BEING IN WOMEN'S LIBERATION:
A CASE STUDY IN SOCIAL CHANGE

by

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ABSTRACT

This is a participant observation study of two Women's Liberation groups in Vancouver. Using a symbolic interactionist perspective in the methodology and analysis, the study documents the interplay among the Movement ideology, the nature of regular participation in the two differently constituted and structured groups, and the individual biographies of the participants. This conceptualization of social interaction as a multidimensional process is traced through the founders' accounts of the formation of their respective groups, through all participants' accounts of their early awareness and "adoption" of Movement ideology, and then through the women's descriptions of the ways in which they continued to apply the liberationist and egalitarian goals of the Movement to their individual life situations. There is further analysis of change in their primary relationships, their friendship patterns, and their paid-work/career situations. There is analysis of both regularities and similarities of their applications of the ideology and of exceptions and individual peculiarities of experience.

In the part on foundation of the groups and women's early awareness of the ideology, it is shown that women became interested in Women's Liberation only as she began to view some aspect of her life as a woman as problematic. This creation/adoption of the concept that being a woman is a social artifact allowed for consideration of change in that situation. Women who felt that they were not subject to the problems most other women were heir to were interested in changing the world to improve it for those
other women. They were characterized as "altruistic" in their attitude toward the role of the Movement in their lives. The founders of both groups were of this orientation. Most other women experienced problems in their lives revolving around their perceived inadequacy and discomfort in the performance of some aspects of their role as women. They utilized the Movement ideology to find explanations of their situation and guidelines for change. They sought out a group with the specific goal of finding like-minded, supportive women with whom they could share their experiences. They were characterized as "pragmatic" in their expectations toward the role of the Movement in their lives.

In their primary relationships not all women defined their situation as problematic. Most did, however, and proceeded along ideologically informed lines to bring about increased egalitarianism in terms of the emotional/sexual relationship, and sharing of tasks within the household. There is concomitant freedom for the woman to pursue her growing range of new political and social interests. The women most free to assert their new-found expectations of equality are either married (with or without children) or women involved with a man but living on their own. The woman living with a man is least able to attempt significant change in the relationship. This is attributed to the high degree of social structural insecurity inherent in this kind of relationship.

Friendship patterns are typically changed in that women are now the most valued source of friends, the number of friends is increased, and the friendship-forming initiative is now taken by the woman herself as she selects largely from Movement women she is meeting. Friendship was shown,
too, to play a crucial role in group formation as the already existent work-based friendship networks among the founders greatly facilitated the initial organization tasks. The role of friendship in the movement of later joiners into their groups was shown in that virtually all of these women first ventured into a group in company of a friend who was already a participant in a group and with whom they had been discussing issues raised in the Movement ideology.

In the paid-work world, women were shown to have moved toward a rejection of carrying out stereotypically "womanly" behaviour that called for older women to be motherly and supportive of male co-workers and for younger women to be non-threatening and flirtatious. They refused to accept traditional definitions of the nature and importance of hierarchies and associated mystification of the "expert" role. This meant that women in relatively powerless positions openly questioned authority. Women with power over others (i.e., teachers) tried to restructure their teaching techniques and their subject matter to reflect their new beliefs in the role of women and of their refusal to embody a part of a hierarchy in their professional work. All of the women extended their concept of sisterhood to anyone who was receptive to this attitude at work. Some did so at considerable job risk.

Selected perspectives on the symbolic construction of social reality (Berger, 1967; Blumer, 1962; Cicourel, 1967-70; Mead, 1934; Schutz, 1964b) and on the nature of social movement beginnings (Freeman, 1973) are substantiated as it is clear that women construct and re-construct their biographies and everyday lives in accordance with their use of the interpretations of their situation provided by the ideology, and with the example and support of others similarly engaged.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part I

Introduction

Chapter I

A. Review of the Literature, Including Definitions of Social Movements, a Discussion of the Scope of the Literature and Its Relevance for This Study

B. The Meaning of Ideology and a Statement of Its Use


Chapter II

Methodology

Chapter III

The Formation of the Two Vancouver Groups: Their History and Character

Introductory Remarks

A. Formation and Structure of the Groups

   Women's Caucus

   UBC Group

   Discussion
TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B. A Description of the Type of Women's Liberation Activities Engaged in and Time Spent on Them</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter IV

Early Awareness of and Participation in the Women's Liberation Movement

Introductory Remarks

A. Early Awareness of Founders

Women's Caucus

UBC Group

B. Early Awareness of Later Joiners and Their Move Into a Group

Women's Caucus

UBC Group

C. Discussion of Becoming Aware of the Women's Liberation Ideology

Part II Sustaining Change

Introductory Remarks

Chapter V

Change in Primary Relationships - In Marriage With Children, Lovers (Past, Present, and Future)

Introductory Remarks

A. The Role of Women's Liberation for Women in Situations Seen as Non-Problematic

154

154

158

158

162
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B. The Role of Women's Liberation in Situations Seen as Problematic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Past Relationships Only Seen as Problematic - Women Involved with a New Person in a Non-Problematic Relationship</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Persons Not in a Relationship - Past and Present Situations are Problematic</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Continuing Relationships Seen as Problematic</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Living With the Lover</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Marriage</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Housewives</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Discussion</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter VI

Friendship and Change

Introduction

A. 1) a) Definition of Friendship - Women's Caucus

b) Definition of Friendship - UBC Group

2) a) Situated Aspects of Friendship - Women's Caucus

b) Situated Aspects of Friendship - UBC Group

3) a) Role of Friendship in Strategy of the Women's Liberation Movement - Women's Caucus

b) Role of Friendship in Strategy of the Women's Liberation Movement - UBC Group

B. Relation of Friendships to Continuing Participation in Respective Groups

Discussion
### TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter VII</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work and Change</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Expectations</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) &quot;Womanly&quot; Behaviour</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Women's Caucus</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) UBC Group</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Expectations to Accept a Male-Dominated Hierarchy and Dealing with Notions of Expertise</td>
<td>259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Women's Caucus</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) UBC Group</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Separation of Work from Private Life</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Women's Caucus</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(No UBC Group)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Relationships with Female Co-Workers</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Women's Caucus</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) UBC Group</td>
<td>278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>278</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter VIII</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Bibliography | 290 |
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My thanks to Gale LePitre for undertaking the typing of the final draft under what must be the usual, annoyingly short time allowance, and to Susan Christopherson and Michele Cholette for typing earlier drafts.

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Dedication

To my Father,

George Butler Stephenson,

who made this work

both necessary and possible.
PART I

INTRODUCTION

This is a study of the nature of participation in a social movement. The social movement treated here is the Women's Liberation Movement and I am examining what it was like to be a regular participant in two Women's Liberation groups in Vancouver in the late 1960's and early 1970's. The regular participants included both founders of the two groups studied and those who joined along the way.

The study is social psychological in orientation, in that it attempts to draw together for analytical purposes an awareness of the interplay between the uniqueness of the individual and the social structural regularities of social life that persons share (like language, socialization into roles, economic opportunity and limitations, expectations as to the use of time and space, etc.) (Swanson, 1952).

It will be apparent throughout this study that within the social psychological orientation, the conceptual perspective used is that of symbolic interaction (Mead, 1934; Blumer, 1966, 1969). This means that human action is seen as volitional, and as arising out of self-conscious, reflective intelligence. This intelligence, or mind, is used by persons in constructing their social reality. They do not respond to stimuli according to pre-existing psychological structures (Secord and Backman, 1974: 5). Neither is it inevitable that the apparent presence of certain social institutions as opposed to others (concrete institutions like
schools, or abstract ones like socio-economic class) will result in one kind of behaviour rather than another.

Only insofar as people come to incorporate these institutions - with the values and behaviours appropriate to them - into their own domains of relevance (Berger and Luckmann, 1967) do these social objects achieve reality. Then only will they serve as bases upon which people act (Blumer, 1957: 147). (See Cassirer, 1946: 38 passim; Edelman, 1971: 66 passim; for discussion of the role of language in the creation of shared meanings especially in social/political change.)

It is precisely this reality-constructing behaviour of people, this process of discerning and/or creating salient features of the social world and then interpreting them in ways that are meaningful to the actor herself and to the other(s) that makes the analysis of human action in a social context so challenging.

In this study of the nature of participation in part of the Women's Liberation Movement, the analysis will be directed to understanding how people make relevant to their everyday lives ideas about the nature of the woman's role in society. I mean ideas in two ways: ideas that are already available due to historic circumstances; and ideas that the women create or synthesize from those available and from their understanding of their own personal biographies. They do this as they make decisions about how to lead their lives in accordance with their continually evolving interpretations of the interrelationship among three sets of concepts: 1) ideological expectations and 2) personal assessment of self and 3) of
their "objective" situation. It is in this synthesizing process that we see the construction of social reality.

The construction, of course, goes on continuously in people's lives, over the whole range of their experience. The focus of this study is on the women's experience relative to a particular social movement, rather than on an account of the evolution of a particular social movement. To understand the interpretations and situations made available to the women by the Women's Liberation Movement it will be necessary to describe 1) what social movements are; 2) what ideologies are and how they are used; and 3) how the ideological and structural character of the Women's Liberation Movement evolved in general. Since this is an ethnographic account of the social psychological aspects of participation in two local Women's Liberation groups, the presentation of material on the literature about social movements and the Women's Liberation Movement in particular should be seen as setting the broader sociological context against which this case study of participation is cast.

Then we will move from this description to 4) an account of the experience in Women's Liberation of the women studied. This begins with the history of the two Women's Liberation groups in Vancouver as recounted by the founders of each. Then there will be 5) discussions of the continuing application of the Women's Liberation ideology in the women's on-going lives. This last comprises the bulk of this study.
CHAPTER I

A. Social Movements - Review of the Literature, Including Definitions of Social Movements, Scope of the Literature, Relevance of the Literature for this Study

Any definition of social movements asserts at least that it is behaviour performed by a group, or interrelated groups, of people who have some continued knowledge of and exposure to each other over time while engaged in the relevant activities (that is, they are not a mob, acting together only once); that the activities are goal-oriented and most importantly, these goals are toward changing existing social relationships, thought, behaviour and/or conditions - or toward preventing change from happening/continuing; that these groups utilize organizational principles - division of labour, development of strategies, etc. - to achieve their goals; that the groups are relatively wide in geographic scope.

There are more or less elaborate definitions of social movements available, but each did have the above features as central to their statement (Banks, 1972; Heberle, 1951; King, 1956; Lindenfeld 1968; McLaughlin, 1969; Turner and Killian, 1957; J. Wilson, 1973). What is of particular importance in this composite definition of a social movement, and what distinguishes this form of behaviour from other forms of collective, goal-oriented action, is that the social movement's goal-orientation is toward change (King, 1956: 25). That is, they "promote a change or resist a change in the society or group of which it is part" (Turner and Killian, 1957: 308).
As will be discussed in some detail later, the programme of change is expressed in the ideology - and the structure and tactics of the social movement emerge from the canons of the ideology.

While the literature on social movements shows considerable overlap - even near-consensus - on the definition of a social movement, there is variation to the descriptive or explanatory work that students of social movements pursue. That work may be broken down into three major types of effort: 1) descriptions of social movements; 2) explanations of their historical origins, including treatment of the motivation of the founders and/or later joiners of social movements, and their social-structural evolution; and 3) attempts to discern and describe what qualities a social movement must have to succeed. These will be discussed in slightly more detail.

The review of the literature that follows is largely descriptive in nature. That is, material has been selected for its typicality. It is not being used to point out relative strengths and weaknesses in terms of the concerns of this study. This is because - as I will elaborate at the conclusion of this section - it is evident that the literature is of limited use for understanding the processes of participation in the Women's Liberation Movement. Some of the descriptive categories discussed here will be drawn upon later, however, to show how the Women's Liberation Movement would "fit" the certain existent descriptive categories of structure or motivation of participants, etc. This is not the essential purpose of the study, however, so critical attention is not focussed on these descriptive
systems. As they are widely accepted concepts - for what seem to be valid empirically-based reasons - I am not critically evaluating them here. They have withstood the test of time.

1) Description of Social Movements

Some of the descriptions are of a general nature, in that they attempt to construct typologies of social movements. I will describe briefly a series of the more frequently cited typologies of social movements. Here we find Blumer's work about general and specific social movements, and expressive movements. The first deal with the relationship between the stage of development of a social movement and its ideological and structural evolution, and the last with the form of expression of "tensions". The first two involve attempts to change the world for the better, but the general social movement is distinguished from the specific by the relative lack of clarity of goal-orientation and organizational complexity and coherence that grows as goal-specifically increases. As, or if, the generalized dissatisfaction of enough people begins to achieve specific coherence of goal articulation and they as a group begin to evolve the organizational strategies for change that are implied by the goals, then a specific social movement arises.

The expressive social movement does not seek societal change in the same explicitly goal-directed sense. This kind of a social movement is rather the locus of expressive behaviour which is an end in itself. The effect this has on society is in its eventual awareness of the aggregate of
personal, individual changes which the participants have gone through (like religious conversion, "life-style" fads, etc.) (1957: 199-220).

While Blumer based his typology upon the development of ideological articulation, structural complexity, and goal-orientation, B. Wilson's typology has as its "central criterion the sect's response to the world." So he has a seven-cell typology: 1) conversionist; 2) revolutionary; 3) introversionist; 4) manipulationist; 5) thaumaturgical; 6) reformist; and 7) utopian (1969: 363).

Turner and Killian have a typology based upon the "two broad directions in which the program and ideology may point..., toward changing individuals directly or toward changing institutions." It is a three-part typology: value-oriented, power-oriented, and participation-oriented (1957, pt. 4).

Smelser's dichotomization of social movements into value-oriented or norm-oriented ones, focuses on the role of the ideology in the origin of a movement and in its role upon the organization, strategy and membership commitment (1963).

A work that includes both a typology of social movements and a full-scale ethnographic description of a movement is Aberle's on the peyote religion (Aberle, 1966). His typology is based on the kind and amount of

* Though he is speaking of what he calls sects, it is clear that the groups - where they exist in numbers of interrelated units - qualify equally well as parts of a social movement(s). The ambiguity of terminology in social movement literature, and the great range of group characteristics - especially in the size and geographic scope of the groups - subsumed under "social movement" essays, texts, etc., is quite noticeable. I am including any theoretical study if the data are based in groups which fit the definition of a social movement as I stated it earlier. Here Wilson's "sects" definitely fit.
change the group undergoes. The amount of change cannot be judged or predicted in terms that are absolute in relation to the amount that the observer might feel is called for (or not called for). Rather, the deprivation (spiritual or material) that the movement seeks to redress is very much a relative matter, one relative to what was experienced before, to what was perceived as well-being before, presently and in future. Aberle's typology divides movements into transformative, reformative, redemptive, and alternative ones.

Ethnographic descriptions of social movements are legion. Sociology and anthropology abound with them. Listing some is not useful here, Note simply should be taken of the fact that much of the literature on social movements is ethnographic studies.

2) Origin Studies - Historical and Structural Evolution; Motivation of Founders and Later Joiners

**Historical Preconditions to Social Movements**

People who try to account for the rise of social movements are uniform in their agreement that the essential precondition is discontent. Wilson says that the origins are social discomfort and unrest which begin to crystalize into protest groups (1973: introduction). Cameron says that "Social change which is not accidental comes in response to dissatisfaction" (1966: 10). Toch states that there must be a problem situation for a group of persons and that, "typically this would occur when society fails to provide adequately for their needs or aspirations" (1965: 26-27).

A more elaborate statement about the existence of discontent is from King, who sets out four "Circumstances Conducive to Movements". They
all contribute to group discontent and they are what he calls cultural confusion, social heterogeneity, individual discontent, and mass communication. The last can also contribute to easing the person's "desire for meaning" by providing varying explanations and solutions for the very confusion and discontent that is brought on by media itself, as a part of the complexity of modern society (1956: 13-24).

A few of the authors are cognizant of the fact that talking about discontent as though it could be objectively determined - or as though its existence alone will result in a social movement - is a doubtful enterprise. Davies, for instance, relies on Marx and Engels' assertion that our desires and pleasures - and thus our evaluation of what satisfies them - are of a "social..., relative nature" (Marx and Engels, 1955, ed.: 94), and thus cannot be measured by some absolute standard. Davies goes on to say that no one who is utterly impoverished is likely to have the energy or time to take action for social change. The discontent that results in social movements will arise where some basic needs for social, legal, and material well-being are expected to be met, and at the same time where there is "a persistent, unrelenting threat to the satisfaction of these needs...." (1962: 89).

As for the realization that discontent alone will not necessarily bring about social movements, Cameron has a clear formulation of some "special conditions which do lead to the formation of social movements." In his conceptualization people definitely are seen as interpreters, as actors in their situation. He lists three conditions: that people consciously recognize their discontent and share these realizations with others; that they
must believe that they can alter their situation for the better; and that they must live in circumstances where getting together, organizing themselves and others, is both possible and possibly effective (1966: 10). In connection with that last condition, there is an interesting discussion of the role of temporal flexibility in allowing participation in political activities, and of time taken as an indicator of commitment to social action groups in W.E. Moore (1963: 168).

There is a similar description of the role of subjective awareness of discontent in the work of Schutz on attempts by groups to gain equality. He speaks of how the chance to gain equality can exist only if the person is aware of the existence of the chance, sees this chance as possible and relevant to his interests, and sees himself as capable of fulfilling the new expectations (1955: 272 in 1964 ed.).

**Structural Characteristics of Social Movements**

The structural characteristics of social movements follow from the fact that it is discontent that is to be ameliorated or eradicated, and from the fact that they are seen as arising in increasingly complex societies where individuals have less and less understanding of and control over what is happening in their lives.

The initial problem of the discontented is to make their discontent known. In a mass society doing this on any useful scale requires considerable thought and effort on the part of many people. This requires organization, which means some division of labour (always assumed to be hierarchical in nature, in every work I read), coordination of efforts,
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Other motivational accounts are congruent with the above. Lofland and Stark describe a group that would fit King's description very well, stating that these conditions result in an essential percondition of considerable, enduring psychological tension (1965: 179 passim). The aforementioned desire for meaning (Cantril, 1941: 59) also fits in an idea of the consequence of this kind of psychological state. If a set of ideas or a social movement (as a group embodying these ideas) comes to be seen as offering a meaningful interpretation of what is going on in the person's life and if the means suggested for changing the world are amenable to the person's idea of what is possible for them, then there is a founding/joining of a social movement.

King also provides a set of categories to describe in terms of motivation what the composition of a social movement will be. The largest group will be "goal-oriented". They share the interpretations of their situation available in the ideology and they agree with the goals. They expect to benefit from the changes they expect the movement will bring about. King does not consider that the "benefits" may equally exist during the process of belonging to the movement. The second, and much less numerous, type is what he calls "utilitarian". They do not share the others' belief in the ideology of the movement. They have joined in order to attain quite unrelated goals - like being able to manipulate the movement in order to affect personal enemies, or to use the movement contacts for material gain, etc. The third type is the "altruistic". They are believers as are the goal-oriented members, but unlike them they are not seeking personal
help for any difficulties in their own lives. Rather, they are most concerned with the problems of others. They are "extreme idealists" (1956: 64-65).

The first and last of these categories will be referred to later in this work.

3) Qualities Required for a "Successful" Social Movement

Of course, any description of what a social movement is, implies what qualities the author thinks a social movement must have in order to succeed. But not all work is explicitly evaluative in nature. It may be more descriptive, or more explanatory - as is true for most of the work mentioned so far.

Success as used here will mean that significant numbers of relevant people have incorporated the beliefs and behaviours that follow from these beliefs offered by a particular social movement.

This survey of the literature indicates that people evaluating the success of social movements assume that success depends upon 1) an ideology that "fits" the "objective" world; 2) social organization that can get the work of the movement done without diluting the doctrine irreparably; 3) inter- and intra-group relations that serve to reinforce belief in the ideology.

In the literature ideologies are defined variously as the statement of the goals of a group and/or a programme for its tactics, or a rationale or justification for the group's beliefs and actions (Banks, 1972; Bittner, 1963; King, 1956; Toch, 1965). Sometimes they are seen as
unchanging articulations of purpose (Toch), and other times they are seen as of necessity being changeable - as the members strive to have the ideology "fit" the complexities and ambiguities of the social world (Banks, Bittner). So, Banks says that a social movement has "not one ideology but many, at different points in time and by reference to the various groups of which it [the social movement] is composed and the various publics to which it addresses its appeals" (1972: 40).

Or Barrington Moore says that the ideology "undergoes modification and elaboration in response to the vicissitudes of the organization's life" (1968: 338). He also clearly thinks of ideology as a belief statement that is for him not only somehow separate from its creators, thus he reifies ideology, but that it is to be evaluated "according" to its congruity with some sort of "objective" truth. He goes so far as to say that any ideology or "charter myth", as he calls it, "contains a mixture of truth and propaganda" (1958: 338). This distinction is not useful to the approach taken here. (See following section on ideology as it is defined and used for this study.)

We can see the same problem of dualism of ideology and truth in the work of Simmons (1964), Festinger (1958), and Lindenfeld (1968: 321, 459). Again these are not relevant to the study undertaken here.

Turning to the second quality a social movement is seen to require for success - an organizational structure that allows the movement's work to be done without the belief system being diluted irrepairably - we see considerable concern with the necessity of a division of labour, and with the source of authority for the ideology and its purveyors.
That there must be division of labour in any human endeavour is an accepted proposition — whatever school of thought one follows (see Mead, 1934, for a discussion of the role of division of labour and coordination of effort that all social life requires). But division of labour for most students of social movements clearly means one of a hierarchical sort. Even though there have been "leveling" movements over and over throughout history, the sociological literature that offers theoretical treatment of the division of labour in social movements shows that the authors find it inconceivable that tasks can be accomplished without leadership — of a hierarchical sort — charismatic or institutionalized (Banks, 1972; Bittner, 1963; King, 1956; O'Day, 1963; Simmons, 1964).

The role of the source of authority or legitimacy of the belief system is linked to the success of the social movement in recruitment and maintenance of membership. Again, as noted in the previous page on the treatment of ideology, ideology must be "believable" and that means it has to have some special quality in order to be persuasive — in the face of possibly contradicting "facts". Thus, we have Bittner saying that "a sense of charisma must attach itself to the movement and its need." Where the movement is secular this special quality of authority can come from the extreme or atypical life stories of the ideologues. For example, they formulated their creed through their years of solitary confinement in the jails of the opposition.

He also speaks to social relationships among believers: they should be confined to the converted whenever possible, and they should be convinced that no part of their lives is irrelevant to the claims of the
ideology (1963: 305-308). Bittner and Simmons point out that believers should be able to use their ideology to interpret seemingly contradictory evidence as evidence that in fact confirms the truths of the movement (Bittner, 1963: 308; Simmons, 1964: 192).

Relevance of the Literature for This Study

What the literature describes - albeit usually from a positivistic standpoint, is that there are three basic components of a social movement - an ideology, the persons involved, and the social organization of the group. But we cannot learn from this literature how these features are experienced - are *constructed* - by the participants. There is the exception of statements by Cameron, Schutz and Blumer that construction *must* go on. But a literature that projects an ideology as somehow separate from the on-going life of its creators, that assumes hierarchy when there is in the Women's Liberation Movement a deliberate repudiation of leadership, *plus* the participant's making a creative attempt to deal differently with problems of work accomplishment, a literature that reflects above all a most static view of social action cannot be very helpful.

I arrived at this conclusion in this research, but this problem is confirmed by Jo Freeman in her report of her work where she studied the origins of the whole Women's Liberation Movement in the United States. She was asking questions which included: "From where do the people come who make up the initial, organizing cadre of a movement? How do they come together, and how do they come to share a similar view of the world in circumstances which compel them to political action?" If to that is added the
questions I am additionally asking: How did they continue their participation? What was it like for them? What were the ideology and groups in their lives? then I find myself in total agreement with Freeman when she says: "The sociological literature is not of much help" (Freeman, 1973: 30 passim).

In fact, it is Jo Freeman who provides one of the few discussions of social movements that is useful to an analysis of the construction of social relationship among people who are attempting to bring about social change. She provides three "propositions" about the preconditions for the formation of a social movement. They are "the need for a pre-existing communications network or infrastructure within the social base of a movement; the network must be 'co-optable' to the new ideas of the incipient movement", which means the people involved are "like-minded" in relation to the issues raised in the ideology: there have to be some "precipitants" in an already strained situation (1973: 32-33).

It will be shown in the section on the history of the two groups studied here that her work is applicable to this study. But for the most part the traditional literature on social movements cannot be drawn upon greatly.

B. The Meaning of Ideology in the Study and a Statement of Its Use

Our beliefs about the world give our world what coherence it may have - coherence in terms of a workable sense of cause and effect and at least a hint of some guidelines for action that follow from that sense. Where these "ordering" beliefs are related to the interests or purposes of
a person or groups they are ideological. This is not to distinguish them from other beliefs as being always and only self-serving or exploitive, nor is it to distinguish them as somehow necessarily biased, distorted, or false. This is the typical portrayal of ideology in social movement literature, as noted above. Rather, ideological beliefs are ones developed and applied as persons continue to search for a meaning in and impact upon their world. That is their life-long problem. Useful action is their interest. As Harris puts it, ideology is "locate[d]...as the language of the purposes of a social group....Ideologies are not disguised descriptions of the world, but rather real descriptions of the world from a particular viewpoint" (1968: 27).

Thus, ideologies should be seen as socially constructed, problem-oriented systems of interrelated beliefs. From a symbolic interactionist viewpoint, it is obvious that ideologies as a language are not static, that they do not exist somehow separately from those who develop them. Further, it is meaningless to try to understand the relationship of ideology and social change by trying to evaluate the ideology in terms of notions of objective fact and the congruency of these beliefs to these "facts".

To say an ideology is the expression of the purposes of a group is to put the development of the ideology in a context of the subjective experience of a problematic situation. There is certain interpretive work to be done by persons, who comprise social groups, who are in problematic situations if the situation is to change. The expression of the purposes of the group - its ideology - must accomplish the following:
1) There must be a description of what is a problem for them.

2) Along with this must be a statement as to who is adversely affected by the problem. This will provide the criteria for recruitment to the group - in this case, to the social movement.

3) There must be an explanation(s) for the existence of the problem.

4) Following from the above comes the set of goals and strategies which the participants will act on according to how they make these relevant to their lives.

These goals are values and they serve as criteria against which the believer can evaluate her own actions and those of others in reference to what she has come to see as the problems of the groups the ideology is referring to. The use of an ideology is a dynamic process. Social movements exist only as long as the participants engage in action to bring about their goals. No distinction is being made here between physical, to-the-barricades action and the action that is the use of ideas to lead to the use of other ideas. This understanding of the history and character of a problem must be utilized to make decisions about what to do in the present and future. The ideology provides principles, moral principles, which a person can apply from situation to situation, as an individual and as a participant in group decision-making.

These moral goals, these values, must be stated as principles, as generalized statements that can be used as assumptions upon which reasoning is based, because only principles are everywhere applicable. Only they can allow continuity of interpretation and direction. Only the application of
principles can reveal to the person what was/is "really" going on for them and for others - in terms of the world view given by the ideology.

The goals of the movement will not be equally relevant to each participant. The ideology provides a full range of goals and the person must choose from them those seen as most relevant to her own biographical situation. She may also add ideological interpretations that may then be taken up by others. They must plan individual and group strategy accordingly.

The social structures that are built up in accordance with the goals and strategies developed by the participants are often, though not always, innovative ones, rather divergent from the typical patterns of social interaction. This is not surprising, considering that the interest of the participants is effecting social change. This constructive characteristic of social movements is pointed out in the literature of social movements by Banks in one of the relatively few considerations of processes of social change, where he says that it must be recognized that:

from time to time men have invented social techniques and exploited them, much in the same fashion as they have material techniques. Indeed, only when it is admitted that such social technologies are possible can social movements be regarded as creators rather than creatures of change. (1972: 15)

Stating the characteristics of an ideology and that the specific content is drawn upon by the believer does not fully account for how the ideology is used by persons. Its use would be a progressive matter temporally, where first people become aware of the ideology, first use it in their interpretations of the world and then continue to do so.
Again, I am not suggesting that the ideology exists "out there" apart from the people who devise and carry it, but there was a time when the ideology had not yet been constructed to a degree that it could be shared. But in the latter 1960's this did begin to occur among some women. In each individual believer's life there was a time when the ideology had no relevance to them, was not used by them, so it is important to understand how this changed. I will next list five ways that people use the ideology, as it was characterized above. Then there will be a discussion of the conditions under which this use occurs.

How an Ideology is Used: By Individuals

1) People use an ideology to make sense out of their biographies.

As Berger (1963: 61) says:

There are some cases...where the reinterpretation of the past is part of a deliberate, fully conscious and intellectually interpreted activity. This happens when the reinterpretation of one's biography is one aspect of conversion to a new religious or ideological Weltanschaung, that is a universal meaning system within which one's biography can be located.

What is being described here is a special case of the biography-casting that we do throughout our lives, when faced with new social environments - new people, new ideas, new circumstances or statuses. Biography-casting occurs: "As we remember the past, we reconstruct it in accordance with our present ideas of what is important and what is not" (1963: 56). Berger suggests that this reinterpretation process "has roots in a deep, human need for order, purpose and intelligibility" (1963: 63). Further, when this reinterpretation is being done according to "a meaning system that
is capable of ordering the scattered data of one's biography [the experience] is liberating and profoundly satisfying" (1963: 63).

This is a study of the special case of reinterpretation, the one that can take place through adoption of the ideology of a social movement. The new interpretations are reinforced, as will be discussed, through participation with others similarly convinced.

2) The ideology provides, similarly, a means of interpreting the person's present life. We all must identify the features of our lives which will facilitate action along lines that are desirable to us, and identify features which are problematic for us. In either case we must take action to sustain, or change those features.

The ideology can provide the rules or criteria for making these identifications, for discerning what is salient, what is changeable, what is to be maintained.

3) At the same time that the ideology provides interpretive schemes for the past and present, it links the present with the future. No conscious actions are made without consideration of their future reception, of the possible range of effects upon the future. Ideologies vary, of course, in the concreteness with which actual strategies for change are stated. But at the very least a statement of what is wrong with the world and the people in it carries strong implications of how it should be different in future. It is then for the person in a social movement to negotiate with her own self and with others over the specifics of what the individuals and the movement must do to come closer to their goals.
In some social movements - such as consumer protection - there is not an expectation that the "negotiations" will be on an individual level, between the various selves a person has. Energy is spent among members to plot out how they can present themselves as a group to negotiate with a relatively defined counter-group (manufacturers, government agencies, etc.).

But the Women's Liberation Movement ideology is addressed to change on more levels. One is on the internal/psychological level where a person tries to achieve a unified self as a strong self-respecting woman. Another is on the personal interactive level, where relationships with others meet ideologically derived standards of equality.

A third level is where thought and energy are used to formulate action as a Women's Liberation group, per se. This may be in terms of local actions, or in terms of developing and maintaining an identity and programme for the movement as a whole -- as nebulous a collectivity as this may seem.

Thus, this ideology expresses the expectation that women will leave no part of their future thoughts and actions unrelated to the principles and goals of the Women's Liberation Movement. The pervasiveness of the expectations for women that come through the ideology is one of the important characteristics of the Women's Liberation Movement that distinguishes it from most other social movements. This pervasiveness will be shown throughout the study.

Each of these three previous functions of the ideology can be seen in terms of an elongated-over-time application of what Cicourel calls the "retrospective-prospective sense of occurrence" (1970: 149). What is
being made sense of is an accumulation of behavioural phenomena, as whole
life-times are being made sense of. So people don't use the ideology just
to "predict" the next moment on the basis of shared understandings of con­
sequence - given their understanding of present and past moments and who is
participating in them. They use it to understand who the whole person,
the whole society made up of persons was, is, and hence likely will be.
They not only are "'discovering' that earlier remarks or incidents now
clarify a present utterance," but they discover that the earlier person
has led to the current one and a certain range of notions and actions is
thus likely in future.

4) This retrospective-prospective sense-making can be done by
the believer upon the biographies of others. One can determine why someone
is as they are by constructing what must have gone on - or not occurred -
in the others' lives to make them what they are today. This construction
gives clues as to how the other is likely to behave in future.

This process helps the believer distinguish between "us" and
"them", or potential us and them. This is possible because the ideological
statements as to who shares the problem ("us") and who brought on, maintains,
or exacerbates the problem are available to the believer. "They" do not
share the values of the Movement, and will be more likely to be found having
certain characteristics. Whether the construction requires identifying
marks such as class, sex, education, psychological type, or statements of
belief and attitude - or a combination of these - will depend upon the
range of information available to the constructors and upon the parts of
the ideology they are using in understanding their own life. But the process of identifying through use of the ideology who can share their world view and who cannot remain the same.

5) The use of the ideology by individuals or in joint action, as Blumer describes it, can provide material for the believer's need to confirm the accuracy of the claims of the ideology. That is, a person acting in ways seen as consonant with the stance of the ideology must face responses to this action. The response may be from their self only, or from others present, or from others in imaginative projection. The ideology provides a means of categorizing these responses in its own terms. So a "friendly" response "proves" the correctness and efficiency of the ideology; i.e., sisterhood can exist, we're right and right-thinking people can't help but realize it after awhile. An oppositional response demonstrates the correctness of the stance, in that it can be maintained that people with vested interests, say, will of course, resist change. J.L. Simmon's article on "Maintaining a Deviant Identity" provides an excellent description of this kind of process, of the folding back upon itself of the interpretations one makes of what is going on (1964).

How an Ideology is Used: Appropriate Conditions

It follows from the nature of biography-ordering, of retrospective-prospective sense-making, that this process is initiated when existing interpretations are no longer satisfactory to the person(or group) making them. This dissatisfaction is distinguished from the "discontent" the positivists
posit (see review of literature section) in that it exists only insofar as the individual experiences discontent. I am basing my assumption that groups can go through the same process as individuals on the work of Blumer (1969b: 78-89) where he discussed the nature of "joint action". Individuals in a group will fit together their individual lines of action by taking into account not only their self-typification and their typifications of the others, but they will also be treating the aggregate of similarly interested people as a unit, insofar as they wish the sum of their relevant actions to be seen as originating in a like-minded, similarly-acting body. Thus, it is possible to see a group as having a history distinct from that of each individual, to see how a number of people can interpret their autobiography as giving evidence of belonging to a group, and how they can direct their individual acts in such a way as to show a group activity.

Returning to the issue of individuals experiencing discontent, Cameron and Schutz were mentioned as taking this position - that dissatisfaction has reality only insofar as the relevant individuals consciously experience it - and turning to Schutz again, we see that it is this unease which occurs when there appears to the person a

...theoretical or practical problem which, as a consequence of our situationally determined interest, has emerged as question-able from the unquestioned background of the world just taken for granted. Our actual interest, however, is the outcome of our actual biographical situation within our environment as defined by us (1964: 234-235).

That this, in fact, goes on as women become aware of the Women's Liberation Movement will be shown as their experience in the Movement is recounted in Chapters IV-VI.

In the previous section there was a statement of four characteristics an ideology will have as a vehicle for expressing the purposes of a group. In this section I will show for each characteristic the interpretations about the status and role of women that is provided by the mainstream of the Women's Liberation Movement.

Obviously, a social movement is not an immutable phenomenon. The members' interpretations of their situation in relation to changing problematic circumstances must undergo modification in the constant interaction of social life. Because of the changes in these ideological interpretations and structural characteristics of the groups over time, I will concentrate this description upon the ideological and structural characteristics of the Movement apparent through the Fall of 1971, when the study ended.

The content description will deal with trends in the Women's Liberation Movement in general. The ideological and structural stance that evolved in the two Vancouver groups will be described in the sections after this one - where their formation and continuation as experienced by the persons involved will be covered.

1) Content of the Ideology of the Women's Liberation Movement

It will be recalled that there were four components to the content of an ideology: statement of problem; of who is affected by it; explanation of the problem; resultant goals and strategies. I will collapse
the first two upon each other to describe a range of the Women's Liberation Movement's expressions of them, and then do the same for the last two components. As will be seen from the discussion of the last two, the Women's Liberation Movement encompasses a very wide spectrum of interpretations of the position of women in society. Therefore, these descriptions must necessarily be rather general and draw upon the most prevalent ideological trends available at the time of the field work.

a) Statement of the problem and b) who is affected by it: The definitive description of the situation of women is that they are a group and as a group are oppressed (de Beauvoir, 1953; Dunbar, 1970; Firestone, 1970; Millett, 1969; Mitchell, 1971). The oppression takes many forms and has many consequences but it all adds up to the limitation of women's potential, to the perpetuation of the use of herself and of her labours to the advantage of others more powerful, more respected, more advantaged.

Perhaps the most inclusive description of the oppression of women is to be found in Mitchell (1971). She examines this condition in terms of what she sees as the four "key structures of women's situation...: Production, Reproduction, Sexuality and the Socialization of Children" (1971: 101, passim). I will use these divisions to provide a synthesis of the views of several ideologues (Mitchell among them) as to what goes on for women in these spheres of existence.

Production

Production means here work that has exchange value, work that is paid for in wages, that takes place in the public sphere of society. Here
women are demonstrably, quantifiably oppressed as measured in pay scales, range of work allowed, upward mobility at work, job security and benefits— including work-related benefits like adequate child care facilities, flexibility of working hours, etc.

This is particularly true for all these aspects of work in capitalistic societies and the situation for women in socialist countries in Eastern Europe is not a great deal better (Sullerot, 1971). One must include here the work that is overtly aimed at the management of society, that is, political participation. Here again, in both capitalist and socialist countries, women are drastically under-represented among the powerful.

What this means for women is that a woman cannot, as Mitchell puts it, "create the preconditions of her liberation," (1971: 106). This is because her lack of participation in or impact upon the means of production in the society results in her being psychologically and economically dependent upon those who are more effectively connected to the mode of production (men). The less effect a person or group has or can have upon productive life of the society, the less impact that person or group can have upon these very means and upon the nature of their existence that follows from it. * There are differences among ideologues in the Women's Liberation Movement as to whether they see the role - or lack of it - of women in paid production as the basic or primary link to oppression, but every group does see this as a major problem.

* The character of this dependent relation is discussed in some detail in Eichler (1973). A clear statement about the relationship between the mode of production and the nature of the existence of its members is contained in Smith (1973).
Reproduction

In Women's Liberation literature the biological fact of female childbearing is linked to oppression by the social and historically limited fact of the woman's responsibility for raising children and that usually in a nuclear family. The distinction between biological and social fact is made because until very recently - and now with the exception of relatively few persons or groups - it was assumed that the limitations upon health, strength, status, and vocation brought on by childbearing and childrearing in a monogamous nuclear family were not socially constructed limitations. In fact, these conditions were not seen as limitations at all, but as inevitable, unchangeable manifestations of the natural order of the world. This was for everyone bio-historical fact (Mitchell, 1971: 106 passim; Firestone, 1970: 8 passim).

Oppression for women in the reproductive sphere is associated with their lack of control over reproduction itself, which is still true for most women today (Firestone, 1970: 226); with there being few legitimate, respected, or desirable alternatives to marriage and childbearing; with the fact that the motherhood role is unduly taxing in the non-supportive nuclear family and in a non-supportive society - few families having what they see as an adequate income, there are few social supports for parenting, like day care, adequate child-care allowances, job-splitting or rotating between mother and father, etc.; and with the great difficulty mothers have in entering the "productive" world of paid labour - for the minimal amount of help that it often turns out to be.
In the affective realm, this limitation of women's role(s) is seen as leading to a pervasive sense of unease, of unworthiness, of being old and used up before one's time (Bart, 1971; Friedan, 1963). This results in the derivative nature of woman's role - she is dependent on others economically (see section on production above) for security and on others' existence as husband or children for her very identity.

**Sexuality**

The Women's Liberation Movement has provided an analysis of sexuality that makes clear that there is a political relationship between biological "fact" and social definition of women's sexuality.

The question of sexuality for the Women's Liberation Movement revolves around two closely related issues: definition and information. Definition involves whose view of female sexuality is now generally held and whose should be held. Information has to do with women trying to learn the truth about their sexuality in order to formulate their own definition and then be able to hold to it in their daily lives.

Given that, traditionally, sexual expression in women has been legitimate only in monogamy and has been important largely in its relation to childbearing, the questions raised in the Women's Liberation Movement about sexuality revolve around whether a woman's sexuality is her own. This means two things: 1) examining the nature of women's sexuality—starting with whether it exists, then asking questions like whether it is a powerful factor in a woman's life, what direction its expression can and should take - and 2) deciding who has the right to define and control that sexuality.
Articles like "The Politics of Orgasm" (Lydon, 1970) and "'Kinder, Kuche, Kirche' as Scientific Law: Psychology Constructs the Female" (Weisstein 1970) vigorously attacked the Freudian notion that women:

...are not whole human beings but mutilated males who long all their lives for a penis and must struggle to reconcile themselves to this lack [and] the requirement of a transfer of erotic sensation from clitoris to vagina became a prima facie use for [women's] inevitable sexual (and moral) inferiority (Lydon, 1970: 198).

These writings attacked the definers of women's sexuality - male psychologists in specific, men in general - for their ignorance and their self-interested, exploitive interpretation of women's sexuality.

It has been very fortunate, to my mind, that the work of Masters and Johnson (1966) was available for women in the Women's Liberation Movement to draw upon for factual knowledge about the physiology of female sexuality. The work of Lydon (1970), a major book like the Boston Women's Health Collective's book Our Bodies, Our Selves (1971) shows the use that the Masters and Johnson work is put to by Women's Liberationists. They could then state with assurance that women's sexual potential, and hence sexual need, was in every sense equal to men's. It is even suggested by some who draw upon the Masters and Johnson work that women's sexual potential, measured in terms of "orgasmic capacity" is even greater than that of males' (Sherfey, 1970).

The inaccurate, exploitive definition of women's physiological sexuality is, of course only one part of the picture of women's sexuality in relation to men.
Another aspect of sexuality that the Women's Liberation Movement devotes considerable attention to is the use of women as "sex objects". This includes the strictly physiological, coital misuse of women by men having no knowledge or interest in women's sexual potential, but it goes very much beyond this.

If we look in the literature we find women described as being seen to lack distinct personhood, to be evaluated not on a complete range of their individual or group behaviours and capacities, but largely in relation to very superficial qualities that supposedly represent sexuality and sexual attractiveness. These qualities that women are supposed to exhibit - literally - are youth, beauty according to the latest fashions or fads, subtly stated sexual availability, sexual and social submissiveness, if not downright passivity.

It is maintained that for the woman who tries to achieve these qualities - and most women must, it is felt, since their value on the marital marketplace may depend heavily on these qualities - will inevitably be degraded in the process. Knowing that she can rarely really meet these standards and knowing that she is being valued for highly superficial and transitory qualities can only bring on anxiety, a sense of inferiority, and a competitive spirit among women as they try to acquire and hold a relationship with a man.

