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Aspiring for unity and equality:

Dynamics of conflict and change in the 'by women for women' feminist service groups, Aotearoa/New Zealand (1970-1999)

Jane Vanderpyl

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the emergence and subsequent development of feminist activist service groups in Aotearoa/New Zealand feminist movements from the 1970s to the 1990s. It specifically considers, the Women's Centres, Women's Health Collectives, Women's Refuges and Rape Crisis groups. Feminism in the groups was closely linked to the internal processes of organising as a collective based on 'women's ways of working'. The groups merged a radical feminist political orientation with a service orientation as they developed services 'for women by women'. The study was based on a qualitative analysis of published and unpublished documents of activist service groups, and open-ended interviews with 65 women discussing their experiences of working in activist service groups.

Two distinct phases of change to the internal organisation of the groups between 1970 and 1999 have been identified and examined. In the first phase, (1970s - 1980s), radical feminist collective ways of working acquired the status of a taken for granted institutional norm among the groups. These groups organised as women-only collectives, utilised consensus decision-making, embodied ideals of non-hierarchy, and had aspirations of sisterhood between women. The second phase (from the late 1980s) was marked by modification of the radical feminist collective, as groups experienced internal and external pressures to adopt bureaucratic practices. Major pressures included the shift by the state to contract funding of the groups, the changing participation of paid and unpaid workers in the daily work of the groups, and the increasing formal differentiation between employers and employees. These changes were a major source of conflict and tension, as the groups modified their organisations to include differentiation of roles, specialisation of positions and formal hierarchy. At the same time groups sustained aspects of radical feminist collective organising.

Dealing with differences was a major site of tension and conflict in the activist service groups. Groups implemented various strategies to address differences between women in relation to race/ethnicity, sexuality and class. A major focus of the groups was the development of bicultural relations between Māori and non-Māori. Models of bicultural

relations in the predominantly Pākehā groups ranged from increasing Māori representation in the groups, to the formation of alliances between independent groups or alliances between ethnic-specific groups in the same organisation. These strategies were mostly framed in terms of a binary opposition between oppressed and oppressor, and along a single axis of oppression. Nevertheless, the groups' attempts to 'deal with differences' between women were important in challenging assumptions of gender-based commonality between all women.

In spite of these conflicts and associated changes, participants in the activist service groups attempted to maintain inclusive, non-hierarchical, empowering organisations 'for women by women'. In the 1990s, many of the feminist activist service groups continued to pursue democratic collective ways of working and to engage in a politics of difference in their organisations.

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In the first instance, I thank those women whose words form the heart of this thesis. This involves two groups: first those who wrote so passionately about their views, experiences and ideals of feminist collective organising and politics during the 1970s in the various women's liberation journals, conference reports and newsletters. Their writings provided an invaluable record of the passionate desire for social change of that period. Second, the women who took the time to describe their experiences of participating in activist service groups and so thoughtfully expressed a lively interest in the topic. It has been a privilege to work with the histories, stories and insights shared with me in the course of this research project.

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To all those women who have worked, and continue to work, in the activist service groups: kia kaha, stay strong.

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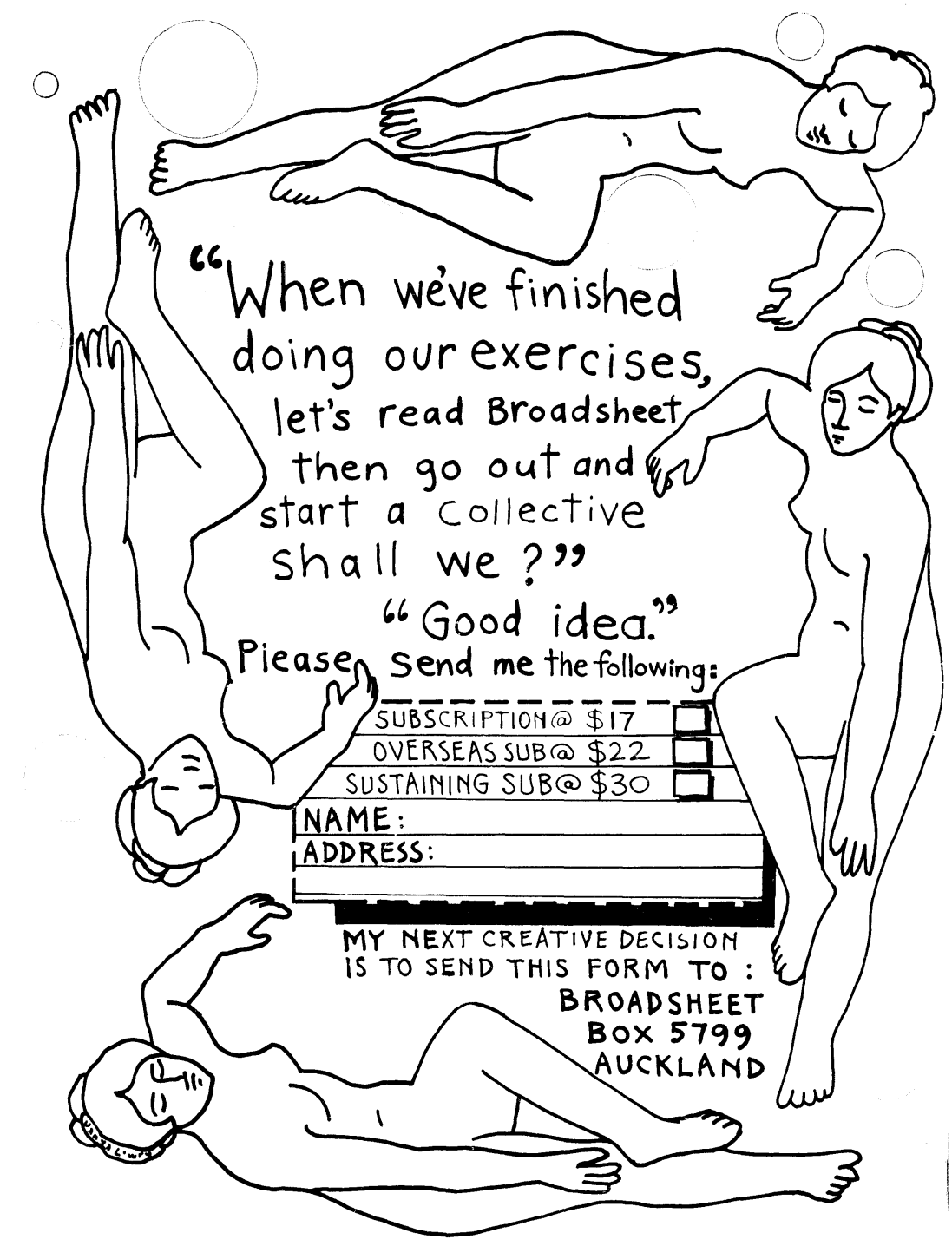
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACC	Accident Compensation Corporation
AGM	Annual General Meeting
ALRANZ	Abortion Law Reform Association, New Zealand
CFA	Community Funding Agency
COGS	Community Organisations Grants Scheme
COW	Committee on Women
CR	Consciousness-raising
CSMC	Council for the Single Mother and her Child
DCW	Dunedin Collective for Woman
DSW	Department of Social Welfare
FVPCC	Family Violence Prevention Coordinating Committee
HROS	Human Resources and Operating Statistics
IWY	International Women's Year
JOS	Job Opportunities Scheme
KOPPS	Key Operating Policies, Procedures and Control Systems
NCIWR	National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges
NCRC	National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NOUS	National Office Update Sheet (NCRC)
NOW	National Organisation for Women
NWSA	National Women's Studies Association (United States)
NZCFA	New Zealand Community Funding Agency
NZWLW	New Zealand Women's Learning Web
PEP	Project Employment Scheme
PIWP	Pacific Island Women's Project
SCSP	Student Community Service programme
SHE	Sisters for Homophile Equality
SISTERS	Sisters in Struggle to End Repressive Sexism
SOS	Sisters Overseas Service
SPUC	Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child
SROW	Society for Research on Women
TEP	Temporary Employment Programme
THAW	The Health Alternatives for Women
TRCC	Toronto Rape Crisis Collective
UWC	United Women's Convention
VOTP	Voluntary Organisations Training Programme
VOJCP	Voluntary Organisations Job Creation Programme
WEA	Workers Educational Association
WEL	Women's Electoral Lobby
WLM	Women's Liberation Movement
WL	Women's Liberation
WONAAC	Women's National Abortion Action Campaign
WRC	Women's Resource Centre
WSA	Women's Studies Association (New Zealand)
WWRC	Wellington Women's Resource Centre

Figure 1: *Broadsheet* subscription advert



Source: *Broadsheet*, April 1983, no 108, back cover:

PROLOGUE[1]

In response to an advertisement for new volunteers, I joined a local Rape Crisis Collective in 1991. It was a predominantly Pākehā[2] group, focused on delivering professional sexual abuse counselling services to women and girls, and preventative education programmes in the area of sexual violence to community groups and schools. At the time I had recently returned from overseas. I was looking for 'something to do' and wanting to make new friends. Earlier university training in sociology and women's studies influenced my identity as a feminist and my interest in feminist community organising. I thought it would be great to become involved in some 'real' feminist activity.

The training of all new recruits took place before we could 'officially' join the organisation focused on politicising new volunteers. This involved introducing trainees to a radical feminist analysis of sexual violence in which all women were described as oppressed, along with training about the Treaty of Waitangi and issues of institutional and personal racism, heterosexism and homophobia.[3] We were taught about feminist collective organising by way of descriptions of the commitment to 'flat structures', being a women-only group and consensus decision-making in the organisation. The training reiterated the importance of equality between all women. These principles were also identified as important features of the National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa (NCRC), of which the local group I joined was a member. The organisation was described as feminist; yet, 'sisterhood' was not a term they used in the training, and radical revolutionary change to society was not on the agenda.

After the training and acceptance interview, I attended my first collective meeting, which involved a potluck dinner to welcome the eight new members to the collective. The collective included one full-time paid administrator, three part-time counsellors and another three volunteers. Initially there seemed little to do except attend the fortnightly collective meetings and listen to the collective debate issues in which I had no history. There were no specific volunteer jobs and each volunteer chose areas of interest. Over the years, I became more involved in administrative and policy work for the Centre, as well as making some very dear friends.

---

1 I would like to acknowledge the influence of the personal narratives in the work of Lesley MacGibbon, (2002) and Melanie Anae (1998) in developing this prologue.

2 Non-Māori New Zealand citizens, mostly of European ancestry.

3 The training also included micro-counselling skills, and training for phone counselling.

Little of the work I did for the Rape Crisis Centre seemed either 'political' or 'feminist'. The organisation provided services 'for women by women'. The collective utilised a consensus process to make decisions at fortnightly meetings which all members (paid and unpaid workers) were expected to attend and participate in. Although long term members and paid workers were clearly more influential in decision-making, it was not initially an issue. However, by the mid-1990s, what it meant to be a feminist organisation was being contested both in the local collective and at the national NCRC meetings. Differences between women were central to debates about the meaning of feminism in these organisations. In the process, we struggled to understand each other and to find a way to work together that reflected the egalitarian ethos of the organisation and the commitment to a politics of social justice.

In late 1994, employment issues came to the forefront of collective politics in the local Rape Crisis group as we attempted to develop formal employment contracts, job descriptions and performance appraisals. The volunteers (including myself) were rapidly embroiled in conflicts with two of the three paid workers. Both parties made claims and counter-claims about what counted as 'feminist', as we debated whether everyone should be paid the same, the content of contracts and how to make decisions in a 'feminist' way. The debates drew attention to the tension between feminism as an internal process (for example, participation and consensus) within the organisation and feminism as an outcome (for example, services which empowered clients), and also to the ways in which processes of formalisation were resisted and contested in the collective. At the time, I just thought I was working with some power-tripping paid workers who had no understanding of feminism, and they thought the same of me as a volunteer.

Contesting the meaning of feminism was a central part of the attempts to develop partnerships between Māori and non-Māori women at each of the NCRC meetings I attended between 1992 and 1999. Many of the members, including myself, struggled over what a bicultural partnership might mean for the radical feminist culture of the national organisation. Conflicts emerged around the inclusion of whānau/family by Māori women and women-only organising, as well as what it meant in practice to share resources and equality of influence between Māori and non-Māori. Often it seemed that differences and unity between women were placed in opposition. The '1970s radical feminist' assumption of 'women as a group' in opposition to 'men as a group', the belief that because we were all women we could work together, and the belief in 'woman's way of working' were embedded in the debates. I was an enthusiastic, if often naive, participant in these debates and conflicts.

In 1995, two other volunteer collective members, Wendy and Inge, and myself, interviewed past members of the organisation, fossicked through the old records and past meeting minutes to develop a herstory of the organisation (for the years 1981 to 1991). The herstory highlighted a rich history of commitment to social justice and engagement in feminist politics. There were early attempts to develop partnership between Māori and non-Māori women working in the field of sexual violence. There was increasing attention to issues of racism in the organisation. Past lesbian members identified the collective as an important part of the local lesbian feminist community. The minutes and stories of past members showed how there had been ongoing debates about the meaning of feminism for the

organisation throughout the 1980s. The herstory highlighted similarities and differences in the debates and issues in the organisation over the 1980s and 1990s.[4]

In 1996, I moved to Auckland, where I joined the Auckland Rape Crisis Collective. My role was limited to attending collective meetings and providing supervision to the paid workers. Between 1997 and 2000,[5] I co-ordinated the NCRC local group statistics collection, which involved contact with all of the local rape crisis groups embroiled in a 'paper war' that took them away from the 'real' work of helping women and children. Individual groups were struggling to meet the increasingly complex reporting required by the Community Funding Agency (CFA).[6] During 1997, I participated in the NCRC Change Workgroup subcommittee comprising of three Māori and three non-Māori NCRC members to develop a set of policies facilitating bicultural partnership in the NCRC at local, regional and national collective levels. The Workgroup worked well together, but the policies we developed were largely unsuccessful. We blamed the NCRC Core Group (national executive) for being ineffective. In hindsight, external changes in the funding environment were challenging the role of the national collective, the relationship between local groups and the national collective as well as the organisation's commitment to radical feminist principles of organisation. Internal tensions were high as members of the NCRC struggled with the implications of professionalism, contract funding, employer-employee relations, and bicultural partnership for the organisation. These were immense issues to deal with by, what was essentially a group of volunteers meeting bimonthly for a week-end.

University graduate training had introduced me to the post-structuralist ideas of anti-essentialism, the fragmentation of the subject, and the notion of multiply positioned subjects (for example, Grosz 1986; Jones 1991; Ryan 1989; Weedon 1999). These challenged the radical, socialist and liberal feminist theoretical frameworks that had been central to my undergraduate introduction to feminist theory. These challenges made me less sure about what feminism meant in practice. However, when I was in the middle of the conflicts described above, I rarely made sense of them in terms of different feminist theories. Instead, I usually dismissed opposing participants as stuck in the '1970s radical feminist orthodoxy', or as 'not feminist enough'.

The collectives I was a part of were rarely explicit about their feminist position; instead they reflected shifting and contradictory feminist assumptions that were dependent on the participants and the issues being addressed. The conflicts were often very personal and intense. We were passionate participants engaged in actively debating what it meant to be a feminist organisation in the 1990s.

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4 This theme was developed in a conference paper presented to the Australian Women's Studies Association in 1998, (Vanderpyl 1998a). In the paper, I examined the similarity in issues and language used between the mid-1980s attempts to develop a regional collective of both Māori and non-Māori groups, and the 1990s attempts to develop a bicultural partnership within the NCRC.

5 By 2000, I had resigned from the statistics co-ordinator position, and withdrawn from the local rape crisis collective as a consequence of going into full-time paid work.

6 The CFA emerged out of a Department of Social Welfare restructuring and separation of functions. See Chapter Seven for a discussion of this development.

Reflections on my Rape Crisis journey

I begin this thesis with reflections on my experience of involvement with feminist collective organising in the Rape Crisis groups. The reflections identify me as an 'insider' in the service organisations, rather than a detached observer. I tell this story, not just to describe my experiences, but to locate myself as a 'passionate participant' in the subject of this thesis; feminist collective organising and a politics of difference between women (Lincoln 1991, cited in Guba and Lincoln 1998:210,215).

