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NO WOMAN'S LAND

Marginality, Liminality and Non-traditional Women in New Zealand

Decade between early 1970 - early 1980

Jan Hollebon

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Social Anthropology at the University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand 1986
Entitled:
No Woman’s Land: Marginal traits of the non-traditional woman in liminality: the feminist movement in New Zealand.

Proposal:
Are non-traditional women marginal to their society? This study purports to examine correlations between theories of liminality and marginality and the small group process within the New Zealand Women’s Liberation Movement. Fieldwork follows the statement of Victor Turner that non-traditional women remain marginalised due to their inability to resolve their ambiguity.

The observation of van Gennep that persons in diverse cultures perform rites when crossing a threshold (limen), led to his developing a model applicable to the rites that are performed to signify the life stages of members of traditional societies. The central phase of these rites de passage, he terms "margin", a crucial phase of transition between the initiate’s existing status in society and the one to come. Three phases are discerned within liminality, separation, margin (limen) and aggregation. Each measures the distance and stage of the novice in relation to society. Further research has directed Victor Turner and followers such as Paul Friedrich, toward extending and developing this model to other forms of liminality associated with decisive cultural change. This investigation is an attempt to research one aspect that Turner has classified: the liminal phase of non-traditional women attempting to alter the status and position of women in their society.

Since adaptations of "liminal theory", (after Friedrich, 1978), and certain observations from hippie culture by William Partridge (1973), appear to have analogous characteristics and patterns, these have been worked into the thesis.

Global Women’s Liberation networking systems create communication links, bolster solidarity and accelerate change. The Consciousness-Raising educational and action process, is the prime means incorporated by the women’s movement to develop self-realisation and growth for all women. Effected initially within the small group process, this is archetypal in its quest for knowledge.

Correlated empirical studies have proceeded intermittently in the form of participant-observation within local topic-oriented groups and within one small group in particular, the Core Group.

Problems peculiar to New Zealand, including geographical isolation and pluralism, have set the scene for the cultural ethos of feminism in this country. The current focus overall, disregarding internal fractures, is an attempt to meld the political with the personal, with its resultant sexual-gender emphases. This movement emerges as relative, and marginal, to the instituted social system, evidenced in various counter-cultural and a-cultural expressions to be described. As a minority sector and microcosm, it remains related to wider macro influences, both non-traditional and traditional.

The concept of liminality provides a suitable methodological tool, to expand knowledge and understanding of those marginal to their society, specifically the New Zealand Women’s Liberation Movement, as well as of women in general. It is intended that this research may develop further possibilities in the use of this concept.
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PREFACE

Personal acknowledgements for a number of persons in various parts of New Zealand remain anonymous, but are nonetheless sincere. Their considerable contributions and communitas are the ingredients of this ethnography. Ruth, and members of the Core Group deserve special mention.

I am indebted to Ian Frazer and Albin Mark for their willing and substantial guidance. Albert Moore, Department of Phenomenology of Religion, kindly offered specialised up to date references to aspects of ritual. Elizabeth Duke, of the Classics Department, has permitted a glimpse of women in ancient times during some stimulating seminars.

Above all, I thank my partner Ken and our sons, whose constant support and co-operation have made this thesis possible.
CHAPTER ONE

THEORIES OF LIMINALITY AND MARGINALITY

The attributes of liminality or of liminal personae ("threshold people") are necessarily ambiguous, since this condition and these persons elude or slip through the network of classifications that normally locate status and positions in cultural space.


INTRODUCTION

The proposal is to merge two broad areas of interest, marginality and women, along with the associated use of separate zones. The ethnographic focus is narrowed to the confines of a microcosmic study of an urban feminist group in New Zealand [NZ]. The perspective is from a socio-cultural stance within the discipline of anthropology. The terms "marginality" and "liminality" may be unfamiliar to some readers. Neither term can be adequately defined in a few sentences, but a brief introduction will serve in the interim. Roger Keesing, in the glossary of Cultural Anthropology, (1976), liminal:

In symbolic analysis, a state or category that is in between or outside normal states or categories. This may be a state of transition between social categories (as when initiates are taken off into seclusion or when on a honeymoon bride and groom go off together) or a category that is outside a normal framework (hermaphrodites, in relation to men and women).

According to Frank Musgrove the concept of marginality,

after an inconclusive history following the pioneer writing (in the 1920s and '30s) of Stonequist and Park, has assumed a new significance in recent years in discussions of socialization. It is perhaps people in marginal situations - in the anterooms of life - who are more open to change?'

Liminality in its classic form, was first innovated as a model for all traditional rites of passage by Arnold van Gennep. These rites mark the life stages of individuals in a particular society. This involves a progression through certain ceremonial stages from secular (profane), to the sacred (where esoteric cultural knowledge is divulged), through a transitional phase in limbo (liminality), stripped of status/role. For instance, a child in tribal society entering adolescence, is ready to learn the secrets of adulthood, the vital role of perpetuating the society. An initiation ceremony for children in this lifestage is prepared and conducted by tribal elders.

In accordance with the theme of this thesis, such a liminal or marginal phase may be
described as no man's land, or in this instance, "no woman's land": a double entendre, when viewed as well from the perspective of the New Zealand Women's Liberation Movement, [henceforth NZWLM]. In tribal ritual, the phases for van Gennep are tripartite, marked as separation, margin and aggregation. Separation is from the society in which the hypothetical novice has reached adolescence. During the marginal (liminal) phase, there is a symbolic death, representing disassociation from the former social world. Here metamorphosis takes place. The pubescent gradually becomes altered to adult, reminiscent of the mysterious lifecycle of a butterfly. It is thought that for females during this phase of ritual, the change is solely ontological, rather than one including status and role elevation, as it is for males. This is discussed by Bruce Lincoln, and will be touched on as this chapter proceeds. Aggregation marks the social acceptance of achieved adulthood, a rebirth and incorporation in a new social world. Associated role responsibilities, accompany the male or female's return to society. A typical example would be the traditional initiation of pubertal traditional Aboriginal males into social manhood.2 

Victor Turner, has extended the traditional rites de passage concept of van Gennep, to apply to all phases of decisive cultural change. He refers to liminality as "any condition outside or on the peripheries of everyday life."3

Robert Bocock, discusses ritual in industrial society, in order to ascertain how ritual action aids or prevents social change at both political and personal levels. He considers the importance of ritual in modern society to be underestimated. Ritual provides meaning in the lives of a wide variety of people, by "using the body in symbolic actions to articulate experiences which words cannot handle adequately." Ritual is described as being "concerned with the process of either binding people's feelings into the existing organisation of society, or with aiding them to become critical and independent of it." It is the latter aspect that is of interest here. Bocock has concentrated on aspects of ritual because it is in such activities that desires, feelings, symbols and wishes are handled and related to the groups and institutions, from the family to the state, of which the individual is a member, and which make up what is called a 'society.'4

"Marginality" is merely a form of this liminality of tribal traditional ritual where persons choose, or are obliged, often more permanently, to dwell on the borders of their particular society. It may take the form of an alternative lifestyle, as in separatist feminism [SF]. Or as in reformist feminism, [RF] marginality may be more of an abstraction and a consciousness. Here a separate place (space) is set aside for feminist interaction and discussion, whilst members continue to live and work in society, and in the process, inform others about their insights and prevailing conditions determining the subordination of women. They do not share the common goals and ways of society, but instead, seek to alter them. In this sense, they are peripheral or marginal to everyday life. According to Janet Chafez, "feminists are women equal to men"; whereas "liberaticists" are women over against, or separate from men; and androgynous ideology aims at placing "women and men equal to each other." Most categories in this study refer to those applied by Denise Dominy, ("Gender Conceptions and Political Strategies in New Zealand Women's Networks," 1983), in her study of women's groups in NZ. The terms "feminist" and "liberationist" are used rather more loosely and tend to overlap somewhat, in keeping with current NZ usage, as in Broadsheet, NZ Women's Liberation periodical, for example.

In methodology, there is a problem persisting in the presentation of ethnographic material: how to recount sufficient factual detail, whilst attempting to preserve the identities of informants. As a compromise, case study material is interspersed within the main body of descriptive analysis. Names and localities are either changed or not nominated. It is regretted that these measures may cause inconvenience to the reader at times. Commentary relating to the anthroplogy of forms of marginality, and to feminist theory, is not intended to be a critique. It is included to assist in interpretations and to substantiate analysis of ethnographic data. The two strands include:
1. Selected material collated from previous researchers within the domains of marginality and liminality in Western industrial society; and the anthropology of women, are represented to illuminate this study in Chapter I.

2. Participant-observation and interpretations of patterns emerging in fieldwork analysis [after Spradley 1980, and Pelto 1970], Chapter III. The small group process is represented by the group of study, termed the Core Group.

A contemporary university campus group, on a somewhat larger scale of group organisation, named for its feature of separate space, The Women's Room, is included for comparison and contrast. Yet another campus group is named Womanspace. It is not included in this study. An historical background of Women's Liberation network development within this urban domain, along with NZ landmarks over the past decade, are sketched in a brief historical overview in Chapter II. Insertions of transcripts of taped anonymous interviews of feminists during the "second wave" era in the 1970s, occur throughout. The two strands become drawn together in the conclusion to assess contiguity. It intended that they complement each other and interrelate.

Utility of the Concept

The concept of liminality may be applied to any non-traditional subset of any society. Its connection with traditional rites of passage lies in its symbolic character, whereby people effect movement from one status position to another. This includes status elevation or reversal. Further, normative society is the main point of reference. Adopted attitudes and behaviour for strategic purposes may be a direct reversal of the norm. An example of this would be in the lesbian overturn of etiquette forms noted in traditionalist women at the 1977 United Women's Conference. The feminist movement encourages creative expressions of "womanness" as well. Within the context of the application of this concept to non-traditional women, the implications of pressure to effect social change may be observed through this form of processual analysis. Its value lies in the possibility of setting aside for scrutiny "threshold" (liminal) persons and their communities. There is now sufficient background research in the use of this concept to build on. In counterpoising structure:communitas, the relation of certain oblique human behaviours to social change appears to become a little clearer.

The diverse ways in which marginality may be applied to both men and women is explored at the risk of overstating the emergent fact of the marginality of non-traditional women.

What remains in question is the usefulness of the concept of liminal theory when applied (1) to non-traditional women within the New Zealand Women's Liberation Movement with its various contact levels of organisation: international, national, regional, urban and small group, and (2) within the specific small group central to this ethnography.

Limitations of the Concept

1. There is tremendous overlap of categories due to diversification found within this one women's movement (NZWLM), ostensibly homogeneous. This is offset by the fact that the movement is also linked by an overarching belief in the liberation of all women, incorporated into the semantics of its communication system. Part of the movement's adopted techniques to alter the status quo lies in the provision of "free space" for members. In effect, a boundary is created. In other words, this symbolises self-marginalisation. This notion of neutral space (threshold) is important to the theme of liminality and to feminist ideology. Thus it is still possible to utilise the liminal concept and compensate for inevitable heterogeneity.

At the small group level, this problem is not significant. This is due to the more homogeneous nature of the small group organised as it is according to topic focus. At this level, the concept more readily fits the category of marginality Victor Turner applies to non-traditional women. The women who form the "Core Group" live and work in society and attempt to achieve social change through example and organised reformist tactics. However, due to rejection of
their society's baseline values, they remain in, but not of their society. The methods of group organisation and members' behaviour reflect the traits researchers have designated "marginal". The application of the theory of liminality is complementary to (i) the recognition and (ii) the understanding of these small group processes. This extends to all convolutions of broader network arrangements.

2. Although it is important to recognise the interrelationships between the communitas sector of study and its social structural counterpart, to portray the latter in any depth in this instance, is not possible. The socio-cultural context and "traditional" women within, are delineated more by allusion to feminist counter-cultural expressions and reversals of behaviour, than by direct reference.

3. Friedrich warns that such concepts can be carried too far. Inherent in this difficulty is the subjective nature of topics requiring any form of symbolic analysis. To be effective treatment relies to some extent on a phenomenological-hermeneutical approach.

Assessment of both the values and limitations of the concept within this context appear in Conclusions, Chapter IV.

I. BACKGROUND TO RESEARCH

Victor Turner, in his extensive studies of social processes, and in isolating for inspection his notions of "liminality" and "communitas - where social structure is not" - classifies women changed from the traditional role as "marginal" and "non-traditional". An elaboration of meanings will be given at a suitable point further on. From this baseline, my enquiry begins. What constitutes "marginality"? If non-traditional women are "marginal" in relation to "normative" social structures, then how and why? Questions such as these evoke further queries. The first step, to find "non-traditional women" in New Zealand, is simplified by the fact that members of the NZWLM, appear to fit this category as much by self-definition as by social stereotyping.

The second step is more complicated: How can these non-traditional women be defined in "marginal" terms? In the first place, women in certain societies have been termed "marginal" in relation to men. Ann Oakley, for instance, mentions that "in traditional preliterate small-scale societies ... women are confined to domestic operations which are marginal to the society's main economic tasks." Silvia Rodgers, in writing of women attempting to find space in a "... Men's House: The British House of Commons", are described as marginal in this contemporary complex urban example as well. "And it is a nice irony that the women as the marginals of society, fighting the marginal seats, are thus the determinants of power. It is after all the marginal seats which decide which of the contending parties take power."!

Bruce Lincoln considers that women may well be "liminal" in relation to men in their respective societies. [See quotation at the end of Section VI, this chapter.] He deals with women's social position in crosscultural, comparative ritual contexts.

Rosemary Ruether has this to say:

Two critical turning points are important for the analysis of the socioeconomic history of women. The first is the transition from tribal or village to urban life.... The second ... is the development of mass industrialization, which ... shifts economic production increasingly from the family to a work place separated from the home. For the first time women as a group became marginal to production and economically dependent on male work for survival. Even though many poor women went out to work in the factory at this time, they were still tied, ... to ... procreative and domestic support systems....
[This] created a new restlessness in middle- and upper-class women who were left with insufficient meaningful work.... A feminist movement, which was expressed in only a few isolated voices in past centuries, began to become a mass movement in the nineteenth century. Women began to rebel against the traditional ideologies of subjugation and to demand civil rights and entrance into education and professions.... Industrialization completed the earlier marginalization of women's place culturally and politically by economic marginalization.... The sex-linked complementarity of work roles established at that time became the basis for an increasingly repressed role and image of women. Each new development of social organization drew activities out of women's place and assigned them to men. Women, once the centre of productive economic life, became more and more marginalized, as the place of the home shrank to its present proportions of a purely consumer and child-raising unit.

I.M. Lewis, in writing about women's possession cults, identifies marginal cults, as distinct from the central possession cults, which reinforce "official morality and established power." Lewis argues that such peripheral cults are "thinly disguised protest movements directed against the dominant sex .... when women lack more obvious and direct means for forwarding their aims." He suggests that women, as "jural minors in traditional societies, also in a sense occupy a peripheral position". Possession is initially regarded as an illness: with blame dispatched to the spirits of witchcraft. For Lewis, the spirits are also peripheral. Firstly, despite the significant attention they receive, spirits are afforded no part in upholding the moral code. Further, spirits are typically attributed to an origin outside the societies they molest. Although favoured victims, women are "far from being a secure female monopoly": a balance to obviate accusations of hysteria. "Downtrodden categories of men", marginalised themselves in rigidly stratified societies, similarly foster marginal possession cults. In this brief précis of Lewis' proposal, peripheral possession is adduced to emerge "as an oblique aggressive strategy in its primary social function". There is a "very direct concordance between the attributes of the spirits, the manner in which the affictions they cause are evaluated, and the status of their human prey."

These examples are relevant to Haitian voodoo, and also apply to the Caribbean in general, to north-west Africa, as well as South America. They have been included to indicate the sembance of purpose, organisation, and strategies that bear some resemblance to the women's groups of this study. Lewis writes of wide-ranging examples in time and space, of the shamanistic regions of Arctic Asia, South America and of the still more liminal cult of Dionysus. However, men too have been treated as marginal within certain other socio-cultural arrangements. Shirley Ardener mentions "peripheralisation of men in the home." Claude Lévi-Strauss for instance, records that the married man among the Bororo Indians of Brazil, never feels "at home" in his wife's house because at the time of marriage, a man is compelled to take up residence in his wife's house of inheritance. He "crosses the imaginary line separating the moieties and goes to live on the opposite side." It is more usual for a woman to change her place of residence in traditional societies however. Similar feelings appear to accompany this shift. For example, in Ernestine Friedl's description of a Greek farming village Vasilika, virilocal rule of residence prevails: the bride moves into the house of the groom's father. This is distinguishable from patrilocal or matrilocal residence, where extended kin groups are included. We are told that all the women, including the bride, cry as the girl goes off with her new husband. Many customs are changing and this situation may now be only temporary. Couples often move to a smaller kin unit with their own children, if this scheme is functional. A quite different situation and context but one which may still apply, is that of the traditional NZ family, where the woman maintains territorial rights over "her" kitchen domain. Examples of this type, according to Shirley Ardener, may amount to "a form of exclusion by women." (ibid.) Secondly, the range of variation in the
definition of a feminist necessitates a comparable degree of breaking down within the broader scale of "marginality". In other words, a variation in the categories of feminist means a comparable variation in the categories of marginality, or overlap into other liminal categories. Some attempts at definition of feminists and feminism and of their particular relation to liminality/marginality, are made in Chapter II. The initial solution is resolvable in the obvious relative position of marginality according to its context, instituted social structure. In this case, the NZWLM represents an accessible, reasonably contained group of both non-traditional, and apparently marginalised women in relation to men, as well as to other women in their society. The immediate questions to arise are, is this marginalisation imposed, and if so, by whom? The difference is that, although traditional women and men also, may be in a marginal position in relation to their society, for many, this is ascribed. The political non-traditional women chooses this marginality as part of a strategy of taking control of her own life, where previous options have been restricted. The transcribed tapes will present some feminist viewpoints, and concluding remarks at the end of this thesis, will attempt to clarify points of enquiry, if not actually produce answers. The developing thesis probes the correlation of feminism and marginality, and aspects of marginal-liminal studies of other individuals or groups in time and space. For, although this concept in these terms may seem relatively modern, marginalisation of humans is as old as society itself. This is evident in mythical accounts, and later historical documentation of the Archaic and Classical periods in Greece and Rome, of which Sarah Pomeroy's research findings relating belief systems to human social organisation, are as readable as they are reputable. 

The study in hand involves considering perceived "marginal" behaviour and actions, that is, contrary to, or contravening traditional codes of convention, from which to elicit meanings. Denise Dominy mentions that during studies of women as social actors, it becomes evident that to focus on action alone is insufficient. The meaning accompanying these activities is also necessary. Another important point this time by Shirley Ardener's partner, Edwin Ardener, is that men and women may well have separate conceptual [mind] systems and standards of evaluation, so that in turn, the meaning of activities may be different for male and female, both emically and etically. In other words, there are differing attitudinal predispositions to the same phenomenon and setting, as Albin Mark puts it. (Emics is the set of related categories through which anthropologists' subjects perceive the world; the folk perspective. Etics, on the other hand, is the set of related categories used by Western social scientists to explain social phenomena; the analytical perspective.) Edwin Ardener came to use a term that most nearly defines for him, the puzzling responses that keep recurring to accentuate and differentiate women from men in fieldwork encounters and interviews. The word he uses is " muted". This Edwin Ardener applies to women, who constantly register a lesser ability and desire to articulate answers to his questions. The term seems applicable to other behavioural differences noted also in this study and incidental studies, relating to what could be a lack in both self-confidence and a sense of authority. Simone De Beauvoir's term "woman as Other", relative to the position of the male in society, may add some meaning to this definition. For Dominy, in her comparison of differences and similarities in political behaviour and ideologies, the degree of women's perceived difference from men in New Zealand, is identifiable through reflected gender conceptions. This line of thinking appears sound and worth developing. Examples occur in case study material to exemplify and support Dominy's theory, and these will be inserted as this thesis proceeds. The distinction between sex and gender in simple terms is made by Oakley. "Sex is a biological term; 'gender' a psychological and cultural one." Her more detailed explanation makes this clearer: Technology has altered the necessary impact of biology on society, but our conceptions of masculinity and femininity have shown no corresponding tendency to change. The lag between the two points to a crucial distinction it [sic] is necessary to make in our thinking about male and female roles - the distinction between 'sex' and 'gender'. 'Sex' is a word that refers to the biological differences between male and female; the visible difference in genitalia, the related difference in
procreative function. 'Gender' however is a matter of culture: it refers to the social classification into 'masculine' and 'feminine'.

Another point she makes is that 'if the proper terms for sex are 'male' and 'female', the corresponding terms for gender are 'masculine' and 'feminine'; these latter may be quite independent of (biological) sex.'

The purpose of this research, within the said contextual schema, is investigation of expressed gender conceptions as they appear to relate to human relationships and social organisation; the forms of human behaviour this precipitates; along with problems of self-identity and communication, identifiable in patterns that emerge from fieldwork analysis. Above all, aspects of marginality/or other spheres of liminality will be considered in conjunction with the systems of enculturation in New Zealand. Also to be noted, are some expressions of symbolic codes referencing altered consciousness levels when exposed to the marginal values of a "subcultural" form, that is, ideologies and strategies of the NZWLM. A simple definition of a symbol, is a thing regarded as suggesting something; a mark or sign with special meaning. Mary Douglas emphasises the enormous power of the symbol to order experience. The overall aim is an attempt to add to the understanding of material extant on studies of marginality in society generally, and of women in New Zealand in particular. It is an endeavour to understand meanings associated with the marginalisation of women in our society, whether voluntary or not, by isolating and studying observable patterns of actions and behaviour in fieldwork analysis. It may provide impetus for others to further this research in more detail.

Early investigation reveals considerable disparity in human perceptions and perspectives relating to formulating a world view. Frank Musgrove recalls an interesting example. In a discussion with a young English research physicist whilst at a Sufi (dervish) commune in the south-west of England, Musgrove's informant volunteered that he had belonged to a group in Southampton "which really reshaped your conception of reality. You begin by recognizing that you never see your own head.'" Equally varied, are evaluations of differences between the human male and the female. Examples will emerge from time to time. To quote Peter Wilson, "We approach the environment, interpret it, develop relationships between ourselves, draw lines of separation, we communicate, we acquire knowledge, organise production, exchange, consumption and reciprocity with the help of rules.'" For some, these rules do not make sense, and this affects all these related modes of action.

II. LINES AND SPACES

Basic to the topic of marginality, are recurring forms of lines and spaces, or to be more specific, boundaries and locations. Some are concrete and tangible, some are symbolic and abstract. The patterns or tracery of these lines could be imaged as a boundary-space motif, or an interlinking network throughout this work: in effect, almost a replication of the functional networks of the NZWLM's own network system. Conversely, certain delimitations, rather than conjoin, may cause disjunction. Boundaries can, and often do, form barriers: the conversion of space into an inside and an outside. By association, the human occupants of such space become conceptualised as either "insiders" or "outsiders". In a sense, the boundary is a key to explicate certain social formulations. Within this context, Turner's extended use of van Gennep's theory of liminality seems to be feasible. Any form of liminality such as marginality, is a relative position or state, as it has been pointed out; therefore it must be treated in relationship terms, i.e. the position, or person(s) in that position, must be considered in relation to the wider socio-cultural context.

According to Mary Douglas,

The drawing of symbolic lines and boundaries is a way of bringing order into experience. Such non-verbal symbols are
capable of creating a structure of meanings in which individuals can relate to one another and realise their own ultimate purposes. Learning and perception itself depend on classifying and distinguishing. Symbolic boundaries are necessary even for the private organising of experience. But public rituals which perform this function are also necessary to the organising of society.

[She goes on to say:]

The system of control is validated by a typical bias in the system of belief ... they make their own typical demands on the media of expression and thus produce natural systems of symbolic behaviour.... With high classification, piety and sacralized institutions, [there are] strong boundaries between purity and impurity; this is the prototype original Durkheimian system in which God is Society and Society is God, where all moral failings are at once sins against religion and the community.

Boundedness may also denote differentiation between biological sex and gender (i.e. maleness and femaleness), where separate space may be allocated according to cultural ascription. An example of this is in the almost universal division of labour by sex. Oakley has this to say: "Every society does have rules about which activities are suitable for males and which for females; but these rules vary a great deal from one society to another, and generalisations about how biology inevitably dictates their form and content are not supported by the data." Further on she states: "In Western societies today, sex is an organising principle of social structure, and, despite popular belief to the contrary, it plays a great part in determining social roles." Bound up with attitudes and beliefs about appropriate behaviour, are gender distinctions, exemplified in fears about employment of women, [still voiced by many NZ men today, and some women,] - that employment may tend to make women become "masculinised".

In all industrialised countries there is a marked differentiation by gender of most if not all occupations. One basic occupation in particular, that of housewife, is exclusively feminine. (The definition of 'housewife' here is the person in a household who is mainly responsible for the household duties.)

The word "househusband" is creeping into the English language, and this would tend to upset this feminine exclusivity, but at present, only to a minimal degree, since the number of males mainly responsible for household duties remains proportionately small in NZ. A study by R. Norvitz in 1978, claims that 18.5% of NZ men are involved in helping with housework on a regular basis. There is little alteration in the delegation of domestic responsibilities of husband and wife between the 1960-1970s period. To be taken into account in this category, is the increasing phenomenon, the male solo parent, a relatively recent product of more frequent marital breakdowns today, along with other factors. In 1982, census figures show that 13.2% of all households with children were headed by a single parent. These facts and related information are to be found in Anne Smith's Understanding Children's Development (1982:187-193), where there is a useful section on NZ family life.

One of the stereotypes of the radical feminist, is that she "apes" men in her attempt to take over the male role, and his position. Her disparagement of cosmetics and "feminine" attire is misconstrued. The response of the conventional sector of society to this threat to overturn accepted values, is to belittle such attempts. Mockery is an effective form of control. In regard to position however, many women do "use" the current system in order to attain more prestigious jobs. To work through the system successfully, it is generally necessary to comply with standard
modes of dress and behaviour. The feminine gender model is thus reinforced by the example of the few women in the top strata.

In fact, the feminist dons comfortable clothing similar to that of the male, because unlike much of the female fashion wear, it is comfortable. Restrictive apparel, such as hobble skirts, symbolise restraint and sensuality, and are denounced for what they represent, as much as for their physical discomfort. Further, it is an attempt to "girlcott" the commercial world and its policy of "consumerism", where exploitation of women is considered conspicuous in media advertising and in the cosmetic and fashion industries, for instance.

Above all, these actions symbolise the deliberate discarding of the whole "feminine" gender role/position. In short, they denote liberation. The effect is to close the gap between the sexes, both visually and in behaviour, as Oakley observes.

Robert Bocock discerns in Western industrial societies "a central social role differentiation made on the basis of biological sexual characteristics". His focus on one of the many forms of role learning, is that of the part played by certain kinds of ritual action. He considers identification with sexual roles of the society to be the most crucial here. Rituals in modern society are not as clearly marked as those in "simpler" societies, where ordeals in the liminal and most sacred phase, may last for weeks. He quotes Eliade (1970) in relation to achieving a "new mode of being", as from child to adult, conditioned by the "almost simultaneous revelation of the sacred, of death and of sexuality."

Bocock's comments on the counter-cultural movement processes are worth noting. Stress is on values and actions attempting to reunify an otherwise highly differentiated and specialised social systems, aims of the NZWLM. Bocock, along with Douglas, sees ritual action of this kind to be often less formalised. The intent above all is to integrate. It can "sustain and articulate forms of consciousness and their associated values and action, which are in tension with the dominant forms of social action in industrial society...." He classifies rituals in complex societies into work, religious, aesthetic and civic categories. He isolates the same problem to be confronted in this study: the difficulty of full definition and empirical identification of the "alternative society", where there are no clearcut boundaries. Musgrove acknowledges this in his contact with artistic communities. "It would be absurd to try to construct from these sketches a simple, composite picture of the artist as marginal man, utterly separate from the public side of life, essentially solipsistic". This point is worthy of note.

As with Turner, Bocock prefers to view alternative social development as a social process. For many participants, involvement is sporadic, rather in the manner of reformist feminist support. Actions in communitas are meaningful where stress is on "being". The "doing"is only in relation to the former. Bocock sees a contribution to society in these spheres of altered attitudes and experience, as well as in experimentation with human sexuality. Examples from the transcripts may expand the range of potential to be given consideration in the formation of relationships. Feminist trials and ideas in alternative diadic, triadic and other grouping variations, even the suggestion of group orgy, are experiments in an attempt to break down barriers, and search for workable alternatives. This evinces an example of liminal innovation of the kind Turner discusses.

Thomas Gregor, in his dramaturgical model of Mehinaku, a Brazilian Indian village, pays considerable attention to the cultural adaptations defining kinds of human differentiation, translated into concrete/symbolic use of space, from apperceptions of natural-cosmological orders of dimension. Here, boundaries or barriers may be ecological, sociological, or psychological. His vivid description of the "trashyard" with its prevailing ethos of informality, depicts a backyard retreat where it is possible to be oneself, make agreeable face-to-face contact, and generally relinquish public pressures of formal speech, dress, greetings, and standards relating to the public image. It separates relationships of intimacy from the distant; offers a social definitional (in this instance), rear-front, private-public space: a microcommunitas within the bounds of village society.

An anachronism of the fourth century BC exemplifying the use of space and boundaries, is that of utopian Sparta. The idea of forming an ideal community set apart from the degenerate system to which it was bound, resulted in social paradox. Sparta comprised the freest of the free in Greece, and the most enslaved. In order to reach the symbolic ideal of equality through
non-differentiation, rigid discipline had to be enforced. The state became the extension of the Greek idea of family, whilst the family itself, as a vital independent unit, along with disparate classes, political, economic, educational and religious spheres, had to sink their differences. All aspects of daily life became utilitarian and communal. At marriage, the women donned male attire and heads were shaved, as part of the solution to free social categories of kinship, sex, age, status, rank and wealth. In this model of liminality and paradox of escape, the illusion may well be a new kind of confinement. Turner puts it this way. In order to keep out structure, structure has to be constantly maintained and reinforced.

A whole book, devoted to the concepts, "ground rules" and "social maps" of space utilisation, is *Women and Space*, edited by Shirley Ardener. She makes this comment:

> It has long been recognised that boundaries, where the difference between 'what it is' and 'what it is not' is put to the test, are frequently marked and reaffirmed by rituals. [sic]
> The incorporation of new elements into a space (which involves a breach of the boundary) may thus be accompanied by ceremonies. 39

The value of Woman Space to feminists, will be evident in descriptions of The Woman's Room and the San Francisco small group in Chapter III. But for separatist feminists, it is of the essence. This "sacred" space, as opposed to "profane" space (after Durkheim, 1965, following Eliade, 1959), as ordered and occupied by men, is embodied in a total ideology of daily living. It is this need for women to find a space of their own, and the reasons advanced for this, that is of consequence here.

Non-differentiation is an important factor in liminality: so it is in theory and application among feminists, more especially among feminist separatists, but it is not without its difficulties. In correspondence, symbolic "lines" are conceived of as being on a horizontal plane, rather than vertical, in the attempted deletion of hierarchies. As it will become apparent, feminists attempt to erase hierarchical forms in meeting procedure and in abstract form. This is an important part of feminist ideology. The much debated efficacy of a "leaderless/structureless" movement, ironically forges another cleft in the aim for unification. All this relates to the balance of power in society. Feminists believe in the slogan "Woman Power". It epitomises a unique, scarcely tapped potential resource. At present it is considered that men usurp the central power organisational agencies in society. In strongly feminist terms, men oppress women. The message is to tell people that "women as a group will no longer suffer the indignity of not being able to control their own destinies." 40 Socialist feminist analysis reduces the problem to structural inequality of the dominating class in the hierarchy. It is only by a redistribution of organisational power in society that can this be ammended. This seems to warrant a revolutionary overthrow of the ruling class. In this context, women are conceived of as constituting a separate lower class or caste from that of men, the ruling class, regardless of the arbitrary social class they are placed in at present by merit of their father or husband.

In the same way, other groups are recognised to be peripheral in relation to the central power structural arrangements, Maori and Polynesian peoples for example, and those in lower socio-economic groups. But overall, women remain subordinate to men, according to the NZWLM.

It could be hypothesised that with settlement and property, conditions imposed certain barriers that have become intensified and multi-faceted with increasing industrialisation. Victor Turner merits the dialectics and fission of social structure to be not only inevitable, but essential ingredients of social change. And even within marginal groups, splits occur and need to be recognised as part of human variety and not necessarily potentially destructive forms. Some feminists evince full cognisance of this point.

Integral to this study then, are persons who help to form NZ society and construct its social demarcations; of their lives in relation to other individuals. Concentration is on non-traditional women. Traditional women represent a force to be reckoned with from the perspective of the former sector of women. Inherent now, is the British stamp of tradition. An
early import as such, is the phenomenon of women's groups; the formation of which are prolific and varied, in response to the varying needs of women. Denise Dominy terms this "voluntarism", essence of the traditional. The concept may perhaps also embrace the more militant sectors of society, in the sense of voluntary membership and solidarity; in the growth of alternative group formation, these women are countering the authenticity of values such as those tested in the past, with the emergence of the suffragist-temperance movement. The successful mobilisation of women into the workforce in the absence of males involved in the two World Wars, serve as examples. These are traced to the more recent efforts of the WLM. To some extent, attaining membership to women's organisations and groups in NZ are attempts to fulfill a need for social and personal identity. Women's lives are made more meaningful if they have a model to make sense of their present role and position, and where there is hope for some change in the future. Dominy stresses the particular importance of women's voluntary associations to express social identity. This is often in the form of symbols of group identity "manipulated for political ends" in specific circumstances. Separatist feminist examples will be shown in Chapters II and III. An immediate example would be the New Zealand National Council of Women [NCW]. The following is a brief editorial during the course of the 1978 conference.

As the National Council of Women embraces so many women's organisations, the exact number of persons it can claim to speak for is hard to calculate, but it is probably more than a quarter of a million. By any New Zealand standard, that makes it a body of formidable influence. [New Zealand Herald, Auckland, (September 25, 1978).]

In agreement with anthropological feminist literature, Dominy finds that her data supports evidence of women's solidarity groups bolstering female power in the domestic sphere.32

Both Simone de Beauvoir (1953) and Sherry Ortner (1974) argue that by reason of their biological functions, women have been considered better suited to roles of nurture. Rosaldo/Lamphere agree that to suggest that "one dimension that affects family authority structure is the relative integration or separation of political and domestic spheres." [For Lamphere's usage "political", read "public" in Rosaldo's terms]" It is important to note that recent studies in the anthropology of women, whilst acknowledging the value of nature/culture, public/private debates, have drawn attention to the need to recognise that male/female spheres are not necessarily clearly defined, as for example they would be in certain traditional societies, where strict taboos adhere to women's quarters associated with menstrual-childbirth sacredness and pollution, as Keesing describes among the Kwaio. He says33

As Douglas's analyses would lead us to expect, separation of these categories is ritually central: and it is symbolically expressed in a series of dualistic oppositions:

FEMALE : MALE
POLLUTED: SACRED
DOWN : UP

In many societies today, there is an overlapping of boundaries, more particularly since rapid social change has tended to draw male-female roles, position and behaviour nearer to an androgynous synthesis. Oakley remarks in relation to social deviance for instance: "sex difference has narrowed considerably in recent years, suggesting that, as some of the differences between the sex roles are reduced by the conditions of modern life, the deviance of male and female becomes more alike."34 Yet gender differentiation tends to reinforce traditional role stereotypes. Dominy points to the often unrecognised "informal" power of women. This is
evident in domestic, community voluntary association or group domains. Shirley Ardener recognises this factor also. "Women who are not formally represented in the political arena as recognised in the dominant ideology may, in fact, still exert political influence and be necessary to its processes." This operation Shirley Ardener terms a "muted structure", the applied term formerly explicated in relation to women and articulation, by Edwin Ardener. She comments on the absence of women in political arenas apparent in many societies over a long time span. Shirley Ardener mentions Tiger, (1978), who "gave examples of the way in which women in public life have tended to be those who are not yet, or have ceased to be, childbearing, thus lacking the defining criterion which specifies them as women - they become 'generic' and are subsumed into the category for men." Women so classified, become for Shirley Ardener "fiction men". In regard to "crossing the line" she has this to say:

When rules of separation obtain, many difficulties arise at critical points and various devices are then introduced to cope with them while maintaining the underlying principles of classification. Mechanisms for entering private or exclusive space may be needed.

The example given is that of apartheid, where passes are necessary for certain "blacks" to enter service in "white" space.

To return to the problem of public-private, Shirley Ardener discusses in some depth the difficulty of defining such a concept when the cultural nuances are so subtly diverse, or to put it in her words, when it "has no precise and uniform content". To tackle the notions topical here, that of feminist debate, Lidia Sciama in S. Ardener's edition above, remarks on the feminist socialist adherence to Marx-Engels' viewpoints on the origin of the family and property, that she considers has added to the complexity, in that some argue that women universally are confined to the private spheres, in social and economic terms. Conversely, the male is associated with the public, and "more rewarding" spheres. Whilst the truth of this is recognised to some extent, it is not the whole presentation."

In the development of this thesis then, the questions surrounding general socio-cultural use of space and its boundaries, are crucial to inquiry into peripheral group formation; just as the particularistic hows and whys of separate domains of women in NZ are crucial to understanding associated meanings of such boundedness. This line-space motif, whether alluded to or not, will be apparent throughout this work.

III. MARGINALITY

The word "margin", is used by Arnold van Gennep to denote limen, Latin for threshold. In his essay setting out the main theory of van Gennep's book on the subject, Rites of Passage [1909], Max Gluckman states that this is "about the sequence of rites used to alter peoples' social relationships..." Van Gennep begins his analysis by using "territorial passages" for his framework. He had noted how persons moving across borders, or on entering at thresholds, (buildings etc.), observed rituals. "These rites of crossing the threshold gave him an alternative terminology, preliminal, liminal and postliminal rites", establishing a model for all rites of passage."

Victor Turner, as it has been mentioned, considers women changed from the traditional role, to be "marginals", who correspond to "liminaries" in being "betwixt and between"; but "unlike ritual liminaries," [emphasis mine], "they have no cultural assurance of a final stable resolution of their ambiguity." Turner classifies marginals as members by "ascription, optation, self-definition or achievement" and includes migrant foreigners, second generation [Americans], those of mixed ethnic origin, parvenus, déclassés ["upwardly" and "downwardly mobile migrants" respectively], migrants from country to city, and as previously mentioned, women in a changed, non-traditional role. All are associated with movement, change and dialectics, when related to the whole: society within a given culture. "Marginality" is a form of "liminality" then, peripheral rather than intersitial.
Frank Musgrove, studies problems and processes of adult resocialisation in groups moving to "extreme or abnormal positions in contemporary English society, ... positions that could be described as 'marginal'". Associated with this change is a modification or transformation of consciousness through the experience of marginality. Examination of this modification is the focus of Musgrove's book. Along with other scholars in this field, Mary Douglas, and Victor Turner, for example, he emphasises the potency and transfiguring properties of marginality. Major points discerned by researchers of marginality, will be considered in relation to this author's observations of women and their involvements within the NZWLM. Of relevance, is Musgrove's account of homosexuals and their "coming out", just one instance where marginality "presses on the boundaries of society and modifies its shape and contours."

IV. LIMINALITY

In order to classify forms of liminality, Victor Turner probes more deeply and widens the scope beyond the rites of passage of van Gennep. For Turner, liminality cannot be confined to the processual form of the traditional. Liminality is now seen to apply to all phases of decisive cultural change, in which previous orderings of thought and behaviour are subject to revision and criticism; when hitherto unprecedented modes of ordering relations between ideas and people become "possible and desirable". His reference to liminality as "any condition outside or on the peripheries of everyday life," as noted above, appears applicable here. For the purposes of this study of marginality and the NZWLM, this model of marginality, somewhat adapted, may be a useful methodological tool. Here are some refinements in subdivisions by Turner, which may be grasped only in relation to "structure."

"Liminals" may be presented as:

- ritual liminals
- marginals
- outsiders
- structural inferiors
- liminoids or "quasi-liminals"

In his intensive empirical studies of the Ndembu of South Central Africa, north Zambia, Turner demonstrates how actual behaviour and symbolism can be used as a key to the understanding of social structure and social processes, all of which have a measure of alienation adhering. By this is meant the well recognised universals of distance and inequality often leading to exploitation between humans, for example, male/female, young/old, white/black, rich/poor, (with their accompanying class, role and positional definitions.) Such differentiation creates areas that tend to separate these opposing groups. Turner arbitrarily marks off such domains for inspection. Those of the dominant social order belong to "structure". The subordinated or ill-fitting groups belong to "anti-structure". Within the bounds of "anti-structure" are the differentiated concepts of liminality and communitas. The latter "breaks through the interstices of structure in liminality; the edges of structure in marginality; from beneath structure in inferiority." Since all such groups are of structure yet set apart, all are liminal in a sense. In other words, persons who, whether voluntarily or not, tend to live, although not necessarily dwell, on the fringe or boundaries of their particular society, are of the culture, but not in it.

Paul Friedrich recognises this quality to be inherent in his own discipline. "Even anthropologists, [are] essentially liminal people." There is a paradox in the dilemma of the anthropologist, a human, "mind-and-culture bound", who sets out to study other humans, differing only in externals. Following this line of thinking in one seminar, Peter Wilson observed that the whole "conundrum" as such, is based on the inability of observer and subject, and vice versa, to penetrate the mind of the other. Here is the initial and instigating barrier. The paradox is intensified when, within this context of marginality, an anthropologist, as one marginalised by
professional dictates, sets out to study others marginalised by beliefs. This in analogy is my position. Simmel notes that in the role of "stranger", the anthropologist is generally categorised as being outside the system of study, thus posing no threat to the integrity of the existing social order. In effect, my own position, whether representing participant-observer or feminist to contact groups involved, - (with implied degrees of distancing, i.e. outsider/insider), - was always accepted in trust. To reciprocate such trust, the rules of boundary should not be breached in the course of research. This issue of professional conduct (ethics) raises another in regard to the legitimacy of anthropology as a discipline. In summing up an argument central to Lacan, Peter Caws appears to banish anthropology and the anthropologist even from liminal status, when he claims that there can be no science of man, because the subject cannot give an analytical account of itself.

V. SOME CONCEPTS

At this point, an introductory definition of applied usage of terms is useful and Marion Levy's text is a worthwhile source book adaptable to these purposes. Here, a social system is defined, following Parsons, "as any system of social action involving a plurality of interacting individuals"; a system, "any patterned collection of elements". As Levy points out, all social systems are coterminous with, or parts of, a society, and no society could exist in the absence of social action. It is the task of an observer therefore, to find what can be said about the character or operation of any particular membership unit. To these observations it is necessary to add those of Turner in order to relate his concept of parts (liminality and marginality), to the whole (society and its structural organisation). A brief statement of the feminist viewpoint will follow further on.

Society (societas), Turner observes, seems to be a process rather than a thing; dialectical, with successive stages of structure and "communitas". Rather than simply community, communitas is described as a modality of social interrelatedness from an area of common living: a moment in and out of time; in and out of social structure. There seems to be a "human need" to participate in both modalities. The social represents for Turner a "bonded and bound dimension", as well as the "unbound" in which "the human entity conserves through the former and grows through the latter."

Social structure, as Turner determines it, appears as a "more or less distinctive arrangement of naturally dependent institutions and the instituted organisation of social positions/actors which they imply." His positing of "society as structure" and "society as anti-structure" in The Ritual Process (1969), and criticised by some reviewers as already overworked, Turner himself reflects may have been in error. In an attempt to justify his use of the term "anti-structure", really an inaccurate prefix in its implied statement, the author makes this point clear: The "anti" here, is only used "strategically and does not imply a radical negativity." His preferred conception of structure is rather "the outward bound or circumference," [he quotes Blake] "than as the centre or substance of a system of social relations or ideas"; since structure has been "the point of departure for so many anthropological studies that it has acquired a positive connotation." This is a useful observation, and may be related to an incidental remark made during an informal interview. In the course of discussion with Ruth, currently involved with cultural (spiritual) separatist feminism [CF], she commented that as my view comes across, social structure, - and as "liminality/or marginality" relate to it, - social structure is the authentic or real perspective. The implication of her statement is that the social matrix may be misapplied according to the perspective of the viewer. In effect, traditional society may thus become marginal to the centralised Woman Culture. For separatist feminists at least, this is the authentic viewpoint. It is simply a case of quality of belief over quantity of believers. There is also the firm conviction among separatists, that their present minority status will alter with educative aids and strategies such as consciousness-raising (in feminist parlance CR). For separatist feminism, the position of marginality appears to be more closely allied with traditional ritual patterns, with its three stages of liminality. This point should become clearer as we proceed. For Turner, it is the final stage, (post-liminal), that of aggregation with centralised
structure, that keeps non-traditional women in the marginal-liminal phase of non-status. This could also mean that structured society also refuses to recognise them. In representing a-structural views, they are both self-marginalised and marginalised by the dominant social order.