There is a considerable amount of literature in the Movement describing what being a sex object actually means - what it feels like to be young and striving for that superficial attractiveness (Alta, 1971; Embree, 1970; Florika, 1970; Morgan, 1970; Stannard, 1971) or older and worried
about becoming obsolete (Moss, 1970; OWL, 1970), or being a woman and not
being safe in the streets from sexual harrassment (Boston Women's Health

Looking further at the literature from the Movement on women
defined as sex objects by those in power - men - we find one of the best
known analyses of this defining process in Kate Millett's Sexual Politics
(1969). She maintains that "...there remains one ancient and universal
scheme for the domination of one birth group by another - the scheme that
prevails in the area of sex." She adds that "...sexual dominion obtains
...as perhaps the most pervasive ideology of our culture and provides its
most fundamental concept of power" (1969: 24-25 passim). She then draws
upon works of fiction (often semi-autobiographical wish-fulfillment work,
actually, as in Mailer, D.H. Lawrence, and Henry Miller) and of psychology
(Freud, Erik Erikson) to describe and analyze in detail how women are com­
posed as unidimensional, depersonalized beings, whose value consists largely
in providing the man with a means for further developing and exercising his
own sense of maleness. She sets this analysis firmly within a societal
context, portraying these writers as reflecting or even epitomizing general
male views of sexuality. They achieve personhood as they find and reaffirm
their self-concept through sexual domination of women and objectification
for women.

Socialization of Children

The Women's Liberation Movement deals with socialization of chil-
dren from two sides: the assumption that society in general views child-
rearing as the only and inevitable role of the adult woman; and the content of values and behavioural expectations passed to the children through the socialization that occurs in the nuclear family.

The expectation that women must be childrearers has pervasive implications for the oppression of women. First, women are "ideally" confined to one main role - a complex and taxing one, but one nonetheless. She is to carry out this work alone, and glorify in it as providing her with her "main social definition" (Mitchell, 1971: 115).

The fact is that the work of motherhood is transient - children grow up and go away - and yet it is on this time spent, approximately one-third of a woman's life span, that a woman is to evaluate herself and be evaluated. If this work was explicitly and genuinely valued, there might be some congruency between this expectation and the reality of women's experience of motherhood. Women's Liberation ideologues have pointed out that woman's work in the home is not "real" work (Benston, 1969) and that it is consequently devalued both by society at large and by her own self ("just a housewife"). Conflicts over this discrepancy in evaluation are frequent themes of the literature (Bart, 1970; Bernard, 1971; Friedan, 1963; Smith, 1973).

If a woman wants to expand her world by sharing the socialization of children with her husband or other parts of the community she finds this very difficult on several grounds. One is the attitude of those others that the biological mother is the only person who can and should bring up the children. Another problem, in the case of the father helping out, is that the structure of the paid-work world is such that most men cannot be
where the children are for any significant lengths of time. The logistics of keeping a man's job usually preclude his presence in the home or his children's at his job.

Another problem that is pointed out by the Women's Liberation Movement is the nearly total lack of day care for children - for the woman who must work outside the home or for the woman who may not do this but who needs time to pursue interests other than motherhood. Additionally, work outside the home for women is often so ill-paid as to be barely worth the effort, though most women who must work continue to do so - at great cost.

All of these problems conspire to make the biological fact of maternity into the social fact of motherhood for women (Mitchell, 1971: 116, 117).

If women, too, see their chief identity and justification in life as arising from motherhood, then it is maintained that in the content of the socialization that women undertake they will inevitably place extraordinary demands upon their children to be loving displays of maternal prowess. One of the strongest statements to this effect is in Firestone where she says that:

...parental satisfaction is obtainable only through crippling the child: the attempted extension of ego through one's children - ...in the case of the woman, motherhood as the justification of her existence, the resulting attempt to live through the child, child - as - project - in the end damages either the child or the parent, or both.... (1970: 299 passim)

Women are expected in the standard nuclear family to recreate the asymmetrical power relationships of the society - male over female in the parental couple and older over younger in the parent-child relationship. This is all to be done on the basis of role stereotypic expectations and not on the basis of individual skills or needs or desires.
Women are expected as well to make their children look, believe, and behave in ways that affirm the dominant values of the society, no matter at what cost to the child, or to the mother who must enforce this expectation (Smith, 1973).

Given then, that women are in a situation where their task of socialization is seen as a "natural" expectation, and given that their children can have little in the way of alternate views of sex-role linked behaviours, it is apparent that the passing on of sex-role stereotypes that are oppressive to the next generation would be a major concern of the Women's Liberation Movement.

Thus, it is the work of motherhood that creates and sustains her oppression. She is oppressed by the rigid and narrow ties to the nuclear family and she must pass on to her children - by precept and example - the very kind of expectations that have made for her own oppression.

c) Explanation of the problem and d) Resultant goals and strategies: There are two kinds of efforts made to provide women with a useful account of their oppression: attacks on existing accounts of the role of women in society; and the formulation of alternative explanations of their oppression. There are, in turn, two types of explanations offered: economic determinist and what I will call biological determinist.

The attacks are most often directed at the psycho-historical, or "anatomy is destiny" interpretations of the role of women. These interpretations hold that there are certain qualities that women have that are linked to their "instincts". These instincts are directly connected to
women's capacity as childbearers. Comparisons are also made with primates, to show how the female must always be subordinate to the male.* These statements are countered by such writers as Shulamith Firestone, in *The Dialectic of Sex*, where she presents another way of looking at the Freudian construction of the origins of patriarchal social order through the actions of males in the primal horde. Or there is Eva Figes' exposition and critique of the history of patriarchal attitudes, in her book of the same name (1970). One of the most widely available critiques of the assumptions traditionally made about the nature and inevitability of the subordination of women is Naomi Weisstein's "Psychology Constructs the Female, or the Fantasy Life of the Male Psychologist" (1970).

In terms of both an attack on existing views of female sexuality, linked with a presentation of alternate historical interpretations there is one bio-social one that was first readily available in the Women's Liberation literature in the collection *Sisterhood is Powerful*. That was Mary Jane Sherfey's "A Theory on Female Sexuality". In this she relates to a theory of the nature of the female's infinite threshold of orgasmic capacity to the psychological response of males in ages past to their awareness of this insatiability. Where men want to possess offspring and where property possession is rigidly linked to bio-social inheritance, then it is in the interests of the male to control absolutely the sex drive of women,

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* A very recent, and absolutely devastating critique of the use (or irrelevance, in fact) of primate studies for an understanding of human behaviour has been made by a primatologist, Frances Burton, in a paper given at a conference on the "Response of the University to Feminism". Toronto, 1974, Wendy Potter, Convenor. The paper will not be published for about a year, but the interested reader should find it most worthwhile.
Sherfey maintains. It is only thus that paternity can be reasonably ascertained, and that a stable family can be maintained.

Turning to the alternate explanations, per se, the economic determinist ones will be discussed first. They examine the relationship between economic systems and the oppression of women. It is assumed that the economic system generates the political system and as such governs the nature of the relationships between people and institutions (church, family, state, bureaucracy, land tenure, inheritance, etc.). This is not to say that people can be divorced from the institutions which, after all, they create and maintain and which they both run and are subject to — sometimes simultaneously. It is just that people often experience the workings of institutions as though there was no humanity linking the workings of custom or law and their own experience of it.

In economic systems where both women and their work are the property of others — usually men — and are used for the unequal advantage of the man or of the groups or class he is a part of, then oppression of women will be a feature of that society. Writers who have examined these kinds of relationships include Margaret Benston, ("The Politics of Women's Liberation," 1969), Sheila Rowbotham (Women, Resistance and Revolution, 1971), Dorothy Smith ("Women, the Family, and Corporate Capitalism," 1973), Betsy Warrior ("Housework: Slavery or Labor of Love," 1971).

The biological determinist explanations do not deny the importance of the economic order for the oppression of women, but they do not place the economic system, particularly capitalist systems, as the "first cause" of
the oppression of women. Shulamith Firestone has the most comprehensive statement of this sort – that the biological division of the sexes predates any other form of role division. The relative weakness of women and the literal confinement of childbearing made for the first exploitation of one group by another. From this division came the "cultural superstructure" that included patriarchy, private property, and with them the total subordination of women and exploitation of them through the expropriation of their productive (in both the biological and "work" sense) labour (Firestone, 1971, Ch. 1 especially).

In the writings of the proponents of the biological determinist explanation of women's oppression, the institution of patriarchy, as embodied in the nuclear family, comes under severe attack. For Millett the role of patriarchy in the oppression of women is in the control of the female half of the population by the male half. She, too, recognizes that this control appears throughout any political, social, or economic sphere of life. Here again, the "first cause" of oppression is not economic, but resides in the "birthright" of being born male or female. She adds to these forms of oppression the psychological form that she calls "interior colonization". This is when women themselves are socialized into believing and propagating the belief in the inherent rightness of their subordination to males (1969: 25 passim).

**Strategies**

I have presented an extremely brief account of some of the predominant Women's Liberation Movement explanations for and descriptions of
the oppression of women. The causes are based in an exploitive class* system - economic and/or biologically based.

The subjective experience of oppression is felt in those areas of people's lives that they common-sensically designate as psychological and economic.

There is, thus, from the Women's Liberation viewpoint, no part of a woman's life that is not subject to oppression and there is no part of society as it now is that can remain the same if oppression is to be erased.

It is one thing for a person or group to formulate and maintain any or all of these interpretations of women's situation. But is only the beginning of bringing about change. The difference between a Jeremiah and a Jesus is in whether enough significant others can be persuaded of the relevance of the interpretations to their own lives. I have described earlier (see section on "How an Ideology is Used: By Individuals", and "Appropriate Conditions", pp. 21-26) how ideologies are used as people undergo a "conversion" to the utilization a whole new "universal meaning system... within which...[their] biography can be located" (Berger, 1963: 61 as quoted above p. 21).

It is in the nature of all pervasive, dominant ideologies that they are "non-conscious", that they are part of the "natural order" of people's lives and are rarely available to individuals for analysis and criticism (Bem and Bem, 1971). This places oppressed people in a very weak position for bringing about social change.

* From a strict sociological viewpoint, the word "class" as used by some Women's Liberation ideologues is ambiguous (see Eichler, 1973).
But it is the task of a social movement to create circumstances conducive for a person's arriving at this new awareness. When the ideology asks people to re-think and in many areas reject much of their former self- and world-views this task may be very difficult. When the relevant persons - the group designated as suffering the consequences of the problems defined in the ideology - are believed to be victims of "interior colonization", when the nature of their oppression functions to inhibit their grasp of a consciousness of themselves as oppressed, then the problems of bringing about a transformation of their consciousness loom particularly large.

So the goals of the Women's Liberation Movement must be making women aware of their oppression ("consciousness-raising") and then providing a means by which women can embark on actions relevant to changing specific forms of oppression. Strategies must be developed to recruit women to the Movement and then to facilitate further action in their part.

Obviously goal and strategy are identical in the technique known as consciousness-raising. Consciousness-raising is a logical precursor to other change-oriented action, though it may take place simultaneously to actions and may be greatly expanded due to these actions. (See history and friendship sections for some of the participants' interpretations of the sequencing and causal conditions for consciousness-raising.) It also is a process that is without an end-state, since it is an analytical technique in itself, useful for understanding any situation a woman is in.

The formation of the "small-group" for the purpose of facilitating informal, non-competitive, analytical discussion of the situation of
women by and for women is a major strategic and organizational technique of the Women's Liberation Movement. It is not unique to the Movement (it seems to have been borrowed from an awareness of early participants of the "speaking bitterness" techniques used by the Chinese after the Revolution) (Mitchell, 1971: 62), but the Movement has made considerable use of it. The small group situation counters the oppression of women in several ways. One is that women bring themselves together, thereby in that act combating the atomization of their lives. Closely related to this fact of association is another positive political and psychological function of the small group — that women bring themselves together on the basis of being individual persons, not as appendages of other persons. The latter relationship is what parent-teacher associations or women's auxiliaries or many other women's groups are based on.

Another way the small group helps to raise the consciousness of women is that a woman is able there to externalize her situation, her experiences and her feelings by seeing that she shares many of them with other women. It becomes evident to her that individualistic, largely psychologically oriented explanations of her situation are not accurate, since too many women seem to have gone through the same things. She can now create a world of women "out there". This ability to view her experiences from the outside gives her, in effect, an Archimedian point, over which she can exert moral, political, and very pragmatic leverage for change in her life.

Thus, the non-conscious ideology becomes conscious. The assumed-to-be-natural order of a woman's life can be called into question systematically by women using their own biographies as basic data for linking their
lives to other women's. This means women can be seen as a group, oppressed as a group, and able to change their world as a group.

This political legitimation of the individual experience, the treating of the autobiography as data for political analysis, is an exercise in the "politics of experience" and is characteristic of a number of recent social movements. It has probably reached its most complete development to date in the Women's Liberation Movement (see Mitchell, 1971: 38 for further discussion of the "politics of experience").

While the Women's Liberation Movement has developed this "social technique" (see quotation from Banks, p. 20) to a considerable degree, consciousness-raising does not occur only out of direct personal interaction with other women. In a media-oriented world, a social movement must devise ways to communicate ideas through electronic means and through writing. This can have great impact. In the section to come on the history of the two groups and the discussion of the women's initial awareness of the ideology, we will see a number of examples of the role of the media in providing a pool of ideas from which women may select out what is relevant to their individual lives.

The need to make ultimately all women aware of the Women's Liberation ideology and to incorporate all of them into change-oriented actions wherever they are means that any group must learn to handle at least a minimum array of publicity and educational skills. They must learn to publicize meetings, to provide speakers for interested non-movement groups. They often work in part or whole on creative and/or journalistic writing, in radio or T.V. work, or in brief-writing for government information to
help spread their interpretations of women's situation. There is no Wo-
men's Liberation group of any size or duration that I know of that has not
undertaken work in at least some of these skills. Much of the writing is a
very personal, emotional sharing of a conversational sort - drawing as
close to the woman as the writer/speaker can, given the problems of tem-
poral and spatial separation.

To my mind, one of the best examples of how this sharing goes
on in the Women's Liberation Movement literature is Pat Mainardi's
"Politics of Housework", where she lists a number of levels
of communication that can go on between husband and wife over housework.

She writes:

He: "I don't mind sharing the housework, but I don't do it very
well. We should each do the things we're best at." Meaning:
Unfortunately, I'm no good at things like washing dishes or
cooking....Also meaning: Historically the lower classes (black
men and us) have had hundreds of years experience doing menial
jobs. It would be a waste of manpower to train someone else to
do them now. Also meaning: I don't like the dull stupid boring
jobs, so you should do them....(1970: 448)

Mainardi is thus able to move the reader from the ostensible definition of
what is going on to the "real" definition, linking it with both the immed-
iate experience of the woman to the experience of women as a group over long
periods of time. This is an experience many women can share with her. For
instance, one could often read in Ms. Magazine about the "click" a woman
experiences in her head when she realizes that she is experiencing a poli-
tical put-down. This is another example of this process of transformation
of consciousness. There has been a consistent flow of letters published in
the earlier issues of the magazine of women sharing their own similar reali-
zations.
Even though it is probably accurate to say that anyone in Women's Liberation views consciousness-raising as an essential process for any woman to go through in order for her to effect change in her life and the situation of other women, it does not follow that everyone agrees on 1) how best to facilitate consciousness-raising nor 2) how best to go about changing the concrete manifestations of women's oppression - such as the nuclear family, unequal pay, inadequate day care, unequal educational and vocational opportunity, etc.

For some women and some groups the creation and maintenance of small groups is a sufficient focus. In this case, as we will see in the discussion of the U.B.C. group, the small group structure is seen as both an end in itself and as a means of strengthening women for future forays into changing the concrete conditions of their lives.

In other groups, or for other persons, the strategic focus may be, even initially - pressure group politics - including educational efforts like leafletting, running a newspaper, etc. - to change concrete conditions, with the assumption that this is the best way to enhance "woman consciousness" and recruit participants. We will see that this is true to a great extent for the Women's Caucus group in Vancouver.

The goal of the Women's Movement to achieve total equality - in a world that must be changed for the better - has led to anti-leadership, anti-elite organizational structure. This is so for two reasons: 1) a rejection of a style that is identified with the oppressive, male world and 2) that women must apply their politics of change for themselves. They must
work from their own oppression outward. They must live their beliefs. This feeds back into the resource that is referred to as the politics of experience.

The conjunction of the belief in working from the basis of an understanding of one's own oppression; the anti-hierarchical emphasis; and the recognition of the diversity of women's situation, experience, skills, and interests all lead to a decidedly atomized, "grass roots" form of political action, particularly for the Movement in Canada. Groups that characterize themselves explicitly as Women's Liberation groups do not have officers, don't have membership lists, try to avoid even implicit leadership by rotating tasks and by having people volunteer to do whatever interests them. There are risks in this (see Joreen, "The Tyranny of Structurelessness,"1972) in that cliques can form where decision-makers and information sources are not explicitly known to all at all times, but this danger can be countered by the rotation of tasks and constant close contact among all members.

In summary, we can see that the belief held by the Women's Liberation Movement that the oppression of women is a pervasive, long-standing condition, which very much includes the difficulty women have in understanding that they are oppressed, leads to very far-reaching goals for change. The Movement must take into account the diversity of women's experience and the atomization of their existence and, in so doing, devise organizational structures and strategies of action that provide women with the means to live out their struggle against oppression from the base of
their own experience and from the social interaction the group itself supplies.

We will move next to an analysis of how the women in this study achieved their first consciousness of their oppression and then began groups to help change other women's situation.
CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

Assumptions about the nature of the social world dictate the method of study of it. The symbolic interactionist perspective on human social life taken in this study means that a way must be found for capturing how people construct their own social reality and how accordingly guide their actions for themselves and with others. What is being described is a social process, one that takes place through and among people over time. I have noted in the review of the literature section how lacking most of the literature was in conveying these fundamental aspects of human social behaviour - the active, reflexive construction of their own social world that people constantly engage in, and the fact that this takes place continually over time, with each interpretation and action embedded in the past and carried out with a view to the future.

In the process of this reality construction people build up shared meanings, shared interpretations of the world. There is never complete congruity of any individual's or group's images of the social world. There cannot be, given that each person has unique sensory equipment and also given that, at the very least, our confinement within our own body means that our literal perspective - biologically and then socially - can never be identical to any other's. Additionally, these differences, coupled with social environments in some ways distinct for each of us (say, the middle child has a different social environment than a first or later child; or some are
poor and have few material goods to manipulate, while others have many—and all the prestige that goes with it) means that our cumulature histories will be in some ways unique to us. Yet, with all this, we do develop crucially shared interpretations of our social world—we maintain some, we phase out others, and initiate yet others.

It is the task of the social scientist to discern what those images of the persons and groups studied are, how they developed them and how they used them in their social life. Doing this, as a number of scholars maintain (Blumer, 1969; Denzin, 1970; Schutz, 1965) means going to the people themselves. This can be going to people presently engaged in the conduct studied, or to others not present in time or space, through documentation left by or about them. This is what Blumer calls the "naturalistic" approach, one that respects the quality and validity of that social world constructed by the people themselves. There is an attempt to understand that world in the people's own terms, and then to show the relationships between the interpretations and actions among people and groups as they carry on their lives. It is here that we can see how it is that people come to have certain interpretations of their lives—of how they got where they are and how they should act next—and how they change these interpretations or assist change. The study of people's experience in relation to a social movement is exactly this study.

I have already discussed the assumptions about the kinds of circumstances that seem to underly a change in interpretation of some facet or other of one's social world (see above, Ch.1, p.26 passim).
The question remains, how best to provide a description of these changes.

The methodology that provides the most adequate means of getting inside of another world is participant observation. It must be emphasized that I am maintaining, along with McCall and Simmons, that participant observation is not a simple method of research but is "a type of research enterprise, a style of combining several methods toward a particular end" (1969: 3). Participant observation, so conceived, allows us to observe and record human behaviour in its two basic levels: the symbolic and the behavioural (Denzin 1970: 7). Symbols arise in interaction and are shared, exchanged and modified as people continually are engaged in taking the role of salient others. We can best learn what these images/interpretations are and how people use them if we place ourselves (physically, preferably, or imaginatively in the case of historical studies) within the behavioural settings where the interpretation and interaction goes on. The plurality of settings must be taken literally. People live their lives in a number of places - and the more settings the researcher can share, the fuller the awareness of how people lead their lives, even in relation to one set of interpretations. It is not always necessary to remain in this setting throughout a whole study in order to get an adequate picture of what is going on. This general absorption of the symbolic and interactive milieu - participant observation narrowly defined - is often used by the researcher in at least the beginning of any inquiry in order to develop an accurate account of the "world view" of the persons and situations studied. Having
achieved this, the researcher may then want to move on to other techniques which will allow in-depth probing of certain facets of the social world.

This move involves what is known as "triangulation" of study techniques (Denzin, 1970: 14 passim and p. 227 passim). The cumulation of techniques, participant observation per se, interviewing, examination of documents composed by or about the persons allows a rich depiction of the world studied and can more nearly assure that the relevances that the researcher concludes to be the crucial ones for the people do, "in fact", coincide with theirs. Triangulation can lead to a closer approximation of this studied world because it also allows the researcher to deal with time. This is true for several reasons. One is that she can be there in the interactive setting(s) over time, thus noting the stable and changing aspects of the social world. She also can go back before her own experience by asking the people, in more or less explicit interview sessions, to reconstruct their experiences from perhaps long ago. Also, through the examination of documents she can grasp even more facets of people's interpretations of their situation. Since we customarily divide our world into public and private spheres and have different "faces" to present in each (see Goffman, 1956 especially, for discussion of the management of this division in our presentations of our selves), it follows that records of the types of interpretations we present in each — for ourselves and others — is of considerable importance in gaining a full-fledged view of the way that people continually create and live in their world. These documents can give a sense of both on-going behaviour and of the changes over time.
In the process of using participant observation - broadly defined, as the use of multiple research techniques - the element of time is crucial in another sense. That is, the researcher has the time and the use of several techniques to allow her to become sensitive to the general, perhaps diffuse or even confusing interpretations and behaviour of the people in a certain circumstance (say, adult women) or with reference to a certain topic (women's experience of the Women's Liberation Movement) and then cut, select out, what part of this world she wishes to study. She can then bring to bear other techniques that best fit her evolving research goals.

In the literature it is repeatedly stated that in-the-field participant observation can be used to sensitize one to what the people's own domains of relevance, own crucial issues and ways of articulating them are. Having insofar as possible gained access to, and being empathetic to, the interpretive and behavioural systems of a number of relevant people, the researcher can be more certain that in the next phase - the attempt to elaborate, make more concrete, and reassess her own interpretations of others' interpretations - she will be focussing upon issues that are generated in the people's own world and not out of her own pre-determined images of what might have been going on. This shedding of pre-determined images is an essential and often extremely difficult task for the outsider (Blumer, 1969: 35 passim).

If however the pre-determined images have been replaced by the people's own then a technique like interviewing can be most useful in this next stage of focussing upon more specific aspects of the experiences of people.
This method of discovering the issues as one goes along is typical of research of this sort. As Dean, Eichorn, and Dean say in their article "Limitations and Advantages of Unstructured Methods"

A major characteristic of observation and interviewing in the field is its non-standardization. By frequently re-directing the inquiry on the basis of data coming in from the field to ever more fruitful areas of investigation, [and] Because of his (sic) closer contact with the field situation, (the researcher is better able to avoid misleading or meaningless questions") (1969:21, emphasis theirs).

Therefore the interview itself must meet the same criteria as field observation of allowing the people to speak for themselves, in their own language, about their experiences. This is so even if the discussion is centered by the researcher around certain aspects of their overall life experience.

In the research for this study the above techniques and progression of their use was followed. They will be discussed with specific reference to this research in the parts that follow.

The Early Field Work

Over a period of twelve months I engaged in participant observation in the two Women's Liberation groups in Vancouver. These were the Women's Caucus and the group at the University of British Columbia.* The aim was to understand in the participants' own terms, what their experience of the movement was - how they became aware of Women's Liberation, how they formed groups, joined them later, and carried out the new interpretations.

* To be referred to as the UBC group throughout the remainder of this study.
of their social world that they learned. I wanted to know what effect being a regular member of the Women's Liberation Movement and these groups in particular had upon the everyday lives of the women.

It should be made explicit that I had been "converted" to the Women's Liberation Movement myself only a few weeks before I decided to study some part of it. I believe that this condition of being a member can be utilized by the observer/member in systematically discerning what is going on because the member/observer has been through similar experiences herself. "Discerning" is used here in the sense that Barton and Lazarsfeld use it when they say:

In exploring for possible factors affecting some given variable, or for chains of causes and effects constituting a "process", there appear to be two basic techniques. The first attempts to obtain objective information about the sequences of events, particularly what events preceded the response under investigation ....The second technique is to ask people themselves to explain what happened and to give their reasons for acting as they did. The basic question here is always "Why?"....Both of these techniques are combined in a technique of qualitative exploration of causal relations known as "discerning" (1969: 185-186).

I felt that the participant observation would allow me in time to then focus on a particular facet of the Movement as expressed in these two groups and that further refinements of data collection would follow in accordance with the evolving goals of exploration. In fact this did happen, as my interest began to focus on how the women seemed to be changing many of their interpretations of their situation and acting accordingly. A useful way to document this, as noted above in this chapter, was through in-depth, open-ended interviews. The participant observation per se was to facilitate effective questionnaire building and interviewing technique
in order to develop a descriptive analysis reflecting the primary concerns and experience of the women.

The first eight months of field work were spent going to the weekly meetings of the UBC group, going regularly to Women's Caucus meetings, though not weekly. The Women's Caucus schedule was divided into different meetings for the various functions the group wanted to serve, so there were bi-monthly meetings of one sort, monthly ones of others, etc. Initially, I took notes on the interaction in the meetings, read the relevant Women's Liberation Movement literature, the Women's Caucus newspaper, and visited informally with friends one became acquainted with over this time.

At first I had planned to study the Women's Caucus group and a contrastingly organized "women's collective" which had been formed in a local house on a communal basis. I went to the UBC group as "my" group, the one I went to for my own personal satisfaction. The collective, however, dissolved almost before it got going, so it became necessary to notify the UBC group that I would now be viewing it from the additional viewpoint of a sociology student, and I asked permission to draw from the group for persons to interview. The participants were very receptive to this idea, and very supportive of my work in general.

The interest in studying participation in two groups arose as I became more and more aware of how differently organized (or "anti-organized") each group was. I will go into some detail as to the history, structure, and composition of each of these groups in a following section, but will say now only that the two contrasting groups seemed to exemplify a recur-
rent strategic division within the Women's Liberation Movement. The division revolves around the often dichotomized questions of whether change is brought about by changing oneself first and then going out and changing society (the consciousness-raising group emphasis) or does one embark upon "political action" and thereby have one's consciousness raised? These differing strategies are roughly tied to psychological deterministic models (the former) and economic deterministic models (the latter). As will be shown, it was only among the Women's Caucus members that these divisions were explicitly posed and tied to definite causal models of society's ills. The divisions showed up in the organization of the groups and in their personnel. Since this difference showed up then in varying interaction patterns and ideological emphases, it was apparent that an attempt to understand how social change takes place could be further facilitated by being able to study significant variation as well as similarity between groups. Thus, it would be necessary to deal with the two actual Women's Liberation groups in the city.

This by no means implies that one has covered all the Women's groups. It is basic to the ideology that any woman anywhere who cares about the issues is in the Movement, whether she can make it to a meeting or not. It was clear that many women could not come to many meetings at all. Often their time schedules didn't allow it, or they came for a few meetings and then would disappear for months or for good. Yet they might show up working on day care somewhere.
In order to achieve some comparability in the selection of persons for the interviews it was decided to ask for "regular" participants who had been so for at least six months. Regular was to be defined by the group itself and this was done, according to what they saw as the minimum participation level (usually measured in terms of attendance at meetings, workshops, and other related activities) for someone to be a familiar and dependably present person. Virtually all of the women who met these criteria consented to be interviewed. This was nine women from Women's Caucus and 18 from the UBC group. The interviews lasted from 45 minutes to three hours. They were done over a period of about two months toward the conclusion of the fieldwork.

The six month minimum was set because it coincided at the time of formulating the interview plan with a shakeup in the membership and strategy of the Women's Caucus late the previous summer, when they voted to exclude anyone who was a member of the local Young Socialist Alliance. This move had been taken by Women's Liberation groups all over North America over the past two years, and the issues raised and steps taken were virtually identical here.

The six months also coincided roughly with when the UBC group was started, in September of 1970.

Note on Ethics and Methodology

Before discussing the questionnaire itself, it should be noted that from the very beginning of the field work it was announced to any and
all persons met that I was doing my doctoral dissertation "on Women's Liberation". I almost always met with a positive response to this statement.

The one or two disgruntled expressions came from ex-sociology students who seemed irritated to have their old field appear on non-university grounds. Yet they agreed to be interviewed and cooperated at length.

I have taken the stance that no form of secret research in social science known to me is justifiable. People must not only be told what one is doing, but they also must be capable of understanding the implications of the work of academic life, of the Ph.D. as a "union card", of possible publication of results, etc.

I also believe that, methodologically speaking, no more distortion need be brought into the study by persons knowing they are part of a study than if they do not. In the case of the researcher being known as such (as well as a friend, perhaps, or colleague, peer, enemy, etc.) the researcher will only minimally have to distort her behaviour in the interactions that take place. There is no hiding, no duplicious "tact" in order to stay in the field. The other persons in the study may, it is true, then alter their behaviour in relation to being studied. It is my observation that alteration of behaviour in order to look good or bad for an observer, if that observer is relatively powerless in the interaction, is too energy-consuming to carry on for long. People stop doing it - if they even were in the first place. Thus, they resume "natural" behaviour relatively rapidly and the researcher need not fear deliberate, deceitful "staging" of behaviour. Again, this assumes the researcher to be relatively power-
less in the interaction. Distortion could well take place if the researcher is seen as powerful and capable of giving or withholding valuable goods, privileges, etc. This was not the case here.

Honesty about the research goals does not mean that one lists off all questions to be asked to every person, or describes in detail every move made or to be made. It means that if an observer is asked by a concerned person about the research that there is an obligation for the observer to discuss the broad outlines of the work and the reasons for preferring to talk in generalities. Then if the person still wants to know more of what may affect herself - then the observer is obligated to enlighten the person, even if it means losing some data, or being thrown out of the field. However, if one has met the second criterion of a knowledgeable "subject", that is, the person understands the nature of field research for Ph.D.'s, then I would anticipate little in the way of negative response to the observer's work. Certainly I have found this to be so. I have also found that persons who understand the problem of contamination of data by the comparing of interviews by past and future interviewees are quite cooperative in refraining from discussing "their" interview with others. Thus, for many reasons I feel that being a known researcher is both morally and methodologically sound.

The Interview

The type of interview technique utilized is best described by John Madge as a focussed interview and the kind within that type is the "focussed autobiography", "...in which the focussed interview technique is
used to collect material on topics chosen by the investigator for their relevance to his (sic) hypotheses" (1965: 183). Denzin describes a similar approach for what he calls a "topical life history" or autobiography. He says this type "shows all the features of the complete form [of life history taken down] except that only one phase of the subject's life is presented" (Denzin, 1970: 222).

Before describing the interview schedule, it must be pointed out that each of the questions was asked of every person interviewed, to assure comparability of data. The brief first part of the interview established some biographical information - the person's age, marital status (number of children, their ages), educational level, occupation, parents' occupation, husband's occupation and income.

One reason for asking the questions directed at socio-economic status was to see from what class the respondents came, in that the Women's Liberation is often characterized as a middle-class movement. The implication of this characterization is that the women involved do not really have anything - from an "objective" viewpoint - to be liberated from. Obviously, if oppression must be subjectively experienced, this viewpoint is not useful, but I did want to be able to address myself to class as an objective "fact", and then to the issue of oppression in relation to subjective perception of it. The biographical material also provided me with information about what roles and activities took up the person's life, so that I could direct the following questions appropriately.

The information I wanted can be broken down into two parts: how the person first became aware of the Women's Liberation Movement (included
is how they actually moved into a group), and what one she felt the movement had in changing her life. The first part would presumably yield the most information about how change in the form of transformation of consciousness takes place, and the latter part would document how change is sustained over time.

When I asked about how the person got into the Movement there were two parts to this: what was of interest and relevance to them about the Movement, and how the "logistics" of entrance occurred. The former would inform about the relationship between the ideology and the person's autobiography, and the latter would tell more about the social interaction between members and non-members, or non-members and other non-members. Since both ideology and everyday interaction are essential parts of a social movement, and of individual change of this sort, these questions would have considerable use.

The next section asked first whether they felt their Women's Liberation Movement experience had had any effect on their life. This was followed by a probe of a general sort, ("can you tell me about that?"). Then the person was asked whether and how more specific aspects of their life had been affected. I covered all the roles I could discern - in the marriage, with the children, with the husband or lover specifically (emotionally, sexually), with the household tasks and couple decision-making, at the person's work outside the home, at school (whether as teacher or student), with friends. I asked how much time they spent on Women Liberation activities, and on what kind, and why they continued to participate in their group.
The interviewees supplied a before-Women's Liberation and after-
Women's Liberation cast to their responses and I tried wherever possible -
as did they, it turned out - to distinguish what kinds of changes did seem
to follow on the Women's Liberation experience and which ones "would have
happened anyway".

There were some aspects of possible change that could not be
reached by referring to a specific role or activity and yet which are
important to examine if one is looking at change in a person's life, change
which seems to be in the direction of a considerable re-definition of self.
So I asked questions about self-esteem, about public presentation of self,
and asked for their evaluation of the whole experience (so far) as to its
value in their life.

All of this information was tape-recorded, with the interviewees' permission, and was then transcribed verbatim and placed on data-sort cards
for use in further sorting and analysis.

Summary

The methodological basis of this study is the use of research
techniques that will allow the researcher to understand certain facets of
selected other people's social world. The methodology must treat their
interpretations of their world as valid, and must allow for comparisons
to be made among the participants' individual experience in relation to the
Women's Liberation Movement for comparisons to be made from group to group
as they each engage in joint action, and for links to be made between the
researcher's understanding of what went on and other researcher's analyses
of other phenomena related to social change as effected by social movements. The remaining chapters are the application of the relationship between the conceptual stance of symbolic interaction and the methodology that follows from it, and provide a description and analysis of the two groups studied.
CHAPTER III
THE FORMATION OF THE TWO VANCOUVER GROUPS:
THEIR HISTORY AND CHARACTER

In this chapter I give a social psychological history of how the ideology of the Women's Liberation Movement became embodied in the two Vancouver groups studied. This entails showing the reciprocal relationships among the individuals' biographies, the ideology they constructed and lived by, and the groups they founded and continually shaped. This is the three-tiered model of social interaction that coincides with that part of the social movements literature that is being used here (see Chapter I, Part B).

This analysis will also be using Jo Freeman's propositions about the social structural prerequisites of social movement formation in dealing with the foundation of both the Vancouver groups. Freeman's propositions are that:

1) A pre-existing communications network within the movement. Where one is very rudimentary...much effort must be spent to build one up.

2) A particular kind of network. It must be "co-optable to the new ideas ...." Co-optable means "...composed of like-minded people whose background, experiences, or location in the social structure make them receptive to the ideas...." What was similar in her group(s) was women who had had left-wing political experience that equipped them with the rhetoric of equality and the direct experience of being denied that equality. These were largely middle-class, educated women who crossed paths on campuses and campus-related politics across the United States.
3) Both the network and a situation of strain, coupled with one or more "precipitants". The network must be extended enough (or made to be so) that the new ideas and actions can be spread and continuing over time and space (1973: 32-33).

Freeman is using these propositions in her examination of the history of the construction of the Women's Liberation Movement as a whole, but much of it is applicable to the Vancouver groups.

First, when looking at the founders of each group in terms of networks per se (leaving aside the co-optability for the moment) it will be very clear that in both cases there were pre-existing communication networks among the founders. They knew each other at work and socially. The "politically experienced" ones (see discussion later, Chapter IV) had been active together. The non-political (UBC) ones were all in the same academic department and Hilary and Jeanette lived together.

The fact that the founders had a rich, complex set of social links can be related to the "co-optability" factor. What is behind the like-mindedness, similarity of background and experience and a certain location in the social structure that makes the founders co-optable is that their life situation is atypical for women, but like each other's. In every case - Women's Caucus and UBC - the founders are as near being "independent" women as a middle-class, career-oriented woman could be. That this is the case is shown by the fact that only one of the women was married (although it is true that Hilary and Jeanette had been a couple for 17 years) at the time. They did not have children, few of them were living
in a one-to-one relationship with a man, all were in skilled and/or pro-
fessional training or already occupied these kinds of jobs. They all were
self-supporting, and in the cases of the professors were making salaries
larger than about four-fifths of all Canadians' yearly incomes. Only Pam,
who came into Vancouver later but had helped start the first Women's Liber-
ation Consciousness-raising group in her home town, was married. Yet she
had no children and was regularly employed in professional work.

Their political backgrounds (for the Women's Caucus women) and
the academic backgrounds of both groups of women made them used to dealing
with ideas, to articulating and criticizing social patterns. All of these
are essential tools for adopting and further developing an ideology and
group and finding media vehicles for it.

I am suggesting that as busy as the founder women were in their
lives they all - relative to housewives, to mothers, to any woman whose
life must revolve around mother(s) - had time.

Further, it takes persons (and this would be particularly true
of women) who have this kind of freedom and skill who can afford to under-
take the stresses and costs of political innovation. Then there is the
other extreme of "freedom", the welfare mother who's got nothing left to
hope for, who's lost at any turn and who finally can't afford not to act.
The suggestion that "freedom's just another word for nothing left to lose"
does not originate with me.

Once the innovation is on its way - once there is a shared ide-
ology, a place to meet, some changes made, some legitimacy appearing on the
horizon then the rank and file, the "masses" can afford to join up. In very practical terms, it took the Women's Caucus women the equivalent in time of a nearly full-time job to start the group, but once it had some perceptible structure and regularity, a woman could be a physical part of it for two hours twice a month. (Of course, she could think about it wherever she was.) Husbands can be coaxed into baby-sitting for that.

It is a problem with many political groups which have the potential of inviting great numbers of "everyday" people that the founders and ideologues almost perforce must be exceptions to the experience of the ordinary participant. Thus there may occur ideological ivory-towerism, a loss of a sense of the basic, pragmatic needs of the majority of participants in the movement, and possibly an alienation of the base of support, of the very people who need it the most. It is still a question as to whether the Women's Liberation Movement will succeed in substantially avoiding this pitfall. Due in part to the explicit, sweeping egalitarianism the ideology embodies, it is my guess that the Movement will keep reaching out to and including a very wide spectrum of women.

Following on this reasoning we can modify Freeman's proposition by noting that the kind of co-optability she seems to mean is essential largely for the requirements of movement or local group formation. Women who found such groups may also be able over time to put in more time in apparent Movement activities of an organizing, public nature. But once the Movement is rolling, once the meeting place is set, the publicity appearing, then anyone becomes "co-optable", who simply "fits" the proble-
matic subject group as defined in the ideology. This is all women in this case, and it is the job of a movement, embodied in its participants, to make an ideological and social "home base" for its constituency.

Freeman's third proposition, or prerequisite, for the establishment of a social movement combines the existence of networks, a situation of perceived strain revolving around a woman's location of herself in society, and some "precipitant" for action that can then be directed along the ideological guidelines that the women become aware of. In this chapter, on the history and character of the two Vancouver groups, I will be describing the role of the first two factors (networks and in-common situations making for "co-optability" to the "new ideas"). The founders' accounts of the history of their respective groups make very apparent the validity of the first two propositions.

While all of the prerequisites could overlap in people's experience and in the course of a social movement's career, the part played by perceived strain or distress over their location in the social structure - their existence as women, as members of a now-known-to-be oppressed group - is shown more clearly in their accounts of their own individual early awareness of the existence and then relevance of the Women's Liberation ideology in their own lives. The role of the ideology in the women's coming to define certain areas of their lives as problematic, as capable of analysis and even of change through the application of the ideology, will thus be the subject of the following chapter.
A. Formation and Structure of the Groups

In order to describe how the Women's Liberation Movement began in Vancouver - with the forming of the Women's Caucus - and to understand how the women in each group became participants, it is necessary to provide a description of the history and structure of the two groups. As will be seen, the two groups function as pre-selectors of their "type" of membership, they emphasize different parts of the Women's Liberation ideology, goals and strategies for reaching these goals, and they have different interactive patterns.

Since the structure of interactive circumstances effects the kind of interpretation, defining, and testing of their situation that can go on among people, it is likely that the fact of the two groups having differing structures will make for Women's Liberation experiences that seem to differ not just from person to person, but also from one group of persons to the other group. That is, there should be some general type of intergroup as well as intra-group differentiation.

Thus, in order to pursue the analysis of change in the women's lives, a thorough understanding of the character (history, structure, and personnel) of each of the groups is required. The groups do not come by their character entirely accidentally. They were founded by persons according to what the founders understood of the ideology and of themselves and other women in relation to the ideology and to each other. Furthermore, they are sustained according to how, and insofar as, they meet the political and personal needs of the women present. The women obviously will
be involved in constructing and changing the nature of the group — again in accordance with their understanding of the ideology and their perception of their own and others' abilities and needs within it. This is a very complex process, the understanding of which is the central concern of this study.

The essence of this process is that the interaction is not lineal in its course and results; rather it is a reciprocating relationship that does nonetheless show an evolution of character (of persons, of groups, of ideology) over time.

The description of the history and structure of the groups comes from two kinds of sources. For the Women's Caucus account I have relied upon an "oral history" given to me by two of the founders of the group. They talked about it during an evening and this was tape-recorded and transcribed. Their account was supplemented often with the other interviews, in that several of the women were also founders or very early members of the group. Since the Women's Caucus started their own newspaper (The Pedestal) quite soon after their inception, a further record of the group is available there and was drawn on to some degree. Descriptions of the current structure (as of the time of the field work) are drawn from my participant observation and from interviews.

For the UBC group I rely largely on my having been present at the first meeting called and from regular (weekly and more) attendance at the group activities for virtually the entirety of its first year. Some specifics as to how the first meeting was called were provided in the interviews.
Women's Caucus

In the oral history of the Women's Caucus, as provided by Penny and Marta, two of the founders who continued their active participation over the nearly three years since the beginning of the group, the embedding in the past of the philosophy, strategy, and organization of the present group* can most definitely be seen - as Blumer indicates it must be.

I will first trace the events listed by Penny and Marta which are historical milestones in the development of the group. This will be my selection (largely coinciding with their own) of concrete "steps" taken along the way as the group is formed, as it becomes institutionalized, and achieves an identity of its own in the view of both participants and the outside community.

Then I will interject at each point in the brief summary of the history of the group, the interpretations of the origins and character of these events as recalled by two people who were instrumental in the structuring of these facts. It is here that we may see the "interpretive process", the "fitting of lines of action to each other", the "growing out of what went before" (Blumer, 1969).

1. What Happened:

The nucleus of women who eventually formed the Women's Caucus knew each other from their experiences in New Left student politics at Simon Fraser University, in 1967 and 1968. (This university is commonly called "SFU" and will be referred to as such throughout the study).

* I am speaking in the historical present. The group "now" is the group over the year of the Fall of 1970 and Spring and Summer of 1971. This was the third year of the group's existence.
Penny: People knew each other. Like, most of the people who were involved at the beginning were people, were women who were involved in the Left, had been in the SDU, Students for a Democratic University.