The personal account of my involvement is not a neutral description of my experiences as they 'really happened', but reconstructed for the purpose of elucidating some of the influences that have shaped my understandings of feminist collectives. The retelling is also framed by the reading, thinking and writing about feminist service organisations as I developed this thesis.

The reflections on the conflicts and tensions I experienced within the Rape Crisis groups suggest how feminisms within these organisations were debated, contested and changed. Multiple feminist positions, in particular radical feminist and feminist poststructuralist concepts and debates, have influenced my thinking about these experiences. These different influences are implicated in the contradictory feminist assumptions through which I make sense of the feminist collectives examined in this thesis.

As Lather (1991) has argued, no research is objective or value-free. The ways in which I construct my social world, and understand my experience, influence every stage of the research process, from choice of topic, selection of method to final writing of the thesis. My identity (for example, in terms of class, sexuality and ethnicity) influences the research relationships and the ways in which I see the world. My choice of topic reflects the areas in which I experienced the most tensions and conflicts. The topic focuses on the internal workings of service collectives, the ways in which the groups organised themselves, and the internal relationships between members, rather than the services the groups delivered. This thesis does not examine the breadth of services the groups delivered or the wider social impacts of these services.

The reflections are not meant as a story of linear progression or of moving from a position of ignorance and 'not knowing' to a position of coherent understanding and all knowing. Instead, the reflection and the development of the thesis was a process of moving back and forth between different understandings, often contradictory and filled with ambiguities, in the attempt to integrate multiple experiences and theories, so that the reflections become more than a story of my personal experience.

In completing this thesis a few years after resigning from Rape Crisis, there is a chance to reflect on those experiences. The distance enables a somewhat more detached stance from the politics of the Rape Crisis. Reading the literature on feminist service collectives, literature debating engagement with a feminist politics of difference, review of the historical documents and analysis of the interviews conducted for this study influenced an ongoing process of rethinking and reframing of my own experiences within Rape Crisis. The exploration of women's centres, health collectives, and refuge alongside rape crisis enables the identification of strategies and issues that were specific to Rape Crisis and those that were common across the feminist activist service groups. A review of the historical developments of the service collectives provides a context in which my own experience can be framed in terms of themes of continuity and change in the feminist activist service groups over three decades.

INTRODUCTION

The predominantly Pākehā activist service groups struggled to sustain radical feminist collective ideals as they experienced internal and external pressures to adopt bureaucratic practices, and attempted to deal with differences and inequality between women. This thesis examines the politics of organising in an influential and major strand of Pākehā radical feminist activism over three decades: the women-only service collective. It presents a richly detailed analysis of the emergence and subsequent development of the 'by women for women' service groups in Aotearoa/New Zealand between 1970 and the end of the 1990s. Feminist activist service groups included in this study comprise of women's centres, rape crisis, women's refuges and women's health collectives. These service groups emerged out of the predominantly Pākehā second wave women's movement in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Women who established the groups were committed to a radical feminist vision in the delivery of welfare services. As the groups emerged out of the 1970s second wave women's movement, they adopted two major principles of organisation. The first major principle involved setting up women-only run services for women because this provided spaces 'outside' of patriarchy for women. Founders of these groups argued that not only would this way of organising empower individual women as providers and users of services, it would also support the development of strong feminist communities of resistance. The second major principle was the commitment to structures and practices supporting egalitarian relations among women in the service organisations. The groups implemented non-hierarchical, inclusive and participatory styles of organisation. The adoption of these two principles of organisation indicates how the group members viewed how they organised as profoundly and fundamentally political. Internal processes of organising were to facilitate radical feminist ideals of unity and egalitarian relations between women – a radical feminist utopian vision of women working together for social change. The analysis of feminist collective internal organising from the 1970s to the

1990s highlights a history of struggle to enact radical feminist organising ideals in the context of delivering services 'by women for women'.

These activist service organisations were a phenomenal development. In the years since their inception, the groups have had a wide reaching impact in Aotearoa/New Zealand through the delivery of a range of welfare services. Some examples include:

- In 1998, over fifty Women's Refuges had provided a total of 115,877 bed nights, 30,232 client contacts in residential services and another 18,618 community service contacts. In addition they answered a total of 146,642 crisis line calls for support, crisis and referral, as well as a total of 5,246 education and training sessions (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1998:13-17).
- In 1999, seventeen local Rape Crisis groups provided 4,581 counselling sessions for sexual violence survivors and those related to survivors, as well as 4,254 contacts for information and 380 education/training sessions (Vanderpyl and Sandbrook 2000:4).
- In 1997, the Palmerston North Health Collective reported that 4,084 women had contacted their services for information and advice in health matters (Palmerston North Women's Health Collective 1997:4).
- In 1996, Women's Centres around Aotearoa/New Zealand were providing counselling, education, resources and information for women in their local communities (for example, Anonymous 1996a; Anonymous 1996c; Anonymous 1996d; Anonymous 1996e; Anonymous 1996f; Pearce 1996).[7]

The above examples represent a small snapshot of services provided recently by activist feminist services. The actual range and extent of services delivered by these groups over three decades is astounding.

The groups examined in this thesis are at the intersection of radical feminist activism and nonprofit welfare sector service activities. They emerged out of the 1970s second wave women's movement, and were especially influenced by the ideas of women's liberation and radical feminism. The early feminist activist service groups adopted many of the principles, ideas and beliefs of radical feminism, such as the opposition to

[7] Evaluating the wider social and political impact of the services provided is outside of the scope of this thesis.

patriarchy, the notion of women as a sex class, and engagement in radical direct action and protest against gender oppression. The groups adopted radical feminist ideology common to the second wave women's liberation movement. As they evolved, the women-only service groups formed networks of local and national social movement organisations that remained closely associated with the second wave women's movement in Aotearoa/New Zealand. At the same time they formed, or were a part of, a series of distinct single-issue social movements (for example, the Women's Refuge movement and the Rape Crisis movement) that became increasingly involved in the delivery of state funded services for women. Consequently, the groups are also part of what has been named the third sector, nonprofit or voluntary social welfare service sector. The nonprofit sector is distinguished by its location in the "public space in civil societies" and made up of organisations that are structured "by uncoerced association, mutuality (in the sense of interdependence), [and] solidarity" (Brown, Kenny et al. 2002:162). Groups in this sector deliver services to their local communities through a combination of state funding, donations and grants from local communities and philanthropic groups.

The activist service groups included in this study have since their inception embodied a social welfare activist model of social change. As a consequence of their location at the intersection of radical feminist activism and nonprofit welfare sector, I group the women's health centres, women's refuges, rape crisis and women's centres under the term 'activist service organisations'. The groups are committed to "structural and collectivist strategies for change and acceptance of the community welfare sector as a site for effective struggle" (Brown, Kenny et al. 2002:169).[8] Groups in this sector have predominantly relied on volunteers, strong participation, high levels of solidarity, altruistic impulses and an effective ideology to deliver social services that were distinct from those provided by the state (Hyde 2000:46). The service groups that I examine in this thesis were characterised by an oppositional stance to the state, the emphasis on women-only organising, and on non-hierarchical participatory practices of governance and service delivery. They also had a high sense of internal cohesion and solidarity around a common radical feminist ideology.

[8] Brown et al. (2002) describe four types of organisations in the third sector; these include the charity model, the activist model, the welfare state industry model, and the market model.

The activist service groups endeavoured to weave together a radical political orientation with a service orientation in their organisation, practices that were characteristic of both radical social movements and the nonprofit voluntary welfare sector. The groups were firmly embedded within the nonprofit sector as they delivered state funded services to women and children. Today, the groups retain threads of continuity with the ideals and practices associated with challenging patriarchy of the second wave women's liberation movement of the 1970s.

This thesis analyses the emergence and subsequent development of activist service groups through a mixed method qualitative approach to capture the complexity and richness of historical description and debate that a single method approach would have missed. This study is based on 40 individual and group interviews with 65 women about the activist service organisations they belonged to, and on an examination of newsletters, reports and publications discussing activist service groups in Aotearoa/New Zealand. In this way, the thesis presents a comprehensive description and analysis of the emergence of feminist activist service groups over three decades, and of the ways in which these organisations have evolved and changed since the 1970s.

Focus of the thesis

I focus on two major areas of tension and change in the organisation of the activist service groups in this thesis. A dominant area involves examination of the processes of institutionalisation and deinstitutionalisation occurring in the groups. The other area involves engagement with equality and differences among women within the groups.

In order to analyse the process of institutionalisation and deinstitutionalisation, I map the institutionalising of the radical feminist collective form of organising in these groups over the 1970s and 1980s. During this time, the women-only non-hierarchical group became an institutional norm among the service groups. By the late 1980s, the services activist groups delivered were institutionalised as a result of state funding. However, the radical collective form of organising was being increasingly deinstitutionalised in the groups over the late 1980s and 1990s. Three factors influencing changes to the internal organisation of the activist service organisations are examined: the increased reliance on state funding to deliver services; the development of bicultural partnership; and the increased differentiation and specialisation occurring

in the area of workplace relations within the groups. These factors contributed to the modification of the radical collective form of organising.

Threaded throughout these processes of change in the organisation of the activist service organisations are debates about equality and difference between women. The commitment to a common 'identity' among women was reflected in the ideal of a feminist community providing services 'by women for women' based on a common experience of gender oppression and the exclusion of men from the groups. Politics in the groups emphasised sameness or commonality between women. The commitment to 'equality' involved the development of non-hierarchical and participatory processes between women in the organisations. An egalitarian ethos emphasised internal organisation processes that empowered women, dispersed power and supported co-operation and caring between women. Ideas of 'identity' and 'equality', equated with sameness and homogeneity, often underpinned the desire for sisterhood in these groups. At the same time, the groups were attempting to develop organisations that 'dealt with differences' and 'inequality' between women. This involved the shift from identity to difference and recognition of inequality between women. There was a move away from simply emphasising women's commonality of oppression and experience to acknowledging and representing differences between women within the groups. In particular it involved the acknowledgment of specificity in terms of class, culture/ethnicity and sexuality. This involved not only acknowledging differences between women, but also relationships of inequality between them, and for some, their complicity in relations of oppression. The groups experienced major contradictions in their struggles to develop a feminist politics that engaged with both equality and difference.

Few Aotearoa/New Zealand studies have comprehensively examined the emergence and subsequent development of the feminist activist service groups over the 1970s to the end of the 1990s. Those that do have tended to examine particular aspects of the development of these groups in ways that do not critically analyse and bring together the historical events and debates that influenced their development with the contemporary experiences of activist service groups. Writers have examined the groups as part of the development of the women's liberation movement between 1970 and 1985 (for example, Dann 1985; Holmes 1998). These authors have analysed the groups as part of the wider women's movement developments and examined how they

represented themselves as feminist political actors (Holmes 1998), as part of the wider protest activities engaged with by the women's movement of that period (Dann 1985), as well as debates about how to organise as radical feminists (Dann 1978d). These two authors draw out and analyse the debates that took place about radical feminist collective organising in the second wave women's movement. Another group of writers have developed case studies of specific activist service groups (Burns 1977; Cammock 1994; Else 1993; Gilson 2001; Hann 2001; MacGibbon 2002), or examine a range of characteristics constituting contemporary women's groups as gendered and/or feminist (Mann 1993; Pringle and Collins 1996; Pringle and Collins 1998; Pringle and Henry 1993). Gilson's (2001) recent study represents the most in-depth exploration of the change from collective to bureaucratic organisation as she explores processes of cooptation by state agencies of Women's Refuge in a comparative case study of a single women's refuge in Aotearoa/New Zealand and one in Canada. Mann (1993) examined the ways in which three 1990s feminist collective organisations were feminist across a range of characteristics and draws out the ways in which the collectives were gendered. This thesis builds on these studies of activist feminist service organisations to present a comprehensive, richly textured history of the emergence of the activist service groups out of the second wave women's movement. It adds to these by analysing the ways in which the feminist activist groups reflected a continuation of second wave feminist politics and how this politics changed during the late 1980s and 1990s.

The study contributes to debates about the ways in which feminist service organisations based on radical feminist collective forms of organising have adopted bureaucratic practices and, in the process, moved away from their early radical feminist ideals of equality, participatory processes and non-hierarchy in the organisation. Some early studies attempted to identify the features of organising that enabled groups to sustain collective-democratic forms of organisation (Bart 1987; Reinharz 1984; Riger 1984; Schlesinger and Bart 1982). A number of writers argued that remaining small, having a homogenous membership, being financially independent all worked to maintain collective organising. These writers identified factors, such as accepting funding from external sources (Ahrens 1980; Gilson 2001; Murray 1988), increasing heterogeneity of membership, and organisational growth and success, result in the inevitable adoption of bureaucratic hierarchical forms of organising if organisations are to survive (Riger 1994; Ristock 1990). This thesis highlights the complexity of internal and external

factors which influenced how groups changed their organisations. I argue that the groups were actively engaged in debating and contesting the process of change.

I examine a range of internal and external factors that resulted in pressures for groups to adopt more hierarchical forms of organising over the late 1980s and 1990s. There were three key sites in which the pressure to change how they organised was a source of conflict and tension in the groups: state funding, workplace relations and governance, and bicultural partnerships. This thesis examines the impact of changes to state funding of nonprofit welfare groups on the autonomy of the activist service groups. The change from grants-in-aid to contracting was part of a shift from welfare liberalism to neoliberal welfarism by the state. Over the same period, attempts to form bicultural partnerships in the activist service groups challenged the assumptions of unity and commonality between women that underpinned radical feminist collective ways of organising. These politics were linked to debates and politics taking place in Aotearoa/New Zealand society over the relationship between Tauiwi[9] and tangata whenua Māori,[10] and about addressing the injustices of colonisation. Alongside these developments, increasing horizontal and vertical differentiation and hierarchy marked workplace relations and governance. These challenged the commitment to the 'flat structure' of the radical feminist organisation. This development occurred as a result of a combination of external factors such as legislative imperatives, changes in women's workforce participation and internal pressures associated with successful service developments. The thesis highlights the complexity of interactions between external and internal factors influencing changes to the internal organisation of the activist service groups.

Much earlier work has tended to frame changes in the groups in terms of an inevitable shift from collectivity to bureaucracy or non-hierarchy to hierarchy in the service organisations (Adamson, Briskin et al. 1988; Ahrens 1980; Briskin 1991; Murray 1988). These authors also argued that adoption of bureaucratic practices resulted in the cooptation and deradicalisation of radical feminist organising by the state. These studies identified the difficulties with sustaining a commitment to collective-democratic forms

[9] Alien, foreigner, immigrant. In the NCIWR and NCRC context it is used to group together all those who immigrated to Aotearoa/New Zealand after the Māori.

[10] Local people. Within the every day context of Aotearoa/New Zealand it refers to all Māori. Tangata whenua also refers to the local iwi (tribe) or hapu (sub-tribe) of specific marae and rohe o te iwi (specific territory of iwi).

of organisation in the feminist service organisations. Increasingly, however, a number of writers have argued for more nuanced models of feminist organisations and processes of change in these organisations (Bordt 1997; Hyde 2000; Iannello 1992; Martin 1990; Reinelt 1995; Riger 1994; Thomas 1999). These authors challenge the either/or framework for analysing change in the activist service organisations. In this study, I identify how the groups have modified the radical feminist form of organising by adopting many bureaucratic practices while still retaining many important collective characteristics.

