986; Costain, 1988; Boneparth and Stoper, 1988; Gelb and Palley, 1979; Kome, 1989). Being a cohesive, organized, and identifiable group makes it easier to be part of negotiations, to receive grants, to counter external pressures, and to make incremental changes. At the same time, having a support group helps make a community more cohesive.

The Vancouver childcare community has many of these lobbying skills, while those involved with childcare in the municipalities do not. The Vancouver community is cohesive and operates under an umbrella organization which places those involved in the childcare community not only in close physical proximity, but also the problems and ideas of one sector of the community in close contact with other sectors. Many of them have been involved with the two task forces and have worked together on briefs and brought forward ideas for public discussion. Communication between the childcare community and specific members of council has been ongoing; this has helped to establish a steady process of incremental change. However, these are not sufficient conditions to see the issue get addressed.

While Pross (1986) argues that organizational capacity is the primary measure of effective lobbying (political success), these findings only partially support that premise. He suggests that both institutionalization and bureaucratization are important determinants of effective lobbying. The Vancouver childcare
community has become institutionalized: a Children’s Advocate position has been created, childcare services have been organized from a central facility, and continuous contact is maintained between members of the childcare community and members of council. However, bureaucratization does not appear to be a primary consideration in measuring the success of this particular lobby. Certainly, good organization is important and an understanding of the political process is essential, but ‘Westcoast’, the focal point of the Vancouver childcare community, is not a bureaucracy.

Several researchers suggest that policy which challenges accepted gender roles or which differs from basic values finds little success on government agendas (Burt, 1988, 1990; Boneparth and Stoper, 1988; Gelb and Palley, 1979). The demands of women have the potential of undermining the ideological hold of traditional family values, accepted gender roles, and capitalist economics. As a result, they often meet with strong resistance not only from politicians but also from government bureaucrats, as suggested by Findlay (1987). Childcare is one of those issues which challenge the status quo.

The discussion in my interviews suggests that Vancouver women are less expected to be at-home mothers than in the municipalities. This is not to say that women’s employment rate is greater in Vancouver; indeed it is not. However, much less emphasis is placed on the argument that at-home mothering is essential for the well-being of children or that childcare is strictly a ‘family’ responsibility. In the municipalities, those arguments carry more
weight.

Of course, we must then ask ourselves: how often is 'family' responsibility a euphemism for 'women's' responsibility in much the same way that 'family' violence is a euphemism for wife battery? The language we use frequently obscures the issue we are trying to address. In the case of childcare being a family responsibility, much more evidence exists to suggest that it is the woman's responsibility to care for children, to alter her career or job plans to accommodate children, and to do most of the work to maintain the household.

Rather than confronting the ideological problems, advocates for women's issues often find greater success by following a circuitous route. For example, in abortion politics in Canada, United States, and Western Europe, government delaying tactics, redefining of the issue, and 'free' votes in Parliament are common. To circumvent these problems, abortion advocates have used private members bills and challenges at the Supreme Court level. With childcare, arguments for government involvement have generally centered around child welfare or (earlier this century) lowering infant mortality rates.

This research supports the argument that claims which fit into the parameters of welfare state ideology find more success on political agendas (Peattie and Rein, 1983). When the established policy of both federal and provincial governments (which provide the bulk of funding) has been to assist in the provision of childcare primarily in situations of severe economic need or
parental neglect, or to 'enable' single mothers to get off welfare assistance, it is significant that more poverty exists in Vancouver (i.e., a higher percentage of low income families and single parent families). This is not to say that no poverty exists elsewhere: indeed, Surrey closely follows Vancouver in its percentage of low income families.

Involvement in the welfare of children has been a well-established concern of government since the nineteenth century in Canada, Britain, and other Western European countries. It fits well with welfare state programs. However, the welfare of women has not yet found such a good fit. This becomes particularly relevant when considering how the childcare issue has been argued.

In Vancouver's case, the childcare issue is seen as a children's issue, a family issue, or a community issue: it is not a women's issue. Arguing for the welfare of children and keeping women out of the picture is an effective and pragmatic political decision. It keeps the issue from being controversial and brings it into the realm of what councillors and the public more readily identify as an issue to be dealt with in the public world. It is no longer the problem of the private individual in the family setting. This ties in with other findings that show that legislation on women's issues more often focuses on children or family needs, not women's needs (Burt, Code, and Dorney, 1988).

Promoting childcare based on the welfare of children and families, while sidestepping its connection with women, has been quite effective to date. This is the same pattern adopted by the
Day Nurseries and Daycare Parents Association in Toronto following World War II. However, the Toronto lobby became vulnerable to red baiting and ideological attack against aberrant family forms (against those outside the traditional nuclear family of male breadwinner and female home provider). Women who were employed out of choice, rather than from being destitute, were not eligible for any government assistance and became accused of being chiselers (Prentice, 1989).