During a sit-in in the boardroom of the university, the idea came up of co-opting this luxurious, seldom used room for a Day Care Centre. This usage was just for one day, "for the TV cameras", but the women who had children stuck together and formed a permanent Day Care group. Day Care or women's issues in general were not at the time a priority of the student movement.

Penny: "...It spent one day as a Day Care with a few token kids, right? They're for the TV cameras...and then out of that there was, like, it was the nucleus of a group of women, most of whom had children, single women with children, who had all the problems that involved, right of being students and trying to find people to look after their kids while they were students, and not being able to afford it.

And that's essentially where the thing started, but... they really did almost immediately have, like, this consciousness about their special problems as women - the focus for it in Day Care.

Child care generally was not merely an issue at all... in the general Left Movement at that time."

The Day Care women were a large part of a group that they formed as the Feminist Action League. This was the summer of 1968. The Feminist Action League met with great derision from male members of the student body, particularly the politically active ones.

Penny: ...That summer...was the bad-mouthing time. They had the Feminist Action League and the newspaper, the student newspaper, put it down. Like nobody had any consciousness.

Marta: Pussy power.
Penny: Yeah, pussy power...like all the men sort of on the Left were going "Nyaah, Nyaah, you're being ridiculous" and stuff like that.

There began to be some articles on Women's Liberation available during that summer and some of the women began reading them.

Penny: A few women were starting to talk about Women's Liberation, and by that time...Juliet Mitchell's article "Women: the Longest Revolution" had been unearthed.

Marta: The Ramparts article had come out.

Penny: The literature was only starting to happen and, like people were rediscovering, you know, Lenin or whoever it was on the woman question, and...Engels...and the classic stuff was being rediscovered. And then some new stuff was happening and some people in were starting to write a little bit too about what was going on.

That fall (1968) some women - other than the political women Penny and Marta knew - called a meeting about women for women. It was clear at this meeting that there was no consensus about what women's issues and needs were. It is here that the comments of Marta and Penny reveal their own interpretation of the most appropriate goals and strategies for women.

As was pointed out in the discussion of the features and specific content of the ideology of the Women's Liberation Movement, the ideology does provide an interpretation of the historical bases of the problem being defined (the oppression of women). There were the oppression-arises-out-of-oppressive-attitudes explanations and oppression-arises-from-exploitive-social-structure explanations. It is clear from the following that the founders of the Women's Caucus found the latter interpretation more amenable to their own understanding of the way the world worked. And it is this interpretation and the strategies it implied that they developed in their establishment of and continuing participation in the Women's Caucus.
To continue with Penny and Marta's description:

Marta: There seemed to be a sort of obvious split between people who wanted to do sort of social action/political stuff, and I mean not sort of - not necessarily outside - well, it wasn't all that explicit, but sort of weren't rejecting the sort of personal needs of people...but saw it mainly as a matter of social action - and [the split between the former] people who wanted a lot of sort of talk groups.

Penny: Self-analysis.

Marta: Who wanted to go off in the direction that the States had gone into and quite explicitly sort of therapy, some of them -- cause they had this stupid psychology prof.

Penny: Yeah...the context of the meeting was they had invited a lady psychologist...and she sat in this sort of throne-like chair while the rest of us scrounged all around the room, and [she] told us how little girls grew up like flowers - naturally - to be women.

...I was going along like "this I got to see", cause I'd just quit my job as a psychologist...and I knew she was going to be awful and she was - oh, she was awful!

The psychologist had invited discussion, but one of the women said she would like to go around the room and let everyone say why they'd come to the meeting. As Marta says:

Marta: ...The difference in expectations really become clear, because everyone said what they expected out of that meeting.

Penny: You know, what you were considering.

Marta: And we could always find out who our friends were.

Penny: The political people.

Marta: "Hi, over there!"
There were about twelve women at the meeting and about nine
of them seemed "political". Of the others, it was recounted:

Penny: ...There were about three or so who were sort of sitting
in the corner saying, "I think...I want to talk about
Jung..." or...you know, this

Marta: the one woman who cried, who said this is, the first
place I've ever sort of felt at home, and I need so
much help.

Penny: [says the women's name]

Marta: Yeah

Penny: Oh, God!

Marta: It was so sad.

Penny: I could have strangled -

Marta: cry, whimper. She was -

It is apparent from the explicit and implicit tone of this how
these central founders of the group felt about the role of the movement in
relation to intimate, unhappy, personal feelings of women. They said in
this part of the exchange that they had tried to explain to each other at
this meeting that taking the psychologist's view, and looking at indivi­
dual problems led to trying only individual solutions which would not
bring about social change, which was where the problems lay. Yet rather
than see the psychologically oriented women's discomfort and needs as a
part of the social circumstances and then allow them to be expressed, it
is clear that the "political" women shied away from this form of articula­
tion of problematic areas.

They are continuing to fit themselves into self-typifications as
political activists, with politics being defined as having content external
from the self. In this sense, they are very much embedded in their past, and while the content of their political activity is different, the form is not radically altered.

Shortly thereafter some of the political women called another meeting. At this meeting, it was decided to call the group the Women's Caucus. The mechanics of group formation can be seen, as well as more of the political embedding of the founders in the comments that followed:

Marta: The "Jungians" had been the people who called the [previous] meeting, and given the structure of things would be the people who called the next meeting, except luckily they never did.

[One of the "Jungians"] was supposed to call another meeting and I ran into her on campus and I said, "When is the next one going to be?" and she said, "Oh, I don't know. It doesn't seem to be anything happening," right? which left the vacuum.

Penny: Into which we stomped ferociously.

I: So what did you do?

Penny: So we sat around together - Marta and me and Bobbie and ...said what will we do...and then we decided we had to have another meeting only we had to be much more explicit about what we were trying to accomplish. And so we discussed, like, the name and decided that...the "Feminine Action League" had to go - we had by default become the Feminine Action League and that name had to go because of all the bad-mouthing that had gone on.

And we wanted it like a really, tried as much as possible to think of something that would conjure up a political image right away. So we called it Women's Caucus cause we thought a caucus, you know, people immediately associate that with politics, right?

Actually, given that they had read so little about Women's Liberation, and were the earliest proponents of Women's Liberation as they understood it in Vancouver, it is not surprising that they thought in such a
traditional way about politics and political groups. What is notable here is that varying viewpoints were early on unwelcome and this continued to be the case with this group. I am suggesting that the character of the group was set at this time and that this definition of political—that politics was social action exercised upon the apparent structures of society (class, economy, etc.), and that personal concerns were not to be dwelt upon—was seen as the only legitimate one. (I sat in on discussion after discussion where opposite views—the "psychological" orientation—weren't put down, they simply weren't heard by focal people.)

The only time personal needs, for friendship and support, were mentioned as worthy of consideration were in often repeated statements that personal strength and friendship were built up by working with people. As the two women said:

Marta: Comradeship comes

Penny: through doing things together.

[A minute or so later in the interview]:

Marta: I at least always from the beginning had this idea, that the way you developed sort of comradeship was in doing some thing together and it wasn't, you know—I never saw these meetings as something where you were just sitting around trying to help each other individually, and I...think most other people didn't either. I always saw them as [having the] focus that social action was supposed to come out [of them]. We had discussions about that fairly often.

This group of women began composing and distributing literature on women and holding meetings for women. They addressed themselves to birth control and abortion problems, feeling it was the form of social action they could reach most campus women with.
They succeeded in having birth control information and "devices" available at the student health centre. And they began to collect and disseminate what information they could on abortion aid.

In the late fall of 1968 the general political situation on the campus became very active and the administration building was occupied. The women tried to be a distinct force in the political activity but did not succeed.

Penny: ...that was one of the things we talked a lot about, you know, our inability in meetings to ever say anything [once one woman had tried and the microphone was taken right out of her hands by a man] and, like, the complete dominance that you felt by all these men. And how angry we would be because men would get up and...essentially [make] fools out of themselves, saying really stupid things that I would know was stupid and that all the women knew was stupid, but somehow, you know, they had the chutzpah to do it.

And none of the women would even dream of getting up and...we would sit there and wait,...knowing full well the kinds of points we would make if we spoke, except that we didn't speak. We would wait for some man who would sooner or later...get around to saying the things you would like to say if you had the nerve to say it....

All these kinds of things were worked through a lot during the fall, talking about that.

But the Occupation...came on us so fast in terms of where we were that the whole...women's group was almost totally non-functional.

As matters simplified over the winter, by February of 1969 the women began calling public meetings on women's issues again. Women began meeting in each other's houses as well, and there was a central meeting place for women closer to Burnaby (where SFU is) and another for those closer to central Vancouver. Some of the women found the commuting to
either group difficult and they also found it difficult to feel any con-
tinuity with a group because of the rapid turnover of participants.

In the spring of 1969 a woman from the Prairies who had been active politically came to work as a technician at SFU. This was Judy. She began coming to meetings and discussing with the women her interest in reaching non-university women.

Marta: Judy showed up at about that time, and Judy was really important for the whole thing, because she had all that political experience and a really strong orientation to working women, right? She just wanted to pull everybody off campus.

...I don't even remember when I first met her, but I just know that...I can remember talking about the kind of public meetings we should have downtown with her...so I obviously...really hooked in quick with her.

The other women had been discussing having public meetings "downtown" and they began having very successful monthly educational meetings in a local union hall.

The women more and more often supplied local media with speakers, and they talked to classes at SFU about Women's Liberation, and some of them became members of the student council.

They sponsored a quite well-known Women's Liberation ideologue from the U.S. for one very well-attended meeting which brought a lot of attention and legitimacy to their efforts among men in the local Left.

As their efforts seemed to snowball the women began to consider seriously having an office, one downtown. This was particularly emphasized by Judy. They heard from a local political pressure group that a close office was available in the Labour Temple and they took it.
Marta: It turned out that they would give us [an office] for $30, a room down there, which we snapped up, partly because it was cheap and partly for political reasons, because we thought that was a really symbolic, good place to have an office. That would say a lot.

They then were able to do much more in the way of speaking, leafletting, holding educational, writing position papers for student conferences, etc.

They were in the Labour Temple for about a year. From there they began their Newspaper.

Intv.: How did the Pedestal start?

Marta: Well, I suspect, like Judy's political background is sort of the traditional socialist background - you got a socialist group, you've got to have a newspaper. And Bobbie had been wanting to do a newspaper for working women for a long time, she had been talking about it and Judy wanted to do a newspaper.

Penny: Judy was the one who had access to the machinery.

Marta: Judy had the access and the skills...cause she was working for [the campus newspaper].

Penny: as a type-setter.

They also planned and carried out the Abortion Caravan - a nationwide publicity campaign to change the anti-abortion laws.

Initially they had been unsettled by a rapid turnover of women, but early in this Union Hall year the two women said that:

Penny: Then it sort of settled into

Marta: a core group

Penny: who was coming

Marta: and then you could start actually planning something
They also had at this time the idea of having the group be organized into special-interest workshops. The idea arose from:

Marta: It's the same sort of thing of
Penny: growing, you know, experience
Marta: Yeah, comradeship comes through
Penny: doing things together.
Marta: Action, I mean you need to do things...you have to do concrete things.

The abortion campaign and its activities took much of the personnel and energy of the group until that summer. Almost the only other project to continue functioning fully was the Pedestal effort.

The women who did not work in the abortion campaign, and who did not go on the caravan across Canada, did manage to have some educational and a few demonstrations.

After the abortion caravan a split became evident between people who shared activities so closely that they were now estranged from those who stayed at home. And there were disagreements on strategy - whether all the group's efforts should go into abortion reform, or whether more women could be reached by the group's addressing itself to a broader spectrum of issues.

One or two smaller groups of women split off, to form collectives or to work on their own.

After a strategy conference held in late June of 1970 it was decided to broaden the range of projects the Women's Caucus would undertake and support. The new organizational structure was to be "consistency" based. As a summary statement from the majority group stated in the Pedestal:
Another implication of the strategy decision at the Conference is the realization that mobilizing women around single issues, like abortion, is inadequate. In spite of the educational work which is done to link the particular issue to other aspects of women's oppression, women will be involved primarily in acting around that issue rather than in confronting their individual oppression in all its aspects. Thus it was decided that the Caucus should be *constituency oriented*—we should organize women around their places of work, school, etc., so that they can define their main problems and begin to work towards solutions.

The goal is *not* to mobilize large numbers of women who can be called out to demonstration, but to organize and to help women to become political women who can confront the institutions and people who oppress them. Although we naturally wish to involve as many people as possible in the Caucus, our main goal will be to organize women to fight for their liberation in the places where they live and work (June, 1970).

The workshops began to expand and over the fall of 1970 and the spring of 1971 there was the co-ordinating committee, and additional workshops on birth control and abortion counselling, for working women, for the *Pedestal*, one on theatre, one on media, and a teachers' workshop. All were entirely voluntary and there was considerable overlap of personnel. Some were more active than others.

By the end of the summer of 1970 the Trotskyist faction was expelled and Women's Caucus then consisted of a very active group of perhaps twelve people, with about another twenty people irregularly present, and a mailing subscription list of several hundred. It was at that time that my field work began.

Over the year, the active workshops became the working women's, and the *Pedestal*. There were monthly business meetings and the workshops met on their own at least twice a month. For a while there were monthly informal "recruiting" meetings as well.
Over the year fall, 1970, spring 1971, this pattern remained — of a few workshops working, a few people supporting the financing and maintenance of the office work.

By the summer of 1971 the women in the two workshops, who often were also maintaining the office, called a meeting at which they notified everyone else that they no longer wanted to diffuse their energies over the workshops and the office. They wanted to spend their time on their workshops only. Other women — relatively new to and different from the previous Women’s Liberation regulars — said they would maintain the office as a drop-in centre for women and that they would undertake to meet some other needs of women in the community.

The Working Women's workshop became an entity in and of itself and the Pedestal became more explicitly a collective.

This ended the time of any field work — conveniently at a time of the disappearance of the Women's Caucus as I had known it.

UBC Group — History and Character

The UBC group existed as a discrete entity for approximately one year — ending late August, 1971. It emerged nearly full-blown in terms of regular meetings, number of participants (about two-thirds of which were "regulars" throughout the year) and consciousness on the part of participants of their being engaged in a Women's Liberation group, per se.

There is no sign of the struggles that some of the Women's Caucus women had of defining themselves or their groups as distinct from any other political expression or goals, or as distinct from men as political activists.
In effect, this had already been done for the UBC women in that by the fall of 1970 the whole idea (vague as it often was) of the Women's Liberation Movement was quite widespread throughout Canada, and thanks to the activities of the Women's Caucus, the UBC group did not have the struggle of being the avant-garde within their own community. Women's Liberation, suspect as it may have been, had arrived. Some models of activity, persons, and groups existed. This can be seen to have significantly effected the origin and character of the UBC group. This pre-existent state of the Women's Liberation Movement shows its effects in the stories the UBC women, and later-joining Women's Caucus women, have of their entry into the Movement as well.

Logistically speaking, the way the UBC group started was that three or four women who were university-centred in their interests and employment got interested in Women's Liberation and decided that there should be an on-campus group. They went to the Women's Caucus for advice and were told that they could and should "go it on their own" by calling a meeting on campus. They did so by word of mouth (and the Women's Caucus announced it to anyone they were in contact with who was connected to UBC). About thirty-five women showed up at the first meeting.

I have indicated very briefly above the historical embedding of the Women's Caucus group in terms of the movement as a whole and in Vancouver specifically. It is necessary to see in some detail the parallel embedding of the founding of the UBC group in the personal histories of the women who started it. The ones who started it were Hilary, Jeanette, and
Siobhan, with Amy being present, though not as a planner, during their early conversations.

The three women - Hilary, Jeanette, and Siobhan - are all "professional" women to one degree or another. Hilary is a tenured professor, Jeanette is a regularly published writer of novels and stories, and Siobhan teaches at the University in an experimental undergraduate programme. They have been friends for some time. As will be shown in the "Early Awareness" section to follow, they all focussed their interest on the movement largely after reading about it in one of the major movement books, Sexual Politics. They each brought a personal, biographical interest to their reading, of course. Siobhan feels that she had always valued women as a group and that the recent reading served to inform her as to ways to articulating her interests; and Hilary and Jeanette had been goaded by friends into acting on their newly professed interest what they perceived as the plight of other women (the "there but for Fortune..." syndrome). They both were acquainted with the author of Sexual Politics (Kate Millett) as well, and thus were partially interested in its content.

But what moved them to make this organizational step was talking among themselves about what they read in Sexual Politics (Hilary: "[talking together] sort of gave us the impetus"), knowing that a Women's Liberation group existed in town, and wanting to have a group nearer where they lived and worked. The three women called up Women's Caucus and arranged a meeting to discuss starting a group out at UBC. As Amy observed:

I don't think they had any plan in mind, either - to talk about just starting it geographically out at UBC. That's really what ...it literally started as. I don't think they had any more idea what they wanted to go on than I did.
So the group was started. It met weekly for a year. Attendance averaged about thirty-five women, with nearly seventy women over a few weeks in the middle of the year.

Since the group was not founded by people with traditional political backgrounds, it follows that a great deal more negotiating of routine action would take place, as Blumer indicates can be the case in a group. From my year of participant observation, and from the interviews conducted, I would say that few of the women had a precise idea of what they wanted from the group and of what they wanted the group to do. There was more consensus about what were not desirable or acceptable alternatives of attitude or activity than about what was desirable.

There was a very strong consensus that no one should force anyone else into their own set of interests or goals or strategies. There would be extensive discussion of an informational and persuasive nature in reference to a given point (i.e., should we all work on one activity at the risk of alienating some of our participants; what activities are most of us interested in; do we want to have a different format to the meetings; etc.) but the conclusion invariably reached was that anyone who was interested could get together with others similarly inclined and work on their own time. They should keep the main group informed and could and should ask for support from the group. This regularly happened, with there being a spin-off Day Care group, several consciousness-raising "small groups", a music group, a literary group studying women writers; and short-term special-interest groups for making political pressure moves in town (writing briefs,
attending conferences, joining the local United Fund in order to help vote in a reform slate with one of the group's participants, etc.).

A typical meeting devoted the first one-half to whole hour for "business", which largely involved the above type of activities. And for the second half of the meeting the women numbered off and broke into small conversational groups of five or six. Sometimes there was an explicit topic suggested, sometimes the first half of the meeting was "educational" and talk could follow on that.

The discussions in these smaller groups were usually attempts to define Women's Liberation in relation to their own personal, emotional/psychological lives. The participants were numbered off by the women deliberately so that they would insure themselves of talking to new women and women who they didn't know as well as they might the women who shared their own "small group", etc. They tried to articulate the issues in their lives at home (husbands, children, lovers) at school, at work, with what they had heard of the Women's Liberation ideology. There was a conscious and repeated effort by a number of these women in the group - including virtually all of the most outspoken (and usually influential) ones - to keep these discussion times on the personal, psychological and friendship level. There was "business", and it was done - at the beginning of the meeting, or in the spin-off "action" groups - but these times were reserved for close talk with new and old friends. This sentiment was explicitly stated and generally agreed upon as a conclusion to any of the group-self-defining discussions of what Women's Liberation was all about and what this group wanted to do and be within it.
This was the way the group functioned for most of the year. Most of the women who were in spin-off groups regularly attended the Monday night meetings. There were some women in the spin-off groups who did not attend the Monday meetings either because they weren't interested or, as was often the case for some of the Day Care women, they did not have time for both.

There were three parties over the year, and there was (as will be shown from the interviews) a great deal of socializing among the women outside of the meetings.

In the summer, there was lower attendance and fewer activities. This is of course usually true in a campus-oriented group. About six to ten women started designing a Women's Studies Course for the following year and during that following year a great proportion of the regulars in the UBC group served as discussion leaders. They met each other there, but the UBC group as studied here no longer existed. Several of the spin-off activities continued and some of the women initiated new ones, most notably a Women's Health group.

Discussion

Thus, we can see how women active in the political left of the middle and late '60's began to perceive a decided discrepancy between the rhetoric of equality for all and the concrete situation of their secondary and exploited position as women within the Left movement and then as women in society at large. They began to feel that if total change of society
Summary of History and Structure of the Two Groups

For the analysis in the remainder of this study, it is important to keep in mind the history and character of the two groups as outlined above. In schematic terms, they may be seen thusly:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nos.</th>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Emotional Tone</th>
<th>Networks</th>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Type of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WC</td>
<td>10 core; 40 total active.</td>
<td>task oriented workshops</td>
<td>friendly but businesslike.</td>
<td>tight. The core - about 3-4 in each group - meet largely in WC tasks.</td>
<td>changing economic and political circumstance of women by traditional political means (educational and pressure-group factors). university women (graduate students &amp; faculty); a few working women, mostly middle class. Most with political experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCG</td>
<td>Large mailing list. 100's</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>have passed through the WC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UBC</td>
<td>20 core; 50 total participants, app. 10 seen once, app. 20 seen for several weeks, app. 100 passed through the UBC group.</td>
<td>deliberately very warm, explicit attempts at each meeting to orient and include new-comers.</td>
<td>extensive for many - both in WL activities and socializing.</td>
<td>building strength through shared knowledge, preparing to go out into other WL activities. university women (graduate students &amp; faculty); wives of students (may be students too) &amp; may also be mothers. Middle class. Few with political experience.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
was possible at all it could only come through dealing with problems of women first (not fighting "the war" or "imperialism" or "capitalism" - at least not in the conventional means they were familiar with). The women in Vancouver who started the Women's Caucus were women who, as Freeman proposed, began to identify as societally-caused the strains they felt cover their role as politically active women. They, too, were women who knew each other, had talked and worked together and who knew how to begin certain sorts of political organizations.

Thus, Freeman's first two propositions are substantiated. Each set of founders were in overlapping social, professional and/or political circles, based on their respective places of work. Further, they were definitely "like-minded people" whose position and experience in their circles made them readily able to adopt the interpretations of their situation, and that of less fortunate women, provided by the ideology of the Movement.

As I noted in the introduction to this chapter, there is a special kind of relationship between co-optability and networks for founders. That is, by Women's Liberation definition all women are in a stressful, oppressive situation by virtue of being women. All women are therefore potentially "like-minded" on certain broad issues or principles. But where the life situation of founders is distinct and where it relates to networks is that the professional women have the time, means, and rather specific commonality of work experiences in the realm of ideas that allow them to undertake the rather special task of starting a political group. Continuing it or being a later joining regular is another and initially
logistically simpler undertaking. The nature and role of friendship links is somewhat different for the later joiners (see next chapter for discussion of this).

As the Women's Liberation Movement evolved differences in priorities within the movement began to be articulated. As was noted in the description of the Vancouver groups, the clearest bifurcation was about definitions of action. Everyone agreed that the overall situation of women had to be changed, but for some women, the founders of the Women's Caucus, this was seen as best done by emphasizing economic change and by accomplishing this through working in rather traditional ways to improve the economic conditions of women working outside the house. Consciousness-raising and sisterhood would come through working together, and through educational action of an explicit sort (a newspaper, theatrics, speakers, etc.). This orientation evolved out of their own autobiographies - their own experiences as working and professional women, their own political background and political analysis of the way the world works in general and of what was needed for women - and women in Vancouver - at that time.

The UBC group was founded by women whose autobiographies did not include much political involvement. Though they were working professional women they did not define their goals or interests immediately in terms of economic change. Their own lives revolved around personal relationships and the University. They had a rather vague notion about what Women's Liberation was or could be, they just knew they wanted to get together with other campus-oriented women to talk about Women's Liberation in relation to each other and other women. Yet they share with the Women's Caucus
founders the growing articulation of the social structural bases of their strain over being women and they share social networks and access to organizational aids (use of ideas, access to meeting rooms, etc.) with each other.

It is important to note that in terms of the history of Women's Liberation in Vancouver, women who become interested in Women's Liberation after the Women's Caucus became a clear entity could now take into account the type of group Women's Caucus was and the kind of priorities and actions it utilized in defining what they as a group or group member could do. They could in effect say, "well, that's their bag, that kind of thing is being done, so we can 'afford' to do our kind of thing - whatever that is." They could also refer to the Women's Caucus women who showed up at the UBC group and who wanted to be active along the lines that the Women's Caucus was. (Similarly, the Women's Caucus would send over to the UBC group women who were UBC students, or particularly interested in consciousness-raising groups as such.) A second or third (or 100th) group does not have to try to do everything for women all at once. A first group is likely to try to through lack of experience and through concern that no one else is doing anything. But either type of group - chronologically speaking - will still have to set priorities as to what will best do "everything" or as to what will best fill in gaps the other group seems to have. These gaps may be organizational, or strategic, or even geographic. That is, a group may be seen to be incomplete in terms of its structure (is it too formal, too lose to get enough done?), its related goals and tactics, or simply it may be too far away to get to.
It would be inaccurate to say that later groups form entirely on the basis of what other groups are seen as not doing. It is quite possible for women in one situation or area to be quite unaware of what other women are doing. Also, women can have decided what they do want from a group. But once the ideology has become fairly well known, once a lot of literature is available, and once it is likely that a friend or acquaintance is familiar with some group's activities - even if she is not a participant - women are able to take into account both their overall interpretation of the Movement in relation to themselves and of the movement as expressed by local groups.

B. A Description of the Type of Women's Liberation Activities the Women Engaged in and the Time Spent on Them

Most of this study will be taken up in showing how the ideology of the Women's Liberation Movement can pervade virtually all aspects of a woman's life. She can use it in interpreting and acting upon her marriage or its ending; the presence of very close relationships with men or the lack of them; her experience doing paid work; the source and type of friendships she once had and now has. But a full portrayal of being in this social movement requires that the reader have a clear picture of what these activities consisted of, which groups evolved what type, and how much time different people devoted to them. This kind of information contributes to a concrete sense of what regular participation in either group meant for the women - in terms of the kinds of activities and skills involved and the time spent in them. The next chapter talks about how women attempted change in their lives outside group activities per se, but a characterization of the
groups would be lacking without this description of the kinds of "demands" entailed in group participation itself.

Just as the Women's Liberation goals that a woman pursues are selected according to her individual biography and the change options she feels are available to her, so too will the type of Movement participation she undertakes be affected.

I will summarize in chart form the kinds of activities and the time spent on them, by members of each group. Then there will be a description and discussion of each facet of activity/commitment in relation to the histories and structure of the groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>UBC Group</th>
<th>WC Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>general meeting</td>
<td>Hilary, Anita, Lisa, Donna, Willa, Trina, Janet, Kai, Henrietta, Shirley, Hestia, Lucy, Amy, Siobhan, Jeanette, Abby, Madeleine, Frieda</td>
<td>Bonnie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consciousness-raising group</td>
<td>Anita, Lisa, Donna, Willa, Janet, Kai, Lucy, Amy, Siobhan</td>
<td>Marta, Penny, Betsy, Adrienne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speaking engagements (regular)</td>
<td>Donna, Janet, Amy, Siobhan</td>
<td>Judy - Pedestal, WWW*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>task/interest group</td>
<td>Abby - day care</td>
<td>Edythe - Pedestal, WWW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lisa - women's studies</td>
<td>Adele - Pedestal, WWW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Willa - day care</td>
<td>Penny - Pedestal, WWW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Janet - teacher organization</td>
<td>Pam - Pedestal, WWW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jeanette - literary, music</td>
<td>Adrienne - treasurer of WC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kai - music</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Madeleine - day care, teacher organization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frieda - literary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Type of Activities Engaged In (continued)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>UBC Group</th>
<th>WC Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>task/interest group (cont'd.)</td>
<td>Shirley - women's studies, study</td>
<td>Bonnie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amy - Status of Women Committee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hilary - literary, music</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>support actions</td>
<td>Jeanette</td>
<td>Marta, Betsy, Adele, Edythe, Judy, Pam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Working Women's Workshop

The categories of activities listed in the chart mean the following:

**General Meetings**

Women's Caucus - for the last few months of the Women's Caucus existence, there were weekly meetings designed to acquaint new people with the work of the Caucus and to help the women attending to meet each other. One of every four meetings was a business meeting for the whole group, where workshop reports were to be made, along with a treasury report, discussion of the state of the Caucus, etc. One or two who were experienced in the Women's Caucus were responsible for opening the meeting, welcoming people, and helping the conversation along.

Bonnie was the newest person to participate in the Women's Caucus and she still wanted the general discussion of what Women's Liberation was about that occurred in these meetings. She was interested in the problems
of working women, but could put in time on this only occasionally, in "support actions", like occasional leafletting for a Working Women's Workshop action. It may be recalled that Bonnie was the most occupied with simple survival, as the sole supporter of two children, on a low-paying, insecure job. She felt she did not have time to go to more than she did. She did not want what limited social life she had to be completely eliminated, as much more time at Women's Caucus activities would necessitate.

UBC - these were the regular Monday night meetings that were the evidence of the UBC group's existence. They had no office, no newspaper, no workshops acting under their recognized auspices. The criterion for participation in the UBC group was presence at three meetings per month. Thus, anyone who was drawn upon for the study had to spend at least most Monday nights at this general meeting. Here some business took place (see History and Character of Groups section) but most of the time was spent talking about what Women's Liberation was or could be in a woman's life.

**Consciousness-Raising Group**

Women's Caucus - there were no small conversational groups explicitly organized to facilitate intensive, long-term discussion among women about their lives as women in an oppressive society. This is not to say that consciousness-raising cannot or did not occur under other circumstances, like in the workshops themselves. It's just that the Women's Caucus didn't explicitly set out to organize these groups as did members of the UBC group.
UBC - a number of women organized small consciousness-raising groups which met weekly at other times and places. Half of the UBC women were in these groups, which included a number of women who were not participants in any recognized, named Women's Liberation group, such as the UBC one or the Women's Caucus. These meetings lasted at least three hours. Often the groups included socializing like camping trips and/or members rotating having lunches or dinners for their own group.

**Speaking Engagements**

Women's Caucus - the Women's Caucus was very often contacted to provide speeches for a very wide range of interested groups - receptive to hostile. Since they were listed in the phone book, had an office, had a newspaper, and had been active for several years sending speakers out was a constant expectation. There was no set way of supplying speakers - whoever was around and was interested did it. Speaking engagements usually took one to three hours, with a lot of the time taken in question-and-answer periods and with some socializing before and after with the inviting group - unless it was a formal occasion, like a men's business organization.

UBC - much of the speaking was in classes at UBC, where teaching assistants or professors who knew someone in the UBC group asked them to speak or provide a speaker. For much of the year the UBC group existed, there was a regular demand for speakers. Most of the women spoke at least once or twice, but the women listed here did so quite often, enough to feel that it did take part of their time and energy.
Task and Interest Groups

Women's Caucus - these were the workshops mentioned. The Pedestal newspaper one took at least one 16 hour day once a month and regular weekly meetings of several hours in length and frequent phoning, lots of writing, etc. The working women's workshop tried to get working women together to talk about conditions at work. They held "educational"s" in the downtown area, inviting women through poster advertising and word-of-mouth. They worked with some women who were striving for fair treatment at their place of work. They would meet with the women to plan actions, help devise posters and leaflets, help distribute them, picket, promote the boycott of certain products or stores, etc. This took weekly meetings at the very least and often many more hours of individual work or work in two's or three's.

UBC - there were both task and interest groups arising out of the UBC group. Of task groups there were groups trying to set up a day care centre for campus-oriented women, and for awhile there was a group trying to organize meetings with future teachers at the school of education. There was also for some time a group discussing the establishment of the first women's studies program at UBC. (This was set up that summer and was very successful.) Another interest group was started by women who wanted to look more closely at the role of women in literature - as creators or subject matter - and also met for several hours every other week for discussion. Another group of women who were interested in examining sexism in music and trying to find an alternative to it, also met to talk and "perform" together.
Both of these groups met in the home of Hilary and Jeanette. The literary group met in the evening. The music group took up Sunday afternoons.

These UBC groups did not have the continuity in time or the ready identifiability that the Women's Caucus groups had. People tended to work on what was apparently most relevant to them (mothers on day care, teachers on teacher education, writers in the literary group) but this was not entirely so. Not all mothers worked on day care and at least one non-mother (Madeleine) did.

**Support Action**

Women's Caucus - this is differentiated from task/interest group activities in that occasionally women would help out a task group that they did not "belong" to. One woman (Bonnie) did so often enough to list it as an activity, but she could not afford the time to be as regular as the whole group. (See "General Meetings" on Women's Caucus.) She occasionally helped prepare or pass out leaflets, walked picket lines, etc.

UBC - no one in the UBC group listed this kind of activity - they were either quite active in any of these groups and thus "belonged" or they just weren't there.

**Writing**

Women's Caucus - again, with the *Pedestal* and with the academic and political background of several of the Women's Caucus members, it is not surprising that six of the nine list writing as a regular, time-consuming activity. The *Pedestal* was a 16 page (usually), high quality paper with a wide variety of carefully researched and well thought out articles (if I may
say so), and it took an enormous amount of work. Articles that began there were often expanded into pamphlets, and several have appeared in national publications, in reprints, etc.

UBC - the writer here, Jeanette, was the woman for whom writing was a way of life anyhow. She felt that the stories she wrote were definitively affected by her Women's Liberation experiences and that she would try to use her stories for conveying her new thoughts. A few women did contribute articles on women to the university newspaper but this was not anything regular.

**Discussion**

What we can see here is that more of the UBC group members engaged in more kinds of activities than was the case for the Women's Caucus. This reflects the different structures of the group, and how differently they evolved over time. It also reflects the variety of biographies and resultant needs and interests of the members of each group. The UBC women came in with little in the way of clear-cut goals for themselves or other women. They just did anything they could think of - anyone with an idea or interest could usually find some people to share it with her.

Over the years of the existence of the Women's Caucus the goals and actions had become much more explicitly defined. The activities were ones taking considerable skill and great amounts of time. Either a woman could place herself within these actions or there was little connection with the Caucus at all, except the general meetings, at which few regulars came. Thus there wasn't much personal/social unity between the task groups
and the one meeting where new people or people not interested in these tasks could come.

**Time Spent in Women's Liberation Activities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Per Week</th>
<th>UBC</th>
<th>WC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15+ hours</td>
<td>Shirley</td>
<td>Judy, Adele, Penny, Pam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ca. 10 hours</td>
<td>Madeleine, Abby, Lisa, Willa,</td>
<td>Edythe, Betsy, Adrienne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Janet, Jeanette, Kai, Frieda,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amy, Hilary, Siobhan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ca. 6 hours</td>
<td>Anita, Donna, Trina, Lucy</td>
<td>Marta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ca. 3 hours</td>
<td>Henrietta, Hestia</td>
<td>Bonnie</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The divisions of time shown in the chart are average hours per week spent in an explicitly organized Women's Liberation activity. To be considered a regular participant in either group, a woman would usually engage in at least one activity a week - typically a meeting lasting about three hours. Thus, the lowest number of hours most often means only one meeting or activity. Very few women (3 - UBC, 1 - Women's Caucus) spend just one evening a week at a meeting, but those who did, spent it at the general meetings of both groups.

Four people also spent five or six hours a week at activities. These activities were general meetings and consciousness-raising for three of the UBC women, and the general meeting and a day care group for the fourth woman. The Women's Caucus woman was Marta who at one time had spent much more time a week on Women's Caucus activities. She had deliberately cut back several months previous to the interview, to give herself more time
to think and write. She also gave an occasional speech but that was all.

The majority of women in both groups spent at least ten hours a week on Women's Liberation activities (11 in UBC at 10+, one at 15+ hours; 3 in Women's Caucus at 10+ and 4 at 15+). The majority of UBC women engaged in three activities a week, each four hours long. The one woman in the UBC group who spent more than 15 hours, spent it in meetings and a special study group that some non-group friends had formed. She used it to try to understand further the situation of women. Study for this group and meeting with it was very time-consuming.

Clearly, the Women's Caucus women who spent so much time were the ones who had the dual activities of the Pedestal and the working women's workshops. This work virtually made up another whole job for each of them.

As can be seen in the discussion of types of activities, there is more of a spread of time/participation in the UBC group than in the Women's Caucus. This again reflects the more amorphous nature of the former as well as the more diverse experience and everyday situations, and needs and goals of the UBC participants. This could be a function of sheer numbers, but it seems more likely that the history and structure of the UBC group allows for more diversity and the Women's Caucus one does not. (I am not suggesting one is better than the other. As long as both kinds of groups are available in one city then a woman has some choice of her kind of participation. She may be limited in time and mobility from joining a preferred group, it is true, but there would have to be a Women's Liberation
group in each neighbourhood and at each place of work before this problem could be significantly eased.)

An anecdotal tallying of time spent in which types of activities is not enough to give the full impact of these activities. What must be borne in mind is that engaging at the rate most of the women are takes up two to four nights or half-days a week. This means baby-sitters to be found, meals to be rearranged, cars to be borrowed, other work to be shifted or sped up or left out. Most of these women share close, complex relationships with other people - husbands, lovers, children, friends. What each of these new activities means is adjustment. Few women can undertake this kind of schedule, often arising very quickly after her entry into a group, without having to engage in considerable negotiation with those around her.

As some of the early awareness accounts showed (Abby, Willa, Donna), getting out of the house is not easy for women - logistically or psychologically. The physical impact of time must be considered in understanding the women's accounts of moving into the Women's Liberation Movement and very much in their attempts to sustain in their everyday lives the beliefs and actions they have adopted as their own. Having time to go to a number of activities indicates in itself the carrying out of Women's Liberation goals. This is because it is not appropriate or possible for many women to spend that much time at those kinds of activities. These actions, then, are not somehow separate from the very issues of the oppression of women that the women are concerned about. They are a struggle against that very oppression. Thus, nothing the women as individuals do is removed from the ideas they hold about the situation of women in general.
This reflexive nature of their ideas and actions is one of the most striking aspects of the Women's Liberation Movement. Here the woman herself is the subject of the ideology. She cannot leave one life and go to a meeting and work on helping someone else's life (as one could do as a civil rights worker in the 1960's).

She has both the freedom of knowing that virtually anything she does or works on related to women is relevant to a struggle against oppression (ideologically speaking). But she has the burden of knowing there is nowhere and no time when she can be outside the struggle.
In this chapter on early awareness I will be concentrating on the relationship between the ideology and the individual's interests arising out of her distinct biography.

There are several themes in the accounts of early awareness of the Women's Liberation Movement and the later joiners' movement into groups that validate the theoretical perspective utilized here and that can add to our understanding of how social movements work.

Repeatedly there is the affirmation of the symbolic interactionist position that people construct their reality and that they make changes in it only when they come to see some part of it as problematic. I will describe, for instance, the content of women's initial interest in Women's Liberation as being based on what they wanted to get out of the Movement - either help for women other than themselves, or relief in a life situation that was directly and personally stressful for them as women.

In terms of reality construction and problems we can see that whether they wanted first to help others or themselves, this interest was formulated in terms of that ideologically informed conceptual category - women - and then locating themselves within it. If they were to themselves well-off women, they took the there-but-for-fortune approach (Adele: "Hell's bells, I was doing OK, but there were all those other people who were really having a rotten break...[and if she were not so fortunate then] I would have a lot of handicaps too, as a woman, because I was a woman.").
If they did not see themselves this way, if they were confused and unhappy, they then saw the Women's Movement as a place where they could understand their own pain, find like-minded people, find friends.

But whichever way they categorized their lives, they saw at the same time that to be a woman was to be in a problematic situation and vice versa - whether it was experienced first-hand or vicariously. When women were perceived as a distinct category, that category was then open to inspection, to questioning and to change. It was then for each woman to follow through on her understanding of where she stood in this category in order to decide where she would embark upon change. (How they continued to do so will be the subject of the remainder of this work, see Part II).

The data for this section will be reflected off of two theoretical formulations -- discussed in the introduction. They are the "appropriate conditions" for making an ideology relevant to one's life (when the assumed-to-be natural order becomes problematic: Schutz) and the relocation of one's biography according to a new system of interpretations offered by that ideology (Berger; Cicourel). What must become problematic is some feature(s) of one's life which begins to be perceived as having to do with being a woman, and thereby the person begins to understand her past and guide her present and future according to these understandings of what women are and can be.

A look at the entry accounts of all the women interviewed shows that nearly all, at their time of early participation, had come to see some part of the woman's role (not just one of their individual roles) as problematic. This means that they had now externalized their self-concept. Only
this allows them to place themselves within the world of Woman. They drew this interpretation from some part of the Women's Liberation Movement ideology.

But it is necessary to distinguish the shared process of discerning a problem from the content. The content for each woman can be quite different. Obviously, the content must vary according to the individual's "actual biographical situation within [her] environment as defined by [her]" (Schutz, 1964: 234-235 and see above, p.26).

As we look at how the women make the links between the ideology, their own biography, and possible alternatives for action, there are two broad action orientations - one directed largely toward the self, and the others being directed primarily toward the situation of women other than oneself. When a woman's immediate, first interests in the oppression of women focussed upon her own situation, I am designating these types of accounts as "pragmatic" ones. When the woman saw herself as a member of the group Woman but as one without immediate problems yet who wished to help women less fortunate than she felt herself to be at this time, I am calling this type of account the "altruistic" orientation to Women's Liberation.

In terms of the model of how an ideology works, we can see the women selecting out of the ideology as they have heard it those parts which seem to fit their experience - or that could fit it if something went wrong in their lives.

It must be emphasized that these categories are based upon the women's interpretation of their situation at the time of their early awareness and application of the Women's Liberation Movement ideology. They
could very well change where they located themselves as women in relation to the Movement after. Some did, as can be seen in Part II.

The Altruistic Orientation

If a woman perceives her own life as virtually problem-free in terms of her role(s) as a woman, she can nonetheless adopt the Women's Liberation stance that women are disadvantaged by seeing herself as the exception that proves the rule. The problems are once removed from her own life experience, yet she can act directly upon their amelioration.

The objective well-being of certain of the women seemed to be a considerable factor in their altruistic approach to the problems of women. Not all of the objectively well-off women – those with professional jobs who felt at the time of entry that life was treating them quite well in terms of economic and psychological independence – were altruistic in orientation, but all of the "altruists" felt themselves at the time to be relatively well-off in the above senses.

All of the altruistically oriented women were prepared to accept the idea that women were a group that as a whole suffered from oppression. But there were two conceptual routes travelled in arriving at that conclusion. One was a logical conclusion based on personal observation and the other was a conclusion that followed more from previous political awareness and experience. Thus, within the altruistic category are two sub-categories of response-type: the non-political altruist and the political altruist.

The use of the term "political" here is rather problematic, in that it can be said that anyone who tries to alter the power relationships
between groups in society is engaged in a political act, yet, as will be seen from the examples to follow of the two sub-categories, some women had only the most superficial analysis of the role of women in society and of their own role within this. They also had a minimal sense of what action might be taken to alter the role of women. Women with this circumscribed view had had virtually no experience in what is ordinarily seen as "politics". Thus - particularly in contrast to the biographies and analysis of the other altruistic women, the political altruists - it is useful to have the designations of "non-political" and "political".

The Pragmatic Orientation

For many women what they recall as being of interest in the Women's Liberation Movement ideology was that it articulated anxieties and dissatisfactions they had about their ability to perform one or many of their expected roles and it offered alternate interpretations and courses of action for them. There was a very immediate self-help orientation to their interests in Women's Liberation and to their projected alternate lines of action. The problems they dealt with came from one of two sources: perceived external conditions (like difficulty finding jobs, etc.), and felt internal distress.