Pākehā middle-class women dominated the activist service groups and the groups struggled to develop organisations that acknowledged and engaged with differences between women. The thesis has also drawn from the feminist theoretical debates on identity politics and the critique of practices of universalism and essentialism in Western feminist[11] theory and practice in order to examine the politics of identity and difference in feminist activist service groups (Ang 1995; Heyes 2000; Mohanty 2002; Sirianni and Leidner 1993; Young 1990). This literature has critiqued Western feminist politics for reinscribing a position of white dominance and engaging in a politics of exclusion and marginalisation of women who were not white and middle-class. A number of overseas writers have analysed the politics of engaging with differences within feminist activist service organisations, particularly around ethnic/racial differences (Matthews 1989; Scott 1996; Scott 1998; Scott 2000; Scott 2001; Wilson 1996). These writers identify how the groups frequently reinscribed relations of domination even while they attempted to engage with differences and challenge relations of inequality between women. In Aotearoa/New Zealand, few studies have explored the tensions in addressing multiple relations of oppression between women or the tensions created by the implementation of bicultural practices within the activist service organisations (Balzer and Ash 1987; Huygens 2001; MacGibbon 2002). Most studies that have addressed these tensions have focused on the women's movement in

[11] In this thesis, I have used the term 'Western feminisms'. The use of the term Western, in this instance, draws attention to a set of universalising practices linked most commonly with dominant white, middle-class women's feminist politics. As Mohanty suggests, while the terms Western/non-Western "are meant to loosely distinguish the northern and southern hemispheres, affluent and marginal communities obviously do not line up neatly within the geographical frame" (Mohanty 2002:504). And yet, as a political designation that attempts to distinguish between dominant and subordinate groups resulting from histories of Western colonisation, it does have political value. See Mohanty (2002:504-507) for a further discussion on issues concerning the use of these terms.

general or specific national women's movement events (Dalziel 1993b; Dann 1985; Guy, Jones et al. 1990).

This study draws together the examination of collective commitment to non-hierarchy and a politics of difference and the struggles to bring the two goals together in the activist service groups. In particular, I examine the ways in which the predominantly Pākehā groups struggled to address the challenges of tangata whenua and minority ethnic group women to recognise cultural specificity and to develop culturally responsive services. In addition, these minority groups argued for increased voice and influence in relation to the dominant group. These developments challenged the collective unity and groups struggled to find ways of 'dealing with difference' among women and working within a radical feminist collective model.

Outline of thesis

The thesis is presented in three parts. Part One discusses the methodology and conceptual framework of the thesis. Part Two examines the emergence of the activist service organisations out of the second wave women's movement between 1970 and the late 1980s, and the processes of institutionalising the radical feminist organisation. Part Three discusses conflict and change in activist service organisations that occurred during the late 1980s and 1990s. The changes influenced the deinstitutionalisation of radical feminist collective organising.

Chapter One, outlines my methodology and data collection process. I introduce the women who I interviewed and the movement literature (magazines, newsletter, and unpublished reports) that I draw on to examine the emergence of the feminist activist service organisations and the ways in which they changed over three decades. The discussion of methodology examines how the thesis is framed by feminist concerns, the blurring of the insider/outsider distinction, and issues of historical analysis.

Chapter Two and Three present the two major bodies of literature upon which I draw to examine activist service collectives in Aotearoa/New Zealand, feminist collective organising and critiques of Western feminist engagement with differences and inequality among women. In each chapter, I outline relevant debates in the literature and identify key concepts. Although partitioning the two areas in this way means they are treated as conceptually distinct, they are interrelated in the actual practice of feminist

organisations. Chapter Two begins with an examination of the ways in which organising as a democratic collective came to be linked with a radical feminist opposition politics. The notion of collective-democratic organising as 'women's ways of working' had a powerful effect on the feminist organisations that emerged out of the second wave women's movement. The chapter then discusses the difficulties in sustaining this organisational form as identified in the literature, with an eventual discussion on the problems with using the binary framework to examine conflicts in feminist collective organising.

Chapter Three examines the critiques by those excluded and marginalised as a result of Western feminist practices of universalisation and essentialism. The first half of the chapter draws together the literature discussing Western feminist organisational strategies to address this politics of exclusion and marginalisation. The strategies examined include consciousness raising, affirmative action and the formation of alliances. The second half of the chapter examines the struggles of Western dominant group feminists to claim an ethnic identity that did not reassert a position of domination and that engages in a politics of partiality and specificity.

Part Two examines the emergence of the activist service collective out of the second wave women's movement over the 1970s and 1980s. Three chapters map the institutionalisation of the feminist democratic collective organisation. These developments are presented chronologically. Chapter Four examines the period 1970-1975, Chapter Five 1976-1980, and Chapter Six the 1980s. It is important to acknowledge the arbitrary division of the time periods. There was no distinct specific moment or event with which to choose the division into distinct time periods. Instead, it is a matter of increasing references to a set of common practices or structures, issues and conflicts reported in the different data sources. Movement literature, such as journals, newsletters and conference reports, were the major source of information used in this section. The three chapters map the institutionalisation of collective-democratic forms of organisation among the activist service groups.

Chapter Four discusses the setting up of the first activist service groups by women's liberation movement participants between 1970 and 1975. These groups were part of a decentralised social movement loosely connected through informal networks, national and regional events and various social movement organisations. In order to examine this development I outline the growth of women's liberation groups and the debates that

took place about organising as a women-only collective. Members of the early women's liberation started many of the first women's centres, women's self-help groups, women's refuges and rape crisis groups in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Influenced by the debates taking place in the women's liberation groups at the time, many went on to organise as women-only feminist collectives. The chapter outlines how groups were made up of predominantly Pākehā, middle-class women, and describes the debates taking place about the relevance of the second wave women's movement to minority group women. The place of differences and issue of inequality between women were already a part of the debates taking place in the 1970s women's movement.

Chapter Five describes the growth of feminist activist service collectives between 1976 and 1980. Both women's liberation and women's rights groups were very involved in the setting up of the activist service groups during this period, as the differences between women's liberation and women's rights groups blurred. Similar to the early 1970s, participants in the women's movement groups debated about how to organise and whether to include or exclude men. Increasingly, however, as more and more women were involved in the provision of services for women by women, participants in the movement were asking whether or not the provision of services contributed to the radical goals of the movement. Debates about the single-issue focus of many of the groups, the appropriateness of the collective democratic form of organising and the primacy of service provision over direct radical political protest were all contributing to a sense of decline of the mass mobilisation period of women's movement.[12]

Chapter Six focuses on changes to feminist political activity during the 1980s. The phenomenal growth of activist service groups during the 1980s and the closure of many of the multi-issue women's movement groups marked the period. Patterns of feminist organisation growth are indicative of the shift in feminist politics from direct public protest and mass mobilisation of women to the emphasis on alternative institution building and development of feminist services as a major form of radical feminist protest activity. These activist service groups networked to form major feminist social

[12] Appendices IV and V describe the debates that took place over how to organise as feminists and the conflicts over how to engage with differences between women in the wider, predominantly Pākehā women's liberation movement of the 1970s. Appendix IV, page 308 examines the major national meetings, such as the United Women's Conventions, between 1972 and 1979. Appendix V, page 322 describes the various regional and national radical feminist caucuses that took place between 1972 and 1978. These descriptions provide a background to many of the debates and conflicts taking place in the local women's groups during this period.

movement communities at both local and national levels. The period was marked by the institutionalisation of the women-only feminist democratic collective form of organisation.

Part Three examines tensions and conflicts taking place in the activist service groups during the 1990s. Themes of change and continuity are analysed in relation to the internal dynamics of the organisations. The three themes examined include changes to state funding models, struggles over the development of hierarchy in workplace relationships and governance, and the development of bicultural partnerships in the organisations. This section draws primarily on a combination of interviews and unpublished reports to examine activist service group members' experiences and understandings of change and continuity. Developments in each of these areas in different ways challenged the activist service groups' commitment to feminist democratic collective forms of organising.

Chapter Seven outlines changes in models of funding and ways in which these changes are implicated in the deinstitutionalisation of the democratic collective organisation. The chapter maps the increased reliance on state funding and the ways in which this was associated with the institutionalisation of the services the groups were providing to women. At the same time, the shift from grants-in-aid to contract funding fundamentally challenged the commitment to democratic collective forms of organisation.

Chapter Eight examines some of the major protracted conflicts around the employee-employer relationship. Groups experienced increasing pressures to formalise employment relationships as a result of funder demands for accountability, legislative changes and changes to the relative participation of unpaid and paid workers in their organisations. At the same time, the groups worked to sustain a commitment to non-hierarchical organising. In response to these pressures the groups evolved a modified collective form of organisation that contained both elements of hierarchy and non-hierarchy.

Chapter Nine analyses the predominantly Pākehā activist groups attempts to 'deal with differences' between women. I examine various strategies groups used to address practices of marginalisation and exclusion of tangata whenua and other minority groups of women. The chapter examines the attempts of both the National Collective of

Independent Women's Refuges and the National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa to form bicultural partnerships between tangata whenua and Tauiwi within their respective organisations. Developing structures through which the interests of both groups could be equally represented challenged radical feminist collective models of organising and resulted in increasingly complex organisations. The challenges to engage with differences between women undermined the early radical feminist desires to create organisations that could be a 'feminist home' for all women.

In conclusion, the stories the women interviewed told reflected a huge commitment to an ideal of feminist collectivism. There was a belief that these organisations were important agents of change both in terms of what they did and how they organised. Linked with this belief was a sense of puzzlement, and at times despair, about the conflicts they had experienced in these groups. Many reported that perhaps it was impossible to work as a 'true' or 'real' feminist collective. A sense of failure to achieve an ideal was part of many of these women's stories, especially for women involved in contemporary collectives. Yet, many of these women continued to work in these organisations and remained committed to the ideals of non-hierarchy, equality, social justice and empowering women. Many feminist collective stories highlighted the conflicts, the tensions and ongoing struggle to enact a feminist politics that engages with both unity and difference between women. I wish to examine the ways in which these collectives form an important site of feminist activism.

PART ONE:

INTRODUCING THE STUDY AND LITERATURE

CHAPTER ONE

METHOD

In this chapter my aim is to describe the methods used in undertaking this research. The first section examines various research issues encountered in the development of this study; namely what counts as feminist research, blurring the insider/outsider distinction, the politics of defining the topic and the subject matter. The second section outlines the qualitative assumptions and methods I used. In this section I also describe my major data sources; the unpublished and published second wave women's movement and organisation documents, and the semi-structured interviews with members of activist service organisations.

Feminist Research

Feminist issues influenced the choice of topic and the ways in which I framed the issues I examined in this thesis. Much attention has been devoted to the question of what counts as feminist research. As Ramazanoglu and Holland argue:

> *Feminist methodology is not distinguished by female researchers studying women*. Since feminist consciousness is not derived from a female body, women do not have a special claim to know gender. Those who are materially and socially more-or-less female do not necessarily fully share political interests or experience a common social/embodied existence (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002:15, emphasis in original).

The differences between myself, as a Pākehā, middle-class, academic researcher, and many research participants were often more important than our commonality as women. Sometimes, a common experience of working in a feminist activist service group, or a relationship built through working together contributed to an experience of shared

commonalities. Research requires a reflexivity as there are "[n]o rules of methodology [that] enable researchers [of any position or discipline] to escape their ideas, subjectivity, politics, ethics and social situation" (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002:16). The implications of these differences raise multiple questions for researching 'women's experiences'. It is important to consider the ways in which the research participates in relations of othering, even when all those interviewed are women (Fine 1998; Pratt 1984).

The particular methods I used, such as interviewing and document analyses, were not innately feminist. These methods have been used across a range of disciplines and for different purposes. The choice of these methods was influenced by my research question. My research question focused on activist service participant experiences of feminist collective organising. The diversity of methods used by feminists indicates that "*[t]here is no research technique that is distinctively feminist"* (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002:15, emphasis in original). Likewise, they go on to argue that "*there is no ontological or epistemological position that is distinctively feminist"* (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002:15, emphasis in original). Feminists take different positions on the nature of social reality and of knowledge.

Feminist issues drove the research. I was concerned to examine and analyse women's experiences of working in feminist collective organisations. Central to the processes of the research and of knowledge production were the questions of what it meant to operate as a radical feminist collective and the shifting meanings of feminist identity and politics in the activist service groups. As Ramazanoglu and Holland argue:

> *Feminist methodology is distinctive to the extent that it is shaped by feminist theory, politics and ethics and grounded in women's experience.* ... What is distinctive is the particular political positioning of theory, epistemology and ethics that enables the feminist researcher to question existing 'truths' and explore relations between knowledge and power. Because of the social diversity of gender relations, and the variable interaction of gender relations with other power relations, feminist knowledge of women's lives cannot be assumed or generalized without qualification and empirical investigation. … Feminist research is politically *for* women; feminist knowledge has some grounding in women's *experiences*, and in how it *feels* to live in unjust gendered relations (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002:16, emphasis in original).

The study critiqued feminist activism for its complicity in practices of exclusion and marginalisation within a particular historical, social and organisational context. This

study involved a critique of what it meant to practice feminism within the activist service organisations from the 1970s to 1990s.

Blurring the Insider/Outsider distinction

My involvement in local and national Rape Crisis groups locates me as an insider in one of the service groups I studied. The research process involved an ongoing act of balancing the positions of 'insider' (an active participant in the service groups) and 'outsider' (studying and reporting on the service groups). This resulted in some advantages, such as facilitating access to many of the service groups, as well as promoting the trust and rapport that supported the collection of stories about collectives and their conflicts. There was a sense of common experience, ideology and/or background, and, for those involved in Rape Crisis, a common history of events through which to discuss the interviewees' experiences. In many ways, my insider status made it easier to conduct the research. This was not because it gave me a more privileged position from which to develop a more authentic account. It meant that I had "knowledge of ephemeral developments that might not appear in any written sources" (Blee and Taylor 2002:97). I had written a herstory of a local Rape Crisis Collective which provided a background of the development of the National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa. In the late 1990s, I had the role of national statistics co-ordinator which provided me with an intimate knowledge of many local Rape Crisis groups. Often the boundary between doing the research and my participation was blurred. Between 1997 and 2000, when I continued to be involved in Rape Crisis, I had ongoing discussions with many women about the themes and ideas emerging from my research. Friends, who were involved in Women's Centres and Health Collectives, and who had been involved in the women's movement of the 1970s and 1980s, often answered questions and debated the ideas I was developing.

The disadvantages of this insider involvement are linked to the bias in primary focus on Rape Crisis that often crept into the work. The conflicts I had experienced became the basis through which other service collectives were analysed. It was a struggle to draw out the different histories, social and political influences that were important to these other service groups. Being an insider also meant that it was often difficult to challenge my own assumptions. However, intimate knowledge of the struggles and conflicts

within Rape Crisis made it both easier and harder to be more critical of what occurred in the organisation. It was easier because of a familiarity with the events, but harder because I was an active participant in the processes (between 1991 and 2000) and thus had a vested interest in their outcomes. At the same time, my particular position, say as Pākehā when there were conflicts about biculturalism, or as a volunteer rather than paid worker in conflicts around employment, inevitably coloured perceptions and analysis. Ely et. al. (1991:124-125) highlight the difficulties of analysing familiar areas as presumptions of understanding easily occur. They argue "[k]nowledge of others' hearts, minds and experiences simply cannot be assumed, regardless of familiarity" (Ely, Anzul et al. 1991:125). They suggest a self-reflexive process involving asking 'am I talking about the interviewees' experiences or am I talking about me?' This suggestion proved useful in thinking through the issues of personal experiencing and analysis of the subject. Furthermore, the impact of these issues was somewhat reduced by my no longer being actively involved in Rape Crisis during the latter part of the data analysis and writing up process. This enabled some distance from the events and participants I had been so intimately involved with over the 1990s. In addition, undertaking detailed research into emergence of the other three types of feminist activist service groups challenged any assumptions that were based solely on Rape Crisis. Many of the interviews were undertaken with women not involved in Rape Crisis, but in Refuges, Women's Centres and Women's Health Centres, and these interviews were analysed alongside a reading of published material about these groups. The blurring of the insider/outsider position in the research process provided a powerful position from which to develop this topic and the subsequent analysis of the published and unpublished material and the interviews.

Defining the topic

The focus of the thesis was on the ways in which the activist service groups struggled to sustain a radical feminist collective form of organisation and to 'deal with differences' between women. This study developed out of an earlier 'failed' participant observation research project, which planned to examine the development of bicultural partnership in the National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups. However, I was unable to obtain assurance from the Core Group (executive body) that I would have access to the

organisation for the duration of the research project and would have had to obtain permission with each change in Core Group. Furthermore, very real concerns were also raised about not having a Māori researcher working alongside and the difficulties this would create for studying such a process. At the same time, my experiences of working in Rape Crisis and the experiences of others in these organisations, highlighted many of the contradictions of working in a democratic collective model. They also accentuated the multiple conflicts that occurred as women in the organisations attempted to work together and continued to influence my desire to investigate in this area. Consequently, I developed a second thesis project. The dilemmas these organisations faced in attempting to sustain feminist collective organisational ideals of sisterhood and egalitarianism remained central to the thesis. The question became what it meant to be a feminist organisation for the 1990s service organisations. The ways in which the organisations attempted to address differences in privilege and influence between women around race/ethnicity was broadened to include conflicts and tensions about the multiple differences, such as class, sexuality, employment relations, that interviewees identified. I changed the study focus to an examination of the development of the activist service groups and women's experiences of addressing issues of organising and engaging in a politics of difference within the service groups over the 1970s to 1990s. And I broadened the study to include those who had been members of Women's Refuges, Women's Health Centres and Women's Centres, as well as Rape Crisis groups in Aotearoa/New Zealand. This was crucial work as there were no other Aotearoa/New Zealand studies that had systematically analysed the development of these groups. This study focused particularly on the tensions experienced with collective organising and the groups' engagement with a politics of difference from the 1970s through to the 1990s.