This line of argument has been more prominent in the municipalities (that childcare should not be provided for the chiselers who want to be employed for frivolous materialistic reasons). Government assistance in the provision of childcare should only be for those who need it, not for those who want it. Of course, who are 'those' people? Women -- and no-one (in the municipalities or Vancouver) is suggesting that the family and employers reorganize so that fathers stay home to look after the children. 'Family' responsibility has a particular implication for women.

Quality affordable childcare does directly benefit the children whose parents are employed, as reports and publications by childcare advocates have pointed out (e.g. Gallagher Ross, 1978; Phillips, 1987). It also reduces community problems emanating from a lack of proper care for children. Government response to this line of argument, which calls for public involvement with childcare to alleviate extreme poverty or to reduce parental neglect, has been more favorable.
Besides tying in with child protection laws and welfare state ideology, the childcare issue in Vancouver has also fit well with the local political climate which has addressed other social issues with respect to liveable cities (e.g., poverty, housing, and neighbourhoods). The Vancouver childcare community has been able to build onto an established tradition. This is not to say that no social issues exist in the municipalities, but that social issues have for some time been within the acceptable parameters of government in Vancouver.

Vancouver’s timing with respect to the childcare issue has also been more favourable. Vancouver opted into a cost sharing program with the provincial government between 1972-1975 -- the most optimum funding time in the past 20 years. This covered capital costs in establishing several daycare centers (which comprise a large portion of childcare expenditures). Since then, provincial funding for childcare has plummetted in terms of the purchasing power of the funds available (see Chapter Three).

None of the local governments examined, including Vancouver and the four district municipalities, have the mandate for the overall provision of social services, as was repeatedly pointed out in interviews. However, both the Vancouver Charter and the Municipal Act (under which the municipalities are governed) provide sufficient leeway for at least some involvement of local government in social issues, and the issue of childcare in particular, if they wish to do so (see Chapter Three). Not having the mandate (which was often cited during interviews as a reason for municipalities
not to become involved) is at least partially a scapegoat. I suggest that the decision to become involved has much more to do with political will than it has to do with the legislative guidelines.

While the pattern followed in Vancouver, where children have become the focus, has pragmatic value, it does not challenge the traditional division of labour. That division is particularly problematic and unfortunately has not become part of the debate. While women benefit from the availability of quality childcare services during their hours of employment (through relief from anxiety, guilt, and total economic responsibility), their reproductive role has become weakness rather than resource, as suggested by Armstrong and Armstrong (1986). The expectation that women will continue to take responsibility for childcare, in spite of their increased labour force participation, puts them at a disadvantage in terms of employment and political participation.

Women are not full functioning members of society with the social, economic, and political power to determine the direction of their own lives. Because of economic dependence, a heavy workload, patriarchal ideology, and a misogynist environment, women (as a group) have very little political weight. Getting women's issues out into the formal political world, where they can be addressed by government, involves confronting the same barriers. Because those barriers (such as patriarchal ideology) are quite formidable, it is not surprising when a particular lobby uses a less confrontational approach when one is available. The Vancouver childcare community
(following long established welfare state patterns) has argued the childcare issue based on the welfare of children, while carefully avoiding its association with women. To date, this has been an effective political decision.

Suggestions for future research

Theories about the condition of women's lives have tended to argue about the parts of women's lives — their employment status, or their domestic work, or their political lives. What we need at this point is research which incorporates the various aspects of women's lives and which views women in their totality. With respect to politics, this means incorporating more research on women's issues which are central to the problem of women's subordinate position vis-a-vis men, and which affect the entry of women themselves onto the political stage. Understanding why so many fewer women hold political office than men has a lot to do with understanding the childcare issue, reproductive freedom, pay equity, and patriarchal ideology.

Putting the childcare issue onto the political agenda at the local level is important: this is the grassroots level from which the problems of childcare emanate. Municipal governments are much more accessible to most people. However, the major decisions concerning government involvement and government funding occur at the provincial and federal levels of government. This research suggests that more understanding is needed concerning putting the issue onto the political agendas of senior governments. While
those groups which advocate childcare within the traditional family setting are largely absent at the local level, they are much more strongly present at the provincial and federal levels (e.g., R.E.A.L. Women).

Connecting the grassroots problems of childcare to senior levels of government in order to put the childcare issue onto those political agendas is a major challenge for the future. While the presence of women in politics decreases as the level of government increases, the importance of women's issues increases with level of government: it is the senior levels of government where the major decisions and most far-reaching impacts are made. That is where the major lobbying effort on childcare and other women's issues will have to take place.
Footnotes

Chapter One


Chapter Four


5. Ibid., 4.
ABBOTT, Ruth K., and R.A. YOUNG.

ARIES, Philippe.