Of course, the distinction of "external/internal" is useful mostly for schematic, analytical purposes. That is, job difficulties can result in psychic strain, growing lack of self-confidence, etc. And internal distress, unhappiness about the self one feels oneself to be, can be seen to be caused at least in part by external sources (husbands, work,
etc.). But as will be seen, there was a type-difference in terms of the political awareness that the women had and used in interpreting the source of their distress. Because of some political experience, though not in the Women's Movement, some of the women at time of entry could more readily adopt a broad interpretation of their situation. They could link their personal distress to the objective situation of women and could contemplate action for themselves and for other women in equal amounts, one might say.

For other women, those with a non-political orientation to their internal source problems, there was at first only the vaguest articulation of women as a group. They simply knew they were distressed and something in the Women's Liberation Movement ideology registered on them as having to do with "helping" other women who felt like they did. So it would follow that there was help for them.

We will see below that the altruistic orientation is the prevalent one for originators of the groups and that the pragmatic one predominates in the later joiners. The chart below summarizes the types of accounts given.

A. Founders' Early Awareness of Women's Liberation

Women's Caucus

The founders of the Women's Caucus who remained in it and were thus available for interviewing were Penny, Marta and Adrienne. There was only one other woman who seemed to figure in the starting of the group but she was not on the scene at the time of my study. Judy came into the situa-
Summary of Types of Accounts of Participants' Early Awareness of Women's Liberation Ideology

Women's Role Is Problematic
All Women (Except Lisa, UBC - Exceptional Case in All)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Altruistic Orientation - Form/Join Movement to Help Others</th>
<th>Pragmatic Orientation - Join Movement to Find Direct Support for Self, Explorations of and Change in Sense of Inadequacy in Role Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political Background</td>
<td>Non-Political Background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WC</td>
<td>UBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marta-F</td>
<td>Adele</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adrienne-F</td>
<td>Pam-F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F = founder of respective group. All others are later joiners.
tion a few months later but was instrumental in early policy formation, such as getting the office off campus, starting the newspaper, then the working women's workshop, so I shall include her here. I will also include Pam because I am looking at the process of group foundation and she had been instrumental in founding a group in the Prairies before she moved to Vancouver and joined the Women's Caucus. Her story fits the type of the Vancouver founders and gives us a clue that the types of experience and interests in relation to the Movement that we see among the Vancouver women is not limited to them.

Looking at the Women's Caucus founders' stories we can see that they were uniformly of the "altruistic" type, and of the political altruist sub-type.

The political altruists had all been for a time in their pre-Women's Liberation days what one of them characterized as "political groupies". She meant by this that they had learned their politics from New Left men, that they had put a great deal of time and energy into politics and that their roles had always been subordinate to the men. They all experienced frustration with this role, because they felt themselves to be more capable than they were given credit for - and at the same time they were not very confident about publicly using political skills and knowledge they had acquired.

This frustration shows in their more elaborate biography statements of how they felt the dissatisfaction. Unlike most of the non-political altruists, they do express strong personal feelings of problems
within their own everyday experience, yet they immediately generalize these
problems outward to all women - and they direct their energy largely to­
ward understanding the objective condition of women, not concentrating on
dealing with their own subjective situation. They want to help other women,
and somehow only incidentally themselves, and they want to attack the visi­
ble exo-skeleton of the social structure. Their political experience
allows them quite readily to move from one set of abstractions to another
- from the working class is oppressed, to women are a class and oppressed -
only this time they are a part of that crucial oppressed group, although relatively privileged members.

Marta's story shows how the combination of previous political
experience of an "appendage" sort, which nevertheless gave her definite
skills in political analysis, plus a problematic professional career line
combined to make her amenable to the Women's Liberation interpretation of
how she had experienced her life.

Before she got into Women's Liberation Marta had begun to have
some political activity at the university where she worked. She felt,
however, that she was involved largely because she was living with a very
actively political professor and that this was an activity they shared,
herself subordinately, when she could not avoid it - rather than that it
was an activity of her own. Then she left Vancouver for several months to
do research in her field and spent a great deal of that time in political
self-education. In the process of her reading she ran across some of the
early popular accounts of Women's Liberation Movement, in some New Left magazines. They interested her in that they described the issues and said that groups were springing up everywhere, so she decided that when she got back to Vancouver that she would find a group. As it happened the core of Women's Caucus was being formulated at Simon Fraser University (see Penny's early awareness and History sections) and so she rapidly became active in it.

Women's Liberation appealed to Marta for several reasons. One is that she had felt from her reading that there was:

M: ...the necessity of real social change, but also seeing the necessity of people having to fight their own fights, right? I mean I can't go off and fight people, you know, in Africa or help people in Latin America.

This impossibility of fighting others' battles, or of having others fight yours seemed clear to her further, in that most of her political training had come from the man she was living with. She felt she had to do her own learning and doing and that Women's Liberation was the place for it.

In connection with this suspicion of being constantly dependent upon men for learning, or for approval in her job, etc., Marta also welcomed Women's Liberation because:

M: I had been spending years, uh, I don't know, I'm sure other women have, too - it's sort of one of the things we talked about - uh, when I got drunk enough at parties I would sort of get up and I would sort of make these speeches about how awful it was being a woman, right? And sort of all by myself and then the next day I would think - Oh God, what have I done?, and it was that sort of connection with, there're other people thinking that kind of stuff.

She also felt she was particularly receptive to Women's Liberation because she had had quite demeaning experiences in searching for jobs after she
received her Ph.D. in a very esoteric field from a very good school. Col­
leagues who tried to help her find jobs through the usual informal channels
told her stories of how the enthusiasm of a prospective employer would turn
into laughter when it came out that this promising applicant was a woman.
Her thesis advisor had said:

M: He was trying to be honest and trying to be fair, that uh,
look, Marta, you can't expect to get as, as good a job as
you should, right? Don't have any high hopes when you get
your degree, and so this whole background was it, too.

For some of the women, upon first hearing about the Women's Lib­
eration Movement, there was a question as to whether it would "fit" into
their existing political analysis of what the top priorities for social
change should be. At the time these priorities were such things as building
and maintaining a strong Left move­ment, and fighting through that movement
against capitalism, imperialism, militarism, etc. As they first began
reading and talking about the Women's Liberation Movement some of them felt,
as Pam says, "That the real importance of the Women's Movement was to draw
women onto the Left who would be really strong and to really strengthen
these women who did come in." She added that she has since come to feel
that this idea is "Quite finky". And as Adrienne says of her early aware­
ness of Women's Liberation, "...what first kept me from getting involved
in it, I didn't know whether it was congruent with...my own...political
analysis."

But she - like the other women - began using what they read and
heard about in the Women's Liberation Movement ideology to try to under­
stand why they had been in the kind of political situation vis-a-vis men
- whether it was the political men they lived with, or worked with. As Adrienne described the transition from Left politics to Women's Liberationist:

I suppose that [time] was [spent] more getting into, not so much personal things - although there is a lot of that - but more intellectual questioning of the whole role of women, and reading a lot and writing stuff and trying to figure out like, what had happened to me, but like why I was in the position I'd been in, you know, in a more generalized sense.

This same sort of attempt to extricate the self from having been defined as a person and as a political being by others - men - went on for each of these women. In one case, Judy's, the defining and consequent frustration came from the slow building of years of being the token woman in a Trotskyist socialist organization. As she became more concerned with the importance of women's struggle against oppression - and more outspoken - she was progressively cut off from participation in the group. She finally quit and said that moving to participation in a Women's Liberation group "just seemed like the logical thing to do". When she moved to Vancouver and went to the Women's Caucus she was particularly pleased that here was a chance to do political work from her own situation as an office worker. She "always had this dream that what I really wanted to do was organize office workers...or try to do that." So, she reiterated that it was "logical to get involved in Women's Caucus."

The most personalized case of growing awareness of subordination to New Left men, who by definition should have known better than to oppress anyone, was that of Pam. When she was living in Saskatchewan, she and some other of the "local political groupies" had begun reading about Women's Liberation but still felt that it didn't have to be the political priority of their lives. She said:
I don't think any of us thought we were really oppressed exactly. We thought it was a legitimate issue, somehow, but - we thought we were oppressed in the sense that on the Left we weren't... playing the roles that we thought we should...and we raised that but we didn't really know how to tackle it.

But that oppression took on a new face when one of the women in the local Left was seriously threatened with gang-rape by several very drunk men of the group. This thoroughly frightened her. It made the other women:

...realize that in fact there were some really bad attitudes among the guys in terms of the way they saw us and that it wasn't much different - the way they related to us wasn't a whole lot different than the way they related to most women or that many guys related to women, period. And for the first time we started to talk to each other.

Some months after this she and her husband moved to Vancouver. She was acquainted with Judy and was known by several of the other women from her student politics days. After a few weeks of settling in she went to the Women's Caucus. She wanted to work on the newspaper and with working-women, and she was enthusiastically received. Her interest in the Pedestal was as a long-time avid reader of it, now having a chance to participate in its creation. Also, she had been working in an office for the previous year and had become extremely concerned about the difficulty that working women had - on the job and combining home and work tasks. She was very impressed by the courage and unpretentiousness of the women she had worked with and she welcomed the chance to help working women.

Thus, we can see in the accounts of the political altruists that they do see themselves as being one of those women who they know are oppressed. Yet these particular women do not feel that their own oppression calls for putting most of their energy into direct self-help. Others' needs are somehow to take precedence.
There were four women who founded the UBC group—Hilary, Jeanette, Amy, and Siobhan. Their accounts each fit the altruistic category with the sub-type of non-political in that none of them had been actively involved in any regular political activities before.

For three of the UBC women—Hilary, Jeanette, and Siobhan—their link-up of their biography with the ideology had to do more with what had not happened in their lives in terms of oppression and personally experienced problematics than with what had happened. They came to the realization that there were often severe problems connected with women’s roles, but they believed at the time that they had been fortunate enough not to have suffered from them. They were all, including Amy, professional women. Hilary was a tenured professor, Jeanette a writer and teacher, and Amy and Siobhan were self-supporting graduate students.

As was mentioned, the three had a particular interest in the issues raised in Kate Millett’s *Sexual Politics*. The three of them had been discussing her ideas at length but it took the goading of friends to move them toward a group—in their case, to contacting Women’s Caucus to find out how to form a UBC-based group.

She first tells how she was visiting friends in the United States who were concerned because their children were involved in anti-Vietnam war demonstrations. She challenged her friends for being paradoxical and possibly hypocritical in that they, too, opposed the war but were leaving all the action to their children—and making that difficult for them.
When she and Jeanette - with whom she lives - got home some more friends visited them. These friends were very immediately concerned with issues of equal employment opportunities for women and they began chiding Hilary and Jeanette for being themselves hypocritical. As Hilary says:

[the friend was saying of his wife, who was just considering a Ph.D.]

...you know, it could perfectly happen that she gets all this training and she still can't get a decent job simply on the grounds of her being a woman, and I thought well - you know, I've gotten along all right, Jeanette has gotten along all right. But I heard exactly the same thing in my response that I heard in [the father of the anti-war demonstrators']...I thought there are plenty of people who aren't getting along all right and I knew it damn well - and why am I not getting into the act? So really, that was why I started - wasn't why I stayed in, but it was why I started.

There is an interesting contrast in the immediacy of direct personal experience that Amy, a graduate teaching assistant, connected to her growing awareness of the Women's Liberation Movement. She was visiting her parents in the East and was watching television when the news showed women chaining themselves to seats in Parliament as a demonstration for changing the abortion-control laws. She recalled:

And actually I'll tell you the one night it happened, was actually a literal kind of thing.

I was home in Toronto last summer, and we were watching the national news and it was the abortion caravan when they chained themselves to the seats in Parliament.

And my first reaction was, fuck, like I could just never do that. And my second reaction was, that's a hell of a lot better than looking for an abortionist - cause I've gone through all that stuff - which I'm sure lots of people have - and that I think, and the months and the times that I have worried that I was pregnant, and it just, I mean I would say it's probably, you know, I could even call it a percentage of my life, like one-twelfth of every year....I have worried about being pregnant.
So really it was quite that literal occasion, you know....I really did actually think that on those kinds of literal terms I would go and help them with abortions or something like that.

Amy then began asking around for where there was a group. She and Siobhan had a friend in common who told Amy that Siobhan and Hilary and Jeanette were going to Women's Caucus to find out about starting a campus group. So Amy contacted Siobhan and began her active participation with them in forming a Women's Liberation group.

B. Early Awareness of Women's Liberation for Later Joiners, and Their Move into a Group

Women's Caucus

Looking at the early awareness accounts of the women who had come into the Women's Caucus some time after its establishment, there are few women - Adele, Bonnie, Betsy and Edythe. This covers the last year of Women's Caucus existence. There were none of the many other women who had participated in the Caucus' activities for a period of time and then dropped off left to be interviewed. Only one of the accounts of the women was the altruistic, or other-oriented type. This was Adele. Her first contact with the ideas of Women's Liberation had been through the press ("and that's the absolute worst contact you can possibly have") and she had largely discounted what she heard. She had been married for three years to a very traditional Englishman who believed that a woman's job was to wait upon him in the home and to work outside the home so that her income could be added to his own. She had divorced him because she could not tolerate being in a
totally one-sided relationship, but still felt that women could and should be complementary if not exactly equal to men, only in a less slavish degree.

She changed her mind quite radically after reading the special issue of *Transaction* magazine on women. She says:

A: I remember last November reading the special edition of *Transaction* on women, and I thought, 'that's rubbish'. There is no way you can compare women to blacks, which was one thing that they were doing. I was really down, down on some of the arguments that were presented because I thought you know, that as a middle-class woman with a good education and a good job that I knew I was doing fairly well. Then as I read more and more, of all that issue, I realized - well, hell's bells, I was doing OK, but there were all those other people who were really having a rotten break. And if anything ever happened to me where I was poor, or couldn't take care of myself financially, and didn't have a good family to support me, you know, morally, and to have Bruce around - well, I would be in really rotten shape too. I would have a lot of handicaps, too, as a woman, because I was a woman. And so when I finished reading that *Transaction* set of articles - oh, it had quite an effect on me, and I started thinking quite deeply about it for awhile.

From there Adele began reading whatever she could find on Women's Liberation and she began phoning around to see what groups there were in Vancouver. When she ran across Women's Caucus she went to a meeting, "liked the people, and liked what they were doing...and have been going every since."

But the other three women who came in later were more "pragmatic" or self-oriented in the connection they made between their biography and the interpretations of women's position offered through the ideology, as they discussed it with similarly interested friends. It should be noted for future reference that Adele seemed to have developed her awareness strictly through media contact. She did not mention involvement with other people in her early thinking nor in her first attendance at a Women's Caucus
meeting. This is unusual, as will be discussed later. (See Discussion section, at the end of this chapter.)

The problems that brought Bonnie to connect herself with the ideology were of the "external" sort, where the source, though directly and personally felt, was attributed to causes outside herself. It should be noted that Bonnie was atypical of all the other women in that she had Grade 9 education, and was virtually the sole-support parent of two teenagers.

Bonnie heard about the Women's Liberation Movement from an acquaintance who was also a single parent and who was for a time attending Women's Caucus and UBC meetings. (This other woman did not continue for more than a few months, however.)

Bonnie said she was interested in what the woman had to say because:

I was sort of depressed about the whole single-parent situation - lack of Day Care centres. And I was very depressed about limited incomes that I make at work and always hoping that your ex-husband will support you, you know. That you feel as if you're going to break - rather uncomfortable.

She heard that the Women's Caucus was trying to help women in her situation, so she found out through her acquaintance the phone number of Judy. Judy told her about the Caucus activities and Bonnie became a regular, though one of the least active of them, due to her heavy work and home duties.

For the other two women who came later into Women's Caucus, their problems were initially felt to arise from their own relative inadequacy in performing certain of their sex-linked roles (and they had few other kinds).
This type of self-oriented problems are what is being called "internal/psychological". The two Women's Caucus women with this type of account are Edythe and Betsy. This category type should be elaborated upon, to show better what it consists of. However, since the great majority of women who gave this account (11 of 13) are in the UBC group, I shall place that elaboration in the parallel part dealing with UBC later joiners. Here I will simply summarize Edythe and Betsy's accounts of early awareness of the ideology and their later entry into the Women's Caucus.

Edythe and Betsy are both particularly good examples of the process of biography re-casting, of relocation of one's self in both the past and present social world according to new understandings provided by the ideology. They use the ideology every bit as much to find acceptable explanations for past feelings, situations and actions as to figure out how to carry on their present everyday lives.

First Edythe. Edythe's acceptance of Women's Liberation ideas came quite quickly and smoothly, but her entrance into a Women's Liberation group was more untidy. She was newly married and had just moved from North Carolina to a small, isolated town in New Jersey when she first heard about Women's Liberation, through "the media, and reading books, magazines and things." She continues, "I was just real interested in it from the very beginning - as soon as I heard the word." The bits and pieces she picked up served to integrate for her some previously inexplicable and uncomfortable experiences and impressions she had had about being a woman.

I: What interested you about it?
E: ...it was just, um, I had always been feeling these things, you know. I mean, um, it's really strange, it's really hard to explain. I, I, I still don't understand it. It seems like so much, so much of the things I had worked out for myself and I don't know how it all happened. It's just, I heard about it and then I read about it and then after that, I just, my mind just started piecing things together.

The first things she mentioned trying to piece together were what she saw as bad experiences in college. She had attended a medium-sized college in a very small town in North Carolina. She and her friends had wanted to be cool, to be different and one of the most striking ways in that school was for girls to go into drama, "'cause then we can just be vulgar and we won't be like all those other girls." Yet they found that even their daring and flamboyance did not make them any more listened to by the men in the group. So they would get together in what Edythe thinks of as sort of early consciousness-raising groups to complain about the treatment of the men, which they saw as stemming from being lumped in with all those stupid women, who they cordially hated.

E: We couldn't stand the idea of, uh, being a woman, you know? We couldn't stand the idea of being around women or of having anything to do with women. Women were just disgusting, 'cause they were so stupid and un-interesting.

I: uh huh

E: And we all, we wanted to be important, so therefore we decided we would be, uh, special women, the kind that had men friends.

Given her contempt for women Edythe (and the other women) managed to rationalize having some of those vile creatures for friends by the following conceptual contortion:
E: I thought, well, if I, well if these other girls are in theatre, they must be just like me. They hate women too, so I decided I would accept them.

So she began to understand the tumult and self-rejection and contempt for other women of those years.

In connection with this struggle to find a satisfactory role for herself as a woman Edythe was trying to get along in her marriage. She had always found herself very competitive with men she had been involved with before, she resented any success of theirs greater than hers, and yet she felt "guilty because I shouldn't be competing with a man." She has great confidence in her husband, and in his total support of her attempts to understand herself, particularly through experience with Women's Liberation, yet she would find herself fighting him as a representative of Men and not always dealing with him in ways appropriate to their actual relationship.

Yet with all his understanding ("We just kind of talked things out, he was my girl friend") the fact of being married as such was still quite a shock for her, particularly coming as it did with several moves farther and farther from home.

She was concerned about what it meant to be an adult woman, a married woman, and on their travels, particularly on the long trip to Canada she began to try to figure out how and why she felt about her mother.

E: ...I started going into the whole thing about my, my mother and what she had been through. And all the other women I knew, what they had been through, and oh, wow, you know, it just all started fitting into place then.

I: um hum

E: Why they, why they had always, so many of them I knew, you know,...they always, they never had been happy or successful and it was so obvious why. They just, they just, you just
weren't supposed to get anywhere. Women just weren't supposed to be intelligent, and uh, they were just supposed to be in the home, have children.

I: um hum

E: And I realized how unhappy so many of them were.

I: uh huh

E: And the, then I started getting really militant, I started getting really angry, you know?

When she was in New Jersey, a few months before coming to Canada, Edythe had heard through a friend of a friend that there was a small Women's Liberation discussion group in a nearby town. She had gone to it for several weeks. Here she had talked about her dislike for women and the whole group had supported her in her talking and she began to feel quite comfortable in the group. But she did not want to become too close to it with a move imminent, so she let her participation slide. It was after the intensive thinking and discussion with her husband on the trip to Canada that she felt really intensely about the need to become a part of a group.

Yet even when she heard about the group in Vancouver, through reading its paper and reading about it in the local "underground" paper she was able to go to only one or two meetings before the "culture shock" of being in Canada ("This horrible weather!") before she retreated to her apartment. Neither she nor her husband could find work and again she thought they wouldn't be staying. She also realized that if she didn't get out of the flat and do something that she would go crazy, so she once again went down to Women's Caucus. She had heard about the Working Women's Workshop and wanted to help there, and she began to. She also very quickly made a couple
of friends among some of the newer participants and so her activity has con-
tinued.

Betsy's movement into Women's Liberation was rather halting at first. She had become aware of it in graduate school, but was initially put off "by the rhetoric, the roughness of it. You know, [every] first line had "shit" in it." But later one of the woman professors was fired and this became a cause celebre, in terms of the woman and Women's Liberation issues. Betsy became very interested through the persuasion of a friend who was "one of those enthusiastic people who sort of convince you."

But concurrent with her growing interest in the Women's Liberation Movement was her move toward engagement and then marriage. The impending marriage led her into "thinking more seriously about what my role as a woman is when it comes to getting married as opposed to being an academic." She let the preparations for the marriage (the "fakey, awful issues of being a white bride", the picking out of the silver - "idiot that I am, without principal or character, I went along with it") and her continued studies be "a good excuse not to really get involved in women's lib, so I really didn't do much about it [then]."

But after becoming a wife, and moving with her husband to Vancouver where he found a job, she found that some of the facets of Women's Liberation seemed more directly applicable to her:

I came out here and I didn't know anybody and I was stuck home. That's when I really realized what it could - it means for a great many women to just be a housewife and a woman but with very little independent life of her own.
Even with this realization, it still took some time for her participation to be regular. She did contact the Women's Caucus right away, but she went only "a couple of times and I didn't really feel committed quite enough to go in and start working on things." She had found it difficult that she had not been immediately welcomed into the group on a personal basis. She had heard criticisms of the Women's Caucus as being cliquish and she let this account for her feeling of separation from the regulars. But for some months she put a lot of thought into the so-called "alienation" that newcomers were said to feel upon coming into the Women's Caucus. She decided it was "up to me" to find her place there, and it wasn't for her to "expect them to come and greet me like a church group, as a welcoming committee....It seemed to me at the time [that there was] no way except by working hard day after day that I would work into knowing these people." So she went back and did just that.

UBC Group

The majority of the women in the total number interviewed (and in the UBC group, per se) were interested in Women's Liberation because of what they saw it offering to themselves, to the direct amelioration of certain problematic facets of their lives. Theirs was the experience of making a direct identification of themselves with women-as-an-oppressed-group. They do not see themselves as one of the troubled, once-removed, as the altruists do. They use the ideology to tell them about what is happening to themselves directly.
As was stated earlier, the source of the problematic situation was seen by a few women to be quite outside of their own competence, causation, or control ("external problems"). There were only three of these women, (two from the UBC group; one from Women's Caucus) each in a rather unusual occupational situation for a woman, at the time of their entry into the Women's Liberation Movement. One, Madeleine, was completing her Ph.D. and shortly would enter the job market. And the other, Henrietta, had just completed university with a degree in animal science.

Madeleine had heard that there was discrimination against women academics, but she was not sure whether to believe it. There were already Women's Liberation groups on the campus where she was a graduate student (not UBC), but they were composed mostly of undergraduates and she thought they were too "radical" and "political" for her comfort at that point. She didn't feel an affinity with them. But when some of her female graduate cohorts began to meet together to discuss the role of women, particularly in academia, she found that "made sense" to her, "...because I had just been looking for a job, and had a terrible time finding it, and I had no way of knowing whether that was discrimination or not, but it might of been, and I certainly heard stories of where it happened to people in [her specialty]."

She enjoyed these group discussions and when she moved to UBC she "just kind of kept my eyes open for a group." She had been talking this over with a few female colleagues and when she heard of a group she and they came. She became a regular. Their participation was more intermittent.

Henrietta's story continued less happily in terms of work found, although she did find what she wanted in the UBC group as far as understand-
ing of and encouragement in her trials. She described her experience as follows, when answering the question about what had interested her in what she'd heard about Women's Liberation:

...I think some of what I went through when I graduated, when I was applying for jobs regularly. And I applied for 60 or 70 within a couple of months, writing letters or having interviews. And -- ah, when someone absolutely refuses to interview you 'cause you're a girl, that's fairly obvious that that's discrimination, cause they just won't interview for it.

But when you go in and they give you these 5-minute interviews and everybody else is having half-hour interviews, and it happens over and over and over, and then someone will say, "well, there's no discrimination, if you really wanted a job, Henrietta, you could get it...with so many people telling you one thing after another I started to think it was me, which is really bad....I always [had] had lots of confidence in that, but when two years of trying for jobs and having people say no, no, no, no, no - it gradually grinds you down.

When she heard from the Women's Liberation ideology that problems with women finding jobs was the fault of "society, and when you realize it isn't you," Henrietta wanted to find out more by joining a group.

It should be noted that Henrietta's story demonstrates the mixture of biographical relevancies that activate participation in a group (or altered behaviour of many kinds). At the very end of the interview everyone was asked whether there was anything they wanted to add to what they had said about their Women's Liberation experience. Here Henrietta said:

...maybe one reason...that I got interested in women's lib and equality was because my dad is an alcoholic and so seeing my mother dependent on somebody who wasn't dependable may have had this effect...it's sort of rough seeing something like that and maybe seeing my mother so caught - 'cause she didn't have any education, 'cause she had four kids, and feeling it was her duty to stay home and you know, cook for him and do everything for him, and bring up the kids and everything. Whereas, I wouldn't see that my duty now. If somebody was like that...I would tell him to get the heck out.
So the young girl's awareness of the importance of education, a job, and reasonable self-sufficiency are readily linked to the young woman's frustrated attempts to carry out what had seemed to be a wise and dependable plan, and these feelings and moves are in turn directly linked by her interest in the Women's Liberation Movement. (She finally got a job, only slightly related to her field. She left the job when she and her husband moved to Vancouver. At the time of the interview she had dropped out of the M.A. program she had enrolled in and was a research assistant in an unrelated field. Her graduate student husband may be taking a job elsewhere soon and she will go with him. There is nothing to hold her in Vancouver alone.)

For more of the women, their problems were initially felt to arise from their own relative inadequacy in performing certain of their sex-linked roles (and they had few other kinds). These were the "Internal" type of problems.

Only one of the women had some previous political experience and was able rather readily to place herself into the objective category "woman". This was one of the things that attracted her to the Movement - the opportunity to integrate and alleviate her problems in a somewhat familiar mode.

This was Shirley, a participant in the UBC group. She had been active in a left-wing political group (the Communist Party) since she was 14 years old. When she first heard about Women's Liberation, four years before the interview, she was very interested in it, but was hesitant to devote her political energies to it primarily. What interested her had to do directly with personal anguish and confusion in her life. What prevented
her from joining a group was the hold-over from her rather rigid political interpretations of the correct order of priorities for a political activist.

Eventually, she felt Women's Liberation was relevant to her:

S: ...because it explained things about my own life very clearly.

I: How do you mean?

S: Well first of all, it explained a lot of sexual things...why it was that I didn’t respond to men as my friends...in high school did. There were things I couldn’t tolerate as a young girl, like going to school dances....It was because of having to respond to another's invitation....The thing of being passive....

It explained a lot about my parents to me, who were in the process of - not of breaking up - but reaching an understanding about their marriage, which is really shitty...so I began to understand what patterns there were there [her father a "bad chauvinist", her mother "a Christian, so she turns the other cheek"]...made me realize...the compulsive nature of marriage....

So I began to understand these things, and that it explained a lot of things about my own feelings of being alienated as a worker. Like I didn’t like being a secretary at all and I resented that a lot.

The hesitations she had had about joining a group are familiar from those mentioned above by some of the political altruists. She says she had "a moral stricture on it in terms of political analysis, which was that you have to struggle with the world in terms of the working class, and therefore Women's Liberation was a movement that took away from that kind of struggle."

She came to realize that "you organized people around their own oppression, and that's the only kind of thing that you can do."

She had been transient for some years, going with her husband from job to job. But when they moved to Vancouver, the timing of her poli-
tical analysis and her personal needs coincided and she sought out a Women's Liberation group. She went to Women's Caucus, but found it not easy to work into. ("...it has an unacknowledged leadership, tends to be cliquish rather than open to new people.") She also had become a student ("...it's easier than working and I wanted to read"); and felt that the UBC group she heard about would more closely fit her needs and interests, so she became a regular there.

Most of the women who defined their problems as stemming from internal distress had had no previous political experience and they approached their problems and the Women's Liberation ideology on a rather specific, personalized, reaching-out-for-individual-help basis. That they learned over time to generalize from their conditions, learned to share their experiences, concerns and eventual actions with and for others is a theme that will be developed throughout the remainder of this paper.

Here we have story after story of women (11 of them) sensing that they are being expected to be someone they cannot be or expected to refrain from being someone they could be. The expectations are problematic either because they feel they lack the skills, or that they cannot accept these expectations for themselves as fitting their self-typifications as an individual.

It may be suggested that this sense of unacceptable expectation is present in virtually all of the women interviewed. What is different here is really a matter of considerable degree. First, in the altruistic women, the problematic expectations were perceived as being visited upon other women. This was particularly true for the non-political ones. For
the political altruists - only in Women's Caucus - there were some personal
problems in the expectation that they subordinate their political self to
the men, but while their politics were a very important facet of their life,
they did not express their problems as being as basically self-threatening
as did the eleven women who were interested in Women's Liberation for its
potential help in handling immediate, deeply personal problems. These pro-
blems were experienced as considerable confusion and frustration about
virtually all their everyday sex-linked roles.

The women whose roles are almost entirely sex-linked are the
married women, especially those who have no employment or vocation outside
the home, and more especially even, those who also have children. Neither
she nor the rest of the world is likely to attribute to her competence or
identities other than those which link her to man/husband/children. Her
status, more than that of virtually all other women, is the most derived
from the existence and status of others, children and husband.

Her roles, then, are few in number (though her tasks are many)
and closely overlap. Thus problems in one almost automatically imply pro-
blems in all the rest. She cannot fall back for self-evaluation or appre-
ciation on knowledge of possible unproblematic participation in "outside"
roles, such as a salaried job. Some women are very active in community work
and as such can gain some additional sources of self-evaluation of their
competencies. But participation in community work often is heavily influ-
enced by husband-derived status and opportunities. Young wives, student
wives, tend not to have this kind of status. Neither do young wives and
mothers tend to have the time to participate in these activities.
Considering the rather circumscribed nature of the housewife/mother role it is perhaps to be expected that the majority of those with the Internal/Psychological problems - particularly those who did not have the kind of past activities that can enhance political awareness - are young married women. There are nine of the thirteen women in this category. Of the nine, four are mothers, none of them engaged in employment or other time-consuming roles outside the home at the time of entry into the Women's Liberation Movement.

Of the thirteen women, ten are in the UBC group. Of the nine married women, two are in the Women's Caucus. Thus we see a preponderance of Internal/Psychological accounts "belonging" to women in the UBC group. These accounts are predominantly those of women who - from an objective viewpoint - most occupy the "private" world of women, a behind-the-scenes world where their essential skills are seen as minimal and are little valued by the "public" world where history is carried out.*

That the women know they are expected to willingly occupy this world, and that they are finding it very difficult to do so at time of entry is apparent in these accounts.

They, more than any of the other women were trying to figure out who they were. They did not see this question at first as involving who they were as a woman, but more specifically how they each as an individual could handle the conflicts in their interpretations of what was expected of them and what they were able to be and do.

* "Private" used here in Dorothy Smith's sense of out-of-sight, out-of-time, out-of-history (Smith, 1973).
The most concrete encompassing statement of problems from a wife and mother is made by Donna (25, married to an engineer who has gone back to graduate school, mother of two small children) who says:

Then I started to hear more about it and it sounded just great, you know, especially when I started reading things like Betty Friedan (because) it was more along the line of married women... and that's what interested me, because that's what I, you know - the things that were frustrating me at the time were apparently not just my problems....

She then listed off some of the problems she had, tying them in with her growing interest in the Movement:

In my own case...I felt awfully trapped and not able to do things because, uh, I had two kids and my husband was really quite uncooperative about looking after them at that point, and not ever using my own imagination to do things. If I wanted to do things I would automatically think "Oh, well, I can't do that because I'm married now..." - this sort of crap, which was mostly inflicted upon by myself....

I felt I was giving up my entire existence - which I was - and my entire self to him and our kids....I always felt if I was taking any time for myself I was just being selfish and, after all, a good married woman has to devote her life to her family ....

So it was mostly self-inflicted except that I spoiled them all into the bargain....

That's why I found The Feminine Mystique, which talks quite a bit about housewifery and boredom and isolation and loneliness - which I was experiencing - quite meaningful to me. More than field of employment or...media things....It didn't mean as much to me as it did to find out that there were other women who were ...as confused as I was. I was mostly just confused. I didn't know what I should be doing.

She heard about the group through an acquaintance who told her about another mother, Willa, who was already going to the UBC meetings.

The account of another mother (three young children, married to a professor), demonstrates clearly how the awareness of problems can only
come with a direct link between a concept (or part of an ideology) and one's autobiography and self-typifications. She became actively interested in the Movement when a housewife friend of hers became a part of the Movement and began talking with Abby about what Women's Liberation Movement meant to her as a housewife and mother.

...she sort of told me a lot about what they did and that sounded...certainly far more appealing. (What was appealing about it?) Sort of, coping with being a housewife tied down with a bunch of very young children, and how to maintain your identity despite the fact that you never slept and never really had time of your own. And how to sort of get everything done within an amount of time you had to do it...And then just the idea that just because you were doing all the housework and all the shitwork that you didn't have to ask permission to go out...perhaps the most important thing, though, was just the idea of...women being important...and then just the idea that a housewife doesn't have to be just a housewife.

If we move to accounts of married women who are not mothers at the time of entry we can see two of them in a classic career vs. homemaker conflict.

Janet first became interested in Women's Liberation in graduate school when some other women in her department formed a small group. She "was very interested" because:

J: ...it seemed like at that time I had a lot of things that I wanted to talk about with other women....

I: Like what?

J: Mainly at that time...a conflict between - my perceived conflict between wanting to...have a career of my own...versus being a wife, kind of thing.

She was also particularly interested in getting to know one of the women who was in the group. Yet at that time, Janet went to only two or three meetings and stopped. She doesn't know why.
But about a year later she moved with her husband to Vancouver, where he had found a job. She decided to give up her very successful work as a graduate student and to try to find related work in Vancouver. She looked for jobs for six months with no success. For the first time in her adult life she was without work and money of her own and she found this an intense strain.

I left graduate school...and came up here with [her husband]... and that was a very dramatic change in my life...That was a decision that had a tremendous number of results.

...when I came up here I didn't know anybody and I was extremely frustrated and unhappy about the job situation...[her husband] was very happy to support me, he didn't push me at all. But he was sort of confused as to why I was behaving like I was. I felt very strongly I wanted to support myself and I couldn't stand it - it was the first time I never had any income of my own, and I didn't like being supported...I just hated it.

It was a very violent reaction...I just was angry a lot and I cried a lot and I was very masochistic....I was really putting myself down a lot, you know - "you should have stayed in school, look what you get for...leaving school...."

So, if she had lots of things to talk about with women before, her early Vancouver experience certainly increased this need.

The need was focussed further when her sister came to visit her at about the time she was feeling her worst:

...and then also my sister came to visit me and we had a fantas - for a week...and I really love my sister a very great deal and it was the closest time she and I had together on my relationship with her is sort of archetypal. I mean, I feel like I would like that kind of relationship with lots of women, extremely close and very warm and sharing....That sort of stimulated...this desire to meet other women and have other close relationships....I'm sure that played a very large part in why I came to women's lib.
To find the local group, Janet called up the Women's Caucus, who referred her to the UBC contact, Jeanette. She found out when the meetings were and became a participant.

Even though the great majority of women in this category gave accounts articulating pervasive distress over their nearly all-encompassing role of married woman, not all married women came to interpret their problems as residing largely within the marital context. Neither were all the women with internal/psychological accounts married.

There are four persons whose accounts do not fit into the sub-category just described.

None of them saw themselves as being engaged in carrying out one primary role (like "married woman") which virtually subsumed all others. One was, in fact, just ending her five year long marriage as she entered the UBC group, and she saw what she was learning about Women's Liberation as playing a part in the dissolution of her marriage. Yet neither the marriage, nor the end of it was seen by her as being a major problem leading to her interest in Women's Liberation. Her conflicts did not centre around specific role expectations, but rather around expectations of the broadest sort. These were, what an adult person like she hoped herself to be, could be. For her an adult person would probably be married, but these kinds of relationships would/should follow (logically, if not temporally) upon achieving true adulthood. The fact of being a female adult also had considerable importance for her. This she talked about by noting that she felt that 1) she had always been expected to be a precocious child so far in her life, and 2) she also saw those enforcing these expectations upon her to be men (not
only her father and husband), who in turn felt that 3) it was quite appropriate for a woman to remain dependent, quixotic, and not entirely sensible—as long as she was charming and bright. Thus, the problematics for this woman, Kai, did not revolve around explicit role expectations like marriage/motherhood vs. single/career, but were struggles over more diffuse self-concepts like child-like vs. adult, helplessness vs. competence, dependence vs. self-sufficiency.

The first interpretations of women as of consequence and competence came from Kai's reading of Doris Lessing. She said:

K: I think reading Doris Lessing had a lot to do with it.

I: In what way?

K: Well, it was one of the very first books that I ever read that was really from a woman's point of view—and where I could identify with the females in the book instead of always having to, you know, identify with the men.

I: ...at that time [3 years before] did you have...conscious formulations of what you were thinking - of knowing you could identify with the women....?

K: ...yeah, I was definitely conscious of it.

But being aware of the newness and the existence of a portrayal of women from their own perspective does not automatically make one a member of Women's Liberation.

It wasn't until about a year later that Kai stated "putting a Women's Lib label on those kinds of feelings." The connection came about when she began seeing prominent Women's Liberationists on television talk shows. She found that even if she disagreed with some of what she saw as extreme viewpoints, she still thought:
...it was sort of nice to listen to women who weren't afraid any­
more to use their heads...it wasn't specific things, it was just
the looking at things from a woman's point of view, which I had
never done....

And also realizing that there was a link between me and every
other woman that I had never felt.

She came to relate herself to other women at that period by
virtue of their sharing:

...where we fit into the power, structure...and definitely how
we're socialized. I mean there is just so many ways that women
feel in common because of the way they have been taught.

At this time Kai was still living in Eastern Canada with her hus­
band and she complemented her reading with talks about women's position in
life with a married woman friend. Then she and her husband moved to Van­
couver in mid-summer. She heard that a women's group was starting to meet
- she couldn't remember from where ("I can't remember where. I didn't know
a soul at any of the meetings...I probably saw it somewhere"). She came to
the second meeting alone, met some women, and became a regular participant.

The next three women with internal/psychological problems accounts
were struggling over role expectations of a somewhat more specific sort -
their relationships with men. For Lucy this was a problematic area with the
man she was living with, for Hestia and Frieda it was with men in general.

Lucy was living with a man at the time of her entry into the
UBC group. She had had some previous interest in Women's Liberation when
she had been living on her own before, in a very large Eastern U.S. univer­
sity town. What she had heard or read from the women's groups there, how­
ever, were quite off-putting:
I'd hear about Women's Lib things [back East], mainly through hand-outs, but they were extremely man-hating and things, you know, which I didn't relate to at all. I didn't even think of Women's Lib in terms of myself.

When she moved to Vancouver, Lucy went once or twice to a Women's Caucus meeting but "didn't get anything out of it." She then heard about the UBC group from a friend at work, who was a close friend of Hilary and Jeanette and had been going off and on herself. She started going with this friend and became a regular herself.

What interested her in the Movement was that in a less intensively political sphere, she was able to hear that "Women's Liberation sees women as people, and, um, I don't think many other ideas about women or ideas about society do." She found this out though reading on her own and through talks with her friend at work. This reading and talking went on for nearly the whole year before the UBC group began.

The specific situation in Lucy's life that made the humanity/dignity of women so important was her problematic relationship with the man she had been living with for most of her time in Vancouver:

I: So that's how it happened technically, but why were you interested in Women's Liberation?

L: Well, I felt depressed. [laughs] You know, like there's just a lot of things that...started making a lot of sense about it.

I: What kinds of things?

L: I guess mostly I was interested in...the whole sex-role thing...I just really wanted to clarify [that]...cause I realized it was very true that...women were brought up totally differently from men - like it's a different cultural thing to women, and I just wanted to explore this more.
Plus, I guess a lot of my relationship with [her lover] seemed to be very very funny, you know? A lot of things going on that I really didn't understand. And I thought, like, Women's Lib would really effect that, and it did.

Within the relationship what she found difficult was that she had more interest in the sexual side of the relationship than her lover ("I equated our sexual activity with his love for me, and unfortunately he doesn't like to screw as often as I do, so that's really a frustrating situation"). Occasionally, however, her lover would become sexually attracted to another woman and Lucy would become very jealous. She "found the whole jealousy thing I went through to be such an ugly feeling, you know, I couldn't accept it in myself, and wanted to get rid of it." So she hoped to find some solutions for this in her Women's Liberation activities. For more information on what did happen, see Chapter on Primary Relationships, below.

The other two women who expressed internal problems - and these in terms of relationships with men - were Hestia, and Frieda. They were the two youngest persons of the interviewees and perhaps partially for this reason they had as of yet had no long-term lover relationships with others, men or women. (Having women as potential lovers was becoming an issue for Frieda at this time, but not Hestia.) Frieda had felt that there was too much depersonalization and romanticizing expected of women in close male/female relationships. In high school and early college she had resented the lack of variation of degree in relationships with men. She would try to become friends with some boy/man only to discover that he and others instantly defined the relationship as entirely a romantic/sexual one. Though she had
been involved in this kind of relationship from time to time she did not like the narrow definition. She felt this meant "not getting...certain basic rights, like, sexually." She also felt that she had:

...never been able to feel great about walking down the streets somewhere...or going certain places in the city even. I feel...such a restricted sense....If you're a woman and you go out, you're naturally assumed to be something other than what you are.

So after some months of thinking over this sort of thing ("...something was fucking me around"), Frieda heard from her friends Hilary and Jeanette that a group was meeting and "decided to come one night, to make that sort of decision, to make an actual trip to come, and I did."

Hestia had a much more explicit and elaborate interpretation of her self-typification in her relationships with men - a typification that led, in her view, to distinct problematics. She felt that in Women's Liberation ("I suppose I always felt that I went along with it, you know), and in a university group particularly, she would "...find people who re-inforced the way I thought about things." The problems were:

...the psychological part of it, like the problems that women have - not all women - but each woman does have some problems that have to do with her social role.

The parts of the social role that she found problematic were:

...my own unwillingness, like - when I was aware of it being unwillingness, I'm sure other times I did...comply with my role - but when I didn't...[it was] unwillingness to let men be dominant...just in everyday situations - which sometimes can be quite embarrassing.