In the same manner, scholars' interpretations of marginality and liminality differ, due in part to the diversity of cultures being described. Paul Friedrich, for example, focuses on the early Greek Aphrodite, whereas Turner ranges from aboriginal Africa, medieval and modern India to Europe, as Friedrich notes. Friedrich recognises the need for more intensive and extensive crosscultural referencing. He recognises also, that the theory of liminality has "sometimes been carried too far (the fate of all constructive ideas), but it gets at some of the essentials of our subjects." 47

It appears that all the above represent forms of liminality in general terms. At this juncture, the following points will be noted:

1. Non-traditional women, as in the "Core Group" of study, Turner classifies as "marginals". This seems acceptable and for now, taxonomic variations relating to the NZ feminist movement itself are disregarded. Marginality is being treated as a broad category in this sense of the term: peripheral to established norms implemented in NZ society.

2. The marginal position of the NZWLM can be treated as both voluntary and non-voluntary: voluntary in that: there is a dynamic factor in which feminists may selectively choose their particular stance; non-voluntary in view of the effects current social pressures and frictions present to those continuing to exist in an alien environment. Some of these pressures represent societies' non-acceptance of those who contradict traditional norms. Thus an imposed marginality exists for those who "opt out" altogether, or for dissenters who choose to remain. Turner's classification of "marginals" as members by "ascription, optation, self-definition or achievement" is applicable to the NZWLM, and varies with individual members.

3. The model of liminality will be of particular assistance in the examination of separatist feminism, where a possible "stage" appears to have become a "state", or is in the process of becoming one; an oscillating phase.

4. There is another question as to what extent feminists are marginal in relation to NZ society. The answer to this problem may emerge from first considering the extent of alienation experienced by various categories of feminist, mostly from case studies. These are questions of some importance. It is evident that examination of the ideology, the belief system and values; the critique of existing society, aims to rectify its present organisational structure; strategies; the alternative symbolic system adopted; teleology and the like, will give some clues to both parts of the question.

William Partridge gives some guidelines here. He lists the values noted in his participant-observational study of a hippie ghetto: isolation from social structure; experimentation; intimacy; communal intoxication and dependency on esoteric information; transience or mobility. These values are apparent as they appear to be reflected in social interaction. Partridge then seeks to relate these to hippie ideology. He also queries the quest for self-knowledge, self-discovery and spiritual growth in the context of these values.48

The concepts and whole question of alienation and anomie are rather too complex to be dealt with in any detail here. But there is a lot that impinges on these factors in prompting women to join WLM. Alienation means estrangement from society. For Partridge, it is useful as a classificatory device, but less useful as an analytical device. Mary Douglas, sees alienation and integration as implying different uses of the body as "a symbolic mode". She asks, "Is it legitimate to call them different codes derived from different social systems?" In her discussion of "restricted codes which integrate the individual with the social system", she distinguishes the possibility of

sub-systems of a lower order of inclusiveness to be alienated
from the whole ... another restricted code taking over. The body is still the image of society but somewhere inside it someone is not accepting its rule.... The symbolic medium of the body has its restricted code to express and sustain alienation of a sub-category from the wider society. In this code the claims of the body and of the wider society are not highly credited.... Experimenting with consciousness becomes the most personal form of experience, contributing least to the widest social system, and therefore most approved. This is where the dichotomy of spirit and matter becomes an insistent theme."

Partridge considers the theory of anomie, first coined by Durkheim in the context of suicide, to be an "efficient tool" in relation to the examination of forms of deviance, but restricts its use in his study. As with any theories being related to a specific study, "one must seek their locus in the ongoing processes of social and cultural life." His quotation from Robert Merton is worth repeating:

Anomie refers to a property of a social system, not to the state of mind of ... individual(s) within the system. It refers to the breakdown of social standards governing behaviour and so also signifies little social cohesion. When a high degree of anomie has set in, the rules governing conduct have lost their savor and their force. Above all else, they are deprived of legitimacy."

VI. MARGINALITY AND LIMINALITY EXTENDED

From this introduction to the forms of liminality, with the inclusion of marginality and the non-traditional woman as focal points, it is necessary to penetrate these subjects further. Frank Musgrove sees that marginality for different researchers is in accordance with their approach.

For Peter Berger marginality is first and foremost a threat to man's primary socialization, and for Victor Turner and Mary Douglas it has comparable powers of transfiguration. It was their assertions regarding the potency of marginality in adult resocialization which prompted the studies reported in this book.

Thresholds symbolize the beginnings of new statuses, new ways of feeling and action.

Musgrove continues: "Mary Douglas (1973) also follows Durkheim in his view that concepts - of time, causality and space - are modelled on the shape, boundaries and margins of society, and develops the thesis of the symbolic replication of the social state." Another comment by Musgrove, echoing Turner's own viewpoint, is that "the importance of 'liminality' as a prelude to change [is] insufficiently recognised...." He adds, that for "Berger and Luckmann ... change tends to be phrased as 'transformation of identity' and a strategic role in promoting these transformations is given to a particular form of 'marginality' and the support of significant others."*

Douglas gives her own point of view on the subject of marginality. "It is the lack of strong social articulation, the slackening of group and grid which leads people to seek, in the slackening of bodily control, appropriate forms of expression. This is how the fringes of society express their marginality."*
By including an extended and modified study of the theories of liminality after Victor Turner, Paul Friedrich et al., a further dimension of marginality is projected. Friedrich, in his work, *The Meaning of Aphrodite*, considers that his section probing the liminal features of the goddess, ("the betwixt and between"), to be crucial to the task he sets. For without insight into such a vital facet of this particular goddess, (also strongly featured in the god Dionysus), Friedrich maintains that his search for meaning would have been incomplete. His work is not only relevant within the applied analysis of features of liminality, but also in its reference to the Greek goddess Aphrodite, thought to be descended from a synthesis of The Great Mother figures of Old Europe, Minoan, Indo-European and Phoenician constituents. Theories about the primordial existence of "Das Mutterrecht" (Mother right), of a matriarchal state, postulated by Bachofen and his followers, are in the main, refuted by anthropologists today. Yet the debate continues. This is nourished partly by feminist writers, such as Sheila Collins and Carol Christ, religio-feminists, who use the prebiblical past in constructing present and future visions. Mary Daly and Naomi Goldenberg, have begun to reclaim the ancient symbolism of the Goddess. Belief may be either in matrifocal power as it originated in worship of the pristine Goddess, or in variations of themes of reasseretion of Goddess (Feminine) power symbolism, into contemporary women's lives. Cultural feminist separatists incorporate these beliefs, reinforced with mythical and ritual enactment.

It is not possible within the limits of this study, to probe the complexities of "liminal theory", nor its critiques. Instead, extracts have been interpolated as they are regarded relevant to this topic. According to Turner, van Gennep, by identifying liminality "discovered a major innovative, transformative dimension of the social", paving the way for "future studies of all processes of spatio-temporal social or individual change". Further development in this field, led Turner to apply this to all phases of decisive cultural change in which previous orderings of thought and behaviour are subject to revision and criticism and where hitherto unprecedented modes of ordering relations between ideas and people become "possible and desirable". He writes now of "liminoid" or "quasi-liminal" terms describing the many genres found in modern industrial societies. Features resemble those of liminality and are akin to the ritually liminal, (yet to be discussed), but are not identical with it. In general terms, liminality is "the state of being in between successive participations in social milieux which are dominated by social structural considerations".

Very simply, the Chinese universal principles yin (feminine) and yang (masculine), in nature and culture, may be used to exemplify Victor Turner's ideas of communitas and structure. This congruence he has come to recognise from later readings of Suzuki and Znaniecki. Turner mentions that in the dimension of kinship, matrilaterality represents the notion of communitas. The opposition of patrilineral and matrilateral functions as dominant/subordinate respectively. The former is "associated with property, office, political allegiance, exclusiveness, ... particularistic and segmentary interests .... the 'structural' link par excellence"; with the uterine links counterposed as: "structure/anti-structure". (His rationalisation here too, is that such organisation allows for inevitable conflict, and, if not its resolution, at least some mediation, in this case, between male and female in society.) What is crucial here, is that male and female are not merely being placed biologically and naturally as binary opposites (after Lévi-Strauss). The sexes in union complement and interrelate. This interrelation is in fact a necessary functional interdependence. Thus, instead of being viewed as polar opposites on different vertical levels and unequal, men and women are viewed as complementary opposites on a horizontal plane. Musgrove, in his discussion of the Krishna Consciousness Movement, mentions the union of Krishna and Radha the milkmaid, to form one being. "This being which unites opposites ... [is] embodied in the prophet Caitanya: human completeness represented in bisexual form which transcends all distinctions of sex, culture and caste. [This philosophy is seen to have had a considerably long history." The dominant, subordinate theme of Turner's hypothesis in structure:anti-structure, probes socio-cultural modes used in counteracting inevitable tension arising from such inequalities.

The following subdivisions are merely refinements of the more generalised term liminality: (1) ritual liminality, (2) marginality, (3) outsiderhood, (4) structural inferiority, (5) liminoid (quasi-liminality). It has been stressed that these can be grasped only in relation to
structure and in this a paradox exists. The illustration of the Spartan state reveals that in order to keep out structure, structure has to be constantly maintained and reinforced. For feminism, this problem keeps recurring. Turner asservates that neglect on the part of social scientists in ignoring structure's counterpart, communitas (within liminality), overlooks this integral counterbalance.

The concept of liminality, as it is used in relation to ritual, is simply a convenient term of usage as a frame of reference for the "ritual process", based on tribal "structural" behaviour of individual or group. By extension and some modification, as noted, it may further be applied to patterns which develop along some of these traditional lines in modern, "fringe" groups, in the interstices, or on the peripheries, of their particular, (often more complex), social structure. Now to examine these facets of liminality.

1. Ritual Liminality

Turner mentions that ritual liminars are often moving symbolically to a higher status; that the temporary ritual stripping of role and status, is "make-believe" dictated by cultural requirements. There is the observation of its being often a "sacred" condition, as in traditional tribal initiation ceremonies; or can readily become one, as Partridge discovers in the hippie ghetto.

Bruce Lincoln summarises some problems related to the investigation of certain women's rituals when incorporating concepts of liminality. Within this quotation, Turner (1969), says that for him

'communitas emerges where social structure is not.' There are difficulties in applying this set of ideas to women's initiation, however, for women cannot be truly said to be a part of the social hierarchy, or to have any significant independent status. Never having such status, they cannot be deprived of it, and one is forced to conclude either that there can be no liminal state for women or that women exist always in a liminal state. In either event, it is not initiation that introduces women to a world devoid of status distinctions.

Lincoln notes that van Gennep (1960), devotes an entire chapter to "the Territorial Passage" comparing "travel between well-defined territories via an ill-defined no-man's land to the logic of an initiation or other similar rite", a connotation that once again encompasses the concept of liminality as well as the viewpoint of the alienated woman, conveyed in this title.

Bruce Lincoln emphasises that a fundamental difference between women's and men's rituals is one of social mobility indicated by spatial change. For women, spatial change is seen to be limited. The reason advanced is that social elevation in these women's lives is rare. In this context a change of social categories involves a change of residence. Lincoln, in his concluding remarks, stresses van Gennep's frequent recourse to the use of a spatial model in describing rites of passage, as among the most important point of his analysis. He also agrees with Turner's argument for the existence of an "inverse relation between social hierarchy and the liminal state", between "structure" and "anti-structure", but as it is indicated, he encounters difficulty in holistically applying the set of ideas embodied in this concept to women's initiation.

2. Marginality

Turner classifies non-traditional women among marginals, as stated. He finds it interesting that they often:

(i.) Look to their group of origin for communitas, forming a "symbiotic yet dialectical relation with structure", in their terms, the inferior group.

(ii.) Look to the more prestigious group in which they aspire to higher status, as their structural reference group, the one in which they mostly live.
From the perspective of communitas become radical critics of "structure". Are usually "highly conscious and self-conscious people", producing "disproportionately" large numbers of writers, artists and philosophers.

3. Outsiderhood

This state encompasses various historical stages and cultures, in which shamans, diviners, hippies, hoboes and gypsies are differentiated as "outsiders" either, permanently and by ascription; or voluntarily setting themselves apart from status or role-playing; or temporarily set apart, or situationally, from status-occupying or role-playing behaviour. "Outsiderhood" is thus a "condition of being set outside structural arrangements in given social systems".

4. Structural Inferiority

Considered by Turner to be found by societies ordered by caste or class systems, this includes outcastes, the poor, and those of lowly status. The state may be absolute or relative, permanent or transient and categorised as value-bearing. The "power of the weak", as for example in autochthonous peoples, may be illustrated by the helots of Sparta. This specific status group presents some ambiguity.

5. Liminoid (Quasi-liminal)

These "specialized genres", examples of which include theatre, ballet, film, novel, poetry, music, art, even pilgrimage, develop most characteristically outside central economic and political processes, "along their margins, on their interfaces ... experimental, idiosyncratic, ... in contrast to liminal phenomena ... which are often anonymous or divine in origin".

Central to Turner's thesis, is a certain homology he identifies between the "weakness" and "passivity" of liminality. These features have often been attributed to the human female in certain societies. Simone de Beauvoir for example, says that

the passivity that is the essential characteristic of the 'feminine' woman is a trait that develops in her from the earliest years. But it is wrong to assert that a biological datum is concerned; it is in fact a destiny imposed upon her by her teachers and society.

In regard to Turner, we have found that he refers to the "passivity" of liminality: in diachronic transitions between states and statuses, and structural or synchronic inferiority of certain persons, groups, or social categories in political, legal and economic systems. The liminal and inferiors are often associated with ritual powers and total community. It is this form of power in the guise of the spiritual, that I. M. Lewis has singled out, as well as interpretations of the Spartan regime. It may also be attributed to cultural feminist forms where witchcraft revival obtains.

Liminality appears to be a method of dealing with movement from one status level to another. Social structural passages are associated with life-stage change of the individual, as in tribal ritual; or in cyclical change associated with the environment, with which individuals in group situations, are inextricably bound.

With increasing specialisation of culture and society, and with progressive complexity in the division of labour, what in tribal societies is principally a set of transitional (time) and interstitial (space) qualities, becomes in defined states of culture and society, itself an interstitial or peripheral state, as it may be possible to determine in the separatist feminist situation. Traces of the passage quality of religious life remain, as for example, in millenial movements. William Partridge gives evidence of the eclectic superimposition of Judaeo-Christian and Eastern religious fragments within the hippie subculture, that may be a somewhat surprising adjunct to the
outsider. There are certain other rites, in the midst of one regular and recurrent central ritual, the "rap" session or "rite of intensification". This involves the communal passing (often in a circle), of the sacramental symbol of unity, the "joint". (Marijuana is not always favoured. Choice may depend on group preference, availability and funds.) "The social atmosphere created in the drug ritual is what acts to interpret the individual-specific effects of the drug and translate them into group phenomena...."

This is a "shared psychic state ... at once personal and consensual." Charles Winick, a sociologist, is quoted by Partridge as noting the term "contact high" used by jazz musicians to describe a "special kind of emotional group contagion" absorbed by any non-drug-using member within a group using marijuana. It would be interesting to evaluate the factor of mere "group contagion", the special camaraderie one may experience within some feminist meetings. This feature is quite tangible, a kind of rubbing off of enthusiasm in commonality. It is not in any way fanatical, and is manifested without external stimulants. It differs from the infectious behaviour of crowds assembled in protest marches and so on. At national gatherings, women have been urged to chant en masse "We are Woman!" A women's rights advocate recounted during a Women in History course, a rite that spontaneously occurred in a United Women's Convention [UWC] assembly. Women were enjoined to link hands and give vent to any frustrated energies or anger, converting it to "Woman Power" on behalf of the world's women, in a group scream. She added quite simply, that it was a most incredible, vibrant experience. It is these forms of ritual behaviour that anthropologists seek, "a system of meaningful acts commonly shared!", as Partridge quotes Lloyd Warner. Social arrangements are relayed through such a "mechanism" of expression as the ritual he describes. In this case, it is almost a nightly occurrence, "...after a day of 'coping with straights'". Rock music is incorporated as an essential aid to establishing "rapport". This hippie term "rap" has been borrowed by feminists, where a certain rapport is invoked through social interaction, in conjunction with food, drink, music, dancing and exchange of community news. Or it could mean a CR session. This most nearly matches its prototype in hippiedom, as it may be judged in Chapter III.

Partridge sums up the rap session as a ritual in which the main features of ghetto life are reflected. He divides the ritual into two parts: "ceremonial drug use" and "ceremonial communication". He sees the body of beliefs and actions accompanying the drug "are perhaps more crucial than the drug itself in the achievement of the shared psychic state." Belief in the drug's efficacy to aid in the achievement of "self-discovery" implies to the observer that certain expectations regarding the drug experience may become self-fulfilling prophecies....

Very useful and immediately practical information is thereby passed on as a by-product of the ceremony. Information related to subsistence, approved behavior, gossip, threats and dangers, and alternative ways of living are aired for those who are in need of such information, the initiatives into ghetto society."

It is in these marginal "states" that attempts are made to liquidate the traditions of marriage and family, as legitimisers of structural status. Along with private property and division of labour, these are areas of social structure which most concern feminist movements. Other features of such movements are the practice of communal sexuality, its extreme polarity sexual continence, or of homosexuality. Dress and behaviour depend upon principles adopted. Sex distinctions are minimised, accentuated, or negated accordingly. When major groups or social categories in those societies are passing from one cultural state to another, they are essentially the phenomena of transition. This may explain the borrowing of much mythology and symbolism from traditional rites of passage, Turner considers. Among cultural (spiritual) feminists this is evident in the form of their religious revival.

Now to consider the two forms of liminal rites de passage recognised by Turner. (1) Rituals of status elevation, and (2) rituals of status reversal.

Briefly, rituals of status elevation consist of the three stages noted by van Gennep, those
of the pre-liminal, liminal, and post-liminal stages, where the neophyte is conveyed respectively from the lower, to the transitional, to the higher position. As a ritual subject in an instituted system of positions, temporarily humbled in the transitional phase, the upward movement means an irreversible return to the instituted system. In rituals of status reversals, the power of structural inferiors is recognised: and potential conflict is diverted, according to Turner. The ritual subject habitually in low status positions, through the dramaturgical use of symbol, ritual, and metaphor, effects a temporary elevation. It is in this mode of reversal that conflict is averted and the subject recognises his or her own place. The role and maintainance of "the strong", or the dominant class or group, is a key social element. In effect, rituals of status reversals allow a transitional non-permanent phase in which the "strong get stronger" and the "weak weaker". For the subordinated liminal group, knowledge is gained through experience of the dominant position.

Reflection and emphasis of the components of instituted structure is provided by this experience of time and space accorded "out" of structure. It involves movement, elevation, and the return to the lower position. With this, comes the recognition of better capacity to cope in the accustomed social position, to erase any envy, and reinforce "place". James Frazer explores numerous instances of the inversion of social rank, also the sacrifice of a scapegoat, as in the Saturnalia festivals, where for instance, the ritual mock marriage of Adonis mimics the seasonal rotation and ensures fertility in the spring.  

**Liminality**
- transition
- totality
- homogeneity
- communitas
- equality
- anonymity
- absence of property/
- distinctions of wealth
- absence of status

**Status System**
- state
- partiality
- heterogeneity
- structure
- inequality
- nomenclature
- wealth/status distinctions


This figure reproduces in part the two structural components counterpoised, with interacting features and producing social change, according to Turner’s theory.

It seems apparent that tribal initiations and the genesis of religious or quasi-religious movements, arise in times of radical individual or social transition, where the members or society seem "to be moving from one fixed state to another, whether the *terminus ad quem* is on earth or is some ideological utopia." Turner mentions that ritual symbols reference and polarise between (1) physiological phenomena, (2) normative values of moral facts, and (3) principles of
organisation, of which sex affiliation and matrilineage, for example, could perhaps be included.

In the milieu created, there is symbiotic interpenetration between the individual and society. Thus communitas, Turner perceives, becomes a modality of social interrelatedness, present in hippie communes and some feminist movements. In liminality, symbolism stresses the structurally invisible in terms of standard cultural definitions and classifications. Turner sees liminality as a phase in social life where "confrontation between an activity which has no structure and its 'structured results' produces in some humans their highest pitch of self-consciousness." The "unusual, the paradoxical, the illogical, even the perverse" may have a "pedagogical function" in that they "stimulate thought and pose problems," or as Turner quotes Blake: "'cleanse the Doors of Perception.'" Just as the Oedipus myth, for example, presents anti-cultural events, so rethinking one's cultural "givens" and reenacting ritual elements has the additional power to reinforce social conformity and code relationships. Freud's analysis of this myth, along with Jung's contributions, show different ways of understanding the non-logical, non-rational aspects of liminal situations, where, if denied expression in liminal ritual and its connecting myth, appear in "veiled form".

Mary Douglas writes: "As a social animal, man is a ritual animal. If ritual is suppressed in one form it crops up in others...." It "modifies experience in so expressing it...." "Ritual makes visible external signs of internal states."

To return to Turner's thesis, for him, ritual liminality implies that elevation in status may not be accomplished without first a humbling and the experience of lower status: a passage through the limbo of statelessness." These are mutually indispensible and seen as a dialectic of this developmental cycle. The concept of liminality has implications in both time and space. As Edmund Leach (1966) is quoted in Musgrove, "the relationship between temporal concepts and marginal states, defining the marginal situation as one in which 'ordinary social time has stopped'".

As the opening quotation to this chapter states, it eludes the network of classifications that normally locate positions in cultural space. It has links with symbols and metaphors, and these have homologous links with the feminine and are utilised by some feminists. Instances of the statelessness, the humbling, the timelessness in an alternative lifestyle, along with the dispensation of normal social classifications, to be replaced by idiosyncratic symbols and metaphors are all to be found in separatist feminism. Separatist feminists practice a form of "stripping", as in ritual liminality: in order to reduce each individual to a non-differentiated state. "Nakedness" may thus be symbolised by hairstyle and uniform dress, or nakedness in physical form, as in some hippie communes. The section dealing with CR in Chapter III provides more insight into this aspect. The local lesbian feminist community shaves heads to a stubble, recognised in some religious orders to be the most effective method of eliminating individuality. Dress is utilitarian, with loose wool shirts and trousers. For all feminists, a levelling of the role and status distinctions of structure, are essential to comply with feminist ideology. This is not always easily attained, as the description of the Network meeting will attest. (See Chapter I.)

Goffman's terms "levelling" and "stripping", are explicated in Turner as a rendering down into some kind of "human prima materia divested of specific form and reduced to a ... condition still social." All-encompassing are the more subtle connotations of humility, invisibility associated with death, darkness, womb, life, and sometimes bisexuality, common symbolic patterns adopted by cultural feminists. To use the opening quotation once more, "threshold people" for Turner, "are necessarily ambiguous". They are also paradoxical.

Rites then, whether male or female, invoke universal properties of the human mind, a common cosmic theme. Mircea Eliade recognises efficacy and satisfaction, as well as a distinction between "a society's official and marginal sectors", where the shaman, for example, tends to overlap somewhat ambiguously.

In a critique of social anthropology, Marc Augé estimates that Turner has given the most systematic account of the "double reality": 'normal' social statuses and 'marginal' (paradoxical) states "through which one has to pass in order to attain normality", [emphasis mine]. Augé elicits two crucial questions as pertinent to this analysis:

1. Can this structure/communitas opposition itself be justified?

2. Can its characteristic paradox and reversals really be defined and apprehended outside a
"structural" context?

Findings of relevance here may be determined by ensuing empirical investigation and final theoretical conclusions. First, to deal with Augé's considered opinions. Question one brings Augé to the problem of unity of rituals. Turner in this respect, follows traditional "Anglo-Saxon" research in seeking to discover the common element to "apparently" diverse types of situations. These Augé nominates as: (i) neophytes in liminal phase of initiation rituals; (ii) indigenous peoples in a country dominated by invaders; (iii) beggars in a society; (iv) millenium movements; (v) monastic orders; (vi) patrilineality in a matrilineal society and vice versa. Augé sees this project to be as "classical as it is ambitious, but it is as fragile as it is classical". And he is right. This is "just one of a whole series of enquiries that have sought basically to oppose a 'structural' to a 'marginal' sector and reduce this opposition ... through an approach which results in the marginal being presented as functioning to the advantage of the structural". Here he includes Mary Douglas' "pollution", defilement, and interstitial sectors of social life (with witchcraft for example, as a marginal influence in both traditional and modern complex societies.) But Turner goes further. Due to this fact, Augé suggests that Turner's attempts are "particularly important for the analysis of ideological efficacy and political practices". He attempts to understand the mechanisms of ritual efficacy. He thus suggests that the symbolism of rites/myths is apparently so "complex and tortuous because ritual at any rate derives its identity from two sources physiological and moral".

In his conclusion, Augé considers that Turner can help rephrase a problem common to anthropologists, that of the analysis of symbolism; this "in spite of an excessively rigid dichotomy" by Professor Turner. Difficulties include: (1) Whether or not to tackle the meaning and an exegesis of each of the components of symbolism. (This problem can reproduce/amplify ambivalence of power which is simultaneously symbolic and ideological.) (2) Symbolisms are universal (at any rate within a particular society), but "install those differences which establish the social". All societies "constitute precise and complex theories regarding the notion of the person, the psyche, blood, sperm, heredity, birth and the order of the world, through which an order is constituted which, beneath the appearance of being natural is always already cultural." (3) A failing of functionalist analysis: "it divides the social order to understand functioning; symbolisms bearing on the human person, like cosmology, and cosmogony, never teach individuals anything but to recognise their own place and to accept it." In this sense, ideology is already in symbolism.**

Now to return to Paul Friedrich as he adapts and modifies the concept of liminality to his own specialised topic of study, *The Meaning of Aphrodite*. Any points of analysis he makes are set out verbatim, although some explanatory notes have been added.

For Friedrich, liminality refers to:

1. Rites and other acts; to images or ideas.

2. The dynamic or processual, in that it involves crossing over (out of or into) relatively stable or fixed fundamental categories; bridging; or operating "betwixt and between" the margins of the above categories, (i.e. rules, groups, structures).

3. Oppositions involving socio-cultural norms. A key point in Friedrich's analysis of Aphrodite/liminality, is his recognition of the degree to which this goddess is symbolised and mediates between the sensuous courtesan and the passionate wife: liminal in many cultures. This lack of ambiguity in regard to sex, Friedrich states, is unique and implies a deeper freedom which equivocally usurps and overlaps the boundaries between the sexes. This is also a key point in aspects homologous to those of feminist analysis. For it is in the slogan "A woman's right to choose", that is, the right to control her own body, around which the abortion campaign and its extensions are centred, that liberation and equality of the sexes impinges. It encircles the double standard that permits the male sexual freedoms denied to the female. The separatist feminist maxim "the political is the personal" is centred in the archaic figure of Aphrodite. Pupils of
Sappho in the seventh century BC had experimented with female structural boundaries, if the fragments of her personal history and poetry extant may be credited.

4. Persons and states, or even situations and statuses. These may literally be transitory. Persons: typically involves stages of life and rites of passage. States and statuses: (the prostitute, poet, minstrel, burglar, seer, depending on the society.)

Friedrich says that liminality relates "to the religious force that is defined or catalyzed or energized by what I have been calling liminality". Liminal figures, especially mythical often involved in acts, (murder, incest etc.) "in which the elements of culture and society are released from their customary configurations and recombined in bizarre and terrifying imagery".

5. Language and linguistic categories. These seem to correspond to moods of the potential, possible, desirable, unreal and so on, that are coded in grammar by the "subjunctive and optative".

6. Rationalistic levels. Certain aspects of liminality become a purely logical or intellectual mediation between cultural and transcultural and universal categories - (this is one burden of Lévi-Strauss).

Friedrich describes the "theory of liminality" as "exciting". He draws up a chart denoting what liminality "often entails"; traits and processes suggested to him by Turner and so selected and adapted, with some explanations not altogether relevant to this paper.

(i) Transition or "crossover" between grids, structures. (ii) A bridging or vaulting over, or simply operating between, such cultural [and universal?] oppositions as nature/culture, good/evil, and beauty/ugliness. (iii) Asceticism or strong sexuality. (iv) Extreme verbal purity or excessive profanity and obscenity. (v) Silence or verbal efflorescence and brilliance. (vi) Foolishness and silliness or great wisdom, seer, craft, prescience. (vii) Social homogeneity or simply absence of relative status. (viii) Nakedness or special costumes.

Friedrich hopes that by studying a larger sample of cultures, to improve the theory of liminality. He adds that this theory has sometimes been carried too far, "the fate of all constructive ideas? but does not elaborate on authors or instances. As for the object of his study, Friedrich considers that Aphrodite of the ancient Greeks cannot be understood theoretically if the theory of liminality is ignored, since the religious meaning of Aphrodite includes not only her symbolisation of fertility, procreation and love, "but from her extreme liminality within a system of culturally specific religious categories ... she bridges physical reality and metaphysical belief" [to adapt Turner].

Another aspect is of particular relevance to this thesis. Just as liminal figures and images of myths often deny, contradict or challenge basic categories of social and ethical norms of a culture, so too may individuals and groups of people. Archaic Greek culture has links with, and continues to influence our own culture, along with the feminist revival of the Goddess. Gods and goddesses reflect the socio-cultural patterns of their respective societies. According to Friedrich's analysis, Aphrodite's liminality appears in association with :

(i) Sexual intercourse without pollution. (ii) Sexual relations between a goddess and a mortal. (iii) Nakedness of a goddess before mortals.

[At certain historical periods, Aphrodite was provided with respectable drapery, the details of which cannot be entered]
These references emphasise continuity and links over time and space, as do cultural feminists. An example of this is in the eternal symbol of the morning and evening star, Venus.

(iv) Sexually active female. (v) Patronage of courtesans, etc. (vi) Sexual passion in legitimate marriage. (vii) Nature and culture combined in "the arts of love". (viii) "The blessings" and "the curse" of Aphrodite.

Friedrich explains one aspect exemplified in Aphrodite's lack of ambivalence towards sex which makes her "unique among the queens of heaven ... [it] implies a deeper freedom". This observation is significant in relation to the WLM and liminality.

In many cultures, extramarital sex is regarded as polluting, particularly when engaged in by a woman.... In Greek culture, sexuality in violation of the code of honor was as polluting as filth or death... For some Greeks, such as Hesiod, [Works and Days :375], any sex was dangerous and polluting: 'Whosoever trusts a woman trusts deceivers'....

In a male-dominated culture like that reflected in Homer and Hesiod, even a relatively active woman defies and threatens and crosses over fundamental categories.

In his concluding remarks, Friedrich observes what he terms two "structurally interesting facts".

1. In all eight cases Aphrodite is liminal or intermediary in the fairly strict sense that she overrides (or, in one case, stands between) two categories that are opposed in the cultural system. He emphasises that

in no case does her liminal, mediating, or transgressing role involve a set of transformations or other set of systematic, logical rules, for getting from one category to the other. On the contrary, her role consists of an emotional assertion, or simply a pragmatic acting-out, that brings together what should be kept apart.... Her potency is an output of structure as well as the specific content of her liminality.

2. The eight ways that Aphrodite is liminal is in a loose and suggestive sense, that often overlaps with "ambiguity" or "ambivalence". These eight kinds of liminality and seven oppositions interact in many complex ways, (for example, sexual activeness is more characteristic of courtesans or men.)

An important point is that the liminality of Aphrodite rests ultimately on the basis that sexual love is itself peculiarly liminal. This may have connotations surrounding the opposition and ambivalence related to the male and female sexes. According to Friedrich, "In anthropological terms, sexual love is the ultimate communitas, the dyadic union that so often dissolves the grids and paradigms of life."*

SUMMARY

There is eclecticism in this presentation of certain viewpoints of historians of religion Eliade, Lincoln, and Friedrich, (the last of whom offers a more analytical approach); structuralists
Augé (and some influence of Lévi-Strauss behind the scenes); functionalist-structuralist and symbolist, Turner; expert in symbolist religion, Douglas; with Musgrove, Bocock, and Partridge, presenting possibilities of marginality and liminality in modern, complex societies.

1. All these writers make reference to the liminal in some form or another. Douglas, for instance, writes of “interstices”: her statement in *rota* conveys that what is unclear is unclean.” Eliade considers the variant meanings and symbolisms in “the bound” and “the unbound.” The remaining scholars tackle liminal forms directly, based on van Gennep’s discovery.

2. All recognise the antithetical quality intrinsic in social structural components and its a-structural forms and expressions.

3. All recognise female/male differentiation and polar oppositions to be cultural universals. However, this point needs some modification and qualification. Oakley, notes the wide cultural variations as in anthropological studies by Margaret Mead, for example, where unassociated sex/gender roles may be reversed or shared, as are the roles of child bearing and rearing among the Arapesh; or where there is very little physically to distinguish male from female among the Bali; or the mergence of sex roles among an African community described by P. Karberry, where women farm all the arable land.

4. All convey the notion that ritual practices are prevalent in all societies. Bocock enlarges on this theme, and Augé augments this further by his observation that ritual is never divorced from nonritual activity.

5. Features of pedagogy, the seeking of self-knowledge, of mythic and symbolic systems, appear in Chapters II/III, in relation to the feminist world view of ideology, values, strategy and aims.

6. The factors pertaining to liminality in Chapter I will be seen to be homologous with feminists and feminism: (i) transition (ii) totality (iii) homogeneity (iv) communitas (v) equality (vi) anonymity (vii) absence of property/distinctions of wealth (viii) absence of status.

7. At this juncture, it appears that the phenomenon of feminism or the WLM may be regarded as fitting into the more generalised category of “liminality”. But not all “categories” of feminism may be so easily placed in the “marginality” of Turner, except where it is employed in the more encompassing way of Musgrove.

8. Sociologists Alva Myrdal and Viola Klien, (1968) in a survey of the position of women in four Western countries, mention in their conclusions, - indeed as the theme of the book, - role conflict experienced between home and work. The non-participation of women is considered to be a possible major contributory factor in the problems of mass society “in the feelings of insecurity and mutual estrangement so widespread in modern society.” Here, and in the following extract, Professor A.M. Rose is endorsed and quoted in a discussion of “the modern wife” once the last child has begun school. She is

> partly functionless, ... questions ... her very reason for existence ... feels a vague but pervasive dissatisfaction. Since she relates herself to other people at only marginal points, and since she is uncertain as to her role in society, she is a member of a mass, not of an organised (i.e. integrated) society.

[A final point in their summary is that]

> Something must be wrong in a social organisation in which men may die a premature death ... as a result of overwork and worry, while their wives and widows organize themselves to
protest against their own lack of opportunities to work."

These citations are included since they echo some of the feminists’ own feelings and findings recorded in accounts in this study. Indeed, they are often the reasons given for joining the NZWLM. In the main, there is general concurrence, following van Gennep’s pattern of ritual sequences, that use of ritual alters social relationships. Discrete inspection of women’s initiation ceremonies, leaves the question of how, and why ritual alters social relationships, as inconclusive. It opens up a possible new field of investigation into the question of liminality of women in general, in certain societies.

Musgrove’s "extreme or abnormal positions" to describe the "marginal" would not include reformist feminists in the general categorical terms used in this study. Change within the experience of marginality, its relationship to altered consciousness will be considered for example, in conjunction with feminist strategies such as CR, and from case study material.

In concluding this chapter, it is worth noting a number of points made by Mary Douglas. She asks that we consider beliefs about people in a marginal state. In her estimate, "These are people who are somehow left out in the patterning of society, who are placeless. They may be doing nothing morally wrong, but their status is indefinable." She uses the ambiguous position of the unborn child as an example. It is on this very ambiguity that the controversial issue of abortion currently rests. In Chapter III, the viewpoint of a Maori woman unable to foster the feminist pro-abortion theory, may be understood in the light of this belief. L. Levy-Bruhl is quoted in the context of Maori belief about menstrual blood. "If the blood had not flowed it would have become a person, so it has the impossible status of a dead person that has never lived." Van Gennep realises the "danger" associated with marginality. This is controlled by ritual during segregation within the sacred zone of liminality. Such rites are regarded as the most dangerous, and by association, most powerful phase of traditional social status alteration.

In discussing the behaviour of marginal persons, Douglas quotes Hutton Webster, (1908). "To behave anti-socially is the proper expression of their marginal condition.... To have been in the margins is to have been in contact with danger, to have been at a source of power." She continues, "It seems that if a person has no place in the social system and is therefore a marginal being, all precaution against danger must come from others...." Many of these ideas relate to feminism/marginality. Douglas comments that the person cannot help his/her abnormal situation. "This is roughly how we ourselves regard marginal people in a secular, not a ritual context...." She also notes: "Where the social system requires people to hold dangerously ambiguous roles, these persons are credited with ... disapproved powers."

She gives the example of witchcraft. Witches are equated with beetles and spiders "who live in the cracks ... and the kind of powers attributed to them symbolise their ambiguous, inarticulate status." There are "witches" performing "witchcraft" within the WLM, about whom more will be said in the final chapter. These are not the "legitimate intruders" of the Azande however. The WLM as a whole represents a threat to cultural traditions. "All margins are dangerous.... Any structure of ideas is vulnerable at its margins." Douglas distinguishes four kinds of social pollution. The first, "danger pressing on external boundaries; the second, danger from transgressing the internal lines of the system; the third, danger in the margins of the lines. The fourth is danger from internal contradiction."

Finally, Mary Douglas discusses how in primitive cultures, "almost by definition, the distinction of the sexes is the primary social distinction. This means that some important institutions always rest on the difference of sex." In strictly ordered structures, it is "almost bound to impinge heavily on the relation between men and women. Then we find pollution ideas enlisted to bind men and women to their allotted roles". An exception is in a society where there is direct enforcement of sexual roles. Then sex is likely to be "pollution-free". Sex pollution may be noted as one which expresses a desire (1) to keep the physical and social body intact. Here "rules are phrased to control entrances and exits." (2) "To keep straight the internal lines of the social system." Rules control destructive elements of these lines, such as adulteries or incests. (3) Conflict of aims can erect another type of pollution.

Worth noting is where "the principle of male dominance is applied to the ordering of social life but is contradicted by other principles", for instance, "female independence, or the
inherent right of women as the weaker sex to be more protected from violence than men, then sex pollution is likely to flourish.

We find many societies in which individuals are not coerced or otherwise held strictly to their allotted sex roles and yet the social structure is based upon the association of the sexes. In these cases a subtle, legalistic development of special institutions provides relief. Individuals can to some extent follow their personal whims, because the social structure is cushioned by fictions of one kind or another.

Turner has delineated boundaries associated with radical social change. Potential conflict and tensions are both examined critically and accepted as integral to any society. To oppose "structure" and "communitas" need not be as strongly termed as a "failing" of structural-functional methodology as Augé stipulates, provided that the approach is holistic. And Turner elicits an awareness of this. The other proviso is that this opposition and discreteness be recognised as a tool, useful for investigation. There are no clearcut boundaries in this instance. Nor do they appear to exist in other supposed cultural "universals". These exceptions and overlapping categories contribute to the difficulty of making any firm definition of marginals and marginality.

Does liminality exist in praxis? The concept of liminality as extended beyond the confines of a ritual context, as well as within this context, to encompass "any condition outside or on the peripheries of everyday life", is in my estimate insightful, and a useful methodological tool.


15 Sarah Pomeroy, *Godesses, Whores, Wives and Slaves*. Women in Classical Antiquity, N.Y., Schocken Books, 1975. See for example, the marginal Athena, archetypal masculine woman, or perhaps an androgynous depiction, p.4. Also, Sappho and the women of Lesbos, pp.54ff; and the marginalising of whores by Solon in the 6th century BC, by institutionalising the distinction between them and "good women", pp.57ff.


19 See this text, Chapters I II.

20 Ann Oakley, *ibid.*, 1972: 158; 16; 159 respectively.


26 Robert Bocock, *ibid.*, 1974: 120; 121; 173; 175; 181.


31 For further discussion, see David Pitt Cluny Macpherson, *Emerging Pluralism*. The Samoan Community in New Zealand, Auckland, Paul Longman, 1974.


36 Shirley Ardener, *ibid.*, 1981: 17; 16; 21; 20; 89; Lidia Sciami in Ardener: 90.


41 See a further account of "anti-structure", Ch.I, VI., this work.


51 Frank Musgrove, *ibid.*, 1977:7; 8; 221.


53 Paul Friedrich, *ibid.*, 1978. See the section on "liminality":130-148, from which a number parts have been reproduced verbatim in order to clarify Turner, and Friedrich's modification of Turner, in condensed analytical form.


61 Bruce Lincoln, *ibid.*, 1981. See further, Notes: 135-6; *ibid.*: quotation, 103; no man's land, 100; 102; *ibid.*: 100; 101; 102. Lincoln's study of women's rituals is by his own admission, restricted. He considers case studies from among the Tiyyar, India; the Navajo, south-west America; the Tiv, Nigeria; the Tukuna, Brazil; and the Mysteries of Eleusis, ancient Greece.


63 The Helots: This was a specific status group of some ambiguity in Sparta as noted. Olivia Pavel, historian of archaic civilisations, asks were they slaves, villeins or serfs? This is because their bond condition in land tenure was not the result of differentiation of classes, but emerged from aggressive expansion. As contributors to work in the economy, the helots were essential to the system. But paradoxically, they were a destructive element as well. For they disrupted the ideology of non-differentiation. Without the balance between social structure, the community and relationships, Sparta could not maintain such ideals. Olivia Pavel, *ibid.*, 1971.


Note: The method of footnoting used in this thesis: where there are a number of quotations from the same source in a block, there is a listing in consecutive order under the one subscript. (After W.G. Campbell, S.V. Ballou, C. Slade, *Form and Style*. Theses, Reports, Term Papers, 6th ed., Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1982.)
Here's the world war I flying ace high over no man's land... I suppose you think you're flying over no man's land, huh?

Well, what about no woman's land?!

Here's the world war flying ace high over no person's land.

" OTAGO DAILY TIMES" (MARCH 21, 1986).

WOMAN POWER
it's much too good to waste

O broadsheet
CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

A HYMN TO VENUS

VII

Celestial visitant, once more 'Thy needful presence I implore.' In
pity come, and ease my grief 'Bring my distempered soul relief,
Favour thy suppliant's hidden fires And give me all my heart
desires.

_The Poems of Sappho_, Edwin Marion Cox, (1924.)

I. BACKGROUND TO WOMEN'S PRESSURE FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Brief Historical Background

The instituted social structure in New Zealand, is founded on traditional belief systems
inherited primarily from English and Scottish settlers. Ironically, these colonists arrived with
thoughts of forming an egalitarian society, to reverse many of the rigid British features of class
structure. To a certain degree, this has been achieved. As this work proceeds, one may gauge that
Aotearoa is far from the idyllic Oceanic retreat that numerous persons today continue to project.
The somewhat satiric title "Godzone" that some New Zealanders have adopted for their country,
conveys this message quite succinctly and implies the insularity that has resulted from its distant
location. Factors of environment merge strongly to form the cultural ethos peculiar to the
present day New Zealander. Contact with Maori inhabitants, the isolation, both from other
countries and within NZ itself, the pioneering quality of life, intermixed with a class and
religiously based ethical system, the latter being more entrenched in some cities than in others.
(Christchurch is one), has tended to establish women in a firm position, with identity centred on
home and family. But in the past, women's tasks often overlapped those of the male realm, where
survival depended on any available human power, whether this meant assisting in a business, or
clearing native bush for farming purposes. For women less curtailed by domestic commitments, or
more determined to retain independence, efforts were often concentrated on organising
campaigns, temperance and women's suffrage taking precedence. This, among other factors,
resulted in NZ being the first country in the world to give women the vote in 1893, part of a
growing movement in Britain and America. It was not until 1918 that British women received the
vote.

Yet public recognition of women's resources occurred only in war time, when women
were effectively mobilised to replace absentee men as a labour reserve in public arenas. With the
return of men, women were returned to their place in the home. These measures were to ensure
the re-establishment of the nuclear family unit and to rectify the ebbing birth rate. The result
was the demographic "baby boom".

Ripples of unrest, emanating from manifestations related in part to Western global
expansion and modernisation, ultimately made contact with NZ shores. Women once more began to
seek work outside the home, in attempts to overcome economic necessity and emotional needs for
expansion and modernisation, ultimately made contact with NZ shores. Women once more began to seek work outside the home, in attempts to overcome economic necessity and emotional needs for stimulation. Betty Friedan gives a detailed analysis of the "problem with no name", a malaise affecting increasing numbers of American women restricted to the confines of the domestic domain, in caring for young children. The major problems identified include a sense of loss of identity and self-esteem, ["who am I"] Despite conflicting views as to the validity of these symptoms, the concomitant ailment of "suburban neurosis" in NZ is not imaginary. Feminist theory accentuates the needless numbers of women committed to mental hospitals, due to inadequacies in the system, which tend to undervalue preventative measures. One criticism of the medical system by advocates of women's rights, is in the over-prescribing of tranquillisers, distributed as a panacea to social ills. A study undertaken in 1976, by the New Zealand Federation of University Women, *Women At Home*, mentions that

The movement of society away from the extended family unit, coupled with the lessening of a sense of community which has come with the greater independence allowed to individuals by technological advances, have put enormous responsibilities and strains on women at home. The value of the services given to families and the community as a whole is at best under-estimated and at worst completely overlooked. Their sense of loneliness and being at a loss is shared by other women in the community, by immigrant women far from friends and relatives who face the difficulties of an unfamiliar language and culture, by solo parents, by prisoners and women whose husbands are in prison and by those who themselves suffer physical and intellectual disabilities. These are women with special needs.