ARMSTRONG, Pat, and Hugh ARMSTRONG.

BARRETT, Michele, and Mary MCINTOSH.

BENSTON, Margaret.

BISH, Robert L.

BLACK, Dawn.

BLACK, Naomi.

BONEPARTH, Ellen, ed.

BONEPARTH, Ellen, and Emily STOPER, eds.

BRODIE, M. Janine.
BRUEGEL, Irene.

BURT, Sandra.

BURT, Sandra, Lorraine CODE, and Lindsay DORNEY, ed.

COHAN, Alvin.

COHEN, Yolande, ed.

COHEN, Yolande, and Michela De Giorgio.

CONNELLY, Patricia.

COOK, Katie.
COSTAIN, Anne N.

DONOVAN, Josephine.

DE BEAUVIOR, Simone.

EICHLER, Margrit.

ENGELS, Frederick.

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JAGGAR, Alison M.  

JENSON, Jane.  

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MAILLE, Chantal

MARSH, David, and Joanna CHAMBERS.

MARONEY, Heather Jon, and Meg LUXTON.

MCLAREN, Angus, and Arlene Tigar MCLAREN.

MCLAREN, Arlene Tigar.

MEISSNER, Martin, E.W. HUMPHREYS, S.M. MEIS, and W.J. SCHEU.
MEISSNER, Martin.

MERRITT, Sharyne.

NORGREN, Jill.

OUTSHOORN, Joyce.

PATEMAN, Carole.

PEATTIE, Lisa, and Martin REIN.

PHILLIPS, Deborah, ed.

PIERSON, Ruth Roach.

PIERSON, Ruth Roach and Marjorie COHEN.
POWER, Marilyn.

PRENTICE, Susan.

PROSS, A. Paul.

SCHULZ, Pat.

SCHWARTZ COWAN, Ruth.

SECCOMBE, Wally.

SILTANEN, Janet, and Michelle STANWORTH.

SMITH, Dorothy.

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APPENDIX A

TABLES
Table 1

Women's Labour Force Participation Rates in Canada, 1901-1989 *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Labour Force Participation Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>14.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>16.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>17.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>19.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>22.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>24.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>29.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>39.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>51.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>57.9 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2
Licensed Childcare Spaces, 1990, by City/Municipality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City/District Municipality</th>
<th>Number of Licensed Childcare Spaces *</th>
<th>Children 14 and under **</th>
<th>Ave. Number of Children per space</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vancouver</td>
<td>8,180</td>
<td>60,225</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(City of)</td>
<td>7.36</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Vancouver DM</td>
<td>1,660</td>
<td>13,495</td>
<td>8.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richmond DM</td>
<td>1,786</td>
<td>22,145</td>
<td>12.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrey DM</td>
<td>2,105</td>
<td>44,005</td>
<td>20.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langley DM</td>
<td>729</td>
<td>13,740</td>
<td>18.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Figures are obtained from the Community Care Facilities Licensing Board in Vancouver and the Licensing Officers of the Health Departments in North Vancouver, Richmond, Surrey, and Langley.

** Figures are taken from the 1986 Canadian Census data. Although licensed childcare spaces are generally applicable to ages 12 and under, the closest applicable census category is 14 and under. Therefore, average number of spaces per child are approximate.
### Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Childcare Subsidies Current $</th>
<th>Other Expenditures Current $</th>
<th>Total Expend. Current $</th>
<th>Total Expend. 1970 Constant $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970/71</td>
<td>1,194,000</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>1,194,000</td>
<td>1,194,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971/72</td>
<td>1,534,000</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>1,534,000</td>
<td>1,469,588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972/73</td>
<td>4,267,000</td>
<td>509,724</td>
<td>4,776,724</td>
<td>4,234,827</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973/74</td>
<td>10,198,000</td>
<td>1,259,256</td>
<td>11,457,256</td>
<td>9,157,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974/75</td>
<td>12,865,779</td>
<td>882,567+</td>
<td>13,748,346</td>
<td>9,917,610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975/76</td>
<td>10,854,971</td>
<td>36,865+</td>
<td>10,891,836</td>
<td>7,307,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976/77</td>
<td>10,308,265</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>10,308,265</td>
<td>6,406,609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977/78</td>
<td>11,011,945</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>11,011,945</td>
<td>6,288,288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978/79</td>
<td>12,612,677</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>12,612,677</td>
<td>6,595,477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979/80</td>
<td>14,884,153</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>14,884,153</td>
<td>7,065,368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980/81</td>
<td>16,903,220</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>16,903,220</td>
<td>7,133,159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981/82</td>
<td>16,684,275</td>
<td>4,397,593</td>
<td>21,081,868</td>
<td>8,029,376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983/84</td>
<td>19,287,794</td>
<td>5,847,093</td>
<td>25,134,887</td>
<td>8,672,872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984/85</td>
<td>18,665,316</td>
<td>5,928,126</td>
<td>24,593,442</td>
<td>8,159,145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985/86</td>
<td>19,598,295</td>
<td>5,868,278</td>
<td>25,466,573</td>
<td>8,116,989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986/87</td>
<td>21,772,586</td>
<td>6,216,544</td>
<td>27,989,130</td>
<td>8,546,607</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987/88</td>
<td>28,935,749</td>
<td>7,587,877</td>
<td>36,523,626</td>
<td>10,718,336</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: B.C. Provincial Government Reports