I: Like what?

H: Well, I found out what would happen was that, in a sense, I was really unaware of what you were supposed to do, because for some reason I had a very strong ego [laugh] and immediately when I met a fellow...I think that immediately there were all
these efforts that he made to establish his superiority.... And I just instinctively reacted with great hostility... in fact, it was more than what I would term fair.... I never got along with anyone, you know, because I anticipated that would happen.

She had an old high school friend who she met in Vancouver who was going to the UBC group and she went along with her, Hestia thinking "...it was a good opportunity," because "I'm not too good at just walking into things completely cold [where] I don't know anyone at all."

**Exceptional Case**

So far the story of every woman but one has explicitly revealed the relationship among the persons' perceived problems, the Women's Liberation Movement ideology, and the support for intellectual and logistic entree provided by a friend. Awareness of problematics, interpretation according to seen-as-relevant parts of the ideology, did not always occur immediately prior to entry into a group, though often it did. In a few cases, the role of the friend was more apparent in the early interpretations than in the actual move into a group. But in all but one of the women's interest/entry accounts, all three of the components noted above were present.

All of these factors are presumed to have to be present if a person is to move voluntarily toward change. It is assumed that defining a situation as problematic - when that interpretation derives from an ideology that explicitly calls for change in causal base(s) of the problematic situation - carries with it the impetus toward change. In all but one of the accounts here, this was the condition for and sequence of moving
toward a Women's Liberation group. The women wanted further explanation, understanding, and support for their evolving interpretations of themselves as women. But what if a person is interested in being in the group, but not interested in change?

It is not logically or empirically essential that every member of a Women's Liberation group is there because she sees her life as problematic. It may be unlikely, but not impossible that women at least enter a Women's Liberation group for other reasons than those given above by the women interviewed. Whether she will or can stay in the group without coming to perceive her life as a woman as problematic is another matter.

Looking at the story of one woman, Lisa, we see someone who does not recall seeing any of her life as problematic when she first became interested in getting into the UBC group. Lisa's story shows that when she looked back over her biography in terms of her entry into the Women's Liberation Movement she recalled no problems. Though I can recall that at her first meeting she went into some detail about how distressed she was about being passed from man to man in the local group of literati. She said she'd go to the pub, have a good evening of talk, and then it'd be "who gets to take Lisa home tonight time." The nights lasted until morning and she was learning to feel she had little choice in the matter. But this didn't show up in the interview, so I cannot attribute my own interpretation here - and still be able to accept at face value all the other accounts, which do "fit".
So, she recalls the first step in her move into the group was hearing that Hilary and Jeanette were starting a Women's Liberation group. Amy - with whom Lisa was spending a lot of time - was also involved. She says:

Last September when they started the organizational meetings...they mentioned it to me, that there was a meeting on Monday night, that we would all start a Women's Liberation group.

I: What was it about Women's Liberation that interested you?

L: Well, I don't really know. I really didn't think I had any use for it in the beginning at all. It was just something (that) the people that I was involved with were involved in. And I had just come back from Europe, and they were wanting to start this thing, and it just sort of happened. It wasn't something that I consciously thought - I'm going to join Women's Liberation. It was something that just happened. - I thought well, I pretty well didn't need it...I really didn't think it was going to do me any good at all. It was, in a sense I guess, partially a social activity when I first began.

From this we can see that there will be participants in a social movement who come in for the "social" than for the help or change implied. In a group (as was the case with the UBC group) which had a very strong consensus about not enforcing one's specific political interpretations upon others, it was quite possible for a woman to be present and accepted, even if her political awareness and resultant behavioural modification were minimally apparent.

A group with a more clearly articulated political stance, with resultant proscribed behaviour alternatives (like the Women's Caucus workshops), would probably be much less amenable to a person with such a small amount of interest in the going ideology. It is, I think a feature of the Women's Liberation Movement that the participants and groups are very di-
verse in their interpretation of the ideology, and in their priorities set for concomitant action. Since the issues are seen to involve all women, then all women are potential participants. Therefore, it is antithetical to the ideology to draw exclusionary membership rules, or inclusioning ones. This does happen, of course, either informally (see Joreen, "The Tyranny of Structurelessness", 1972) or formally (as when women members of Trotskyist groups have been voted out of local groups in city after city in North America. See history of Women's Caucus section above.)

In any city of any size, then, there will be room for women who are not ideologically informed or "pure" to be an active member of the group. I would think a woman would have to have strong support for participation from other sources, though, to go and stay in. Lisa had that from her desire to be in with these older women who she knew as friends and teachers in her major at University.

After three or four months Lisa did become interested in some of the Women's Liberation issues ("like sexuality, like roles — all of a sudden...they became priorities"). We could say that it was then that interpretations of problematic features in her life occurred. It was then that she began reading a great deal of Women's Liberation literature. Her interest in Women's Liberation _per se_ began then, as did her interest in changing problematic circumstances. Yet she could not articulate this further, even when asked to elaborate.

Her story was the least detailed, the least personalized and cognizant of her feelings and interpretations of all the women interviewed.
From the observer's viewpoint, I would say she was little touched by her Women's Liberation experience – at least from what a year of observation could show. But she was there all along – there was room for her, she attended regularly, she was active and sought after for talk and support. It takes several kinds to make a social movement.

C. Discussion

In this chapter I have been examining how the women first make the ideology of the Women's Liberation Movement relevant to their lives. Of all the kinds of ideologies available to a person in our society, how is it that they go about adopting this one?

What can be seen is not only the selection of this ideology as relevant to them, but a further selection of certain parts of it at first. This two-level selection demonstrates the reality-constructing nature of people's social action, the role of their perceived social situation in making for problematic conditions which the ideology is then seen as useful for interpreting and changing, and the process of biography re-casting, of retrospective-prospective sense-making. The actual move into a group, whether as founder or later joiner, shows the role that social links and then the Movement group itself has in further facilitating the use of the ideology by women.

The ideology is selected out only when the women do begin to identify being a woman as a social fact and not simply a "natural", unquestioned bio/psychological fact. That perception of being a woman as a social construct occurs only when some aspect of that existence is seen
as problematic - whether for other women than oneself or directly for oneself.

The next level of selection of certain parts of the ideology as particularly relevant to one's life shows a further refinement of how the women link themselves to the Movement. First, the breadth of issues for women addressed in the Women's Liberation ideology allows great scope for any woman to draw from for an interpretation of what is going on in her individual life. The ideology also provides some basic principles for how she might deal with any problems - others' or her own. So the woman who is, for herself, quite well off as a woman can see that others may not be so fortunate. The woman with traditional political experience can see that she is now in the pivotal category of persons who experience the most telling oppressions of the time. Therefore she can and must organize with others to fight the oppression of their group. The woman who is worried about getting jobs can learn that this problem is societally caused, not brought on by personal failings. The woman who finds the language of university women too harsh at one time in the expression of their rage can find interpretations of the problems of married women very useful to her when she finds herself in that situation. The woman troubled about her relationships with men finds explanations of sex-role conflict, of "sexual politics", very enlightening. The same is true for the woman for whom it is important to understand her parents' relationship or her relationships with other women.

The ideology makes whatever was problematic begin to come clear. (As Edythe said: "...it all started fitting into place," or Shirley said:
"It explained things about my own life very clearly.") The woman can see what was "really" going on all along - for herself and/or for other women. She can reinterpret who she was then, in the sense of giving new causal accounts of the actions or situations of herself or other women. It is a very different view of oneself to move from being virtually a crackpot or malcontent (Marta's getting drunk and standing up at parties saying how awful it was to be a woman - and then feeling terrible for doing so) or as a failure (as a job seeker, an adult, a mother) and seeing that one was all along ahead of one's time or acting as an oppressed person would and not as someone inherently inadequate.

These realizations lead to the belief in the possibility of change. This is a crucial tenet of the Women's Liberation Movement, that one can and must change the bases of their oppression. Since one of the most basic manifestations of that oppression is the psychological isolation of women from each other and their sense of powerlessness, it is for the Movement to provide a place for women to give support to other women. As I noted, these two groups differ in their view of what form support should take and toward whom it should be directed. But in both cases, women are to work together - whether to give support to other women, as is the first priority of the Women's Caucus, or predominantly to each other through explicit consciousness-raising groups as the UBC group does.

Here the role of friendship networks comes up again. The existence of networks among the founders has already been documented and commented upon. Later joiners do not initially have networks among participants in the groups, in the sense of multi-point, reciprocating relation-
ships with other similarly engaged women. What they have are uni-
directional links to the Movement and more specifically to a group. That
is, they know one other person who is interested in the Movement and who
has contact with a group. They find ease in talking with that person (one
housewife to another, one office worker to another) and they go to a group
in the company of a contact person (usually the one they've been talking
with).

Freeman points out that networks must be elaborated for a move-
ment to carry on. This is what happens for these newer women, as will be
discussed in detail in the chapter on friendships. But for now it is
important to see that in virtually all cases there is this pattern of
seeing women as an oppressed group, as seeing oneself as one of them, and
of seeking other women out who think similarly. This is how women become
aware of the Women's Liberation Movement and how they move into a Movement
group. They do it themselves, through their own understanding of the ide-
ology and of their own lives.
PART II
SUSTAINING CHANGE

It is important to know how the women in the two groups first became aware of the Women's Liberation Movement as being of direct relevance to themselves, and then to learn how they acted upon recognition of that relevance by forming and/or joining their respective groups. It is equally important to understand how they continue their involvement in the Movement as they relate it to their interpretation of what is going on in their everyday lives. The Women's Liberation ideology provides goals for change in every aspect of women's lives - economic, psychological, political, social. It is necessary to understand which goals which women take up as their own and how they attempt to achieve them.

In theory, liberation cannot be a partial matter. Yet in practice it is obvious that the pervasive inequality that women face will not be brought to a sudden halt. As is said in the Women's Liberation literature, no one in power gives that power up willingly. It is also obvious that for a woman who thinks of herself as oppressed, who has been brought up to accept that oppression, and who is dependent for economic and psychological survival on playing out her complementary role in an unequal power relationship (with husband, lover, employer, etc.) that becoming "liberated" will be a long-term effort. It is an effort that probably cannot succeed totally in our time and in our world. But in her attempt to change a particular part of her life, a woman may in fact accomplish what is to her a great deal in very practical matters. A husband who now
takes care of the children nearly as much as she does, a comaradarie on the job among woman workers where once none existed, successful communication with a lover about one's sexual needs - all of these are perhaps a small part of the overall change that the ideology calls for, but they may be very significant changes for the woman who has thus acted. This partiality of attempted or possible transformation of consciousness and circumstance is inevitable perhaps, considering also that the task of liberation is so large that any one person, group, or movement must set priorities as to where they can allocate their interests and energies.

Whether one is looking at joint action or individual action the actor(s) must go through the same process of perceiving certain situations as problematic to themselves in order to act and to try to change those situations for themselves. The priorities a woman sets herself will be affected by what parts of the ideology are available to her, what the group she belongs to has as its central ideological priorities and strategies, and how the everyday biographical circumstances she lives in limit or facilitate both her participation in the Women's Liberation Movement and her interest in change in her immediate circumstances.

We will see in the sustaining of initiated change the full flourishing of "role-making" as Turner discusses it (1962: 22). The person must redefine the roles she wishes to undertake, she must make new decisions about where she now wishes to place the "boundaries" between roles. Women may now place themselves entirely outside of roles which they were well within before, for example they could move out of marriage. Or they may shift the nature of their enactment of a continuing role, for example they may now expect and have housework shared equally, or start back to school
or get a job to contribute more money to their own needs and to those of the family. Where once a woman may have had few roles — as can be the case particularly with housewives — with one primary identity or role, and few and closely related "lateral" roles, she may now expand and/or change considerably the range and character central and lateral roles (Olesen and Whittaker, 1968: 10).

Given the ideology, the latter is what we would expect her to attempt. But the question remains as to how she can succeed in these changes.

We can return to Turner, when he says that:

> Interaction is always a **tentative** process, a process of continuously testing the conception one has of the role of the other. The response of the other serves to reinforce or to challenge this conception. The product of the testing process is the stabilization of the modification of one's own role (1962: 23).

We can now turn from the theoretical to the actual by looking at the accounts the women gave of how they tried to maintain in their everyday lives the changes they came to see as necessary from their understanding of the ideology of the Women's Liberation Movement. As was stated in the Methodology section, analytical categories for understanding the data were drawn from my understanding of the way the ideology divided up the world of women and from the women's use of the ideology in situations they came to see as problematic.

Ideologues try to arrive at adequate descriptions both of what women's lives are like, what conditions these kinds of lives, and what should be done to alter them. An ideology will contribute to social change only insofar as the description of people's lives can be seen by significant portions of those people to be an accurate account of what goes on for
them and only insofar as the alternatives it offers seem "possible". The Women's Liberation ideology implicitly and explicitly asks - what do women do in their daily round of activities, how do they feel within these and what can be done to improve matters? The world of women is analytically broken up into their emotional/psychological life and their economic life. The latter subsumes areas like their work - at home and/or outside the home; and the former refers to relationships with significant others - their husbands, lovers, children, and other women. Of course, the issues and personnel in both areas may overlap considerably.

The next chapter accordingly will be about 1) primary relationships with members of the household (including husbands, children, lovers, if living with the woman) or with lovers, even if the woman is not living with that person; 2) with friendships; 3) and with work outside the home.
CHAPTER V

CHANGE IN PRIMARY RELATIONSHIPS -
IN MARRIAGE WITH CHILDREN, LOVERS
(PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE)

According to the Women's Liberation ideology women achieve their social identification by their connection with men as their husbands or lovers, and with children as their product and raison d'être (Freeman, 1973). This definition of a woman according to her relationship to these particular others has very definite economic and attitudinal roots and consequences.

The roots of this "man-identified woman" situation are seen as an exploitive economic situation served by romanticism. The consequences are that a woman will feel guilty if she does not meet the ideal of the totally happy and efficient wife and/or mother. She will feel frightened if she threatens the relative security of the marriage. She will question her competence, her feminity, her "maternal instincts" if she isn't able to perform her emotional and economic tasks well. If she begins to question or resent what her life largely consists of this would feed back into more guilt and fear.

For the unmarried woman who is closely allied to a man the amount of economic dependence may at that time be less or non-existent. But if the relationship - or an anticipated one - is to culminate one day in marriage then it is obvious that the emotional situation may be similar for a married or unmarried woman. She still derives her status and her badge of
typicality, if not to say normality, from the potential or actual existence of a successful relationship with a man. She has her femininity affirmed by his acceptance of her. She has a future as a whole social being through him.

That, in general terms, is the Women's Liberation Movement's description of the traditional expectations for women in relation to husbands, family, lovers. How then, do the women deal with their own traditional views of these primary relationships, with the new interpretations given by the ideology, and with their own living-out of these relationships?

The accounts in response to these questions fell into two broad categories, and then these can be divided into several sub-categories, all of which were closely related to the situation in which the women were. It is important to keep in mind that the division of the accounts is based upon their situation at the time of the interview. I will, of course, deal with the histories that the women gave of how they had structured their life up to this artificially set time.

First, there were women who felt that their experience in Women's Liberation had had an effect upon these primary relationships, but that it had not changed them. This can be so because the women were currently in the kind of relationship that was non-problematic precisely because they had chosen their partner on the basis of criteria of equality of participation on all levels of experience. They did associate other changes in their lives with their Women's Liberation experience. But they did not see a need for change, nor did they perceive basic changes as having occurred, in their current closest relationships, because of Women's Liberation. The
distinction made here is between the ordinary impact that any new and im-
portant "event" in one's life will have upon related areas and the kind of
alteration that occurs when a part of one's life is seen as problematic,
with the new event having direct bearing upon the definition and "solu-
tion" of that problem.

The other category was that in which the majority of women fell
- those for whom their current primary relationships were perceived as
problematic and who felt a definite change in these everyday experiences
was due to their participation in the Women's Liberation Movement. Within
this category there was considerable variation as to the immediacy and per-
vasiveness of the problems, the amount of energy spent in dealing with the
problems, the kinds of changes the women attempted and the extent to which
they themselves felt they had succeeded.

What we will be looking at in these problematic situations is
how women who shared assumptions about the necessity of women being per-
sons in their own right set up differing tactical priorities for what they
would try to change in these difficult situations. For some, the efforts re-
volved largely around finding an acceptable explanation for difficult re-
lationships that no longer existed. For some the search was both for under-
standing of the past problems and guidelines for the present situation where
the same partner was involved. For some there was the additional concern
of bringing up children in ways that were consonant with Women's Liberation
ideas about equality of rights for all people and of not limiting the po-
tential of children along sex-stereotyped lines.
I will first discuss the role of the Women's Liberation Movement in the lives of those whose primary relationships are not seen by them as problematic. Then I will move to how the Movement plays a role in the understanding and altering of problematic relationships. The role of the Movement will be discussed in terms of the guidelines provided by the ideology and the moral and social support provided by other participants. I will focus on three aspects of the relationships whenever possible: the emotional, sexual, and logistic. Logistics means examining issues of household task allotment, time for each person to pursue her own interests.

Unlike in the other sections in this study I will not be dealing with the data by using the two different groups as the bases for comparison. It is apparent in this section that the differences in accounts have to do more with the biographical situation of the women - in terms of marital and household status (married, living with lover, single, mother, etc.) than with which group the women belong to. Where the group membership comparisons may be made is in their relevance to the recruitment patterns and organization of the two groups. That is, it is clear that the Women's Caucus was more amenable to women whose major concern was the working woman (defined in terms of wage-labour) and the UBC group draw more from, and presumably appealed more to, the university-based women. This university base was both vocational, in the case of students or teachers, and geographic/logistic, in the case of student and faculty wives who lived nearby and were confined in their physical mobility - due to young children, low income resulting in few having cars, etc.
A. The Role of Women's Liberation for Women in Situations Seen as Non-Problematic

There were seven women who did not feel that their primary relationships were problematic. (Three were in Women's Caucus, four in the UBC group.) Therefore they did not talk about having to work out new ways of carrying out parts of their relationships. What they had all looked for and insisted upon was equality, was their own independence. Since they had it, they didn't select it out of the Women's Liberation ideology as a goal directly relevant to themselves. This condition was a part of their current situation.

Of course, something as important to the women as their Women's Liberation experience would have to become incorporated into their close everyday relationships, as will be shown. But these particular women did not feel the need for using the interpretations of women's situation offered within the Movement to improve their relationships - which were for them, after all, not problematic. The women who did use the interpretations to understand and perhaps change their situation will be discussed after this section.

Each of these seven women was involved in what she saw as long-term relationships with another person. Two of them, Madeleine and Henrietta, were in marriages, *per se*.

One of the women, Judy, had been living with her partner, Andy, for nine years. Adrienne and Adele were divorced and had been in their present relationship for about three years and one year, respectively. Two
of the women, Hilary and Jeanette, were living with each other and had been for seventeen years. All of the women were economically independent. All but one working in a profession - Judy worked in an office.

Independence and equality had become a personally held value by several means. One was through a difficult earlier experience of not having had these qualities in the same relationship as the person was in now. This was true for Judy.

Only Judy conveyed a sense of having to have worked out a non-problematic relationship with her partner. She had been with him nine years. Issues of equality had been crucial to her from the beginning of their living together. They had thus achieved a quality of interaction that was acceptable to her before she was a participant in Women's Liberation.

The way this had come about was that Judy has been very "political" from the time she was 14 years old. Her father had been very active in the old C.C.F., etc. She had always been the woman on any governing body of her political groups and she had always concerned herself with the position of women within those groups, and outside of them. At 17 she had moved in with Andy, who was seven years older than she was and much more politically experienced. She described the early days this way:

We went through most of the heavy stuff a long, long time ago. Like, when I first started living with Andy he wasn't really used to...doing very much for himself. He came from a German Catholic family which started out very poor farmers when he was young and become working class in the city. It was a very... patriarchal family - five boys and one girl - and the boys never had to do anything....The girl had to do it all....
So we went through the first few years we lived together of doing things like - I wouldn't do any housework unless he did and so the place would get to be an absolutely disgusting mess and we would have screaming fights about it, and things like that. And we would eat out most of the time.

And I also had a problem which was that I was 17...and he was 24 and he had been involved in politics a lot longer and of course he had read a lot of stuff. I hadn't read anything and so I was sort of dominated by him that way. And so we fought about that until I eventually insisted that we had to do things separately - that we would go to different meetings and be involved in different things politically.

So most of that stuff was hassled out before Women's Liberation.

The adjustments that they were currently having to make did have to do with Judy's intensive participations in the Women's Caucus, however.

She said:

One interesting thing about Women's Liberation is that it's the only really consistent thing going on - in Vancouver or probably North America, outside the campuses. And there is just not a...radical working class movement to participate in. And because of that, since we left the L.S.A. (League for Socialist Action), it's been sort of strange because I've been very active in Women's Liberation and Andy...hasn't had that much to do politically. So that causes problems all the time, still.

I: How's that?

J: Well, it means that there's a lot of times we don't spend together because I'm doing Women's Liberation stuff. And it seems that, you know, if the reason you're not spending much time together is because one person is active and not because both of you are, then the other one just almost resents it. Like, I can remember feeling the same way when Andy was much more active than I was, too.

Another factor that is relatively new to their relationship is that Judy and Andy have moved into a house with three other women, all active Women's Liberationists. They all did this mostly for convenience, rather than for philosophical reasons, but the fact remains that the chief topic of conversation and the focus of most activity is the Women's Caucus.
Andy "gets to resenting the fact that he has to sit through numerous lengthy discussions on the eternal business of Women's Caucus." But he has found friends from all this activity. Most of his friends are now women, "just because that's what's happening."

Judy didn't feel that she could distinguish any other effects upon the emotional tone of their relationship. In terms of the sexual aspect she finally went off the pill because Andy had a vasectomy. The decision was explicitly made on the basis of her Women's Liberation experience, in that:

...it's not to do with Women's Liberation in the sense that I imagine Andy wouldn't have been opposed to getting a vasectomy some time before I got involved in Women's Liberation. But it has to do with Women's Liberation in the sense that all this stuff they've done around abortion and stuff around here, we've come to know about things like who does vasectomies and how good they are and that...made it easier in the sense that people just talk much more freely about that kind of thing...than they used to. And there are a lot more people around who don't think it's some kind of threat to your masculinity.

So that was the way Judy saw her Women's Liberation experience affecting their relationship. It was to her all a part of the way the relationship had been "evolving" over the nine years.

For Adele and Adrienne there was the experience in a previous relationship of not having had the kind of independence and equality that they began to feel at the time that they needed.

Their experience had come from marriages to men whom they had found to be very domineering and traditional in their expectations held for a wife's role.

Adrienne characterized her marriage as her being "defined by the Great Radical." She had found this extremely wearying but had stuck it out until he, in fact, left her. She said of the separation:
...when we had been splitting up - which is a nice euphemism -
I think the reason I hung in as long as I did - because it was
really awful - was...this real fear of being alone...having to
make my own decisions entirely without someone to...help and
stuff like that.

But she went out on her own, found her job teaching at a univer-
sity and "was quite amazed that it wasn't hard at all." She feels the
"most significant thing" in her raise in confidence was her evident suc-
cess at teaching; "I could do it. They didn't walk out of class. They
didn't throw rotten eggs, and they didn't fall asleep."

So when Adrienne met the man she is now living with:

I kind of laid down the terms of the relationship right from the
beginning. Like...what I wanted and what I didn't want. And
I pretty well said 'take it or leave it', you know. And...he
turned out to be really good....So...it just never had to get
into that pattern...I was emotionally secure, and I was in an
emotionally supportive situation, but it didn't have any of the
bad things that nuclear relationships usually have.

The role of the Women's Caucus in her life is a big factor in
the "supportive situation" Adrienne mentions. She said later that Women's
Liberation has:

had the effect on the relationship of [it] not having the
demands on it that a usual nuclear relationship does because
I get so much support in other ways that I don't have to make
those demands in the relationship....

I: Where does this support come from?

A: Well, it comes from knowing women, and knowing women you
really like a lot. And just being interested in what they're
doing and just spending time with them. And it comes too
from working with them.

Thus, to Adrienne the "relationship, by the standards of most
nuclear relationships, is fairly casual, not sexually...but in terms of the
time we spend together and things like that."
She finds it unimaginable, aside from "a fluke of God" that she and her partner would separate. But if they did she thinks she wouldn't try to get involved in an "ongoing relationship with a man." She feels that the "support and emotional security" she gets "from Women's Liberation and the [communal, co-op] house [she] lives in" that it wouldn't be necessary. "I'm getting too old. I don't have the courage to start all over again and lay it all out again and say 'these are the conditions', and all that kind of stuff."

Adele's story was much the same. She married a man whose idea of equality for women was that they both worked outside the home but she would do the entirety of the household work as well.

I let this guy get away with this for three years...and I just called it quits....That was two years ago and after that...I really started feeling a change coming on....The kinds of men I didn't want to be associated with and I didn't care about - it could go on indefinitely, as far as I was concerned, without getting involved with another guy again if he was going to turn out to be a jerk...who didn't believe in a co-operative kind of existence with men and women pulling their weight with regard to domestic activities.

She had barely heard of Women's Liberation at the time and had "more or less discounted it" because of the image she saw portrayed in the media. But then she met Bruce:

...and he believed in a 50-50 kind of thing...where everybody pulls their weight as much as they can and that's fine with me. I really like that...and now I would never go back to the old domination thing again.

She had been living with Bruce for about six months when she began to be involved in Women's Liberation. As she began to become more politically active she did find that her growing political awareness and skills made her see Bruce's political activity somewhat differently.
It's really helped me, for instance, when I'm starting to take a closer look at why he's involved in the N.D.P. And his opinions about property ownership and all this...I've become more receptive to his ideas, which I was...previously just not regarding because that was politics and that was off in a box and I wasn't very interested in politics. Now politics aren't in a box anymore...[they] are part of the Women's Liberation thing. So I can have more respect now for the kinds of things that he is interested in and the kinds of things he feels are solutions to some of the problems.

In terms of the "emotional aspect" of their relationship, Adele feels that she cannot really assess what the effect of the articulation of her ideas about equality will have been "until if some day we have a child...that would be a big test."

In the sexual part of their relationship, there were no problems and hence no apparent change. "We didn't really have any ideas before about what was a man's role and what was a woman's role so therefore there is no reason now for me to change any of my ideas and we don't have to worry about that."

Henrietta had seen the results of insufficient independence and equality in her parent's relationship. This was enough of an example to her to reject this pattern for her own life. She said:

Well, I had my own ideas about equality, you know, when you get married. And my idea is not to marry a guy and then change him into what you want, but to find some guy who already thinks the way you do. So I did, and Randy's idea was, you know, to share everything. So I never really had any problem that way.

She continued later that the reasons for her feeling this way were:

Maybe it was home environment type thing, with going through sciences, Dad's always saying you can be whatever you want...I never really thought about being inferior or having inequality. I don't know why I never wanted it, but I know I haven't wanted it ever since I ever thought about it.
Thus, four of the seven women in currently non-problematic relationships had turned away from harsh examples of the subordination of themselves or others, as individuals. This did not occur as a result of their Women's Liberation experience. But there were other effects of their participation on the Movement, as will be noted in later chapters.

The other three women in non-problematic relationships had been in their current relationships for much of their adult lives and had always experienced equality and independence therein. Looking at the other woman married to a man, we see that Madeleine's husband was her own age and was always at the same stage of his work and intellectual/emotional life as she felt herself to be.

Yet she did feel there was some effect from her Women's Liberation experience, in her attitudes toward marriage as an institution.

It has made me much more critical of the whole idea of marriage. Like both of us feel if we ever split up we'd never get married again. It's made me much more open to the possibility that it may be very necessary for us to separate at some time, either permanently or for some short period of time. Not because we want to separate necessarily, but because of demands of our careers, or demands of what we want to do. And I think...I see that with a lot less fear than I would have when I first got married. That would have been a very frightening thing to me, and now it's not necessarily happy, but may be necessary and maybe a good thing. I mean I can see it in more or less these kinds of terms.

She could discern no effects or changes on their emotional or sexual life other than the above type, which she reiterated later, saying "I think [there is] more of a feeling like I could live without him, which is a good thing to me. And he sees that as a good thing."

One marriage-related issue that came to Madeleine from talking about aging with Jeanette and others at meetings was that of having chil-
dren. Jeanette had been describing a single professional woman she knows who also adopted a teenager, "contracting" to help the adolescent through school and thinking that if they were still close and wanted to be mother/daughter, O.K., and if not it still would have been good for them both. Madeleine had felt that she should make a decision about children before she was 35, due to the increase in abnormal births occurring to women over that age. But she now thinks that "maybe a very good thing for me would be to just wait until I am 40, and then if I feel like it to adopt a kid. And that was a kind of new alternative I never really thought of."

Just as Madeleine became interested in Women's Liberation for reasons other than problems experienced as having sources within herself, she did not see this relationship as being one for which she needed to draw upon the Women's Liberation interpretations of the male-female relationship to understand or "improve" her situation. Her own long-standing interpretation of what was going on remained completely workable for her.

Then we have the woman couple - Hilary and Jeanette. Since they are both women, both economically self-sufficient and neither is interested in imitating a male/female role expectation in their relationship, it is fairly likely that they would not feel that the Women's Liberation ideology in relation to sex-role-linked expectations was applicable to them in terms of problems of this sort. What problems a female homosexual relationship is heir to are not likely to be of this type, assuming the couple is not trying to carry out a traditional heterosexual pattern of interaction.*

* See my paper on female homosexual couples for a discussion of these matters. "Living with a Stigma," paper presented at the Canadian Sociology and Anthropology Association meetings, 1971, St. John's, Newfoundland.
Where they both felt there was an effect on their relationship was in the new people they met and the new experiences and perceptions to share. As Hilary said:

...because every Monday night we go to the same sort of group and I go to one small group and she goes to another. So we can say, well, what went on in yours? So that there may be a more...continuing conversation. Ordinarily we don't do that sort of thing, or at least we haven't for years....Even if we're teaching the same course...it's not terribly interesting to spend too much time at night saying, 'what went on in your class today'....

But I think because Women's Liberation is more involved with attitudes and ideas and responses which we find more interesting to talk about....That certainly has been a focus.

It is evident, then, that for those women in non-problematic relationships who did utilize the ideology, it had two functions - to affirm their appropriateness of the character of their long-standing relationships; and to provide them with new thoughts about what the scope or necessity of these kinds of long-term relationships could be.

B. The Role of Women's Liberation in Situations Seen as Problematic

The majority of women did see as problematic some or all of the relationships with men/lovers/husbands/children. But again, what they wanted to change varied according to their situations they were involved in, the histories of these situations, and the parts of the ideology that they utilized to deal with the problematics.

They did differ by type in their accounts in what they were trying to achieve - in whether their most problematic relationships were in the past, or whether the types of problems they had were continuing - whether within their own minds, even if they were not involved with someone, or within an on-going relationship.
I will summarize here the kinds of problems women were experiencing and the role of the Women's Liberation Movement in their interpreting and changing these situations. Then their accounts will be given and discussed.

1) Some women had used the Women's Liberation ideology to deal with problems in relationships that were in the past - unlike the women just discussed who had never had problems relevant to Women's Liberation issues in their closest relationships. They describe the role their Women's Liberation experience played in the ending of these unacceptable relationships and then discuss how their current relationships fit in with their new ideas of what close primary relationships between men and women should be like. Their current use of the Women's Liberation ideology is, in effect, as a maintenance mechanism, a reminder of what to keep and what to reject in a relationship.

For these women their concerns in these previous relationships were achieving independence from their reliance upon an individual man (for Kai, Janet, Siobhan) or upon men as a prestigious group (for Amy), and in the process trying to find out if/that they could then live with that independence.

2) There were women who use their understanding of parts of the Women's Liberation Movement to explain problematic relationships with men whom they knew during their Women's Liberation experience and from whom they separated. They differ from the women just mentioned in that they have not formed new relationships which they would consider to be potentially long-term ones.

They draw from the ideology a way of describing and understanding what had gone on in previous relationships, in ways that placed themselves
in the company of other women. This again means that their previous difficulties can be at least partially externalized and that the sense of personal failure and resultant guilt feelings can be ameliorated.

The women saw their having followed traditional expectations of submission and dependence upon the man as being the basis of their problems. This interpretation allows them to know what to avoid in future relationships with men. But knowing what to look for and actually finding it in oneself and the other person is an on-going problem for the women.

3) The remainder of the women were clearly in current problematic circumstances. They had been in the relationships with the man they were currently with throughout their Women's Liberation experience. a) One (Lisa) had moved in with her lover. Lucy was in a shared household arrangement of some duration. The other nine women were in b) marriages. Five of these women were also c) mothers.

It can be shown how the women utilize their understanding of the Women's Liberation ideology as related to their own autobiography to interpret the past and guide the future. It can also be shown how their experiences within their respective groups aided in their perception of the need for and possibility of change in these relationships.

The discussion which follows will be organized according to the kinds of situation-linked accounts described above. The previous groupings and the ones to follow may be schematically represented as follows:
Non-ProBLEMatic Situations
But Effects Noted; Use of
Ideology for Hypothesizing
About Role of Primary Rela-
tionships as Institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Past Relationships</th>
<th>Past &amp; Present</th>
<th>Current Relationships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Only Seen as</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problematic</td>
<td>Problematic</td>
<td>Problematic</td>
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<td>or Involved</td>
<td></td>
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| Hilary ............ UBC | Siobhan ....... UBC | Hestia ....... UBC | Lucy ....... UBC | Betsy ....... WC | Anita ....... UBC |
| Jeanette ............ UBC | Amy ............ UBC | Frieda ....... UBC | Lisa ....... UBC | Edythe ....... WC | Willa ....... UBC |
| Adrienne ............ WC | Kai ............ UBC | Marta ....... WC | Pam ....... WC | Trina ....... UBC |
| Adele ............ WC | Janet ............ UBC | Penny ....... WC |                | Donna ....... UBC |
| Judy ............ WC |                        |                |                | Abby ....... UBC |
| Madeleine ............ UBC |                        |                |                |                |
| Henrietta ............ UBC |                        |                |                |                |
| Shirley ............ UBC |                        |                |                |                |

Changes in Situations Seen
As Problematic Ideology Used for Definition
of Problem and Solutions

Past Relationships
Living With or Involved

Past & Present Problematic Relationship

Current Relationships
Living With Married

Married With Children

(divorced, has children)
1) Past Relationships Only Seen as Problematic - Women Involved With a New Person in a Non-Problematic Relationship

The four women in this type of situation and with these similar accounts are Kai, Janet, Siobhan, and Amy. What each of them traced out in their stories was an evolution from feeling too dependent on men for their self-esteem, emotional and/or economic security to a growing resolution to take full responsibility for themselves alone.

Both Kai and Janet ended their marriages during their active participation in the Women's Liberation Movement. It may be recalled from their entry accounts that both had for some time felt themselves to be in considerable conflict over the parts of their role as a wife (Janet) and as an adult female (Kai). Janet had found nearly intolerable leaving graduate school, its activities and its income, to go with her husband to his new job. She found the UBC group highly amenable to her changing thoughts about herself and herself in marriage. She said of this experience:

One way I could put it is that going to Women's Liberation and talking about the things we did, and meeting the kind of people that I did reinforced an image of myself as being able to exist independently of George.

The kinds of "things" she meant that were talked about were moving:

...from an outside definition of self to an inside definition of self, from being part of something to being a whole something... instead of being supported, of supporting oneself - both in, in any terms you'd care to think of it - financially, or emotionally. And yet not denying that human beings are only human beings if they are in relationships with other people.

A period of five or six months passed from when Janet began feeling that she would be able to be on her own, and when this actually happened.
Both she and her husband began seeing other people. They tried to accept this in each other but couldn't. Then he found a job somewhere else and this served as the actual physical separation. During this time Janet was very close to Kai and another regular in the group.* She also derived psychological sustenance from her impressions of Jeanette and Hilary, whom she did not know well, but to whom she paid a lot of attention. As Janet said, "I think [they] have played a big role in my [change of] image... I felt both of them had made it independently of men and I thought this was fantastic."

The end of Kai's marriage was seemingly much more abrupt. It will be recalled that she became interested in the Women's Liberation Movement through reading about women as people of import in their own right, and through seeing Women's Liberationists who took their intellects seriously. This was very important to her, since she had apparently always been torn by ambivalent expectations that she be both "bright" and yet someone's "child".

She started going to the UBC group in September. She said that the experience "really sped up the end of my marriage...it started occurring to me in November and we were split up in December."

As can be seen in a subsequent section, most women tried to work out any problems they had within the marriage. But they did come to describe their marriage as problematic first. Kai, however, felt that there were few problems with the relationship per se. What she found she could

* The only one not available for interviewing, due to scheduling problems.
not tolerate was marriage. What happened to her she outlined as follows:

[The marriage] probably would have gone on, cause we got along really well, and we both cared about one another but it wasn't my thing at all.

I: How was that?

K: I just felt claustrophobic every time I thought of the future ...I could see that things were going to be pretty much the same way they were in 20 years...and I wouldn't be all that different.

I: Uh huh, so how did you start thinking otherwise about that?

K: OK, I went to Women's Liberation meetings and I saw all those wonderful women sitting around who were doing just fine, and didn't need men...that didn't mean they didn't care about men but they didn't have to have them to make it in life.

So it was just, like, the hint that it was possible was enough for me - and I just wanted - just I really had to find out for myself if I could face being completely responsible for my own life.

This need to be "completely responsible" for one's own life showed up very clearly in the stories of the other two women in this category. Siobhan had been involved with one man for several years. They often stayed together for great lengths of time, but they did not have a shared household as such. Amy's pattern of relationships with men was quite the opposite, in terms of longevity. She was regularly involved with men, but no relationship lasted longer than two weeks, before she became involved in Women's Liberation.

But no matter what the differences in their previous patterns of relationships, the issues that emerged were the same. Siobhan was elaborating upon her answer to the general question about the effects upon her
work situation and then moved to what had happened at the breakup of her involvement with this man.

...I also see where I want to be...I guess I keep calling it 'adult',...and that means being really responsible.

I: How did you start coming to these thoughts?

S: ...I guess...part of this whole thing for me is that I split with Tony at Christmas time and I think I really didn't know before Tony and I split up that part of my sense of security, that - I never would have said that - had to do with being connected to him, that somewhere in the back of my mind there was the idea that if I was ever out of a job he would look after me or something. And I would have denied that to the last...but when I saw what happened to me when we did split up, and I suddenly felt like, "OK, kiddo, here you are and you sit in this apartment and you're all by yourself, you're the one that's got to do it," then all the other things began to come clear to me...

I suppose partly what has happened to me this year, is that the idea of being alone, singly responsible...comes clearer to me.

She was asked whether these thoughts connected with what she'd experienced in Women's Liberation.

Absolutely, because it seems to me precisely, that that's one of the images that women do have in the backs of their mind, that somehow they never have to be completely responsible for their own lives....

She didn't see her breakup with Tony as being "causally linked" to her involvement in Women's Liberation, she "suspect(ed) it was coming anyway." But she does think that the "Women's Liberation meetings...may have made the sense of that [being on her own] being alright, earlier or clearer to me."

For Amy there was not one relationship to change or leave. There was a whole way of dealing with a wide range of men. She was arriving at
a distinction between what she had seen as "independence" and what she now sees as "liberation".

...really thinking about me [had been] really freeing - it's the difference between independence and liberation...thinking that I was very independent and I think really equating that with sleeping with as many people as I possibly could. That was, in a sense, independence, or living in my own place was independence but it wasn't really, because I was, in fact, always dependent upon men in one degree or another...

But I do feel a sense of liberation in my mind, anyway philosophically - it's really, a lot of it is for me thinking that the philosophical dilemmas are mine, not my boyfriend's. That's really the best way I can put it, that's really quite something, too, for anybody.

She found that what she had been doing was "romanticizing" and "mystifying" men. She would fall in love with them "for four or five days and then the myopia would clear and I couldn't stand him anymore." This happened "because I had put a lot of expectations on them, I had not even looked at them - I...just made an image of what I thought a man was supposed to be."

She came to this interpretation of her behaviour through talking with other women in the group and through intense reading of the literature after she had been going to the UBC group for about three months. She found that "one of the things that interests me about Women's Liberation was this...not depending on men, not looking to them for your career, for your raison d'etre."

She began to apply her new thoughts in very explicit well-thought out ways. This degree of thought apparently was necessary after spending most of her adult life falling from affair to affair. One thing that she altered was the financial arrangements of socializing. She began the "per-
centage plan", where she compared her income with that of the man and then paid the appropriate proportion. She thought that money was crucial to her feeling in some way obligated to the man. She felt that money was the symbol of the man liking her, a belief she traced back to her girlhood, as she said:

I guess I was always trained...by my peers that...it didn't matter particularly how much you liked the guy, but if he liked you, that was the big thing and therefore if he liked you you couldn't risk that at all...so...if he wanted to sleep with you then it didn't matter if you wanted to sleep with him - in fact, I just didn't even think about it....

So what she does now is "fight against" this not discerning or crediting her own feelings. She takes into account technicalities like not having a car:

...so if I go over to some guy's house...it's really hard to leave, like one just can't leave...especially if they live over on the other side of town...so now I make sure I have enough money that I can call a taxi if I don't want to stay there.

I try to free myself as much as I possibly can and also free my mind to decide whether I actually like these people or not, or I try to get them over here as much as I can so they can leave.

Almost immediately upon her deciding to fight against letting romantic feelings "just wash over" her, Amy's next relationship with a man lasted four months. Shortly thereafter she met the man she is now involved with. She talked with him some length about her previous type of relationship with men and they agreed upon the necessity to avoid rushing into an intense, highly sexually oriented relationship. This has been very successful at least in terms of longevity, in that it is a relationship that has continued for over two years as of this writing. She did what the effect-but-not-change women did, she started out with a non-stereotypic relationship
this time and it is one that she did not see as problematic.

To complete the description of these accounts, the current relationships of Janet, Siobhan, and Kai should be discussed. Like Amy, they actively picked someone who agreed with them about non-stereotypic male/female relationships. Janet said of her lover that what he'd really like would be to "be in Women's Liberation". He had been married and he had been involved in a few sexual/emotional relationships with men, so he was very interested in finding with Janet a very personalized, mutually respectful relationship. She said that:

We have a very - I can only think of it in terms of a...balanced relationship, both of us really struggling not to fall into stereotypes, which is extremely difficult for both of us. And, again, I feel like going to Women's Liberation is...a source of sustenance somehow. Like I go...and sort of feel the way I am, like I'm really me, sort of.

The main stereotype she was fighting was her:

...tendency to feel I'm responsible for the relationship, you know...I would rather hurt myself...go around feeling resentful and angry and quelch that down rather than run any kind of risk.

This kind of denying herself she also had to resist in the area of sexuality. They were both, in fact struggling with "comparable feelings", in that she would be afraid at times not to be "always available" and he would be concerned that he was always "supposed to make me come in order to prove that he's a man." They talked about these issues a great deal, and their dealing with it made her feel it is "a very rich relationship."