The politics of constructing the research area and topic

The ways in which the research was a fundamentally political activity became rapidly apparent in the process of recruiting participants and developing the research topic. Initially, the subject of the thesis was feminist service collectives. While seemingly innocuous and concrete enough, the subject rapidly became fraught with issues and tensions over the meaning of the term 'feminist service collective' and its participation

in a politics of exclusion. There were two aspects: first, the problem of criteria, and second, the shifting relevance and meaning of the term 'feminist collective' over three decades of change among the organisations I was examining.

My initial criteria in many ways reproduced the practice of writing Pākehā dominated histories in which the 'Other' was a footnote or framed only in terms of participation in the dominant account. This was influenced by the criteria I used for selecting women to interview, that of self-definition as having participated in a feminist service collective organisation run 'by women for women'. Implicitly, this focused attention on participation in those groups that emerged out of the predominantly Pākehā second wave women's liberation movement. This raised issues for the research process, both in terms of participation in maintaining Pākehā dominance through failing to be recognise developments as raced or classed, as well as the problematic nature of defining feminist service collectives, run 'by women for women'.

There has been a tendency to identify race and class specificity of historical accounts of second wave women's movements. Historical descriptions of the 1960s and 1970s women's movements remain structured by processes of universalism and exclusion. This has occurred through claiming to describe feminist movements but focusing mainly on the white women's groups, while the actions of indigenous and minority ethnic women have been little more than footnotes in these historical accounts (Gluck 1998:35; Thompson 2002). Gluck (1998) highlights how utilising the structures, practices and values of the white feminist collective groups in the women's liberation sector frequently excludes other forms of organising influenced and/or structured by feminist interests and concerns. For example, Sudbury (1998) argues that, in the UK, many of the black women's groups did not develop separatist politics, or a defining radical or cultural feminist strategy. Most black autonomous women's groups neither specifically adopted the collectivist label in defining their organisations, nor foregrounded gender oppression over and above all other forms of oppression. If these aspects are used as the defining features of radical feminist organising without acknowledging the ways in which these dominated white feminist activism, then black women's activism as related to feminism is rendered invisible. This is an issue for revisionist histories of contemporary feminism. "Focusing on groups whose activities are based on an analysis of women's subordination – strategic gender interests" (Gluck 1998:33) seems merely to reinforce the hegemonic model and discourse.

In the process of researching, analysing and writing up the research I address the tendency to reinforce hegemonic models and discourses in different ways. First, this involves specifying the dominance of Pākehā middle-class women and their interests in the second wave women's movement in Aotearoa/New Zealand, and its historical, social and political location as one of a number of Western feminist movements. Second, the thesis explores some of the relationships between this movement and other radical identity-specific protest movements. Third, the thesis critically examines the ways in which the predominantly Pākehā middle-class groups participate in a politics that marginalised minority group women. Fourth, I examine the ways in which differences and inequality between women are addressed within the activist service groups. There was a particular focus on the contradictory and ambivalent outcomes as privileged groups attempt to challenge their position of dominance. Finally, the criteria were at times loosely applied as not all interviewees identified with the criteria for selection that I had initially identified. For example, some groups did not fit these criteria. Many of the early groups had included men. I included these groups because they had been influential in starting many of the early service groups, and also because they were sites in which many of the early debates about what it meant to organise as feminists took place.

Another example involved the inclusion of whānau/family in the services of the Māori Women's Centres and Māori Women's Refuges. The need for some flexibility in applying the criteria emerged as the research project progressed. It was part of the process of examining the shifting meanings of what it meant to be a feminist collective amongst the service groups that were the subject of this thesis. These repositionings are common as concepts frequently shift in meaning as part of broader social, historical and political processes. They are products and constructions of particular moments in time. For example, by the close of the 1980s, the term 'feminist collective' was becoming less and less useful or appropriate to characterise the groups I was examining. This study identified how the groups were engaged in feminist goals, but did not always specifically identify as 'feminist', and how some groups still maintained some collective-democratic processes, but would struggle or hesitate to call their organisation a 'collective'. Increasingly, I choose to group the organisations I examined in this study under the term 'activist service organisations'. This demonstrated the ways in which 1990s groups reflected a multiplicity of practices associated with radical and

institutional politics, many of whom identified as feminist, were women-only and continued to adopt various collective-democratic practices.

A qualitative approach

The study used a qualitative, mixed method design to examine the emergence of activist service collectives in Aotearoa/New Zealand and changes to their organisation over three decades. A mixed method approach was used to capture the complexity and richness of historical description and debate that a single method approach would have missed. It was not used to substantiate one method by use of information obtained through another data source or as a method of validating the truth of one data source (Huberman and Miles 1998:198-200; Patton 1999:1192-1197; Richardson 1998:357-358). The initial research design had only involved an exploration of some of the 1970s women's movement literature. Originally, I had believed that the published texts and a detailed reading of *Broadsheet* would be sufficient to describe the 1970s developments. However, as the research progressed, the questions about the 1970s became more specific and, as a consequence, I undertook a much more detailed search and review of 1970s-1980s second wave Aotearoa/New Zealand women's movement publications. The research process thus involved the collection of data and ongoing analysis throughout the study (Huberman and Miles 1998:186).

The study involved examination of participants' meanings and understanding of feminist collective processes and conflicts in the organisations. The study had three aims, first to map the emergence of activist service collectives out of the second wave women's movement and changes to their organisation in the 1990s. Second, to study participant understandings of the values, practices and structures constituting the feminist activist service collectives. Third, to examine the ways in which participants understood and constructed the tensions and conflicts they experienced within the activist service groups. The study aimed to identify themes of change and continuity over three decades in the constitution of activist service organisations as political and feminist, and in how difference and inequality between women were addressed within the organisations.

A qualitative approach, focused on historical description and analysis, was utilised. The approach examined the emergence and constitution of the feminist service collectives as

part of the flow of history, and located these developments within a particular movement context. Detailed information about which groups started when, where and how, was a part of the process of developing an historical description of the emergence of activist service organisations. Since this study focuses on participant understandings of their experiences of working in activist service organisations, a qualitative approach was ideal in the examination of participant understandings and meanings of these organisations, through both interviews and written accounts. The focus was on obtaining in-depth, richly detailed participant descriptions of processes, actions and events in their organisations.

I undertook a detailed review of published and unpublished documents developed by participants in the second wave Aotearoa/New Zealand women's movement and the service collectives (See Appendix I, page 293 for a summary description of these documents). In this process, I was able to examine the development of specific service collectives, the debates that took place over feminism, and the issues raised about identity differences between women. I undertook 40 semi-structured individual (32/40) and group (8/40) interviews with 65 individuals. (See Appendix II for a summary description of participants' involvement in activist service groups). The interviews examined experiences of working in feminist collectives, with a particular focus on the areas of tension and conflict identified by participants.

The interviews and written documentation did involve different modes of production in terms of different audiences and purposes. In the interviews, it was possible to ask more questions, probe for feelings, there was a more immediate experience of emotion and intense feelings. I was actively involved in the construction of the interview story. The written documents were already edited and represented particular viewpoints. I could not specifically ask the authors for more detail and it was difficult to identify the gaps in the accounts, in terms of whose voices were missing and what viewpoints were not represented. Rather than the different modes of production being a limitation, I drew on the strengths of both to develop the study. By using multiple sources I was often able to develop a detailed picture of the groups, their activities and debates at particular moments in time. It is important to recognise the ways in which the groups, especially because of their informal organisation, often changed rapidly as new members came in and old members left. Consequently, what it meant to be a feminist collective shifted over time, and this was examined through the use of both written and oral sources.

The subjects of this thesis were feminist service collectives that had been set up since the 1970s, particularly those groups which had only included women. The service groups included women's centres, health collectives and centres, refuge and rape crisis collectives. The women's liberation and women's rights groups were included in the study where they influenced the development of the service groups. Initially, I had intended to include lesbian feminist groups in the study as these also provided many specific services such as 'coming out' groups and support services. However, on reflection, these groups were excluded in order to narrow the histories and debates I had to engage with. The decision to focus on the four types of service groups enabled an examination of the similarities in struggles over what it meant to organise as a feminist collective. Differences between the four types of groups were identified in terms of early influences (for example, women's health movement) and organisational strategies the groups pursued (for example, NCRC and NCIWR Māori/non-Māori partnership strategies).

Ethics approval for this study was obtained from the University of Auckland Human Subjects Ethics Committee.

Data sources

Published and unpublished reports

Published documents were identified through a search of the National Library databases, and other published sources such as Else's (1993) book on women's organisations in Aotearoa/New Zealand and the Ministry of Women's Affairs Directory of Women's Organisations (Ministry of Women's Affairs 1989).[13] In this way, many of the newsletters of the women's liberation groups were identified. The list on page 31 provides a summary of published and unpublished newsletters and reports used to obtain information about the activist service groups. (See Appendix I, page 293 for a more detailed description of each of these sources). I reviewed each newsletter for references to service groups and debates about how to organise and what it meant to be

[13] Also useful were the lists of women's organisations developed by the Ministry of Women's Affairs (Ministry of Women's Affairs 1989). Lists of women's organisations were also republished in later years by the Ministry of Women's Affairs, for example in 1991, 1993, 1994 and also on their website, see http://www.mwa.govt.nz/cont_pb.html#directory.

a feminist group. Each newsletter was indexed for the subjects of interest, for example, references to specific groups, debates about organising, politics of difference, ideological conflicts. *Broadsheet* provided a rich source of information about the development of feminist activist service groups, particularly for the 1970s and 1980s. Most of these newsletters were produced for a feminist audience who identified as part of the second wave women's movement (for example, *Broadsheet*), as lesbian feminists (for example, *Circle*), or as members of an organisation (for example, *Wellington Women's Resource Centre Newsletter*).

Identifying and obtaining unpublished material occurred through a variety of processes. I searched the Alexander Turnbull Library catalogues for any references to the women's liberation movement and the activist service groups. In this way I obtained further newsletters, conference papers and reports that earlier searches had not located. A participant in regional Rape Crisis meetings between 1984 and 1986 gave me the minutes and reports from those meetings. Many of these sources were produced for specific audiences, such as those attending the Rape Crisis meetings, the Piha Women's Liberation Congress, or members of the Wellington Women's Refuge. In the case of meeting and organisation records, they constituted "a rich source of insights into … group interpretations of organizational life. … They are often contemporaneous records of events in organizations. This can help researchers to look more closely at historical processes and developments in organizations" (Forster 1995:148).

Decisions about the inclusion of published and unpublished sources can be an issue in studies that rely on historical documents and organisation records (Forster 1995; Neuman 2000:395-401; Platt 1981a; Platt 1981b). Some of the issues I experienced were primarily about the 'truth' of the historical detail, especially in instances where there was conflicting information. The most common situation involved different dates at which groups started or ended. It was often difficult to ascertain precisely when a group started. This is in part due to the ways in which groups have multiple starting points. For example, a start date may be when founders first mooted the idea of setting up a group, when they became incorporated, or set up a permanent physical base. Some of the groups changed names and sometimes it was difficult to ascertain if this was a new group or a continuation of an earlier group. Even more difficult was the identification of closure of groups. These endings were rarely publicly announced, and often groups gradually disappeared without ever formally announcing that they had

Table 1: List of published and unpublished data sources

Data Sources	Period Published	Period Reviewed
Broadsheet (Wellington)	1971	No. 2, 1971
Broadsheet (Auckland)	1972-1997	No. 1, 1972 – no. 214, 1997
A Collective for . . . Woman, also known as *Woman*	1972-1981	Mar 1972 – Aug 1981
Circle or *Lesbian Feminist Circle*	1973-1985	No. 1, Dec 1973 – no. 44, Dec 1985
Wellington Women's Workshop	1973-1974	No. 9, 1973 – no. 20, 1974; no. 22-26, 28, 1974
Palmerston North Women's Liberation Newsletter, later *Unison*	1973	Vol. 1, no 2-4, 1973
Auckland University Women's Liberation Group Newsletter, continued as *University Feminists Newsletter*	1974	Mar, April, June/July, Aug 1974
Auckland Women's Centre Newsletter	1975	July 1975 – Nov 1975
Juno, and *A Juno Special*	1977-1978	Jan 1977, Series II, no. 2 and no. 3, 1978
NZ Women's Health Network Newsletter	1977-1992	No. 1, Aug 1977 – no. 75, Last Edition, 1992
Piha Women's Liberation Congress Papers	1978	
Wellington Women's Refuge Newsletter	1979-1981	Nov 1979 and Mar 1981
New Zealand Women's Learning Web (NZWLW), and continued *Women's Information Network of New Zealand*	1979-1982	No. 2, Aug 1979– no. 4, Jan 1980
Wellington Women Resource Centre Newsletter/WRC Newsletter	1979-1982	July 1979, no. 2 – no. 15, 1982
Women in Nelson	1979-1991	No. 1, Apr1979 - no. 41, July 1991
Bitches, Witches and Dykes: a Women's Liberation Newspaper	1980-1982	Vol 1, no. 1, Aug 1980 – no. 6, Aug 1982
NZ Rape Crisis Workers' newsletter, also called *Rape Crisis Workers' newsletter of Aotearoa*	1982	Vol 1, no. 1, May 1982 – vol 2, no.1 Feb 1985
National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges AGM Reports	1984-1999	Annual Reports
Pamphlets, letters, reports and minutes, Sexual Violence groups	1984-1986	
Rape Crisis Training Package	1987	Estimate of date created
Tauranga Rape Crisis Operation Manual	1987	Was updated 1990
National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa Newsletter	1989-1990	No. 12 Aug 1989 – no. 16 June 1990
National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa AGM Minutes	1991-1998	Annual report
NOUS: National Office Update Sheet	1995-2000	Mar/Apr 1995 ; Issue 2 – Autumn 2000

closed. Lists in *Broadsheet* were useful sources about the existence of service groups (for example, Anonymous 1976d; Anonymous 1976g; Anonymous 1977a; Anonymous 1978g; Anonymous 1979c). However, it was difficult to ascertain the accuracy or completeness of these lists. Other sources, such as the Ministry of Women's Affairs publication of women's groups during the mid-1980s and beyond, were also useful, but had similar problems. Similarly, Anne Else's (1993) *Women Together: A History of Women's Organisations in New Zealand. Nga Ropu Wahine o te Motu* and Dann's (1985) *Up From Under: Women and Liberation in New Zealand, 1970-1985* were useful sources. In most instances, I attempted to obtain a few published references regarding the existence of each group, or asked others (through interviews or personal communication) in order to confirm that a group had existed in a particular period of time.

Decisions about the 'authenticity' of the documents, i.e. they described the events identified in the account, were an ongoing part of the research process. Deciding whether or not the sources were 'real' was less of an issue in the use of more recent documents. Authenticity was also assessed through asking participants who had been a part of the meetings to affirm that the reports and minutes were about the identified events and meetings, especially in the case of Rape Crisis unpublished reports of meetings. Misquotation was less likely, as newsletters, minutes and reports were nearly always examined in their original form (Holmes 1998:46).