The number of women who say they have suffered from depression is high, 156 or 16.2% of the sample. Depression is one of those nebulous illnesses which vary a lot in intensity and disabling effects, and the women suffering from depression will often receive little sympathy from those who have never experienced it.

Nancy Chodorow writes of changes contributing to women's isolation; the effects for instance of a lessening kinship involvement, particularly with upper class urban women; the removal of economic roles and cottage industry to outside locations in towns and cities, where the predominantly male breadwinner, is separated from his family for lengthy periods. And although the contribution of the housewife is crucial in the maintenance and reproduction of her family's class position, it is publicly invisible, relatively unrecognised and unpaid. It is of no account in the economic system. As an occupation, housework is ranked among menial tasks, which in turn determines the position of those who perform these and related tasks. Feminists believe that to receive monetary gain would increase the value of domestic work and its workers, but it is a complex situation, hampered by its separate, private location and the social acceptance that child bearing automatically constitutes the role of child rearing and the domestic labour that goes with it. Further discussion of this topic will follow under section VI. Of Feminists and Feminism: Socialist Feminists.

During my stay in a small English village (population 150) in Sussex in 1979, middle to upper class women were observed to foster informal network bond relationships, to compensate for their isolation from other centres and their family during the day. The nearest urban settlement of 55,000 people, is ten miles distant, with irregular train and bus services. Four other villages radiate in spoke-like arrangement, each within a radius of three miles. Women tend to lead quite separate lives from their husbands, who commute 55 miles to London on the only train link, leaving at 7 a.m. and returning about the same time p.m. A common sight at these minor
British Rail stations are rows of idle cars, abandoned until their owners' return. Occasionally a resourceful woman will utilise the vehicle by day, collecting her spouse from the train in the evening. The more affluent have a car each. As most families have children, women are tied to school routines, more so for those whose children go home for lunch. Because the village school is situated close to four crossroads, mothers are obliged to accompany their children to and from school, unless the children travel by school bus. These occasions do present opportunities for regular contacts; still many women have spoken of loneliness, isolation and of the responsibilities of virtual solo parenting.

These insertions may appear digressions, but they indicate that the "problem with no name" is widespread. One may offer solutions to these women's predicaments. In answer to this, it may be said that in most cases remedies have been thoroughly explored. The brevity of this presentation makes issues and problems appear more simplistic than they in fact are. A sense of isolation and loneliness accompanied by some loss of identity, seem to be the main manifestations in these situations. On the other hand, three mothers who have experienced working in London, and whose partners continue to do so, avow that they would never exchange their present life in their village for urban dwelling.

A German friend Anna, also living in a small village, this time on the Rhine, has intimated that isolation has contributed to difficulties in her readjustment to nuclear family life. With higher education and wider life experience, many of the traditional values adhering to small village society have lost their meaning, contributing further to her isolation. Her husband teaches at a secondary school, travelling a considerable distance to Cologne each day. They had travelled together when she had worked as a psychologist. It had seemed expedient to procrastinate having a family to complete studies, settle into a career and to accrue some assets. Now aged thirty-five, with two small children, she finds her altered existence at home, despite an exceptionally high standard of living and labour saving accessories, to be often depressing and frustrating. A conscientious and intelligent mother, she experiences guilt in these reactions. She misses the stimulation of her colleagues and friends and feels that the lack of child care facilities are detrimental to both mothers and children. Any relief from caring situations rely solely on kinship networks or friends, who are seldom readily available. These samples have their corollaries in the NZ context.

Socialist feminists believe that there should be attempts to socialise housework and to redistribute roles associated with domesticity and child care in Western countries, as it has been achieved quite successfully in China; to combine parental with social responsibility in these spheres to free parents for productive communal work. At least two members of the local Collective have made visits to China to assess the benefits of its social organisation. Helen Brew's television documentary presented in NZ earlier this year (1985), denigrates the present Chinese system of creches and social reforms that take the mother out of the home. As in any system, there are features that are not ideal, but personal impressions gained in 1980, evoke an image of involved, relatively contented people over the whole spectrum, (particularly when compared with pre-revolution poverty and class disparity etc.) The maintenance of the extended family proceeds alongside creche facilities, whose use is monitored according to children's/parents' needs, and may be waived altogether. Children's Palaces provide specialised attention to develop particular abilities in selected children out of school hours, covering physical, cultural and academic spheres. Arrangements are available for all children, according to parental circumstances. Children appear to spend plenty of time with their kin, due to variable work shifts. Paradoxically, China's greatest power resource potential as well as its demise, lies in its people, over one thousand million, enabling the kind of flexibility impossible in NZ with little over three million inhabitants. Care of its people is the responsibility of the state, where socialisation schemes embrace all facets of living. Revolutionary attempts to form an egalitarian cultural ethos, has created a more liberated atmosphere for both men and women, and a secure environment for society's most vulnerable - the young, the elderly, and the poor. In this system, everyone is needed, for everyone has a place. As the system like any other is evolving, vagaries caused by rapid change have tended to obfuscate this harmonious ideal. Egalitarianism is undermined by escalating change often exerted by foreign trading pressures, now regarded as essential to China's economy. China is opening up. There is incongruity for example, in an
occasionl liveried chauffeur mingling with thousands of cyclists on the wide Beijing streets, as he drives an overseas diplomat to an opulent hotel. An article in *Broadsheet* (November 1985), just received, recounts a NZ teacher's experiences of sexism observed among her Chinese students. Yet, when one looks at the long history of Chinese imperialist decadence, the present achievement appears miraculous.

Conversely, the onus of social responsibilities in NZ is placed to a considerable degree with the family. Mothers are very often in the position of scapegoat when a child shows signs of deviancy. State aid has not kept abreast with the realities of daily living. Problems with teenage and even prepubescent gangs, are significant in major urban centres in this country. Smaller centres like Kaikohe, are faced with an unprecedented wave of violence by youths protesting boredom and a future of unemployment. For many women, redundancy will have to be faced once more.

To lift out the last statement for scrutiny: in 1983, the proportion of married women in NZ working full time, and therefore constituting part of the labour force totals 52.7. Vacancies are scarce. Part-time work is more limited and limiting. There are many children severely affected by social change that is not being adequately dealt with in our society. Ignoring realities and reiterating that women should be at home looking after their offspring is not going to alter these facts, as feminists are wont to point out. Quality, government-subsidised day care and after school centres remain minimal. Mothers, and especially working mothers, continue to be burdened with blame, guilt, a double workload and heavy caring responsibilities, many of which need to be more evenly distributed socially. These are some of the contentions inciting feminist action in NZ at the present time.

Another idea to be advanced mainly by feminists, is that self-affirmation and self-esteem for many women are seen to reflect through others' achievements. There are mothers who have attained little personal recognition in any field except in the encouragement of their family's gains. A mother's glory may be in the pride she feels when her child graduates from university, or scores a goal for the team. For many NZ women, recognition often appears merely in the fact of being someone's wife or mother. Politicians' wives regularly appear in this supportive, but otherwise diminished role. As more women enter traditional male preserves, this tendency should decline; or reverse, as in the case of Margaret Thatcher and her husband. An interesting examination of responses to, and by women, entering the House of Commons, masculine territory by long tradition, is depicted in a study by Silvia Rodgers, (referred to in the previous chapter, also superscript 8.) Marginality is exemplified in these women's minority situation, in their challenge by impinging on hitherto unquestioned rights of male exclusivity within these precincts. The women do not enter unscathed. Rodgers writes of joking behaviour, one method she observes to be used by men in the House of Commons to undermine women MPs:

> I suggest that jokes are ... the method by which a dominant category defends itself against a disadvantaged but threatening Hcategory.... in an attempt to reinforce its own boundaries, makes jokes which tease out the sexual features peculiar to women. Jokes are the symbolic and acceptable way of indicating that one particular woman, or a group of women, have no legitimate place in this area of politics and authority....

> There was one occasion, however, when the joking, which included a great deal of jeering, was focused onto a group of women. Inside the Chamber women avoid sitting in groups, but on one day during the debate on the Abortion Bill Amendment Act they did.... As they sat on the back benches they were the target of ribald jokes. These ranged from: Where are your hockey sticks' to Who is the Madam?**

> These women do not necessarily call themselves feminists; conversely, it could offend them. They may remain traditional except for their career. It can impose a number of restrictions on traditional home life, but their gender conceptions, expressed in dress and
behavioural codes, are those of traditionalist women of the genre of NZ women depicted below. Yet the English women have been categorised as marginal. Where does this fit into Turner's scheme of non-traditional women being marginal to their society? The answer to this rests in Dominy's classification of female group categories. [See below]. In this assessment, NZ traditionalist womanhood may also be regarded as separatist in relation to men, who are considered to be different, with separate roles and work usually in other spheres. The arrangement is deemed complementary, and equitable. The more assertive women in this category, are prepared to enhance their position and prestige by utilising the existing social system, otherwise viewed as acceptable. The women Rodgers describes are ambitious, and they are marginalised to some extent because of this, both in The House and by conservative members of society. But it does not interfere with their own feminine identity, still conceived along traditional lines. This not only includes how these women are conceived by others in society, but it is how they conceive themselves. They are not marginal in \textit{rote}, as the separatist feminist who denies her cultural heritage and reformulates a counter-cultural model.

Chodorow considers that there is a need to ensure that both sexes develop a sufficiently individual and strong sense of self, a positively valued and secure sense of gender identity that does not bog down either in ego-boundary confusion, or low self-esteem: where there is no overwhelming relatedness to others or compulsive denial of any connectedness to others or dependence upon them. The rationale governing the second wave of feminism, appears consonant with the growing awareness of three interconnecting factors.

1. The lack of self-identity is related to lack of autonomy of women over their own bodies and lives; which also relates to some changes in women's roles, whilst ambiguously continuing to be identified in traditional terms. See the example in Chapter III, The Core Group, in the way Fiona is viewed by her male colleagues.

2. There is a perceived imbalance of male power over that of the female in the public arena. The position of women has tended to be defined through domestic role channels with minimum representation in public spheres.

3. With more women entering the workforce, role ambivalence, guilt and fatigue due to continued responsibility for the workload at home, necessitates some social legislation to meet these new demands. Within the realm of the topics discussed, it is suggested that there is a need for inexpensive, quality 24 hour child care and activities centres, for all age groups. (Alternatively, costs could be adjusted on a sliding scale according to income.)

4. The problems listed above, still prevail for certain women remaining at home, particularly for those involved in caring for the young, the elderly, the disabled, or those disabled themselves.

Crossculturally, it appears that the overarching concern for many individual women involving themselves with associations or groups, is how to cope with, or how to effect, social change. For the National Council of Women [NCW], for instance, the aims to ensure social, cultural and economic equality for women, to decrease sex stereotyping and to gain an equal partnership, does not encourage work outside the home. In this study, concentration is on patterns emerging from participant-observation of a particular group involved with implementing social change. Because problems of self-identity, autonomy, semantic communications, relationships, of gender conceptions and sexual discrimination keep recurring, some credence must be given to writers such as de Beauvoir, Della Costa, Friedan, James, Lamphere, Mitchell, Ortner, Rich, Rosaldo, Spender, Ruether and others, who as women, have experienced personally, as well as academically scrutinised, this contradictory position woman appears to find herself in. To quote Ortner,

The secondary status of women in society is one of the true universals, a pan-cultural fact. Yet within that universal fact, the specific cultural conceptions and symbolisations of women are extraordinarily diverse and even mutually contradictory....
actual treatment of women and their relative power and contribution vary enormously from culture to culture, and over different periods in the history of particular cultural traditions. Both of these points - the universal fact and the cultural variation - constitute problems to be explained.\(^9\)

De Beauvoir is among those considered to be notable feminists of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Included are Goldman, Anthony, Millet and Firestone. There are many more authors recommended for feminists to read. Specific project groups also read widely on topical subject matter.

From my vantage point, looking from the inside out, human use of space\(^{11}\) in NZ, can be discerned to be arbitrarily bounded by cultural dictates. These boundaries are either concrete or symbolic, visible or invisible and sometimes readily divisible, especially in regard to WL network groups. There is an inside and an outside, according to the vantage point and perspective of the viewer. Traditionally, men and women have been allocated separate and conjoining roles, intended to complement each other; and to function efficiently toward the maintenance of social production and reproduction. The separate spheres associated with male and female social roles, may tentatively be considered in terms of "public" and "domestic" as defined by Rosaldo, and reapplied in Dominy, [op. cit.]. However, the reader should bear in mind that modern anthropological theory having put these concepts to some use, has advanced beyond limiting the male and female too strenuously to these domains, for there are many variables.

In narrowing the focus meantime to consider women in relation to domestic functions, and to consider socialisation through family and other institutions of education, where there is social intent to mould to a particular gender-defined role and status, certain discrepancies emerge. Namely, not all women do identify with these ascribed roles. The ethnographies in Chapter III give instances of this. There are many women, not just "radical deviants", who see their power involvement too heavily weighted in favour of domestic-oriented activities and not enough utilisation of their resources in the "public male sphere". One conclusion to be drawn both by de Beauvoir and Ortner for example, is that women are not necessarily determined by nature toward domestication but rather, determined by arbitrary cultural definitions of biological sex and gender, to a prescribed role and status, which conveys an idealised image to which men and women are expected to conform.

There is an inclination with traditional women in NZ to favour and foster their socially recognised ability and assertiveness to control domestic and voluntary community affairs (informal power, after Dominy). Many attempt to improve their public opportunities by working through women’s voluntary organisations, such as Plunket Mothers, segments of the national society formed in 1907.\(^{12}\) At the same time, many of these women prefer that men do not penetrate the domestic arena. For this reason Dominy terms this category of women separatist along with its oppositional force, the feminist separatist. For they, as much as male guardians of the status quo, uphold and maintain NZ traditional family norms.\(^{13}\) There is a comparison here with the given examples of traditional English women above. Other women in reformist groups, some feminist, may view aspects relating to the male/female dichotomy in the light of a future androgynous compromise, and are concerned with sharing and overlap in the two domains.

Thus we find women who may currently experience and encounter (1) role confusion leading to ambivalence in some situations, due in part to changes that have already taken place; (2) positional confusion, and (3) identity uncertainty/or lack of self-esteem connected with (1)/(2); (4) concern with the preponderance of unwaged women working in the domestic sphere, in which their economic contribution to the work force remains unrecognised, and maintains a psychological and material dependence on the partner earning; (5) controversy surrounding women’s status, considered to be at present subordinate, with men superordinate, by contenders striving for women’s equality; considered to be equal, even privileged by those mainly traditional; (6) imbalance in the arena of decision-making, power and control within society, recognised by feminists (male and female), traditionalist women’s rights groups, but generally discounted or unobserved by traditional lower class women.

Meantime, attempts fostered by the United Nations are being made in many parts of the
world, including Third World countries, to improve the position of women. According to
Broadsheet, representing widely held feminist opinion, this latter intervention is abortive in view
of lip service paid to right wing political parties and traditionalism. There is a brief reference
to this in section V., this chapter. Along with women’s larger associations, active participation of
small groups carrying out actions and protests according to conceived ideologies, are gradually
activating change through raising awareness and policy-making within the instituted social
system. Women’s organisations help members to redefine their self-identity, in order to
ascertain, perhaps verify, their social identity. These steps attempt to establish women’s role and
place in an evolving modern social order. The stance women themselves take in this matter,
depends to a great extent on individual gender conceptions, according to Dominy. In turn, this
determines what needs to be corrected in terms of social change, or what to protect from threats
of reform. Causation of women’s problems in this area are narrowed to factors of unsatisfactory
social structural organisation/or to male supremacy as instrumental in regulating this structural
order. The more radical stance, conceives of men intent on perpetuating the status quo to keep
women oppressed. Women allied with radicalism espouse raising consciousness, as one strategy
proposed to break down social norms.

Traditional women’s rights advocates therefore, may continue to dominate the
domestic-community arenas and manipulate through voluntary associations, through which entry
to the public arena may be gained. Dominy considers. For instance, women seeking representation
on city councils or in politics, may achieve experience and recognition through their alliance with
a nationally accepted women’s voluntary association. They work through conventional, traditional
channels and remain in traditional women’s domains. Political involvement by women in NZ is
minor in comparison with men. “The current number of twelve female MPs, out of a total of 92
seats, is still an improvement on four at the beginning of second wave feminism. Meantime,
individual, personal power may continue to be augmented by encroaching on public space and
utilising the female association or group as "stepping stones", in accordance with Dominy’s
findings.

Reformist feminists tend to drop out of the centralised social system, to live as
marginals in a sense. Their manipulation is through and within society. The intention is to alter
conservative attitudes, and exert pressures toward re-education and political gain, in campaigns
directed at raising public consciousness of sexual discrimination against women, inherent in this
social system.

Radical feminists desire the overturn of the whole social structure. Tactical measures in
accordance with ideology, involve more disruptive social protest forms. The personal and political
are envisaged as one. Direction to achieve this aim, points toward either eradicating the
divisions that appear to prevent human equality, in a socialistic styled utopia, or to form a
separatist Woman Culture, whose female values engender and express peace and unity. This
constitutes creating a total, separate lifestyle, where codes and symbolic systems are reformulated
to redefine the image of women through features of self-definition. Separatist feminist women
without further qualification, may be seen to be marginal to the central social structure.

In this study, semantic relationships emerge as vital, and as a result of boundary-making.
Forms of communication, male and female gender conceptions and subsequent differentiation
develop as cause and effect, in attempts to rectify women’s perceived position through change.
Bonding is an integral part, as are the tensions which inevitably arise, along with methods
continually being revised for resolution. This cursory background sketch, leads up to some ideas
connected with developments in protest and revolt for social change for women. Now a glance at
the development of women’s voluntary organisations in NZ, will set the scene for the microfocus of
a specific group, described in Chapter III.

Risk anything! Care no more for the opinion of others, for those voices. Do the hardest thing on earth for you. Act for yourself. Face the truth.

Katherine Mansfield.
II. NEW ZEALAND FEMALE GROUP CATEGORIES AND RELATIONSHIPS

My model of voluntary women’s associations and groups in NZ, adheres loosely to Dominy, who traces the NZ precedent to the well-established tradition of women’s voluntary organisation in Britain, USA, and Australia. The National Council of Women founded in 1896 as a radical defence group, gave impetus to women’s suffrage and remains influential today. A women’s bookshop in Christchurch perpetuates the work performed in temperance and suffrage in the name of Kate Sheppard.

A range of voluntary associations have evolved and a range of ways in which women desire to effect political actions. In consequence, a variation in strategies and long-range goals have ensued. Each “reflects particular belief systems and particular ways of making sense out of reality and one’s social predicament”, Dominy notes. Her concern is with the political aspects of women’s group organisation, apparently influenced by gender conceptions. Such organisation is informal in the sense of being non-legitimated in terms of social structure. Dominy questions how informal power as such works, and what this says about the nature of formal power; formal being associated with public, predominantly male-organised institutional social domains. These questions are important and politics inform the purpose of such organisations. However, this aspect is subsidiary to the focus here; that of marginality and the boundaries this condition implies, along with some interpretations of symbolic reformulations.

“Voluntarism” is the term Dominy uses to cover the type of women’s organisations and their activities to fit the above description. To repeat, as this author observes, it is the manner in which gender is conceived that dictates women’s choice of group affiliation. In consequence, ideological forms, politically related tactics and activities are by this implication, coloured accordingly, as are the interrelationships with members of one’s own and other groups, with other individual women, with men, with society and culture. In all, the person’s initial lifestyle, the adopted lifestyle and/or the one that is envisaged, stems from the fact of sex/gender differentiation within NZ society and of individual gender conceptions. In this study, problems of self-identity keep surfacing. How femaleness is defined. And maleness. Whether or not there is female/female, female/male interrelatedness. Whether there is an expectation that one form is more acceptable than another. This involves how individuals, pairs, or groups organise themselves, and variations on the standard patterns as possible improvements on these. [See footnote 28, Chapter II]

Informant: Lesbian Separatism ... I personally see as a valid option for some women as long as they don’t try to picture that as the only valid option for every woman. Because they are not going to get anywhere, well, they are going to turn off women, or else, I mean it is an ideal that is so high ...

I would like to see some women’s communities here and there, ... and where I could go and spend two weeks maybe.... While I see lesbian separatists’ option as valid, I see very few lesbian separatists who are really consistent and logical themselves for a long period of time.... I don’t think someone from the outside should criticise or speak about the lesbian way of life because someone like me still on the outside I am not ... probably unfair. But what I observe from lesbians, I know now is that they get so wrapped up in their personal relationship that they really, ... not much left for other women in general. They pour everything into just a few women.... Just like I don’t think it is right that a heterosexual
couple pour everything into each other so there is nothing left for society.

Perhaps that is the way or the stage in evolution where these lesbian relationships are at the moment, that the lesbians who are having political consciousness as well are working very hard to work out equitable relationships with other women and working out all the facts. They have been living in a very oppressive situation for years and years and years; the kind of forerunners for a new lifestyle and people who do come after them who do have political consciousness from the start will find it much easier to deal with relationships.

Interviewer: That's right, and there are not many models, even the lesbian literature is pretty slim; from the world of loneliness there are a few things and they are pretty unhappy stories, there is really very few happy successful models. The lesbians that I live among have a great deal of strife and do pour everything into their relationships. Which I find a bit disturbing. I find it very difficult. There is obviously a problem in [the Collective] but we cannot confront it because when we do there is no problem.

There is identification of individuals on the basis of their similarities to one another, which may result in bonding. Differences are observable, sometimes profoundly so. As intimated above, tensions and sometimes conflicts may arise from these differences. Choices may be difficult to make. Once made, women proceed to emphasise differences, often by symbolic means. An example of this occurred at the United Women’s Convention in 1979, in the form of a feminist political statement. A group of lesbian separatists gave other lesbian feminists the option to "come out" in public by displaying purple armbands, to distinguish the "true" feminist, that is, the totally political, from the sexual lesbian and from "other" feminists. This simple expediency, clarifies by means of demarcation, the misconception that all lesbians are feminist. It distinguishes, from the lesbian feminist [LF] perspective what feminism itself constitutes, and what constitutes a feminist. Where this places cultural feminists, one can only conjecture. Since many cultural feminists align themselves with lesbian separatism, the choice of whether or not to wear the purple armband would probably be a complication only for a minority of individuals. This symbolic action relates to the key strategies separatists have adopted, that of "symbolic inversion" a process of inverting or negating the normative, after the assumption that society is male-defined. The process attempts to negate the existence of men through symbolic denial of this kind. In consequence, this involves the redefinition of womanliness in separatists' own terms. By a public representation of the symbols of "dyke culture" lesbian separatists may transcend the boundaries of their indigenous culture. There is confrontation and communication directed outside the group, beyond the personal into public space. Dominy describes how this stigmatised group has adopted "markers" in an attempt to raise its status, to show pride in identity. Thus their use of derogatory labels such as "dyke", "lesbian" and "gay", defuses the effect of outsiders using them. A valid point. Strikingly direct communicative and disruptive strategies to be made by lesbian separatists, occurred at the 1977 UWC. Dominy's analysis is perceptive. For her, the strategies failed in their objectives, in that the messages were misinterpreted by other women attending. It seems possible that language and other codes used were too idiosyncratic, too diverse from the majority of women's own systems. Protest of normative politeness, was expressed in ignoring "good manners", in apparent retribution for their being ignored as a group. Lesbian separatists "laughed, sang, clapped, kissed and hugged their way through the convention", as a verbal and symbolic confrontation. The university building, venue of the Christchurch UWC, became the object of institutional derision as a graffiti message defaced its walls. Dominy points out that the action itself "was not the work of true vandals", but rather, "rhetoric of persuasion.
through alienation" to express that the oppressors "vandalise our minds and bodies with their institutions", according to an informant. "My anger wanted some action ... maybe made some other women angry. I went and wrote out my anger ... about patriarchy which makes a sacred thing of buildings, but destroys peoples."

Denise Dominy extends her purview of women's voluntary associations and networks in NZ to the observation of kinds of groups which have been classified inclusively as: (1) traditionalist groups, as represented by the National Council of Women [NCW]; (2) lesbian feminist separatist networks, with a particular focus on separatist households; (3) reformist groups, represented by the Women's Rights League [WRL], the Society for Research on Women [SROW], the Women's Shelter Collective and the Radical Women's Collective. Overall interspersion of traditional and radical feminists is in comparisons made of the United Women's Conventions.

Membership

The selection process as to the choice of an appropriate women's group to join, seems to be contextualised according to perception of "reality". Membership to women's groups and any associated networks, signifies a process of self-definition. This is substantiated repeatedly in fieldwork experience. Voluntary associations define their membership in terms of shared interests and goals, around which they coalesce. This policy is the point of the various clusters within the urban feminist network context. The formation of the university campus group, is more environmentally-related, expressed in the lack of cohesive interfocus. During term II when numbers had swelled, consideration was given to the prospect of breaking up into smaller topic-related sections. This did not eventuate, probably because numbers tend to fluctuate and dwindle dramatically in term III when examinations are looming. The purpose of The Women's Room group, along with concerns of female students and their affairs, is to secure a haven for the female minority sensitive to sexist discriminatory behaviour within the university system to which they belong. The marked boundaries imply distinctiveness from other groups and members and from the wider social environment.

Although instances of overlap blur definition three broad categories of women's voluntary group membership discerned by Denise Dominy, are a useful baseline. These are (1) traditionalist, (2) separatist and (3) reformist.

In terms of self-definition, traditionalist women in NZ comply with established norms in a belief system which complements the established politico-economic system. Women work in an unpaid capacity within the domestic and extended community spheres for the maintenance of reproduction and nurturance of the nation; a traditional society, according to Dominy, based on a Motherhood ethic. Common interests unify group organisation.

Similarly, along with the shared characteristics of the overarching bond of feminism, to work within particular areas of concern often taps existing resources of experience, as well as interest levels, to ensure greater efficiency, at least in theory. Voluntarism overall, focuses on the attainment of a measure of autonomy.13

Denise Dominy makes two important points: one should not assume that asymmetry implies subordination, nor complementarity equality. Her approach, developed in a culturally homogeneous urban situation, does not assume that interacting groups can be isolated neatly for study.

For historical purposes, a fourth overlapping, and rather ambiguous category has been added to Dominy's group categories, identifying the activist revolutionary radical, who may work/or live within the social spatial domain. In the early days of feminism in NZ, this category of feminism was utopian and impractical in the conception of ideals embracing the revolutionary overthrow of the whole class-based system, whilst methods of achieving this enterprise remained hazy.

Q: What have you seen as being your function in the theory group?

Ans.: Only working class lesbians.... Theory of Utopia, of the - 44 -
world ... bastards stood up there with all their bloody money and ... all their influence and all their bloody brains and do it on their own.... The thing is where is your revolution going to come from? Not going to come from your middle class people. Do you really think that any of those women are going to go into a revolution where it makes everybody equal and money has got no value? No bloody way they won't. Until they start losing ... privileges they will be fine ... the same as with your liberal men, take away some of their privileges and see how sympathetic they are.

Q: Well, do you think then that the women's liberation revolution has to be a mass movement? How do you propose that will come about? We can't be pessimistic. I am optimistic dear ... nothing ... will come out of it. The whole revolution.

Ans.: Well the revolution, well it is going to be through violence and I can tell you there is going to be a hell of a lot of bloodshed; they are not going to get it by sitting on the doors of parliament saying I demand my ... this and I demand my equality throughout society.... Guerilla warfare, it wouldn't be sitting out in the open fighting. Guerilla warfare.

Q: And you still think that would be feasible? Terrorism. But it would have to be accompanied by all sorts of education....

Ans.: The education system at the moment is a factory. It is throwing out little. You get your reject and you get your export quality you know ... University, where they get thoroughly cleaned ready for the export market. Packaged in plastic. Then you have got your discards or your rejects, and they go out and work as labourers.... NZ keeps the rejects ... that is what our school system is like.

Beliefs and actions of this group today tend to express pragmatism and an anti-theoretical approach. The result is a dismissal of utopian goals. Rather, an investment in the here-and-now is evidenced in the realisation of social change in the form of Women's Refuges, Rape Crisis Centres, Women's Bookshops and so on. (Some would term these reformist still, as does Dominy.) The inclusion of radical activist as a discrete category is in keeping with the allusions to the beginnings of second wave feminism in this country. Dominy's reminder not to assume that categories are neatly bounded applies in this instance and is worth remembering throughout this study. For these rather arbitrary categories and labels are merely an attempt to explicate social groupings and their apparent purpose, in an endeavour to extract meanings. Separatist feminists may physically involve themselves in such projects within society, but ideology and goals are symbolically distinct from pollutant (male) involvement within this social sphere. Consider the recent eruption within the Women's Refuge movement, splitting lesbian feminists acting out male-avoidance procedures in accordance with their ideology, and moderates seeking to reunite male/female for the good of society.

Reference to Dominy, Barrington and Gray and to Bunkle and Hughes may assist in providing further information and impressions in regard to the "traditional" woman. Difficulties of definition correspond with attempts to define the NZ feminist, or those marginal to their society. Even in collating basic characteristics overlap is unavoidable. It is sufficient to mention that the women who follow continuing traditions founded in this society, will have a reasonably well-defined role, position and responsibility based primarily on the assumption that most girls intend to marry and have a family. Ideally, to fulfill the role of wife and motherhood adequately,
this will have a Christian foundation and an involvement in voluntary community activities in accordance with the stages of family life. It may include successive work with Plunket Mothers', kindergarten and school committees, and personal participation in some instances. Membership to The NZ Women's Institute is among a variety of voluntary women's organisations that may offer guidelines to good housekeeping. Once the last child attends school, part-time work organised to suit school hours may be possible. There is a range of classes to extend knowledge of homecrafts and wider interests, and plenty of voluntary social work, due to the number of women now working. Pride in house, garden and family standards are encouraged in NZ traditional society.

TRADITIONALIST

1. Female reproduction as a model for gender.
2. Biological gender definition.
3. Control of maleness; attempts to manipulate women to more control in public sphere; but not the reverse for males.
4. Separate spheres, domestic-public; aim is to manipulate the status quo; domestic female operated domain.
5. Social purity to culturally transform male sexuality.

REFORMIST

1. Social attributes as model for gender.
2. Social gender definition.
3. Share and evaluate maleness.
4. Integrated spheres.
5. No pollution conception, i.e. associated with maleness; symbolic contamination.

SEPARATIST

Includes LF and CF.
1. Creative sexuality as a model for gender.
2. Biological gender definition.
3. Reject maleness.
4. Separate spheres.
5. Natural purity; reject male culture, adopt natural culture.

RADICAL ACTIVIST

[Within the social sphere.] 1. Biological gender definition [femaleness]. 2. Preference for separate sphere for males; overlaps with
revolutionary social praxis,
to transform the results of
male society.

3. Pollution concept mediated.
4. Spheres overlapping, but not
integrated.

Model after Dominy, (ibid., 1983:235, fig. 1.)

The New Zealand Paternalistic State System

Judith Aitken writes of the deficiencies of "welfare statism" that have left women "in
much the same relatively disadvantaged position they were in a century ago."16

The NZ traditional ethic identifying women's role and position in the family, succinctly
expressed in Dominy's "Ideology of Motherhood" describes how "traditionalist" women define
themselves relative to men, based on differences, but with equal capabilities. This is a positive
concept that Dominy assesses as a method of maintaining "real" power.17

The major privatised sphere to foster capitalist policies, and in the forefront of feminist
attack, is that of the nuclear family, basic to NZ traditional cultural traditions. American
anthropologist, Trotskyist and radical feminist Evelyn Reed, considers the combined system of
patrarchal capitalism to be "a system of oppression, discrimination, exploitation by its nature."
What is this nature?

Juliet Mitchell, in a discussing New Zealand society in 1974, views it as a

patrarchal society in terms of power, a patrilineal society, [the
law of descent and the law of inheritance are through the
father's line], and a patrilocal society, since it is still requisite
that a woman follows a man to his place of residence....

[Shulamith Firestone in Dialectic of Sex, is quoted as
recognising a]

primary biological opposition between the sexes which
enabled men to become dominant because women were the
child bearers. Following from the primary opposition between
male and female biology, ... there are all the exploitative
relationships, including class ones, and it is technology in the
context of social revolution that will free us.18

Here is a synthesising of the economic and socialising functions of capitalistic
consumerism and patriarchal decrees. Evelyn Reed remarks that the family as an economic unit,
with its marriage and property systems of legalised legacy transmission, can never be particularly
happy whilst "economic chains lacerate every one of the affective sentiments."19 Rosemary
Ruether, studies the "relationship between sexism, economic systems, and religious beliefs,
racism and psychology." (Review for Religion, back cover.) The opening paragraph, Chapter 1
states: "Engels, in his classic study The Origin and History of the Family, (1884), defined the
subjugation of women as the first oppressor-oppressed relation, the foundation of all other class
and property relations." In Chapter 7, Ruether goes on to say that this work "continues to be the
basis for socialist doctrines of women's liberation." Those feminists who at the present time seek
further than reformist strategies, and "envision a reconstructed society and family as the basis of
women's liberation, must still go back to it as a primary text."20

III. THE RISE OF FEMINISM IN NEW ZEALAND
Feminism is metaphorically imaged as coming in two "waves": the first wave begins in the late nineteenth century continuing until World War I; the second wave is associated with counter-cultural groups proliferating in the 1960s. The hippie subculture for instance, was fighting for many similar freedoms, noted in Chapter I. A substantial number of these remain unfulfilled for feminists.

Influences from abroad took effect, but development in NZ as "essentially Pakeha and middle class, often preoccupied with self-interest", can be traced back to its beginnings and the primary differences that were to emerge.

The first public venue was provided by the Radical Activists' Congress in 1970, through which the Women's Liberation Front attracted the interest of the Progressive Youth Movement. Women's libertarianists were treated as a "sub-group of the working class". By this is meant that approximately half of the working class (wherever they perform this function), is comprised of women who need to become conscious of their role as workers to develop working class consciousness for the revolution. The Women's Liberation Front, as it was called, as sectarian and conservative was unlikely to fulfill the more radical aims of WL. It folded after a few months.

Early in 1971, a small group of approximately ten socialists formed the first real WL group, Women For Equality [WEL]. The emphasis was primarily on problems of sexism and sexual division, seen as different from class division. Still their message was aimed at the working class. Some of these women remain active on the movement today. The presence of a small number of men indicates that, as when the Manifesto was written, humanity was inclusive and acceptable. The major concern of this group was to create conditions for revolution. Theoretical discussion centred on evaluating which processes in society cause the most upheaval if changed, relating this of course, to changes most likely to affect the position of women. Issues of priority were, and remain, equal pay (for equal work), organised child care and abortion. Demands were not isolated, but considered for their overall central impact and connected with helping break down the nuclear family as an economic necessity. This is viewed as one of the contradictory forces holding together a complex unit, society. These aims appeared distinctly threatening to society at large. Even so, despite improved attitudes due to increased awareness, prompted mainly by the WLM itself, the words "feminist" and "feminism" continue to conjure up heinous connotations. These emerge as blatant designs upon the unborn child and destruction of our cultural foundation, the family. The development of lesbian feminist/lesbian separatism, cultural feminism and associated "witchcraft", has done little to dispel these images. For the conservative citizen there can be no injustices that could justify such unimaginable evils seeping into our culture. The countervailing prototype organisation to rise to meet this threat, The Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child [SPUC], plays on outraged sensibilities through its promotional campaigns. Visual impact is one method used. Lurid photographs of aborted foetuses are displayed publicly, with appropriate captions. Counter groups often reply with similar shock tactics, some to demonstrate the effects of non-clinical methods.

It is apparent that from the time that such extraordinary women emerged in this country as advocates of women's rights, there was a measure of estrangement from established society. However, it is apparent that marginalisation properly begins with the second wave or neo-feminism. For these women were no longer working only to improve the lot of women in society, or for those who could envisage beyond, for the welfare of society as a whole. Militancy exhibited by suffragettes did not threaten the entire structural foundational order. Second wave feminists were seeking revolutionary overturn of all that this culture holds meaningful. Put into basic terms, by questioning the base of this society the family, the politico-economic, religious, educational orders, the whole social structure in fact, is being questioned. Feminist alienation was sealed. The stigma attached to those beginnings has never faded, despite the fashionable it mange to being "feminist" in the late 1970s and 1980s.

Thus feminists recognised by the movement, dating from the second wave of the Women's Liberation Movement, in the early 1970s, have ostracised themselves from their own society, in order to reformulate a meaningful system. Their marginality is imposed, in that there was inability to reach compromise after earlier attempts to negotiate reforms during the first wave. It is self-imposed, in the sense that the second wave has allowed little room for compromise. These factors determine all members of the NZWLM to be marginal to the social
become apparent to the reader following the first chapter’s introduction to marginal and liminal forms. Broadly, this marginality rests on the hypotheses formulated by the NZWLM, regardless of the possibility of implementation. Systems develop out of beliefs. To conceive of a total Woman Culture would scarcely be given credence. Yet counter-cultural patterns have persisted, along with some erosion of the traditional. From reformist to radical members, an established universal symbolic system binds. Its network provides meaningful alternative codes, evolving out of distant autochthonous myths, legends and metaphor. Members have attempted to purge the enculturation of their childhood through catharsis within radical Theory groups, CR and ritual, to be superseded by a female-created epistemology. New consciousness is accompanied by new communication systems, resulting in original behavioural forms. The ideals Turner combines with communitas, belong here. They include comradeship, homogeneity, knowledge, stripping/levelling, a-structural beliefs ["anti-structure"], totality, mystery, nature, paradox and the bizarre.

As Women For Equality grew too large, it helped set up the Auckland Women's Liberation [AWL] group at the university in 1971, prompting the emergence of a different outlook. Phillada Bunkle instigated Women's Studies at Victoria University. Class and education orientation became more conventional and less political. Different ideals led to different tactics. Women For Equality believed in anti-media and anti-leadership and were "strongly purist" in these beliefs. AWL cultivated the media and chose a leader, Sue Kedgely. The attention Victor Turner has paid to paradox in liminality, seems consistent with its persistence in NZWLM development. In order to keep out structure, structure has to be constantly maintained. This point is reiterated due to its considered importance.

AWL focused on CR, self-education and "spreading the word". Religious terminology is sprinkled frequently throughout feminist discussion, just as it is interspersed with hippie, as well as its own jargon. Knowledge gained through group interaction became disseminated by visiting conventional groups (the Lions are mentioned), and giving talks in public. From this group’s focus, came the nascence of Broadsheet magazine, resulting from the desire for action. Its name, taken literally from the publishing term referencing the size used by most daily papers, drew the anticipated comments. The name has received much criticism from feminists who consider the allusions to be unwarranted and demeaning. Somehow the name has survived the antagonism and Broadsheet journalism continues with word play and inversions, introducing lexical change through deliberate usage. Some examples are Herstory, girlcott, dykecott, womaning, snicker and snort campaign, sneers to jeers, s’explanation; Kicking Against the Pricks, Hogwash, Let’s Twist Again, (Broadsheet features); Alice in Blunderland (Royal Commission Report), the White Male Club [controlling and monopolising NZ power and resources]. Head stuff, groupie and rap session are borrowed hippie terms.

The politics of non-separatist history of that time are reflected in the names of three men appearing in the magazine, who worked actively on those first issues. Men also worked and attended meetings of Broadsheet’s parent group AWL. Liberation was in terms of freeing women from restricting social stereotypes based on sex, not from deliberate systematic oppression by the male sex. Policies included demolishing sex roles for example, stressing these as a major cause of Women’s oppression. Issue three includes part of the Manifesto of AWL, citing it as a movement for equality, accentuating WL politics at that time, to be criticised for not examining the terms of that equality.

THE WOMEN’S LIBERATION MANIFESTO

Women’s Liberation is a movement for human equality, a movement aimed to liberate women from the deeply embedded image of their own inferiority. It is a movement aimed to liberate women from narrow, limiting social roles, so that women in New Zealand can grow up facing an open future with many and varied opportunities for development and fulfillment. It is a movement aimed to liberate persons, both men and women, from stultifying social roles and stereotypes,
in order than [sic] men and women may be fairly assessed as persons. It is a movement aimed to encourage more honest and realistic relationships between men and women. It is a movement aimed to improve the quality of life of men, women and children in New Zealand. We see this as possible only through the improvement of the position of women in our society.

Broadsheet. New Zealand feminist magazine, (Issue 4, October 1972.)

In terms of membership, everyone belonged to every group, which included Women Against the War. Viet Nam and American Imperialism provoked the formation of such groups abroad, making the feelings of women felt in actions such as marching and keeping vigilance. "Mobes" included this women's contingent. Involvement in maintaining peace continues today. A number of NZWLM members have joined the pan-cultural assembly of women protesting the nuclear arms race at Greenham Common in England. KNOWHOW, under the umbrella of AWL, offered a service role in advice on contraception and abortion, surreptitiously presaging the active Sisters Overseas [SOS], assisting NZ women passage to Australia to obtain abortions not clinically or legally safe in NZ. Women's National Abortion Action Campaign [WONAAC], Womens Electoral Lobby [WEL], and Abortion Law Reform Association New Zealand, [ALRANZ], are related concerns.

At first, Broadsheet reported group activity in some detail, but as groups proliferated, or had casualties, contacts proved more difficult to maintain and reporting dwindled. Currently, groups are listed with contact numbers and "What's New" provides an opportunity for groups to advertise their presence and objectives free of charge. In this way anyone interested can make contact anywhere in the country, which can lead to further stimulation of ideas, action or the florescence of new groups. The Core Group has made use of this service, along with other services Broadsheet provides. Labels, badges, gift cards, and posters are available through the bookshop, or through mail orders. There is assistance with book lists, books feminist-oriented, and other books by women for women. Notification of events, meetings, conferences, campaigns, courses, publications, culture or groups, are advised through the magazine and bookshop and circulated for distribution to notice boards around the country.

While socialist feminist groups were active from the beginning, many early WLM groups adopted a liberal, reformist stance. Recognition was later given to the power relationship seen to exist between "women as a class and men as a class" and the psychological, sexual and economic functions of that relationship. Attention directed toward "the lesbians in our midst"; what was intended to be done about it, became riveted by the first of a long series of "biting political cartoons" beginning with Issue six of Broadsheet. Gay Liberation was begun by lesbians in NZ, but with eventual divisions between gay men and lesbians, men focused on law reform, whilst many lesbian transferred to WLM. It appeared to Broadsheet, that the cartoonist had deliberately come into AWL from the Gay Liberation Movement determined to educate. Differences in politics and lifestyles could be seen to create a rift even then. Concern was felt that unless all women worked together, there could never be a movement. Many lesbians were afraid to "come out" in the group for fear of rejection.

Interviewer: We don't mind what you do in the privacy of your own home.

Informant: This isn't the time or the place to mention that you are a lesbian.

Interviewer: So you don't think the Collective is.

Informant: They're not anti either. Theoretically they are
pro-lesbian and in practice they are ... terrible.

Interviewer: [Of another collective] ... a large number of heterosexual women went away feeling very hurt.

Informant: You are pro-women, yes I am not saying that; no let me think of a proper word for this ... I can’t ever find the right one.... They are not anti-women, they are pro-women but their energies are being wasted.

Interviewer: That is a sort of lesbian separatist stand isn’t it. I am not sure what lesbian separatism really is. That sort of means when you say that, you can’t be totally committed to a woman unless you only live with women.

Informant: I believe that.... Of course you can’t. Impossible.

Interviewer: But it doesn’t mean that you are necessarily bad feminists.

Informant: Oh no, but you are not as good as you should be.... You are not as dedicated as you could be and I do believe that feminism does need a lot of dedication.

Interviewer: That is true.

Informant: We’ve got a big thing to fight.

Interviewer: On the other hand you have the practicalities of the matter and that remains, that lesbianism is the choice or the lifestyles of a minority of women.

Informant: I think it is only a minority of women who can. Let’s put it this way....

When you are repeatedly ignored in the street by Collective members.... You get out of a van with little signs all over it saying Lesbians Are Everywhere.... You get out of your van and people know which van you got out of. A Collective woman will pass and pretend they don’t know you.

Interviewer: Why are they pretending they don’t know you?

Informant: Yes, it’s happened quite a lot recently. Now why are they ignoring me? Well, it was obvious. It is because of those signs on the van isn’t it. Yes, they are pro-lesbian as long as you don’t talk about it. Do it behind the doors of your
bedroom, fine, you can do it. But don't do it in the van in the street...

Interviewer: It sounds as though it has never been tackled properly.

Informant: It's never ever been tackled at all.

In Issue ten, the cartoonist designed a cover, considered by a prominant and long-standing member of the Broadsheet Collective, to be a tour de force, and even a turning point for the movement. The pictorial was featured in conjunction with the article "Gay Women are Sisters". By these means, the movement was forced to confront the existence of lesbians and to recognise that because they experience oppression, they could help formulate policies. A visionary article of depth analysis in the same issue crystallises the schisms occurring in NZWLM, with us yet. It was to uncompromisingly place men as the Enemy. "Frightened" response was evoked by this tone.