Siobhan and Kai both became involved with men who, as Kai said, knew the women from the beginning as "a Women's Liberation person." This seemed to make for easy-going, non-problematic situations from the beginning
- at least there was no mention of difficulties in relation to sex-role stereotyping or of any other problems at this rather early date in both relationships. It is interesting to note that for three of the four women the new men were younger than they were and the women felt this may have been a factor in the cast of relationships. They felt both the man and themselves were less likely to fall into stereotypic behaviour and that they were each more prepared to discuss potential problem areas early and often.

These four women are the ones who have been the most dramatic and innovative in their resolution of past relationships and initiation of new ones. They are not the youngest women, the least experienced in these sorts of complex relationships (like Hestia or Freida). They have not undergone lengthy, problematic and self-eroding marriages. They seem not to have regarded their marriages nor the breakup of them as major, painful mysteries. They are at transitional periods in their career/economic situations. They are women who could be seen of this whole group as the ones most representative of that "independence vs. liberation" dilemma of many young, educated, middle-class women. They more than any of the other women concern themselves with concepts, with philosophical dilemmas, with moral stances. They want to find themselves, but the search is for a larger self in a wider world. One is tempted to say that these are almost the only women - individually and as a group - who can afford to ask themselves these questions. With the interpretation provided by the ideology and the examples and support provided by the members of their group they achieve the mental and emotional resilience that can accompany their economic and logistic flexibility. They obviously feel they had nothing to lose even-marrriages - but a great deal
to gain by taking upon themselves to redefine their roles as women, working toward the Women's Liberation ideology view of what liberation actually can be.

2) **Persons Not in a Relationship – Past and Present Situations are Problematic**

For the women who were not currently involved with another person on an emotional/sexual basis there was still an attempt to understand what had gone on in previous relationships. They also had to consider the future – did they want to be involved with someone again, what did they want the relationship to be like, was that possible? They had to reassess their ideas about closeness, equality, marriage, about men in general. They were involved in hindsight theorizing and hypothesizing about the future, or in explicit retrospective-prospective sense-making.

There were five women who at the time of the interview were in this situation. They included the two youngest women interviewed, Hestia (22) and Frieda (22), Bonnie, who had been divorced 14 years and who had two children, Penny who had been separated from her husband for several years and who had recently ended an involvement with another man, and Marta, who was divorced and had most recently been living with a man for three years, until about a year before the interview.

Four of the women were utilizing parts of their conception of the ideology of the Women's Liberation Movement to explain for themselves what had gone on in their earlier relationships with men, particularly the
ones they had been close to. Bonnie was using the ideology largely to alter her relationships with her children. Men did not seem to figure in her life to a mentionable extent.

Hestia's and Frieda's former relationships with men had not been extensive - in terms of number and/or depth. As Hestia noted in her discussion of why she was interested in the Women's Liberation Movement, she "never got along with anyone." She saw this as being due to her refusal to accept traditional role expectations of passivity and subordination to men. She felt that perhaps her reactions were so strong as to be unfair to the other person. But she has found since being involved in Women's Liberation that there has been more flexibility in the relationship. As she says:

H: I think the last couple of people I've been attracted to...I knew there would be difficulties if I got involved with them, but like on the surface I can see a certain amount of willingness to make an effort, like not to do the usual thing.

I: On their part, you mean?

H: Yeah...like in one case I went to visit this fellow and like, I was his guest. He did all the cooking, just automatically. There wasn't any question of anything else. And I'm sure that's one reason I liked him.

Frieda had also been finding the traditional expectations of feminine behaviour in relation to men to be unacceptable (see entry section). For her the issues were a bit more complex than for Hestia, in that Frieda had recently been involved in an emotional/sexual relationship with a man. She also had some interest in having close emotional/sexual relationships with women. So she had at least two kinds of questions to ask herself about
her closest relationships. In her comments on her relationships with men in general and her recent ex-lover in particular she shows clearly how the ideology works for her (once I'm aware of something...."):

...I don't play games anymore, which is a nice thing in dealing with men. I was - if there was a sort of social stress...like men coming onto me I would immediately respond in a fictitious coy, feminine sort of stunt. You know, play feminine because he's masculine. And I don't have to do that anymore. It's a nice feeling.

I: Why is it you don't have to do that anymore?

F: 'Cause I see how shitty it is, and I see it in a detailed way. And once I'm aware of something I can deal with it.

I: ...you went with a guy for about a year last year, didn't you?

F: Yeah, and I broke up with him cause we weren't getting along as well, but I hadn't really been able to stop going with him cause I felt really like I was doing everything wrong in the relationship and maybe if we stayed together we could work it out.

I guess that going to Women's Liberation I think that I got it straight - I just started to say I can't work it out with you, we're just in such different spaces.

At the same time, as she was trying to deal with relationships with men, Frieda also was trying to decide whether or not she could identify herself as a homosexual. She says that:

I've always been sort of vaguely aware that I might be gay, but didn't want to accept that, and would go along and have a sneaking affair and say, oh well, I'm not gay, I'm just having an affair ....And now I think I've accepted the fact that I am gay at the moment....

What she then described as learning from what she read of the literature, and from talking with women in the group were two main ideas. They somehow came from accepting that women could "get together in other than a political sense." For her, the realization that she might legitimately know
women "sexually and politically" seemed to imply that she could also know men much more personally, less stereotypically. Because, as she said, "If women can be treated differently, obviously men can." And she had begun to think that it would, indeed, be possible for her "to know guys in a very personal way."

The other new way of looking at her sexuality came from talking with women in the group who were homosexual in orientation but "that's just the thing they do on the side, like, they're not gay primarily." She added that "knowing them, that they could do that sort of thing gave me a chance to...look...at myself - that I could do the same sort of thing."

There is a continuing theme in the Women's Liberation literature about de-stereotyping every kind of relationship, including the traditional ideas of what friendship is between women and about the role sexuality can have between women. Most of the women are aware of this literature and it is a frequent topic of conversation. Frieda is in a situation where she can and does utilize this literature and these talks to better understand and live with what has been a problematic area for her. She is provided with some guidelines for decision-making - to emphasize the importance of who the person is, rather than to be governed in her choice of relationships entirely by which sex the person is. She hadn't been, in any case, but she had been "sneaking" and she did not like that she now felt that:

The ideal sexual relationship [is] one minus sexual justification of any sort, like men or women. I think that's the main thing, if you accept the person as a person. Making the person into any sort of a thing is making yourself into a thing - the hell with [that].
Marta and Penny were also trying to understand their past relationships, with men, and to bring this analysis to bear upon their current activities and attitudes toward men. Both had been in long-term relationships with men who fit Adrienne's description of "The Great Radical." Both felt that while their growing awareness of Women's Liberation had not caused their relationships to end, that it had most decidedly effected both the relationships and their attitude toward the breakup.

Marta had gotten into her long-term relationship somewhat against her wishes. She had been new to Vancouver, and knew few people except this man. She "wanted a really close, warm relationship with somebody but I didn't want to...physically live with him because that gets you into all kinds of hassles." But she found that she "had no choice, I mean the price [he] put on our having a relationship was that we lived together....At that point I had no alternative, no community, no sort of support from anyone else."

For three years she lived in this relationship, continually "fighting out" what she felt as his "possessiveness" and narrow definition of her role. She says of their eventual breakup that:

...[he] blames it [Women's Liberation] for the separating, I think, because...I was too tough and could never relax and I just couldn't let things go by....But I think without Women's Liberation the relationship wouldn't have been any longer, it might have been shorter - only I would have come out of it half-crazy, right? As it was, [Women's Liberation] just made it clear what was going on....I mean, it sort of provided a base for analyzing the kinds of things that were going on.

Now, though she is not involved with any man, her Women's Liberation experience continues to effect her thinking about relationships with men. First, she feels that she has the "community" she did not have when
she was first in Vancouver. For her, this comes from working closely with people for their common political goals. She wants to be able in future:

...to pattern my life in such a way that the dependence on having a man, that kind of need, you know, isn't dominating. That there is a completeness in my life so that if somebody is around...that it's possible to have a really warm relationship...but it won't...take over your whole life, the way it always has in the past.

For Penny there was a similar attempt to understand how she had behaved in her marriage. She also was trying to guide her current acquaintances with men according to her new understandings. She had been married for several years in a most traditional relationship: "all our social contacts were through him and...I saw everybody through the screen of his perception...", and "...making it easier for my husband to survive in the world [was] my major function in life...and to organize my life and his life so that everything would flow smoothly for him."

But two things happened to change this, as she saw it. One was going back to graduate school. She began to meet and evaluate people on her own. This her husband found "very threatening". "Anything that broke up the traditional pattern was really threatening." The second was her increasing participation in the burgeoning Women's Caucus. As she said of what went on:

You get into talking with women and about women being oppressed and...at some point you have to deal with the psychology of being a woman...and the ways that you're socialized to be passive and dependent and weak and helpless....And you begin to ask questions of yourself - am I really like that? I have an M.A. in psychology and I'm an honour student and...how can I be that weak and submissive, and stupid at the same time. And a lot of things don't add up.
So the new activities and attitudes she had introduced enough change into a relationship that was "fragile enough it couldn't take too many stresses and strains" and it broke.

What Penny is trying to do now is to carry on with her attempts to refrain from falling back into her old patterns of behaviour with men. She responded to the question about how she tried to deal with men by saying:

It's really hard. You know all the bad things you do - flirtatious things, and the sort of engineering relationships that women are skilled at....It's really hard not to do them....

What tends to happen in a lot of cases is that you sort of close your eyes for awhile and then you can't anymore and then you go "blee-blee-blee" - hysteria, shriek, yell - and the poor guy doesn't know what you're talking about, you know. Everything had been going along fine until the point where you sort of break down and go all hysterical, and he says, "oh, I can't stand this," which is sort of reasonable.

...So I haven't learned of any...magic formulas...other than to try and work things out...talking a lot....

She can no longer "separate myself...from all the stuff that I do and that I'm interested in." Since she finds few men who share her interests or are able to accept what she sees as the entirety of her, she is not now with someone. She is not interested in being married again, but she keeps trying to find a relationship of mutual "respect".

The one other woman not in a relationship with a partner is Bonnie, divorced for 14 years, mother of two children, 13 and 14, who supports herself as a data processor at a large business.

She had to say of her marriage only that she had "probably had a bad marriage." She said that she found the idea of people living together
unmarried, as her friend Judy does with Andy, rather startling, but "sort of neat— for them.... As far as marriage—I'm not interested. I've got enough problems right now."

She socializes very little. She works a night shift and during the day is either resting, doing housework, or is busy with her children. It is here that she had some comments to make about the effects of her Women's Liberation experience. She came into Women's Liberation to try to do something to ease the stress of being a single parent and this continues to be a problem. She says:

I think this is a problem where you know you can sort of do something in your head, and then when it comes down to it emotionally you sort of have to really work at it quite hard, you know?

What she is working at is trying not to make her desires and ambition for the children's well-being into their goals.

You can intellectually say "I'm not going to worry about whether my children are doing well at school," stuff like this—"it's up to them." But then there's the whole fear and the whole panic that I think some of the parents—a lot of them—go through. Like, you're the only one that's responsible, you sort of imagine yourself as being responsible for that.

I: And do you feel you've kind of changed on that?
B: I think I've toned down quite a bit to what I was.
I: Can you tell what kind of effect it is having?
B: I think it would have a more relaxing effect on your family situation. I just don't get up-tight about it to the extent that I did.

This evolution is very much in line with predominant Women's Liberation ideology on treatment of children. Just as wives are not possessions, neither should mothers possess and manipulate children. They should not
live through them, for the children's sake, and for the mother's. This is what Bonnie was attempting.

Where she utilizes the ideology is in trying to find ways of not passing on to her children the traditional expectations of parents upon children - that is, not seeing the children as a possession and as a direct reflection upon the success of the parent as a parent. Where the mother's role is virtually synonymous with woman, traditionally, the pressure on a woman to exert pressure upon her children to be always excellent is potentially very great.* This Bonnie has realized and is trying to avoid.

What can be said to further tie together the experiences of the women who are not in close relationships with partners? The younger ones are still trying to define male-female relationships in general, still trying to figure out what they need, what they can do, what they can accept. Two of the more experienced women, who have had time to be involved in lengthy relationships that ended, are trying to understand what went on, where they had been wrong and where they had been right all along. They were trying to find ways of spreading out their needs for close relationships over several people ("community"), filling in their needs with several kinds of friends where possible. Where it might not be possible, they saw the resultant aloneness as at least allowing them to retain a sense of wholeness of self.

Bonnie's marriage was long ago. Her time and thoughts are taken by work and her children. These are the closest people, the most immediate concerns, and those she tries to change (see work section).

* See D. Smith, "Women, the Family and Corporate Capitalism," p. 28, passim.
The ideology is used to re-define the past, to provide guidelines, for the future. The group tends to give support for the changing ideas and situations the women are experiencing.

3) Continuing Relationships Seen as Problematic

So far women in three types of situations have been discussed. Their situations were connected to the timing of their participation in the Women's Liberation Movement and connected to their use of the ideology to explain their past for them and to interpret their present relationships. Thus we moved from women with long-term, pre- and during-Women's Liberation, non-problematic relationships, to women who used the ideology to explain past difficult relationships but who had not moved into on-going relationships of this primary sort, then to women who left their past strictly behind and were effectively applying their new ideas of equality and freedom in recent relationships. But what about women who find themselves in pre- and during-Women's Liberation relationships that are problematic to them? They did not leave like Kai and Janet. They did not learn from painful experience like Adele or Adrienne and move to an already-accepting partner. They were not in equal relationships all along like Madeleine or Henrietta.

The remainder of the women to be discussed are in problematic relationships of varying degrees of objective and subjective flexibility.

The first women to be considered are the unmarried ones who are living with a man. It might be thought that their freedoms or their problems, or lack of them, would be the same as the women who are involved with
men but not actually living with them. But there is a difference — in
conventional definition of their situation and in these two women's exper-
ience.

The definitional difference between that of women simply "in-
volved" with another person is that living with someone usually implies
considerable commitment — emotional, sexual, temporal, and often economic.
There is a name for what one is doing, there is a place attached to it.
Outside people can identify the couple as a household unit. The couple
themselves can be involved in situation-bound teamwork. It is a news item
among friends when any couple breaks up, but when a household goes too, the
potential impact can be even greater — for audience and the team. Emotional
and sexual commitment can become an issue over and above the individual's
feelings re: the other. It can more easily become a public issue, with
additional definitions about proper behaviour loaded on.

Another crucial part of living with another person is the contin-
ual visibility of each to the other. Each has access to a nearly total
knowledge of the other's whereabouts. It is probably traditional to
equate this accessibility to information with "being close", "sharing" or
"openness". There comes to be an expectation of availability of the other,
an equation of this availability with love. This expectation of availabil-
ity is differentially applied though, along sex-role linked lines. There
might be equal expectation of emotional or sexual fidelity, or infidelity,
in the modern couple, but it would still be likely that the woman should be
more accountable for her time than the man.
If these descriptions are accurate in general for any household situation, we might expect these expectations to be more intensely apparent the more socially reinforced the relationship was.

That is, time and fidelity are perhaps an issue in any close relationship between persons emotionally and sexually involved. But add to that a household, then a legal definition (marriage), then the responsibilities of children, and the type of problems are likely to be increasingly concrete, increasingly negotiated over a long period of time. The women in each of these progressively circumscribed situations are less and less likely to see themselves as being able to just leave. "Philosophical dilemmas" would probably be a great luxury - "What do you do if he's stepping out on you, what do you do if your husband is no longer attractive to you, what do you do with three kids and no help?" These dilemmas and the role of the Women's Liberation experience are discussed for women in the following situations: living with a lover; married but without children; housewives (here the same as women with children).

a) Living with the Lover

There are two women in this situation, of living with their lover and seeing the relationship as problematic. It is not entirely problematic, but they do discuss some areas of conflicting expectations which they have tried to understand and ameliorate through what they learned from their Women's Liberation experiences. This is more the case for Lucy than for Lisa.
Lucy was the one who became interested in Women's Liberation because the Movement "sees women as people" and because she was experiencing a very painful degree of jealousy and insecurity over her lover's lack of sexual interest in her and yet apparent interest in some other women. She had been interested in Women's Liberation for nearly two years before she went regularly to the UBC group. She read a great deal and talked about it constantly with a woman who knew Hilary and Jeanette well and who eventually took Lucy to the meetings.

After her first several months thinking and talking about her own feelings and rights, Lucy "left Whitney." She felt she did this not simply out of her "frustration" but also because she had begun to feel that she had good reason to resent him and that she was capable of living on her own. She said of her move:

L: I think Women's Liberation gave me enough of a feeling that maybe I was going in the right direction, instead of maybe just going crazy, you know. That I was able to make some changes.

I: You say going in the right direction, what does that mean?

L: Like, kind of listening to what I have to say to myself, or listening to my reactions instead of thinking always they must obviously be wrong...realizing that that was my space and if that was it then I would have to start working from these instead of always trying to push it aside...[Because of Women's Liberation] I didn't see it as such a negative thing - I think I had a bit more strength in order to take it and just be able to keep going along without living with him.

So she moved out for a year, the last eight or nine months of which included her joining and regular participation in the UBC group. During this time she saw Whitney a lot and eventually she felt they could live together again. She wanted to see if she could apply the strength
and independence in their relationship that she felt she'd acquired over that year.

The "jealousy problem" still exists, but to a lesser degree. Lucy is trying to deal with this by sharing their relationship with others more, by treating women she might have seen as threats to the relationship as potential friends of both herself and Whitney. She feels that a communal set-up, "not necessarily sexually" could fulfill more of each of their needs without having to define others strictly on a lover-or-not-there-at-all basis. She is trying to accept their relative lack of sexual activity by saying that it is simply a difference of preference, not commitment. To her the logical thing now is that if she doesn't like it, she could just leave.

She also feels that their relationship is more easy-going now precisely because there is an end in sight. This is because Whitney is going to be leaving the West Coast for the North in about a year. She feels, again, that she can, in effect, use this time as a "learning" time for them both, without the added pressure of planning for or depending on permanence.

Lisa's relationship with her lover - like her early account - is much more nebulous and difficult to characterize. They were involved for some months before they moved in together. During this time there was conflict over each other's occasional brief sexual encounters with other people. There was also conflict over Lisa's time being very occupied by Women's Liberation related activities - the weekly UBC meeting, her small group, speaking engagements, planning committees, and just socializing with her new friends.
Lisa refused to let these activities be circumscribed by Colin's criticism, and suspicion, and they had reached the point by the time they moved in where she felt "he doesn't want me to [drop the activities]." Though she still feels some tension between them on these points, she begins to think that since they are living together he values the time he now has to himself - "to go play his guitar or write his thesis...." She does wonder now and then where he is on an afternoon - as he apparently does with her - but neither will press the issue.

In looking at these two relationships it may not be sound to draw generalizations from just two people. But there definitely are similarities in their problematics and response to this. The two women obviously value their partner and relationship enough to go along with behaviour they find difficult to accept, in their partner and in themselves. Perhaps they are unusually dependent or gullible, or insensitive.

But here we can see that living in a situation where the "rules" are all informal is a mixed blessing. If they're not married, could not they easily negotiate, even easily leave? But by the same token, since they are not married, they do not have formal, explicit rules which could reinforce both of their definitions of the situation, the man can as easily go. A woman very attached to a man, living in these circumstances, is perhaps in a very high risk situation when conflict arises. She has little to fall back on but emotional or sexual power and if this is insufficient and she wants to retain the relationship what she will have to do is accede, compromise, ignore or reinterpret what is going on. This seems to be what these two women are doing.
What they are doing for the most part is directing their energies for change toward themselves - to handle their jealousy, their unease or insecurity. They do not generalize out from their situation to make a political analysis of it - to consider the possibility that their circumstances have to do with the way men deal with women. This could imply then, that the man, too, must change. Apparently they cannot risk suggesting this to the man - in a particularly painful area (sexuality, fidelity). They try rather, to adjust themselves and to accept, at least, that their worry or anger is appropriate. If its cause cannot be eradicated, then their double load of pain and guilt for that can be lessened by dropping the latter component.

The ideology and the group can assist them in this, ironically enough one might say. It can strengthen them when strength is not disruptive - as was the case for Lucy, up to a point. They can have friends and activities to fill out their social and emotional world. It is true that due to the understanding of the Women's Liberation ideology they both demand and get appreciable co-operation in running of the household. And this is change for both of them. But it would be misleading to say that they see change in the direction of a real solution to their problems as having happened.

b) Marriage

As has been noted earlier, married women who are still trying to work out difficulties in their marriage are being discussed separately from married women with children - women who see themselves primarily as house-
wives. Given that we are dealing in these three sections with women who do see parts of this primary relationship as problematic, it is evident that there are noticeable differences in the parts of the ideology that they utilize and how they do so.

Living with someone has its own particular freedom and constraints. Being married has its own peculiar conditions as well. Women's Liberation ideologues have some very explicit things to say about what marriage can do to a woman and some very concrete statements as to what she should expect of herself and her husband in that marriage (Mainardi, 1970; Freeman, 1971; Syphers, 1970). It is in marriage that the "man-identified woman" becomes most defined as such. This, presumably, adds greatly to the other social expectations of conformity to traditional sex-linked roles.

Along with the social and legal aspects of the relationship, there is the crucial element of economic-[inter] dependence that most women experience. Marriage means survival in all these spheres for most women. It also may mean - and is expected to include - love, companionship, and eventually children.

We have seen that of the 11 women who were legally married before and during their Women's Liberation experience, a few were not in problematic circumstances. Either they had had a previous difficult marriage (Shirley) or they had simply never evolved problematic patterns of behaviour (Henrietta, Madeleine). They also, these three, had their own income. In fact, two of them had often been the sole economic support of the couple. Thus, one side of the traditional marriage-based triangle (social, economic, and legal bases) was blurred or even reversed.
I am not suggesting that economic self-sufficiency will create egalitarian marriages. But it does seem that if there is a strong interest on the woman's part in an egalitarian marriage - including equality of emotional and sexual sharing and commitment - economic self-sufficiency certainly can facilitate this. Most of the married women, including for the moment, the mothers, are trying to achieve greater equality and sharing in their relationship, which still is largely based on these three basic elements.

What then, are their problems and how do they deal with them? All three of the women were in their marriages prior to their participation in the Women's Liberation Movement - all of these three women are in Women's Caucus. As they became more and more aware of certain parts of the ideology, those parts in relation to marriage, they began to relate already difficult facets of their marital relationship to the descriptions of other women's problems which they found in Movement interpretations of what marriage meant for most women.

For Pam and Betsy the problems they perceived were linked in time and character to their reasons for becoming interested in the Women's Liberation Movement. Betsy was very ambivalent about marriage as such. She felt that she had been pressured by her parents to marry and that she had herself occasionally responded to being quite "scared" about not being married before getting her Ph.D. She said that some times "I really did feel superior to my friends who weren't married, after I had caught my man...." She recoiled against these thoughts, too, thinking "what a terrible
fraud it was to feel you were superior because you're married, when you know that's the least reason in the world to feel superior."

Her ambivalence still showed in her relationship as she found herself disliking intensely having had to change her name, of being expected by her husband to be a typical "faculty wife". Yet she would find herself "play(ing) the mistress role much more than I would like to...." She does not see much change as having occurred in their relationship, change as defined by her. They have talked a little about the eventual possibility of moving into a communal situation - yet she knows that her husband still is hesitant even to meet her Women's Caucus friends who do have somewhat different "life styles". He has begun to understand her seeing her name change as the symbol of what she objected to about marriage, yet she makes no effort to return to the use of her pre-marriage name.

Where she does project change as occurring is in her attitudes about child-raising. Betsy is not positive that she wants to have children but she says of the possibility:

...as far as having children that's two or three years off and I hope by then that I will have purged myself of enough middle-class hangups so that I don't get caught with having a baby like I did getting married. And I will be able to adopt a more flexible way of living with a child.

She was asked whether these thoughts on flexibility had come from her Women's Liberation experience, and she said that while she had always thought she would be able to combine family and a career, what she had only recently been considering - which was a result of her Women's Liberation experience - was the interactional aspect of relating to her future children. This meant:
...just being more free and easy about taking children with you and believing that they're capable of surviving without the whole protection of standard hygiene and social protection that children get. Ideally a communal family maybe would be one answer to exposing the child to a broader experience.

But, again, change for Betsy is largely in the future. She does work on some of what she sees problematic, but she feels that for some time ahead:

...realistically looking at things, I don't see my marriage relationship changing, that I will go along after him wherever he goes, and try to finish my degree or do my work whenever I can.

She didn't feel a move would be entirely a negative thing for her, in that she "could organize a [Women's Liberation] group wherever I am. I think that's an advantage."

For the other two married women who experience difficulties in their marriages during their participation in the Women's Liberation Movement, the problems were more specific in nature. They revolved around the sexual aspect of their relationships. Interestingly, for one woman (Pam) her early reading and talking with friends led her to interpreting this area as requiring change and then she was able to improve the situation. For the other women (Edythe) the problem appeared well along in her experience. It was not a matter of redefining existing patterns of behaviour, and then changing them, as Pam had done. It was rather, finding that the patterns themselves had changed - for the worse - and not being able to alter the new behaviour.

To elaborate: it may be recalled from the entry accounts that what really moved Pam into participation in the Women's Liberation Movement was discovering that the men in her social/political circles had some very "bad
attitudes" about women. She felt she could not exclude her husband here. She also had been experiencing for some time considerable feelings of uncertainty in their sexual relationship. She described it as follows:

...that's an interesting sort of thing because when I first met Raleigh, it was sort of funny, for some reason he told me all these crazy stories about women he had known in New York City who were [prostitutes]...it was a fairly sad story, but for some reason his association with women who - it's sort of hard to explain - I guess, sell their bodies...put me up-tight. As though there was this unknown competition who was really snazzy....So that sexually I felt that I must be really sort of home-spun plain, in comparison. And I was fairly shy about it and I also always figured that he must be really sophisticated....

She doesn't remember the details of her growing awareness of what these comparisons were doing to her, but she knows that at the time she began reading about Women's Liberation in terms of sexuality and as she was also talking about this with the women in her group that:

...then one day I reacted. Like I suddenly realized that was really oppressing me, that old image...was really bugging me. And I said something about it. And after that I started...being much more honest about, you know, what I wanted sexually...and it's far better....It's just simply a matter of saying what I really want and sort of it being much more a mutual sort of thing.

Pam, then, had found that the traditional expectations that the man be knowledgeable, wordly, and explicit in sexual matters had been making her sexual relationship one-sided and difficult. (I must say, this story seems to me to be a miniature classic in the power of information control - of imputed or real information/knowledge - as reinforced along sex lines, to limit one person's ease and strength within a relationship.)

Edythe had problems with another stereotype in terms of sexual behaviour. She - like Pam - had no difficulty in having all household tasks equally shared. She had always relied very heavily upon her husband for
every kind of support. He was, as she said in discussing her growing interest in the Women's Liberation Movement, the "girlfriend" she could talk to about her new thoughts on women. What she had been trying to do was change her opinion of women, and of herself as a woman, as he had heard about in Women's Liberation literature. She felt she had succeeded in raising her opinion of herself to a great degree. And nearly simultaneously her husband would reach similar conclusions about the worthiness of women.

She describes the process of their mutual change:

We've just kind of grown together...I've been able to help him understand a lot of things about women that he never understood, because he had always kind of not really respected women either ...And through this whole thing he has really realized through seeing me change and all of a sudden become a stronger woman, and he's watched me become more self-confident...and he realizes that it's because of the whole thing of realizing about the women's position in society and everything....It has been very important. We've come very very close, I think.

Edythe says that a further benefit of her husband knowing she is stronger is that he now does not have to feel totally responsible for them both, as he had felt before. That had been the pattern of their relationship because 1) she had been nearly helpless, as she herself describes her part and 2) he "always had the thing that the man has to be responsible for everything and 'cause his father was the real, strong man." This is changing as he begins to "realize I can take some responsibilities too, and he doesn't have this man thing he has to be." She finds that he "has started to relax more...to enjoy things more" with these changes.

All of this may sound just like a Women's Liberation dream come true. But there is a growing problem for Edythe and Earl in connection with a related stereotype of male/female competence or superiority - that is, men
as dominant in the sexual relationship and women as subordinate, as sexual objects. When I asked about their sexual aspect of their relationship (fully expecting the usual improvement in this as well, as with Pam and most others) the answer was quite unexpected:

That's a whole 'nother thing....I don't know, I can't figure it out. Well, anyway, I have sort of this sick thing about sex, like the way I enjoy, I always enjoyed sex before I was married and the only way I enjoyed it was that I always had this thing about - I sort of enjoyed being the slave or something, you know? And such a martyr, and I sort of enjoyed it, just belonging sexually in bed...to the man, and being there just as a sexual object. I actually got turned on by that idea....

Then, really, I never had that many problems with sex. And then I got married and I started gradually realizing these things about myself and started really liking the idea of being a woman and understanding what it was. Then I haven't figured that part out sexually. So my sex life has been hurting....It's getting very serious as a matter of fact....I've got to do something about it. It can't go on like this. I've gotten so like now I just can't really enjoy sex at all.

She has found that her husband remains her friend and helper throughout this, and she hopes that things will work out to be "even better." She is "still working on it" but no change is apparent yet.

This change, exceptional in its contrasting nature to the other changes in this relationship - and unique in the stories of the women - is very illuminating for understanding the relationship between "inherent" sexuality and its social channeling. That is, Edythe, more than most of the women here, and perhaps more than most women, had found that her sexuality was not directed toward a person, but toward an objectification of the characteristics that a relationship could have, as embodied by a male (master) and herself (slave). I would say that virtually all sexual expression is
socially defined in its modes and objects. For the majority of persons there is a reasonable "fit" between the societal expectations for the actors and the self-concepts the persons have in relation to their sexual expression. Edythe had been experiencing that fit - even if it had its own kind of objectification of persons, a kind that the Women's Liberationists consistently deplore. But in changing her self-concept to a considerable degree, with the active co-operation of the person with whom she is sexually involved, she finds that the fit is gone. She has lost the cues that were her link between her sexual feelings and the other. She now has the task of re-socializing some of the most intense, and mysterious aspects of self-concept. Since this problem has become apparent to her so recently, in terms of when the interview took place, it is not possible to tell how the problem is being resolved.

There are several comparisons that may be made between the accounts of the married women and the women who were living with a man, but not married to him (Lisa and Lucy). First, none of them had any noticeable problems about sharing household tasks. (We will find that the housewives definitely had this problem.) This may be peculiar to these couples, but it may also be that they are able to apply a general sharing-the-flat kind of outlook, whether or not there is the extra definition of marriage. The tasks are not terribly taxing, the women often have outside interests - finishing a degree, (Betsy, Lisa), working at the library (Pam), or an office (Edythe, Lucy), off and on - and it would probably take a more traditional orientation, and more time, than most of these women have to allow for a sexual division of labour around home.
Secondly, in contrast between the two types of situations, the married women are not worried about fidelity, as both Lucy and Lisa were. This may have to do with the reinforcing nature of the legal side of marriage. The married women have known their husbands for some time. Presumably they and their husbands considered the desirability and possibility of meeting the fidelity expectation of marriage before they made this move. Yet, they are none of them married for so long (Pam - two years, Betsy - one, Edythe - about one and one-half years) that boredom or isolation from each other are likely to be contributing factors to a desire to know others sexually. The two women who have been married longest, and who lived with their husbands for some time before marriage (Pam, Edythe) have tried to work out problems quite consciously with their husbands. Pam worked out the equality of the division of labour early in their marriage, before her Women's Liberation experience, on the basis of their shared relations of equality that they had from their "civil rights" days. (This is one of the few relationships where this happened among political couples. See History of Women's Caucus for the contrasting and usual, situation.)

One is tempted to say that they had the time and security to work things out with their husbands. It appears that the non-married women, and the newly married one (Betsy), did not feel that latitude for confrontation in their relationships. They kept their problems to themselves, or they tried largely to adjust themselves and not their partner as well.

If there is a positive relationship between societal definition and support of a relationship and the security and flexibility of a rela-
tionship, then if we are looking at relationships where we assume the woman has a primary and strong motivation to maintain the relationship, change is more possible in a marriage. The woman caught most in between is the woman-living-with-a-man. The one who is involved but on her own can lay down her own terms. Her economic or geographical base hasn't altered. The emotional one has, but that isn't the whole story of her life. But the living-with-a-man woman has her emotional, geographic, and economic bases blended in with someone else, but not reinforced by legal means.

The married woman may feel herself to have considerable constraints on her economic and emotional freedom. This may be so especially as in the case of Betsy, if marriage in itself has been seen as a clear-cut goal in life. But she also has the knowledge that the other made a legal and economic as well as emotional commitment. She knows marriages are harder to end than to begin. And this in itself may give her the security she needs to try to alter the relationship as she has learned from her Women's Liberation experience how she should.

c) Housewives

It will be recalled from the early awareness section that the women who were housewives all became interested in the Women's Liberation Movement when they heard that the housewife role was oppressive. They had been very unhappy with the expectations they felt for their performance in this role and they did not feel they were truly competent in it. When they heard that the problems and unhappiness they experienced was not unique to them and could be attributed in large part to external factors,
not to their own adequacy or lack of it, they then were in a position to try to change their circumstances.

There are five women who were married, who had children, and who saw themselves primarily as housewives. All of them were in the UBC group. Four of them had been mothers from before their entry into the Women's Liberation Movement. One, Anita, had found that her Women's Liberation experience had improved the understanding and sharing—emotional and logistic—between herself and her husband. On the strength of this they decided to have their child. Thus she joined the ranks of housewives, and her accounts of continuing change were similar to theirs.

**Time and Tasks**

Having concluded that her circumstances are alterable, the housewife is then faced with the task of carrying out the exploration of new possibilities in her relationship with her family. Where once she had been the focal point for emotional support and the execution of all activities, she must now attempt to diffuse that focus. (The necessity of delegating some logistic and even emotional work to others is a situation faced often by the working wife and mother—whether or not she shares the Women's Liberation Movement perspective about the purpose of shared household tasks.) Because of societal expectations many continue to suffer guilt and anxiety about not fulfilling the expected role. At first most women do not have a clear idea of what should be done, and an even less clear idea of what actually can be done to change what has often been a long-term situation and one that seems satisfactory to other members of the family and community.
She continues to look for guidance, for examples and support from the same 
Sources she has been utilizing since her entry into the Movement - through 
reading, and more importantly, through talking with other women in the group. 
It is a trial and error process for the most part. She tries to evaluate 
what needs to be changed as it relates specifically in her own situation. 
She then presents the need for change to her husband and her children. 
If it "works" she goes on. If her family does not co-operate, she tries 
another tack.

For example, Abby said that there were two aspects of her mar­ 
riage that she began to think it was possible to change. One was her feel­ing that she did not have a right to any time of her own, time that was not 
spent on family-centered activities. From talking with other women in the 
group she began to realize that perhaps she was entitled to some activities 
of her own. She says, "on an intellectual level I could understand that, 
of course, I'm entitled to go out one evening a week. [But] I felt very 
guilty about it at first." She kept going out, though even more than one 
night a week and after several months the guilt feelings had considerably 
lessened, as did a lot of the tension and resentment she had been feeling 
towards her life as a housewife.

The second aspect of her marriage that she wanted to change was 
the distribution of work around the house, and, as an important part of 
that, she wanted her husband to understand that he should not be helpful 
for her sake, but because "...it's his house too." Her technique for achieving 
this change was the same in any case:
We rarely fight...usually we try to talk them [disagreements] out. Sometimes it's a matter of having a few conversations about it over a period of time, maybe a couple of weeks, maybe a couple of days. It just depends....There are separate actions going on so you have a conversation and you do something a little differently and you sort of see how that lays. And then, you know, you have another little conversation and do something else which either compensates for something that was wrong with the first action or goes one step ahead.

Willa, twenty-five, mother of one and married to a graduate student, found that she too had difficulty in really believing that she could and should have time to herself and that tasks at home should be genuinely shared. She illustrates how being in the group led to articulating problems and planning change when she describes how she formulated new thoughts on her situation:

...by meeting with these other women and finding out that...something can be done about it and the world's not going to fall apart if I take an action on what I think should be corrected ...I don't think I would have done this...[gone out on her own to meetings, etc., started having her husband sharing the household work] unless I had been with other women who were doing the same thing, because I didn't have any precedent...I guess being with other people gave me the strength to do it.

Willa describes the strategies through which she achieved changes as follows:

First of all, I would hear about them [things to change, from other women in the group meetings] and I come and lay the trip on David and if he didn't respond well [laughs] I would be very angry. And that happened for the first two or three months and then I found out that, well, I just had to do more subtly. And now if I want to change, oh I will gradually bring the subject up and get him to talk about it and get him to admit that well, perhaps there is, perhaps he should be helping, and, no, it isn't actually my job. And he comes around much more quickly and gently if we do it that way....

I just learned husband-ese, to manipulate him. I don't know if he knows he's being manipulated.
The accounts of the housewives vary only in detail. They learn to define their specific priorities and techniques for change through talking with other women in the group. Once again it is apparent that the comparison, testing, and modifying of the woman's ideas and actions is through frequent interaction with others similarly engaged. This facilitates the woman's development of more diverse role concepts and behaviour, as she continues trying to change her marriage.

Interestingly, the technique employed to achieve radical change within the marriage itself may be seen as stereotypically traditional - manipulation. Yet is more/less than that, in that it also demonstrates the successful utilization of a commonsense model of learning, a recognition that person can absorb only so much new data at any one time. This method of adjustment also indicates, at the very least, their attachment to the relationship which, while perceived as constraining, nevertheless is one which neither interactant is prepared to see dissolve.

The Mother-Child Relationship

Of course the physical care of the house and its inhabitants and the moral responsibility for it are not the only defining activities of being a housewife. Marriage usually means children and having children means bringing them up "right". Since it is the family, particularly the mother, who is expected to teach children to conduct themselves in ways appropriate to their age and sex, and since the Women's Liberation Movement ideology so strongly questions the validity of societal sex-role expen-
tations, it is obvious that a mother active in the Movement will find it necessary to attempt to modify the nature of these expectations. She finds that she is questioning what children and parents should be to each other. She begins to wonder what she can, in good conscience, teach her children about appropriate sex-linked behaviour. She asks herself what kind of examples she and her husband are and should be for the children. Furthermore, she contemplates these changes recognizing that all the other agents of socialization (schools, neighbours, etc.) seem to disagree with her.

Donna discusses her attempted changes in handling her children:

...I was very bad. I rave to think how bad I was [before being in Women's Liberation Movement] for creating a boy/girl dichotomy -like, girls do this, boys do that. Unconsciously mostly...I used to say, oh girls are sneaky and girls are whiney, and boys are not. And boys will do certain things and girls will do certain things. And now that I'm going to Women's Lib I realize how absolutely destructive that is. I'm trying to get out of it and it's very hard because my one kid is five and he's thoroughly grooved into that already and it just makes me sick to think of how much of it has been my influence...I'm really trying to get him out of that and so I'm afraid what I do mostly is just preach at him, which has no effect at all...and I feel quite bad about it. That's made a lot of difference.

Another thing that has made a tremendous amount of difference is that I now deeply believe in day care and before I used to think that it was nice to send them to nursery school but I never wanted anyone else to raise my children, you know. Now I see what a hell of a mess I'm making of it, I'm perfectly happy for somebody else [laughs]. That has made a lot of difference. I'm perfectly willing to send them to a day-care centre. They've been accepted for one next fall and I'm eager for them to get into it. And they're both very happy to be going....I was really deeply into the every child needs his own mother sort of crap before, and I changed my mind about that....
I have also found that since I've been going to Women's Lib that I'm getting terribly frightened of sending my kids to school because I can see just how easily I have been [teaching them sex-role dichotomies]...and when they get to school it's going to be a lot worse.

Willa also reflects these views on the usefulness of day care, not only in relation to the labour-saving aspect, but more particularly with regard to avoiding a too-intense emotional involvement between parents and children.

...I like to have day care so that I can do things I want to do and I also would like to have day care for other women so that they could be free to do what they wanted to do.

(Interviewer: Have your thoughts on your relationship to your son been affected at all by Women's Liberation Movement?)

Well, I don't like to read him nursery rhymes anymore. I learned that at Women's Liberation Movement, that they're sort of a sexist literature....And I'm trying not to lay a masculine trip on him, making him feel he shouldn't have to cry, and be a man - whatever that is. And he can just be him. I learned that there and I guess that's how it's affected him....

I think it's really good that I leave him [with her husband when she goes out] and that I have learned that he's not mine. He's just - I think that we just borrowed him for awhile....And well, just [me] being around him all the time, he was just getting very dependent on me. And since I have gone out and put him in a day-care centre and left him with David it's just been a really good change for him. He's much happier and he doesn't cry and whine when I leave.

This concern about the child's independence is echoed by Trina, twenty-three years old, mother of a two year-old, and married to a graduate student.

In the long run this [Women's Liberation Movement experience] will probably help me to give her more freedom, I hope, when she's older. To...choose to be herself, whatever that turns out to be. And I would see my role...as giving her enough security to be free...without worrying about the fact that no one loves her...she'll have that love and then she can work everything out onto that.
Thus, each of the women we see questions beyond the traditional role of motherhood. They do try to have the work distributed among husband and community. They see this not just as a convenience, but as a necessity for the emotional health of the whole family. They feel that traditional parent/child relationships are detrimental to all concerned.

They are modifying their behaviour in relation to sex-role expectations that now are more widely defined. In the same way that they do not wish to be subject to men qua men, or husbands qua husbands, they do not wish to have their children subject to them simply because the children are their own offspring. They no longer believe that a relationship is justified solely on the basis of traditional societal expectations. Each case is to be judged on its own merits wherever possible, without one "side" or the other exercising undue control or having unearned rights.

**Sexual Aspects of the Marriage**

To look at the sexual aspect of a marriage as though it were separate from the emotional or other parts of the marriage may be placing an analytical division where no division may exist in real life. Yet one of the defining characteristics of marriage is that it is the one institution in our society in which free sexual access to the (female) partner is absolutely "legitimate". Within this institution, as in their non-marital role playing, women traditionally were expected to be undemanding, co-operative, and supportive. Their own physical or emotional satisfaction was not to be the primary consideration.
It is interesting that in spite of the fact that the women all had the freedom of choice that comes with the most up-to-date birth control methods, and though our society is supposedly going through a considerable loosening of the constraints of sex-linked role behaviour, prior to their Women's Liberation Movement experience the marriages of the housewives in this study were all very traditional in terms of what wife and husband expected of each other.

The Women's Liberation Movement position is that women have "rights" in the sexual realm as they do in all other areas of their lives. The women reported that they began to initiate sexual activity more readily, and that they began to say no when they did not want to engage in sexual activity - which they had not done before. They tried in general to de-stereotype their sexual behaviour, to make it a part of their lives which could be learned about and improved upon.

For all of the housewives as they began to assert their own preferences in terms of occurrence or form of sexual behaviour, there was considerable tension at first. At the time of the interviews most of the women still did not feel that these conflicts had been resolved.

The following response, from Donna, was typical:

I used to put up with things that I didn't even realize I was putting up with...where the husband walks in and automatically pats you on the ass...or every thime you hug there is the whole mauling treatment....Since I've been going to Women's Lib, I've gotten this idea that what I want to do with my body is my business. It has created some friction, because I just don't stand for that anymore.