An issue that emerged in the research process related to difficulties sustaining the separation between 'primary' sources defined as the "'raw' material of history" that described events, in contrast to "secondary sources that may be considered the 'cooked' analyses of those material [or events]" (Reinharz and Davidman 1992:155). The sources I examined often included debates about the representation of events as well as being representations themselves (Holmes 1998:46-47). The published and unpublished sources constructed particular interpretations of 'social reality' based on individual author experiences at the time that they were written (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002:124-128; Scott 1992:37). No one document presented a more 'real' or 'complete' account than other accounts of the same event. The accounts are limited, partial and socially located (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002:125). I examined the documents as part of ongoing feminist debates about how to organise and what it meant to organise as feminists in the activist service organisations. As such, the accounts reflect discursive

and political constructs of the topics under investigation. The above reiterates the need to read such documents as "arguments rather than 'objective' representations … The danger lies in reliance on a simple 'reflection' model that takes a text or account as evidence of what 'really' happened or what people 'really' believed or how society 'really' was" (Clemens and Hughes 2002:207).

In examining newsletters and reports, it is important to attend to the social relations that were part of the development of the newsletters and the writing of reports and minutes. An important aspect to consider, when reviewing published and unpublished documents, was the question of which voices and viewpoints were heard and in which contexts. For example, *Broadsheet* was published in Auckland by a group of Auckland feminists and, especially in the early to mid-1970s, there was a distinct bias of reporting women's liberation events taking place in Auckland. In addition, for multiple reasons, particular feminists had more voice in the publications. *Broadsheet* was at times criticised for representing the views of a narrow group of feminists (Poulter 1977). At the same time, major reliance on published sources to identify groups results in an exclusion of groups who left no public records of their existence, for example, many of the self-help health groups. This study is biased in the representation of groups that published reports about their activities. This bias results in gaps in the descriptions of activist service group developments out of the 1970s second wave women's liberation movement.

There is a need to be "alert for signs of internal politics of documentation" (Clemens and Hughes 2002:204). Publications about how to organise in the groups were often developed in the context of informal discussions and conflicts within organisations and among movement networks. Writers did not always make these debates explicit in the publications. Furthermore, organisational documents, such as minutes or reports, can "omit or distort crucial information in order to present the organization more favorably" (Clemens and Hughes 2002:204). Conflict and disagreement may be excluded or minimised. Authors may not describe unpalatable reasons for conflicts in historical documents. At the same time, the newsletters published by second wave feminists were full of disagreements and debate. The letters section of *Broadsheet* was often a rich source of debate about issues among movement participants. However, issues of interpretation do emerge because many key terms and concepts (for example, radical, collective, women's liberation) used in the newsletters had shifted in meaning and

importance in the time between when they were written and my reading of those sources. Thus, it was easy to miss the significance of some of the debates and issues addressed in the 1970s. This issue was often addressed by reference to various other analyses of the 1970s Western feminist women's movements (for example, Ferree and Hess 1994; Ryan 1992).

Newsletters, minutes and reports were reviewed and coded, and I developed a detailed index of *Broadsheet*. In addition, I identified and coded other relevant articles and references. I used these published and unpublished sources about the groups in two different ways in this study. First, I reviewed sources to identify the development of groups in terms of when they were established, who established them, which groups were established and why particular service groups were established. In this respect, I sought 'facts' and names about the organisations. As discussed above, this presented issues specific to historical research on organisations. Second, I reviewed sources to identify debates about the development of service organisations, and discussions about feminist organising and identity politics. The latter articles and reports were themed by events and issues. In discussing events and issues, I have attempted to be thorough in presenting the diversity of perspectives and views expressed in these reports and articles.

The focus of the thesis is the development of the feminist service collectives and the debates about feminist collective organising. The review of writings of the women's movement highlighted the ways in which debates about organising were taking place in multiple contexts in the second wave women's movement. Many of the early service group participants were also involved in these early debates. I developed two appendices to elaborate on the related debates that took place in the United Women's Conventions (UWCs) and many of the radical feminist gatherings (See Appendix IV, page 308 and Appendix V, page 322).

In reviewing the published and unpublished sources, two distinct periods emerge. During the 1970s and early 1980s, there was a proliferation of newsletters and publications by participants in the women's movement. The newsletters were rich with debates and reports on feminist events, often throughout Aotearoa/New Zealand. From approximately 1985, as result of the decline in the number of broadbased multi-issue women's groups, there was also a decline in the number of movement newsletters. During this period, there were few women's movement publications. In those published

from 1985 into the 1990s, such as *Broadsheet*, there were few references to the activities of the service collectives. Publications about the activist service organisations tended to take the form of reports created in order to increase funding, planning documents or reports related to the Annual General Meeting (AGM) reports. Both NCRC and NCIWR produced newsletters for their member organisations during this period. The newsletters, especially in the 1990s, reported statistics about services, media campaigns and national office activities.

Semi-structured individual and group interviews

Semi-structured interviews were another major source of information about the organisation of activist service groups and participant experiences of conflict in the groups. I utilised the notion of the active interview in developing and undertaking the interviews (Holstein and Gubrium 1995). This notion emphasises the way in which the interview is an interactional event, "a product of talk between interview participants" involving a process of collaboration between interviewee and interviewer (Holstein and Gubrium 1995:2). In many ways, the interviews reflected a conversation between friends (Johnson 2002:104). Sometimes I would relay some of my own experiences of working in feminist collectives in order to reflect back similarity or differences in experiences of working in collectives (Lather 1991; Oakley 1981). The focus in the interview was on encouraging the 'telling of stories' in ways that supported reflexivity and linkage by the interviewee and interviewer in the process of interviewing. The focus of the interviews was on participants' understandings of their experiences and therefore encouraged an informal semi-structured approach to the interview.

As Kathleen Blee and Verta Taylor (2002:92) outline, semi-structured interviews involve the use of an interview guide that "includes a consistent set of questions or topics", but which allows the interviewer "flexibility to digress and probe based on interactions during the interview". Semi-structured interviews are useful for understanding organisational developments and conflicts from the perspective of participants. They provide a depth of information and the opportunity to explore the interviewee's experiences and interpretations of events in their own words. As Blee and Taylor point out, semi-structured interviewing allows for:

> scrutiny of *meaning*, both how activists regard their participation and how they understand their social world … [S]emi-structured interviews bring *human agency* to the center of movement analysis. Qualitative interviews are a window into the everyday world of activists, and they generate representations that embody the subjects' voices (Blee and Taylor 2002:95-96, emphasis in original).

The semi-structured interview allowed for the development of a longitudinal view of continuity and change in organisations through multiple interviews with women involved in these organisations at different periods of time.

Semi-structured interviews provided a substantial source of information about service collectives in the late 1980s and 1990s. Apart from the newsletters identified above and the very comprehensive edited collection by Anne Else (1993), there were few written sources on contemporary individual groups or on contemporary debates about organising that have taken place the service collectives. Of those that do describe contemporary groups, they tend to be single case studies of local Refuge collectives (Gilson 2001; Hann 2001; MacGibbon 2002), or as in Mann's thesis (Mann 1993) of three contemporary feminist service collectives. In this way, those interviews with women belonging to 1990s feminist collectives provided crucial sources of information about this period. Interviews with women who had been involved in the collectives during the early 1970s to mid-1980s supplemented the published and unpublished sources about developments during that period. The interviews reflected on many of the themes debated in the newsletters about feminist organising.

An interview schedule of open-ended questions was developed for the study (See Figure 2 on page 37). The questions were developed through a review of the literature in relation to the topic to be investigated and piloted with two interviewees (Lofland and Lofland 1984). I included their interviews in this study as few changes were made to the interview schedule (Iris 29/1/97; Robyn 26/1/97). The interview schedule provided a prompt during the interview, and a review tool at the end of the interview. I asked interviewees about age, ethnicity, sexuality and social class at the end of each interview, if these had not already been identified during the interview. At the beginning of each interview, the interviewee was able to review the list of questions and could choose how she wanted to begin. Often at that point, the interviewee launched straight into describing their experiences or, if uncertain, some discussion took place about the purpose of the research. I emphasised a desire to understand more about how their organisation worked and the conflicts they may have experienced in these organisations.

In this way, I supported the interviewee to take the lead in deciding areas that were important to them in the interview.

The interviews aimed for depth in understanding and richness in description. The women usually told stories about particular events that had occurred in their collectives. In the stories, they described the different parties to the conflict and their views of the conflicts. The reflections involved the interviewee's interpretation of the conflicts and often the causes of the conflicts. As such, the interviews were never neutral or complete accounts of the events and conflicts (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002; Scott 1992). At times, I was able to interview different participants in a single organisation who were, or had been, in conflict. These interviewees demonstrated the multiple ways in which conflicts are experienced and understood, and the influence of social position (for example, paid or unpaid workers), experience and other factors. The accounts reflected individual truths and reflections on events.

Figure 2: Interview schedule

About collectives you have belonged to:
Which collectives have you belonged to, when were you involved? And what was your involvement in those collectives?

In relation to _____ collective:

1. Experiences of working in a collective:
Why and how did you come to be part of this collective?
What was your involvement in the collective?
What stands out about your involvement in the collective?
How was the group organised? eg, committees, roles and responsibilities

2. Collective feminist processes
What made it a feminist collective?
How did the group work as a feminist collective?
How were decisions made in the group?

3. Group dynamics and relationships
How did the collective work while you were a collective member?
What were the significant differences between women? How did the group attend to these differences?

4. Specific issues and/or conflicts that took place in the collective.
What were the key issues while you were a collective member?
What situations of conflict occurred?
What alliances did your group form with others? How did these alliances work?

The interviews combined elements of different approaches, including oral history interviewing with a focus on eliciting "robust or 'thick' description of a historical period or situation from the perspective of those who lived through that time" (Blee and Taylor 2002:102). In this way the interview operated "as a technique of bridging, seeking to understand social contexts through stories of individual experiences and to comprehend experiences of the past through stories told in the present" (Blee and Taylor 2002:102). I sought the views of those involved in various service collectives at different times. Other interviews became a recording of individual histories of involvement in the women's movement and the activist service groups, as some of interviewees described an involvement in a range of activist groups that had spanned ten or more years. Some of the interviewees were more like key informants, in particular the interviews with national office workers and Core Group members of the NCRC and NCIWR, which provided insider understandings of how specific organisations operated. The focus was on understanding the organisation's structures and internal dynamics. Blee and Taylor (2002:106) argue that the crucial distinction between key informant and the other interview approaches is that "in key informant interviews the interviewee's experiences and motivations are not the unit of analysis; rather the interviewee is being asked to serve as an expert to inform the researcher about various aspects of the movement". In this study, both the organisations and the individual's experiences were the units of analysis.

I aimed to interview women from a range of feminist collectives, with a diversity of roles and involvement in the organisations. Study subjects were initially drawn from my own networks in Rape Crisis across Aotearoa/New Zealand, and among friends. They were all asked to identify any women they knew who had ever been involved in any feminist collectives at any time since the 1970s. In addition, I advertised in *Broadsheet* and received four replies, including two service groups who were interested in the study. As I interviewed women, I used a snowball technique to identify possible participants by asking them if they knew of women I could approach for an interview. The early sample was biased by a larger group of Rape Crisis and Women's Centre collective members. Consequently, I specifically approached some Refuge and Health collectives for interviews. The sampling strategy resulted in clusters of women from different groups and periods of involvement in feminist collective organisations. (See Table 2 on page 41 and Table 3 on page 42 for a list of all the feminist activist service

groups that individuals interviewed had ever belonged to sorted by decade). I stopped interviewing once I experienced data saturation in the interviews (Morse 2000). This occurred as I gained a sense of repetition in the reflections, issues and views expressed by interviewees, and at the point where all four of the major service groups were represented.

On obtaining a name of a potential participant, I contacted them, described the study and requested an interview. Each potential participant was given an information sheet about the study and asked to sign a consent form. (See Appendix III, page 307, for a copy of the participant information sheet). Criteria for participation in the study was based on having been, or being currently, involved in a feminist service collective, such as a Women's Centre, Rape Crisis group, Refuge or Health Collective. In this way, the individual participants determined whether the organisations they belonged to were feminist and collective. Only one person refused an interview on the grounds that they did not think their organisation fitted the criteria of being a collective organisation. No one else that I approached refused an interview. However, there were some women that I was unable to contact or organise an interview with in the time I had available, for example, I was only in their town for a week and they were unavailable during that time. Women of Pacific Island ethnicities, either New Zealand or Island born, were not included in the interviews. Attempts to contact these groups, for example, in Refuge and the Pacific Island Women's Health groups, were not successful. Consequently, their experiences are not reflected in this study except where I had access to published reports. This is an important gap for there are few publications that examine the activities of these groups.

Interviews took place in a location that was convenient to the interviewee. Most interviews took place either in the home of the interviewee or at her workplace and took between one and three hours. All but two of the interviewees consented to the interviews being taped (Kaitlin 10/3/97; Verity 11/12/97). Interviewees were informed that they could withdraw at any stage of the research. The interview started with a description of the study goals. The study used a combination of individual and group

interviews.[14] An individual, who would volunteer themselves and other organisation members, usually undertook the organisation and planning of a group interview. All of the group interviews included members of the same activist service groups and focused on members' experiences of belonging to that organisation. Group interviews have some advantages and disadvantages relative to individual interviews (Fontana and Frey 1998:53-55). The group interviews provided other perspectives on the research topic that were not available in individual interviews, such as group discussion and debate about meaning of feminist organising, as well as making visible the interactions of group members. Often, in situations where the group included long term members, it was possible to obtain more detail about the historical development of the organisation. A disadvantage was the challenge of drawing all members into the discussion in the group interviews. The group interviews provided rich sources of data about feminist service collective experiences, and often stimulated group members, aided individual recall of events, and enabled elaboration of the experience of working collectively.

On completion of each interview, I developed a summary of the important themes examined in the interview and identified further questions to ask in other interviews. The interviews were transcribed and the transcripts imported into NUD*IST, a qualitative text analysis software programme. The interviews yielded rich and complex reflections on the experiences of working in feminist service collectives which were coded into a range of categories. The categories of analysis were derived through an iterative process of examining the interviews and the literature analysing feminist service collectives drawn from a variety of disciplines, including sociology, history, gender/women's studies, organisational studies, politics and the social movement studies (Boyatzis 1998). Also influential in the development of the categories was an earlier study of a local Rape Crisis group (Vanderpyl 1998b) and my ongoing participation in Rape Crisis. The major categories were: collective processes; types of organisations; collective and feminist values; identity politics; conflicts between and within groups; and employment. I divided each of the major categories into a number of sub-categories. For example, collective and feminist values, which drew together the interviewee reflections of what was important about how they organised, was divided

[14] Often the terms focus groups and group interviews have been used interchangeably (Blee and Taylor 2002; Fontana and Frey 1998). In this instance I would argue for the use of the term group interview, as focus groups have usually involved unrelated individuals brought together by the researcher to examine a particular topic.

Table 2: Interviewee membership of Women's Centre, Rape Crisis, Refuges and Health Collectives during the 1970s to 1990s

Collectives interviewees* belonged to:	1970s	1980s	1990s
Women's Centres			
New Plymouth Women's Centre			
Tauranga Women's Centre			
Nelson Women's Centre			
Wellington Women's House Collective			
Auckland Women's Centre			
Wanganui Women's Centre			
Rape Crisis Collectives			
Tauranga			
Levin			
Palmerston North			
Hamilton			
Nelson			
Te Awamutu			
Wanganui			
Opotiki			
Whakatane			
New Plymouth			
Auckland			
National Office Workers			
National Core Group			
Refuge Collectives			
Palmerston North			
Tauranga			
Auckland (general refuges and ethnic-specific)			
Wanganui (general)			
Wellington (Tauiwi Refuge)			
Nelson			
New Plymouth			
Paraparaumu			
National Office			
National Core Group			
Health Collectives			
Nelson Health Collective			
Palmerston North Women's Health Collective			
Wellington Women's Health Collective			

*The time periods refer to the period of time that interviewees belonged to the specific collective. Specific time periods often included more than one person.

into: not patriarchal; trust; spirituality; equality; sisterhood; sharing and bonding; safety; personal development; commitment and belonging. In these sub-categories, cross-case analysis took place by grouping interviewee reflections and understandings in order to analyse similarities and differences in perspectives among those interviewed (Boyatzis 1998; Miles and Huberman 1994; Patton 1999; Silverman 1993; Silverman 2000). This process supported the development of the general themes and identification of patterns in feminist collective organising. In the process of analysis and writing the chapters, some of the categories were used more often than others, for example, discussions on biculturalism and employment.