The beginnings of arguments and theories to absorb WLM include biology versus culture; reform versus revolution; mother right/matriarchy; the links between oppression of women and the "many-tentacled octopus that is patriarchy". Finally, the Auckland university group instigated the move that males were to be excluded from all feminist activities. Any decision-making was to be by women only. Many feminists were vociferous in opposing this move. For its implied statement makes the position of the heterosexual feminist a vicarious one. The now vexed questions of who is the Enemy in women's oppression, and where does this place heterosexuality and feminism had been brought out with greater clarity. Another debate to incite division had been added to the list, homosexuality versus heterosexuality. Broadsheet, with this growing unforeseen development, was now placed in the rather "uneasy role" of attempting to satisfy ardent feminists, separatist or not, moderates and women encountering feminism for the first time. Criticism in floods of letters voice the ambiguity of this position. This form of liminality within an already marginal position has not been resolved. The magazine can only mediate in order to fulfill its communicative function.

IV. SOME LANDMARKS IN NZWLM

The first women's national event is sited in the first United Women's Convention in 1973, in which AWL was extensively involved in planning and organising. Speakers and workshops drew an attendance of 13,000. Four United Women's Conventions followed consecutively. 2,000 attended the second one in Wellington, reportedly an extremely cold, wet weekend during International Women's Year [IWy] in June, 1975. Margaret Mead was guest speaker, "diminutive in her magnificent Maori cloak", who "exhorted the crowded mass to make their voices heard", to which the reply was shouted "I am Woman!" The UWC in 1975 suffered a split that has continued, centred on the two schools of opinion taking extreme polar stance over the abortion issue, making the slogan "Women Unite, Just Because You Are Women", somewhat obsolescent. Judith Aitken reports that this was the real test in questioning whether women are "sacred vessels for carrying the cultural seed, or sensible adults with views of our own about the respective merits and disadvantages of unwanted pregnancies." This convention aimed at representation on a large scale: women in the church; in rural life; Maori women; those in folk art; lesbian women; single, married; old and young women attended. The issues beginning to form provoked fractures during these United Women's Conventions, some of which have already been introduced. Perhaps a better term would be United Women's Contentions. Some politically organised factions were to cause fission. Bunkle, in an address analysing the movement, isolated two major threads: "equal rights aims" and "the prowoman line", risking glorification of "female values" and inevitably leading to separatism or to "reinforcing traditional roles". The 1977 UWC held in the Christchurch Town Hall, of which Dominy writes, was reported in Broadsheet as an open display of contempt of women by the media. This issue continues to recur from time to
time. A local newspaper refuses to print any article likely to provoke criticism due to feminist bias, and will not use the term "Ms". Media reactions at the UWC led to a controversial media ban and a reporter being ejected. It seems that instead of the requested female reporter, a male reporter had been sent. He sat in front of a group of lesbians, who chanted with increasing volume, "Out! Out! Out!" The lesbian separatist/heterosexual disparity in thinking was brought to the fore at the 1978 WL Congress at Piha, where smouldering feelings rose to the surface. Described as a "crystallisation process", the 1979 UWC was structured and participated in by lesbians for the first time. That 1981/1983 passed without a UWC, Judith Aitken considers, probably indicates that the need for them has passed.

The movement in 1973 is described in *Broadsheet* as "heroic"; in 1975 as "diverse"; "reinforcing" in 1977; and " sobering" in 1979, due to the awareness that some women were not prepared to tolerate the slow pace of others' self-education. Also that the "obviously middle class, unavoidably pakeha, generally straight nature of the women's movement was becoming something of a burden." Yet another faction troubling the movement in present times, a relic of past NZ history is disclosing itself, to become bifurcated into a black-white feminism. Black women's groups remain integral to their culture, in the manner of China. This provides another insight into developmental aspects of NZWLM. Maori/Polynesian women consider that there is no sense in a marginal subculture, as in white feminist thinking in NZ. Divisions within the movement have links with strains external to WL, incultured by a plural society. The divisions within the WLM and their oppositional stances against society, are strongly related to divisions within the social structural order.

Lesbian and heterosexual feminist disparity in thinking on matters of male participation in governing the activities of women, has been recurring through to the present time. In 1984, during the national Women's Forums to detail information relevant to the formation of a Women's Ministry, the decision not to admit men was so resented by some people, that in Dunedin a counterpart male group was formed. The lesbian political position was given support during the final assembly reporting. Workshops were less successful at forums in some instances, where traditional and feminist viewpoints often clashed. One observation made in one workshop, was the overbearing attitude of older women with status positions in the city. One city councillor for example, disdainfully to listen to younger, more timid women in the group. Another workshop held strictly to consensus ruling and although dominant speakers were present, control in this manner allowed opportunities for everyone to speak. [Further information about these Forums and their purpose is in Appendix B.]

To return to the UWC. Some members have speculated that the 1973 UWC "burned out" the AWL in the energy expended to organise such a venture. Numbers at meetings dropped, until without making a formal split, *Broadsheet* became autonomous after some months had passed. In this year, issues contain interviews with Maori and Pacific Island women. The overwhelming message conveyed was that WL was irrelevant to their needs. One Maori woman testified that she felt discriminated against more as a Maori than as a woman. Liberation from "this British system" is more important to these women. Another woman made a statement to be reiterated a decade later by a Maori woman at the Network meeting, discussed in Chapter III. The same words introduce a major problem. "Women's liberation is all talk and no action." This also introduces the theory versus action contention. "A lot of our women have been doing community work for years. They don't go yelling down the street, they act... Most women who demonstrate about it don't really need it" [WL]. The feeling that consistently comes through from these interviews is that racism and self-determination are the primary concerns of the Maori woman; that WL "doesn't address crucial working class issues, and that some feminist demands, for example, contraception and abortion are repugnant, even genocidal". The "glaring omission" in regard to Maori input to the feminist magazine only became obvious and rectified in 1979.

In 1975, *Broadsheet* "was running into problems" with its loose organisation, and became the first "closed" collective. Dissaray in the movement, appears based on the passing of the Contraceptive, Sterilisation and Abortion Bill expressed as a "bitter defeat for the feminist movement." It marks the culmination of undercurrents of dissent in wide-ranging ethics among women's voluntary groups now beginning to surface. The metaphor of "leech" is applied to the IWY controlling committee that it can ignore the "lunatic fringe and get more comfortable
responses”.

“The Split” in 1978, openly formulates the irreparable “ructions” within the whole movement, over ideology in non-separatist and separatist feminism, demarcated by the lesbians’ supposed walk-out of Broadsheet Collective, denied by the magazine, but achieving public attention. However, the divisions at the root of it were spread right through the movement at the time, surfacing at the 1978 Radical Feminist Caucus at Piha, mentioned above. Eruptions at the 1979 UWC, left many women wondering how such “bitterness and line-drawing had come to pass, and asking what this meant for the Movement.” Yet the NZWLM continues, and its development through stages of immaturity may be measured to some extent by the 1980s, where more tolerance both by the marginal groups among themselves and of the society they have spurned, is evident. In return, NZ society displays more tolerance of its non-traditional women. This is evident in the positive response to feminists’ reports by minority groups such as Women Against Pornography, Black Women and lesbian separatists in the plenary session of one Ministry of Women’s Affairs forum.

Broadsheet’s aims were published in September 1978. Recent annotations reviewed in 1982, are quoted here: (1) to discuss issues of interest to women from a feminist perspective, (2) to reaffirm its independent political stance, and (3) to continue publishing signed editorial comment and to continue publishing articles on lesbianism and lesbian feminism. Broadsheet tries to chart and comment on trends that severely affect women. An attempt to reach a wider audience resulted in a new format, visually more conventional. However, “deradicalising” the magazine, was ill met by radicals. Another attempt by WLM members to go out further and meet the public for the first time in person, was in the form of the Backstreet Theatre Group, promoting a pro-abortion message in a desperate bid to reverse what one member of the Broadsheet Collective, Christine Dann considers to be worse laws than a decade ago. 1974 also brought problems of finance. Failure here, tended to highlight problems and deficiencies in the movement. Its demoralising effect hampered the impetus needed to build an effective campaign. The pertinace of introducing strong leadership and more structured organisation arose once more: yet another dichotomy, structure versus non-structure. Doubts hovering within collective meeting procedure illustrates this point. Broadsheet Collective chairs its meetings in turn. An observer puts it this way:

There is a ‘how-I-feel’ warm-up and a ‘how-I-felt-about-this-meeting’ warm-down at the end. During some dissention, one woman was heavily defeated. ‘I thought consensus meant discussing a topic until those involved reached an acceptable compromise. But Anne, who feels a bit cynical about this system at the moment said: ‘How can one person hold out against the wishes of the majority? Consensus is like voting. It’s like leadership operating at an unspoken level.’

V. PREPARATORY SUMMARY
(Predominantly from the Broadsheet Perspective, 1982.)

Problems of organisation are considered due to inadequate theory and ideology and to inadequate action. The critique expresses that there is a lack of knowledge of the position of women in NZ and suggests what should be done about this. WLM involves hard political toil with goals often visionary, rather than clearly sighted. This is what tends to take the “stuffing” out of the women’s movement. A theme in Feminism As Therapy,\textsuperscript{22} emphasises the value of decreased work and increased “play”, necessary to reach a balance and toward increasing personally gratifying cultural activities. Both activities are considered essential to maintain efficiency. It relates to the fact that theoretical analysis is less vital now than during the initial stages, and groups may now treat this stage more cursorily. The Core Group, succeeds reasonably well in achieving a work-play synthesis due in part to its place within its historical context, where
later groups learn from others’ hard earned experience. This is an awkward problem for the
campus group, where the liminal quality pertaining to the student lifestyle, recognised by
Partridge, tends to disencourage stability. Attendance at leisure activities is much higher than at
meeting/work representations. The recent Women’s Festival campus activities in September 1985,
marking the end of a decade for UN involvement in women’s concerns is one instance. Patronage
of the women’s art display, poetry and band was good, but there was little enthusiasm during
organisation of these events, according to one involved member. WLM discussion on the
prevalence of inertia experienced by members, calculates that this is part and parcel of the rise
and fall of feminist “waves”. One problem is the imbalance of minority numbers attempting
gargantuan tasks. There may be disparagement from within, as well as from without. Fatigue,
physical and emotional, perhaps coupled with despair, have to be overcome, and often accompany
women seeking membership to WLM in the first place.

The movement in “those heady days” was extremely volatile and anger as well as fatigue
is common feminist syntax. WLM resistance depends on a strong base. This means that it must
have alliances. Fears of the direction being taken toward the rise of a right wing anti-women
movement, are spelt out in articles such as “The Conservative Conspiracy”. These accuse IWY
and other women’s organised forums of being government controlled and funded, with the
intention of restricting who is invited and what is discussed. Regional IWY groups have replaced
autonomous feminist conferences. This is a recurring theme by Broadsheet writers in the late
1970s. The central message is to warn of the dangers of working for reforms through the system.
Feminists often fear “success” within this competitive system, as being abrasive to feminist
ideals. It risks censure in the form of sharp criticism or worse, “trashing”, tantamount to being
ostracised from the movement. This extreme method of feminist community control is discussed
in Chapter III. The three ‘rs’ of oppression in feminist terminology are rape, religion and
racism, all of which are considered to be closely related to the present systems of social control
in “straight” society.

Divergence between separatists who had been operating as a political group within the
Broadsheet Collective and radical feminists wanting to stay with radical politics and not be
consumed by the “woman out there” was becoming increasingly difficult to contain.

In the 1980s, a broader focus of background and lifestyles gave rise to nascent solidarity.
NZ’s own particular brand of feminism was emerging more strongly and this became highlighted
in the role taken during anti-Springbok Tour demonstrations with black women in the front lines.
Responsibility came to the fore in problems of unemployment and attrition in women-only job
areas. Action has been taken in nuclear war threats; during government cuts of social services
where the user pays; in the formation of Herstory Press in Wellington in 1975; and in the
controversial Hite Report analysing sexuality. Various feminist bookshops began to flourish; the
Matrimonial Property Act took effect in 1976; the adoption of a Working Women’s Charter by the
FOr., was hailed not so much for changes in working conditions for women, but for its significance
in change of attitudes. It represents a statement around which women can organise. Changes in
attitudes are now sought, a mediation compared with the movement’s earlier revolutionary
strategies. This list represents some milestones NZWLM has achieved. Bouts of apathy and
exhaustion of both individuals and groups are interspersed with positive actions, and will recur.
For feminists realise that there is yet much to be done.

To recapitulate:

The aftermath of the French Revolution at the end of the nineteenth century, worked as a
catalyst, giving strength to liberationists, which also resulted in commitments to feminism. A
"lull" occurred between the 1930-1960s, where feminism was merely "dormant". Feminist theory
denies that the cause had died. The Depression following the war, with its ensuing struggles
produced a need for men and women to join forces. The second wave eventually began to
emerge in the late 1960s, for the variety of reasons put forward. In these early days of the
second wave, a preoccupation with theory had its roots in attempts to work through the hows and
whys of women’s position, in an endeavour to formulate an effective policy for social change.
Today, although women are encouraged to discuss theoretical data, there is a shift in
concentration on particular issues. And although it is still being queried, this first step appears an essential prelude to the second stage. Women had first to learn to come to grips with the concepts of feminism.

In retrospect, the 'seventies were judgemental. Feminists themselves unsure of what this concept constituted, were seeking a stereotype not unlike that adopted by conservative society. Women began to assess other women to decide what "isn't really feminist", to the extreme where self-imposed restrictions began to jeopardise the very freedom being fought for. Tolerance and understanding is more evident in general now, and within the movement itself, as noted above. This may be attributed to the improvement in self-identity and in self-confidence evident both in individual members and in the development of the movement itself. CR and Theory groups have broken down many traditional barriers and achieved greater levels of awareness to the point where women must make their own decisions in the long run. In the absence of sound evidence about the efficacy of any particular mechanism to bring about social change, the maxim seems to be, let us get on with feminism in our own unique way, to repeat the commonsense view of a stalwart of NZWLM and convenor of the first UWC. Another of her remarks is that women who bear children need to be given respect and support from the rest of society.

The terms visible and invisible are common in feminist usage. Women in relation to men and to society, are considered to have been invisible for too long. Oppressed groups, such as blacks and homosexuals are now "coming out". Political lesbians could see that butch and femme roles were made from a persistent strain of heterosexual "conditioning". This decade has seen communication with the community at large: "a break through the wall of invisibility". This communication comes from artists, speakers, writers, actors, singers, such as the well known Topp Twins, who give shape to this creative force in their message. These women see themselves as potentially dangerous, and are considered so: a threat to heterosexual hierarchical society and its inhabitants. Another medium of communication is the advent of the Dyke News, with a similar format to Broadsheet. The latter is recognised as giving a focal point to the movement.

Outside the movement, apart from milestones in law and workplace, women are more visible as bus and truck drivers, tending parks and gardens, serving petrol; roles once unthinkable, are now taken for granted. Separatists have their own rules based on more rigid belief systems, as do many radicals as well. Traditional "separatist" women, belonging to the hierarchy of prestigious women's voluntarism, are labelled by feminists as "the blue rinse brigade". The implications of this image, as an accompaniment to stylised behaviour, is that these women perpetuate the distinctions that contribute to the subordination, not only of women, but also of certain members of class and race. The rationale is that where privilege is valued, there is little genuine thought for the underdogs of society.

VI. OF FEMINISTS AND FEMINISM
Introduction:

The vexed question as to what constitutes feminism and by extension a feminist, has not been satisfactorily answered in simple terms. This is basically because feminism is created by diverse individuals from diverse backgrounds. The overarching tie linking these people, is an aim towards effecting social change for women. What it means to be a feminist therefore, is as varied as there are individual women. Feminism "has taken on a complexity of meanings, each vying with the others for superiority." This does not only concern outsiders' labels, but the position women take within the movement needs to be considered. Feminism involves an assortment of different communities, each with something to offer. Until it is recognised by feminists and "outsiders" alike, that feminists are first of all individual women with individual needs, understanding leading to effective communication is simply not possible. Diversity creates variety. It also creates creativity. Women's groups reflect these attributes, marginal groups more particularly. At least one feminist in the 'seventies sees this as positive.

[We] were hassling in our own lives how to be a feminist with
growing children and a husband to keep happy, that you still really want to keep happy. And there were a couple of lesbians in the group who were completely different ... were sort of still working through the most terribly negative feelings about men.... And there was one person in the group who came I think in the first instance really because she was desperately unhappy and she was unhappy in all sorts of ways, not only because of family reasons; that was part of it, you know, - all sorts of reasons. She really didn't have any time or energy to give to being an activist. She wanted looking after. That proved very difficult, so there were a lot of things ... to hold together. But it was well worthwhile ... and perhaps that was a good thing because one of the things that we all agreed upon at that stage, that was feminists are not one sort of woman and they are not all young radical; that there is no sort of, you can't have a standard feminist. There isn't one sort of person. That there must be, - if it means anything, - there must be room in the movement for people of all ages and, you know, married and nonmarried, never intending to be married, and all the sorts of variations on sex lives,- and we should be able to accommodate all these.

Feminists may be men or women, interested in equalising opportunities. Mostly, they are women with a va­ledictory cause, that of women's rights. (This term is broader and is not to be confused with causes organised mainly by traditional women, effected through the medium of "voluntarism"). Concerns often encompass human rights and egalitarianism. At any event, a breakdown of the present social structure appears mandatory, whether decrees invoke totality and immediacy, or gradual introduction of reforms.

One collective member believes that far from being "radical", radical feminism confirms the oppressed state of women. According to her argument, it reproduces within itself the distortions of women characteristic of the society which it supposedly challenges. "Until radical feminists get beyond their bourgeois egotism, they will continue to suffer defeat." Han Suyin, visiting Chinese doctor, author and lecturer, objects to the word "feminism" as compartmentalising what is in fact only an integral component of the revolution, concerning a system based on exploitation, not men and women in isolation. She says that the word feminist would not be understood in China, where the liberation of women is an integral component of the revolution. In her view, NZ men make fun of women and place women's liberation in a discrete category. She is not alone in exhorting NZ feminists to take a more militant stance. [See Broadsheet Issue 28, April 1975.]

A self-labelled "conservative feminist" has criticised radical women for turning other women away from the movement. Do "pseudo-definitions" divide? Does complexity result in apparent lethargy? These questions do not have any straight answers as yet. What appears to be certain, is that as feminists more and more come to understand what they are up against, the question of how to fight it seems more impossible to answer, let alone to put into practice. As Ruether mentions, sexism is said to be the oldest oppression, predating even the oppression of one race or class over another. It has certain unique features that are difficult to confront and overcome. The subtlety of its socialisation processes is possibly the most difficult. The lives of most women and men are intertwined in the way that no other oppressive system seems to be.

Feminist theory has recognised that personal and social facts come together in sexism in a complete mix that so far, the WLM has been unable to come to terms with.

However, individual women have made impressive gains in confidence and achievement in learning personal skills through the group process, to be described in Chapter III. This is evident in the Core Group. Feminist networks exist in all major women's occupations, including contact lines with those working at home. Another observation is that age doesn't fully determine who you are; feminist awareness can develop at any time in a woman's life. Perhaps the major
gain in the movement as a whole would be the overall shift in public consciousness. Yet numerous women as well as men remain unconvinced.

The "straight" version of a feminist goes something like this: Are you still a Women's Lib. "fanatic"? [fad connotations]. The university feminist group formed in 1974, comprising others besides students, had to contend with the definition of "deviancy" from the "male behavioural norm". Many women are afraid that to join such a group may threaten their "femininity". The stereotype of the women in the era of second wave feminism, is not immoral or amoral, but abnormal. The "unenlightened" traditional woman presents a hurdle to overcome. Many profess to have no wish to know about it. Many women now know but fear the consequences of action. A remark often heard is "I'm a believer in women's lib. but...." The common stereotype is summed up in the Gay Liberation news sheet entitled, "Witches, Bitches and Dykes". By adopting derogatory names applied to them, feminist separatists diffuse oppositional thrust.

The historical phenomenon of feminism that took root in the 1840s, mostly flourishes now under the newer name of Women's Liberation. Differentiation between "feminist" and "women's Liberationist", is discussed in Broadsheet, [Issue 35, December 1975] and also by Chafez, [reference footnote 5, Chapter I]. However, either term seems to be acceptable in current local usage.

Feminism is not simply a concern for women: but rather the right of all women to self-determination by enabling them to make their own decisions. What this involves, is freeing women from social stereotypes and oppressive systems. (From one stereotype to another?) Non-separatists incorporate the aim to "free" men and children to be independent as well. Feminists do not believe that motherhood is, or should be, the primary and justifying goal of every woman. For this is seen to foster the traditional attitude making women a sexual being first and human being second.

Feminist ideals will be detailed more specifically. Initially, second wave vision led toward the "promised land of communal living," eschewing lifestyles of conservative parents, as did hippies and other counter-cultural movements of the 'sixties. For many, this was not the solution and the range of alternative developments bear witness to the experimentation women were prepared to indulge in.

Overall ideology accounts for the importance of (1) people over roles; (2) tasks of production and maintenance in society are shared not delegated to one sex or another; political decisions based on the needs of women, are considered to be of benefit to NZ as a whole. It is considered that (3) equality, peace and development in society may only be achieved in larger units than family, school and workplace, so that individuals may be treated justly. It is stressed here that feminism is not dogmatic, but that all concepts have to have limits if they are to mean anything. One of the hall marks of feminist egalitarian ideology is in the introduction of the prefix Ms. The use of "person" has become part of situations vacant columns. Other non-sexist terminology has been inserted into our language, some of which will appear as the discourse unfolds. Religio-feminism is singularly intent on altering Biblical texts following exposure of a patriarchal masculinised bias.

Tolerance does not mean excessive compromise of ideals. Lack of cohesion could lead to irreparable demise. Certain common concerns are identifiable, for instance, in the aims at moving from a sense of powerlessness to power in the eventual control of personal lives. Therefore, since the emphasis is not impersonal, but personal-political, the potential for binding a variety of sectors appears strong. Victor Turner considers group schism to be integral to on-going development in processes of social change. It rests on mediation and compromise as to the course a political or social group takes. If all proposed meditations fail, a total split may result.

Tactics involving affirmative action, - self-defence courses for women for example, - legal challenges, demonstrations, and CR, appear to have been only moderately successful. An alternative tactical proposal in the US, is that of "managerial philosophy". It involves learning to play the career game well, by getting to know the right people, gaining access to information, which equals power and manoeuvering into the strategic positions in organisation, gains entry in order to scrutinise at first hand, the workings of the male career role. Friedan calls it "exchanging one half life for another ... the world of... the ulcer and the coronary". Greer gives
a warning "prophecy" on the use of these tactics; for her it helps to reinforce and maintain the status quo. Note the borrowed terms of religious revival, common to some feminist visionary writers.

The feminists in this study are New Zealand women; therefore they represent a particular kind of woman and feminist. How they are labelled and categorised depends on the perspective of the viewer. They label themselves, or are labelled "feminists". A cursory examination has identified feminists of various kinds. How then do feminists define themselves? To explicate some of the difficulties that may be encountered, the discussion to follow indicates that feminists may group themselves into approximate categories, (1) according to how they define themselves as individual women, (2) how ego stands in relation to instituted society, (3) how, once analysed, it is considered best to effect social change and (4) how the self is defined in relation to other women, to other feminists in particular, and to men. These steps may not move forward in linear fashion. Individuals, as the groups they form, are fluid in their arrangements. As examples further on will show, a woman may find that her role and position in society is ambiguous and her self-identity somewhat nullified. This is often the case with housewife/mothers combining a part-time job. Role conflicts may develop since women's place in society is fragmented and where often neither role is given recognition as one of worth.

Introduction to a feminist group usually has the effect of reversing many negative attributes through group processes described more fully in Chapter III.

This study will proceed from the general to the particular, to either refute or substantiate theories cited in Chapter I. Let us briefly consider how NZWLM appears globally. Critical surveys by prominent liberationists abroad, Greer and Han Suyin for example, view the NZ stance as reformist rather than militant, "not political enough". As noted, the WLM is about self-determination for women, and as women's lack of confidence is evident, particularly in this country, this emerges as a sound baseline. Evelyn Reed, is reported in Broadsheet to be well aware of this "repressed self". She advises the NZWLM to mobilise those who are ready.

Other visible problems include questions such as how to reconcile lower and middle class goals. The Indonesian liberationist Yetty Noor, voices the concern of Asian Third World countries, noting how affluence and introspection appear to be enveloping the Western WLM. Coupled with class division, NZ is experiencing increasing complexities in conjunction with pluralism, mentioned briefly in Chapter I.

NZ is seen to fear the consequences of change. Even among non-traditional women. For example, there is reluctance to support others who act contrary to feminist ideals. The successful woman is accused of being on a "power trip". Feminists deny that they consciously ape men.

In conclusion, Broadsheet has repeatedly printed raging controversies in regard to the subject of labels and attributes of the authentic, or by contrast, quasi-feminists and feminism. Letters are a consistent guide from which to gauge the current tempo of issues.

Thus there is difficulty in conceptualising what kind of space this wide-ranging category of feminist should occupy, that may be completely separate from the regular social order, or not. There is little doubt as to the feminist's sense of her own marginalisation, which is expressed physically, or theoretically and symbolically. A further dilemma in definition as to whether a feminist is recognised as such, relies on political-personal self-definition. This divisive wrangling is reminiscent of religious sectarianism, and is destructive of realising a holistically conceived movement. The recognised ideal is for communities to accept their differences philosophically, to proceed with the selected job in hand, and continue to allow the larger network affiliation to bind this conglomerate sisterhood into an ongoing movement to assist all women.

Radical, lesbian feminists and cultural feminists seek resolution by overturning or inverting the symbolic classificatory system of "norms" equated with NZ white middle class society. This requires some attempt at definition: as defined by radical feminists; and as defined by some social scientists. A point to re-emphasise is that the space comprising the inside and its resident insider, and conversely, the outside and the outsider, within these culturally-defined bounded spheres of concrete and abstract-symbolic, depend entirely on the perspective of the viewer. For, from any particular world view stems: (1) ideology (2) strategy (3) political action (4) behaviour, polite or antagonistic, or both (5) dress (6) symbolic classification, a system which includes speech codes, signs, other symbols: of constructive, destructive and/or creative origin.
Problems of communication within the realms of class and ethnicity produce strong elements of conflict and division within the urban feminist network of empirical experience. Sociological reference to class follows Spradley [1980], and Barrington, Gray [1981]. Class will primarily be defined in this study, according to the individual's socio-economic-educational classification, including familial and current position.

**Categories**

These arbitrary groupings are purely to assist in research. Before discussion of feminist segments, said to be marginal to mainstream society, the more traditional woman, "of" the society needs to be considered further.

Traditionalism: This type of NZ woman is basic to NZ instituted society, founded by pioneering stock. Although many of these conservative women would deny any association with the feminist proptotype, prior to becoming feminist-affiliated, members of WLM were being born and socialised into similar relatively standard situations peculiar to the NZ nuclear family. Their parents and siblings most likely belong to this traditional order. This point is often hard to assimilate. It is just such an environment that future feminists find themselves in, that determines a counter response. Core Group members without exception, mention their inability to come to terms with the society of their enculturation. As we shall find in the next chapter, some parental awareness has sparked off a feminist consciousness in the first place. For others, it is parental dogmatism in adhering to strict social norms that has influenced a counter reaction. Church and school have played adverse roles also.

The traditional woman, according to Dorniny, bases her power and considered equality with men, on reproduction and nurture. Her role is of equal importance in its complementarity to the husband/father earning to maintain his family, through work outside the home. There is often little consideration that the same complementarity could obtain with overlap and role sharing. It is an asymmetrical form of equality in that although some of these women see a unity in their role and position in the domestic sphere, with men balancing this in work and place in the public sphere, as noted, there are women who foresee more scope for equalisation if they can move into the male-dominated public arena. In antithesis to the feminist stand, the voluntary and unpaid, is imbued with status. One woman attending a Ministry of Women's Affairs forum expressed umbrage at the suggestion that this unpaid state should be reversed. In her opinion, it is this very fact of women being unpaid that gives any voluntary work its special quality.

Feminist Studies: Groups direct enquiries into the nature of the phenomenon of feminism, through the various segments of social organisation, feminists tend to address. Thus we may observe metafeminist studies: studies of women by women for women from a feminist perspective. Herstory, in reply to History, attempts to fill omissions in records of events concerning women, a task made doubly difficult by the fact that details of women's lives through history have been neglected.

Socialist Feminism: This has its origins in the precognition of Alexandra Kollontai, 1872-1952, as a precursor of Euro-feminism. Her contribution to the development of the relationship between the women's movement and the socialist programme, is augmented due to so many documents being lost to generations of the time, particularly during Stalinist censorship. Such lack of historical continuity has impeded feminist scholarship.

Kollontai's anticipation of certain focal concerns of contemporary Eurofeminism include: (1) the role of domestic labour under capitalism; (2) implications of the "second shift" for women's status, De Beauvoir's the "double load"; (3) ways in which family life and subjectivity are shaped by economic restraints.

She places considerable emphasis on "privatization" of domestic work, as a key determinant of women's second class status, and which Engels recognised also. The essential point is that it is division of labour per se, that so profoundly affects the question of domestic labour. The broader perspective means that division of labour is not simply coupled with private property.
or the factory system, but recognises that women everywhere in time and space have suffered oppression. This link between the classes and cultures could strengthen through co-operation; a sort of women of the world unite. Fundamental to socialist feminist investigation is (1) the nature of domestic labour under capitalism; (2) implications to the status of women; (3) concrete measures socialist societies might undertake to transform it, and (4) the question of reform within capitalist society.

Central to the causation of oppression directed at capitalism, is in its altering the nature of women’s work to use value only. By this is meant, transforming domestic labour into unproductive labour. The repercussions of this are considered to be manifold. Marxian definition of the goal of labour use is to create surplus value. Domestic labour does not ostensibly fulfill this obligation. Reasoning follows, that in not objectively contributing to the well-being of society as a whole, its value is negated in production. The services provided by women in essential background maintenance are (1) productive labour, (2) reproduction and nurture of future generations, as well as those of the present, emphasised as invisible benefits of the private system. It is this aspect and its constant supply of cheap labour, that is said to be at the root of the perpetuation and stability of the capitalist order. Its hidden nature is analysed by socialist feminists to be instrumental in making domestic work appear as a personal service outside of capitalism.

Some theorists such as Ann Oakley, see as the most elementary demand, not the right to work or to receive equal pay, but the right to equal work itself. For Kollontai, the family in essence is an economic institution, rather than biologically based. De Beauvoir argues that every culture’s structure is economic, with union of men and women ordered to serve the interests of society. In capitalistic society, this has traditionally meant nuclear family structure and division of labour between spouses. Kollontai maintains that in order to effect a transformation of women’s “subjectivity”, women must be (1) be liberated from bourgeois marriage and motherhood forms (2) reduce investment in heterosexual relationships (3) realise that love is only one aspect of life and must not be allowed to overshadow other facets of relationships between individuals and the collective.

These ideals are interesting to compare in the light of NZWLM historical development and the split from a purely socialist political, to a sexual-political clime, proving somewhat disruptive of movement unity.

Religious Feminism: There are stringent efforts being made to rephrase the Bible and orthodox religious ritual and symbolism from its Judeo-Christian context and bias. Riv-Ellen Prall-Foldes describes a moderately successful experiment in recreating and performing a female-based Jewish ritual. Her model exemplifies that even within strict orthodoxy, it is possible to provide a meaningful inclusive context for women. Denise Carmody writes in support of such changes for she considers that one should not be forced to make a choice between religion and feminist consciousness. She feels that both may be altered to come together. The religious base and consequent development is centered on Mystery on the condemnation of the human species to an "existence richer than its understanding". That this quest for explanation extends through generated myth, ritual cults and moral codes yet remains unresolved, is exemplified in the ambiguities and wide variety of innovated practices. Hierarchical ordering, contrary to feminist ideals, pervades the Judeo-Christian religion. The general conception of the universe with its three levels, where the dwellers of each is ordered by a perspective of reduced elevation, [God, human, Satan]. The feminine order of humanity is conceived of (through Eve’s creation from Adam’s rib and Eve’s being blamed for Original Sin) as inferior; that the deity is masculinised and the patriarchal system ordered analogously, is the concern of this writer and others in this field, notably Rosemary Ruether, who works through an ecological mode. Examples of the latter’s ideas are inserted in this work. All these writings present evidence to the effect that the major religions of the world, Islamic Moslem, Hinduism, Confucianism, Taoism, Shinto, Buddhism, Judaism and Christianity, have placed women in a subordinate position. Examples cited are those of Buddhism, in which women may not head religious communities. Hindu orthodoxy regards women as ineligible for salvation. Islamic subjection is the most severe, where Muslim women in purdah are kept veiled due to woman’s seductive nature and social and
public life is curtailed in accordance with this stricture. The practice of polygamy within the harem system asserts the mastery of men. Christianity judges woman the weaker vessel. In archaic societies where the dominant value has been union or harmony, women's roles and images have been held sacred. The principal focus in agricultural economies has been that of sacred fertility. Motherhood has in all societies been homologised to Mother Earth. Denise Carmody advises the reader to consider the "nurturing sort of creativity" valued or appreciated in society, as relating to woman's status. Distance from fertility and nature as societies increased in complexity, often mark the transition to patrilineal focus, according to Carmody. The four foci of the archaic world view include the sacred; fertility; mytho-ritualism and shaminism, where the sacred incorporates into daily living a harmony with earth, sky and sea: "a primary archaic equation." The sacred is concretised by incorporating all creation into its realm and interweaving with cultural activities. Signified too is the regular representation of the sacred as androgyne. This "realisation that femaleness and maleness are coeval, co-present in the originating mystery which transcends them both" seems befitting to the quest which the author seeks to find returned in the modern mind. Carmody lists as a primary objective in her religious study an attempt to aid women to see many of the causes of their present social and self images, as religiously derived; also to reflect on some positive uses to which women's religious history might be put in the future.29

Mary Daly, (1973) is among those who extend this attempt to meld feminism with Christianity, to draw in the female-biased mode more rigorously. It expresses a greater need to reformulate an identity and place for women through ritual and symbolic forms. Its iconoclastic/ or reversal of male symbolic superordination, makes this segment more radical, more urgent perhaps, than many religio-feminists. Worship of God the Mother, for She created the universe, exemplifies one attempt to remodel the existing Biblical text and beliefs.30

Reformist Moderate: Belief is in gradual but certain change effected through education, raising the consciousness of others in society and by methods of peaceful protest, such as picketing. Strategies however, are directed, firm, and efforts constant. The Core Group would fit into this category. Individual members have variations in lifestyle and in the degree of participation in society outside this group, which tends to create some overlap. Categories are not fixed, but merely a guide. Meg for instance, lives in a collective. Ingrid has a nuclear family arrangement (albeit somewhat unconventional). Kate has her own house and lives with her male friend, whilst subletting as a flat to defray expenses. Fiona, Lee and Anna, reside in separate mixed flats, the latter two are student flats, and somewhat more idiosyncratic. Most of the Collective members of the past decade, lived in what could be termed loose nuclear family situations, although practically all of these families ultimately separated in order to practice feminist ideals, or where partners objected, or were unable to come to terms with WL. Some of the complexities of relationships may be divined in the following extracts:

Informant: The personal is political, but it is not enough. It just remains a nuclear. So you know I am very upright about what I say and the way I live and I think that is my most sensitive point. After all, I do not have a variable existence but I live in the nuclear family. I live with a man and I have three sons. I can't do anything about that, but you know I am very vulnerable.

You know, you can't win if you are a feminist and hoping to live with a man ... hell of a lot more chance to go on with your own life ... problems - you might have security, you know, not because you depend on him ... and emotionally, - so you are not always caught up in the emotional problems.... On the other hand for lesbian separatists, if you are a lesbian and you are not a feminist you are still all right very often. Because you don't sleep with the enemy. I mean you can be very antiwoman but we would still be better than a feminist

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who sleeps with a guy. That is for me a contradiction. I mean, I can think of some men I would rather live with than a lot of women. I mean, living with a woman who is not a feminist who is downright sexist, would be very difficult for me. I think some people don’t feel like that and they really put you on a guilt trip... just like socialism too, put you on one... middle class.

Interviewer: I have noticed that some of the positive points in lesbian separatists who very often are cultural spiritualists... is that they have provided a great deal of inspiration in the side of developing our own culture and our own ways of expressing... which seems to be extremely effective in certain areas of spreading the message. For example, Back Street Theatre, eight out of the nine were lesbian separatists and many were cultural feminists. The women’s band, a lot of the stuff... so there is a great injection of that point of view from lesbian separatists.

Informant: I think divisions are in two ways. They are between lesbian separatists and feminists... and then you have got them another way, which is the class thing... socialist feminists or radical socialists, rather complete change in political... abolition of capitalism... and you have others.... Take the question of sex roles... I think you can have an androgynous society, complete sharing of sex roles and everything and still have capitalism. Still have class pressure. It will be more difficult because it has complete androgyny. You don’t have that much housework. The role of housewife and househusband will more or less disappear in an androgynous society... so that will be a passing phase of life of a lot of people.... It will not be an end in itself. I think the role of houseperson is very important as part of the Marxist analysis and feminist analysis... but I mean, now capitalism is the most resilient thing in the world, it has absorbed so many things.... It hasn’t collapsed in the Depression of 1930.... Exploitation is economic and oppression is cultural, psychological, and political that predates.... We know there have been matriarchs here and there. I don’t think how Engels and others claim that it was a stage... but apart from that, mode of production has changed and so on and.... Sexism has been brewing up.... but if you go back there has been an external factor... the Russian revolution, the first world war, the Chinese revolution.... They have been helped by an exterior factor and the... obvious external factors threatening us is an ecological and nuclear disaster and that is what makes people come together.... Capitalism will not be able to cope.... So people will have to decentralise. Monopoly capitalism hopefully.

Reformists may vary between moderate and radical, according to their strategic actions, the dynamic expression of their ideology. All reformists define their self-identity through cultural-structural identification. Biological differentiation is acknowledged as fact. It is not emphasised or used as a gender identity base. It is seen as the basis of arbitrary role and status differentiation manifesting itself on an unequal basis, with the male-dominant public sphere
organising, controlling, reinforcing and maintaining the status quo. Reformists aim to influence attitudinal change, to lobby parliamentarians in various ways to alter the divisiveness of capitalistic structure which is seen to impede women's progress within the system. They work through the system and make ostensible compromises. Current practices and norms attributed to this system are not accepted. Important differences between radical and moderate feminists is the degree of time factor taken into account in order to effect this change. This in turn, affects the degree of "radicality" in strategies. Radical reformists want immediate and strong actions; abrupt change. Activist, even revolutionary in their thinking, strategies and protests may be disruptive to instrumental machinery of society. Destructive if necessary. An example of one protest action taken in Dunedin against the Miss NZ Contest, involved male/female, radical/reformist operation. Part of the group tampered successfully with the television transmitter, and sufficiently delayed transmission to make their point.

Radical Feminism: First and foremost, radical beliefs are based on the premise that women are oppressed. It is recognised that this involves class and racial domination. However, white middle class feminists may initially concentrate on sexism, since this problem appears within their experiential range. Doubly disadvantaged, are Maori and Polynesian women. These and other forms of exploitation are being tackled. Radical feminists may be separatists, or work in a revolutionary-reformist capacity within the system, with aims to disrupt its functional channels to make their message heard. This sector of the movement is responsible for introducing CR in WL detailed in chapter III. It is the dominant strand of the feminism movement. In an article in the feminist magazine, the opinion is expressed that radical feminists are responsible for the lack of feminist organisation and morale. This assertion alludes to the small group method that employs "subjectivism", which inevitably leads to men being identified as the cause of sexism, rather than its agents. The personal and subjective, are given credence in place of objective analysis and ideas. Personal experience is seen as the "touchstone" of truth. In sharing childhood and later experiences with other women it is thought possible to change the way women as individuals operate and a gradual feminist consciousness will spread through society. Accretions build to ultimately revolutionise society.

In the more pragmatic opinion of the feminist in the above interview, rules are necessary to build a mass organisation. CR is believed to work and its message will reach countless women at all levels. Women may know, but fear the consequences of fighting for it, a comment that has been made before. Another criticism is that this vision embodies exclusiveness and elitism and a "going nowhere outlook". In a society where women are not immediately prepared for upheaval, an obvious measure is to enhance existence in the here-and-now.

Cultural-Spiritual Separatism: For these feminists, links with the mythic past rest on attempts to revive the "matriarchal state", thought to precede the present patriarchal state, established in Classical Greek times, when the balance of female power was thought to have been overturned. Equality, egalitarianism, healing energies epitomising Woman Power, were at this time subverted. Instead, power pursuits began to favour the glory of war, to conquer and submit the vanquished to imperialism. Property and familial arrangements are central in this order, with the father in charge of the household, which encompasses human, along with its material contents, as noted.

The Mother Goddess figures strongly in this belief system. Symbols are associated with life-giving properties and those of death. These are personified in the name of Aphrodite and Demeter and Persephone. The moon and the Venus star for instance, represent the omnipresent in imagery, indestructable over a time-space continuum. The section Introduction to Ritual, in Chapter III expands this subject.

In some respects, ideals between cultural feminists and lesbian separatists may fuse to blur delineation. These women advocate a counter-culture as a pragmatic solution to findings from women's theoretical research. Woman Culture is purist, with an all-pervasive anti-pollution policy reaching into all aspects of daily life. Distinctions do exist and should become apparent in the course of discussion. Cultural feminists may be celibate, are vegetarian and incorporate ritual symbolic action within separate living space. In this domain of feminism in particular, there appears to be a model for the application of the modified theory of liminality, as it is adapted by
Turner, and Friedrich after him. This counter-cultural state, possibly a phase, in which the "quasi-horde" or "tribe", as nominated by Partridge, but more regularly termed community among separatists, lives within the principles of Turner’s communitas, in an attempt to resolve the pressures of conflict and alienation experienced in the social structural setting. In the separatist feminist, it is triggered by a sense of society's being male-dominated, resulting in female oppression. This alternative is selected as an option to the transformation of the existing social order by revolutionary or reformist means.

The foundational base giving precedence to a matriarchal state of CF vision, rests on the full implication that presupposes that women were once superior to men. Superiority does not necessarily imply domination as now, relations of oppressor:oppressed. Woman Power is not defined in hierarchical terms. Power is in creativity. This hints at women's biological uniqueness, in the implication within the mysterious processes of fertility, birth and death. This conjures up associated images of power: mystery, taboo, menstruation, magic, witchcraft, healing.... All these strands are interwoven into the spiritual feminist belief system.

Contradictions appear in the emphasis placed on women's uniqueness as a biologically defined, anatomically superior symbol of fertility. Procreation for lesbian/cultural feminists may inculcate selected methods of modern scientific development, in preference to mating with a male.

Informant: Most women want to use their reproductive faculties.... They could use a stud as long as they are tolerant lesbian separatists who want to do it on their own and are consistent with themselves and do not decide if they’re drunk one night to go and screw a guy which I think is more of a copout than having a married relationship for twenty years.... but I think they have to exercise a great deal of tolerance, and not patronising tolerance.... I don’t like to divide people by ... how they do it, or how they get it, or how, with whom, so they ... those people can express their sexuality differently. That’s fine.

Interviewer: What you are saying there, is that the tolerance that is needed has unfortunately been absent ... and I think that this might be a contribution for the disintegration, of the destruction of women's groups. I’ve interviewed with quite a number of women who said to me how they felt terrific aggression on them that they weren’t lesbians... and they were sleeping with men and they were weak, and consequently dropped out. Couldn’t stand the pressure and it was very hostile pressure too.

Ideals of creativity are contradicted by destructive ideals: abortion, for instance; the perfect life-death analogy.

Lesbian Separatism: This other form of separatism within the WLM is more total. Men have been declared the Enemy at the root of women's oppression. Traced as the instigator of patriarchy, later to adopt capitalism, and attach this system as better able to perpetrate and maintain masculine order and control, merger of the two systems forms an image of "maleness"; that is, male-ordered, and male-defined. Therefore, any association with the Enemy or his influence, is associated with the profane region and in this sense, "polluted." This is the foundation of the long standing argument against heterosexual women by lesbian separatists..

The way to attain purity, that is, to become an authentic woman before becoming an authentic feminist, is to be totally lesbian separatist. Maleness and femaleness are still being researched for a refinement in definition. Femaleness can only be considered on current deliberated terms. In substance, this means that no time or space is to be given over to any man, according to the lesbian separatist viewpoint. He may be negated in any related social terms, and
in terms of personhood. Only femaleness exists in this reconstructed, reconstituted world, redefined by women for women. Problems relating to male offspring have arisen, for at early Collective meetings at least, even small boys were not favoured. A mother mentions in transcript, the difficulties this created for those with male children. Separatist feminists may still opt for female animals. As for male children, infanticide is not known to be practised. One solution is for the father to take custody of the child at separation if possible. At present, lesbian mothers have been deemed unfit to take custody of their children by social welfare standards in this country. This too, is being researched.