I'm sure that he thinks that because I'm going to Women's Lib I feel I have to make an issue of this, but that's not true. It's
just that I've developed the courage to do it...and he doesn't realize there were times before when I didn't say that...but that has made a lot of difference, and it does make sexual relations rather touchy because then it's a question of, like, whose idea is it, you know.

Willa was the one who felt that most of the strain had ended. For her the problems she had previously experienced were compounded by ignorance of some of the physiological aspects of sex, and by little communication with her husband about her feelings:

From going to the meetings I found out...stuff like vaginal orgasms are not real, or so they say....I was wondering why I couldn't have an orgasm unless I was manipulated manually on the clitoris. And I always thought that, well, maybe when I got mature I'll have natural orgasms....And I always sort of felt guilty about it and the way I found out about that was talking with the women....

I started demanding that he play with me beforehand properly and that - I don't know, I shouldn't say demanding, you know. I demanded, yeah, I guess I did. Enough of this fooling around - that I was going to get pleasure out of it and it wan't, just going to be always him, and that I wasn't going to be bothered with sex unless I was getting satisfaction. Where before I was just taking it as it came without even thinking about it, or if I didn't feel like it...I would just have it and...well, let's get it over with. Where now I will like, I say, O.K., if I'm going to participate then I'm going to have my satisfactory time. And I guess that freed me and now I respond better when he's playing and - yeah, a better sex life.

The housewives in this study started out trying to change their lives in ways that would allow them to find and sustain a more satisfactory view of themselves - to themselves. They learned from reading about Women's Liberation Movement, and from talking with participating friends that to be able to do this they would need to address themselves to change on two fronts: work load and attitudes. They had to have more time outside the home in order to form and maintain new friendships, to join work groups, to go to meetings. They also had to learn that expanding their lives in these ways was not only
possible, but was rewarding. Since all of these changes were to be made within the existing family context they had to be accomplished in concert with complementary changes by the others in the family. Their husbands changed the amount and kind of their participation in the home. The children were dealt with differently within the home and were often placed in group situations away from home. The women saw this as very beneficial for all concerned.

Although these women continue to see themselves as housewives, they no longer see themselves only as housewives since they have new friends and many more activities outside the home. They feel that their husbands better understand the problems and rewards of running a household. They find the housewife role less dissatisfying because it has changed in character and is no longer their only important role.

The housewife role has not so much diminished in value, as that other, newly made roles have developed and increased in value. The housewives now have a greater range of criteria by which to evaluate themselves and are therefore able to see themselves in a more positive light. As Willa said in assessing the effect of her Women's Liberation Movement experience upon her life as a housewife:

I used to think there was no status in being a housewife and, it was really dull and boring. And now I just don't even care about it. I'm just here doing what I'm doing without having to justify myself for that...

For my part it's much better. I can tolerate it (being a housewife) now.
C. Discussion

In her article on the Women's Liberation Movement, Freeman states that the pursuit of change within the Movement could be summed under two concepts - the Equalitarian ethic and the Liberation ethic (1973: 458). What this means is that people must not only pursue equality within existing frameworks of power relationships, but they must also question the extent of power and self-determination available to anyone in the existing social structure. This question should lead to innovation, to expansion of the definitions of the potential of the individual and of the society - aiming toward a fuller, more humane life for all. The role of the Women's Liberation Movement in this process is in the development and carrying of the ideology from which the women select what they see as relevant to their situation.

The Movement in its groups also provides a resource for women in the persons of other women with similar interests and concerns. They provide examples of what women can do in life and give each other moral support in their efforts to change aspects of their primary relations.

In these accounts of the role of the Women's Liberation Movement in the women's primary relationships it is clear that virtually all the women are engaged in the pursuit of a life style involving one or both of the Equality and Libertarian ethics.

The women in non-problematic relationships, for whom equality was not an issue, did use the ideology to consider the limitations of traditional relationships like marriage and subsequent child-rearing in a
single-family household. Madeleine and Adele are these, as they say that they would not again attempt a traditional marriage arrangement. If, by some chance this relationship ended, they would consider some sort of communal situation. Some of them had begun innovating in their living arrangements, as Judy and Adrienne had in living in a group house.

Most of the women, though, want to construct a self that exists as a whole being independent of any other relationships. This does not mean they wish to be separate from others. The women want to find ways to build and sustain this self within close relationships with others, even if it means leaving a problematic relationship to be open to another less problematic one, as do Janet, Kai, and Siobhan.

Independence requires, in very practical terms, equality within relationships. We see that people in problematic relationships have to work out ways to change very concrete aspects of their relationship - like who takes care of the children, when/whether the woman will have time to pursue her own interests, whether her sexual needs will be recognized by both and met. The accomplishment of this led to decided feelings of relative freedom of self-discovery and self-worth, so we see Abby gaining great confidence in her ability to do rigorous class work. Trina finds as she, too, returns to part-time student status that she can think and express well her own thoughts; Anita feels close enough and confident enough in her relationships to move to her goal of motherhood.

The group provides them with inspiration, with examples of other women trying to change their lives or of women who seem to successfully lead quite different and independent lives (see Kai's comments about how just
seeing all these wonderful women gave her the conviction that she, too, could be independent.) The women gave considerable moral support to each other, by example, and by direct encouragement. (See Willa's comments about how she couldn't have tried these new things without knowing other women doing the same.) (Also, see friendship section to follow.)

This group support shows too, in the women who are not in problematic relationships but who have either moved into innovative situations (cooperative child-rearing household like Adrienne) or are trying to prepare themselves for future relationships. Thus, Marta says that she thinks that the supportive, communal feeling she has from other women would allow her to insist on her own personhood in a future relationship with a man. This would mean being close to the person, but not turning her whole political, emotional, and physical self over to him - as she felt she had done before.

It seems clear that the people who can consider not only equality but also libertarian, innovative life styles are those who are not burdened by problematics. They either have been in a non-problematic relationship all along or they were able to leave the problematic one. It appears that over the time of aloneness before taking up a new relationship - in some cases they have not yet taken up a new, stable one - i.e., Marta - they are able to consider a really different way of approaching the typical issues of social sustenance. These issues include finding someone to love, to be with on a regular dependable basis, but now it is to be done without what they see as constraining expectations of stereotypic sort that does not meet their needs for independent personhood.
In a study which attempts to portray fully the everyday lives of the persons studied in relation to a social movement, the role of friendships is important. This is so for several reasons. One is that friendship is a relationship that may be second only— or even equal—to primary relationships (as discussed earlier in this paper) in terms of emotional commitment and time spent in this kind of relationship. One's spouse or lover can occupy only one place at once, but a person can have friends nearly everywhere time is spent—in the neighbourhood, at work, or far away from face-to-face interaction. So just as the work world and the home world or any other realm where a woman may spend a lot of her time and thought must be examined, so too must the world of friendships.

The social psychological literature on affiliation provides an analytical link between processes of friendship formation and maintenance and how these processes may be usefully looked at in relation to social movements in general and the Women's Liberation Movement in specific. This link consists in the rather consistent agreement on the role in affiliation of attitudes, shared time, and sense of consequence. That is, friends are people with whom one 1) shares attitudes of in-common relevance; 2) situation over time (Newcomb, 1956); and 3) with whom there is positive consequence deriving from the relationship for the persons involved. By "situation" I mean shared activities among persons of one's own social stra-
tum, job level, role-set, etc. And positive consequence is in terms of prestige, reinforcement of the self-image by the relationship with the other(s), or even avoidance of negative, undesirable consequences (Backman and Secord, 1962, 1964).

Of course, some attitudes are more important than others for developing friendships. The importance of any attitudes held by a person can only be evaluated in relation to the interests (goals, problems) of the "attitude holder". Of the range we all hold we develop, maintain, or re-construct our attitudes in an interplay between what is known, what comes to be known, and our individual biographies - which are more or less problematic in various facets. We can see this relationship between biography and attitudes throughout the accounts of the women about their Women's Liberation experience. For instance, in the early awareness part we can see how attitudes toward their role as women changed as they move into the Movement. This continues as they evaluate their everyday primary relationships, as they maintain certain attitudes and change others in their attempts to gain equality and to expand their concepts of appropriate behavioural expectations for all concerned in these relationships.

What is of particular interest here is how affiliative behaviour takes place in these segments of the Women's Liberation Movement. Thus, I wish to explore how ideologically provided criteria for affiliation are developed and utilized in the formation and maintenance of friendships. I also want to examine the role of the group experience in supplying a pool of potential friends and in reinforcing many evolving beliefs about the self and other women.
It is one of the organizational tasks of a movement to provide for the situations in which persons may find—or find themselves to be—like-minded people. This is necessary for founding a social movement and for successful recruitment, as Freeman has pointed out. But it is obvious that provision must be made for these networks to be maintained and elaborated upon if a social movement is to continue.

In reference to the Women's Liberation Movement itself, the attitudes that are particularly relevant to the choice of friends are developed in an ideological environment that is an anti-elitist, and anti-"structured" movement. Structured is in quotation marks here to indicate that the common use of it in the Movement is semantically and sociologically inaccurate. Any continuing social interaction has regularities, has structure. But for most people in the Movement structured was synonymous with a structure of hierarchies, or rigid division of labour according to expertise and for power. They were anti-that kind of structure. (See Joreen, "The Tyranny of Structurelessness", 1972). There is considerable reliance upon the exchange of life histories among participants to provide authority for and legitimation of the interpretations of women's situation provided by the ideology. This is the use of the "politics of experience", as Mitchell (1971) described it. Thus it is apparent that developing close, frequent, supportive contact among women would be a goal of the Women's Liberation Movement.

This is true also because it is one of the tenets of the ideology that women are isolated from each other—due to competitiveness over men, the social isolation of the nuclear, neo-local family, etc. This condition must be overcome and the strategy is bringing women together.
We can see the reflexive nature of participation in a social movement when the Movement provides a place for women to contradict the everyday conditions of their oppression—both by now associating on a non-competitive, self-assertive, politically active basis with like-minded women and out of this close association an enabling of continuing development of analytical insights into their oppression. Mitchell discusses this where she says that "Women's Liberation both counteracts the oppressed behaviour of women in our society...and provides a political base for the analysis of this oppression." (1971: 58).

The Women's Liberation Movement provides a model of the ideal relationship among women, which is expressed in the term "sisterhood". This means that a woman who sees herself as sharing common oppressive conditions with other women—by virtue of their gender assignment—will see that it is only through the concerted, cooperative efforts of women that this oppression will be changed. This oppression is seen as psychological and economic, and thus sisterhood means many kinds of actions. It means rejecting the negative stereotypes of women, which a woman is very likely to hold towards herself as well as other women. It means defining one's own needs for people and satisfying them by one's own means—not through the agent of husband, children, or sheer proximity. It means giving support to other women—moral, political, and economic.

An aphorism that often comes up in conversation among Women's Liberationists about pre-Women's Liberation relations among women is that "a woman is a friend that you have until the next man comes along." Women are seen as pitted against one another in competition for men, for jobs,
and approval from the usual male boss; for self-esteem at the expense of other women. In the ideology one can see repeated descriptions of this competition and explanations for it. Similarly, there are accounts of how this situation can be overcome and of how rewarding it is to know women as sisters.

How a woman can best arrive at consciousness is often debated. Is it through consciousness-raising groups, or through working together on concretely political activities and thereby learning to see women as sisters - or a combination of both? The Vancouver groups embodied these different viewpoints, as was noted in the "History and Structure of Groups" section. But no one disagrees on the necessity and pervasive value of sisterhood.

The role of sisterhood in the paid-working world of women will be described in the next section. There, women were thrown together in explicitly competitive economic and prestige systems. But this is not the whole of any woman's life. In theory she can choose many of her associates. But the expectations of appropriate sex-role linked behaviour may significantly constrain the choices in her friends. If she lives through a man, or for her children she may 1) not experience a need for friends; or 2) not have the support of others to act upon the needs she may come to perceive. So in practice she may have had very few friends or may have known her friends because they were her husband's or lover's friends. Or they may have been friends through the children's activities, or through sheer proximity of neighbourhood. Other women may seem to her to be uninteresting and of little value.
This is the way traditional affective relationships between women are described in the ideology. Women are not real friends. They share for the most part, circumstantial, situation-oriented acquaintances of varying intensities.

In looking at the women's accounts of their friendships in relation to their Women's Liberation experience, we can see:

1) How they use the ideology to define friendship - which includes their ideas about how friendship *per se*, can occur; qualities of it that are important to women; and of which kinds of persons are the most likely resource for friends and with which people friendships may be problematic. We can see also

2) How the concrete, situated part of friendship, such as the amount of time spent, with whom and doing what, has been affected by the belief in and participation in the Women's Liberation Movement.

3) That there is the theme of the role of "friendship" in the on-going strategy of the Women's Liberation Movement.

There is also available from another section of the interview information about friendship that came up in relation to the motivations for the women continuing to participate in their groups which will be discussed in a separate section in this chapter following the elaboration of the above points.

These are the themes that appear throughout the accounts, but there are both inter- and infra-group differences on definitions and explanations of friendship, in emphasis on one or another aspect of friendship,
and of frequency of occurrence of each of the themes. I will present the above four types of descriptions of the women's friendship experiences, and at the end there will be a discussion comparing the two groups.

A. 1) a) Definitions of Friendship - Women's Caucus

1) How Friendship Can Occur

Not all the women in Women's Caucus made statements about the "causal" basis of friendship, but the four who did (Marta, Penny, Pam, Adrienne) did so by comparing what had been the situation for friendships for themselves and for women in general with how they now thought women could know each other. In so doing, they expressed interpretations of the nature of affiliative relationships that bear out very well the literature on the necessary conditions for friendship - shared attitudes and shared activities.

Before Women's Liberation, as Marta saw it, women had friends

...cause they're around or cause you need friends or something

Or as Penny saw it, women had friends as part of

The traditional role [where] you don't have many friends if you're the wife because your social relationships are pretty well your husband's friends and then whatever women they drag along, right?

But with Women's Liberation this changed for them - as they found that there were people with whom they shared conscious, deliberately chosen attitudes about what was to them a crucial issue - the oppression of women. Marta followed her earlier comments by stating what she now saw as how real friendships could develop:
Getting involved...in Women's Liberation means that you work with a lot of people and that creates a special kind of relationship and a basis for friendship that nobody ever told you about, right?...What you never get told is that working together is really the basis for friendship, right? Common work in many, in real ways, common interests and a common goal that you are working for.

Adrienne felt that the women found the emotional basis of their friendships - what she designated as mutual support - through

...knowing women, and knowing women you really like a lot, and just being interested in what they're doing, and just spending time with them. And it comes, too, from working with them.

She had found in her earlier political experience that she had not been able to work closely with men on projects in which they were both deeply concerned ("they turned into these competitions and kind of ego trips"), but that she could now work very easily and closely with women, due to this mutual support. (See next section - "Valued Qualities".)

ii) Valued Qualities in Friendships

It is characteristic of the Women's Liberation Movement that participants not only share attitudes about the goals or activities they are pursuing, but they also share attitudes about that very sharing. The process of sharing is explicitly cited as a goal and an effect of participation in the Movement, as was noted above in the description of the Movement's ideological development of the concept of sisterhood. The goal of sisterhood is achieved in the seeking for it, which is not necessarily always the case in the pursuit of other movement goals such as independence or equality, or even a sense of self-worth - although the latter is very closely linked to the practice of sisterhood.
In the Women's Caucus the term most used to describe the emotional quality that was looked for and received in friendships was "support". There was great similarity in the accounts in that the women pointed out the instrumental function of support. Its use was in giving one strength to carry out political activities of an organizational sort.

As above, Adrienne talked about how knowing women as she knew in Women's Caucus made it easy for work to be done cooperatively.

...like the primer [a history of women's role in Canada] that's one example of that. I mean, that was just a fantastic experience. And so working with writing things or in an action you get support. I mean, it's what we choose to call support. It just gives you a kind of strength...I don't know, you just don't get so hung up in your own personal problems. You just don't think about that too much, you know.

This kind of statement was typical of most of the women in Women's Caucus. Edythe felt the value of her friendships in Women's Caucus was not in distracting her from her problems, but was useful in actually ending loneliness she had felt when she first arrived in Vancouver. She had been interested in Women's Liberation but it wasn't until she was frantic with the newness and confinement of her situation that she went to Women's Caucus. There she met some people and made

...a few friends really well, really quickly, and then we had some old talks and then being around the women all of a sudden I was really feeling good again, you know...and then I realized how important the whole thing was to me and then I really started getting interested in the Working Women's Workshop and the unions....

Other women mentioned the value of the "closeness" of "deep" friendships that they had formed among those they worked with in the Women's Caucus, and they contrasted this to the lack of close friendships before this time.
Kinds of Persons Likely to be Resources for Friendships - and Those with Whom Problematic Relationships are Likely

A number of the women talked about how friendship to them now meant friendship with women. These were then, women who did or potentially could share attitudes about the conditions under which women live. It was not an easy conclusion to come to, for some of the women, as Edythe described.

E: I have a whole new attitude about making women friends.

i: How's that?

E: Well, I'm willing to try now. And like even, I worked in Office Overload a few times and usually I can't take the office girl types, you know - so dumb [whispers]. But now I have a whole new way of looking at that....As a matter of fact, they're very interesting. I have discovered these new people in the world called women. It's really nice.

Even valuing women as a group did not always facilitate making friendships among women. This was true in two cases, where Adele and Bonnie found that each of their closest pre-Women's Liberation friendships could not survive the new ideas held by the two women.

For Adele there was the virtual loss of an old friend who had recently been left as a single parent by her husband. The woman now lived with her parents. Though Adele had tried to share her own new interests with the woman - as they had shared so much before - and had tried to interest the new mother in day care she had met with "polite silence, which is unusual". Since the woman's parents were particularly prone to deriding Adele's political interests, she felt that there was not much she could do to keep up the closeness they had enjoyed before.

Adele had also found that being women was not always enough to preserve friendships where there were radically different attitudes held about marriage and the family. As she said:
There are other people, like quite old friends who are now married...that I never see. We have absolutely nothing in common anymore. I don't appreciate her ideas about the family or about the kind of life she's leading - where she is at home totally devoted to this child and her husband. That's fine, but I think that we have a certain bit of responsibility outside our own little nuclear family.

Bonnie lost out with her best friend, too, who teased her about her Women's Liberation activities. The friend "even let her teen-age son" tease her and the friendship was definitely suffering.

But for most women, as the definitions given by them imply, friends were women and women were friends. This occurred not just through the attitude of valuing women, but also through very pragmatic means: through Women's Caucus activities and social life extending from the friendship networks formed there.

1) b) Definitions of Friendship - UBC

1) How Friendships Can Occur

In Women's Caucus there were several women who addressed themselves explicitly to statements about the "causal" bases for friendship. They were interested in making theoretical links between women's individual experiences and the social-psychological structures that made for certain kinds of behaviour.

There was no one in the UBC group who did the same. They could talk about what they wanted in friendship and what they found (see next section), but no one was engaged in making definitive statements about where sisterhood could arise.
ii) Valued Qualities in Friendship

Though no one in the UBC group used the word "support" in talking about what qualities they valued in their friendships, some form of emotional support was what they were talking about much of the time. They found support in the style of friendship, and in the examples that other women's lives gave them. Some of them also mentioned finding women to be interesting company in a way they never had found them before.

By style of friendship I mean the emotional tone of them and the way that interaction followed from that. For instance, Abby said that

I really think that one of the, to me, biggest benefits of Women's Liberation is that the way of talking to people really changes. There's sort of an honesty. Certainly it's not total...but it's still more honest, more open - just this more trusting or something. But it's a different way of speaking to people and also talking, you know,...just about different things.

To explain what she meant by different things Abby then described how she had talked daily for months over "5 million cups of coffee together" with her next-door neighbour. They each knew many of the facts of each other's lives, but Abby felt she could not be frank with the woman over something like what she saw as her very debilitating child-rearing practices. ("She doesn't discipline her kids...and I still have never felt it my place to say, 'Look, Alice, you're really ruining yourself'.") Abby feels she knows the women who are her friends from the UBC group much better after much less time because there are shared assumptions about openness in friendship and about the rights of mothers to Day Care, to time of their own, etc. In contrast, Abby tries to convey some solutions to the woman by her own example of use of day care, etc., but she feels she would lose the friendship if she actually spoke her thoughts to the woman.
For Donna, too, there is a distinction between Women's Liberation friends and non-Women's Liberation friends. She gives another example of the special kind of talk that goes on among the UBC women, especially in a "small-group", a consciousness-raising group.

I would tell anybody that is in our small group practically anything I'm thinking. There isn't anything I've ever held back, so I kind of look at Women's Liberation as a place where I can go and I can honest-to-God say anything....It really gives me a chance to sit down and talk about what I'm really trying to sort out in my head....

In this small group, although I really don't know anybody that intimately, you know...I still find it doesn't bother me to say anything....It's kind of a relief because they really don't know my husband personally and they don't know my kids so they're not really judging what I say about them...or what they see me do, because quite often people will see me doing something and then when I say something they will say, "oh, but you just did--", and that really has no bearing on the fact that I suddenly thought what I just did was wrong and I shouldn't have done it. So I find I can be very open in this group.

The fact that other women they met through Women's Liberation could be non-judgmental or non-competitive was mentioned by several women as having a very important part in the quality of their friendships. Lisa said that she knew women in

...a totally different way now. Essentially...the things about competition...I don't feel that anymore. I don't feel necessarily a need to compete for some man's attention or with another woman. I don't feel a necessity to be bitchy towards other women, simply for the sake that they're better looking or what have you - those silly little things.

The role of non-competitiveness in friendships was mentioned by Hestia, too, as she also talked about the support she got from being able to see women as examples rather than competitors.
H: I had much more anxiety last year than this year, and there could be a number of reasons for that but I really think [that] getting the reinforcement from people at Women's Liberation has really made a difference. Specifically, I grew up with if you don't have a man by the time you're 20, you might as well kill yourself.

I: What did Women's Liberation have to do with this?

H: Well, there were lots of other people who don't have men, or the ones that do, that wish they didn't. And also the people in the group are really shining examples, I think, of all kinds of wonderful things. I mean, success in a number of fields, or even success I would say as a personality. Like I just like them, I guess that's what it comes down to.

Anita talked about women as examples not just as ideals, but as other instances of what she herself was experiencing. She says that the new style of relating to her woman friends, who came into Women's Liberation with her, allowed for this.

I: Are you friends with them in the same way as before?

A: No, no. We talk a lot more about personal stuff now, especially because we - we were friends before and before we joined the small group, and then in the small group we started talking about personal stuff we had never talked about before ... That's really changed the relation. It's been a much richer exchange of experiences, and it's so good to hear what's happening inside other people, you know. It's just comforting and you know you're not the only person and that sort of thing, that your problems are not unique.

The women in the UBC group placed considerable value, then, upon the support they received from other women in terms of closeness, trust, examples of what women could do and were doing. The other aspect of friendship some of the women talked out was the sheer interest that women now held for them - that women friends could now provide a truly fulfilling relationship. Siobhan stated this most clearly when she said:
S: I don't think I've ever had a sense before that I could have a social world that was entirely made up of women, that would be really exciting and interesting for me. That's really a new sense.

I: You do have this sense, then?

S: Oh yeah, yeah, absolutely.

I: Is this to the exclusion of men, or is it just the presence of women?

S: There's no sense of exclusion for me. It's simply that some very simple thing happens in your head when you realize that - for instance, like we had last week —...you can have a dinner party where there are only women and it can be absolutely gorgeous in every possible way that you would expect a party to be - intelligent, funny, flirty, you know, the whole range and that's really a nice sense for me. That I could never walk into a room anymore and feel like if there wasn't a man there something was missing.

iii) Likely Resource Persons for Friendships and Possible Problematic Persons

It should be apparent that, as in the Women's Caucus, there is in the UBC group ideological and pragmatic selection for women as friends. Many women had the experiences that Willa had:

I: How about your friendships — have they been affected by Women's Liberation?

W: Oh yes, very much so, especially with women. I hadn't had any meaningful friendships with any women and since going to the meetings I have learned to trust and love women. I used to think that they were very kind of, well, just that stereotype bitchy, cranky and untrustworthy. And now like I have - before when I was invited somewhere I would only feel a tiny excitement if there was men going to be there and now I'm getting that feeling of a real excitement in and really joyful when there are women. And I don't really care if there are men around, when I used to think "well, what a drag, going out with women."
This increased valuation of women worked for Willa even in relationships with women who did not share her Women's Liberation experience.

She did find most of her friends were in Women's Liberation, but still she'd

...learned I'm getting on much better with other women that aren't [in Women's Liberation], than before....Before, I used to be really down on women that were always doing these safe things like playing bridge and reading Chatelaine or anything like that. And now I can understand why they do it....Well, I just understand women and I'm not down on them. I think they're oppressed and oppressed people do funny things.

But several of the women had found problems in interacting with non-Women's Liberation women. As Abby mentioned about her neighbour, they couldn't be as frank as they wished on sensitive issues. Or they felt themselves to be the neighbourhood "freak" who no one could understand, as Donna did.

I've become sort of the local freak....There are a lot of very nice women there [in married student housing where she lives] but a lot of the time when I went to discuss things with them they sit and listen to what I say and they say "I don't know anything about that", which I find very discouraging....Oh, God, they just don't have the faintest clue about what I'm saying and they just don't want to listen. They are really terrified of what's going to happen if they open their minds one tiny little bit.

And then I hate myself because I can't resist temptation to torment some of the men.

So we find here, as was often the case for the Women's Caucus women, that women looked to women as friends, but even then being another woman was not always enough. There had to be sharing of attitudes as well as situation - or condition as a woman - for a friendship to be maintained from before Women's Liberation, or sought out and maintained during the Women's Liberation experience.
2) a) Situated Aspects of Friendship - Women's Caucus

In the section describing the type of Women's Liberation activities and the time spent in them by the women, it was apparent that for most of the women in Women's Caucus the activity level was the equivalent of at least a quarter-time job. When one considers that most of the women had either full-time jobs or other major time commitments, like Betsy's Ph.D. thesis expectations, it follows that Women's Liberation activities provided a significant exposure of persons to each other over long periods of time. That in itself wouldn't make for friendships, but again, the shared attitudes seemed to bring the women to define these relationships as friendships.

This is shown in their response to specific questions about who their friends were and who they spent time with. The answers for most Women's Caucus women were to list off the women from the workshops they were in.

A few women listed other people, but as Adrienne put it,

Most of the people I know now are active or latent [Women's Liberationists]...I can think of a couple of women who are very much in agreement with Women's Liberation but just aren't activist types....

Penny found her friendship patterns to be the same in that there were the ones she knew directly from Women's Caucus activities and the others

...if they aren't officially in any groups or activities they still identify themselves with Women's Liberation and a lot of their ideas and all the things we talk about are things related to Women's Liberation.
The only person who did not have friends who were Women's Caucus regulars was Bonnie, the single parent. She was the one in the group who spent the least of her time in Women's Liberation activities. She was not, as she saw it, "one of those people that makes a lot of friends". She would talk to Judy on the phone about various problems "because she brings up kind of positive arguments both ways", but she did not feel at ease about taking any more of Judy's time. Bonnie was also concerned that what little free time she had for socializing would be taken up by non-social events. She said:

I found that going to the Working Women's Workshop once a week my social existence was being hampered a bit by the time taken. 'Cause, as I say, there is only about one or two people that I have met socially outside Women's Caucus - so naturally a sort of relaxed social life is very necessary, too, isn't it?

It seemed then, that those who had a strongly articulated interest in Women's Liberation and who could make the time to spend in Women's Caucus activities also began to count the other women there as friends. They began to interact with them other than in explicit Women's Caucus activities, but Women's Liberation was still an important focal point to the relationships.

This is then a process of reinforcement and reciprocity, people adopting certain attitudes about the oppression of women, then - or simultaneously - finding like-minded people, sharing a number of activities that both allow one to see the others as friends and that for the most part preclude time being left to spend with other pre- or non-Women's Liberation Movement acquaintances.
2) b) Situated Aspects of Friendship – UBC

As is true for the majority of Women's Caucus women, the time spent in Women's Liberation activities for most of the UBC women is considerable. What this has to do with friendship access is that most of the UBC women list as their friends other UBC Women's Liberationists. They meet them at groups for the support and friendly sharing that has been described earlier. That the friendship element is a crucial one is evident from their responses to questions about why they continue to be in Women's Liberation. Every single UBC woman said what kept her going was liking the people and the talk and the learning about herself and others within this situation.

A particularly clear statement of the way the group itself provided a place for the combination of political and social attitudes and needs was made by the mother of three, Abby. She found her time to be quite limited due to child-care demands and the uneasiness of her husband over the amount of time she was already spending on Women's Liberation activities. She was describing who her friends were and when she saw them. She listed several group members and then said

I don't see a lot of them at things that really aren't activities, special activities. Partly because some of the things are kind of border-line cases, but also because I feel kind of jealous, well [her husband] feels kind of jealous of my time. So that I kind of feel like that's my social activities – going, I mean like going to Women's Liberation is going to a party sort of thing. Not exactly, but....

Most of the women said that they did see their Women's Liberation friends on other occasions than UBC-group-related activities. For the women who were new in town over the past year (Madeleine, Willa, Hestia, Abby,
Janet), the UBC group had been virtually their only source of friends. They had come into the group in the Fall, had become very involved in it and had little reason or need - or time - to go elsewhere for friends.

Other women who had more of a history of friendly interactions in town found the older friendships taking on new strength (Anita) or sometimes becoming problematic. The tendency was for them to increasingly have friends that were Women's Liberation sympathizers or actual participants in the UBC group or one of its "satellite" small groups or other activity groups.

It seems that what the Women's Caucus provided for its participants was a place to work and from there friendships could evolve. It is apparent from the early awareness and entry section that most of the UBC women entered it looking for emotional support - for like-minded friends. The UBC group, thus, provided a place where friendships could be made and eventually people could use the confidence and strength they got there to do other political work.

3) a) The Role of Friendship in the Strategy of the Women's Liberation Movement - Women's Caucus

Providing a situation for sisterhood to develop is one of the goals of the Women's Liberation Movement at large (Freeman, 1971). Within the Women's Caucus there were two people who made explicit statements about how and why sisterhood could be developed and used to further the goals of the Movement and the Movement itself.

The different viewpoints within the Movement on the role of consciousness-raising did not seem to them to be a high priority strategic
goal. They did want friendship to form among women and they valued their friendships very highly, but they felt that truly trusting, long-term friendships could come only out of working together.

As Marta said,

...something that has been really clear to me is that the best way of fixing yourself up is to...go out, to do something with other women and that's how you build trust, right? I mean you trust people 'cause you've worked with them, right? Not because you've sort of explored their psyches - although that comes too, that comes with it, the sort of contact needed to really get close to somebody comes from doing something with them, from being successful at something, right?

It would be, then, the duty of the Women's Liberation Movement to provide an opportunity for this trust to be built. Pam had had the experience of having her first close friends, other than her husband, in the Women's Movement and she said that

In the last year through the Women's Movement I've really begun to develop some really deep friendships with several women and to really treasure that, like just feel that that's one of the best things that the Women's Movement can give to women.

While Marta had given a rather general statement about what sisterhood could do for women, Pam related its value directly to the work of the Women's Caucus itself. She said:

Just recently I've been feeling very strongly that it's not going to be possible to do the kinds of things that we want to do unless we are in fact very close friends. And that it's especially important that we not just see each other in meetings because we'd grow to hate each other because...meetings are such a hard thing to get through somehow - if you're always sort of having to work and to grind and to get things done....You start to feel that the other person is the person who drags you away from having fun and having free time....And even if you don't want to have those feelings you start to have them.
3) b) **Role of Friendships in the Strategy of the Women's Liberation Movement - UBC**

Just as there was no discussion of theories about how friendship can occur, there was no one in the UBC group who responded to questions about friendship by addressing themselves to it as a strategic tool for the Women's Liberation Movement. This is consistent with the more "psychological", less theoretical approach to the oppression of women that is consistently shown in the histories of awareness, entry and on-going participation in Women's Liberation shown by the UBC women - as compared to the Women's Caucus women.

**B. The Relation of Friendships to Continuing Participation in Respective Groups**

There was one other part of the interview where friendship was mentioned by some women. The previous data was drawn largely from the responses to explicit questions about "effects upon friendship". One of the questions toward the end of the interview was "What keeps you in Women's Liberation, why do you keep going?" The answers are summarized below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The people, the talk, continued learning about self and others</th>
<th>Women's Caucus: Adele</th>
<th>UBC: Willa, Shirley, Trina, Donna, Kai, Abby, Janet, Jeanette, Lucy, Hilary, Hestia, Amy, Lisa, Siobhan, Henrietta, Frieda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continuation of the Movement</td>
<td>Marta, Adrienne, Betsy, Bonnie, Pam, Judy, Edythe, Adele</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the following sections are some quotations from people with each participation maintenance orientation.

**Women's Caucus**

To begin with the Women's Caucus replies about what kept them in Women's Liberation, let's start with Adrienne:

I: What keeps you in it?

A: Maybe because I can't imagine not being in it. That doesn't mean I'm always really out there on the barricades...[but] it just seems to me so pressing, and it just seems to me intolerable the lives that women lead, most of them. Not myself, I'm obviously very privileged as a woman, I can't bear - I can't think of anything else to do with my life. It's been so long since I defined success in any kind of status or job terms.

Marta was equally accepting of the necessity of continual struggle:

I: What keeps you going?

M: The world. I mean, it doesn't change.

Judy shared the almost fatalistic sense of the essential task of Women's Liberation work:

I think Women's Liberation must be the hardest thing to quit, I mean, if you're really in it. Because you can never get out of being a woman. I mean it is impossible to be even bought off. You can't quit it like you can politics.

So, Women's Liberation isn't just politics, narrowly defined, for her or the others in Women's Caucus - it is a way of life.

**UBC**

From Amy, of the UBC group, in response to the question as to why she keeps going to the Women's Liberation group:
Oh, 'cause I've found out a lot, you know, I've really found out a lot and I've wanted to talk about myself very much. I've wanted to talk about my relationships with men and I've said a lot that I've only said to one or two people [before]. And I like knowing that other people feel that way, and getting some...more feeling of strength that I'm, in fact, not a freak. That the things that have gone on in my relationships that I haven't been happy with are not really that abnormal, you know, that I can cope with them as a matter of fact, you know, with a little bit of thought.

So I've liked that. I've liked going to the small groups...it's warm there. It's friendly. I like the people. I like going to the bar afterwards.*

This theme of generalizing from one's own experience and from that of others to one's own was persistent, as was the description of an emotional tone of warmth and support. As another example there is Lucy's answer to the continuation question:

There's still a lot of things that I don't know about how other women live. And with the small group in particular, more than the large, I really feel a lot of strength in them. I really like the discussions that go on. And I also find interesting that a lot of them have kids...I'm just interested in seeing how they work out problems with raising them. One thing that really bugs me about the system as it is now is that you don't have much contact with children.

I: ...You see a lot of strength there, what does that mean?

L: A lot of it is they just kind of know what it is they're doing with their lives....

I: What does seeing that do for you?

L: I guess it's the possibility of seeing the possible alternatives and just seeing what we have in common.

* A tradition in the UBC group.
Discussion

If we look at the Women's Caucus women we see that they have a decided interest in articulating and applying an explicit ideological statement relating any facet of a woman's life to the Movement. Thus, they have much to say about the role of friendship in the strategy of the Movement. The UBC women do not. While several of the Women's Caucus women have a clear awareness of the importance of other women in giving them a supportive, communal feeling that helps them in their consideration of their closest relationships (see primary relationships section, i.e., Marta or Adrienne on marriage), they do not make that support group and the Women's Caucus synonymous in terms of motivation for continuing. But the UBC women do. It is not simply that friends are women and women are friends - even when the population of friends is nearly co-terminous with the group, as the affiliative networks of the women in both groups show. The distinct impression received is that for the UBC women that group per se, is a collectivity of friends. It is not a strategy-making body where people learn to be friends as they carry out somehow more primary tasks, as is the case in the Women's Caucus. Rather, for the UBC women the primary need in entering and staying in the group was friendship among like-minded people and the group is thus an end in itself. For the Women's Caucus women the group is a means which functions to being about sisterhood and which functions well because of that sisterhood.

These findings bring us back to the entry stories. Most of the Women's Caucus women were altruistic in orientation and political in ex-
perience. They have maintained these beliefs and acted accordingly. Those who came into the group later (Adele, Edythe, Bonnie, Pam) were altruistic and political or internal problematic in initial orientation. But they all evolved in the direction of the founders and prime movers of the group. Thus a considerable coherence of direction and interest shows over time. People stay in Women's Caucus for the same reasons it was founded.

The same is true of the UBC women. Few were political before, a few were altruistic in orientation. But most of them went in to find people to share their thoughts about themselves - as women, it is true, but also very much, initially, as individuals. Even the altruistic or external-problematic entry persons have come to feel that the primary draw of the group is the people. The internal problematic people have widened their interests somewhat - to a deep interest in an appreciation of what other women in the group are trying to do to change their lives, but "political" at the UBC group is strength-through-consciousness-raising-first. Friends and talk are explicitly identified, even synonymous with Women's Liberation. Women's Liberation is traditional-style, continual political work for the Women's Caucus women, and friends come through that.

Obviously, these stories, focussing first on the UBC ones, are at least partially a function of the relative newness for the UBC women of this whole type of talk and open interaction. It is an intense, exploratory, informative time for them. The talk was always very explicit about feelings and friendship and life-comparing. Again, it was what many of the UBC women were looking for.
But if we compare the overall friendship experience of the UBC women and Women's Caucus women there are far more similarities than differences. Did the Women's Caucus women go through this exploration and sharing years ago? Do they not talk about it now solely because of their priorities within the ideology action framework, or have they learned what they want to know, settled into friendship and activity patterns and can take this kind of learning as a given?

This could be so and could be part of the reason why they seem to ignore the role of their comrades in maintaining their participation in the group. Since they have all gone through considerable friendship pattern changes and since most are in one of the two socializing groups within the Women's Caucus, their continuation reasons could hardly be put down entirely to impersonality within the group. It does seem true that the Women's Caucus focus on traditional political action leaves little room for the woman who comes in "cold", who wants the exploration, warmth and support that the UBC women are experiencing. But this is not to say that the Women's Caucus women do not have this among themselves - they do, but that's not (or no longer) the primary reason for their being in the Women's Caucus.

It may be that there are limits to how long a woman needs or wants or can tolerate this intense exploration. If she was looking for knowledge of self and others, if she was looking for support and got it - then she can do other kinds of activities for women. Though I have not been able to follow through on this systematically, I have the very strong impression that this is what has happened to the UBC women. The group did not take up in the same form the next year. But easily three-quarters of the
participants are still, three years later, active in some form of activity related to fighting women's oppression (see above, p.89). They worked on a great variety of projects and they move from one to another, as their interests evolve, or as a task is completed. I couldn't ask them why they kept going to an explicitly Women's Liberation group now, but if I asked them why they engaged in their respective activities, I suspect their answers would be similar to the Women's Caucus answers at the time of the interview.

It is clear from this analysis that the Movement does provide the three basic prerequisites for affiliation—like-minded people (shared attitudes) have a symbolic and physical place (shared situation) to get together to find mutual support, new ideas, and interesting activities (positive consequence).
CHAPTER VI
WORK AND CHANGE

It must be made clear at the outset that only one type of work is being discussed in this section - wage or salary work. The distinction that is important here is not one between labour and work ("hiking is hard work") or between "volunteer" work and paid work. A distinction is being made between housework specifically and work paid for in money.

It has been the Women's Liberation Movement, spearheaded by such arguments as Margaret Benston's (1969) "Political Economy of Women's Liberation", which has focussed attention upon the specious societal position that women's work in the home is not "real" work. It is work by any other criterion than direct, regularized cash payment. It does have payment in the sense of having an economic return in the form of a home, clothes, food. It has reward in the sense that being a housewife brings with it the recognition of her occupying the most appropriate role for a woman in society (still).

That the Women's Liberation Movement is succeeding slowly in bringing about a broadening of the definition of "real" work to include housework is being shown in the nationwide marshalling of many women's groups to change laws which have up until now resulted in legal settlements detrimental to the wife as in Murdoch vs. Murdoch. This was the case where Irene Murdoch, wife of an Alberta rancher, was granted upon divorce the total settlement of $200 a month to live on. This was so even though her husband
conceded that her assistance throughout the 25 year marriage had been instrumental in the ranch being developed to its then value of $300,000. Her appeal of this ruling at the Supreme Court of Alberta was rejected by a four to one margin, with the reason given that she had made "...only a normal contribution as wife to the matrimonial regime" (Canada and the World, 1974: 4-5).

Yet because of women's efforts in Canada, it may be that housework will not be seen much longer as having only "use" value, as Benston characterizes it (1969). It will have "exchange" value. We also can see at least partial attempts to quantify the value of housework and to pay the woman through social assistance plans, like Canada Pension. But it is only the former - paid-in-cash labour, that has exchange value, value that can be traded for goods or that can increase itself through investment, etc. The other labour, that women alone do, has only use value.

Having made this distinction, it is important to look at this kind of work for at least two reasons. One is that it occupies a considerable amount of the working woman's time and energy. Any study of change as effected by an ideology of such scope as the Women's Liberation Movement must include any part of a woman's life wherein appreciable amounts of time, energy, or thought are spent.

Secondly, the disadvantaged situation of women at work is a constant theme in much of the writing about women's oppression. It has been the work of many ideologues to describe the objective conditions and subjective feelings of women at work and to interpret these conditions for wo-
men as being caused by an oppressive system which must be radically altered. Here the Women's Liberation Movement in Canada has been considerably aided by the publication in 1970 of the Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women. This still provides the most thorough documentation of the situation of working women. This oppression shows in their on-the-job-situation, and in the problems of inadequate societal support for women in terms of training, of day care, of job mobility, etc. The Report has been widely used in the Movement and was "must" reading - or at least skimming - and discussion material for both of the Vancouver groups.

Frequently in the Women's Liberation literature (Pedestal, 1970: 6-7) it is pointed out that women at work are expected to carry their typically "female" behaviours and attitudes into the job situation. That is, they are to be supportive, charming, not-too-bright but hard-working, submissive, and accepting. Part of their survival at work will depend more on these expressive abilities or superficial qualities than upon their technical skills. The ideology further holds that as women are judged often on these non-technical attributes that they will remain competitive with other women on the job and isolated from them. This isolation and competition will be exacerbated by 1) job insecurity, since the low-skill jobs most women occupy have little legal or union protection and are easily taught to waiting others; 2) there being very few other women in the few jobs women hold which are highly skilled and prestigious; 3) women themselves not valuing other women as persons and as co-workers (Toews, 1974).

This description of how work is portrayed in the ideology points again to the second reason for examining women at work; that is, finding
out whether they come to interpret their work experience according to the ideology - if so, what do they do about it?

Work is much more than tasks performed. It is an idea that people hold. It is a means to an end, perhaps an end in itself. It is a group of people one works with.

We can look at change in the work situation from two directions: how do the women change their perception/definition of what their work is; and how do they change their performance at work? How does a woman use her Women's Liberation-derived interpretation of what the work situation consists of to understand and effect what happens at her work?