Table 3: Interviewee membership of women's liberation groups, lesbian feminist collectives, and other feminist collectives during the 1970s to 1990s

Collectives interviewees? belonged to:	**1970**	**1980**	**1990**
Women's Liberation Collectives*			
Liberation Collective 1			
Liberation Collective 2			
Liberation Collective 3			
Liberation Collective 4			
Liberation Collective 5			
Other feminist collectives			
Broadsheet, Auckland			
WONAAC, (various areas)			
Women Against Pornography (Auckland and Wellington)			
Womanline Collective, Auckland			
Daybreak, Dunedin Bookshop			
Lesbian feminist collectives			
Lesbian Coffee Shop collective, Wellington			
Lesbian Anti-Racism Group, Wellington			
Lesbian Links, Wanganui			
Lesbian Links, Hamilton			
Dyke FM collective, Wanganui			
Tamaki Makaurau Lesbian Newsletter collective			

*The women's liberation collectives have not been identified as it was not possible to maintain confidentiality of the interviewees if I had named the actual collectives.
? The time periods refer to the period of time that interviewees belonged to the specific collective. Specific time period often included more than one person.

CHAPTER TWO

EQUALITY AND 'WOMEN'S WAYS OF WORKING' IN FEMINIST SERVICE ORGANISATIONS

This chapter examines debates about characteristics of feminist service collectives and changes in their internal organisation. Feminist collectives have changed significantly since the early 1970s, when many of the women's liberation collectives were characterised by informal 'structurelessness' (Cassell 1977). The early women's liberation groups were distinguished by egalitarian and inclusive practices such as consensus decision-making, task rotation and the development of universal competence in all tasks. However, the ideals of the completely egalitarian feminist collective have proved impossible to maintain. Groups started with an "emphasis on collectivity and consensus of various degrees, but over time they moved to more hierarchy, whether planned or unplanned" (Acker 1995:138). Patriarchal capitalist society, which is premised on inequality, hierarchy, competition and individualism, challenges the attempt to maintain organisations based on feminist collective principles (Acker 1990; Bordt 1997; Murray 1988). Additionally, internal tensions in the collective organisations, such as the development of covert leadership, lack of accountability and difficulties achieving consensus, undermined feminist collective ideals (Reinharz 1984; Riger 1994).

This chapter first examines literature on the characteristics of feminist collectives. Second, I discuss factors challenging the maintenance of feminist collective values and practices. The groups were characterised by the development of both informal and

formal hierarchy. The literature on feminist collectives has often framed the development of hierarchy in terms of an either/or dualism that fails to address the complexity of conflict and change in feminist collectives. Third, I explore the ways in which simple oppositions such as bureaucracy and collective, patriarchal and feminist, fail to address the complexity of feminist organising.

Feminist Service Collectives - An Oppositional Construction

Feminist collectives attempted a 'prefigurative politics', an enactment of egalitarianism that participants wanted not only in the group, but throughout society (Eder, Staggenborg et al. 1995:486-487). Processes of organising had to be consistent with desired end goals and directed towards the implementation of the group's vision of a better society. Challenging gender inequality, discrimination and oppression was part of the radical feminist collectives' agenda of social change (Ryan 1992:55). Bordt (1997:137) argues that the collective within the second wave women's movement was institutionalised. She defines institutionalisation as:

> a process whereby ideas, actions, or structures become taken for granted, or second nature. ... Once the outcome of institution is achieved, organizational practices or structures take on a rulelike status, or life of their own, and are beyond the reach of politics and individual interests (Bordt 1997:134).

She argues that "the collective – as an organizational form – gained status as an institution among feminists. This status was maintained throughout the 1970s, several years beyond the demise of the women's liberation strand of the movement" (Bordt 1997:137).

In many accounts of Western second wave women's movements, the development of the feminist service collectives has been closely tied with the women's liberation movement groups (for example, Buechler 1990; Dann 1985; Evans 1977; Radford 1994).[15] Ferree and Hess describe how:

[15] Quite a number of accounts of the women's liberation movement blame the development of alternative organisations and service groups for the demise of the movement and are critical of the potential of the service groups to realise the radical goals of transforming society. They link the development of these groups with the ascendancy of cultural feminism and the increasing dominance of liberal feminism (Echols 1989:269), or with the limits of the small collective group and collective forms of organising (Freeman 1975:205), the limiting effects of the overriding focus on internal processes over and above political effectiveness (Valk 2002), and the shift to a politics focused on single issues and loss of mass movement

> Women's liberation groups were the relatively informal, loosely structured networks of women in the community, struggling for feminist goals outside of the conventional political system, through consciousness-raising (CR) and support groups, self-help projects, media-directed actions, and efforts to construct more egalitarian relationships in their personal lives (Ferree and Hess 1985:48).

The women's liberation groups influenced the ways in which the service groups adopted collective principles, goal of sisterhood, women-only membership and radical feminist critiques of patriarchal relations.[16] As the following discussion suggests, these ideas were entwined with the emerging radical feminist theory and political strategies. Carmen Sirianni (1993:283) argues that, initially, little was distinctively feminist about organising in the women's liberation sector. Women opposed the way in which "the power of the sovereign individual had been systematically undercut by representative government, trade union bureaucracies and large, impersonal institutions" within liberal democracies (Vickers 1992:49). As a consequence, early women's liberation groups implemented practices to empower individuals, such as consensus decision-making processes, rotating leadership and a 'lot system' to randomly allocate tasks.

(Evans 1980:223). However, others argue against the above criticisms, instead emphasising that the service collectives represent both a radicalisation and an institutionalisation of the ideas of women's liberation. At an individual level, participation in groups working "on 'women's issues' such as rape … in the context of established organizations … raised women's consciousness, increased their feminist activism and contributed to their radicalization" (Rupp and Taylor 1986:92). At the group/organisational level, "the decentralised structure of the movement" supported radicalisation with the continued proliferation of feminist groups, and the issues these groups were working on expanded (Rupp and Taylor 1986:93). Women working in these organisations were, in different ways, working toward the same goal of dismantling the complex structural base of patriarchy and ultimately transforming society (Rupp and Taylor 1986:95). As Buechler argues:

> The late 1960s and early 1970s were indeed the bonfire phase of women's liberation, but rather than burning out, the residual sparks and embers of this white-hot phase have drifted in many directions, where the embers continue to glow and are periodically fanned into flames by the winds of social change. ... [I]deas with ideological origins in the women's liberation movement have found their way into numerous institutional and cultural niches, where they continue to modify social organization and inform social practices (Buechler 1990:75).

The dispersion of the ideas of women's liberation and collective forms of organising mean it is possible to speak of the continuity of the 'feminist community' which is localised, loosely linked through various networks, but one that can be found in many cities and towns within most English speaking countries. The continuity of the feminist community, especially throughout the 1980s, requires elaboration of social movement theory to include "the creative forms that a continually proliferating and dispersing social movement has managed to create in the wake of its most public and dramatic periods of mobilization" (Buechler 1990:76).

[16] Integral to understanding the importance of collective organisation in the second wave women's movement was the distinction between women's liberation and women's rights strands, or collectivist and bureaucratic strands as they have also been named (Ferree and Hess 1985:67). As Reger and Taylor (2002:94) outline, the distinction between collectivist and bureaucratic strands in second wave women's movement was one of a number of dichotomies through which the movement was examined (for example, Ferree and Hess 1985; Freeman 1975; Ryan 1992).

Consciousness-raising (CR) was developed as a major tool for analysing patriarchal oppression, developing strategies for social change and building unity in the women's liberation sector.[17]

> Providing daily illustrations of the claim that 'the personal is the political', consciousness-raising created strong bonds of sisterhood, identified immediate changes in personal lives that could be attempted, and sought links between personal change and societal transformation (Buechler 1990:72).

By putting women's experiences first, and seeking to derive theory and strategy from these experiences, CR was viewed as a necessary precursor to effective political activism. CR was important in the creation of the 'radical' feminist political subject (Bondi 1993:91) as the CR groups provided a context in which personal problems took on political meanings.

> Through sharing their experiences, what women had felt as personal inadequacies, neuroses and so on, came to be viewed as the product of contradictory pressures on women and dominant myths about femininity. This enabled women to rewrite their own stories, to insist that 'the personal is political', and to develop a feminist identity through which to challenge the subordination of women (Bondi 1993:91).

CR revealed the political nature of women's experiences and produced a powerful sense of solidarity between women. The small, women-only, leaderless CR group served as a model for many of the early feminist activist service groups, both in terms of organisation and in the emphasis on individual experience.

In this analysis, patriarchy was conceptualised "as an elaborate system of male domination of women's minds and bodies which [was] at the basis of all social organization" (Weedon 1999:20). Patriarchy referred to a system of domination which was trans-historical and all pervasive (Firestone 1971; Millett 1970). Women were a sex-class. Thus, radical feminism was dedicated to eliminating the sex-class system and challenging patriarchal meanings traditionally ascribed to female bodies (Weedon 1999:19-20). Patriarchy was founded on a fundamental polarisation between men and women in which men exploit women for their own interests. The "idea of a shared oppression, irrespective of class, race or culture, became the basis for oppositional notions of *sisterhood* through which women everywhere could unite in the struggle

[17] Kathie Sarachild and Carol Hanish, members of New York Radical Women (1967), developed consciousness-raising as a method for exploring women's experiences of sexism. They drew on their experiences in the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee in Mississippi where blacks 'rapped' about white injustice (Solomon 1989:92). CR groups were vital in recruiting previously uninvolved women into the women's movement.

against patriarchy" (Weedon 1999:26, emphasis added). Notions of being male-identified and woman-identified had been developed by radical feminists to help build feminist solidarity by orienting women to other women, and the focus on 'the personal is political' increased reflection on all personal aspects of life.[18]

The above ideas were influential in the decision to organise as women-only collective groups. As Taylor and Whittier suggest:

> [The radical feminist groups] pursued social transformation through the creation of alternative nonhierarchical institutions and forms of organization intended to prefigure a utopian feminist society, held gender oppression to be primary and the model of all other forms of oppression, and emphasized women's commonality as a sex-class through consciousness-raising (Taylor and Whittier 1992:108).

Separatism involved the development of an alternative female culture, free from male domination and focused on reversing the cultural valuation of men and the devaluation of the female. Feminist collective organising was viewed as political and as representing a vision of feminist liberation. The radical feminist focus on protest related to women's bodies, for example, health issues, sexual and domestic violence. As Weedon (1999:19-26) outlines, the radical feminist focus on personal experience of women under patriarchy was bound up with the meaning, status and control of their bodies. Addressing issues about women's bodies, sexuality, procreative power and labour became the unifying focus in radical feminist politics. A focus of radical feminist politics and analysis was decolonisation of the mind from patriarchal meanings traditionally ascribed to female bodies. For example, the rape crisis groups, the refuge groups and health groups attempted to challenge male-defined approaches to the female body. Challenging gender oppression and developing better organisational forms became entwined with the development of the feminist service collective. The development of the women-only organisation based on collective principles attempted to enact a form of radical egalitarianism between women (Cassell 1977; Sirianni 1993).

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[18] Lesbian feminist separatist developments were entwined with the emergence of women's liberation politics (Stein 1993; Taylor and Whittier 1992). Initially, participants in the contemporary women's movement argued that lesbians would undermine the focus on sexism and that sexuality was a personal rather than a political issue (Echols 1989). The ideological implications of lesbianism were hotly contested: "In these debates, the perspective of lesbian feminism emerged by taking some of the basic insights of radical feminism and logically extending them into explicit analyses of lesbian identity and practice" (Buechler 1990:117). Within this framework, a lesbian feminist position emerged in which lesbianism was perceived to be the purest form of personal politics. Some lesbian feminists argued that a politics based on the woman-identified-woman was the most radical feminist politics, as well as suggesting that the movement privileged lesbian relations over heterosexual or bisexual relations, and advocating separatist communities focused on building 'women's culture' (Buechler 1990; Stein 1993).

Early proponents of feminist service collective organising linked collectivism with challenging patriarchal power. Wendy Collins, Ellen Friedman and Agnes Pivot (1978:237) argued that, if "we are trying to break down power structures that oppress women (and men), it is no use organizing ourselves in a way that mirrors those power structures, as this will only perpetuate them". Likewise, Kath McLean and Robyn Clarke (1985) insisted that feminism without collectivism made no sense in organisations like women's health collectives. They argued that if women were to take control of their own bodies, then organising hierarchically in health care undermined this goal (McLean and Clarke 1985:177). The connection between forms of organising and radical feminist politics resulted in many feminists during the 1970s and 1980s developing feminist collectivist democratic organisations. These were organised as alternatives to, and in opposition to, patriarchal bureaucratic and hierarchical organisations (Cassell 1977; Ferguson 1984).

The contrast between collective and bureaucratic forms of organisation dominates explanations and explorations of feminist collectives. Joyce Rothschild-Whitt (1979) contrasted collectivist- democratic ideals with the ideal bureaucratic organisation outlined by Max Weber (1946). Collectivist-democratic organisations were premised on a logic of substantive rationality that differed from the formal rationality of bureaucracy. The ideal of the collectivist-democratic organisation was characterised by minimally stipulated rules and a minimal division of labour (see Table 4 on page 49). Collectives were to be grounded in relationships with others that were holistic, co-operative and nurturing. Non-hierarchical processes and structures entailed a desire to relate to others in ways which respected the capacities of the individual, avoided placing one group of people above another and promoted collective ownership of the aims of the organisation (Brown 1992:6). In contrast, the ideal of bureaucracy was characterised by hierarchy, a system of unequally graded positions, with specialisation of functions and roles, and differential valuing and reward systems associated with these divisions (Rothschild-Whitt, 1979 citing Weber 1946). Formal rationality underpins this ideal of bureaucracy (Rothschild-Whitt 1979:509).

Early studies of feminist collectives applied the ideal characteristics of the collectivist-democratic model specified by Rothschild-Whitt (for example, Ahrens 1980; Bart 1987; Farrell 1994; Murray 1988; Reinharz 1984; Riger 1984; Schlesinger and Bart 1982). Much of this early work examined how closely feminist collectives fitted Rothschild-

Whitt's model (Bart 1987; Schlesinger and Bart 1982), or identified threats to collectivist-democratic organisations, such as differences in expertise (Reinharz 1984; Riger 1984), external government funding (Ahrens 1980; Murray 1988), and inefficiencies in decision-making (Murray 1988). Many of these early studies posited an either/or model of organisation in which the focus was on identifying the features which enabled groups to organise as collectives, or on identifying those factors which resulted in the seemingly inevitable progression to organisations adopting bureaucracy. As will be explored in a later section, framing analyses of organisations in terms of the opposition between bureaucracy and collectivism misses the complexity of practices and values in feminist organisations.

Table 4: Comparisons of collectivist and bureaucratic ideal types of organisation

Dimensions	Bureaucratic Organisation	Collectivist-Democratic Organisation
Authority	Possessed by those in office. Hierarchical organisation of offices.	Resides or possessed by the group as a whole
Rules	Formal, universal and fixed	Minimally stipulated
Social Control	Direct supervision, standard rules and sanctions	Personalistic and moralistic appeals
Social Relations	Ideal of impersonality, relations are role based, segmented and instrumental	Ideal of community, relations are holistic, personal, valued in themselves.
Recruitment and Advancement	Employment is part of a career, with advancement based on seniority or achievement	No career, no hierarchy of positions
Incentive Structure	Remunerative	Normative, solidarity
Social Stratification	Differential rewards by office, hierarchy justifies inequality	Egalitarian
Differentiation	Maximal division of labour; dichotomy between intellectual and manual work, and between administrative and performance tasks Specialisation of jobs, ideal of specialist-expert	Minimal division of labour; reduced division between intellectual and manual work Generalisation of jobs, demystification of expertise. Ideal of the amateur factotum

Adapted from Rothschild-Whitt (1979:519) and Reinharz (1984:309).