* Other Expenditures include capital and equipment grants (72-73 to 75-76); daycare support programs (83-84 to 87-88) which varied from $180.8 thousand to $209.6 thousand; special needs daycare (1981-82 to 1987-88) which varied from $4.4 million to $7.2 million; and emergency repair/relocation/start-up/expansion grants which varied from $86.9 thousand to $395 thousand.

+ The Annual Report notes expenditures under Special Needs Care but no amounts are given.
Table 4

1984 Per Capita Revenues by City/Municipality *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City/District Municipality</th>
<th>Total Revenue $</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Per Capita Revenue $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vancouver (City of)</td>
<td>314,097,375</td>
<td>414,281</td>
<td>755.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Vancouver DM</td>
<td>28,320,174</td>
<td>65,367</td>
<td>433.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richmond DM</td>
<td>55,688,829</td>
<td>96,154</td>
<td>579.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrey DM</td>
<td>66,984,784</td>
<td>147,138</td>
<td>455.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langley DM</td>
<td>18,981,475</td>
<td>44,617</td>
<td>425.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Revenue Figures are taken from Municipal Statistics, Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Victoria, 1984. Population figures are taken from 1981 Canadian Census Data. Therefore, 1984 per capita revenue figures are approximate.
### Table 5

#### Women’s Labour Force Participation Rates

*By Year and City/Municipality*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vancouver (City of)</td>
<td>47.6%</td>
<td>49.9%</td>
<td>57.3%</td>
<td>60.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Vancouver DM</td>
<td>41.9%</td>
<td>49.6%</td>
<td>60.4%</td>
<td>63.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richmond DM</td>
<td>44.1%</td>
<td>49.9%</td>
<td>60.2%</td>
<td>63.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrey DM</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
<td>42.2%</td>
<td>52.8%</td>
<td>55.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langley DM</td>
<td>36.1%</td>
<td>44.0%</td>
<td>51.0%</td>
<td>56.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Canadian Census Data figures.
Table 6

Family Median Incomes by Year and City/Municipality *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vancouver (City of)</td>
<td>9,029</td>
<td>25,525</td>
<td>32,428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Vancouver DM</td>
<td>12,479</td>
<td>36,567</td>
<td>48,153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richmond DM</td>
<td>10,231</td>
<td>30,922</td>
<td>40,506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrey DM</td>
<td>8,785</td>
<td>26,229</td>
<td>33,861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langley DM</td>
<td>8,093</td>
<td>27,711</td>
<td>36,463</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Canadian Census Data figures. ‘Family’ refers to husband-wife or single parent families with children at home.
Table 7  
Incidence of Low Income Families  
by Year and City/Municipality *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vancouver (City of)</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Vancouver DM</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richmond DM</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrey DM</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langley DM</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Canadian Census Data figures. 'Families' refer to husband-wife or single parent families with children at home.

** Data not available for 1971.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vancouver (City of)</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Vancouver DM</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richmond DM</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrey DM</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langley DM</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Figures derived from Canadian Census Data using figures given for number of Single Parent Families and number of Husband/Wife Families with children at home.

** Data not available for 1971.
Table 9
Age Composition: Children 14 years and Under as a Percentage of the Total Population by Year and City/Municipality *

<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vancouver (City of)</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
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<td>21.2%</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richmond DM</td>
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<td>22.0%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrey DM</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
<td>24.7%</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langley DM</td>
<td>31.5%</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Figures derived from Canadian Census Data.
Table 10
Composition of Councils by Sex, Year, and City/Municipality,
Showing Seats Held by Female Councillors as a Percentage
of the Total Number of Seats Available

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Vancouver City</th>
<th>N.Vancouver DM</th>
<th>Richmond DM</th>
<th>Surrey DM</th>
<th>Langley DM</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>27.3</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
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<td>28.6</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>42.9</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>14.3</td>
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<td>42.9</td>
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<td>11.1</td>
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<td>11.1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>28.6</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ave. % Seats Held by Female Councillors 1970-1990
25.5%  23.1%  14.8%  19.2%  10.9%

Current (1990) Ave. % Seats Held by Female Councillors: 22.9%