Informant: No, they [LS] are not going to be just the spearhead of the revolution at all. But every woman must go through that stage at some time or other to get the right airspace. Either lesbian separated or a woman living alone without any ties with men, which is the same thing. You can go into lesbian separatism and with some people it only has to last for three months; some people it is a lot longer. But I do believe that every woman will have to go through that.... I go through it every now and again.

Interviewer: I don't live with men and I don't think I ever will again, well I hope. At the moment I don't ever want to again, but ... I still read things which are written by men and I still observe and analyse what is going on....

Informant: This is the thing, this is why I don't waste much time on men because I haven't got the ability to analyse what they are doing, and to turn it into something positive. I just haven't got that ability, nor do I have the inclination.

At the base of lesbian separatist ideology, is biological selection. Gender choice is in response to deep theoretical and personal probing in relation to self, to members of Radical Theory/CR groups, to other women, especially in relation to men and mainstream society. The solution to the problem of women's oppression experienced in various forms, is to separate the female sex from the male in order to find for women self-identity, autonomy and fulfillment without compromise. It involves a total lifestyle, as mentioned in connection with the slogan, "The personal is political". It is not simply sex-oriented. Some lesbian separatists choose celibacy, as do a number of cultural feminists. Sex is only one criterion, only one of the many factors that make up a person's life. Even so, this form of political expression has strongly sexual overtones. Although to some extent there is a disassociation by lesbian feminists from Gay men or women who align themselves only on the basis of sexual activity, in "regular" society, there is little social awareness of this distinction, and homosexuals are plainly "aberrant", even "pagan". Letters to the local newspaper on the subject of the current Homosexual Law Reform Bill, convey a significant proportion of insularity and intolerance toward all Gays.

Conclusions

The very word "movement" implies forward change. There is hope in this vision. In retrospect, the NZWLM has altered and matured in over a decade of fluctuating fortunes. Somehow the vibrancy seems to have mellowed into a more realistic pragmatism, since the often remote utopian dreams remain unrealised, especially for revolutionaries. Yet there are tangible signs of progress. In 1973, there were no feminist refuges, no rape crisis centres, nor incest survivors' groups. Even with the present split in the Refuge movement, with fundamentalists decrying man-hating lesbian separatist influence in refuges to be instrumental in keeping some women away, there can be no denying the hard work and effort of these women, that has brought
adverse hidden behaviour and subjects into the open for public appraisal.

The structural composition of any feminist group, embodies many of the important principles of feminism. This is worth keeping in mind. The next chapter establishes this fact. So too, do the variant strands of feminism embody overarching feminist principles, contributing to the whole, even whilst expressing independent characteristics. There seems little doubt at this juncture, that even the moderate reformist groups reflect traits of marginality. There is a chosen path away from traditional society. For only from a peripheral vantage point, can society be adequately scrutinised and assessed before strategies for change are put into motion, and before any return as full participant is contemplated. Separatists meantime, concentrate on constructing a cultural ideal. Shades of the Homeric Hesperides and the Lotos Eaters, revivified by Tennyson; or the Spartan dream perhaps?

VII. BACKGROUND TO AN URBAN COLLECTIVE

A collective denotes a group or working unit, run jointly by member-workers. A small group of women who started this Collective for Women in 1971, saw very clearly that the WLM was potentially different from any other radical movement, "simply because it involved the majority of the world’s people." Not all these people are "involved", but as women, often with children, they do count. For the Collective at that stage, women constituted a "class", which "cut through the usual divisions of society and marital status, sexuality and income qualifications and abilities, outward appearance and age". All are women before anything else. As women, they suffer the same disadvantages because they are women, according to this viewpoint.

A newsletter in 1980, [number 121] states: "Women constitute half the world's population and perform nearly two-thirds of work hours but receive only one-tenth of the world's income." This information comes from the "State of the World's Women" Report for the United Nations Decade for Women, 1979. The international resource and communication service for women ISIS, is based in Rome and Geneva, and began in 1974. In 1980, the network includes over 5,000 members, with women and groups in 130 countries. ISIS co-ordinates the International Feminist Network, by mobilising world wide support and disseminating information received. An ISIS Bulletin produced every three months, provides international perspectives on a specific theme. It includes resource and bibliographic listings, news of groups, publications and events.

The local urban Collective decided that women of all ages and backgrounds, should work together as a group to improve conditions for women in this country, but not to function in the manner of the highly organised, executive type of group. Relationships were to be equal, with no power over anyone else, with jobs to be shared and alternated. In this sense, the Collective runs itself. It has been found that informal elites do emerge, if only because persons are different and abilities and interests vary accordingly.

Initially, WL was concerned with women's problems and looking at life from the woman's viewpoint. Eventually, it was envisaged that the movement would broaden to liberate all humans from stereotyped roles expected in various societies. Reading, research and personal experience "best rinses the brain" [sic]. The image of the WL today, as projected by Greer, (a major source of influence to women in this Collective), emerges as a predominantly a gender-sexual bias. Concern with sexual attitudes is lesser than concern with the issue of the social institution of family. Constant criticism of the WLM by unliberated men and women incited a re-examination of this Collective's functions and to question to what extent it was political and involved in election procedures, by comparison with its personal emphasis.

The growing belief was for women to develop their own ideology, to remain as free as possible from male influence. Achievement must come from the women themselves. These women felt that to have men take over and advise would be to defeat the aim. A number of women preferred to work in segregated groups, as they had difficulty expressing themselves and their own problems. This appears to be accentuated with men present. Some sought in the movement a non-competitive relationship with others, a type of communication not found in society at large. In reviewing first impressions gained on joining a WL group, one Collective member says that she could see small holes being picked in her outlook and attitudes. She
became over-sensitive to remarks and attitudes aimed at women as revealing prejudices against
women. These she had not noticed before. With this came the realisation that women were
justified in feeling frustration. She began to recognise the limitations of her own life as a new
mother. The more reading done about WL, the less able she became to express herself on the
subject and even to understand her own feelings about what to do with her life. The initial effect
of WL on her outlook, she sums up as "destructive". The confusion she came to see as part of her
increasing awareness of an immense problem to be tackled, purifying in itself and significant in
preventing the escape routes of an "uninvolved, dependent woman".

By 1978, the Collective was seen to have three basic roles: (1) providing the need most
women feel for social contact with other women, (2) providing opportunities for the development
of particular interests or talents, and (3) acting as a forum for the discussion of feminist ideas
and ideals. As these roles were explored and developed, two approaches emerged within the
Collective. The first sought to fulfil personal needs by becoming involved in CR, personal
interest groups, feminist art, theatre and projects such as the newsletter. The second approach was
to carry feminism, "however poorly articulated" to the established community, through the
medium of the now installed Daycare Centre, Women's Refuge and feminist bookshop. This latter
took over as a surrogate communication locus when the Collective ultimately contracted an
"illness", and went into recess in 1979. This lasted until the eventual "death" of the bookshop,
due in part to expiry of the lease. The use of such metaphoric terms for these centres, indicates
the esteem and importance with which they were regarded, built as they were with tremendous
communal effort.

Through this type of pragmatic approach, adaptations were made to feminism. Compromises were dealt with through experience, rather than the reverse, with pressures exerted
by the established community. In this way, pace is suited to the community needs being served,
instead of to the exclusive demands of feminist theory. Thus, a marginal community is being set
up within the established order. From this experience evolves the theory versus practice
dichotomy, present still and evidenced in the ethnographies. Both approaches within the
Collective were then considered vital, and closely linked to role and place in the movement and
to social change in the city. In attempts to relate the two approaches within the Collective, it
became important not to overlook the largely unstated role of the movement.

A five point programme was developed, "applicable to this whole enormous class". It
concerned (1) equal pay (2) equal opportunity (3) high quality child care, (4) access to
inexpensive, safe effective contraception, sterilisation and early legal abortion, (5) freedom from
sexist conditioning and general improvement in the status of women. Policy: Self-determination
for women. The proposed aim is ambitious: to free the energy of women into moving and
shaping the world.

Task 1: Talking and writing about the above objectives. One year later, a collective newspaper was
begun. The content included comment, reports, research, jokes, and information. Prepared by
different groups in turn, it was produced fortnightly and sent to 350 readers. Active members had
increased to over 80, with marches and demonstrations swelling numbers at times to 200.

Task 2: Courses of topical value to WL and women's studies covered law, politics, education,
history, literature and psychology. These normally resulted in papers or booklets being
reproduced for wider circulation and impetus in this area. Analys of women rather than
superwomen, were written into Herstory.

Task 3: Talks to schools, organisations and clubs of every kind. Myths circulating in society, were
drawn forth by direct questioning or statements about the NZ housewife or feminists; many of
these seemed to be incontrovertible. In parallel, many women were unable or unwilling to be
involved with the Collective due to "wildly inaccurate information which has circulated about
the movement" but they have nevertheless come to depend on the existence of the Collective ...[
that] raises a voice on their behalf." Reactions to women entering traditional male preserves, [for
example, Rotary] for talks discussion, range from "exaggerated courtesy to undisguised hostility";
to" bewilderment" or "drunken expletives" imploring "ladylike" behaviour.
Task 4: A study of infant readers disclosed that women are portrayed as less authoritative. In a 1:3 ratio, men typically initiated dialogue, indicative of parallel prospects for adult roles. Representation of reality excluded the Pacific Island child, solo parent, working mother and househusband.

Task 5: A survey of local women's attitudes to contraception, sterilisation and abortion, produced almost 75% desirous of liberalised abortion laws. Concern arose from an estimation of 6,000 illegal abortions in this country. A random selection of 150 women interviewed represented different age, marital status and occupational groups.

Task 6: Since women needed immediate help, KNOWHOW and SOS information services were set up on sex and abortion. The Women's Refuge was established in 1976, and the Women's Rape Crisis Centre in 1982. The Women's Resource Centre [WRC], opened at a temporary site in 1980, and once moved to a more permanent and centralised location, began operating as a central meeting place, with a box number. It continues to be utilised by the Core Group and provides resource and reading material, information, classified magazines, posters and badges. Although open drop-in periods have increased, to serve its full purpose this needs to be on a daily basis.

Task 7: In 1974, shares with a child care co-operative preschool and rental of rooms, helped to support the Collective. In 1977, a Community Daycare Centre, was established as part of an IWY project.

Task 8: The feminist bookshop, operating on a voluntary roster system, was opened in 1976 and folded five years later. The work to install and maintain such a venture, which included mail order services, finally took its toll. Difficulties of inexperience, women working or studying full time, as well as feminist sections beginning to appear in most large bookstores, are attributed to its demise.

Recapitulation:

The first Collective meeting was held in 1971. Group formation was at first according to locality, age, marital status, background or circumstances, with the objective of making women feel comfortable. A year later, it was decided to divide into smaller groups, dictated by geographical residence. By 1976, three small groups were meeting regularly, two concentrating on CR and one emphasising the theory of radical feminism. Women at this stage were very active in politico-economic awareness. Study courses were held through the university extension; workshops focused on women and the media. There was a danger of becoming "living room feminists", just as accusations have been levelled at Lévi-Strauss and other "armchair anthropologists", said to be immersed in theory. Impressions of university-oriented feminists gained by Evelyn Reed during her visit to NZ in May 1973, are described as “comfortable" and "doing it all rather academically". It was obvious that Auckland was the nucleus with its dynamism providing links and communication with other NZ women. During her NZ visit, Margaret Mead is quoted to have criticised the NZWLM's lack in expanding choices for men and women. "You have obsolescent goodness." Since receiving the vote, too much time has been spent in "patting yourselves on the back".

Problems relating to Collective organisation, are mentioned in a newsletter as early as 1974. Loose structure is cited as contributory to undermining the Collective's effectiveness. The feeling of isolation from the Collective is expressed by a member in a small group of five, in which women "do nothing but chit chat." Attempts to create a "liaison person" to provide a unifying link with fragmented small groups, seems not to have worked. Another cause of tension, that of ostensible acceptance of lesbians within the Collective, seems to have been tentatively resolved by these women themselves, when they came forth "out of the closet" and formed their own group in 1976.

In 1978, there was a meeting to decide the future of the Collective. Its past image of an "umbrella" relationship to the small groups and the whole, had altered to the extent that "a new
metaphor expressing the process and interdependence of parts and whole now seems appropriate."
The "small groups are alive and well but communication channels need more energy by more
women." Business meetings were ill-attended at this stage. Now comes recognition that better
balance in leisure activities along with work is needed. It is interesting to observe a touch of
structure being introduced at this point, in the stipulation that future meetings encouraging the
social, should keep time for business later and be "strictly adhered to". And although "boring",
findings from "think tank" suggestions decide regularity to be the only way to plan.

A letter from Sandra Coney, representing the Broadsheet Collective, in 1979, reprinted in
the newsletter, mentions pleasure that this urban newsletter had recommenced publication. The
ailment afflicting the Collective is not localised for she adds:

The feminist movement is shattered and scattered. Radical feminists have either gone underground to lick their wounds, or
they have spread outwards, taking their feminism into the places they work, the organisation they work in and into their
personal lives. There are very few visible groups to get involved with. This is not because of a lack of commitment
[sic] to feminism, or a dearth of radical feminists. It is just too hot (and horrible) in there.

"Woman" (117: August 1979:8)

The Newsletter [number 118, 1979], publicly announces WLM difficulties and attempts to analyse reasons for this. A topic for discussion at the bookshop drop-in centre, is entitled: "What can we do to get the Collective back on its feet again?" The grist of the message is that many readers may not have realised, but "she" is "anything but in fine shape", but in fact, "flat on her back and in great danger of becoming past history." Two major and closely connected problems are cited at the root of the "illness". The first is that the Collective is deeply in debt; the second is the huge decline in members who are prepared to do things. Why is the Collective "dying"? The answer is divided into three categories:

1. Personal: (i) Women considering that feminism has "ironed out the thorny problems" in their own lives. (ii) Many women appear to be frightened at the changes in their personal lives that feminism may lead to. They are unable to order their lives into the sort of "shape" perceived to be necessary to call themselves "feminists".

2. Socio-political: (i) NZ women are assessed as being a-political in the main. The achievement of the Matrimonial Property Act, the Equal Pay Act and the Human Rights Commission are considered to have had a "calming effect" and the increasing economic crisis to be a "more salient issue today". (ii) The apparent demise of the Collective appears to "emanate" from the feeling of many women that they do not belong to this "mystical body", about which they know little. The Collective is associated with the "elite" and "run by women-in-the-know". (iii) With avoidance of leadership, there remains the difficulty of expertise and "how to pass it on".

3. Strategies: how to combat the problems formulated. Feminism is a stated political movement, with activities reflecting this, but there is a need to compile a "blurb sheet" listing objectives in order to channel "Woman-energy", and in order that the Collective may not be seen as a "band-aid setup".

The group collectively attempts to elicit some understanding of the current situation, both for themselves and their readers, by examining past motivations. They write

“Our experience as feminists are divided into three interrelated areas of conflicting wants and needs.”
1. We came to feminism because we wanted:

- an ethical base
- something that was about us
- a challenge
- some answers about women's oppression
- to meet strong women of all ages
- friendships - an end to isolation
- intellectual growth - an end to stagnation
- to question values and assumptions with others

2. We then discovered that we needed a woman's revolution which requires:

- numbers, commitment, organising skills, skills in collectivity, vision, theory, wholistic [sic] approach, ongoing critique of our process
- balanced by validation of our growth, new values and the ability to cope with change

3. Meanwhile, we get bogged down with these:

- premature reconciliation
- economic security
- production and consumption [feminist services and enterprises]

Problems of:

- working with a continuum
- hierarchy and leadership
- too much to do
- class and race
- communication etc.

"Woman" (No.118: August/September 1979).

It is evident that the scarcity of voluntary staff was to adversely affect many ventures, and this continues to afflict the WLM today. Overriding difficulties encountered by the Collective seem to have been provoked by the deliberate avoidance of structure and leadership. But a founding member who remains active, equates this structureless method with freedom from restrictive polemics and programmes that could have been divisive. The same method permitted nearly thirty different interest groups to operate within the general Collective. The value of the small group process should not be underestimated. Under the current Network system, group numbers fluctuate around twelve. Work output is described in terms "waves of energy, surging forward and then falling back to regather strength".

Membership was gained through personal contact, from gatherings addressed and the Newsletter. In those early days, enthusiasm was high and members are reported to have travelled some 50 miles from outlying districts to attend meetings, courses and functions. The newsletter was supported entirely by donations. As the Collective grew, this became more valuable as a communication link. Concern with the number of "respectable bodies" asking for information about women from the Collective is expressed in the national feminist magazine: "This new found respectibility for the Collective has caused some concern and many women have become more radical". WL was obviously not contemplating a return to society from voluntary exile.

This conjecture is substantiated by a revival of feminist activity in this centre,
October 1982, in the form of a “postal meeting”, inviting everyone to have a say. Information and return mail would allow contact with groups being formed, "and what’s on and where." A synopsis of events relates the closure of the bookshop six months previously. "This left us with no books, no feminist place for visitors, ... no noticeboard for activities, no meeting place and no visible sign that there is a group of feminists left.... Now, a new centre with "a very low rental" has provided the impetus for fresh beginnings. The aims are to "combine social and political - provide a focal point for groups to form and meet. A questionnaire to guide organisers is included."

The second news sheet in March 1983, is simply entitled "Women's Resource Centre", and details a weekend retreat and some general notices. Among these, is the news that the university group has found its own "Wimmen's Room" on campus. This was to become the topic of controversy, leading to disruptive measures, described in Chapter III. There is a plea to all groups to urgently update phone lists.

Number three, appearing in May 1983, is called "Feminist Newsletter", but almost solely relies on letters criticising or praising the Feminist Weekend.

Newsletter number four, "Women's Resource Centre", November 1983, evinces the baseline of the current established Network. News of local and more distant feminist group activities are reported in a more racy journalistic style, with cartoons and hand scrawled messages to add to an informality not evident in the Collective newsletters.

The fifth newsletter boasts twenty-two pages of industry. Without a doubt, the feminist movement, not only in this locality, but all over NZ, has become revitalised after its respite and the ethnographic section in the following chapter records part of this growth.

SUMMARY
Divisions. Dichotomies or Factions?

Despite efforts to cement segments into a unified whole, where solidarity represents power, disruptions are inevitable. The universal dividers of humanity, sex, class, race, ethnicity and age, are reasserted in the WLM.

Gender and Sex: The single explicit current criterion for membership to the NZWLM, is classified in terms of gender. Women are a class, some feminists argue. This qualification was not always so. The NZWLM once admitted men. Broadsheet Collective appended names of male contributors to early issues. The presence of men in organisational positions, at meetings, or to leisure activities, cause discomfort to those women whose ideological theories mark the male sex as being responsible for women's fettered state. After arguments for and against, male entry to the NZWLM was excluded. Genuine male supporters of the cause may be invited to swell numbers at protest gatherings, such as those to boycott - (feminists occasionally call this "girlcott") - the Miss NZ Contest. But they have no part in planning operations. By extension, heterosexual feminists, by cohabiting with the "Enemy" (the original divider of the sexes), of separatist feminist belief, forge a cleft to gravely threaten the movement's solidarity. For on the basis of this (symbolic) pollution theory, lesbian feminist separatists question heterosexual authenticity as feminist at all. At the 1978 Radical Feminist Caucus, this discreteness erupted into factions denoting this separatism.

Class and Race: There is a general incompatibility between women representing lower socio-economic class segments and those of the more affluent and mainly better educated, considered by the former to be introspective and theory bound. This is reflected in a dichotomy of theorists versus pragmatists. A major gap exists in the ability of the predominantly white middle class women, characteristic of Western women's movements, to comprehend, far less meet, the aims and needs so different from their own. This is particularly apparent when class difference is combined with ethnic difference. Currently, many groups in the locale of study remain static, or in decline, due to an inability to resolve effective means of incorporating Maori and Polynesian women into the movement. Within the core group of study, there is also much
discussion about how to involve women from "working class" environments.

Age: Disparities of age are being broken down in instances where women of all ages meet on common levels of womanhood at annual national events, such as the United Women's Conventions in the past. These same events, make patently visible the flaws detrimental to any satisfactory attempts at unification and where divergences of ideals and values as purely class, or race derived, offer only partial explanation. In the main, feminists exert strenuous efforts towards breaking down traditional barriers connoting hierarchy in any form. Traditionalist women are intent on maintaining the status quo. Events at the national/international level reveal variations in women's liberation policies to equal the pan-cultural ethos being represented.

Towards a Synthesis

Time-Space: A concern for practising feminists whatever their class, race, or age, is vested in quests to disclose a neglected past to provide women with a heritage. Efforts are channelled through the mechanisms of spiritual feminists' revival of archaic goddess worship and rituals; also of witchcraft; religio-feminists' reinterpretations of Judeo-Christian doctrines; research into "Herstory"; Women's Studies and Theory groups, where analysis of major systems of world economy and forms of socialisation, for example Confucianism, Maoism, Leninism, Marxism, capitalism and "patriarchy", attempt to reconstruct womanhood in all these comparative contexts. The object is to achieve a sense of integration of past, present and future, in order to place women in some authentic and coherent time-space scale of vision. This is not necessarily linear; rather, the concept appears cyclical. "Woman Space" is a metaphor with broad connotations within the terms of global women's liberation movements, as it has been observed.

Internal Strife: The task to come to terms with, is where obvious signs of splits represent women against women. These include revolutionary radical versus reformist; lesbian separatist versus heterosexual; upper/middle class versus working class; white versus black; structure versus non-structure. The debate on the efficacy of a "structureless, leaderless" movement continues, along with the recent split within the Women's Refuge movement, as noted. Allegations made by one of two factional groups so far, is aimed at the "extreme lesbian separatists" in charge of most centres. According to the spokesperson for the "moderates", their conduct parallels aggressive male behaviour, the reason for the existence of these shelters. Claims are that many women now avoid the refuges; and that there is gross misappropriation of subsidies by lesbian separatists. The Women's Ministry is in the process of making investigations. This is a more unusual situation where traditionalists and separatists are working for the same cause within social structure, but whose visions differ enormously. There is a danger that "infighting" politics could destroy the whole scheme that both factions are working for. These reports are from television and newspaper documented news items.

Apart from this direct clash on structural ground, internal feminist divisions are not those of "straight" society - "a whole system of divide and rule", according to Evelyn Reed. For Mary Daly, "The essential thing is to hear our own words, always giving prior attention to our own experiences, never letting prefabricated theory have authority over us." Other feminists consider any movement fragmented by theoretical convictions and aims, to be potentially self-destructing. Further guidance is in the following portion of a reader's letter to Broadsheet:

We shouldn't have a fixed model of feminism but rather come to consciousness as to where we are and act from our own centre. That will perhaps be the only way we can grow and the Movement along with us.

[The writer sees separatist feminism and Socialism not as ends in themselves, but as]

two useful areas of experience as a process towards our final
goal. As women we come from many different places and will take many different routes to get to the places we want to go.

[This author's belief in a Feminist Revolution, allows her to view the separate parts or divisions within feminism, as intrinsic to the same whole; as genuine political differences to be "confronted" rather than "attacked".]

A feminist has to work out a whole new view of the world and a new way of dealing with it; it is usually done in conversation with women who are feminists. The first thing a feminist should do is think and talk.

Letter to Broadsheet, (March, 1976:2-3.)

And this summarisation appears apt to introduce the Core Group of study, since the description is befitting.
FOOTNOTES


3 Nancy Chodorow, in Rosaldo Lamphere eds., *ibid.*, 1974:64.


5 Socialisation of housework has the economic advantage of eradicating the wasteful practice of individual nuclear units each containing expensive household items, e.g. washing machines, stoves, and the social advantage of eliminating independent households with bounded separate space, that tends to isolate the houseperson.

6 Helen Brew is the national president of New Zealand Parents' Centres. A documentary series edited by her, on the subject of child care in China, appeared on Sunday TVNZ, in May 1983.

7 The New Zealand Official Yearbook 1983, Department of Statistics, Wellington, 88th annual ed., has no data regarding the hours spent in housework, in unpaid community work or social work. There is division into three groups: (1) women working at least 20 hours, (2) women working in part time employment and (3) all women working for financial gain. Age groups are in categories of 20-24; 25-29; 30-39; 40-49; 50-59.... for those with marital status. The percentage of married women in the part time bracket totals 76.1. The third bracket, that of married women working for financial gain totals 56.7.

8 Silvia Rodgers, in Shirley Ardener ed., *ibid.*, 1981:64.


11 See this work, Chapter I, II. Lines and Spaces.

12 The New Zealand Plunket Society, installed in 1907 by Sir Truby King, was "probably to have a lasting effect on the New Zealand family." The society promoted King's view that "women ought to be trained for child care and marriage - but not for anything else". [Olssen, Levesque, 1978], quoted in Ann Smith, ed., *Understanding Children's Development*. A New Zealand Perspective, Sydney, George Allen, Unwin Australia, Pty., Ltd., 1982:188.

13 For detailed case studies on NZ women, refer to Rosemary Barrington and Alison Gray, *The Smith Women*. 100 New Zealand women talk about their lives, NZ, A.H., A.W. Reed, 1981.


15 Denise Dominy, *ibid.*, 1983:13 quotation; 203ff; 206ff; 235 fig. 1.


21 *Broadsheet*. 1972-1982, A Decade of Defiance, Issue 101, July/August 1982:46; 13; 12; 13; 14; *ibid.*; 50; 51; 14; 44; 14; 44; 53; *ibid.*; 14; *ibid.*; 10; 15; 15; 16; 17; 18; *ibid.*; 20; 18. This is a special anniversary issue, noting a decade of NZWLM history, including that of *Broadsheet*.


23 *Broadsheet*. *ibid.*, Issue 101:38; (Section VI.)55; 54.


32 Denise Carmody, *ibid.*, 1979, Introduction:1; 37; *ibid.*; 22.


34 *Broadsheet*. *ibid.*, 101:47; *ibid*.

35 All these quotations are from "Woman", from March 1972 to April 1973. Nos. 1;2;3;12;13;14;17;22;26. Additional information is marked in the main body of this section.


37 *Broadsheet*. *ibid.*, Issue 101:64.


Note: The unidentified interviewer and informants are extracts from transcriptions of tape
recordings of interviews of WLM members of the last decade, dated 1977. Many of these are presented in dialogue form, rather than in the form of interviews. Information draws from 1970 onwards. Records of Broadsheet feminist magazines and Collective newsletters, "Woman", are filed in the Hocken Library.
CHAPTER III

ETHNOGRAPHIES

I Tireseas, though blind, throbbing between two lives; Old man with wrinkled female breasts, can see 'At the violet hour, the evening hour that strives Homeward.... I Tireseas, old man with wrinkled dugs Perceived the scene, and foretold the rest - I too awaited the expected guest.


I. A NOTE ABOUT FIELDWORK

As it has been conveyed, this developing thesis expands from recent insight gained in full participation within a small group functioning within the NZWLM. Contrast and comparison comes from a less involved, and intermittent observational study of a campus women's group. Both groups are affiliated to their local urban network, a relatively recent emergence in 1982, in somewhat altered guise from the Collective, after a brief period of recession. [Noted in Chapter II.] The nascentance of "second wave" feminism in the early 1970s in NZ, saw a fervour of activity, with regional groups mushrooming. In the locality of study, once an old house had been bought, the women's Collective settled into a period of stability and growth centred around this solid base. My personal experience of the Collective during its established stage, was due to contact with an associated co-operative preschool, located in the same house. Apart from fees paid in return for a progressive approach to educating preschoolers, parents were involved in assisting on a roster basis during sessions, as well as contributing to the maintenance of the house and grounds. Two rooms were let, with shared facilities to further boost finances. The co-operative preschool exists still. For a time, subscribing to the fortnightly newsletter, kept touch with local progress within the movement.

Transcripts of taped interviews with selected feminists during this period, record personal aspects. These express individual world views, their introduction to the NZWLM, and reasons for joining. Ideologies, goals and obstacles are mentioned, both experienced and perceived. In the material retrieved, there is extant at least partial historical continuity of the last decade within my own range of experience. The transcripts have been collated by a radical feminist who remains involved in WLM activities. In fact, there is still a small core of the originators of the local Collective working in various spheres, mostly in a professional capacity for the furtherance of women's rights. Some are teachers in schools and in tertiary institutions; others are advocates of Women's Health, working in centres; a few are working for quality child care. As this chapter proceeds properties of stasis and of change, any comparison and contrast in ideological emphases, issues, strategies etc. will be noted.

My own position requires some clarification. The dearth of studies of the anthropology of women in this country, coupled with an interest in the concept of the theory of liminality, led to the development of this current focus. The ethnographies are to illustrate possible uses, pitfalls and modifications of this conceptual mode.

The initial intention was to work as unobtrusive participant-observer. My purpose was declared to the group at the outset, and accepted. The small group process functions with participants more than observers, however. Minimal involvement becomes increasingly obtrusive. The option to learn through the pragmatics of the small group process was thus resolved.

Within situations demanding consensus, my contribution and influence consistently
operates as modifier. This too was accepted. The convictions of this author assert the need for social change in some areas. Empathy however, does not necessarily indicate espousal of the preceding or following ideologies, strategies and transcripted ideas as such.

Since networking and consciousness-raising are the main strategies adopted by WL movements, some notes on these will preface the ethnographies.

II. INTRODUCTION TO WOMEN'S NETWORKS

According to Carol Kleiman, the "Old Boy Network" is a well-founded tradition and socialisation process, and one which women have only recently begun to make serious efforts to form in counterpart. This does not disregard the social forms of YWCA, NCW and other bond groups of Colonial days. What is new, she decides, are networks with the express purpose of helping women to the power that has been missing in women's lives. Kleiman views networking as operating to accelerate the slow process of evolution, and one of the most effective ways to get power. As it will become apparent in this study, support groups raise self-esteem, and bolster confidence and awareness. Once started, networks tend to keep going of their own momentum. There is a common bond in women's desire to be successful in their chosen endeavours and to be taken seriously in male-dominated society. There are many women on the "outside" who are "stymied", Kleiman notes.

One aspect of networking is as a means of survival. Where links are created, support for members and for their related activities is assured. It also makes people accountable for their actions. Dale Spender remarks:

> When women are confined to the periphery its such a slight imperceptible move to fall off the edge into obscurity.

Broadsheet. (Issue 30, June 1985:33.)

A problem in NZ is to know what is going on in other parts of the country. To be able to communicate new ideas to other groups is often impossible where geographical gaps hamper collaboration. Auckland is the undisputed dynamic center of feminist activities, noted in Chapter II. In the course of discussion, members here have conveyed concern at the inability to maintain contact with members in southern regions. It is problems such as these in the nature of communication, that affect the unity of the NZWLM.

III. CONSCIOUSNESS-RAISING

Often termed "the rap group", it is described variously as "a free place; a place to be honest"; "one of the prime educational, organizing programs" of the WLM; a process, the only one in fact, developed by the WLM in the sense that it

enables women to develop a political consciousness of their oppression, which breaks down carefully imposed cultural barriers to building understanding and love of each other and oneself ... offers collective experience ... communal development of trust, growth, political analysis and action....

The cornerstone of the movement is consciousness-raising.

CR began in USA with Leftist women activists involved in issues of black civil rights and anti-war campaigns. A Collective member who arrived in NZ just prior to the women's liberation movement, relates her experience of similar revolutionary activities and of her introduction to WLM in this capacity. She discovered the comparative lack of revolutionary-radicalism in NZ, that other overseas feminists have commented on.
When I arrived in New Zealand I kept telling myself I had to forget all ideas about revolution because no-one thought in these terms here at all....

I am always suspicious of people who haven't been to CR groups or haven't been in a group that thrives on sisterhood ... and have to thrash things out over a long period of time.

[Her first experience abroad came in 1969 through contact with the Women's Liberation Front.]

And I said I was very interested ... and she said I couldn't go just like that; she would have to ask the others and I thought that was very strange.... But I was admitted to the small group ... and it was the first time I had been in a group of only women ... so I went to that meeting and it was mind-blowing, it was really.... Their idea of being liberated was to be liberated sexually ... and marriages were breaking up; women were being independent economically.

CR provides both a method for arriving at the truth, as well as a means for action; for organising people within the movement and outside. Its emphasis on going back to historic roots, seemed to be right for WLM aims, thus CR was adopted in 1967. Feminists describe the task they have set as "monumental": to attempt to defeat male supremacy in order to give women equality.

The first United Women's Convention in 1973, organised by the Auckland WL integrated groups, is cited as the landmark inspiring an upsurge of interest in CR here. Sandra Coney, of the Broadsheet Collective, suspects that the dearth of established feminist groups in NZ at that time may be the reason for this, since there is no tradition earlier, and very little residual CR, after those initial phases. An original member of AWL explains:

Interviewer: The AWL group started up and was an umbrella group of small groups ... there is a group working on equal pay ... [and] on abortion but for some reason it disintegrates.... They [Broadsheet] got money and moved out on their own. Some of the women believed that it was because the AWL took on the first UWC and put their all into it and after the Convention ... stopped coming. Such a massive effort.... But Broadsheet is the only group that is still going that was part of the original AWL. Do you think that it is a sort of speeded up version of what may happen to the Collective? Do you think it is not a parallel experience at all?

Informant: Well it could happen, if there was one activity that dominated all the others....

Interviewer: You mentioned power - Broadsheet was powerful. Do you think it could be power struggles?

Informant: Well in ... [the Collective] we have been so careful about that....

The strategic purpose behind CR, is "radicalisation of the participants." By this is meant that members gain insight into
perceiving the political nature of every aspect of their lives and
to discover the means by which the politics of sex specifically
has enabled the masculine ideal to achieve the functional
effectiveness of the feminine ideal.¹

[In other words, the slogan "the personal is political" is given
meaning.]

The consciousness-raising group is specifically designed to
eliminate pre-existing habits of passivity, dominance, the need
for outside instruction, or a hierarchy, ... to take care of
functional details.²

CR can be started anywhere among assorted women, to form either a homogeneous
group similar in social background, or a heterogeneous group who may meet as strangers through
the WRC. The Core Group was formed in combination. Advantages of the latter composition are
in that although differences in women can present difficulties that may take longer to sort out,
there are obvious advantages in demonstrating "how women's problems tend to survive the
boundaries of age, economic status, and ethnic background." Women meet in each others' homes, or
at the WRC or some other "neutral" place. Privacy is of paramount importance. Ideally, meetings
are once a week, and more often during crisis or "exhilarating" sessions. The importance of
regular attendance is stressed. Absenteeism, along with excessive unpunctuality, slows down the
process of growth. For each meeting marks as a stage in this step by step process. In order to
achieve "substantial" growth, the duration of groups is minimally from six months and up to two
years. Groups may then disband, with members dispersing to work in projects. Those groups that
remain, as for example the San Francisco small group soon to be discussed, give support,
"refuelling, personal feedback". Few explicit rules prevail; rather values are implicit. Members
are advised, especially at the beginning, not to spend too much time on "daily functional
problems. Those are the symptoms, not the disease."

Eventually questions will be explored. Here are some examples.

- How often are we able to be honest about our feelings?
- What situations make us feel guilty?
- What are our private terrors?
- How do we feel about childbirth? aging? menopause?
- How do we feel about love? When have our feelings been experienced as love? What
  are our fears of being unlovable?
- How have our experiences with discrimination against women, whatever their race,
  compared with experiences of discrimination against black men? Other minorities? What feelings
  of inferiority have we been taught that are the same? Or different?
- What conditions of our daily lives do we want to change? How are we (or why are we
  not) changing them?
- What was your earliest childhood awareness of being trained to behave like a girl? How were brothers or boys in the neighbourhood raised, treated, or educated differently? What
  was our feeling about that?
- What thoughts are brought to mind by the word "humiliation"?

From the chosen topic, each woman refers to her personal experience, termed "giving
testimony"; the "first-person rule that is the heart of consciousness-raising". This is neither
interrupted, criticised, nor is any advice offered. Information is strictly held within the group
and is not recorded. "Generalisations" follow a testimony from which analysis relating to the
clarification of women's oppression is adduced. The basic process is quite simply one of women
speaking to one another out of their own direct experience. A "communitas" situation is created
within this private space, where communication and interrelatedness are of the utmost
importance. The themes are "becoming whole and real".³ It would be interesting to make
comparisons and contrasts with the mysteries of archaic and ancient Greece, such as Eleusis. Unfortunately, space does not permit this here.

Catalytic" techniques are considered helpful to maintain "flow". Yoga, modern dance warmups, "the laying on of hands" and back rubs are suggested ideas to loosen up and make one feel good in between sessions. Games "indigenous to women's culture" where there are no losers and the "rational and emotional elements are intertwined" provide insights on "several levels simultaneously". There are examples of this in Seminar, and A Rite, in this work. Role reversals, in which each woman takes on the identity of another group member within a specific time limit, is a form learning process not unlike those performed in certain traditional rites of passage in liminality. The "debriefing session" once members resume their own identity is described as likely to be as painful as it is triumphant", as women comment upon their performances and observations. " Living inside someone else's head is an extraordinary sensitivity exercise". A few groups practice "stripping down to essentials". This serves to deal with the problem of self-esteem, which often begins with a reassessment of the body. Questions like, "What do you hate most about your body?" when openly discussed can have a "very purifying kind of catharsis". So communal nudity "universalises" the female body and "all the remaining differences become no more than variations on the theme of femaleness". Here is another example of levelling or "stripping", that involves the whole person. Certain spiritual feminists perform their rituals "skyclad".

Each person then, has a great deal to learn from the other. They come together to use each other: "eavesdropping on lifestyles.... I suppose we have sanitised the word 'exploitation'." However, CR is not an end in itself. Nor is it considered to be a political action group; nor even a therapy or support group. All aspects are to some degree intertwined. Not unlike hippie revitalisation, CR within the WLM is a "voyage of self-discovery; a journey with other women to find our common roots." The activities of reading, letter writing to sexist advertisers and other "effective strategies to combat it" [male supremacy], undertaken in the Core Group, are essentially concurrent with CR.

After the group has grown and changed together, the individual will have grown and changed, too. We will never be quite the same again. And neither will the world.10

IV. INTRODUCTION TO ETHNOGRAPHIES

Participant-Observation Involvement:

Spatial Location or Setting, Perspective and Communications

Networks 1: From the stance of participant-observer, working from the matrix of an interest-allied group within the context of an urban feminist network, the impression gained is one of ever-widening circles rippling out from the core. Figure 2 attempts to illustrate this perspective.

Groups such as this are organised according to a specific topic-orientation and work within revolves around its formulated aims and strategies. They form integral units of various urban or regional networks. The initial number comprising twelve in this urban area did not remain static; for groups, along with their membership, are flexible. Due to such policies, interchange and overlap is usual and groups are constantly evolving and devolving. Dynamics of this kind do not necessarily represent demise. According to the feminist, who conducted the earlier interviews, "the dying process" is common. She explains: "It's more than personal. Our ignorant system keeps us stifled."

From this microfocal viewpoint, it would be easy to disregard links and interrelationships of wider macro influences, as separatist feminists in fact attempt to do, especially in regard to instituted social mechanisms, such as those in education and in medicine. Attempts to build a self-sufficient and contained Woman Culture is being realised, but it is not total. Vital links remain to maintain life support in terms of economic livelihood and a variety of
resource interchange, including converts, and the use of existing technology. A case in point, is the Core Group's "sortie" into organising and conducting a seminar to discuss, demonstrate and propose counteractions to the "undercounter" violent, pornographic and other undesirable video tapes available on request. The group relied on the willing cooperation of a university department for the use of space and equipment. The successful organisation of the seminar alone was rewarding. The positive response of the participants, their cohesive interaction, recruitment of new members and the members' accomplishment of new group skills were additional bonuses. Thus, whether it is accepted or not, the relative state of a marginal community is fundamental.

Networks 2: Another way to visualise the alliance network, is in terms of a wheel: to nucleate Broadsheet, the NZ feminist magazine, as the major regular agency of communicaiton and only enduring founding organisational body of "second wave" feminism in NZ. See figure 3. For some, this would place an unwarranted emphasis on the role and position of this magazine. However, from this vantage point, it is viable to make reference to Broadsheet as the major communication centre for both the dissemination and the absorption of information, with its national and international links. For although local regional and urban networks attempt to administer to and liaise with their respective area groups by means of newsletters, network representative meetings, telephone trees and so on, the Broadsheet collective functions as a stable point of contact in contrast to the constant fluctuations of network arrangements. Broadsheet has presented issues from June 1972, and compares more than favourably with counterpart overseas feminist magazines, in regard to stability and service. It comprises a publishing concern, a filing compartment and bookshop. Even so, Broadsheet's financial situation has always been precarious. Towards the end of 1984, yet another threat of obsolescence prompted an urgent appeal in the form of a letter addressed to individual members to support the Collective. Factors contributing to this position include: (1) Increased costs "across the board" especially in production costs. (2) A drop in sales of books at the associated bookshop, along with devaluation increasing overseas accounts. (3) The gradual change from voluntary to paid staff, inadequate in number in the past, to be increased to five part-time workers. Reference to Broadsheet then, from this perspective, conveys aspects of ideology and folk terminology; presents factual issues and distortions, and gives credence to certain interpretations. In these ways and in many others, the magazine, along with its depot, is a receiving and dispatch agency of information. Nor is tendentiousness denied. The locus of Broadsheet as a mutually reinforcing communication linkage and unifying agent, reaching out to its constellations, is substantial in a country where physical geographical barriers tend to separate and create diversity within community clusters. For example, a group formed in Gisborne occasionally reports difficulties of isolation and also of parochialism, where "different" behaviour alienates conservative citizens. Such networks provide communication links and help to unify spatially separate members in a "sisterhood" of global proportions. During my visit to the Broadsheet headquarters, Collective members intimated that communication throughout NZ remains inadequate.

V. THE SMALL GROUP PROCESS
Introduction:

As a vehicle of effective processual development, this mode has become integral to the WLM. Generally, such a group, will constitute five or six members and no more than ten, as a workable number for a beginning group, or core. Once a certain number is reached, some groups may close temporarily, or even permanently. Depending on the type of group, it may be expedient to include new members at a later stage. The small group process is essentially marginal to all that is traditional in its counter approach.

The group of study, given the simple and fictitious name the Core Group, allowed for a period of personal growth, definition and learning skills, before reaching out to interest other
individuals with similar concerns. As these women had come together with the intention of organising for action, it eventually becomes necessary to recruit others to swell resources, to increase points of contact, and to disseminate the workload. The value of small group organisation is borne out in this ethnography. It is validated in the successful completion of cooperative action, in the purpose behind these activities, and in group experience, which includes the development of basic values of trust. All experience is based on honesty, (with oneself, as well as with other members). This leads to eventual growth evidenced in various forms of commitment, and ultimately to a flexible stability, continuity of membership and comradeship. Such growth results from sincere human interaction, more possible in the small group. Reticent women open out more readily when numbers are kept to a minimum. Even dominant members are more easily quelled, in that responsible, caring relationships and sensitivity to others' needs, take on more significance within a small group context. On the practical side, it is difficult to evade meeting and task commitments. With experience, business is dispatched more easily. At least, this is the way it is with the Core Group.

Space

The "small group" is symbolically and physically many things. Although it comprises a collection of women plus its environment it is primarily conceived of as a special space. What it connotes may only be tangible in members' consciousness. The group is really a process of evolvement. To an outside observer this is not apparent. Perhaps some of the members have left and others have arrived to fill this space. But it remains the Core Group; or Suds., (the American small group yet to be introduced.) The process of its evolution is termed growth. It is evident that "growth", the term denoting progressive change, does not occur in a vacuum and needs to be recognised as a slow process. Over the last decade, women have found that the collectivity is all right for CR groups, but can be unworkable for action projects. The resultant development has been a gradual division and subdivision of the local urban Collective, developing the various foci and network arrangements of the present day. So too, the groups begin to relate to their society through WL. This permits a central unity in their lives, stabilised through this process of group interactive growth. That not all women place all facets of themselves and their lives within this group space is not relevant. It appears that the stability of the group core remains constant despite varying degrees of outside living involvement.

Trust is important here and seen to be regularly relayed through commitments which assure members' integrity and thus group continuance. Members first have to learn to trust themselves. This trust then extends to others. A vital factor in any human relationship, is the ability to communicate with one another. Following this is the willingness to contribute to action. Thirdly, is the need to accomplish a common purpose.

In the early stages of Core Group's interaction, one member found difficulty with practical task involvement. This she overcame herself step by step. For just as her considerable ability in verbal communication proved at first to be her stumbling block - "all talk and no action", it eventually became an avenue of retrieval. She simply spoke of her problem and received encouragement in return. Eventually, her contribution assured the success of a group assignment. She later communicated the pleasure this had given her.