Consensus decision-making was a crucial practice in the collectivist-democratic organisation for it symbolised the sharing of leadership, solidarity and authority among members of the organisation. Ideally, it gave each member of the collective equal influence, participation and status within the group. Jane Mansbridge (1980), who studied two organisations committed to participatory democratic organising, found that consensus worked in two very different ways. On the one hand, it helped to maintain solidarity among collective members by focusing groups on reaching agreement. Consensus both reflected and created unity in a group. On the other hand, it protected each individual against the others, a 'self-protective veto'. In situations of disagreement or conflict, consensus decision-making processes protected the interests of the less aggressive, the less verbal or any other minority by giving them a potential veto. This made it more likely that group members would listen and try to understand each other's points of view. Thus, consensus decision-making aimed to build a commonality without endangering the right of individuals. The self-protective veto could potentially protect individuals and minorities against coercion (Mansbridge 1980:268). Mansbridge (1980), and others (Cassell 1977; Phillips 1991; Phillips 1993), argued that frequent face-to-face meetings were critical to successful consensus decision-making. Numerous meetings created empathy, connection and caring between collective members.

Ideally, in consensus decision-making everyone was involved in the formulation of problems and negotiations of decisions (Rothschild-Whitt 1979:512). Decision by consensus entailed a "[g]radual buildup of group commitment to a decision ... it represents a synthesis of many ideas ... [e]licits commitment ... [e]mpowers people" (Reinharz 1984:312-313). Only decisions that carried the consensus of the group were considered to have moral authority and were binding and legitimate (Rothschild-Whitt 1979). Members of a South Australian Women's Centre contended that consensus decision-making facilitated co-operation rather than competition (McGrath 1986:13). It avoided the development of stable hierarchies of authority by involving everyone in decision-making, and meant that the people who made the decisions were the ones that undertook the resulting tasks (McGrath 1986:15). Consensus processes supported goals of equality and solidarity among members of the organisation, as well as the practice of shared leadership.

The form and nature of leadership was much debated in the feminist collective organisations. Freeman (1972), in her oft cited article *The Tyranny of Structurelessness,*

and Cassell (1977), in her study of an early women's liberation group both argued that collectives attempted to avoid any formal leadership positions. They avoided this because group members believed that leadership undermined the commitment to egalitarian relationships. However, as both Freeman (1972) and Cassell (1977) point out, the groups often ended up with a covert tyranny of informal leadership that could not be challenged. Brown (1992: 164-165) criticises Freeman (1972) for examining leadership in these early feminist collectives from a narrow conception of equality and argues that Freeman fails to understand leadership or influence as negotiated in the feminist collectives. Brown argued that:

> [L]eadership acts must be accomplished in a manner which constitutes acceptable influence. This process involves managing the differences between participants with the intention of achieving, ultimately, a situation wherein all participants are able to contribute to organising activity on an equal basis (Brown 1992:165).

In a participant observation study of a British women's centre, Helen Brown (1992:67,68) utilised Brown and Hosking's (1986) concept of 'distributed leadership' to describe a mode of conduct in which regular contributions were expected from all collective members. In some situations, temporary inequalities in influence were negotiated between participants in the organisation. Yet every participant retained both the right and the responsibility to contribute to organisational decisions. The collective resisted the development of formal or stable hierarchies of authority. In some situations, shared ideology has a 'leadership role', in those instances, where "[i]nstead of a single leader, there is a clear ideology within which members identify and the ideology serves to influence behaviour of organisational members" (Pringle and Collins 1998:11).

Furthermore, feminist collectives implemented a range of strategies to avoid the development of hierarchy. Amy Farrell (1994:719) described the way in which *Ms,* a United States of America (US) feminist magazine, did not use professional titles in an attempt to challenge the development of professional hierarchies. In another study, Reinelt (1995) described how the collective rejected the relevance of formal education and training in making hiring decisions. In this way, the collective tried "to create alternative systems of value and power that did not depend on institutional legitimation" (Reinelt 1995:90). Some collectives aimed for universal competence in all tasks (Rothschild-Whitt 1979:513). This involved task rotation and training through which members gained experience in all areas of work in the organisation (Bart 1987:349-350). In other groups, all workers were paid the same rates of pay irrespective of the

type of work undertaken (Rodriguez 1988:222-223). The incentive structure within these types of groups was mainly linked to value fulfilment and on solidarity incentives, for example, friendship, and only partially on material incentives (Rothschild-Whitt 1979:515). In Noelie Rodriguez's (1988:217) analysis of a US Shelter for Battered Women, new staff were only employed on the basis of a unanimous decision of staff. All staff had been victims of battering and many had previously been residents of the Shelter. Consequently, the Shelter "deliberately maintained a staff of nonprofessional and predominantly blue-collar and minority women who have been the victims of male violence" (Rodriguez 1988:219). The ideal of this Shelter, and many others like it, was to have the "residents run the shelter on an equal footing with the staff" (Rodriguez 1988:219).

Resisting the process of developing a 'professionalised' social service institution, divorced from the community it was to serve, entailed establishing relationships that respected the expertise women had about their own lives (Reinelt 1995 33:88). In Susan Murray's (1988) case study of a US Battered Women's Shelter, peer counselling was a primary vehicle for empowerment of women. In the process of peer counselling, the battered woman:

> decides on her own course of action and is 'empowered' by the decision-making process. The ideology explicitly enjoins staff members to avoid dominating power relationships with the residents by not encouraging the choice of one option or another. To assume an advisor role would simply be reproducing the relationship of power and control identical to the one from which the woman has escaped. Her dependency will have shifted from her previous relationship to the present one with shelter staff (Murray 1988:82-83).

It was the staff member's role to help each woman explore the problem and support her to develop her own solutions. Peer counselling assumed power symmetry between workers and residents, and a common experience of patriarchal oppression. Collective members in groups such as refuge and rape crisis attempted to develop a relationship of equality with the women the organisation was serving (Edmundson and Thorpe 1985; Murray 1988).

The above discussion of feminist collective practices and ideals highlights their similarity to the radical alternative counter-institutions (Rothschild-Whitt 1979) and the self-help movements (Amir and Amir 1979) that emerged during the 1970s and 1980s across many Western countries. However, in contrast to many other democratic

collective organisations, gender differences, women's experiences and sisterhood came to be central to the constitution of feminist collectives (for example, Cassell 1977; Farrell 1994; Ferguson 1984; Sirianni and Leidner 1993). In her study of an early 1970s women's liberation movement group, Cassell (1977:168) argued that "'women's way' [of working] offers an emblem of the nature of women, the way they behave (or should behave), and a dream of a new and liberated society". Collectivism, caring, friendship, community and egalitarianism were symbolic of 'woman's ways of working'. Bureaucracy, individualism, abstract formal rights and hierarchy came to be symbolic of 'male ways of working'. This opposition provided the basis for group identity and a boundary differentiating 'them' from 'us,' men from women. Men represented hierarchy whilst women represented community. This oppositional construction played a vital role in unifying and organising the feminist group (Cassell 1977:167-168). Cassell argues that 'women's ways of working' expressed everything that was liberatory:

> Thus the opposite pole of radical egalitarianism, where all differences are to be erased, is hierarchy, where status differences are stressed. Self-actualization is contrasted with repression; sisterhood and cooperation with exclusion and coercion; personal experience with sterile abstraction; and collectivism with oppressive individualism (Cassell 1977:151).

Sirianni (1993:300) draws on Carol Gilligan's (1982) 'ethic of care' to make a similar point about feminist collectives. She describes how understandings of femininity influenced feminist collective commitments to egalitarianism. The feminist collective revalued feminine notions of caring, nurturing, and community. This involved:

> egalitarian participation, democratization of all leadership roles, elimination of all competitiveness in organizational life, careful listening, respect for the experiences of all women, self-transformation, and autonomy through intimate sharing and small group support. ... what later came to be called a distinctively, though not exclusively, female 'ethic of care' (Sirianni 1993:284).

Relationships with others were ideally holistic, co-operative and nurturing, and similar to the private sphere, as opposed to relationships centred on the autonomous, competitive self-interested individual associated with the public sphere (Young 1990:306). In this way, solidarity between women in the collective was based on an opposition to those forms of organisational structures characterised as patriarchal: hierarchy and bureaucracy. This opposition between women's and men's ways of working has not only been criticised for its essentialist assumptions (Heyes 2000; Sirianni and Leidner 1993), but also for the simple dichotomy of feminine ways of

relating as liberatory and masculine ways as oppressive. I will discuss this further later in this chapter.

These emergent feminist collectives were constituted through the binary opposition of masculinity and femininity, in which equality was entangled with a resistant practice of femininity. The feminist collective was, thus, a site of resistance that embodied a utopian vision of feminist community and relations.

Difficulties Sustaining Feminist Service Collective Organisations

Utopian visions of co-operative relations between women and the development of egalitarian feminist community were challenged by frequent conflicts between women in collectives. As a number of writers about feminist collectives have noted, conflict has been a major aspect of these organisations in spite of ideals of unity and co-operation between members (Mueller 1995; Riger 1994; Sirianni and Leidner 1993). Conflicts were often believed to be antithetical to ideals of feminist collective organising. Stephanie Riger (1994:291) points out that conflict within feminist organisations has often had particularly negative consequences for the participants because it "threatens the sense of community that motivates many women to join feminist organizations". Conflict between women in feminist collectives challenged essentialist assumptions underpinning 'women's ways of working'. It was often assumed that women were inherently more co-operative, nurturing or committed to egalitarian relations. Consequently, participants often viewed conflicts as antithetical to ideals of feminist collective organising. Yet, as both Carol Mueller (1995:264) and Stephanie Riger (1994:294) argue, conflict is inevitable in these organisations. Riger (1994:300), quoting Eleanor Batchelder and Linda Marks (1979:107), suggests the presence of conflict "should not surprise us. It is the absence of ways of negotiating competing demands that we should worry about".

Being committed to non-hierarchy in everyday practices of the feminist collective was a major source of conflict. A major source of conflict in feminist collectives was what it meant in practice to be committed to non-hierarchical organisation. Two trends challenged the commitment to non-hierarchy in these groups. On the one hand, the attempt to organise informally, and with minimal structure, rules and divisions, was challenged by individual differences in skills, time and expertise. These individual

differences were often implicated in the emergence of informal hierarchy and covert leadership in the collective organisation (Cassell 1977; Freeman 1972; Riger 1984). The development of informal hierarchy resulted in inequality of influence among collective members. On the other hand, the tendency for organisations to adopt bureaucratic formal organisation practices as a result of both internal and external pressures influenced the development of formal hierarchy. The result was formal differentiation in positions, responsibilities and authority among organisation members (Reinharz 1984; Riger 1994). These trends have been associated with many claims regarding the impossibility of maintaining non-hierarchy within feminist collective-democratic organisations (Acker 1990; Acker 1995; Freeman 1972; Freeman 1983).

Difference and disagreement became a problem for feminist collectives and were seen as undermining the goal of equality and unity between women in the organisations. The next two sections examine the different ways in which the emergence of informal and formal hierarchy in feminist collective organisations has been identified in the literature. The following review of the literature separates discussion of the emergence of informal hierarchy from discussion of the development of formal hierarchy, because it is useful to separate the different tensions associated with each trend. At the same time, it is important to recognise that both trends interacted and are central to debates about the meanings of equality and difference in feminist collectives and to debates about what constitutes these organisations as feminist.

Differences and disagreement in feminist collectives

The literature examining internal tensions within feminist collectives identifies significant struggles over the ideal of equality among women in the group. A prominent focus has been on the ways in which differences between women are implicated in the development of informal hierarchy and inequalities of influence within the group. However, as examined below, sometimes groups will tolerate inequality between members. There are also significant criticisms of consensus decision-making processes as limiting expression of disagreement and differences between women, as well as being implicated in encouraging group homogeneity.

The focus on the development of informal hierarchy within the feminist collective was undoubtedly influenced by Freeman's (1972) landmark article *The Tyranny of*

Structurelessness. In this significant piece Freeman criticised the early women's liberation groups, many of which aimed to be both anti-leadership and anti-structure. These early groups were informed by a radical egalitarianism where individuals were seen as "having equal potential, with differences in performance reflecting not differences in competence but in socialization" (Cassell 1977:129). The feminist group came to have responsibility for eliminating differences in terms of abilities or skills because these were the effects of socialisation. For some members, the egalitarian and anti-leadership ethic was so radical that even differences in ability were perceived as hierarchical (Cassell 1977:129).

Within the feminist collectives, individual differences in skills, influence, abilities or ambitions have been sources of conflict and implicated in development of informal hierarchies. Deborah Mann's (1993:139-141) research on three Aotearoa/New Zealand feminist collectives described how differences of knowledge, experiences, and paid and unpaid roles created unacceptable inequalities in influence within the collectives and became the basis of conflict in the groups. Farrell (1994:720-721), in her study of the *Ms* collective, argued that strong personalities and greater length of time and experience working in the organisation resulted in inequalities of influence. Riger (1984:106) pointed out that when expertise was distributed inequitably throughout the group or when networks of friendship, expertise, and support were overlapping informal hierarchies often emerged in the groups. Those who had been in the collective longer, or who were more articulate, or louder in voicing opinions, developed greater influence in the consensus process (Ristock 1991:52). Problems arose when inequality in influence was deemed to be unacceptable to other members. Covert, or informal, leadership was difficult to challenge in these groups (Cassell 1977; Freeman 1972).

At the same time, collective processes were contradictory, by privileging group authority even while encouraging individual empowerment. In the informal organisation, leadership developed from the skills and interests of collective members and in this way empowered individual women. Yet, when individuals gained power without it being formalised, organisations ran the risk of developing an informal hierarchy which was not subject to collective control. Cassell suggested that "self-development can be an ambiguous principle in a collective context, since differentiation may be perceived as a threat to the collectiveness of the group" (Cassell 1977:131-132). This paradox was rarely recognised in feminist collective conflicts. Instead, individuals,

rather than the structure of the organisation, were often blamed for the conflicts. Individuals had deficient motives, lacked ability, lacked commitment to feminism (Riger 1994:295), or were 'male-identified' (Buechler 1990:114-115).

Nevertheless, other studies of collective organising point out that inequality of influence was not always the basis of conflict and tension. A belief in a common interest or 'higher goal' among group members could overcome some of these inequalities. In these instances, it was equal respect rather than equality of influence or equal power that was critical (Leidner 1991). Mansbridge argues that "[t]he greater the common interest, the less need a polity has for equal power in order to protect members' interests equally" (Mansbridge 1980:31). Some inequality in participation and influence was often accepted in situations where group members believed that the more influential members had the same interests as the less influential members (Mansbridge 1980:242-243). In circumstances of resource, skill or time differences, Brown (1992:165) maintained that groups negotiate situations of temporary inequality. Kathleen Iannello (1992:17-18) argued for a distinction between leadership and domination. She pointed out that domination involves authority based on position and rule without consensus, along with the maintenance of a wide social gap between leader and other members, often by processes of coercion (Iannello 1992:18). Thus, she moved the debate away from issues of equating leadership (formal or informal) with inequality to a focus on the way in which leadership was enacted: whether it involved acceptable and voluntary influence or coercion. Iannello, (1992:119) described a pattern of emerging leadership occurring within the feminist health collective and peace group that she studied. This was similar to Brown's notion of 'distributed leadership' described earlier.

Equally important was the way in which specific collective values and practices made disagreement and differences difficult to address in the collectives. Situations in which dissension was based on conflicting interests or opposing ideologies were not uncommon (Fried 1994; Herzog and Radford 1991; Sirianni 1993; Vanderpyl 1998b). In these cases consensus processes often proved ineffective. Ideological differences were often a source of irresolvable conflict. Amy Fried (1994) investigated conflicts arising from ideological differences in a US Rape Crisis organisation. She argued that the loose structure of the organisation and the emphasis on egalitarian relations allowed for the development of two distinct and opposing subcultures. One was comprised of those focused primarily on developing a professional service for victims of sexual

violence. The other group included those who had a primary focus on radical political change (in terms of how the group organised, the relationships between providers and users of the service, and organisation goals). These two groups clashed over the goals of the organisation because of their different social analyses. Paradoxically, Fried concluded that the participatory structures encouraged the articulation of ideological differences, but that, once expressed, these differences were often irresolvable within the collective. Christine Herzog and Deborah Radford (1991) reported a similar experience in an Aotearoa/New Zealand education collective where ongoing clashes between two ideologically opposed factions resulted in the closure of the organisation. The above conflicts arise as a consequence of factions with conflicting goals and the inability to specify a common goal across the group from which to reach agreement. In these situations, consensus processes of making decisions may be ineffective and lead to paralysis in the organisation (Fried 1994; Herzog and Radford 1991; Mansbridge 1980).