Sixteen of the twenty-seven women interviewed have jobs - or ordinarily do. One is temporarily unemployed, and one is going back to school shortly after years of work.

Most of the women rely on these jobs for their entire support. In two cases this income provides completely for the husband as well.

Eight of the nine Women's Caucus participants are working women. Eight of the eighteen UBC women are. There are basically two kinds of work engaged in - academic, from teaching assistant to tenured professor (one woman is a novelist, but has frequently worked as a university lecturer); and clerical/secretarial, from Office Overload to bank and library data processing, to an administrative assistant. Only one of the eight UBC women does office work (Lucy). The rest are in academic positions. Three of the Women's Caucus women are academic (Penny, Marta, and Adrienne). The other five are in the clerical occupations.

It might be thought that the problems that the professional women began to see in their work situation would be quite different from those
that became apparent to the clerical workers. But this is not so. As will be shown, (1) virtually all of the women were expected at work to carry out "womanly" behaviour - womanly being behaviour that fulfills stereotypic expectations of sexual/social receptiveness to men, and/or of a maternal sort; (2) all were to accept unquestioningly a male dominated hierarchy. Part of the notion of hierarchy may include the importance of "expertise" and "mystification" of the role. This encourages role distance, which the clerical workers were subject to and which the professional women found they were to reinforce in relation to students; (3) they were to treat the work place as being entirely separate from their personal, private life, particularly in relation to their politics; (4) many found themselves set in competition with other women, for whom they had previously had little regard - and this had been mutual.

The remainder of the material in this chapter will be presented in this way: the accounts will be divided by group - UBC and Women's Caucus. I will examine the content of the four types of expectations/conditions of work that the women experienced, and I will compare within each expectation the accounts of persons from the two groups.

These categories of the four types of expectations and conditions are the sum of the types of accounts presented. Not everyone sees the same kinds of work in the same ways. Each person and work situation also has its unique qualities.
A. **Expectations**

1) "**Womanly**" Behaviour

   In a sense, "womanly" behaviour subsumes the other three. But some behavioural expectations are more explicitly sex-role linked than others. These will be discussed here.

**Woman's Caucus**

   Five of the Women's Caucus women were engaged in clerical work. That they were expected to fulfil more expectations than sheer job efficiency was very clear. In fact, the social aspects of their physical presence (i.e., that they were women and should behave appropriately, above and beyond processing materials) were very much a part of the requirements of job performance.

   Judy made this very clear. She worked in an insurance office, among about 100 women and 30 men. The men held the supervisory or managerial posts. She began describing as one of the two major effects that Women's Liberation had had on her that she became "more sensitive to a lot of things that happened to women." True to her autobiography and her central political interest - working women - she experienced her increase in sensitivity about the situation of women at work.

   I find it - or did at least in the beginning of this [recently acquired] job more distressing...all this sexual stuff that goes on at work... like, the feeling you have all the time that your relationships with men at work are extremely sort of sexual, you know - that if you have any relationship with them at all it's sort of a flirting one....I mean, that's part of this whole thing about really being treated like a sexual object at work.
Having reached this interpretation of what was going on for women like herself at work, she then had to do something about it. This wasn't simple or easy.

Whereas I used to be able to do these things rather well...and either I - I could do whatever I wanted - I could either go along with it or I could argue about it.

I've found now that I got really upset by it and what I did is just sort of avoided the men as much as possible and fairly quickly they avoided me too, which was O.K. ...I haven't gotten involved in any sort of bantering.

The only problem is, the bosses, do [it] too, and after last week I'm not sure how long I'm going to be there anymore.

No one else in Women's CAucus - doing clerical or academic work had any comments about expectations for specifically "womanly" behaviour on the job.

**UBC Group**

"Womanly" behaviour was definitely an issue for several of the UBC women, however. These were all in the academic world.

Siobhan was halfway between a graduate student teaching assistant and a regular appointment. She was teaching in an experimental program - one of the few jobs open to a person holding "only" an M.A. She spoke both of her own experience and of Amy's, who was a teaching assistant. Answering the question about the "overall effects" of her Women's Liberation experience, Siobhan started out with her work.

S: First of all, I think - I know - I think about my job differently.

I: In what way?

S: Well, I think - this is something Amy and I talked about because we both have had the same feelings about it. Both
Amy and I have been those sort of creatures who get along terribly well in graduate school because everybody thinks, aren't we these nice bright girls and what's more we have bodies to go with it. So we've always been sort of — what's the word — I want to say, coddled, flattered and sort of complimented. But there has always been something condescending about it, I guess — I feel now — and I guess there was something condescending in me about it. That somehow I've thought of myself as...this comic, darling broad, in a kind of way not really taking seriously that I am going to live alone, [that] my work really does matter to me, I do have to make a living and that's going to be rough.

So she, too is faced with what to do about now taking her work seriously, now rejecting a previous image of herself.

S: I've been watching very carefully my reactions this year with the people that I teach with, because they're all men and they're all older than I am so again I can see myself in this...position of being "our darling young woman"....It's hard to figure out when you keep getting put in [that] position...how not to let them do it..., not to do it yourself.

I: What kinds of things do you try to do...?

S: ...when I start feeling powerless or feeling little girl to them, or feeling resentful...that's what I keep on trying to sort out. Which is like learning to fight back — and I don't mean that nastily, but like not going silent when I disagree, you know, not withdrawn.

I: Are you able actually to apply this?

S: More and more. But it's hard...I don't think I have that solved by a long shot, but I feel like I see it a lot better than I did before. And I also see where I want to be...adult.

For someone in the rather tenuous employment situation that Siobhan is in the effort and risk involved in speaking up, in breaking the role expectations, can be quite considerable.

What are the problems of a woman who has a secure academic position? This is Hilary's work situation. She is a tenured professor, 54
years old.* She is however of very low rank, (see Subsection 2), next). As she became interested in Women's Liberation one of the things that she expected to hear dealt with in a group was "the put-down of the female who starts to move into the system." She saw the put-down as occurring in several forms. That in relation to advancement will be discussed in the next section, but the other - certain "womanliness" expectations can be noted here.

I suppose I started listening [to the advancement issues] but then it came back into our own living room quite a lot, when I deal, as I deal with the guys in our department. The guys... are very nice to me and I think they like me, and I think they respect me. Generally, if I'm a member of a committee I'm asked to be secretary. If people meet in my office they really love to have me give them coffee. And I thought, I have no objection to giving people coffee. I do have an objection to being secretary.

So finally this year when I was a member of a committee and [the head] said would I be the secretary I said no I wouldn't - and that's nice.

But I thought, really I am somewhat marked by the notion that this is the job of any women I even particularly knew...making men comfortable is the job of women. In other words, I was taking on a sort of - or I had a certain notion of womanliness that was sort of "mama".

What Hilary felt had happened to her was first, that she realized what she had been drawn into in many of her work relations. Secondly, while she had previously simply tried to go along the path of least resistance, she no longer would do so. She used to feel "I haven't any business to say I don't like it," but now "I really didn't play games...anymore." She thought this shows that she has "changed quite a lot."

* A tenured position is one of relative security and it is supposed to reflect proven quality and some length of experience in the work. A university administration may not fire the person without showing cause for doing so. This exerts a conservative influence on dismissal of tenured persons. The security provided makes a tenured position a highly desirable one for most people.
So the younger women in either kind of work and in either group are to be girlfriends or daughters and the older one is to be mother. These expectations are built into the actual task performance in any of these work situations. First the women identify this as what is going on, then they struggle against it. It seems likely that the more secure the job the more clearcut and even aggressive the effort at change can be, though there are exceptions, as will be shown (see Sub-section 4), Bonnie).

2) Expectations to Accept a Male-Dominated Hierarchy and the Women's Having to Deal With Assumptions of the Validity of Expertise/Role Distance

For a hierarchy of power and influence to exist and thrive it must be seen by appropriate people to be legitimate. The legitimacy of hierarchies in many job situations today - particularly white-collar and professional jobs - is based upon a belief that some work is more valuable than others and that only certain people should have access to the valuable jobs. The more expertise the work is supposed to require, the more important it is, and the more rights the job holder has to make decisions for others. This right usually includes more pay for exercising it. It is important for the expert to be unchallengeable as to their training and skills (Goffman, 1959) and one crucial way of being unassailable is through creating distance between the expert and the clientele, or the expert and the subordinate. This role distance results in mystification and continued asymmetry of power in the relationships at work. That this goes on at considerable expense for women is a central theme of the Women's Liberation ideology. Women who begin to interpret their work relationships
this way then face a formidable task in trying to deal with this "new"
situation.

Women who work in low-status office jobs are expected to accept
only one side of this configuration. They are to be unquestioning and sub-
ordinate. But women who are in jobs that do carry some authority and pres-
tige must deal with the legitimacy of hierarchies from two sides - as sub-
ordinates in a male-dominated hierarchy and as executors for their students
of uneven power relationships in that same hierarchy. This is shown in
many of the accounts.

Women's Caucus

Taking an office-work situation, Pam again articulates clearly
the realizations she came to about what was happening at work. She feels
that she had always - "women's movement or no women's movement" - reacted
against any "hierarchies":

I just don't like hierarchies. I don't like set-ups where some
people make the decisions for everybody else because for some the-
oretical reason they're better at it or smarter...and have all
kinds of power..., and I just begin to perceive things, like...
I don't like the way things are organized and I always see
things like that some people are - secrets are kept about how
things should be done, some people do jobs for which they aren't
paid, people aren't supposed to tell each other how to do things
..., decisions are made by guys who don't know what's going on,
but who are supposed to be the decision-makers, so they make de-
cisions that fuck everyone else up; whereas, if the people who
were effected made the decisions the stuff wouldn't happen -
it's just obvious stuff.

So Pam thought that these perceptions came out of her earlier "left-
wing consciousness." When she had had this consciousness, though, what had
happened to her was that she would speak out, get into trouble, and subside.
She had made it a practice for sometime just to keep quiet. But this is no longer the case:

It's getting to the point where I can't [keep quiet], and the reason is that in so many cases it's men who make the decisions and it's women who get fucked up by them - it's women whose work load is doubled by some stupidity or other and I'm just appalled by how hard some women work.

But Pam has begun to believe that what happens to women at work is not a simple case of technical error or exploitation solely in terms of time or labour or wage. It is more complex than that to her:

The thing that really bothers me about it is that, it seems to me that, it's not just fear of losing your job, it's a fear of not being liked, and that you win the pleasure or goodwill of your boss or even the guys you work with - whether they're your boss or not - by working your blessed ass off.

What happened to Pam in her last job was that as far as she could tell she began to be seen by her bosses as a trouble maker and she was put on probation. She left the job to return to school for the first time in years, so she can't know if she would have been kept on or not.

There was not much flexibility in her work situation - she could redefine it for herself in terms of illegitimacy of hierarchies but this did not hold for others. She could not change her performance of it either.

The same was true of Bonnie, who was a data processor in a bank. She began to protest the inequities of definition of part-time and full-time job designations - where the part-time women did only an hour a day less of work but received no benefits and had no job security. She made this protest for another woman (see Sub-section 4)), on principle, not for herself directly. She said that before Women's Liberation:
I think my attitude was before, sort of let's take it and forget about it, you know...you're supposed to be very grateful you're working, you know, the whole trip.

I just sort of think it doesn't matter what sort of menial type task/job one has, that one has to live in dignity within that job....

So she'd redefined what work was and she'd tried to do something about it, but she did not succeed as far as the technicalities of the job are concerned. She did change some attitudes of the women among themselves, however (see 4) below).

These are accounts of women in low status, low paying jobs over which they apparently can exert little influence - singly at least. This fact probably has a lot to do with the fact that most of the office workers are in the Women's Caucus group. It is the group geared to the scheduling and concerns of the typical working woman, the office worker. It is the group which is trying to get women to work as a group to alter their circumstances, knowing that a single protesting woman office worker is extremely vulnerable to job loss.

The professional women have two sides of the hierarchy issue to deal with. On the one hand they are subject to it in terms of being evaluated for upward mobility, and on the other they are ordinarily expected to exert authority and display expertise to their students. Their concerns include discerning discrimination at work; de-mystifying their sources of knowledge; de-emphasizing the power they have in relation to students; and critically evaluating the importance of research productivity. None of the Women's Caucus academics discussed discrimination at work, but they did talk
about the demystification and modification of the symbols of rank or authority, and they did talk about the role of research.

Looking at the former, it should be remembered that one of the basic tenets of the Women's Liberation ideology is that each woman's life provides her with valid knowledge upon which to base her understanding of her life. She is an expert on many of life's major issues because she lives that life. She is to trust herself, her own perceptions - hoping that they are not illumined by false consciousness - and to hold herself in esteem accordingly.

What this means for women is that they are truly equals. No one can really know that much less than another about what is to be a woman. If a woman believes that there is this relationship between experience and knowledge in her life than it is likely that she will feel that this is so for others, too. That expertise isn't necessarily tied to certification. That certification often leads to mystification and "power-tripping".

It does appear that most of the teachers have adopted this perspective. As Penny, who supports herself as a teaching assistant, describes the changes in her job that have come out of her Women's Liberation experience:

...a lot of my ideas have become clearer in Women's Liberation than in anywhere else. Ideas about sort of non-authoritarian approaches to teaching come out of...a whole political philosophy....I'm sure I'm a better teacher than I was otherwise. I think teachers - and I know I - have the tendency to really lay it down and sort of say "this is the way it is, folks".

Partly I don't do that...because I know it's a bad way to teach...but I think it really is partly like a political perspective on not being an authority which I find sort of politically rather offensive - but that of approaching a problem by saying that here we are in this room and I've read some stuff and I know some stuff. And all of you have had experiences and read some stuff and know some stuff and we can share that.
That's the way I think one has to approach Women's Liberation too...and any kind of political organization...and...in teaching too. Because it's true and it works because it's true.

The same approach with variations as to relevant subject matter, was developed by just about all the teachers, no matter which group they belonged to.

Of course, there is often more to academic work than classroom teaching. In most disciplines considerable research and writing are expected of a person. In Women's Caucus Marta was the only woman whose work included this expectation.

What Marta had done over the years of her participation in the Women's Liberation Movement was to stop doing research - she was in the natural sciences where research is even more a requisite for academic acceptance than in the social sciences. Marta was redefining a central part of her work. She was, in fact, rejecting it. She had had considerable attention paid to a theoretical paper she had written on women. She found the apparent usefulness of the paper to so many people such a "contrast with the scientific papers" she had written.

The contrast was in the relevance, the utility her political thoughts had had. She felt that the "sort of pettiness of the theoretical role (in her academic discipline)...became so apparent - the irrelevance of it in terms of the social needs...for change."

This contrast made it "very difficult" for her to keep on with research and in fact she had done none for nearly two years. She expected that this would result in her contract being dropped. But the contrary
happened - she was given tenure. But she was prepared to risk her whole career sooner than keep up with work she could not accept - ideologically or morally. (See Sub-section 3) for more on this subject).

UBC Group

In the UBC group there is no discussion from the one clerical worker about problems related to hierarchies at work. Lucy was, in fact, encouraged by her employer to try for a better position within her section. There were a number of bureaucratic difficulties involved in matching her current experience, her training and her seniority and this move seemed to be nearly impossible at the time. Lucy was not sure she was really interested in the change anyway so no more attempts were made.

If we look at the academic women and the issues relating to the two dimensions of the problem of interacting in a hierarchy, we see from the UBC group that one woman was beginning to feel that she had been subject to discrimination for a long time.

It was Hilary who came to the conclusion that she had probably been consistently held back in her advancement largely through being a woman. She had been a university teacher for a number of years. What she did not have were post-graduate degrees. She had very extensive administrative duties within her department. Yet with
all her apparent skill and commitment she had just been given tenure, while still at a very junior rank. She had not, until her Women's Liberation experience, questioned the course of her career.

I think one of the things I discovered early on [in her Women's Liberation experience] was that I had really been putting up with - without even paying much attention to - put downs, as if they had to do with me personally, not sort of sex-generated....

Only as I listened to a lot of people talking - they were younger than I but I heard a lot of people talking and I thought, it's true. Very different people in any different worlds are getting really put down because they're female. And then I began to pay attention to my own circumstance, and thought, I teach in that place because I'm good at what they want me to do and...there isn't any particular reason why my B.A. in [another field] has anything to do with it.

I: [Did they have] any more academic training or anything?

H: No.

This is an excellent example then of someone moving from a non-political, subjective interpretation of a situation ("as if they had to do with me personally") to the belief that these problems existed because she shared with other women the objective condition of being a woman, and an oppressed one at that. She got "indignant" about all this but did not spend much time and energy trying to change this facet of her job.

If we look at the women's concerns about the exercise of rank differential or mystified expertise over their students, we can see from the accounts of Siobhan and Hilary how two women very different in age and experience handle this similar concern.

Siobhan, for instance, felt that she should make conscious efforts to share her out-of-class life with the small number of students with whom she had constant contact as their tutor in an experimental program. She did this because:
I think they need to know what it is - you know, they are still at a point that everybody is talking to them about human beings as though they were cardboard images, and treating them like cardboard images...the student/teacher relationships that they experience so far is a terribly, terribly flat one. And part of what I was encouraging them to do in writing and keeping journals was to really pay attention to themselves, not as cardboard. So then the only way I could teach them was by not talking cardboard myself: I really just had to be there completely.

Hilary was somewhat different in that she found her Women's Liberation experience helped her to say what she did not share with her students. Her job was "mainly [to] teach people to read and write," even if they were very unclear:

It's very necessary for a person who is doing my job not to say - "You are not being transparently clear, I don't understand you." You've got to understand as much as you possibly can. And I've felt increasingly a sort of gap between what I can understand and what they thought maybe I could understand.

I think Women's Liberation - not simply because I hear a whole bunch of people who are more or less student-age talking - but really because of this kind of openness, this non-defensiveness, somehow let's me sit with a kid better, to hear what he's saying. I don't have to be defensive about saying I don't know about drugs, and I'm not afraid to say it because I don't even feel that it's a put-down. So I really can say where I am to kids and they won't think that it's any form of put-down and so they will keep talking to me....It's much easier for me to have some notion of how to occupy my own space and let them occupy their own space really, too.

Turning to the last concern, the role of research, we can see that the woman (Madeleine) in UBC for whom this was an expectation integral to her performance took exactly the opposite tack from Marta (Women's Caucus) in addressing herself to the same problem of whether or not to identify herself with traditionally defined scholarly production.

When Madeleine, a social scientist, had been in graduate school the emphasis of the training had been on teaching. There was considerable
scepticism in teachers and graduates alike as to the value of research and Madeleine had done the minimum. She had since taken a job as a professor at UBC. But after some time in Women's Liberation her thoughts about the role of research and teaching began to change.

I guess I feel a tremendous, much more commitment to do some research and to publish, because of Women's Liberation...for a number of reasons, one of which is that you always get that crap about women who don't produce and that seems something that I would like to counter in some sense.

Also just because I feel...it's very interesting - I was talking to [a woman colleague]...about why women don't publish...and we were talking about the kind of relying on others for your feedback. Well, students are a very immediate other and they're giving you feedback rather constantly and that is...very important...to me. You don't get much feedback from research, you really don't.

...I guess I'd like to be able to develop so I work and do things for myself, which is very much how I see my research. I see my teaching as both for myself and other people....

And so I would say like, it has kind of made me more willing to say research is important to me as my teaching, whereas I couldn't have said that two years ago.

We can see then, women rejecting the legitimacy of hierarchies in the work situation - in their minds. But they cannot always bring about major changes in how they are subject to these hierarchies, especially if their job security is minimal and/or the hierarchy is massive and diffuse, as it is in universities. But where they do have some control over their work they can and do considerably alter both their interpretation of their role, and their actions in enforcing a hierarchy.
3) **Separation of Work from Private, Personal Life**

It is apparent from the accounts given above that many of the women are applying their new interpretations of work and of themselves as workers to their job situation. But it could be possible to do this without presenting oneself as being a "member" of Women's Liberation, without making it possible for others to take into account a new role one was undertaking. It would also be logically possible for a Women's Liberationist to feel that she had best protect her job by keeping away from the job her Women's Liberation ideas about the oppression of women at work. But the working women are not doing this.

In the previous section we were also talking about some ways that the women, especially in the example of Siobhan, no longer separated their private from their professional lives. There their interest had been to de-mystify their role, to fight off being authority figures. But in the case of a number of the Women's Caucus women - who had been involved in politics for much of their lives and who were nearly the only women in the two groups who had been - the biggest issue of the distinction between private and public work lives revolved around previously having had to leave their political activities outside the work place door. They are no longer making a separation between their politics - broadly defined - and their job. They have found that for the first time in their working lives they can synthesize their work and their politics. This is particularly important to the women who had been "political" before they were in Women's
Liberation. They had had to treat nearly a third of their days as totally irrelevant to some of their most heart-felt concerns.

Because of the almost total overlap between a previously politically active life and membership in Women's Caucus, accounts from Women's Caucus are the only ones in this category.

Pam, for instance, had been finding that her intolerance of hierarchies was becoming more and more apparent - as was noted above. But she now was speaking out from an explicit, Women's Liberation interpretive viewpoint. She said:

P: I've reached the point where I can talk to people at work. And I can be open about sort of who I am and I'm not afraid of it anymore, and I don't think it's peculiar or anything.

I: When you say "who you are"...what are you talking about?

P: About being a feminist - and being very open about it and wanting to talk about it. And I've come to the conclusion that there are many, very many women who find that really exciting and have started feeling that way themselves.... It wasn't until [about a year and a half ago] that I stopped living a completely schizophrenic existence....

I: So you were able to sort of synthesize your two lives?

P: Yeah. This year instead of walking into a job, and trying to pretend like I didn't have any thought in my head - which is what I was trying to do, be just totally nothing. I knew damn well that's what a lot of people were living schizophrenic existences....

It is easy to imagine with the kind of work done by women in offices that this no-thoughts/be-nothing approach would have a certain survival value. Judy had found herself doing the same thing at work. In fact, all throughout her lengthy political experience her job had been totally without value except for its providing a very meagre paycheque.
She summarized the effects upon her work of being in Women's Liberation this way:

The...really important effect it has had is I feel for the first time like the most important political stuff I'm doing is really what I do at work and that's really nice. Like, it really gives me a good feeling. I sort of feel like my life is sort of integrated in a way that it never has been before.

She was asked how she brought up the subject of Women's Liberation and working women's rights at her job. She said:

...it took me a long time to be able to do it. It was really a change, because in the beginning it seemed like all people talked about was weddings or what sort of famous women looked like on T.V. ...and I never could think of a way to sort of bring it up right, without doing a put-down on the other women, or on the discussion. So it was really slow.

But now I'm really identified as being a Women's Liberationist and like, six of the nine women who work in my department went to the library series [of lectures on the oppression of working women]....Some of them came back hostile, but at least I'm not in that position any more where I have to think of ways to raise the subject. And we're also talking about trying to organize the place in a union way, although...we haven't talked to that many people about it.

For the professional women their Women's Liberation politics could be brought directly into their selection of materials, as well as their style of teaching, as mentioned earlier. Adrienne was the prime example of this. She teaches in the Humanities and she can choose her reading and lecturing material to describe and analyze women's situation as presented in literature, drama, etc.

I: The kind of work that you do, has Women's Liberation touched on it at all?

A: Sure. First...it's touched in the way I select my material...like, I'm doing it in a course right now. I started out with *Children's Play*...which has never been done before...
[because], like, being interested in children and what's happening, I think for myself is a direct consequence of being involved in Women's Liberation, because I had chosen not to have children [before Women's Liberation] and wasn't particularly concerned with having children before I got involved [and now she lives in a communal co-op set up deliberately to share a friend's children among all the household]. ...So there's that. Then I did Ann Jellicoe's The Knack, [which was about] sexuality between men and women, compulsive sexuality in men...and I just worked out on that one. And then I did a play...about a Jewish woman who has always defined herself as a mother and the kind of destructive pattern she gets into....

It's easy, actually. I mean, it doesn't only have to be stuff by women. You can talk about the way women are portrayed in literature. You can talk about something like Mother Courage where the whole question of moral principle and political principle - like it's defined in social terms so you can talk about it that way, too.

As a natural scientist, teaching the "science and society" courses, Marta doesn't talk specifically about women. But she feels that her teaching here "although it's not directly Women's Liberation, but the sort of political strength and the sort of confidence in my analysis comes out of the experience of Women's Liberation."

These accounts then, typify the ways that women in office work and in academic work are able consciously to synthesize their new political beliefs with their working world. That they do so in the aspect of work that involves potentially competitive relationships with other women will be shown next.

4) Relationship With Female Co-workers and Associates

The possibility of co-workers competing against each other for approval is nothing new. Nor is the use of this potential by employees in
order to keep effective opposition stifled new either. For men in unionized work though, this kind of competition and division may be minimized. Tasks are relatively clearly defined, and who shall do them is often very clearly defined. There is often a reasonable wage and some job security. There may also be a tradition or "solidarity" or "brotherhood" which could minimize competition which is destructive of co-worker interaction. It is likely there is a well-known rejection of "rate-busters" as well.

But for women in office work there are usually none of these safeguards against cut-throat competition and/or job insecurity. Since working women may also bring into the work situation the particular need for approval from males and disdain for other women that are built into our socialization process, the potential for divisiveness among women workers is considerable.

Whether this actually occurs is not known. One of the best known feminist studies of working women, Ellen Willis' report of her experience working in the telephone company, showed that women in fact provided enormous support to each other to get their work done and to protect each other from supervisors. Yet the work of Toews (1974) contradicts this, in a hypothetical choice situation where women were asked who they would prefer to work with. They do not choose women.

This competitiveness is equally possible for professional women, only here co-workers who are female are in such short supply that competition among female colleagues may not even have a chance to show. Where negative attitudes toward other women may show is toward female students, or towards "female" subject matter.
Women's Caucus

There were five women who did office work - (Pam, Edythe, Bonnie, Judy, Adele). As was noted in the previous sub-section, work became a central integrating focus for several of the women, because of their growing interest in improving the lot of working women. This means then, that women co-workers have much more value than before. There are now at the very least political reasons to talk with them. But few of the women spoke of co-workers for political reasons, narrowly conceived. They valued women also as fellow humans undergoing an arduous, ill-rewarded, sometimes degrading experience at work.

So Judy becomes "more sensitive to a lot of the things that happened to women." Or Edythe, who had never associated with the other women at the various jobs because she thought them to be "so dumb". But now she finds:

I have a whole new way of looking at that. I got so I could even talk to the girls and...like them - as matter of fact they're very interesting. I have...discovered these new people in the world called women....It's really nice.

Most of the women tried explicitly to minimize conflict among workers and to give support to them whenever they could. For instance, when Pam found she could not abide the attitudes and behaviour of her male boss she began to realize that this made it difficult for her immediate supervisor, who was female. Pam knew that the boss was trying to blame her complaints and considerable dissatisfaction upon Pam's supervisor - in order to prevent his supervisors from blaming any problems on him. Pam would not lighten the load of blame on herself by saying there were problems with
her supervisor. Pam did feel there were problems with her supervisor, in
that she was such a hard worker that she held unrealistic goals for all the
women in her department. She was caught in a very difficult situation, with
her job at stake. She said of the situation:

[The differing expectations of what should be done on the job]
caused a certain amount of argument or debate between me and my
immediate supervisor. And it was very important to me not to
develop a really strong enimity with her because I - well, like
she was very interested in Women's Liberation and she was very
sympathetic and very excited about it and she was a very good
person....The problem was the time had come to hire more people
to work in the department...and she was trying to keep up.

....So there was a certain amount of tension between us and my
boss was playing on it and using it and trying to imply that that
was the source of all the problems in the place. And all my para­
noia and bad reactions against him, he was blaming on her. And
it was just very complicated and I just reached a point where I
was becoming physically ill....

What finally happened was that Pam and the supervisor both re­
signed simultaneously, shattering the department. The supervisor was mov­
ing out of town and Pam had decided to return to school. She suspected
that the supervisor would be given a bad name by the boss to his bosses.
So Pam was very careful to write a long letter to the manager of the whole
complex, explaining her reasons for leaving and pointing out that the super­
visor had no role in it. She was called in by the manager to discuss her
letter. She was pleased to find that her suspicions had been true - about
the false blame on her female supervisor - and that she had been able to
prevent it being accepted.

Another case of women firmly supporting each other was Bonnie
at her work. I think it should be emphasized that Bonnie was the least
flexible economically. She had grade nine education. She had been divorced
for fourteen years. She had two children and supported her family with virtually no help from the ex-husband. She had a very low-paying job in a bank, where she worked nights. What happened on her job was that several of the women became "upset" about their vulnerability on the job. This was particularly evident for the women who were classified as part-time help. They worked nearly a full shift, yet had no job benefits of any sort. Bonnie began talking about this with one or two of the most hard-pressed women. She explained what went on in this way:

Well, I try to [talk about Women's Liberation] with the girl that I'm working beside most of the time. But then, like there's another girl who is very hostile to Women's Liberation....She sort of imagines it [as a] sort of radical group of freaky women, I guess and has never given it another thought.

Yeah, we did something. Like we did approach the personnel man and asked why people were paid part time and some full-time - and sort of the only good thing, if you can say anything good came with it, [was] that he made a fool of himself, and that the three of us [and] the girl who was sort of against us saw how much of a fool he made of himself. Like, he really double-talked.

And then he finally said to me, well it's your right to complain ...but this girl is still only working part-time with no job security at all, and no benefits.

....And what really freaked the girl who was on part-time was that I spoke out and asked questions and tripped him up on things.

....She didn't really think I would do that because, like she said it was nothing to me.

And I said, I tried to explain that it was something to me be- cause it affects me as well as the people around me.

For a woman as much on the economic margin as Bonnie is, and who used to think that a person should just take their pay and forget it, being "grateful that you are working", this kind of behaviour is daring.
Thus, the office workers all found that they had increased communication with women at work. They talked about their politics. They invited women to meetings, and many came. Those in problematic situations tried to help other women define the problems in a political way, not on an individual basis and they spoke out for themselves and other women. It didn't seem to alter the job performance much, but it did change the quality of the interactions among women.

The alterations of attitudes of the professional women toward women students is in many ways subsumed under their overall increase in egalitarianisms and demystification in their teaching, as was described earlier. But there was one explicit account of change toward women students *per se*. That was from Adrienne, the Humanities professor.

I think I had a fairly chauvinistic attitude toward my female students, especially the quiet ones - which is, like, most of them, or was most of them. I mean...my star pupils were almost always young men. That's changed a lot.

I'm much more interested in getting to know them...drawing them out...and I know that they responded to the fact of having a woman teacher. It's ambiguous. Sometimes they feel, "oh we got cheated, we just got a woman." But on the other hand they respond to it, especially when the women can deal with argumentative men.

So I know that they're getting a certain support...from the identification, and I think that Women's Liberation has changed how I feel I respond to women students. I think I thought of myself in a much more maternal role, like they could come to me and I'd bring them to get pills and hold their hands while they went for their pregnancy test - a lot of that kind of stuff, you know - kleenex in the drawer and "how long has it been, did you say?" - you know, that kind of thing, but [now] seeing women much more as equals, which I think I tended to see the men more as before.
Thus we see a number of the women in Women's Caucus seeing their relationship with other women in the job situation through the interpretive lens of the Movement ideology.

**UBC Group**

Among the UBC women there was not much discussion of relationship with women at work - as colleagues or students. Hilary mentioned that she would talk about Women's Liberation with another interested woman in the department and that the two of them would support each other politically. But there was no expression of explicit valuation of women.

In terms of colleageality, where there were women with other women in their departments, they did now discuss work conditions with them, along Women's Liberation lines. And they provided moral support by that talk, by signing statements, agreeing to help each other out at faculty meetings, etc.

The one other aspect of academic work that came up among the UBC women in about the role of other women was that several of the graduate students/teaching assistants had undertaken studies of women for course work, and in Amy's case, for the M.A. thesis. Seeing women in and of themselves as a topic of study was a very new way of addressing themselves to their work as incipient scholars.

**Discussion**

Though I have divided up the effects of the Women's Liberation experience on work for analytical purposes, it is clear that a pervasive ideology allows women to apply their beliefs to every phase of their work - formal, informal, implicit and explicit. Some of them are in situations
which are seemingly more amenable to some kinds of change than to others. But they all have come to redefine what work is, what they as workers are, and how the two will be combined. In most cases we can see a clear-cut before and after biography re-casting. They used to try to play the traditional female role, many used to believe in the appropriateness of rank or title, they had felt work was irrelevant to their beliefs, and they did not value women co-workers or associates. Now each of these characteristics were contradicted. They saw how these conditions aided in their oppression - as the ideology says - and they wanted to do their part to stop this.

We can also see that not all of the women in each group of women who engage in paid labour bring out the same types of concerns over what goes on at work. Among the Women's Caucus women there is always at least one person who articulates problems of working women in ways congruent with the Women's Liberation ideology. It is clear that in many cases their interpretation of the situation is a new one, as is their rejection of what is problematic. The ways that they try to remedy things is also ideologically based. So Pam and Judy link the demand that they be pleasing to male bosses with the insecurity it breeds among women and thus with their exploitability. Judy used to be able to go along with the sexual bantering but she can no longer. Judy can do nothing except withdraw now. But Pam's strategy for dealing with stress and exploitation on the job takes very much into account the role and conditions of other women at work. She does not see her situation as rare. She sees it as a typical example of how work is ordered at the expense of women. Bonnie, too, fights back on the basis of that situation (part-time vs. full-time work and the prerequisites
involved) being simply one of a type that must be met on a group basis. She makes a real effort to explain this to others on the job.

For a Women's Caucus woman, then, there is no work situation that cannot be understood and perhaps changed on the basis of the view that women are exploited as a group and thus must attempt change as a group. This has been the position of the central participants for years, and the working woman has been a major concern of the group. Women's Caucus women, thus, have readily available to them articulations of the oppression of women at work. Most of them also live the life of the working woman (whether clerical or academic) so their own personal experiences can be shared as well as their media production and consumption of interpretations of the working women's situation. There is a constant reciprocity of interpretation and situation for the Women's Caucus women, and this shows in the breadth of their accounts of work.

The UBC working women, as a group, had a more specialized and luxurious work life. The work had its problems and the women had plenty of room to exercise their new concerns about not carrying out the very hierarchical behaviour that they were subject to. But their biographies did not make for a concern with synthesizing previous interests in political action with their current situation. Neither did they feel themselves to be in competition with other women. Other women were not there for them in the same way as they might be for an office worker sitting among seventy other women. Where women were there for them - as students or as scholarly resources - the women did try to change their behaviour toward them.
I am suggesting that the differing scope of concern between the two groups does not arise simply out of the fact that Women's Caucus participants are doing more kinds of work than do the UBC women. I think that what shows is the elaboration of the ideology relevant to the working women that is available among the Women's Caucus participants, due to their year-long involvement with this issue. The group both draws in more working women on the basis of their distress about work and provides them with more ways to interpret their work situation.

The ideological focus of the UBC group is not particularly on the working woman, nor do the women there have extensive political experience. Also, the UBC women do not have jobs that so immediately reflect the descriptions of oppression at work that are most available in the ideology. These three elements of their situation contribute to a less intense application of Women's Liberation interpretations of what is problematic at work and hence of changing one's involvement in the situation. It is a part of change in their lives, not a culmination of their interest in change, as it seems to be for the majority of the Women's Caucus women.
CHAPTER VIII
CONCLUSIONS

It is a frustrating aspect of research on human behaviour that the writing of it confines one to a uni-dimensional telling of what is in reality a rich, multidimensional experience. Vast amounts of the person(s) past and present experience and their anticipated future are brought to mind at once by the person as they sort out their understanding of their world and act upon it accordingly in numerous ways. Acts may be single ones or a combination of them. They may be undertaken immediately and simultaneously, or reserved for later and carried out sequentially, or in other permutations of timing and number. For the social scientist there are always "befores" and "afters", always preconditions, prerequisites, and then results.

The reflexive nature of social behaviour makes the attempt to define in absolute terms the parameters of any of these facets of behaviour a misconceived task. The actual or potential complexity of our view of self-in-our-world, and the on-going nature of biography-casting means at the very least that our own causal models may be changed radically and repeatedly in our lifetime. Our explanations of how the world is structured, of how we become who we are, and of how we come to exist as we do in our social world are inextricably linked to how we act within that world. These actions fold back upon our view of self and world and re-structure both, whereupon our next actions are formulated according to these evolving interpretations.
In this study I have tried to show how women who are regular participants in the Women's Liberation Movement came to utilize different interpretations, different "causal" accounts of their social world and their self within it than they had used previously. I have tried to show the role in social change of the social movement as a provider. It is created by people who develop an ideology that links them in a shared interpretation of the problems of and solution to some part of their social world. Part of that ideology includes instructions for how that ideology is to be shared. This means that communication methods are regularized - the audience is defined, the channels are set up, meetings are arranged. So the social movement provides a nexus for on-going exchange of interpretations of experience. This very nexus facilitates the continuing evolution of the ideology and contributes to the physical existence of the movement.

But it does more than that. In the Women's Liberation Movement, the very act of being in a group, of finding and defining sisterhood, of becoming an active, assertive, skilled political analyst and communicator of ideas for oneself and others - is integral to the experience of lifting oppression and expressing change (as an individual and as/or a group). Because of the breadth of applicability that the movement sees its analysis to have, it is essential that the opportunity to participate in the movement should be extended to all relevant people. Thus, more and more people must have the opportunity to share this belief system and contribute their interests and energies and thoughts into the attempts to change those parts of the world defined as relevant in the ideology. A great part of their
contributions is their own experience of change. Ideologies vary in specific content - in the definition of the problem, and in what strategies are to be followed in improving the situation. Thus, there is variation in who sees the ideology as relevant to their experience, and how a person may utilize the interpretations provided to guide behaviour relevant to the ideological issues raised.

The ideology of the Women's Liberation Movement is characterized by provision of definitions of the problem of the oppression of women that can be seen by all women to be relevant to every part of their lives. At the same time, there is the recognition that women can have very different social/psychological careers through life. Thus, there appear certain basic goal themes through the ideological statements, but differently situated women must decide for themselves which of these goals - independence, equality, a strong sense of self-worth, and sisterhood - will have priority in which parts of their lives. The exercise of sisterhood is to provide the emotional and political support by women or women who are attempting to achieve any or all of these goals.

The relationship between the individual situations of women (their biographies), their group relationships, and their selective use of the ideology can be seen throughout the history of the two groups, as groups, in Vancouver. The same is true throughout the accounts of individual women as they trace their experiences in the Movement.

Thus we see that women with traditional political experience (the Women's Caucus women) were the ones who had the expertise to start a group where nothing of the type had existed in town. They knew the physical acts
it takes to call meetings, to set up an office, to write ideological statements. They work out in their reading and talking what these statements will be, but they already know the process. Women who have incomes of their own, who have few family duties and who can govern their own use of time can spend the hours, days, and months it takes to set up a group – as was the case with the beginning of the Women's Caucus. These same women, in their very self-sufficiency, in their own experience of successfully tackling difficult career options may not be prepared to sit and talk for months at a time with very non-self-sufficient women about the quite different kinds of specific problems this differently situated woman may be occupied with. The more self-sufficient woman will not necessarily denigrate these other women, but decisions must be made by individuals as to where they will put their energies. It is perhaps to be expected that people try to work on issues that are familiar to them – like equality at paid work, or in putting out great amounts of educational material (as they do every day at their jobs). In the process of doing this, the self-sufficient women experience support from other women as they engage in this group work, and this reinforces their belief that this is the way sisterhood can (and should) be developed. They seemed not to look for social and emotional support from women in situations other than those that were explicitly organized Women's Caucus/Women's Liberation activities.

By the time the women who started the UBC group became aware of the Women's Liberation Movement ideology as relevant to themselves there had been two years of ground work done by members of the Movement in Van-
couver and all over North America. There were by then books as well as articles about the oppression of women. There were frequent television and radio programmes by and about women. There was a much broader and more articulate definition of the problems of women available to the general public. It can be noted in this context that the only women in the Women's Caucus who mentioned a strong media influence in their early awareness of the Movement were two non-founders - Adele and Pam. Adele heard about Women's Liberation first through a magazine article and one of the first important influences on Pam was the Pedestal - which she'd received before she moved to Vancouver. Nearly half of the UBC women mentioned media influence.

This very diversity of applicability of the ideology, this acceptance of the many meanings, relevances, and strategies the ideology could provide for women allowed for the UBC group to be formed and to continue on the basis of exploration of the possible interpretations of women's needs. This is unlike the Women's Caucus, which rather quickly formulated several rather specific goals and strategies for change and these were then worked on. Again, in the individual accounts of the UBC women we see that they were preponderantly women who didn't know what they wanted to do - just what they wanted to feel - less confused, better about themselves, less alone, and so on.

Yet with these differences of biography and of group character and participation, it is striking that most women from both groups achieved very similar types of change. In their primary relationships most felt that they were much nearer to ideologically defined goals of equality of emotional
and logistic sharing — if they were involved with someone. If they were not, they felt they had come out of previous relationships stronger because of their new interpretations of what had gone on in those relationships. The only women who seem to have accomplished little here were the ones who had neither the freedom of non-involvement or of living on their own, nor the relative security of marriage. I maintain that structurally they were the most vulnerable to being left stranded emotionally andlogistically or their relationship broke up under the strain of attempted change. For most women, then, their needs were being recognized, their work was being shared. They saw themselves begin to have impact of a sort that they explicitly desired upon their situation.

If we look at their changed views of the role of work in a woman's life, if we consider how they lose their attachment to prestige systems; how they refuse to let anxiety about job security continue at the expense of self-respect of concern for sister workers; how they carry out organizing actions at work and about others' work, we can see the same increase of participation in the working of that part of society that is paid labour.

The friendship patterns change show the same thing. In terms of sheer increase of numbers of friends this wider participation shows. The active choice of friends according to social and emotional needs, now clearly recognized and defined as legitimate, also shows that the women are no longer passively accepting a range of associates available largely through accidents of status of geographical location.
When these types of changed behaviour are overlapped with the grid of their new—often very time-consuming—activities the picture of the process of social change is completed.

On the whole, these regular participants in both the Women's Liberation groups in Vancouver have re-structured their everyday reality considerably. They have more elaborate social networks that serve many more functions, they have increased their social and political skills. They have thereby both raised their valuation of themselves and increased their impact upon their environment.

Whether these individuals will similarly partake more of the rewards of society (bearing in mind that the Women's Liberation Movement maintains that many of the rewards of society are undesirable—like power at the expense of others, wealth for its own sake, etc.) remains to be seen—as is true for women as a group. But being an actor instead of a reactor, and having greater self-confidence and self-respect are rewards in and of themselves. The economic and political changes that women as a group require to fulfill their potential as humans are proceeding at a discouraging pace. In fact, in the economic sphere particularly women are losing ground relative to where they were even a few years ago (Bennett and Loewe, 1975). No change can occur without the initial articulation of the problems of being a woman in our society. It is the Women's Liberation Movement, including these women studied, who are making this problem evident for themselves and others. These changes may be slow and piecemeal but it is probably accurate to say that without this problem definition and the changes
in attitude and action that the women studied here and thousands like them have undergone, the changes would not be possible at all.
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