Pamela Allen, together with members of her group, writes of their collective experience of the small group process. The purpose is to convey some impression of the importance of this particular structure for women's movements, and to assist those about to embark on forming a group. It is perhaps interesting to compare Allen's San Francisco group development with the Core Group. It is also worth comparing the Suds.' accounts with contemporaneous newsletter items and transcripted commentaries describing the growth of this phenomenon within the local urban Collective. At the time of writing their group paper, the American members adopted the nonsensical name Sudsoflopen. Unlike our group's authentic name, this name offers no notion of the derivation of the work being done, who these women are, or of the ideas they have produced. Besides, the concept of using a nonsense title they decided, provides room to grow and develop. The group itself, is conceived of as a space. Space that is free. A place in fact, where members can "withdraw" for a while. It is possibly more symbolically than physically separated and
contained from the world "outside", which is felt to be alien. This precisely conveys the sentiments of NZ women's campus groups with names like Womanspace. Another is The Women's Room, whose members portray their space as follows:

Women's Thoughts on Why a Women's Room:

- I like to choose who I spend time with. Sometimes I choose to go to the cafe. Other times I want to spend time with women or without men.

- If something infuriates me e.g., 'wimin's jelly wrestling', I know that at the wimen's room other wimin will also be upset. I then feel powerful realizing that it's not 'just me' and can work with other wimin to do something about it.

- I don't feel I have to be a certain way in the wimin's room. I can just be me.

- It provides a quiet place for women with small children to relax, breast feed, change nappies etc.

- A place to get information about wimin's issues i.e. library here plus pamphlets.

- Freedom from stereotypes laid on us.

- A place to discuss issues which are particularly important to women in a place where we know other interested women will be - in particular to have a private room for meetings where we will not be hassled by men.

- The room is a quiet place where small groups of wimin can go and talk. The library in the wimen's room provides interesting literature which can be read in a comfortable environment. Cups of tea can be made cheaply.

- The women's room has a friendly atmosphere and is a good place to meet other women of all types and ages, heterosexual or lesbian, with all sorts of views. You don't have to be a "stroppy man-hater" to come here."

The Sudsofloppen space is described as

especially suited to freeing women to affirm their view of reality and to learn to think independently of male supremacist views. It is a space where women can come to understand not only the ways this society works to keep women oppressed but also ways to overcome that oppression psychologically and socially. It is Free Space.

Small Group Development

The local Women's Collective in 1972, found two methods of organisation permitting members to be active: (1) through small groups, and (2) through specific group formation to tackle a particular issue. A year later, with increasing numbers came the realisation that to be
effective, group organisation must evolve accordingly. The organisers became aware that the mark of any thriving human group is in change, and that the WLM has to alter in order to meet new challenges and opportunities. "We created a framework within which to do our work - if it turns out not to meet our needs, we have to change it." The prevailing question as to what constitutes an acceptable degree of structure/leadership to adopt was under attack from the beginning. One viewpoint expressed by a Collective member in the local broadsheet argues that 50-100 in a group requires some structure, with an open-ended attitude towards change. Flexibility has become the adopted mode with readiness to change one’s own particular group arrangement in response to membership needs. The findings following a representative discussion on this topic, concluded that the current unstructured nature of the Collective was unsatisfactory. The Political Action group in the early '70s, expressed strong resentment - "some may say hostility" - in the concept of "imposed structure" on the Collective, presented with fait accompli.

Yes, I really so cringe at the word leadership. I suppose you have to use it...what I call a resource person.... Small groups. I think it is the only way ... involves people all the time. People have to be on the spot in a small group but if you want to you don't have much of an excuse ... not to participate, not to give something.

I don't see the Collective as a group, but as a series of small groups.

Ultimately, it was deemed a sensible move to name each small group for easier identification. Thus a 1973 newsletter reports, of the Kate Sheppard group, attempting to practice the Quaker belief of unanimous decision-making, one that has currently been adopted by the group. Therefore, if even one member objects stringently to any policy after all aspects have been presented, the matter is either dropped or altered.

It appears that each group was fulfilling objectives of functional efficiency and adequate communication by means of the broadsheet, general meetings and personal contact. It was the responsibility of each group to contribute toward writing articles, typing, duplicating, and addressing mail, then to contact the person(s) putting out the newsletter. Specialised tasks could last for six months. In the case of the public relations office, with its obvious character of responsibility, it became necessary to discuss the efficacy of role-rotation policy. At the same time, it is desirable to make available a variety of skills so that latent abilities may surface, and to allow as many women as possible to develop their full potential. This move benefits both the individual and the movement as a whole.

Increasing numbers need not impair this system, since core group elders are expected to take responsible attitudes towards integrating a new member, who usually comes through a personal contact. Such a system of support and teaching, combined with group utility of communication links within the Collective meant that valued new recruits could be installed indefinitely. The simple expediency of forming additional topic-interest groups when necessary, had become a working reality. As it has already been mentioned, groups primarily involved in CR, are reluctant to include new members, due to the stage of interpersonal development.

Thus there is a basic premise in the validity of the small group even in the early stages of the women's movement. For where there is face-to-face communication, strong solidarity may develop, and "action springs from the collective consciousness of such a group." The aim of deepening interpersonal relationships, is regarded as a very realistic ambition. The possibility of each individual member getting to know each other personally when membership becomes large, is then no longer feasible. This same problem of how to bind disparate units exists today. The allocation of group areas according to location or domicile, appears to have had a truncating effect.

The role of the newsletter seems to have been more integral when the movement was in its infancy, when bonds and links had to be implemented and maintained. Ultimately 350 newsletters a fortnight provided topical information for readers in the early 1970s. With the recent disbanding of the Network monthly meetings, it is possible that regular, comprehensive
broadsheet coverage of task group activity, may replace representation at the business level. Occasional women's dances and other social get-togethers, then as now, serve as contact points at the social interactive levels. The assumption implicit in any feminist involvement, is that groups are bound by common aims in "sisterhood". This involvement, crucial to the nature of the movement, means freedom from coercion in any form, a term that for feminists is synonymous with structure/leadership organisational forms.

A related problem that has continued over this decade, is one of making contact, let alone effective contact, between the women's movement and the social community beyond. This includes the problem of attempting contact with a wide variety of women outside the movement, many of whom view feminism with some hostility. This is seen as a real test of sisterhood. The predominating feminist conviction sees divisive elements throughout Aoteorua's social construct where all women have been conditioned to compete with each other and to separate themselves off with male partners for life; yet at the same time, social conditioning so emphasises sexual differences between male and female as to set them apart as well.

Motives for joining the WLM appear to be not very different from now. Small group discussions in the beginnings of second wave feminism, isolated such motives as seeking in the movement a non-competitive relationship with others, not found in society at large; communication with women who share common views and feelings. (For most of these women, this was the first experience of real empathy.) Some became interested due to contact with involved friends. Many appear to have been influenced by the rhetoric and writings of such people as Germaine Greer. The individual stirrings within, often conducive of producing merely vague dissatisfaction, became better clarified when problems were presented in the manner of Greer. And this created more. Greer has had the profound effect of goading many women into action.

A lot of things she said articulated for me a lot of things I had ... they were such foreign concepts just kind of, never encouraged to think that way about problems. What problems? Just general discrimination.... Also I began to see what the advertisements were saying about women.

Well, I started on a completely personal note presumably because I was very down. The seeds of political reaction must be there, but I was a depressed housewife; I was ... trying to be a happy housewife and trying to make sense out of it .... I was a member of a book club and they had The Female Eunuch, ... so I bought it and read it and thought wow! that was me. And from then on it was still a completely personal level - and that was me too, ... but I didn't know anybody else thinking the same way. I had earlier been involved in a political Left in Canada and it just didn't seem to relate.

The initial task of groups meeting a decade ago, was to develop an individual consciousness of self, in relation to other individuals in the immediate group, to the women's movement beyond, and to one's own society. This process is exemplified in the San Francisco booklet Free Space, [ibid.]. Focus on the personal, is combined with a probing that came to be known as feminist theory, the political aspect. From this stance attempts are made to analyse and formulate a working ideological framework. Goals are specified from which to agitate through actions or social reforms with intent to improve women's position in their respective social contexts.

In the process of formulating a world view, the contextual framework of previous "struggles", (this term was used in earlier historical times, as now), includes the efforts of suffragist action, abolitionists and others, and became broadened into an ideology with definitive goals set. Measured in this manner, progress seems almost negligible. At least this could serve as
a reminder that social change is slow, and the word "struggle" meaningful. Indeed, in 1971, the Suffrage Day memorial focus in Auckland, featured a mock funeral in order to mock further the lack of progress towards women's equality in NZ, which had led the world giving women suffrage. This event is considered to mark the beginning of publicly recognised second wave feminism in this country. Over 1,000 people watched this procession, symbolically re-enacting an overdue death to Victoriant values, as it proceeded appropriately enough through Albert Park. For those with radical-revolutionary views, liberation of the human race from its own morass has immediacy. Struggle often connotes bloodshed. Here is one feminist viewpoint. She is not NZ born, and has experienced revolutionary action in her own country.

The revolution will come... From an outside cataclysm. Mind, I personally don't endorse violence but can see the point of it... defend it....

There is definitely a revolutionary swing in the movement.... There are lot of dichotomies in my life; - I lead a very schizophrenic life.

Struggle also incorporates the day-to-day task of ensuring continuance of commitment and energies into what can be unremitting toil for intangible rewards. It is a common term in WLM to be "burned out". The whole metaphor invoking battle - the fight for freedom, etc. is contradictory too, in that peace is one of the key concepts of WLM. However, the urgency to resolve social inequalities mounted into some kind of fervour, and once aroused, was seen to justify the means. The vision is that of ultimate harmony. As Donna Awatere, an ardent feminist from the very beginning, now Maori activist, expresses it, "Those were heady days following the '60s." The same term is used by a feminist reviewing the past decade of the NZWLM, Chapter II. Awatere talks of naivety, passion. The significance of the word "liberation" in the second wave of the women's movement implies a deep consciousness of such struggle; of secondary status, and a considered oppression of women, in particular under the capitalist system.

The world view and teleology of the Core Group, is much more in the here-and-now, and its reality one of daily living within one's society. This same society is perceived through a confirmed feminist perspective, but practicalities of existence, for example, earning enough to live on, mean daily interactions, and these offer opportunities to learn through experience. For learning about people and their relationship to their society, to be able to discuss mutual problems, and perhaps offer an alternative solution is surely what liberation is all about. Group meetings are often preceded by individual members' encounters during the past week. It is during discussion of minutiae, that approaches toward actions are sometimes moulded or modified.

The group process developed by Suds. in USA sees one of the key characteristics of an oppressed people to be that of self-hatred, signified often in venting frustrations on one another. This conclusion, as in all their abstractions after analysis, was arrived at after long, and often painful, personal subjectivity, as part of this group process. An extreme form of this victim/self-hatred syndrome, may possibly be located in the pervasive, early method of feminist social control, known as "trashing". Here the offender becomes ostracised, in severe cases, to the point of psychological, as well as physical isolation, generally without trial or stated reason." The result in fact, is a further degree of marginalisation from those already marginal to their central social structure, with little recourse to return to either. Surely this represents a marginality that has turned full circle.

Problems

"Roadblocks" experienced by the Suds. small group relayed other fears. Initial distrust in talking about one's "whole" self before a gathering of "strangers" is a feeling homologously conveyed in the local transcripts.

The Theory Group, ... they are not even in touch with themselves; they can't even discuss between themselves....
Their opinion is based on emotion. One-to-one, give them a group, and they hate it. They can’t touch one another ... restrained in everything. It’s awful.... I’ll tell you why. Because no bastard trusts anybody else in the Theory Group....

Like there is some kind of entity which is separate from the sum of relationships between the women in the group.

Problems include gaining awareness of individual needs and learning to keep expectations both of self and of others, realistic. The Suds. experience of some members in living together was actually found to be detrimental, in that it was said to have detracted from group experience and personal relationships. On the other hand, eating together, as in the Core Group, took on a special meaning, almost a ritual significance. It represents the sharing of time, the thought and care that members express in their contribution of food, and within the context of the meal itself. A glimpse of this togetherness came with Kate’s chocolate cake. In a society where a measure of a woman’s status may be in her ability to produce a large, light pavlova, Kate arrived in typically cheerful, bustling fashion, complete with cream and icing, to put on her cake, rather burned. She unabashedly recounted the tale of the cinderling to an approving audience. The story has a familiar ring to it. And the wafting chocolatey smell close to Meg, (a confirmed believer in health food), proved too tempting. Everyone began eating at once. The cake took on a prestige of its own. The farewell occasion had been arranged for Lee, who did not appear. This was her loss without a doubt. There was no judgement on her failure to let anyone know; only concern that something had gone awry. A number of alternative values surface at this otherwise auspicious gathering, trust and caring in particular. Kate’s confidence in members to have superceded boundaries presaging the NZ homemaker and her symbols of gratification were met. Once membership is confirmed, absentminded omissions and similar idiosyncrasies are accepted, and faith in Lee as a committed member was unsullied. Everyone knows that her integrity is applied wherever it matters and that is what counts.

In parallel, the American members also affirm each other’s worth, based on faith: a common dedication towards an “understanding of our predicament of being female in this society.” This is rationalised that through commitment, group members become emotionally free to forgive failings in others.

Another problem facing the Suds. group, included resentment towards others, directly related to a sense of power imbalance between men and women; a dominant:subordinate relationship. This resentment is found in all WLM groups to a greater or lesser extent. However, the San Francisco group found that as self-confidence increased, this resentment towards men diminished once the group began to discern the difference between resentment and anger. Another common problem to be dealt with as it arose, includes impatience to execute reforms for change. Here in this particular group, was the greatest cause of tension: disagreement over how liberation should be accomplished: personally or politically, that is, by changing “ourselves” or changing society, until there was the ultimate realisation that both are necessary and interdependent. The slogan “the personal is political” is in these ways validated.

Definition of Targets

This along with definition of one’s group, (which may include definition of oneself), is of key concern in formulating feminist projects. This involves questions such as whom do members aim to reach? Feminists; prospective feminists; women only; men only; both men and women; specific ethnic, racial or socio-economic groups; or society at large? On this decision imposes the question of legitimacy, and how much compromise is necessary in order to reach target zones. This affects reformist segments more particularly, since revolutionary-radical and separatist groups are generally not seeking this form of mediation. However, where feminist services operate, this may become mandatory. One feminist for example, in speaking about early WL days when lesbian feminism was a hidden phenomenon, had found herself singled out and reprimanded by another worker when on duty at a Rape Crisis centre. This was because she had
assuvered her predilections toward lesbian feminism in the course of conversation with a rape victim. Ngahua Awekotuku is another early feminist, who voiced some reminiscences of the past decade of the NZWLM for the TVNZ documentary (ibid.). She was told by a fellow feminist that she had set the NZWLM back 50 years, by publicly mentioning the presence of one or two “Sapphic women” in the movement. Now a Maori activist and national figure, and incidentally the first Maori woman to receive a PhD, she notes that the WLM continues to survive despite her intervention. A different example occurred during a meeting discussing the Core Group’s proposed projection of a public profile. A considerable time elapsed debating the pros and cons of writing “wimmin” on the poster and introductory brochure. This is one of the many words in our language being altered by feminists because of connotations of “sexism.” There is awareness that unfamiliar words could well produce suspicion, countervailing positive interest, the object of the whole exercise. The consensus decision was to retain the traditional form. Obviously, decisions of this nature, have to be felt to be effected without sacrificing values. Since language codes are basic to our communication, this is one of the most important modes to accelerate the change in other sectors that is continually taking place anyway.

Questions of legitimacy and compromise go back to a woman’s initial decision to join a female group or organisation. How it is perceived: is it credible and authentic? What are its beliefs and ideals? A woman who is desirous of achieving rights for women has a range of organisations to choose from in NZ. The decision may rest, not on an assessment of policies, but rather on external factors signified in forms of etiquette, dress, manner of speech and so on, and all may settle under the umbrella the common cause, that of Women’s Rights. When contemplating the even broader spectrum of women’s organisations and groups, two opposing poles emerge. One could be described as generating an “alternative” ethos and the other, “respectability”. And within this differential is prescribed the nature of service or objective. Interestingly enough, after the first shock of WL had subsided, it became rather “chic” to pronounce oneself a “feminist”. Hard core radicals at the very least, as already indicated, have found this trend outrageous. Yet there is the paradox to confront, that in order to liberate all women, it is important to be able to reach them, and this is simply not possible on radical feminist terms. Somehow a balance has to be attained, without too much compromise of feminist ideals.

The National Organisation for Women [NOW], is one organisation that appears to some extent to rely on an authenticity established through the portrayal of a respectable image. This in turn effectively attracts more members. Women with aspirations to gain access to national political, legal, educational and medical institutions, often choose prestigious organisations of this kind. The adoption of a “multi-issue platform” presents less threat than do “alternative” groups, harbouring marginal people with strange ideas. For here are solidarity incentives both in status and friendship bonds, potential for points of contact, whilst using legitimised methods in working within the traditional system. An organisation like NOW has an assured “recognised constituency and competency” and this “enhances its acceptance.” It represents an enormous contrast to the small group organisation and tactics. External relationship patterns thus play an important role in group affairs, whether acknowledged or not. These relationships to other groups and to established society, affect the long term impact of an organisation, as do internal dynamics. Clearly a group’s legitimacy, may be accepted by one segment and offset by the non-acceptance of another. In the case of topic-oriented feminist groups, overarching network support systems generally suffice to maintain solidarity. However, this may be insufficient where strategic aims depend on re-educating through the presentation of entirely new ideas and norms to an unsuspecting public. The classic stereotyped image of society, assisted by media misrepresentation, placed upon the (radical) feminist, - strident, outcast hermaphrodites of the “lunatic fringe”, - scarcely applies to the women of Core Group experience. Among other groups, with few exceptions, it is apparent that with her mask removed, the woman beneath feels vulnerable and sensitive in the ambiguity surrounding her position and role in society. Examples of this appear in the ethnographic section. One of the main purposes of the campus women’s open day, is to allow other students and staff members gain more understanding and tolerance through admission to this separate zone. One woman quipped: “Of course they’ll expect us to be stirring some concoction over a cauldron.”
Group Organisation

Now to look more specifically at group organisational methods. For Sudsloppen, the processes arrived at evolved gradually, after much trial and error. Early activity was consciously unstructured, only it became apparent that there was always some structure. The same principles and patterns emerged in the Core Group. The group processes of Suds. are headed thus: (1) Opening up. (2) Sharing. (3) Analysing. (4) Abstracting. Core group processes began in this manner and worked through each processual stage, but overlap is considerable, therefore deliniations are blurred. This is partly because compatibility within the group was never a real problem and this was made easier due to ultimate goals being readily defined. The task of organising projects and group arrangements were simultaneously aligned with the processes at personal-emotional-intellectual levels.

A major organisational problem is to keep people co-operating to ensure the group's survival. Benefits and incentives in this case were inbuilt with the goal, and reasserted in the growing concern to share commitments and assist each other. Regular meetings to plan action, success in previous efforts however small, has a snowballing effect. Casualties in the Core Group have been few, mostly related to job shifts. The progress of campus groups and the WLM in general however, is marred by rapid turnover of individuals and groups disbanding. The rise and fall of segments is not always related to task completion; that is, when an objective has been accomplished, the task force organised for that purpose may disband. Many return with others to perform another task. Yet there is always a shortage of dedicated supporters, since the work is often onerous. The ratio of numbers to work output is therefore unbalanced. Also resources are inadequate. Discussion with the Broadsheet staff confirms this impression, along with group experience. Dedicated members are constantly stretching time, energy and finance to meet demands. Some women become understandably discouraged at the immensity of the prospects overall, and question how realistic is this vision. Alternatives are few. For those who persist within WLM there are the more intangible rewards already projected.

It is clear that inducements to join the WLM are not in the realm of personal material gain, in contrast with many other women's groups. It seems reasonable to conclude however, that self-identity is defined through group membership, due to solidarity combined with purpose incentives. These factors reach greater intensity in women experiencing alienation.

As the Core Group became more widely advertised through sympathetic media in the form of articles, letters, along with self-advertising, and through the group's own industry and activities, some members of the public responded to popular appeal. One elderly woman at a 1984 Ministry of Women's Affairs Forum thrust a ten dollar note into a member's hand.

The Core Group is a branch group and its potential growth is imminent. Kindred ties with the founding group strengthen and affirm efforts by newer and smaller groups such as these and act as a stabiliser. Guidelines toward formulating ideology, tactics and goals have been adapted from the larger, more established "sister" organisation and exchange of ideas and prospective actions to combine with or lend support, assure constancy. New branches have sprung up in urban locations, and there are prospects of encouraging more. The overall aim is to create a mini-network, within the larger feminist network system. Plans to become an incorporated society are being investigated by the Core Group. Mergence with other branches, more particularly with the founding group, would only be realised if advantageous. Such a move does not interfere with individual group definitional features. These remain fairly intact due to character moulding that develops through individual participation and localised environment.

Status benefits merited through organising roles in associations like NOW, is one that radical feminists abhor and denounce; just as "popularising" feminism is contrary to policy, or any power inducements associated with "establishment" tactics involving monetary gain, social or political prestige. Perhaps the Core Group is enhanced by members' rather untidy idiosyncrasies of absentmindedness over details of time, place and date, where only genuine human concerns are primary. Countering this, is the suggestion that this policy accrues to undermine overall efficiency and effectiveness. And it is apparent that those latter qualities are predominantly lacking in WLM. Since development proceeds through "active, collective learning" the effort towards building up the group's resources includes finding ways to co-ordinate variable
behaviours within the group context.

Women's organisations in general have tackled a multitude of issues. Feminist concentration continues in the spheres of abortion, and in the related areas of contraception and childbirth. This includes free medical care and twenty-four hour, quality child care facilities. The overall concept is that women should be able to exercise control over their own body as of right. Equal pay for equal work, with equal opportunity are focal points as well. This pinpoints any form of discrimination by gender definition, as in the objectification of women as sex symbols, where in positions of subordination, women may fall prey to forms of sexual harassment. Feminists emphasise, that because this form of discrimination is socially acceptable, men often commit acts of violence without any sense of shame or guilt. The increasing incidence of reported violence against women in this country, is estimated by some feminists of long standing, to be related in part to the threat posed by women's increased self-affirmation and independence from the male. This point has been reiterated on the aforementioned TVNZ documentary "Our Voice and Our Vision".

All small group activity is disseminated and directed from these major domains, health/body, family, work/employment; "sexploitation"; role/position. The past decade concentrated on CR and Theory groups. This emphasis probing self, society and culture and to investigate how these interrelate, is in order to analyse the causes of some women's sense of friction, alienation and subordination within their own socialised world, and in relation to men. Developments from findings led to a launching of feminist literature, lecture tours, women's study courses and groups, with the latter usually being organised through universities. Feminists began servicing "dropin" information, direct aid and referral centres. Action groups began organising reform through various modes and strategems, which include education and protest forms. All methods are designed to alter social attitudes, along with changes in law. The overall feminist aim is to gain equality for all women, presaged by complete autonomy of self. The implications of these claims presuppose that currently, women are not equal with men in their society; that for some, their culture is male created and defined; that to be liberated in the spheres delineated, could achieve those aims. The problem is how? This question along with causation, that is, defining who/or what is the Enemy, has resulted in fission within WLM.

Marginalisation

It is apparent, and this chapter deals with this aspect further, that women who have aligned themselves with WLM, feel themselves to be considerably estranged from their society of acculturation to the point where they can no longer live comfortably with its prescribed rules and ethics.

I feel very much an outsider.... It's muted when I'm operating with my friends ... but when I am actually operating in society in my job for example ... or looking at the shops, you come up against patriarchals, like that I am just watching TV at my mother-in-law's house, I am filled with this terrible feeling of just fear and anger which has obviously got to be muted all the time ... because people can't cope with that and so it comes cut in all sorts of angry ways and people... people just don't understand and I never understand why people don't feel the same way that I do about watching television, for example. No analysis about watching a news programme, for example ... and there is no coming to grips with any sort of issue in the larger framework and watching the way the whole capitalist patriarchal ideologies are working, and working on me. So what I am trying to do at the moment, is work out, watch the process of my socialisation operating within me and also trying to change them, and coupled with that trying to do work in external ways in society as well.
The initial marginalisation from these women's society is perceived as having been imposed. Next, in order to reconstitute their lives, either inside or outside their society, they have chosen to marginalise themselves by collectively organising a movement, independent of the established institutionalised ordering. In other words, to attempt to create a free space, a form of liminality, neutral, in a sense pristine, where needs of these women may be translated and formulated into codes that have meaning.

Strategies

Adopted strategies are limited to two basic forms: (1) pressure group strategies, and (2) service group strategies, designed to effect desired change or to provide alternatives to existing institutions. The Core Group works through the first option. Methods vary according to the issue and to available resources. Often various minor and major concerns proceed simultaneously. A key issue may reach the order of magnitude of a national campaign, with other concerned bodies entering the arena along the lines of their chosen strategies. An example of this is in the relatively recent introduction of video to NZ. Since the updating of laws and regulations to include this phenomenon are negligible, loopholes appear both in point of entry and in regard to censorship and classification. Exploitative entrepreneurs are anxious to retain their hold already sustained by popular demand. The law relating to a person's right to view in the "privacy of one's home" is being used as leverage. Feminist demand insists on female panel representation, a feminist perspective as imperative to elicit an accurate definition of what constitutes "pornography", since theoretical study of this and related topics, has been thoroughly investigated by specific feminist bodies. Concerned educational authorities and parents are among others seeking to voice their opinions. Conjoined actions by feminist groups, include petitions and letters to involved governmental controls, letters to MPs, lobbying, letters and articles to newspapers, radio interview panel discussions, seminars and workshops to achieve a "brainstorm" of counter actions, the picketing of video parlours, and marking with stickers any vendors identified as harbouring "blue" and/or "snuff" videos. All the more radical protest forms have been preceded by milder tactics, as for example, attempted discussion with shop managers and assistants, have usually been to no avail, and are in fact, often met with antagonism. Feminists are alert to what often amounts to just a paper victory, or "tokenism", a fairly common political ploy at appeasement, without very much alteration of the status quo.

The flexible and spontaneous nature of the small, and often inexperienced group such as the Core Group, achieves objectives due to enthusiasm and a preparedness to acknowledge mistakes. Shared responsibilities and skills ensure that each member has some familiarity with issues and tactical measures. Such a model can reduce internal conflict and speed up perception of problems and their resolution through communication. Knowledge of each other can assist in the simple delegation of tasks and means of dispatch. Expectations of oneself and one another gradually becomes more realistic through face-to-face contact in a small group that is developing good rapport.

Ideology

Strong belief in commitment often results in founder members displaying a deeper sense of obligation, urgency and concern with the cause that is not necessarily present in those who join later, at least, not to the same extent. This is observable in both the Core Group and the campus group, even whilst leadership qualities are being played down. At the same time, coercive measures are not necessary either. An appeal for more help will ordinarily get response. And since the opportunity for personal development is grounded in the belief system, logically this should not only benefit the individual member, but the movement as a whole. That co-operation levels of attainment are high in the small group situation, is evident in the degree of efficiency accredited to this method of organisation in WLM. It stands out in the Core Group, since there is at least one member with experience and expertise in organisational skills. One member in particular stands out. As "elder", it was her unspoken responsibility to disseminate this learning to "novices", with the aid of suitable book lists, articles and group experience, the best stimulus to
self- growth. In concurrence with Pamela Allen's findings, fieldwork experience shows that to be autonomous thinkers, each individual must work out her own framework for herself. As an adjunct to this, Allen ascertains, along with many confirmed feminists in NZ: "To be independent in our thinking and to identify our interests as being those of all women, does not necessarily mean that we are anti-men... An autonomous women's movement will function to serve women." Such a movement, Allen considers, "needs to begin to develop a counter ideology and culture to male supremacy, which will affirm the rights of all women and all people, including children." Immediate and simultaneous programmes of action include finding ways of meeting women's needs now so that they may grow and develop their fullest potentialities. Inclusive systematic programmes attack "male supremacist institutions", whilst maintaining long term goals. This means preparing to take part in leadership of a society which meets the needs of its people. One of the reasons Suds. considers the small group structure to be a good base for developing ideology, is that "groups can be at different stages depending on the needs of their members." Allen terms this a "formative period" during which ideology will take time to develop through women working collectively towards liberation of all women. In considering their group concept of free space, she explains that "this is not a place involved simply in analysis of those set patterns, sharpening our understanding but leaving us bound." As she frames it, the group's aims are "laboring towards building a collective trust", a "meaningful alternative". Each member has considered pulling out; for the "move from alienation to commitment involves a terrifying lowering of defences." The transition from segregation is identified as the attainment of new confidence and self worth. This could be framed within the context of the transitional progression from the pre-liminal stage into liminality, symbolic death, rebirth and aggregation into a new culture where women may find meaning and fulfillment. The quest for self-knowledge is archetypal. Consider the Greek myths; or Homer's \textit{Iliad}, and the \textit{Odyssey}, for instance.

One element of discovery for the San Francisco group, is that unity must come from working together, not like-mindedness, a point the current WLM would do well to observe. "Working together strengthens the group to become a place that provides direction for the individual" both to meet her own individual needs and her role in meeting needs in the WLM. The group becomes a place "to get encouragement, help, and support to learn, grow and act, and a place to come back to for criticism for we want to learn from our mistakes." In describing new organisations as "often friendly, egalitarian and hectic", Liz. O'Sullivan [ibid.], aptly verbalises what has been encountered among feminist groups here.

ETHNOGRAPHIES I

VI. THE CORE GROUP

\textbf{Introduction}

It could be argued that to concentrate on a core group in microfocus, does not permit access to a holistic picture of group organisation and development. This point is valid and is hopefully averted by reference to other members and their contributions in a more generalised way.

To have become part of the Core Group at the very beginning is of considerable value. The foundation period is observably crucial in shaping any group's ideals, motivations and particular genre. That it is continually evolving, is apparent in the pooling of a conglomerate of ideas, experience and resources from each individual's variety of life experience. Indeed, feminists know that it is politic to foster this unique potential yet to be tapped. All women have something to offer, but this must come of their own volition. In return, growth and positive qualities are developed in the giving. A sense of self and group identity builds confidence to perform with more purpose once members are severed from this supportive atmosphere and return to the world outside. Reinforcement in continuity of meetings is important to recharge and maintain gains already made. Repetition and social procedures set in a particular location, and at a particular time each week, become familiar and meaningful. Because of past commitments,
there is a build up to the present, and there is a future due to the on-going nature of strategies and aims. There is considerable spontaneity punctuating activities, preventing the habitual from becoming mundane. A sense of identity most members lacked before, is therefore defined through membership: a realisation of self-worth in the co-operative assertion of rights through commonality in belief. This immediately affords the unit an independent signification and focus, from beneath the WLM umbrella, whilst invisible links are retained. Inventive growth within networks, marks the considerable autonomy, self-sufficiency, as well as expressiveness open to constellations. Although rites are performed within the feminism movement, spontaneous creativity within the patterns of ritual is encouraged and admired in all spheres. In metaphoric terms, there is a sense of floating free under protection. The links are not chains. The relationship between network and group is the same kind of balance as that between elder and novice - guidance and independence, but with reciprocal interaction.

No person is deliberately placed above or below another, unless it is for the benefit of all. Those with dominant characteristics are encouraged to defer to the timid, and to give these women opportunities to express themselves in their customary mode, but to also gain confidence by learning and performing new skills. It becomes apparent that each person has varying strengths and weaknesses; each also has something to contribute and to learn. A certain humbling takes place during getting-to-know each other sessions, where straightforward honesty is displayed during exchange of feelings, of values, anxieties and problems. In this there can be discerned a form of "stripping", somewhat in the manner of the liminal phase of traditional rites of passage. The more intensive outpourings and ensuing analytical discussions of feminist Theory groups, appear as a kind of preparatory tabula rasa, a making way to receive a new body of knowledge. Though scaled down in this particular group, it is apparent that in the gradual absorption of earlier founders' insight, in the awakening consciousness of new ideas through contact, exposure to literature, actions and activities, alternative art forms and expressions, some of the various strategies of consciousness-raising are being met.

The Group Core

Concentration is on the original six members who seem to have implemented a special and enduring ethos. They have been called Kate, Ingrid, Meg, Fiona, Lee and Anna. Tables to record details such as age, race, class etc. have been intentionally omitted in order to preserve anonymity. Any inconvenience this may cause is regretted. Material for research purposes may be applied for through the author.

Methodology

This entailed full participant-observation for eight months, from April to November 1984, inclusive. Principally, it involved meetings; a group organised public seminar; displays; talks; interviews; interrogations of leading figures in society, including MPs; letters to same; letters to the press; also articles. All efforts are directed towards increasing public awareness. Reform is in accordance with the formulations of group aims. As an adjunct to the feminist ideology of a work/play synthesis, in executing what is often undisguisably "hard grind", business may be set in more congenial surroundings - a potluck meal at a member's flat is common. Meetings are always preceded by informal discussion of events. This helps to create an on-going strengthening of bonds. Social and leisure activities are liberally interspersed, but these are marred by insufficient attention to organisation, inability to set a date to include the majority of members, or apathy. For instance, after repeated attempts to organise a weekend camp at a tramping hut, which included three cancellations, this combined work-leisure activity was finally abandoned. By the simple expedient of coming together, any task is lightened. Often the most memorable frivolity and comradeship evolves out of onerous tasks.

Cursory on-the-spot notetaking is amended following the event. Most interviews are of an informal nature, since the basis of methodology involves participation.

Meetings
The preferred arrangement is to meet on a weekly basis and on regular evenings, but this is kept flexible and arranged consensually. Individuals' requirements are given priority over work. At the same time any pressing programmes are dealt with until completion. The central base is the Women's Resource Centre, but this varies in accordance with personal itineraries. A solo mother for example, occasionally obviates the need to organise a baby-sitter by holding the meeting at her house. Car pool arrangements overcome any transport difficulties. Each person shares available resources in a reasonably equitable system of reciprocity. Due to factors of commitment, incentive, prearranged meeting nights to suit most women, as well as contacts to keep absentees or intending members informed, numbers in this group are reliable. Punctuality is not a strength.

The proposal to form a new group came via the Network, through an announcement on the campus women's group notice board. It read: women interested in a specific form of sexism, are invited to attend a meeting at the Women's Resource Centre. So it began.

The group founder was grappling with various door keys to no avail. She introduced herself and a friend, and cheerfully exited to search her (fortuitously) nearby flat. My companion was seated on the floor of the dim corridor, pretending to read. This was her first feminist meeting too. Kate returned with the right key, just as two others arrived, and in response to the warmth (and security?) of beanbags and herbal tea, awkwardness thawed. During discussion of the theme came the discovery that everyone had had corresponding experiences, and responses in regard to sexual discrimination. A common bond was realised in those beginnings, and through the modifying process of consensus, a predominantly reformist group was to emerge.

**Group Size**

By the second meeting, a core group of six women had been established, of whom four still remain. Past experience of Collective members had tried and proved this small group model and this was endorsed in working through the process. This number is considered very workable in the early stages of group formation. It is certainly easier to relate to one another and to build or subdue confidence, exchange ideas or knowledge in small groups. Gradual recruitment has swelled numbers to twelve currently, and this becomes necessary as experience and workload increase. Established core members informally become elders, assisting and setting the tone for the new. Occasionally replacements are required. One member left to experience an alternative kibbutzim lifestyle; another took up work in another region; still another went to complete a fine arts course at an appropriate university. Links are generally maintained, despite erratic correspondence, and travelling members are welcomed to others' new locations. On a larger scale, this is repeated among Network members, who may stay with other regional members. Sometimes comparisons are made. According to one hard working pragmatist, seeking her own refuge in a hitch-hiking vacation from women's refuge work, expectations of hospitality in one particular area apparently did not match up when compared with others of her experience. Resource backup in the form of collective systems, is available within urban/regional Networks as well. If for example, a picket is organised, members from other task groups may be requested to join as voluntary supporters, effecting transitory group enlargement, giving some insight into other segment activities and strengthening Network solidarity. Network affiliation is constantly reinforcing links, bonds, information, ideologies and often symbolic-legendary ties. Such a tie in NZ, would figure in the embodiment of heroic womanhood, epitomised by the ordinary pioneering woman. The expenditure of energy and effort of Everywoman is given much attention. Research into Herstory pays homage to the humble along with the great. A feminist who had embarked on writing her mother's life story, finds gratification in that this has given her mother sufficient impetus to take over writing her autobiography.

**Shaping the Group**

Flexibility then, is a key concept in group size, organisational arrangement and in attitude. The nucleus of small group dynamics however, is always in the core membership. Co-operation, individual and collective, follows as a result of individuals engendering responsible
attitudes towards group welfare and its aims. Bonds of commonalty assist in ensuring group stability and a sense of community. Qualities of patience, sensitivity, encouragement and enthusiasm towards each other and group ideals, are ingredients needed to mould the shape into a unit. This processual development is both tangible and intangible. It involves growth. The mode is through the creation of a teaching-learning environment, possible due to the receptivity of the "novice"; a form of therapy ensues in that after the degree of empathy is assessed, a supportive group trust develops, which permits a subjective unburdening. Apart from reticence at the start, this seemed to occur without barriers, following the Core Group’s first meeting. This does not obviate a feeling of being drained at the end of most meetings. Even so, early feminist Theory groups, because of the nature of their probing to find causes of women's misery were much more intense. The resultant communication blocks tended at times to defeat the whole purpose. Once this is overcome, exchange of ideas and knowledge, repetition of successful learning experiences, embodied in an atmosphere of mutual respect, increases self-confidence and self-esteem, with the result that individuals find themselves capable of performing skills within the group situation not previously thought possible, as exampled in the Core Group’s seminar. This progressive growth and interaction ascertains group cohesiveness, but does not attempt to make it self-contained. Personal growth through membership interaction is integral to women’s liberation movement strategy, with a view to helping women everywhere toward helping themselves. There is much overlap in Network involvements and in convergence of interests. Many women belong to more than one group. In an urban centre of moderate population density such as this, face-to-face contacts occur on numerous occasions. One member is involved to the extent that she attends meetings most nights. For her, all these issues are related and significant.

An example of purely spontaneous behaviour only likely in a group situation, occurred one meeting night, when two members on arrival together, recalled that within half an hour there was to be a television documentary on the topic, "Self-Defence for Women." At this stage, one of the women was attending a course in conjunction with other strategies of self-affirmation and independence. Ingrid recalled a guest lounge with television at a nearby licensed restaurant. Once those expected had arrived at the WRC, everyone moved on to the restaurant, filed upstairs in twos, proceeded to absorb the programme with critical interest, then set off once more to resume the meeting, quite undetected. Although only mildly audacious and rather in the nature of a schoolgirl prank, this episode sparked off a sense of “togetherness" in a shared secret action. There was also the deeper connection and knowledge behind what was being projected, the "fight back" policy of the movement’s overall concept, reiterated in the documentary of self-defence, and also in the method of viewing it. The "them-us" esoteric consciousness remained intact, since ostensibly, the group was behaving exactly as those around, observing the same documentary content. This is not to say that the Core Group necessarily condones a setting apart from other women. Rather, this action illustrates symbolic boundedness and juxtaposition. There are numerous occasions when WLM members are physically in contiguous social contact with mainstream members of society in this way. It demonstrates how actions of more serious intent may be conducted within an abstraction of the women’s movement ethos to subtly assert its discreteness from conventional society. Feminists do not always "rave". The lighthearted retelling to those who had been absent, worked to reinforce group unity whilst indirectly emphasising society’s oppositional polarity. In sum, it is a more subtle instance of a marginal situation.

Naming

Three members already use pseudonyms on occasions as a form of personal protection when writing publicly. Anyone acting as scribe for the group however, signs her customary signature, as well as the initials signifying the group title. The title in full incorporates the group’s purpose and the adopted letterhead gives this full title and its symbol. Anna, student in fine arts, printed an appropriate motif from a selection of Kölitz’ poignant human life portraits. This symbolic representation of an anonymous woman’s despair is the silent motto on group posters and pamphlets. The wording is a group effort. In order to preserve participants’ anonymity, all names have been changed throughout this study, and for the same reason locations
are not detailed. It is recognised that this method of disguise has its limitations.

A name change often accompanies the symbolic death and rebirth, during the initiate’s new self-identity process within the WLM. This rebirth may or may not be formally ritualised. If not, identity change is still recognisable with the source rooted in group development. Although not patterned within the Core Group, it is discussed by individuals for whom it becomes evident. A formalised ritual naming ceremony, consonant with denial of "straight" society through withdrawal, was attended by a Core Group member. Her admission to this esoteric "Womanspirit" branch of feminism, seems to have been based on a close friendship with the novice. Background would no doubt have been taken into account. She resides in a women’s collective and attends associated monthly Therapy groups. Her avowed feminism is genuine, tangible in her practical service to the movement. When she returned after about a week in another city, location of the rite, she animatedly recounted aspects of the performance. This will be examined for its symbolic and marginal qualities further on in this chapter. Notable events pertaining to the Core Group’s development will be set down in this section.

Age

With the exception of one person, all women in the Core Group are NZ born and Caucasian. Ages range from twenty to forty, with most in the former age group. Within the local Network, women are aged from about eighteen to the late fifties. Members of Collective days mention two fourteen year olds in one of their groups. Perhaps a feminist speaker at a secondary school had impressed these young women.

Class, Occupation and Family

The aforementioned sociological study of 100 women in NZ society, resulting in a book for the general reader, entitled The Smith Women, shows a preference for the traditional English categories of stratification, Upper, Middle and Lower, along with their internal subdivisions. This model has been approximated here. Each member’s own, and their parents’ occupation and education, are noted to give some indication of class grouping.

"Family", is an institution integral to NZ society, as we have noted. Feminists point out, that the child within this context, has no social or jural rights. In other words, there is no recognition of a child’s personhood. The child is defined solely within this unit up to the age of sixteen years. A female’s personhood is considered to be further "muted" (after Edwin Ardener) within this capacity and this extends into adulthood. Feminists for example, are attempting to boost the low prestige associated with housework and to reverse any situation where women’s work has been restricted to use value only. De Beauvoir sees parity in the economic sphere as a basic factor in liberation of women. Severence of kinship, and friendship ties, is not undertaken without a certain trauma. How much strain is placed on these relationships depends a great deal on parents’ and others’ own beliefs, and to a certain extent, on their ability and desire to compromise. It depends also on the degree of change in personality and chosen lifestyle of the convert. Most members of my acquaintance deeply value former relationships, even whilst experiencing conflict with others’ ideals and values. This is a source of genuine pain and ambivalence in members’ lives. It is a topic that continually recurs, and excerpts of some of these personal problems will be inserted during discussion.

I find it very hard relating to people, more and more hard although I go on doing it.... But I find it more and more hard to interrelate with people who haven’t got that feeling about this total thing because I really enjoy talking to them and relating to them and everything but I feel thwarted by them at the moment because I am in such a period of rapid transition.

The original core members of the Core Group are from middle class parentage. An
explanation to justify this conclusion will follow shortly. Later recruits vary between upper-middle class and middle-lower class, producing a broader dimension in the understanding of women's needs and ideas for recruitment. A well-recognised problem area is that of the "working" class, where need is greater, and feminist consciousness lower; and where there may be the additional concerns relating to ethnic differentiation. A feminist from the "lower" socio-economic class joined the group during the organised seminar. As a "single" person experienced in youth care and Labour Party unionism, she suggests that one way to reach other working class women, is to give low key talks to women in factories and to mothers of day nursery and preschool children. The section of this study reporting the terminal network meeting, conveys more insight into some of the complexities wracking this sphere, in accordance with the perspective presented by the Black Women's group representative.

In The Core Group, middle class backgrounds seem evident in that two members' parents are involved in propriety farming; four in urban and mainly professional occupations. One member often speaks rather ambiguously of her "privileged class" background. It is a preoccupation that appears equated with an element of guilt in her break with kin and friendship ties and concomitant bonds, in opting for an alternative lifestyle. Blame for her predicament and "the f-up of my life", is directed toward both paternal and culturally-ascribed authoritarianism. Conversely, two members' mothers, both teachers, influenced their own current feminist consciousness. Of the six core members, all are presently engaged in, or have attained, higher levels of education, three at masters degree stage. Occupations, along with study include lecturing; involvement in ecology; whilst Fiona, mentioned earlier, practices her profession in a predominantly male sphere of the medical field. The member of European extraction, primarily in an endeavour to familiarise herself with an unknown world, that of the "worker" class, opted initially for a labouring job and an opportunity to work manually and outdoors. The original Core Group women basically characterise the "student type". Individuals entering later have provided some variation, that is met with equanimity: full time waitressing, freelance journalism, housewife/motherhood, even a former video parlour salesperson. Each is important in her own right.

Role and position is only of consequence in relation to future change in this sphere for women. The social world outside is conceived of by feminists as affording women narrow scope and choice in occupation, especially those married with children. This is a society where through socialisation, child educative models are reinforced by media and other models. For example, "sexist" role enactment in school reading material until challenged, invariably featured the mother working inside the house cooking, baking and dusting etc. Conventional attire, typically "feminine", usually included the badge of the housewife, the apron. Her daughter may be "helping mother" by making beds, or drying dishes. "Father" always worked at "male" chores, often accompanied by his son, gardening, cleaning the car, painting the fence, and so on. Media representations such as television continue to support or exaggerate these role stereotyped images. The feminine ideal, often impossible to live up to may produce stress, in extreme cases bulimia or anorexia nervosa.

Lee recalls with some pride how 20 years ago, her mother tackled the school's use of infant readers projecting unrealistic depictions of NZ life and stereotyping roles. This was more significant since she is a farmer's wife, where social role expectations remain basically rigid. Not only did Lee's mum succeed in getting the offending readers removed, she succeeded in stepping beyond the farmer's wife image in her everyday life.... Once her family gave her a chain saw for her birthday.

Definition of Target

Of particular concern to feminists, are graphic forms of imagery that when exploited, become a powerful subversive medium. Included are depictions of women as victims of violent, sadistic and/or pornographic abuse, being "silenced" (symbolised by gags), or being subdued and punished (manacled by the neck or ankles). Some magazines for example, depict women expressing pleasure in gross violations of their body. Milder versions of this kind are procurable from newsagents or the dairy. Some graphics give emphases of society's rude side, - the
"back-front" etiquette, in which partially clad or naked buttocks are flaunted. Frontal exposure tends to aggravate the social contradictions surrounding sexuality versus maternity. Paul Friedrich gives this controversial subject discursive scholarly treatment, in which he posits "the existence of an ancient, long-suppressed lover/mother archetype" in a dichotomy of sex/sensuousness and maternity/motherliness and where the relation of women to sex has links with the liminal. These are the phantasy forms of imagery. The acting out, the real brutality against real women is connected with the proliferation of such visual forms as these. According to a recent documentary interviewing six originators of feminism in NZ, the increase of violence by men against women is related to the male response to the threat posed by the rise in women's independence of men, and of women's autonomy in general. Black feminist slogans proclaim that rape is about power, not sex. Feminist author Kathleen Barry, interviewed in one of the films presented at the Core Group Seminar, entitles one of her works, *Women's Sexual Barrier*. She views all women as potential victims.

Themes of the Old Testament and the Koran, are revised in contemporary forms that depict woman as seductress; of a lower order of nature. Feminist research into sexism and religion, equate much of today's destructive imagery, with the patriarchal idea of sex as essentially evil and synonymous with woman. Rosemary Ruether has this to say:

> The reason why sexism is the "last cause" is doubtless because its stereotypes are older and deeper in our culture than any others. It also affects the identity and personal support system of such (male) liberals more than any other issue. Sexual symbolism is foundational to the perception of order and relationship that has been built up in cultures. The psychic organisation of consciousness, the dualistic view of the self and the world, the hierarchical concept of society, the relation of humanity and nature, and of God and creation - all these relationships have been modelled on sexual dualism. Therefore the liberation of women attacks the basic stereotypes of authority, identity, and the structural relations of "reality."

Within this context, Ruether goes on to say that the repressive view of female as "alien" has been the model used in stereotyping and "inferiorisation of other subjugated groups, lower classes, and conquered races." The NZWLM overlaps these areas of concern. The common starting point is the urgent need to allow more opportunities to women at all levels. There is a concern with improving the lot of all subjugated persons for the overall betterment of society. This consciousness is held by only a minority. The difficulties groups experience in seeking to introduce reforms, may be attributed to entrenched social traditions.

**Organisation**

Mode: This is a development countering the instituted hierarchy, yet paradoxically, the basic tenets of the group themselves are moulded and bounded in a sense, but by overarching WLM policies encompassing egalitarianism. Its separate identity is juxtaposed between oppositional ties: to the feminist movement, and to a sense of responsibility towards women in normative society. Thus space for women is divided, with women inhabiting either the inside (WLM), or the outside (social structure). In this manner, not only is space allocation private for women and public for men in the overall traditional concept, but women, as either traditional or non-traditional, are themselves spatially divided in their general daily lives.

**Levelling:** One of the most obvious means of levelling, is in seating arrangements, with the floor representing the base. Floor cushions and beanbags are fairly liberally spread, and generally chosen in preference to chairs. Floor seating arrangements have further values in easy mobility. A roughly circular patterning provides simple face-to-face interaction, freer conversational flow at a uniform level, intimacy and a relaxed informality. If there is a need for each person to
speak in turn, this is done in circular fashion, usually clockwise, but this could be consciously altered, if merely to avoid becoming mechanical. Care is taken always to provide alternatives, that is, to make allowance for free choice, whatever the circumstances. Although feminist emphases are preferred, nothing is ever taken for granted. Discussion often arises spontaneously out of a situation. Each viewpoint is considered, even if not accepted unanimously. It is not the group's intention that women should be turned away over discrepancies in points of conservatism.

Habits: A degree of uniformity is observable in dress and ornamentation; also in food selection at pot luck shared meals, where similar thinking pervades other choices and practices in daily living. Women attempting to fight the more blatant depictions of sex stereotyping, would rarely resort to perpetuating these models in the use of adornment etc. Thus members tend to eliminate the structural-formal imagery denoting "ladylike" etiquette and appearance. Baggy overalls and the like and sneakers seem to proliferate. However, in liminality, as Turner is wont to point out, anything is possible. So too at one meeting, a confirmed feminist member gratefully cast off the much-despised high-heeled shoes. It is realistic to recognise, as do feminists conducting self-defence courses, that women often wear these shoes, which without attachments, make readily accessible weapons in the event of an unprecedented attack. Another point is that once members are accepted, such aberrations in dress may only be referred to perfunctorily, or if alluded to by the person concerned. Anything questionable, would be tackled directly. Trust and honesty are considered important values, as noted already. Kate once spoke of meeting compromises in dress when work or other business situations may demand this. She uses the illustration of meeting her bank manager. In other words, compromise is used according to expediency. It is unlikely that these forms of compromise would have been credited a decade earlier. Further, radical feminists often enjoy creative, sometimes bizarre experimentation with colour and stylistic dress. Separatist uniformity is more moulded, akin to separatist religious orders, so as to assert both concretely and symbolically, ascetic dedication to a cause. Political lesbian feminists shave heads and wear sexless clothing partly as a badge of this dedication. In the same way, vegetarian food is generally presented at Core Group shared meals. Discussion revealed that not all members are wholly vegetarian, but its practice is desirable. Carnivorous "behaviour" is essentially equated with the pristine human male. Another method of levelling is in the controversial leaderless/a-structural approach, where methods vary accordingly from group to group. The Core Group's processual development began with rather loose structural arrangements, to reach the proposed mediation of facilitating. The reader may be interested to compare this with The Women's Room organisation.

Leadership and Office

The instigator of the group, is the only core member experienced in handling group situations. Her undeniable qualities of leadership are underplayed, both for personal reasons and related feminist policy purposes. Instead, her skills are directed towards coordinating group members and group activities. Workload responsibilities, are distributed in accordance with individual readiness levels. Ordinarily, members indicate this maturation by offering to tackle a particular task as it arises in discussion. For Meg this process took approximately three months. Her highly developed articulation born of a very alert mind, is not matched in manual skills. This imbalance has resulted in over compensation: a tendency to be "picky" over another's spelling or grammatical errors, with instant apologies and red-faced embarrassment. Her verbiage, leading to digressions, along with interruptions and apparent domination over group discussions, is not a simple case of over-confidence. Her acute awareness of these tendencies to disrupt were only mildly rebuked. Before it became necessary to broach these problems more directly, Meg resolved the whole situation herself. This embraced other lacks in group organisation simultaneously. Her avoidance of praxis in favour of theorising she also bridged in this one swift move. Meg introduced the concept of facilitating, often used in feminist organisational situations, and also the method favoured in one Women's Ministry Forum, and at a Women's Decade Festival conference of recent experience. Paradoxically, this effort of structural-avoidance, actually
effected the group's first experience of regulating to order. From this point, a semblance of the eventual effective work-play synthesis, a mark of this group's co-operative unity, began to emerge. This direct method of approach involves informal leadership experience by rotation, so that each person has equal opportunity to control meeting procedure and members' involvement, by means acceptable to feminist ideals. The facilitator is time-keeper, itemises topics suggested, their order of priority, and approximates the duration of time necessary to discuss each. This is fitted into a time slot regulated by the member who is first to leave. Since Meg begins work early, she usually states her limit around which business is conducted. Now overall efficiency is remarkably improved. No longer are the willing and available left working up to about midnight, struggling with fatigue and failing literacy, in order to complete an urgent group letter. The important casual conversations still have a place before and after the affairs of business. The facilitator is able to check digressive discourse, and passing time. All members are learning to cope with new group skills, as part of the process of self-education. Gains in experience and self-confidence are basic to WLM aims towards the achievement of female autonomy, discussed earlier. A sheet of blank newsprint is generally placed on the floor in the centre of the encircling group. Anyone who has an idea for discussion, sketches the topic outline with a large felt pen. Each topic is then assessed according to urgency and time allocation. Within this apparent boundedness, flexibility remains. An item meriting less attention, may be dealt with cursorily, deferred, or deleted altogether. Sometimes women have to remain behind to complete unfinished work, but every attempt is made to delegate responsibilities and workload equitably.

Consensus: Organisational method is fluid, based on informality and equality, which may even reflect a certain disorder, when compared with standard meeting procedures. This same flexibility however, permits "structural" measures to invade what is essentially a structural policy. When, for instance, Kate suggested that a letterhead could be introduced to project a more professional image, Meg rejected this as tantamount to replicating commercial practices. General discussion ensued, and Meg conceded to adopting a plain letterhead, to be designed and photocopied (rather than printed), by Ingrid. Thus moves may only proceed by consensus opinion, that is, general agreement, not by majority rule. In the event of one person still in disagreement, discussion may continue at length until some compromise is reached. Should the dissenter remain adamant in the face of considered argument at all levels, the plan may be carried.

Developmental Stages

From Group To Unit: The group's present homogeneity is an observably evolved state. Initially, the collection of individuals to come together had ostensibly one common link, an urge to alter their social environment, perceived as nonsensical. Yet during that very first meeting, a more generalised rapport was evident. This was to ripen over the next eight months. The satisfaction gained from the need for active involvement helps to engender a co-operative spirit. Experience had taught that the goal to achieve social change is not attained by separate individuals. And so, by various, and mostly painful routes, these women have sought to join others facing similar problems in the hope of finding support in the quest for solutions.

Membership to such an organisation as the WLM means that women are now capable of influencing alterations in social attitudes, policies and laws, whilst at the same time being altered themselves. Realisation of this is sobering, in the recognition that such changes require responsible handling. Elements of "the personal is political" are present. Questions as to the most probable stance were topics of discussion, as in the first weeks members probed their own and others' backgrounds and feelings, to ascertain individual positions before committing their group. For some, the swing towards a radical polarity seemed inevitable. Modifying variables resulted in this arbitrary classification of "reformist", working within the system. All proposed actions are independently assessed since members' opinions may vary according to each proposal. When, for instance, a picket was proposed, some women preferred to work behind the scenes making placards, organising through telephone contacts etc. In these ways, it is possible to consider individual sensibilities, utilise particular talents and inclinations, distribute tasks fairly evenly, whilst proceeding with the action. Any overwhelming objection(s), would influence any decision.
to proceed. In this particular case, the action was called off following more detailed investigation. Taken holistically, the situation did not appear to warrant such an extreme form of protest, better withheld for any future emergency.

An earlier stage of group development is worth noting. A subtle shift by Kate abrogated group reliance and dependence on her, to one of self-reliance. She helped prearrange outlines of strategies for the meeting to follow; then mentioned casually that she would be in another centre at that time. (This was true, but timed with deliberation, since she knew, even if the women themselves did not, that they were capable of managing the group affairs.) Members discovered some latent abilities that week, after initial signs of discomfort. Kate’s shrewd test is consistent with feminist group teaching-learning therapy.

To Recapitulate

Certain ethics, both implicit and explicit, are encouraged under the auspices of the WLM. All connect with the overall goal to achieve female autonomy and self-determination. The "elder-novice" relationship is one of relative equality at all levels, with a change of self-identity and consciousness consonant with feminist membership involvement. As noted in references to Dominy, for women joining a female group, identity appears to be conceived through her identifying with this specific group. For an affiliated feminist, daily living is reordered in accordance with this teleology. Estimation of the associated change in consciousness and identity appears for these women, to be dramatic; whereas for traditional women, identity through a group seems to be more a reassertion of the status quo and of their role and position within. Status elevation within the hierarchy, may be enhanced through identification with a socially-accepted group. For those gaining membership to the NZWLM, the reverse is likely. Severence from mainstream society is assumed by the women themselves. Former ties and social networks are cut. The reordering of daily life, of new relationships and loyalties are only possible through a new consciousness. This entails a great deal of inner conflict and experimentation. Meantime, attachment to the small group gives support and reassurance. It is the contact in small groups that enables members to widen their horizons and feel a part of the movement itself.

Although membership within the WLM is often transitory, immutable traces of a member's input remains and continues to affect successive members as well as those past. This can be explained in concrete terms by witnessing the manner in which the Core Group unit has come to be ordered: its original methods; behavioural patterns of members and their interaction; group aims and expectations, and efforts to date. In short, the meanings of actions and behaviour of members are revealed through the kind of group they have formed. Under these terms, this group has achieved a great deal in realising at least some of its ideals.

Stages: The Core Group's development may be arranged in an approximate order. In the beginning stages, processes are more clearcut. After eight weekly sessions, these processes have been fairly established and tend to blur somewhat, due to overlap. The first meetings conducted at a personalised level sorted individual childhood backgrounds, fears, anxieties and joys. Random presentation of personal problems allude to early awareness of sexual discrimination, with mothers exerting a partial influence over three members. Meg's stempaternalistic upbringing casts her father in a position of adverse influence, in his adherence to an established system of European male dominance. Although ranging in degree, all members mention experiencing a sense of isolation through their assertion of a different sense of values. For one, boarding school experience was one of "loneliness" and "misery". For another member something worse occurred. She speaks of a form of "paralysis" which came to possess her creative faculties and leave her no longer able to express herself in certain symbolic forms of communication, affecting not only fine arts, but also written expression. Educational authorities had rated her as a gifted child; [the top 3-5% on national norms on an achievement measure plus evaluation of performance by subject expert(s)]. J.C. Stanley is a good reference, for example, New Directions for Testing and Measurement, 1982, No.13:97-109.

She had been given specialised assistance. She had also retained a valued asset, a sizeable vocabulary and the ability to frame it. Yet paradoxically, this was to work against her. She wanted most of all to work with her hands, preferably outdoors. Her choice of work, labouring
to build walking tracks in bushland environments, exposed her to very pronounced attitudes dividing gender and class. As the sole woman in this particular role she was ridiculed, although physically strong and able. Her manner of speech denoting a superior class affiliation, only contributed toward distancing her further. There ensued an intolerable and almost total breakdown in communication. These barriers still beset her, and how best to bridge the boundaries relating to class, sex and race, are often raised by her. An altered job and lifestyle, in particular, her membership to this group segment, has patently revised her self-worth. She has mentioned that only in the Core Group has she felt this comfortable.

1. Bonding: All members of the Core Group speak of a sense of frustration, of anger, isolation in separation, depression, and loneliness - of being at odds with conventional society: where standard ethical codes and communication seem to have little meaning. All women have experienced abuses based on sexual discrimination in work situations; forms of sexual victimisation where to make a report would jeopardise their job. All these subjects make important themes isolated by feminist theory. The anger most feminists experience is recognised as a source of power, to be channelled productively through raised consciousness in learning.

2. CR: This second level is in this group really coterminous with the first, in the processual development of the Core Group. In the beginnings of WLM, these groups were often closed purely to concentrate on CR. Many feminists believe that a fully rounded membership is only possible if a member has been through this process formally. Informal suggestions of CR methods in the Core Group include directives toward pertinent bibliographic material, exchange of books, turns in reporting a set book or article in precis followed by analysis and discussion, newsworthy items to pass round, such as newspaper or Listener articles, letters or memos from other network groups, and so on. Spontaneous consciousness-raising in group meetings often occurs amidst pre-business discussions of encounters with a public insensitive to "sexist" discriminatory practices during the intervening week. Kate, for instance, alludes to the various kinds of socially accepted media advertising confronting her en route to work, and instances of masculine behaviour such as "wolf whistling" that prompted her to form this group. She also mentions experiencing "bum pinching", - to use the vernacular, - in a crowded theatre lobby; and going beyond simple indignities, rape of a teenager in a city council carpark toilet. The exhortation of city councillors that this facility be closed at ten p.m., presupposes an enforced curfew for women at that hour; - all this and more, compelled her to attempt to form a group to instigate reforms. Occasionally unresolved problems may be passed over for collective debate. Meg had just begun her new job not long before the group's beginnings. She was concerned that her only entrance to work each day brought her unavoidably face-to-face with a "girly" calendar, stationed at the top of the stairway. Although offensive to her, it was obviously an accepted part of the surroundings to male, and apparently female, workmates alike. At least, discreet enquiries revealed that no-one seemed to comprehend her predicament. Now as a member of the Core Group, she felt all the more compelled to voice some form of protest. Newness in both areas compounded her confusion. A number of suggestions were offered by the group. Everyone agreed that she should express her feelings as moderately as possible. Her stated problems were (1) her emotions were strong, those of anger and embarrassment; (2) she felt completely isolated in this situation, with little expectation of understanding from workers or personnel in charge; (3) she valued this job; (4) such behaviour from a new and low-ranking worker would undoubtedly be regarded as presumptuous. Being given a sympathetic audience sufficed for the time being, and there the matter has rested.

Problems of this nature become easier to handle with experience and confidence. It still requires tact and patience. For communication fails often enough to warrant alternative strategies: stickers, protest banners, even mock dramas are staged outside businesses considered to thrive through offensive exploitation. A dealer in photographic equipment was pinpointed for consistently utilising pictorials of provocative semi-clad female poses in full window displays.

3. Ideology: there are different standpoints on different issues, but there are genuine attempts to transmit meaningful codes. Often mere words are inadequate where there is a conflict of ideals.
and actuality, as the example above illustrates.

**On Formulating a World View**

We have glanced at some factors contributing to a feminist consciousness. For many women, discrepancies in the organisation of NZ society are sufficient to affect the quality of their lives. Feminist analysis has isolated certain faults pertaining to the hierarchical system. Oppressive forms discernable in emphases on differentiation of class, race and sex, are considered to be a major cause of upset in the lives of both men and women. For a number of feminists, practices of sex and gender discrimination, place women in the position of "victim : male-tyrant" relationship. A link may be established between this perceived dominant:subordinate position in sex-gender relationships and other perceived forms of oppression, for example, homosexuality. Other feminists take a less extreme view but seek to expose certain practices often unquestioned because they are traditional, as exampled with the calendar situation. Responses to introductions to feminism in the early 1970s reflecting an ambivalence towards the feminist movement, are typical at that time. Traces of this remain, due in part to society's projected image of feminists and feminism, and strengthened by the aggressive posturing of some feminists themselves.

I started thinking of feminists about 1971 - very vaguely, superficially rather frightened of it, but wanting it at the same time.... I was always going to a meeting but never got going, I always wanted to but never did.... Feminist comment about women's problems made some sense. It wasn't all accidental ... suffering things like underpaid ... experiencing inequalities in their personal relationships with men as well as work relationships.

1974 I - that was my first experience with feminism and that was the first time I had ever found a group of women that I really clicked with ... the Theory Group.... Since then I have been able to sort of integrate my life better.... I spent another six months mainly just consciousness-raising and after that I went away again and nearly died of depression because I felt so dependent on the group.

**Group Processual Stages in Summary**

These are classified as follows: (1) bonding (2) CR (3) ideology (4) method (5) actions (6) relationships and communications. Stages 1-4 have been discussed in the course of this assay of the Core Group. Additional examples are immediately below. Stages 5-6 may be illuminated in the separate descriptions of the Seminar and the Women's Walk.

1. Bonding: self-knowledge and its relation to others in the group and in the women's movement; interaction and group skills; strategies emphasising the relation of traditional women to the social structure, and suggested revision of laws, consistent with findings in terms of this relationship.

2. CR: learning esoteric knowledge of the movement; imparting results of this in a basic reformulation (on a selective basis), to "outsiders". From theory to practice. (Spreading the Word).

3. Ideology: common perspicacity leading to formulating aims, ideals and strategies.

4. Method: construction of work plans from the above outline in order to execute group reforms.
5. Actions implemented.

6. Relationships and Communication: the Core Group in relation to social structure; women in society; men in society. The Group in relation to overall national-international WLM network. Of primacy, is the development of relationships and communication within the Core Group itself.

In returning more specifically to the Core Group of study, it is interesting to note that (1) each individual's occupation involves work in "establishment" institutional systems; that (2) each member has experienced some form of sexual harassment in her work situation, the most illuminating perhaps, being Fiona's position. Although she works ostensibly on equal terms and qualifications with male colleagues, she is frequently "hassled". That is, she is recognised in terms of gender, and so differentiated.

At present, due to increasing instances of female harassment, the university women's group, in conjunction with allied campus groups in other centres, are drawing attention to this fact. Traditional lines of communication being utilised include student newspaper articles, forums and information booths in central locations. Less traditional means are open air theatre and warning stickers in women's toilets. The first conference on sexual harassment in NZ, was held in May, 1985 to explore three main themes: (1) its reality (2) how to deal with it, and (3) prevention. The first task is definition. Its effects are important, and personal and institutional ways of dealing with the problem need to be considered. So too is the relation of social approval and promotion of sexual harassment. Feminist networks are strongly in support of this move.

The following list of network groups current at the time of writing, indicate the variety in interest-focus, the flexibility and versatility of members and their groups, and degree of overlap into related levels of inequality and social needs. Offshoots and variations occur from time to time. For example, a Students Against Racism group sprang up to counter implications of an Immigration Bill to be implemented during 1984. Its focus was narrowed to this issue. It was organised by a small number of campus feminists, but open to men and women.

Examples of Network Clusters: Baby Unit Support Group; Early Childhood Workers' Union [branch]; Health Collective; Sisters Overseas [SOS, branch]; Women Against Pornography; Women's Refuge; Rape Crisis; The Working Women's Council; Young Pacifica; White Women Against Racism; Black Women's Group; Nga Wahine.

VII. SEMINAR

Forward planning and enthusiasm was the key to the success of this first major venture of the Core Group, numbering six. Seven additional women attended the morning session, with an interchange of three new participants to total seven in the afternoon, plus the six organisers. It involved a great deal of co-operation, communication and shared learning of group skills. Involvement this time had to exceed group boundaries and include an unknown public and the press. A conservative newspaper sent a reporter to interview two members, but the item did not appear. A community newspaper with a sympathetic woman editor, permitted free advertising, inserted an unedited preparatory resumé of the group's aims and activities, and a report of the seminar.

Questions of structure arose in the planning stages, with reference to standard seminar procedure. Consensus opinion favoured informality and the intercession of some structure to begin the morning and afternoon opening sessions. Addresses by three members, approached the topic from diverse angles as a leadup. Kate spoke of the origins of the Core Group. Her unobtrusive co-ordinating skills maintained flow throughout the seminar. Members took turns round the circle to explain their purpose in joining. Handouts and visual displays provided further information. Lee opened the afternoon session by glancing at some aspects pertaining to women and the topic in relation to the law. Before an attempt is made to consider amendments, this subject requires some examination in relation to the topic of discussion: inadequate censoring and classification of videos flooding the NZ market. The film Not A Love
Story, was shown. Produced by the Canadian National Film Board, it is obtainable free on interloan, through the NZ Women’s Liberation network. It is well documented, and relies a great deal on symbolic imagery to distinguish between the concepts of erotica and pornography, and to present case studies to exemplify the use of these in global commercial spheres. Collating and compiling video excerpts on these and related topics had been difficult, as this was an unknown field for all members. A helpful male collective member, loaned his video recorder and assisted during numerous "teething" problems. Workshops had been planned to follow the general discussion periods, but excellent rapport precluded any unnecessary division. Tea breaks were productive and even managed an amicable distancing of smokers from non-smokers.

One of the most discussed subjects to emerge as incidental to topics specified, was the recurring problem of communication with women at different levels. It was noted that a seminar does not generally attract women of diverse backgrounds. Even should this be achieved, the question remains, what constitutes a common language? This is not elitist in outlook, but the confrontation of a widely recognised concern in feminist politics. One woman working as the representative of a women’s labour union has no difficulty in this. In her experience, it means learning others’ codes and making opportunities at a personal level.

Members involved in the organising, expressed various degrees of nervousness preceding the seminar. Meg overflowed the zip, caused partly by unfamiliarity. She mentioned during introductions that she has had to overcome severe awkwardness and shyness. Lack of confidence appears to afflict many NZ women. The whole small group process is centred around reversing this sense of inadequacy. Yet on this occasion, Meg provided the ideas and the expertise to synchronise both the start and the finish of the seminar. She had everyone laughing and interacting almost at once by utilising one of the CR "mixing games". The idea is to throw a cushion to someone, calling your own and that person’s name. This is more complicated than it sounds. At the end of the seminar, when participants were feeling strained and fatigued, Meg led with guitar and everyone sang the WL songs Anna had photocopied for those unfamiliar with the words. This strain had been anticipated. Core Group members had experienced it many times during preparation. To scrutinise and edit video material of a violent and sadistic nature in order to discuss and analyse its content is a very unpleasant task. Nevertheless, the "brainstorm" of ideas to censure the importation of these videos, along with suggested amendments in classification, seemed justification enough.

The seminar achieved aims beyond all expectations. Membership and outside support increased, encouraged by the sincerity of the group’s amateurism. Interaction sparked off experiential ideas. Despite concern over communicating, with the germ of conceiving this project, some inroads into reform were being realised. Preparatory work demanded all the ethics of WLM. Patience scarcely faltered, although a few truisms were bandied around on occasions. This is not fully explained by the common focus. Bonds of honesty, trust, and a reliance on combined resources had already been sufficiently forged by this stage. Known individual quirks in temperament were certainly tried in this co-operative effort and if anything, have tended to seal these bonds more firmly.

Here is an extract of a feminist song:

Women all around the world Every colour, religion and age One thing we’ve got in common We can all be battered and raped

Some have an easy answer Buy a lock and live in a cage But my fear is turning to anger And my anger is turning to rage And I won’t live my life in a cage - no! (rpt.)

Holly Near.
VIII. THE WOMEN'S WALK

Ten turned up, all members. The walk was open to any women, and did not exclude male children. Advertising followed the usual local Network routes, and included the student and community newspapers. This combination leisure-learning activity, affirmed or dispelled a number of fragmented notions members had gleaned about each other during more intensive group situations. The occasion provided an opportunity to deepen understanding of oneself and one another in a mutually agreeable alternative group activity. That day, many gaps were filled as wide-ranging topics were discussed, whilst incidental clues or direct allusions unfolded about one another and their lives, both past and present. The tramping track had special meaning for Meg, for she had once helped to form it. Although this particular communal working environment had not been satisfying, due to the barriers of gender and class, she prefers to work in a community in this way. The tramp led many kilometers upward through native bush, primary and secondary forest growth and down towards alluvial tracts. Kate, an enthusiastic environmentalist and well used to leading survey parties, imparted a great deal of her knowledge of flora and fauna and its development on the way. She patiently repeated botanical names to refresh recalcitrant memories. Sometimes the track narrowed and drew everyone closer together in single file. On these occasions, there were opportunities for everyone to contribute to the conversation. Those who preferred vigorous exercise, would often move on ahead, leaving the others to absorb their surroundings. So group formations would be dictated, and subsequent interactions follow. Mostly, the women walked in twos or in small clusters, seldom alone. Sometimes a pair or trio would slow down, engaged in earnest conversation. A halt for lunch seemed appropriate near the summit. The river could be viewed snaking far below. With the party reunited, reciprocity flowed in the exchange of food and in personal interchange of ideas and goodwill. As we sat eating on a bank, slightly apart from the others, Meg chose to open out and express some deeply personal concerns. Overt behaviour and comments could teach a great deal about each other as individuals and also about oneself, in relation to other members and the group as a whole. The deliberate divesting of gender roles was pronounced in many ways. Clothing was practical, roughly masculine and suited to the purpose. Certainly not a sign of fashion consciousness existed here. Anna wore a pair of ancient shorts over "longjohns", wool socks and tramping boots. A battered oilskin parka protected an old wool shirt and jersey. Eating habits displayed disdain of unnecessary "manners", as when the end to an enjoyable lunch was punctuated by some one's loud belch. Postures, a subject previously discussed among the group, asserted a studied disregard for approved standards, with legs and bodies comfortably sprawled, The conversation was liberally peppered with epithets, a little muffled when mouths were full. Conversely, the dismissal of certain manners did not occlude consideration for others. Kate, as the more experienced elder, unobtrusively integrated individuals to preserve a synthesis. There was no chance to feel isolated or neglected, as she complemented different levels of ability, fitness and experience by skilfully moving among stragglers, whilst keeping the rest in view. The selfless and the selfish stand out more glaringly during excursions such as these. Values already implemented within the Core Group's urban activities were sufficiently binding to produce, with slight variations, an overall concern for the welfare of others. Monthly group therapy sessions attempt to assist in difficult transitional processes. Traditional gender conceptions must first be unlearned in order to adjust to the many difficulties in adopting new codes.
Experiments in communal living in the early 1970s were fraught with difficulties as well:

I lived in a nuclear family setup and after we had been meeting together for some time ... the four couples decided to live together, as because women's liberation.... I was really lonely and not only lonely but intellectually lonely, and Sarah and Ivan weren't getting on that well in the nuclear setup ... and we got this house and there were two kids ... and after a while the men stopped coming. Once we started living together the men stopped coming to the group and we started being more lonely and I can't remember about that emotional decision....

We have had a lot of hassles. Jane didn't get on with Tim. There was a power struggle. I didn't get on with Tim either ... and they just withdrew into the couple unit ... these big emotional traumas.... The house was ghastly because we never had enough space to ourselves and noisy. You never had any peace or tranquility.... Things like learning to share all my wedding presents....

I went to work ... and I'll never forget that because that gave so much ... well-being and independence.... Rick had slept with this woman at work, his work ... and it was the first time that I found that my theory ... my psyche, couldn't cope with my theory and it was a very shattering experience.

The women's walk group returned pleasantly weary to the shelter of the cars, just as a rainstorm descended. It poured all the way back. After a warmup in a coffee shop in town, everyone separated to return to their respective lifestyles.

IX. INTRODUCTION TO RITUAL

Of Witchcraft:

In 1985, the NZ Listener made the startling pronouncement in a cover story, that "witchcraft in NZ is alive and well", although "so far, ... largely a feminist phenomenon". Traditions stem from USA, where goddess worship "is common to all shades of modern feminist witchcraft....

At either end of the scale, is the Starhawk tradition, heading the 'Covenant of the Goddess, an officially sanctioned church in the US"". Feminists relate persecution of witches to misogynist attacks. Accepted terms of usage may depend on the coven or circumstance. It may be witch, pagan, neo-pagan or spiritual feminist. Witchcraft does not divide body/soul, good/evil. Thus there is no conception of the original sin. Nor is there recognition of Satan, according to the argument. As it has been observed in other areas of feminism, ethics are equated with responsibility, to oneself and to others. It is this aspect of morality that governs actions.

In NZ, covens appear not to have a communication network, nor admit to knowing about the other. Membership is traditionally kept to thirteen. If this is exceeded, a new coven may be formed in a separate locality, with its own esoteric knowledge and rituals. "Many NZ groups follow this [Dianic] tradition but the separatism may be transitional." In quotation, this is explained:

Women have been hard done by over the centuries and like the feminist movement in other areas of life there is going to be a separatist thing for a while. 
This opinion of a practising "witch" in NZ, is relevant to this thesis, for separatism has been hypothesised as being the nearest form of feminist marginality to the transitional liminal stage of rites of passage. It is apparent that this "state" is no doubt only as permanent as the ability to resolve the reasons for this separation. It is this difference, the inability to reach this final resolution that Turner has objectified, and on this basis has relegated non-traditional women to a marginal category. The ritualised, religious character of spiritual (cultural) feminism, is also close to traditional rites of passage.

This same informant explains ritual forms. These symbolic themes are associated with the affirmation of femaleness. The term "feminine" in these contexts is disassociated from gender conceptions of traditional paternalistic societies. Basically rituals celebrate the seasons, converting seasonal energy flows. "Fun is an essential element." The words "fun" and "exhilarating" were used to describe the naming ritual below.

Samhain, celebrated on the the first of May, is the onset of winter in NZ. The efficacy of the circle is once more demonstrated in group formation. Hands joined and raised, and minds collectively direct energy-power. The circle no doubt contains the energy flow and its even distribution, and signifies the cyclic nature of the seasons as well. Death is celebrated in conjunction with resurrection; a positive perspective, akin to the cyclical processes in nature. Aspects of human life, aging and death are viewed similarly. Rituals have been adapted to the southern hemisphere.

The Lammas ritual is a harvest celebration. Key elements enacted in this liminal position are in the interstices between hope and fear. Again the circle is formed, and chants reply to the question of the priestess, "What do you fear?" The passing round of bread figures which are then cast into a fire, works to free the women of their fears. Initiation rituals are closed, as tradition dictates. Their details are secret. They appear to emulate rites de passage in the cyclic simulation of death, to announce the rebirth. In other words, the casting out of one's former identity, before self-affirmation of a new identity, and self-knowledge, gained in liminality. Purification, a trial or test, the formation of a linked circle, avowals and feasting are ingredients of initiations. Dominy writes of these rituals in relation to feminism in NZ.

Spiritual feminism exists on this campus. In regard to "hexing", casting spells, a sense of responsibility remains primary. This may be lifted in the case of a rapist. However, the beating of an effigy may constitute vengeance.

X. A RITUAL

The occasion was a name change, synonymous with identity change. The time of year Hallow’een, permitting a dual celebration and feast. Approximately twenty women were counted present. It is little wonder that a committed feminist with the name of Wiseman would desire a name change. She chose the new name-identity of Wisewitch.

A local member attending the ceremony, had another friend there also, who had recently lost her father. She felt that both her presence and the ritual would help support her friend. This is another exemplification of the importance of consanguinal ties. In this case, the loss of a male relative still matters and could be discussed.

The ceremony was spontaneously created round its celebratory contextual themes, of Woman, energy-power, death and rebirth. The actors were involved in its creation, and made it personalised. Rites had been performed in this sacred place quite recently and its participants guided this ritual performance. It was decided by all present, to bring out and emphasise, coterminous with the naming rite, the theme of menstruation, contravening regular social practices.

Strands of red wool (blood), were wound round and round menstruants and then the other women, to unite all. Silver lamé thread (moon), was wound round also, making a web uniting all women through space and time. This ancient symbol of the feminine returns to past mythology, to the goddess and fertility personification of Life/Death, so stressing Womaness and power. This symbolic representation is a denial of repressive male structures. Sexual reproduction incorporates the uniqueness of Woman power. Belief in this lore, in revering a pastmetaphoric...
state, draws from this the strength to reinstate womanhood and autonomy.

A third strand green (earth), was interwoven, symbolising woman's link with nature and the environment. This tends to reinforce the fertility/growth/strength theme.

Interpreted Meanings From the Ritual As Described:

The first thread represents the disruption of traditional taboos relating to women and menstrual pollution, by emphasising and celebrating woman's unique power of reproduction. It is released from hidden denigrating associations and thus symbolises women's liberation from male/structure and elements of divisiveness. The rite expresses the autonomous control of women over their own bodies and environment.

The second thread is a direct link with the moon, symbol of the feminine, guarding womanhood past and present, in the moon's continuity over time and space.

The third thread has sexual-reproductive (personal) and fertility-reproductive (universal) links, implying harmonious interdependence.

In toto the threads represent a spiritual aspect of wholeness, a sense of harmony that encompasses the body and universe; life and death. Bonds are strengthened in ritual enactment. More specific to the ceremony, the initiate is now fully incorporated into this secret band. The aggregation, the third step in traditional rites of passage is here not a return to society, but into an alternative community, a transitional resolution.

The threads are then cut. Severance allows individuality to remain intact; it allows for creativity and autonomy. The rite recognises freedom of expression, whilst simultaneously denying access to the social world outside in the binding to this esoteric world. There is a deeper, perhaps unconscious, homage inherent in this rite. In the binding and the severing are the paradoxes of life and death. Hope comes with the vision of self-knowledge, self-realisation in self-identity. The network of interwoven threads and their cut-off, may also represent contradictions within Woman Culture, those of communitas and independence. And of its contradictory relationship with outside society: bound in an interdependence necessary to survival and marginalised through the need for autonomy. Responsibility is to others, but also to oneself.

Finally, there is a sealing of self-affirmation and expression that self-identity remains intact. The cut threads are distributed to individuals to use creatively. One woman has interwoven threads through her natural wool jersey to create a figure, a moon and trees. Another woman, stifled of her former creativity by the system she has only recently begun to denounce, has not done anything with her threads as yet.

ETHNOGRAPHIES II

XI. THE WOMEN'S ROOM
Introduction:

The background to the achievement of this space for women is one of struggle. Male students felt threatened perhaps and responded with cries of sexual discrimination. Why a special space for women? Women had already encroached on a traditionally male preserve by attending university. The suggested territory flared up partially concealed prejudices and reactions, chiefly conveyed by letters and articles in the student newspaper, with succeeding attacks on radical feminism, lesbianism and witchcraft.

Mention of the previous year's attempt to take away The Women's Room, had obviously left a deep mark, evident in the long discussion given to the topic. It seems that after a fight to gain their own space, there continued a fight to retain it. The room had been ransacked and the women recounted this with genuine despondency. It was suggested that stickers on the door does not help to inspire confidence. They read: "Men Keep Out." But it seems that these were put there after the ransacking. Lesbian stickers on the walls however, also tend to alienate. To the
query "Do you have to be a lesbian to join the group?" came the reply, "Oh no, there are a lot of us straights." In fact, one of the discussion points to follow was how lesbians at a student pub had been "hassled" and told to "push off". Similar treatment was received in a coffee bar, by women dressed in overalls. (a nervous glance at my own attire - overalls.) Such treatment of minority groups is a matter of grave concern to the movement.

This is a more homogeneous group in that locale; student status, age, class and ethnicity are most nearly similar. Membership for a year's subscription to a university club is currently two dollars. (Ten paying members constitutes a recognised club.) Numbers tend to fluctuate in accordance with the terms' work, but may range from ten to twenty, with as many as seventy members, many non-financial. These variations complicate attempts to organise activities. Interests are recognised as being too broad. Once more, the cohesive value of small groups is recognised.

"Women's work is hard work." It requires commitment, dedication, constancy, energy and enthusiasm. If a number of these attributes are absent in this group at times, it may be put down to inexperience and the transience common to shifting university populations, as much as to lack of organisation and oscillations of members. The disruptive elements of the university calendar reverberate throughout the whole institution, affecting individuals and groups alike. In this instance, it may be felt in group instability. Attendance at weekly lunchtime meetings average about ten, making this group larger than the small group situation, but not always enough to warrant the subdivision recommended. Meetings are for the purpose of structuring an otherwise casual drop in situation. Here, university affairs pertaining to women in particular may be discussed, decisions acted out within the wider university context and conducted in the customary manner. The campus group is part of the local urban Network.

Aims are stated through the medium of the Network grapevine, the student newspaper, posters, stalls in the university union foyer, letters and representation at student council meetings and university forums. More power has been realised with the appointment of a Women's Rights officer in 1984. This was not achieved without a great deal of debate, and male students were vociferous in pursuing their argument that this group of women was once again guilty of elitist tactics.

Why then is [sic] a certain few rooms and land on this campus of both men and women, set aside specifically and only for women. As a guy myself, I don't like the thought that part of my fees may go to the upkeeping of this "Women's Room". Basically I feel no desire to go within a 20 metre radius of this room."

Nethertheless, the room remains and a Women's Rights officer was installed and kept busy with campaigns allied with national concerns, the most urgent being that of discrimination against university women and the best policies to deal with this, whilst relating the problem to all aspects of concern to staff and students. Commemoration of various important days in the women's calendar are organised around such events as International Women's Day; specific awareness weeks, for example, Rape Crisis Week, Abortion Week, Lesbian Awareness Week, Anorexia Awareness; peace projects; issues relating to racist, sexist and other concerns, often backing the women's alliance Network events as well as those of university. Conscientious core members can never get enough assistance, for as in other areas of WLM, they are constantly overworked.

This group represents a more radical segment of the women's Network. The issues it handles cover a wide range of controversial topics, and the stance is firm. Students in general may be classed as liminal, in relation to their society, particularly those suspended between the worlds of childhood and adulthood. At any event, for the full time student, this phase and status implies transition. The position of these women of The Women's Room, in relation to traditional university life and still further within greater society, is marginal in the extreme. Myths surrounding The Women's Room are exaggerated. The inhabitants of this space reflect a consciousness of their outsiderhood. The door and window are kept closed in fear of malicious eavesdroppers or intruders. One window has bars, others are opaque and covered with stickers and
posters. An incident that gives credence to the suspected depth of hatred and suspicion bred of fear of the unknown, came during involvement in three arenas: with this group, the Core Group, and a "mature" student body. There was to be a Community Awareness Week in the local Public Library. Various Network activities' groups were to set up stalls. It seemed sensible to liaise the two university stalls. The first intimation of animosity came when a member of the mature group wanted to ascertain that the tables be kept separate. "We don't want to be mistakenly associated with those people." Attempts to rationalise this request, revealed that a fear of reprisal from her own ethnic community had prompted this woman's remarks. She was genuinely distressed that she should be seen fraternising with such "extremists". Her own position was already precarious as it was considered an innovation for a woman to be attending university. Another woman within her ethnic community had asked if she had "gone butch," as she had been observed wearing jeans to university.

To return to the campus group in relation to larger group organisation, one difficulty is due to women being at different stages of feminist development. Some need support, whilst others are ready for action. With these differing levels, there results a conflict of interests, varying abilities to cohere and to relate. The now familiar reluctance to take over leadership and the avoidance of any structural forms, is more forcibly enacted here, even in a student world where values countering formalism is not unusual. A typical scene would be one where dress is very casual, and skirts are seldom favoured. Badges, (one said "witch") and earrings, (oo), are the commonest symbols reflecting counter-structural affiliations. Hair is mostly spiked, shaved or long. Postures sprawl, some quite languid, on easy chairs or floor. Language is invariably cryptic, liberally sprinkled with feminist jargon and occasional verbiage.

Procrastination of anything that represents progress seems to be the preference. Desultory remarks like "I hate doing this", [sigh], from one overtaxed member forced to lead the proceedings since no-one else will. She reads correspondence aloud, placing letters on the floor. One remains unopened as it is addressed to a specific member. When a reply is required: "Oh well, I'll write this." Occasionally, group letters, as in other Network segments, may be composed on the spot.... "What'll we talk about now?" (repeated sporadically) are indicative of some of the general feelings. Jocular remarks are just as common, and relieve any likelihood of tension. In fact, a great deal of tolerance and consideration is expressive of all WLM groups of empirical experience. Yet inertia, perhaps disillusionment? seems to be prevalent, and the lack of effective organisation a major flaw, as with the WLM as a whole. This group in particular seems depressed in its efforts, and it is reasonable to assume that this could stem from continuous abrasive outside confrontations.

After some weeks of semi-chaos, elements of order presided. For example, topical points for discussion were pinned to a wall for perusal. Leadership and organisation were kept suitably low-key but sufficient to maintain an integral force necessary to achieve certain aims. One solid group member was farsighted enough to prepare for the next term ahead prior to vacations. By the middle of the first term, informal friendship ties were apparent, often due to drop in contacts at other times. Late afternoon is popular. Socials and alternative meeting venues, such as potluck meals at women's flats, seem to have been arranged fairly frequently during this first term. Monthly women's dances at a church hall are well attended by this group.

In sum, The Women's Room represents the themes of this thesis, thresholds: marginality and women's particular utilisation of space. The Women's Room, is a space symbolising a sanctum from a hostile outer world. The door with its bold message "Men Keep Out", signifies both the barrier and threshold between the inside and the outside. As a minority group, these women are isolates from much of mainstream university life, and that of wider society. The message of this solidarity support group, is one of loyalty and inner integrity, along with preservation of esoteric knowledge. This message is verbally reiterated as one vital to ensuring group survival. Women who fail in these respects, are strongly and openly criticised. The subject of trust is raised often. Since outside threat has been backed by action, membership entails more risk, making the group and its members more vulnerable. At the same time, students are in a better position to organise for protest, whether political or not.

The mystification of the occupants of The Women's Room is no doubt conveyed in part by the masks worn when outside. Masks of apparent indifference are projected to hide an inner
insecurity and sensitivity. Open Day does tend to contravene some superstitions, but sceptics would maintain that trappings of a secretive nature would be hidden on that occasion and its objectives are purely a "blind." The ideas, behaviour and actions of these women are perceived to be socially destructive in that they represent an element likely to denigrate any established traditions. Distancing noticeably increases as women become further ostracised by exaggerated myths and stereotypes. Threats to established university traditions are an expectation. But for these women who demand private space, the threat is of a different order. Certain behaviours have merited traditional acceptance to become institutionalised. Until recently, for instance, certain male halls of residence, have escaped serious censure in the annual performance of "initiation rites" upon "first-years". The emergence of radical feminist women requiring a segregated space is a new threat and does not fit any known category.

The secrecy that surrounds The Women's Room may perhaps be imaged within the original Judeo-Christian equation of the evil nature of woman being rooted in female sexuality: whilst an imbalance of power and the threat to the existing structural order may explain to some extent the vigorous responses. However, to use Mary Douglas' [1966] implied statement once more, that what is unclear is unclean, seems to most concisely summarise this situation.

Patterns from fieldnotes include the question of free choice where women at times simply wish to be with other women in their own space, without the company of men, to "take over". Feelings of anger is commonly mentioned in collectivities and there is need for a place where women can work with others to do something about it.

One recognisable communication problem of concern to be discussed in session, was in the inadequacy of welcome to newcomers. Perhaps this may evoke a somewhat different picture of the occupants of The Women's Room from that viewed from the outside.

**ETHNOGRAPHIES III**

**XII. THE WOMEN'S NETWORK MEETING**

There were thirteen women present at this fated and final meeting; some with children. All were Caucasian except for four representatives of the Black Women's group, who entered together at the last moment. They clustered at the far end of the WRC. All were visibly nervous and three kept their heads and eyes lowered. There was a tension in the room that was difficult to identify at that stage. Having sought permission to enter, the next task was to introduce myself and my purpose to the assembled group. Almost everyone sat on floor cushions in a circular formation. They appeared to fall into three categories, discernable in modes of dress, behaviour and speech. (1) A Maori-Polynesian support group of four, representing the Black Women's group. (2) A section of white women strongly empathetic to the black group, dressed mostly in layers of long loose apparel, with informal speech and manner, and rather surprisingly, many were of ample proportions. One arrived late and began munching a large green apple, which she proceeded to share. (3) A section wearing masculinised clothing, and some in modish or homespun dress. Hair is either very short or very long; speech educated and articulate, and given a more formal emphasis than the latter group.

Apologies were read. Then silence. Eventually someone addressed the topic: the future of Network meetings owing to the decline of numbers. She added that it was possible that these meetings may have outlived their purpose, and suggested that comments round the circle would be useful. Thus the speaker quickly exonerated herself of any responsibility in taking over a leadership role. Another woman offered to take the minutes, then responsibilities were passed over to the group.

Reasons were advanced for the lack of attendance, (only two groups out of twelve had been present the previous month). Suggested possibilities included waning interest, everyone too busy with individual groups and other activities, support satisfaction in small groups. Then came the question, do Network meetings need to be more congenial? This most nearly broached the
underlying cause.

Another point to discuss was whether or not to continue; and whether alternative liaisons, for example, the Network newsletter would suffice. Did poor attendance at socials have any connection? How about potluck meals? They're not too "meetingish". Anyway, these meetings are merely an academic exercise, "headtripping".

So ideas continued round the circle. Then it was the Maori spokeswoman's turn. Her friends remained mute, only shyly nodding their approval. Silence descended once more. She sat on a stool and thrust her head into her hands. In a rather muffled voice, she said, "How am I going to put this?" Her dilemma lay in a recognisable communication gap between cultures and intrinsic understanding. She anticipated certain misinterpretation. This astute woman was fully aware of two entirely different experiential levels on which the respective belief systems are based. All at once she stood up. Out poured a tirade of words with impassioned gestures that was very moving. Yet what she said was not incoherent either. Some of her usage was highly emotive and idiosyncratic. It was also effective because it was real.

I hate coming to one of these meetings.... I get the tremblies when I have to come to one of these.... All the black women dread them. I'd much rather be with my kids. You don't know what it is to be a black feminist. Black women are not comfortable. I tell people over and over what it's like to be a black woman.... White women are at the bottom of the elite group. But Maori women are at the bottom of the dirt pile. This movement lacks honesty and commitment to one another.... You all want the chance to climb the corporate ladder the same as white men....

An interjection: What can we do to make black women more comfortable?

Reply: How can you make us more comfortable? Do you want me to spread my whole guts on the floor? Listen what I said.... Get off my back. Just get off my f--- back. I'm so tired. I'm so tired....

As the lowest on the scale of the oppressed, she has been made to grovel in the basest manner of human indignities. Nor is this the first outburst. As she made ready to leave, the others followed. Then she did a surprising thing. Without ado, she moved round the circle shaking hands and kissing each on the cheek. Then she left.

The effect of this honest delivery and her sealing gesture of sisterhood left no-one unaffected. As class-and-education bound, these women's issue of sexism as a male problem had been trivialised. As persons they now seemed somehow hollow. All subsequent reactions expressed a sense of guilt and need for atonement.

The position of the women in the second arbitrary category, above, is seen to be ambiguous. Their guilt lies in being white. Although this empathy was acknowledged in special gestures during the Maori woman's leavetaking of this group, she knew also that as white women, their experience is still not her experience. For women in the third category, there are accusations of elitism, due to unfortunate comments made in embarrassment during the scene earlier. One had attempted to defend this stronghold of obvious privilege:

It is the way I live in the system. I'd be foolish not to take advantage of my education, position and work in society. To maintain my self-esteem. My job is important. It has to be self first or there's no use further.

There is guilt here too because the WLM teaches egalitarianism for all women.
The substance of the Maori women's grievance is historical and difficult for contemporary Pakeha to grasp as their personal responsibility. It goes back to European usurpation of Maori land, some of this tapu [sacred]. Land as a commodity also represents mana [dignity, prestige], and in consequence, Maori power and privilege in this plural society have been lowered, along with their wealth. The whole conception of Maori subordination in society now, is at baseline, crucial to this sense of injustice inflicted in the past. This tends to distort any potential relationship between Maori and Pakeha. From this young Maori activist's feminist position, the hierarchical pyramid of power consists of gradient rankings of white men and their social organisation from the apex; white women are below white men; black men are next, with black women at the base. From this perspective, it can be seen that white women are reasonably well off. It is her contention that it is the [white] feminist intention to topple males in high ranking positions by using the women's movement, in order to take their place. Since it is only the white feminist who has the power in reality, there can be no equality for all women. Thus the reasons for assembling together are poles apart. Ideologies and goals are incompatible, hence black women can never feel comfortable with what is essentially, white feminism.

Urgent separate meetings were to follow this one, but no solution has yet been found to bridge this gap. Integration is only possible through comprehension and understanding. The Maori spokeswoman offered a partial resolution when she said:

You need to look at yourselves. Educate yourselves. To learn to understand the Maori culture. We cannot do it for you.

It is from this taking-off point that various Network groups are seeking to make their reparation resolute. There are to be no more Network meetings. But there appears to be no immediate solution either. This problem of ethnocentrism has long been one causation of splits within the women's movement. The Black Women's group is heavily involved with other Maori issues, for instance, Waitangi Day protests. The baseline each group works from is vital to understanding the perspectives of different backgrounds and abilities. The split between sexism, classism and racism is evident. Men have also accused white feminists of using the movement for their own ends. In addition is the accusation that this is to be at the expense of continued oppression of the black segment of the population.

The importance of this crucial meeting cannot be over-emphasised. In this miniature drama lie deeper problems relevant to the broader section of NZ society. The problems of pluralism in class society.

SUMMARY

The power of networking strategies is to support and effect change. The most efficient vehicle functioning within the network system is that of the small group. This original mode was discovered in the early stages of NZWLM, where task focus or purpose centralised its aims and motivations. The Collective in local feminist development gave way to networking. But Broadsheet continues as a collective, functioning to cement networks and operating as an integral binding force for this system nationwide.

One purpose in comparing and contrasting the Core Group with The Women's Room campus group is to show that within networks, small or larger group development creates and maintains its own character, whilst following and adhering to the more generalised ethical model structuring the a-structural patterns of the WLM. The transcripts provide insights into personal feelings that have directed women towards WLM membership, their development along with their movement, through to the present day.

The quest for evidence of "marginality" and its constituents has been amply demonstrated. To enumerate:

(1.) Group flexibility, in playing down structured organisational components, out of which comes evolvement and/or devolvement, as it seems necessary. Moves are made according to consensus,
and in this as in all aspects of group interaction, the human element is foremost. The leaderless-structureless movement is only partially successful. It remains one of the dividers of policy. The Core Group has succeeded in modifying the use of structure according to need.

(2.) Levelling in its various forms, to the stripping of social status and role.

(3.) Organised networking is important. The support given to marginal groups in seeking alternative options works both for political strategy and personal affirmation. It backs attempts at self-sufficiency, as in separatist experimentation. In the meantime, this relative state and interdependence needs to be recognised, for although dependence on centralised structure is decreasing, it still exists.

As a tactical strategy, networking is a vital system of communication; a number of adjectives spring to mind - integrative, unifying, reinforcing and stabilising. There are links with the past that assist continuance by providing meaning and goals. Vacillations in membership loyalty are frequent, due to demands of task commitment.

Comparisons and contrasts of group studies provide insight into often socially unrecognised degrees of variation associated with activities and behaviour within the bounds of feminism and feminist categories.

(4.) Broadsheet disseminates alternative ideals whilst operating on a compromise basis, mediating between the extreme radical and the more conservative reformist levels. This stance is a cause of dissent among radical thinkers.

(5.) The Women's Network Meeting: The present position has been described by one representative as "on standby" or "at a standstill". Flexibility and adaptability are evident in the ready acceptance to try other measures once meetings have lost their efficacy whilst the need remains to deal with an evolving situation of deep concern.

(6.) Group fraternity inculcates alternative dress, hairstyles, behaviour, body language and syntax. By incorporating group-specific codes, bonding is reinforced within, simultaneously keeping out those who lack means of communication. Group representatives at a Network meeting make visible the differences present in the movement itself, surfacing in the attitudes and behaviour of pragmatists over theorists, the class-race rifts and so on.

The circle of women, seated mostly on floor cushions, did not want a leader. This resulted in difficulties to begin and maintain continuity. The person to briefly take over this role in order to get the meeting started, did so apologetically and quickly passed it over. Long silences ensued, caused partly by tension and accentuated by the lack of formality necessary to maintain distance. There was awareness that this problem was not theirs specifically, but one based on deep divisions within the movement. This scene being enacted by one microcosmic community goes further. It ripples out to the problems of wider NZ society.

The local Network as it stands, epitomises its marginal stance in relation to traditional society. Its intentions are to undermine current social-structural components. Methods devised to achieve this are synchronised accordingly in aims, strategies, behavioural codes and ideals and yet are paradoxically intercepted by internal rifts ordered from without.

The Small Group As Represented by the Core Group:

From its introduction it is clear that the efficacy of the small group process is well documented in achieving the various aims of WL. It provides the groundwork necessary to achieve productive action. Group organisation is fluid and full interaction is encouraged. Trust and cohesion are built up step by step in a context of mutual experience and goals. Subjectivity and objectivity are intermixed. The levelling accepted by its members, assumes that equality is considered necessary to the baseline of movement philosophy. Protagonists of small groups employ practices that imply patterns of marginality. Women are motivated by conceived
inequalities within the power structure towards their sex and others in subordinate positions. Methods, strategies, tactics, aims and behavioural actions of members are therefore organised to break down these structures and formulate new ones. Alternative ideals and values are disseminated more widely through a communication network. Here the Broadsheet feminist magazine and its offices play a large role. Interspersed with constructed strategies, spontaneous creativity is fostered and applauded. So the group begins to shape a framework round an a-structural stance. The real, the authentic and the meaningful are central to the group's purpose.

What of specific expressions of marginality within Core Group practice? The venue, the setting, the WRC, in parallel with The Woman's Room, is surrounded by signs of promotional data for women. The walls have woman-focused posters, captions like "millions of women can't be wrong". Badges, stickers, books and notices register the same theme. In both locations, the rooms are old and spartan. The women take what they can get. Random contributions add a motley homeliness.

Network members are apt to turn up en masse at certain city functions. Selected Festival Film showings will see members greeting each other with casual hugs and other warm gestures communicating inclusiveness, that by the same token works to exclude outsiders. Emphasis on communitas encompasses all Network and individual day- to-day encounters and actions.

The gradual breaking down of forms of differentiation are worked into all aspects of daily life and in many ways are not easily discernable to the general public. Forms of address, first names for everyone, adoption of the title Ms and treatment of people as equal persons regardless of social position, class or age can incite reactions however. For some women, the term Ms implies links with radical feminism. It is not remotely associated with them or their world.

All members of the Network have one thing in common at the very least. This is their sense of isolation in their society, where others seem not to heed commercialism, competition, consumerism and human exploitation that to them is so blatant, and particularly unbearable for a woman. These women at certain times in their lives have felt very solitary and unsure of themselves. Even so, the break with kin and friends and those who are a part of the social order, is not easy. It is this fact of cutting off from the bonds that keep community together, that represents more significantly and completely (and symbolically), the choice of a marginal lifestyle. For radical and separatist women the choice in some cases is irrevocable. It may also mean severance from one's children. However, in the case of understanding families such as as Ruth's, links may remain. Although her life is committed to feminism, her mother and her large family remain in close support, for they have all found their own niche, and are not judgemental. Strong friendships are made within the feminist community, where time-consuming activities allow for little "outside" contact, where interests mostly no longer converge anyway. The avowal of egalitarianism and an altered way of life with others with the same values is axiomatic, and self-regulating. It becomes more difficult to relate to those with different values. But unless communication is assured people are not going to receive the message from feminists themselves. The efforts made to date in public talks, displays et cetera are diluted but presented with sincerity.

In personalised sessions within the movement, honesty about oneself and one's life allows the veneer that separates people, more especially in urban society, to be erased. This is the equivalent of purification in liminality. The person is expunged of the weights of past existence and is ready to receive the gnosis of the new. However informal this may be, it approximates ritual death in (liminal) separation from the social world.

The methods of group organisation, in attempting to achieve the aims of equality and raising women's self-esteem as described in the ethnographies, express markedly peripheral methods to regular meeting and other organisational procedures in society. The leaderless-structureless concept counters cultural norms.

There is recognition that woman is in many ways treated as marginal to her particular culture and this also is expressed in various ways by researchers. Ruether writes of the repressive view of female as "alien" to be the model used in stereotyping and "inferiorisation of other subjugated groups". Edwin Ardener's fieldwork experiences claim women to be "muted". Turner considers non-traditional women to be marginal to their society. De Beauvoir conceives of
women in relation to their society to be "Other" in her book entitled *The Second Sex*. Bulloch's version is *The Subordinate Sex*, and Germaine Greer's message comes forth in *The Female Eunuch*. Feminists speak and act out loud in public many things that hitherto have remained unsaid or hidden. Shock tactics are often used to jolt others out of apathy.

Overall, the liminal-marginal concept has proved useful in assisting interpretations of non-traditional behaviour, particularly within the context of the small group. Further evaluations of the concept will be made in Chapter IV.
CHAPTER III


2 *Ms.* Magazine:18. References [2-10] are from a "Consciousness-Raising Kit" collated by *Broadsheet* Magazine, in which precise references in some instances have not been included. This kit is available from the Collective office or bookshop.

3 *Redstockings Magazine*, N.Y.:147.

4 *Broadsheet*. "A Guide to Consciousness Raising", Sandra Coney. "The purpose of CR was to get to the most radical truths about the situation of women in order to take the most radical action." This quotation is from Kathie Sarachild, who outlined the original programme for radical feminist CR.


8 *Ms.* *Ibid.*:80-104.


11 This letter is dated 12 October, 1984.

12 A recent visit to the office shows that this problem still exists.


14 These thoughts have been put together by some members of this university campus group, 1984. There are variations in the feminist spelling of woman, for example, "womyn". The most accepted versions are: womin (singular); wimin (plural).


16 "Woman". No. 26, April, 1973.


20 *The Oxford Minidictionary*. Sexism: discriminating in favour of members of one sex. Assuming a person's abilities and social functions are predetermined by his or her sex.

22 The term "Snuff," is given to videos in which the protagonist at least is actually killed. These parts are often enacted by female child captives who have been sold into this market. "Electric Blue" videos are violent and often pornographic. The following is an abbreviated, and therefore inadequate extract, from a definition of pornography compiled by a feminist group in Wellington, Women Against Pornography: "Pornography is verbal pictorial or live representations directed at a male audience which is regarded by women as portraying degradation and hatred of women and children." The newsletter goes on to qualify and build on this statement, too detailed to include here.

23 Pamela Allen, *ibid.*: 40-43; 40; 40-41; 59; 62.

24 Methods of survival in hitch-hiking came up incidentally during discussion at a meeting one night. Experienced members proffered hints from personal encounters. One verbalised the power of the psychological approach. Should a male driver show signs of becoming "fresh," she casually starts cleaning her nails with a "handy" fruit knife.


27 These terms are used strictly as understood in common usage within and as applied by hierarchical societies, and do not imply the convictions of the author. It is appropriate to remind the reader that within the context of recording and description, the author is merely an observer and interpreter. There is no pretension to an in-depth knowledge of feminist theory. Correspondingly, personal opinion is only where stated.

28 In NZ, as in other Western societies, there is much emphasis in stating the normalcy of heterosexual pairing, - in media advertising and so on. Liberationists are intent on refuting this notion by splitting pairs. Variations in sex and group number formations are not uncommon; for example, groups of three, - very often all female, sometimes all male and sometimes mixed, - now eat together at local restaurants. This trend is comparatively recent from casual observation, perhaps over the last decade. Lesbian separatism abhors the practice of some of their members who replicate heterosexual traits in pair bond relationships.


30 New Zealand Listener. - Bruce Ansley, "Witchcraft: Women's Rites." The following references are to be found on pp. 14-16, June 8-14, 1985. This author refers to the British anthropologist Margaret Murray, who traces modern witchcraft back to 1921 in her publication, *The Witch Cult in Western Europe.* The article probably operates to incite a degree of sensationalism, but is based on fact. The term "witch" in feminism is not the "wicked witch" of fairytales. Feminist revival in this sphere is in part an attempt to atone for millions of innocent women put to death in the name of witchcraft.

31 Denise Dominy, *ibid.,* Appendix B. Samhain Ritual:254.
FIGURE 2: Global Feminist Network Linkage.

FIGURE 3: NZ Feminist Communication Network.
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS


Give, sympathise, control. [Peace....]


COLLABORATION OF PHENOMENA: FEMINISM AND MARGINALITY

This thesis is entitled No Woman's Land. For feminists, and as an adaptation in the manner of feminists (no man's land), it describes their liminality: a space in limbo outside the normal social framework. "Free space" is significant within the WLM. It symbolises a neutral sphere, to withdraw from the "outside". It is here that the processual stages, somewhat akin to van Gennep's rites de passage may take place, resulting in revitalisation. The original limen, meaning "threshold" applies in this context, as do the "threshold people" of Turner.

The study sets forth to examine aspects pertaining to non-traditional women hypothesised as marginal to their society, following Victor Turner's extended use of liminal theory. The purpose is to reach some understanding of liminality, marginality and marginalised women; to consider possible motivations determining their behavioural patterns and in so doing, learn more about women in this culture.

Thus begin a series of quests:

1. To ascertain whether or not non-traditional women, in this instance NZWLM members, fit this arbitrary classification "marginality", one segment of the broad category of liminality. Supporting evidence, includes counter-cultural reactions by feminists to NZ traditional social institutions - (of family, education, paternalistic and private enterprise monopoly systems), - indicates this to be possible. Patterns from fieldwork analysis have since substantiated this. Mary Douglas says: "To behave anti-socially is the proper expression of their marginal condition." [1970:51] Conclusions reached, support the hypothesis of non-traditional women's marginality, modified to one of degree and depending on individual stance in the movement.

2. To consider the legitimacy of such a construct, "anti-structure" to justify its study aside from social structure. Here Marc Augé's evaluation proves helpful, in that his critique of Victor Turner argues both for and against this dual concept. Affirmation appears in his statement that Turner has given the most systematic account of the "double reality": "normal" social statuses and "marginal" (paradoxical) states. [1982:63-65] The assumption that instituted social structure is central is challenged by one radical feminist. It needs to be conceded that the cultural matrix is according to perspective. This could overturn the theory that it is non-traditional women who are necessarily marginal. The world view of Woman Culture perceives the outsider to have usurped the power of matriarchy. Correspondingly, the Maori activist/feminist stance maintains that the pakeha has subverted the Maori cultural heritage in the course of land-snatching. This involves more than economics. There is an assertion that power politics have intrinsically eroded all that
the Maori holds dear. The Maori woman is considered below the pakeha feminist, who on the hierarchical scale of ranking in this society, is higher than the Maori male. Nor is a minority group necessarily inauthentic. According to lesbian separatist philosophy, all women have political lesbian potential. Many remain to be enlightened. This study however, utilises the approach of the social sciences, in which the established instituted social order is the main point of reference.

3. The next question to arise is whether or not this conceived marginality is imposed, and if so, is this by traditional society or by the non-traditional community? Once again, there is no conclusive answer if both viewpoints are to be considered. In the first place, conditions of society have imposed a need for certain women to take active measures to improve the status of all women. Secondly, membership to NZWLM is voluntary. A third point to note is the profound influence of vocal feminists like Germaine Greer. Women vacillating over problems of personal identity and autonomy, for example, have found that clearly articulated feminist analyses often crystallise their thinking. Feminists, and women within society, are recognised by the movement to be at different stages of awareness and contacts are mediated accordingly. There is a move to consider aged/aging feminists and their future and priority given to "doubly disadvantaged" women. Historical conditions appear ripe for sweeping social reforms about the time of this decade of study which begin with the counter-cultural movements of the 1960s.

4. Under the terms above, members of the NZWLM do fit the liminal-marginal category, but not uniformly. Inevitable variations in feminism and feminist types, correspond with variations within the broad class of womanhood. This results in variables within the classification of marginality itself. It has been noted for instance, that non-traditional women involved with social reform, dwelling and working in society, may still remain peripheral to the ideals and codes of instituted structure. Identity is through their task group, guided by feminist network ideology.

5. There is value in the microfocus of an isolated section of society provided that the treatment is holistic. Recognition of the relative nature of the marginal phase or state tends to regulate any interpretative imbalance.

6. The names van Gennep, Turner, Friedrich, Musgrove and Douglas recur in the major field of enquiry into concepts of liminality. Definition of its classic form becomes a model for all rites of passage, including those of modern industrial societies. Persons are noted to be moving from one social category to another. Disassociation from the secular social world is simulated by catharsis (CR/Theory group measures), or the ritual enactment of symbolic death and rebirth. The initiate now cleansed, is reduced to a level of non-differentiation and ready to absorb esoteric cultural knowledge. This metamorphosis alters self-identity. Ethnographic descriptions disclose that certain separatist feminist rites perform similar identity transformations. Accounts of other feminists, along with ethnographic data, show that during the course of the group interactive process, women may still undergo intrinsic identity change.

In his notion of extended liminality, Turner regards marginality to be a form of liminality, associated with all phases of decisive cultural change. Musgrove terms marginality as "the anteerooms of life", where persons are more open to change.

7. In general, reasons for joining the NZWLM are related to women experiencing alienation from socially accepted gender "conditioning". There is mention of isolation, despair, ambivalence, anger, frustration and societal anomie. The inability to relate to standard ideals and ideology causes many women to seek alternative solutions. The WLM offers its members support, mutuality and opportunity to activate reforms. Self-affirmation is gained within the medium of collectivity. The more radical view perceives women to be among the oppressed in society, and concentrates on alleviating women's stress. Feminists from eastern and/or under-developed countries in particular, criticise this rather insular form of radicalism as being divorced from related cultural concerns. Maori feminist attitudes are similar. This trend of the NZ feminist towards introspection has in effect, strong implications of voluntary marginalisation.
8. How well do theories of liminality-marginality correlate with the specific field studies of non-traditional women?

Mystery clings to confound the deciding point of life's beginning and end. This varies with cultural customs. The argument concerning the status of the foetus and the unborn child remains fiercely contentious, hampering feminist attempts to alter legislation in NZ. Overtones of Christian morals and ethics transect the whole contraception-abortion issue.

It was found that for any form of communal interaction, for any protest or tactic to contravene, superimpose, or completely circumvent NZ conventional society, a separate retreat (woman space) is essential. This in essence marks the liminality of non-traditional women. Numerous instances of marginal behaviour developing from interactive growth within communitas have been pointed out. All the issues tackled have a-cultural or counter-cultural elements. The abortion issue is liminal in itself, due to life-death associations. Although the discrete environment (woman space), need not become a total way of life, for the separatist this is the ultimate state. The separatist world view perceives feminist authenticity to be based on maintaining disparate relations from potential male contamination. This appears to be a countering analogy, a reversal of the taboos surrounding female sexuality.

Overturned values representing feminist marginality are found in broken rules of etiquette in everyday living. Modes of dress, eating and drinking habits (including invasion of traditional male territory - public bars, clubs etc.), of language (swearing, colloquialisms, inserted feminist jargon), and distinctive body language, all discard conventional practices. In short, male-only "double standards" are being challenged along with other social traditions. These illustrations of marginal behaviour have a definite purpose. The lesbian separatist for instance is not concerned only with sex or reversing roles. In the final analysis, society has been unconditionally declared male-defined, dominated and operated. Men therefore, have to be banned from intervention in women's movement interests if this situation is to be revoked. The whole ideology has developed to become gender-specific. Tactics are instrumental to radically politicise the personal: to attain self-autonomy for women. As a climactic battle of the sexes, it is scarcely a new phenomenon. But a political movement to organise women en masse in order to make critical, independent analysis is unprecedented in global history.

Yet historical development of the NZWLM has been bumpy. Internal divisive elements have proved almost as serious as problems to be countered outside the movement. The lesbian-heterosexual split has reverberated throughout feminist communities and to the outside society to some extent as well. The current Homosexual Law Reform Bill has highlighted this focus. Other difficulties include moving beyond the educated middle class element of women who are in the position to instigate movement policy, in order to reach the more needy in lower socio-economic situations. Certainly the rather elite earlier theorists, necessary at that time, are giving way more to the pragmatic concerns of movement development. It is recognised however, that the ideals of an egalitarian sisterhood are far from being realised; that the route has always been fraught with difficulties and will continue to be.

9. On the positive side, strategies developed by NZ feminists, Theory groups, CR, collectives, the small group process, health advisory and other dropin centers, have not been unsuccessful. From this historical précis, reviews of the UN focus on this decade for women, television documentaries of over a decade of experience and so on, indicate a maturation process in which tolerance of human variety is being met. In conjunction with this is more acceptance of the argument that for women's liberation to be effective, its movement must expand and contract to accommodate its members, rather than stagnate in uniformity. One of the key factors of the marginal-liminal phase or state is that of flexibility. Innovation is the forté of any movement, and such fluidity is often exampled within these ethnographies. The response to the Network Meeting crisis illustrates this well.

10. Social control in its severest form severs vital human interaction, mainspring of feminist communities. The much-criticised feminist "trashing" amounts to total marginalisation of those already marginal to their society. Further ostracising from the community on which a
committed feminist has become dependent, makes survival very precarious. Ordinarily, effective control is worked through the group process during open discussion. Trashing was more likely to occur during the beginnings of self-consciousness in second wave feminism. Then a self-imposed stereotyped image produced sensitivity that could result in intolerance of obvious deviations.

One of the prime hazards appears in communication blocks. This is intensified in dealings with "straight" society. Since adaptations to more meaningful symbolic systems have been created by feminists for feminists, these signify little to the outsider. It is also possible that a heterosexual feminist may constitute "outsiderhood" and fail to understand separatist codal systems. Beliefs only create a meaning for the believer. A "truth" that does not conform to one's own logic is denied. Albin Mark, in many thought-provoking seminars on the subjects of myth, ritual and symbol, conveys the enigmatic quality of the symbolic message to be part of its cryptic usefulness to the user. As a problem-solving device of culture, the message is an epistemology of a kind.

11. The fact that all feminists have been socialised in traditional NZ society and have somehow to be released from "customary configurations" in the manner of mythical figures, requires not only neutral liminal space but an incorporated substitute symbolic system in order to cross these boundaries, as noted. The revival of the Great Mother and the matriarchal state are no doubt necessarily ethnocentric and is only one aspect of the feminist body. Reformist alternatives have firmly infiltrated our society. The Women's Refuge for instance, fulfils a social need. The important preventative aspect now being researched by feminists aims to eradicate this need for such shelters. Along with specific signs such as lesbian separatist purple armbands denoting their visibility at a United Women's Conference, symbolic codes must have inherent meaning for the sisterhood as a whole.

Overall, the theories attached to liminality and marginality correlate well with the specific field studies of non-traditional women that were undertaken. Now to look at this more closely.

Limitations of the Concept Adjusted:

In the introduction to Chapter I, it is noted that due to wide diversification in the expansion and contraction of experiential ideas within the NZWLM, there is overlap in both the categories of feminist and concomitant degrees of marginality.

It is still possible to utilise the concept of liminality in that integral to the conceptions and practice of feminist ideology is the "threshold" or boundary, marking feminist "free space" or territory, and self-marginalisation. Women acting out a lifestyle beyond this symbolic demarcation, remain true to their belief system, marginal to those of instituted society.

The second and third problems, those of attention to the broader socio-cultural context and carrying the concept [liminal-marginal], too far, are interrelated and common to community studies. They may only be redressed by allusion to the broader context, registering its essential relationship to the subculture and leaving an opening for an extension of the study to include the wider spectrum.

The recent history of the NZWLM shows growing divisiveness in action and attitude with numerous splinter groups reflecting a wide range of opinion and ideas about current strategies and action. Despite this, it is argued here that that the movement has sufficient underlying integrity and continuity to warrant using the concept of liminality. The terms "movement" and "sisterhood" convey an implication of homogeneity. This impression was in fact to influence the selection of a feminist group as being sufficiently "contained" to be suited to this particular women's studies project. However, the movement itself in all its variety has dispelled this evaluation as precipitate. Yet even the instigators of second wave feminism in this country, could scarcely predict the events that were to alter the entire direction and policies of the movement. "Flaws", actually natural subcultures arising, began to surface partly with the advent of other fringe groups dissatisfied with prevailing social conditions making opportune attachments. A multiplicity of belief systems under the auspices of women's liberation have

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emerged. The swing from political to personal-political has had to recognise and reconcile a sex-gender bias.

Women's liberation "going public" policies have mostly provoked societal outrage. The effect of this response seems to further distance and radicalise the radical. Nor are there overtures to meet social approval at the expense of ideals, although the feminist magazine *Broadsheet* as mediator between the movement and its potential recruits, has been forced to offer some compromise. Documented interviews with feminists involved throughout the past decade, reveal an intricate interweaving of radical elements within both the social and separatist spheres. This is a partially a result of matching perceptions of theoretical analysis to the means necessary to act these out. The progression from theory to praxis has often meant altering the theory to fit reality, in this case, society at large. Thus, although many lesbian feminists have elected separatism as a solution, many work within the capacity of radical reformist, as do those within the Women's Refuge movement for example. Other women have found that in order to make feminism work for them, initial revolutionary reactionary measures have required modifying. Some have mellowed with the passing years. By the same token, society has absorbed some of the changes instigated through feminist pressures, somewhat blurring definitional boundaries between marginality and social structure in the process. Turner's interpretation of liminality appears to be that of a transitional phase in which alteration in human status position accomplishes an on-going process necessary to social change. Therefore there is a continual expansion and contraction in both modalities according to such compromise and modification.

At the outset, the NZWLM can be contextualised in an international setting. Its network development results from the expansion of ideas and impressions of feminists abroad. These, translated into analyses, ultimately become feminist theory. In correspondence, a number of New Zealand women felt an urgency to do something about problems relating to many women's increasing ambivalence over their place in society. Haphazard groups were formed. Social problems were inspected in the light of women's personal experience. As ideas were beginning to foment, women began to organise. ["Don't agonise. Organise."] Self-marginalisation had begun.

Major group categories have evolved according to personal anger, political ardour, opportunity, individualism and a variety of other reasons. Revolutionary-radical tactics follow patterns of disruption. Some reformists have mediated between their growing consciousness and social conformity. This starts to overlap with the movement's development and where marginal reformulations begin to interpenetrate conventional society in the form of Women's Shelters, Feminist Bookshops, Alternative Health Centres offering free advice on contraception and abortion, as well as in heightened awareness of issues of importance to women, such as matrimonial/property clauses.

The growing lesbian element within the movement manifested itself in lesbian-heterosexual factionism. Theory and Consciousness-Raising group tactics were only an innovation. Political lesbian realisation that functionally pure feminism needs absolute distancing from the cause of women's oppression, has led to separatism. These women, along with numerous cultural feminists were to proclaim a pollution-free Woman Culture. Other factions correlated with basic social structural divisions of class, age, ethnicity and religion rose to challenge the egalitarian ideals of the NZWLM. From these, the subcategories of the movement may be discerned. Distinctions of age at least have gradually been edged out as the movement methodically works at providing a movement that incorporates all, not just the young and the radical. Socialist feminism, lesbian feminism, cultural spiritual feminism, religio-feminism intersperses radical and reformist tendencies. Organisational policy continually comes under attack in an effort to perfect methods.

The separate categories relating to the feminist movement overall, can be be accommodated in relation to Turner's classification. Each may be treated summarily in this conclusion in the expectation that earlier descriptive analysis has to some extent clarified these methodological adaptations. However, only those within the range of empirical experience have been recorded in any detail.

For Victor Turner, "liminars" include ritual liminars, marginals, outsiders, structural inferiors and the quasi-liminal, or liminoid. The following redistribution of feminist categories
still fit into the overall concept of liminality. All display characteristics of liminality and of those peripheral (i.e. marginal) to their society.

The problem of heterogeneity may be broken down as follows:

(i.) Socialist feminist analysis of women as an oppressed class or caste could place non-liberated women within Turner’s classification of structural inferiority. This lends scope to another field of research.

(ii.) Lesbian/cultural separatist feminist participation in the artistic elements of the buildup of Woman Culture (all-women bands etc.) move also into the "liminoid" realm of artists.

(iii.) Cultural feminists border on the lines between ritual liminality, outsiderhood, as well as marginality. This depends on the conditions of their beliefs. Those following the Starhawk tradition (see Chapter III), may well be placed in Outsiderhood, separate not only from their culture of origin, but also from other feminists. Cultural spiritual feminists in general remain in marginality, since the phase tending toward a state, that is, an integrated Woman Culture, is only partially resolved.

(iv.) Religio-feminism attempts to meld Christian with feminist beliefs, ordinarily dismissed by feminists as inseparable from the Jewish patriarchal system.

    This is part of a growing reformist sector seeking to change society gradually through practice rather than rely on the revolutionary abrupt changes prognostised over a decade earlier. Reformist feminists remain ideologically marginal to their society of origin, but attached due to commitment to reform.

(v.) Feminist Studies have worked mainly through university and extension departments to teach the theory behind the practice.

Difficulties of overlap due to diffusion noted in limitations 1. is dealt with by adapting the concept, whilst the basic tenets of liminality adhere. The limitations of the concept in 2/3. respectively are self-explanatory. Other critiques of the method pertaining to this work are discussed in the course of Chapter I, particularly with Paul Friedrich and Marc Augé.

Second wave Western feminist development adopted self-marginalising tactics and symbolic and physical "free space". The threat posed by the postulated destruction of traditional foundations reinforced this marginalisation through conservative retaliation. This in effect completes the liminal cycle for them. The front line position chosen by radical feminists paves the way for women to follow. It is not a comfortable option. Forms of disruptive strategies, sometimes arising spontaneously out of situations, give some insight into this in the described "graffiti incident", the "coming out" armbands and media confrontations at United Women's Conventions. The abuse incited is not regarded as altogether counter-productive. A considered positive attribute is that it draws attention to the cause. Less radical members may see this as negative where prospective supporters withdraw their support, in fear of reprisals from society that such associations may bring.

In conclusion, the value of the theory of liminality appears in (1) the separation of communitas from structure (2) recognising communitas as integral to structure and (3) essential to the processes of social change within the processes of human status alteration (4) assisting in understanding the behaviour/actions of those in communitas and (5) to code the invisible/intangible but influential aspects of human/social development, that is, the symbolic and often unrecognised non-conventional modes of expression that considerably affect structured norms.

In relation to the specific topic of non-traditional women, the concept remains useful due to the related factors above, and in that it collates the spatial boundaries, the persons and the conditions that often elude regular classificatory systems in one that is alternative yet maintains
integration with human socio-cultural patterning and reckoning; in the allowance for the cultural misfit of paradox, non-logic and the bizarre as part of the world of today, not simply a mythical figment of past belief systems; and where from this recognition comes the possibility to research and understand the semantics motivating the a-cultural manifestations of those who are "different". Obviously crossdisciplinary, as well as crosscultural referencing, is necessary to improve this concept.

Allusion to the marginality of some traditional women and certain categories of men by authors such as I.M.Lewis require explanation: women as "jural minors in traditional societies, ... in a sense occupy a peripheral position." [See footnote 11, this chapter.] This topic could open another area of research.

It is possibly the apprehension of this sense of marginality or alienation in their own lives, that has propelled certain women in this country into action. Once a movement became formed, then purposeful self-marginalisation became expedient. Briefly, the two forms of marginalisation could be described as one of dependence altering to one of independence. The now non-traditional women has chosen a marginal stance for strategic purposes in order to break ties of dependence and achieve self-control.

Finally, according to Turner, movements have a liminal quality that is neither instituted nor preordained. When seemingly fundamental social principles lose their former efficacy, others emerge to transect and possibly replace the traditional, [1974:248]. The factors of liminality noted in Chapter I reveal synonymous traits within feminism: (i) transition, (ii) totality, (iii) homogeneity, (iv) communitas, (v) equality, (vi) anonymity and (vii) deletion of distinctions of property, wealth and status. There is variation in the degree of adherence to these beliefs and values. Not all categories are easily sited in the marginality of Turner. However, the structural communitas dichotomy seems to correlate with the male/female distinctions of the sexes combined with superimposed gender differentiation as primary social oppositions. The structural/a-structural dialectic as mutually interdependent, assures social structural fluidity and balance in the threat of the "power of the weak". Within this concept is reasserted the succinct wisdom of Mary Douglas, the unclear is unclean [1966:102].

A final declaration from Virginia Woolf remains a truism: "There is no gate, no lock, no bolt that you can set upon the freedom of my mind."

_A Room of One's Own_. G.B., Penguin Books, (1945: back cover.)
Because ritual studies is a newly consolidated field within religious studies, a high degree of methodological and bibliographical self-consciousness is necessary. And because its aspirations are interdisciplinary, it is obligated to differentiate and relate its task to several other disciplines.

[Here he includes symbolic anthropology. He cites three major goals of ritual studies:]

(1) to mediate between normative and descriptive, as well as textual and field operational, methods; (2) to lay the groundwork for a coherent taxonomy and theory that can account for the full range of symbolic acts running from ritualization behaviour in animals, through interaction ritual, to highly differentiated religious liturgies and civil ceremonies; and (3) to cultivate the study of ritual in a manner that does not automatically assume it to be a dependent variable.

His early attempts in the formidable task of classifying ritual are outlined as follows:

1. Ritual Components. 2. Ritual Types. 3. Ritual Descriptions. 4. General Works in Various Field-Clusters. All sections are of interest, and details will be listed according to Grimes.

**Ritual Components**

1.1 Action [movement, dance, performance, mime, music, rhythm, gesture, play, work]

1.2 Space [geography, environment, architecture, cosmology, shrines, sacred places]

1.3 Time [season, holiday, repetition, calendar]

1.4 Objects [masks, costumes, fetishes, icons, art]

1.5 Symbol, metaphor

1.6 Group [role, kinship, class, caste, family, hierarchy, ethnicity, acculturation]

1.7 Self [body, feeling, states of consciousness, gender]

1.8 Divine beings [gods, demons, spirits, animals, saints, ancestors]

1.9 Language [sound, song, poetry, word, story, myth]
1.10 Quality [e.g. colour, shape], quantity, theme [e.g. evil]

**Ritual Types**

2.1 Rites of passage [couvade, birth, baptism, initiation, puberty, circumcision]

2.2 Marriage rites

2.3 Funerary rites [mortuary rites, death, mourning, unction, burial, cremation]

2.4 Festivals [celebrations, feasts, carnivals, contests, sports, games]

2.5 Pilgrimage [quests, processions, parades]

2.6 Purification [fasts, pollution, taboo, sin, confession]

2.7 Civil ceremony [royal rites, enthronement, legal ceremony, warfare]

2.8 Rituals of exchange [hunting, agricultural rites, ritual, ecology, meals, food offerings, potlatch]

2.9 Sacrifice [decapitation, cannibalism, executions, violence, atonements]

2.10 Worship [liturgy, prayer, sacraments]

2.11 Magic [fertility, divination, sorcery, oracles]

2.12 Healing rites [shamanism, psychedelics, exorcism, illness, therapy, dream incubation, possession]

2.13 Interaction rites [animal ritualization, habit, secular ritual]

2.14 Meditation rites [possession, conversion, trance]

2.15 Rites of inversion [rites of rebellion, clowning, joking, obscenity, revitalization rites]

2.16 Ritual drama [pagents, experimental rites, entertainment rites]

**Ritual Descriptions**

3.1 [Rites interpreted with primary reference to specific traditions, systems, periods, or geographical areas]

**General Works in Various Field-Clusters**

4.1 Religious studies, theology, ethics, history of religions, liturgics

4.2 Anthropology, ethnography, ethology, folklore

4.3 Sociology, social psychology, political science

4.4 Literature, literary criticism

4.5 Philosophy, classics

4.6 Communications, kinesetics, linguistics
APPENDIX B

MINISTRY OF WOMEN’S AFFAIRS

WOMEN’S FORUMS

These extracts are a synopsis of relevant policies pertaining to this study, parts of which are verbatim from the bulletin issued by this Ministry, in explication of the above topic.

The women’s forums were arranged into hundreds of "small-group workshops." These workshops assembled together to report itemised priorities.

Women’s Policy 1984

"Labour [Party] recognises that there is still active and implicit discrimination in all areas of New Zealand women's lives." This government promises to "play a leading role in achieving equality for women" in the following spheres: economic, social, cultural, legal and political. [p.12]

Economic Equality:

This includes promoting quality childcare by supporting: (a) "a range and diversity of early childhood care and education facilities ... (b) after school care and holiday care for older children, particularly in existing school facilities .... (c) quality childcare adequately and flexibly funded." [pp.13-15]

Training and Employment:

This government "believes that women who wish to have access to the paid workforce and training, retraining and career opportunities, should have that right." [p.16]

Social and Cultural Equality:

Home and Community are covered in this section. "Women working in their homes, particularly those caring for children, the elderly or the disabled, have been particularly hard hit" ... due to insufficient economic assistance; low income families in particular. [p.27]

Education:

"Educational equality of opportunity for women of all ages and the full development of human potential on a non-sexist basis" is of concern in this area. [p.37]

Health:

Women are stated "to have the right to be involved in the provision and quality of health care services, particularly those which affect them individually." [p.44]

Of significance to the feminist cause is the statement that "every woman has the right to control all aspects of her life, including her fertility." [p.45]

Doubly disadvantaged Women:

"Labour recognises that some groups of women face special difficulties, particularly minority ethnic groups, disabled women and rural women ... believes that the recognition of different cultures is legitimate and inherently worthwhile and adds a positive and rich aspect to New Zealand." [p.54]
Legal and Political Equality:
MINISTRY OF WOMEN'S AFFAIRS

Labour will create a Ministry of Women's Affairs. The new Ministry is to be headed by a woman and will be provided with sufficient resources to act as an initiator, co-ordinator and monitor of activities affecting women.

"The purpose of the Ministry is to achieve the social and economic conditions for the equality of women and men in New Zealand." ["The 1984 Women's Forums." p.2]

The Human Rights Commission Act 1977 is to be reviewed to include prohibition of discrimination in employment on the grounds of family responsibility and an examination of the effectiveness of the current administration of the Act.

Labour will (a) "ratify the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, with 'reservations' if necessary.... (b) review current rape legislation, will provide financial support for women-staffed rape crisis centres.... (c) investigate the conditions at women's prisons.... (d) review the current domestic violence legislation.... (e) introduce legislation to recognise the concept of communal property and to establish procedures for claims. The Family Protection Act will also be extended." [pp.66-76]

THE 1984 WOMEN'S FORUMS
Policy Priorities:

A brief explanation of priorities, organisation and effects follows. It was intended that the forums were to be open to all New Zealand women. Dissention over issues and organised obstruction to challenge the establishment of the Ministry of Women's Affairs, was highlighted by the media. Fundamentalist church groups were strongly vocal, and the fear of change recognisable in many traditionalist women, is more complex for certain Christian denominations, since their opposition is based on beliefs which disallow equality for women. One of the main themes was the need to recognise the value of women's work in the home. And the key words "choice", along with "affirmative action" were misunderstood to be imbued with more radical political overtones, including "discriminating against men". These terms are explained as meaning equal opportunity, at present existing "in theory" in New Zealand at the present time. Whilst "in practice it does not, since prejudice and tradition create barriers of many kinds." [p.4]

Three issues not featured in the policy, were to be given considerable support in the plenary sessions: They were pornography, peace, and lesbianism as a valid option. Minority group concerns, involving "numerically smaller special interest groups" tended to receive fewer "scores" in the analysis of priorities, due to their receiving lesser attention. Policies affecting the majority of women were given priority, but workshops were not consistent in recording decisions. Four categories of priority emerged: "top priority", "secondary priority", "third order" and "endorsed". If there was no consensus, no score was made.

Office of the Minister of Women's Affairs, (March 1985.)
Women, on Women

Modern women novelists—a selected booklist.
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