The commitment to consensus decision-making had contradictory impacts on feminist collectives. It encouraged individual participation and empowerment, but also often worked to privilege group homogeneity. Mary Holmes (1994:5) describes consensus decision-making as invoking a powerful 'will to agree'. Consensus processes pressure the group to come to an agreement in ways that make it difficult to express individual disagreement. Associated with this 'will to agree' was a prohibition against the expression of anger within the collective and a pressure to be 'nice' that were in keeping with ideals of 'women's ways of working'. These processes and prohibitions functioned as a means of social control. Holmes examined how consensus decision-making in two Aotearoa/New Zealand magazine collectives, *Broadsheet* and *Bitches, Witches and Dykes*, operated as an informal system of power that made individual disagreement difficult to express. This process worked to privilege group unity in a way that resulted in differences and disagreement being defined as deviant. She states:

> [d]ifference rather than being incorporated in making decisions was excluded by being labelled deviant. This tendency to treat difference as deviance helped maintain the illusion that a consensus decision accurately represented the desires of the group (Holmes 1994:10).

In situations of disagreement, the disagreeing individual or faction either made a concession to the group or left the organisation (Holmes 1994; Riger 1994).

The experience of disagreements, especially those based in differences of values between collective members, came to be defined as a problem for feminist collectives.

Groups often attempted to reduce these tensions by only recruiting people who 'fit in' (Rodriguez 1988:221) or had similar values (Bart 1987). This practice had the "consequence of limiting diversity, since those who might create conflict are screened out and those who continually block consensus are gradually chilled out" (Rodriguez 1988:226). The informal power structure intensified in this process, which then acted as a further force repressing dissent (Rodriguez 1988:221). The struggle with disagreement and differences between collective members was used to argue for homogeneity among collective members.[19]

In an exploration of Canadian social service collectives, Janice Ristock (1990) suggested that groups often attempt to resolve tensions by creating a homogenous collective that allows the group to feel strong and united. However, in the process they suppress differences:

> Women's personal sense of self is expected to fit within the 'cohesive' collective's identity in a way that is often prescriptive. … Diversity and difference are perceived as threatening to the larger goal of a collective identity. Thus the ultimate threat of a nonconforming group member becomes ostracization (Ristock 1990:175).

Ristock (1990) examined internal documents of feminist service collectives and identified a strong focus on linking feminism with empowerment, equality and choice. She found that few documents acknowledged women's diversity. The basis of unity for collectives was a shared ideological commitment to feminism. As a consequence:

> When a woman shows diversity or difference, then, it is her feminism that is called into question. She is seen as a deviate threatening the unity and power of the collective. This analysis of some women not being 'feminist enough' merely individualizes the complexities of collective difficulties (Ristock 1990:177).

However, as she argues, "homogeneity is a myth" (Ristock 1990:177); differences in influence, positions, identity, locations and political analyses are always already in existence, and these are inevitably implicated in inequalities of power and influence in feminist collectives.

[19] In this context, difference and equality come to be placed in opposition to one another. However, as Joan Scott (1992:43) suggests, "when equality and difference are paired dichotomously, they structure an impossible choice. If one opts for equality, one is forced to accept the notion that difference is antithetical to it. If one opts for difference, one admits that equality is unattainable".

The problem of 'success' for feminist collectives

Feminist collectives also struggled with the development of formal hierarchy as a result of adopting bureaucratic practices. Formal hierarchy is characterised by vertical and horizontal differentiation (Iannello 1992:107-108). Vertical differentiation consists of a 'unity of command' whereby no member of an organisation receives orders from more than one supervisor. Horizontal differentiation is characterised by a division of labour according to task, for example, manual, administrative or managerial. Together, vertical and horizontal differentiation creates the power, privilege and authority relations structuring most mainstream workplaces. In hierarchical organisations, authority ultimately rests with individuals by virtue of their organisational position. Only those in top-level organisational positions make critical policy decisions, with varying degrees of input from those at the lower levels of the organisation. Organisational growth is characterised by increasing levels of stratification in terms of work responsibilities, decision-making power and an associated differentiated system of reward. This system reinforces power inequalities and social distance between members of the organisation (Thomas 1999:108). Specialisation creates inequalities in pay, authority and incentives. Workers at the bottom of the hierarchy experience less control and autonomy in decisions affecting their jobs (Thomas 1999:109). Iannello claims that the flow of information defines a formal hierarchical system. She states, "[i]n most instances, the possession of information ... constitutes power. ... [P]ossession of information, on one hand, and ... deprivation of it, on the other ... keeps systems of domination in operation" (Iannello 1992:16). Within feminist collective organisations, sharing of information has been one of the central processes through which equality of influence was sustained. Task rotation, sharing roles and responsibility, and attendance at collective meetings by all members worked to facilitate the sharing of information.

The adoption of bureaucratic practices has often been justified by inefficiencies in feminist collective processes, difficulties resolving conflict in the groups, accountability requirements from external funding bodies and pressures due to organisational growth and success (Ahrens 1980; Brown 1992; Epstein, Russell et al. 1988; Gilson 2001; Iannello 1992; Murray 1988; Perry, Waterford et al. 1982; Reinharz 1984; Riger 1984; Ristock 1987; Rodriguez 1988; Schlesinger and Bart 1982; Sealander and Smith 1986). Success in service delivery by feminist service collectives has been linked with multiple pressures to develop formal hierarchical structures in these organisations. Riger

(1994:283) argues that success in the collectivity stage creates pressures to formalise the collective. Riger (1994:289) describes this as a paradox, where "those things that make an organization innovative and desirable are the very things that may have to change to insure its long-run success". She argues that feminist collectives were more likely to develop a formal hierarchical organisational structure if they became large, used external sources of funding, rewards for organisational participation became primarily remunerative, and members came to value organisational efficiency over participation (Riger 1984:106).

Processes of organisational change in feminist collectives have been the subject of a number of studies. Studies in the 1980s tended to draw on the work of Rothschild-Whitt (1979) to examine organisational change (Ahrens 1980; Murray 1988; Reinharz 1984). Most described the changes as a linear process from collective to bureaucracy in terms that described the change as a complete transition from collective to bureaucracy. Changes were often viewed as inevitable due to reliance on external funding or organisational age.

The acceptance of funding from government agencies or other institutions was often blamed for the development of formal hierarchies, both horizontal and vertical (for example, Ahrens 1980; Gilson 2001; Murray 1988; Wharton 1987). Carol Wharton's (1987:155) exploration of 25 US 1980s Battered Women's groups identified external requirements of funding bodies as a major reason for the shift from collective to bureaucratic organisation. Funding agencies specified the type of governance required, demanded extensive reports on organisation activities, and required that titles and responsibilities be specified for each funded position. Wharton's (1987:155) groups also blamed the slow process of consensus decision-making as the reason for introducing a hierarchical system of organisation, along with differences in knowledge and involvement in the work of the organisations among paid workers, volunteers, and board members.

Sara Epstein, Glenda Russell and Louise Silvern (1988:360), in a questionnaire study of 200 US Battered Women's Shelters, argued specialisation in roles occurred as Shelters relied increasingly on paid staff. In these situations, paid staff had more knowledge of day to day organisation of the Shelter and volunteers had less involvement and less influence. Boards focused more on fiscal responsibilities and service outcomes, while paid staff attended to individual client needs. Thus, board, volunteer and paid staff

functions and responsibilities became increasingly distinct in orientation. Lois Ahrens (1980) also described this pattern in a study of organisational change in a US Battered Women's Shelter. Ahrens (1980) outlined how intensifying differentiation between boards members, paid workers and volunteers resulted in the shift from feminist collective organisation to a professionalised social service institution. Institutionalisation and deradicalisation of feminist collectives have often been associated with the development of formal hierarchy (Briskin 1991; Reinelt 1994; Riger 1994). In this model, as groups developed bureaucratic forms, they became institutionalised and no longer pursued feminist goals for social change within their organisations.

Institutionalisation of feminist collectives has also been connected with loss of radical feminist goals of social and political change. A poem from Toronto Rape Crisis illustrates the link between institutionalisation and depoliticisation:

> An idea becomes a movement
> The movement becomes an organization
> The organization becomes an institution
> And there lies the death of the idea
> (Pence) (Cited in Amir and Amir 1979:255).

Institutionalisation has been associated with the adoption of practices acceptable to mainstream institutions and consequent cooptation of the radical goals of alternative groups. Meyer and Tarrow (1998:21) outline the relationship between cooptation and institutionalisation of social movements as occurring through three processes. First there is, the '*routinisation* of collective action' such that movement actors and authorities can identify familiar patterns of action, second, there is the '*inclusion'* of those social movement actors who follow these familiar patterns of action and the '*marginalisation'* of those social movement actors who do not follow these familiar patterns of action. Finally, "*cooptation*, [occurs as] challengers [social movement actors] alter their claims and tactics to ones that can be pursued without disrupting the normal practice of [state] politics" (Meyer and Tarrow 1998:21, emphasis in original). This development is frequently linked to alternative groups taking on conventional bureaucratic structures in order to obtain funding from, or build relationships with, bureaucratic organisations. Bordt (1997:135) argues that "organizations are pressured by organizations on which they are dependent and by larger cultural expectations in society" (Bordt, 1997:135, citing DiMaggio and Powell 1983:150). Consequently, even while groups adopt alternative forms of organisation, over time the groups come to conform to the

standards established by the context in which they are operating. Bordt (1997) draws out the ways in which activist service groups relate to two distinct contexts, an alternative context made up of many collective-democratic activist groups and individuals, and a technical context made up of bureaucratic legal and political systems and mechanisms of government. She associates the shift away from collective organisation and deradicalisation of the activist service groups with the weakening of the alternative organisation context and increased influence of the technical context.

Later studies examining the development of formal hierarchy in feminist collectives retained a focus on the shift from collective to bureaucracy, but developed more nuanced models of social change or typologies of feminist organisations incorporating both bureaucratic and collective elements. Increasingly, the literature on feminist organisations has challenged the simple opposition between collective and bureaucracy, the confounding of collectivism with feminism, and the adoption of bureaucracy with cooptation and deradicalisation. Later studies address the complexity of organisations by emphasising multiple forms of organisation and involving elements of both collectivity and bureaucracy, as well as calling attention to how participants make choices about organisational change (Gilson 2001; Hyde 2000; Iannello 1992; Riger 1994; Thomas 1999). Riger (1994), amongst others (for example, Iannello 1992; Thomas 1999), has suggested organisational change is best modelled as a continuum according to the degree of formalisation in the organisation, and the layers of vertical and horizontal hierarchy that have been developed.

A useful model for examining processes of change in feminist collective organisations was developed by Riger (1994). She outlines three phases, *creation, collectivity,* and *formalisation*, associated with changes to feminist collective organisations. This dynamic is sometimes followed by a fourth phase, *elaboration*, which involves a process of alliance building between individual groups. The *creation* phase is characterised by intense involvement, frequent informal communication, and small numbers of members. A high level of cohesion and commitment from organisation members is found in both the *creation* and *collectivity* phases of organisation. These first two phases have an informal structure in which work and leadership are usually shared among group participants, and members value egalitarianism within the organisation. The transition to the third phase, *formalisation*, involves a move away from informal and participatory processes as the organisation becomes more

bureaucratic and hierarchical. The increased bureaucratisation of phase three reduces the high levels of interpersonal participation in the organisation characteristic of phases one and two (Riger 1994:285). The move from *collectivity* to *formalisation* is fraught with tension as group members' experience major gaps between the ideals of egalitarianism and the development of hierarchy. The fourth phase results in the development of the large multi-unit organisation with a central headquarters and decentralised local organisations (Riger 1994:290). This has a parallel with contemporary organisations that are designed as multiple, semi-autonomous business units (Hatch 1997:191). In identifying the different stages Riger (1994) outlines how feminist collectives, which survive beyond their initial founding phase and are successful, struggle with the tension between maintaining a collective structure, converting into a conventional bureaucratic organisation, disbanding, or creating some unstable amalgam of the disparate forms. A number of writers have argued that collective organising cannot be sustained, except where collectives remain small, consist of a homogenous group of friends, and do not require external funding (Reinharz 1984; Riger 1994; Thomas 1999).

Many former informal feminist collective organisations have adopted bureaucratic and hierarchical forms of organising while still retaining a commitment to practices specifically associated with collectives. Iannello (1992:92) names these groups "modified consensual organisations". She describes how collectives have evolved specific practices and structures in response to internal tensions and external funding requirements, for example, separating worker and management roles, and yet retain many of the commitments to equality characteristic of collectives. Even while the groups develop both vertical and horizontal differentiation, they still retain a commitment to collective practices. Thus, collective and bureaucratic principles operate in different parts of the organisation.

Organisational changes are associated with three major shifts for feminist collective organisations: from feminism as an internal process (for example, empowering workers through shared leadership); to feminism as a service outcome (for example, women providing services that empower clients), from organisational autonomy to organisational growth of services and dependence on the state or other funding agencies; and from a system of dispersed power to a system of concentrated power (Thomas 1999:102). Jan Thomas argues these characteristics form a series of continua

along which feminist organisations can be placed. Thomas's model of feminist organisations challenges the tendency to confound collectivism with feminism and bureaucracy with patriarchy.[20] Furthermore, organisations may embody a mix of positions along the continuum for each of the three characteristics of organisation rather than have only characteristics consistent with either collectives or bureaucracies. Even though Thomas (1999) separated the three characteristics for clarity, in practice they are interconnected in processes of organisation change. For example, she associates the loss of organisational autonomy and the development of concentrated systems of power with a shift to focusing on feminist outcomes rather than on feminist processes in the organisations. This changed earlier collective ideals of empowering all workers through internal practices which facilitated equality among all members. Instead, feminist ideals emphasise individual empowerment by adopting a 'proleadership' practice in which individual women nurture their leadership potential by taking on more responsibility, and increasing income, within a hierarchical management system.

On the whole, this development of formal hierarchy in feminist collective organisations has been associated with (i) organisational growth and/or success, (ii) acceptance of external funding, (iii) demands for organisational efficiency, and (iv) employment of paid staff in specialised roles. These changes have been associated with the loss of egalitarianism among collective members and of feminist utopian visions of organisations free from hierarchy and inequality between women. The early literature on feminist collectives links changes with the loss of radical politics and the impossibility of sustaining collective forms of organisation. There was a tendency to assume that organisations which developed bureaucratic features were no longer radical egalitarian organisations.

Challenging the Oppositional Framing of the Feminist Collective Organisation

Organisational change in feminist collective organisations has tended to be analysed within a dualistic framework of collective versus bureaucracy. This framework fails to

[20] The tendency to confound collectivism with feminism was critiqued by Martin (1990). In this article, Martin identifies ten characteristics useful in evaluating feminist organisations. Given the focus on collective organising in this thesis I have drawn on the work of Thomas (1999) and Riger (1994) to examine processes of organisational change.

draw out the ways in which organisations could be both bureaucratic and collective. The following section examines the implications of this dualistic framework for how change and conflict were understood in feminist collectives (See Figure 3 below for description of this framework). The opposition resulted in linking feminist identity and politics to a narrow range of values and practices within collectives. Egalitarianism and 'women's ways of working' were integral to a series of binary oppositions through which feminist collectives were constructed (Reinelt 1995:91). In this framework, feminist organisations were conceived as collective, empowering, non-hierarchical, grassroots, and based on feminine values, while non-feminist organisations were conceived as hierarchical, bureaucratic, institutionalised, and based on masculine values

Figure 3: Oppositional framing of collectives and bureaucracies

Feminist	-	Patriarchal
Women's way of working	-	Men's way of working
Collective	-	Hierarchy
Democratic participation	-	Bureaucratic organisation
Empowerment	-	Power over
Grassroots activism	-	Professional social services
Political	-	Institutional
Outside the system	-	Inside the system
People	-	State
Sisterhood/Unity/Community	-	Abstract individualism

Adapted from Reinelt 1995:91; Mansbridge, 1980; Cassell, 1977; Young, 1990; Ferguson, 1984

(Reinelt 1995:91). There was a tendency to assume that the terms on the left of Figure 3 all mesh coherently in the alternative feminist collectivist-democratic organisation (Reinelt 1995:92). Thus, collectives were participatory, empowering, 'outside the system' and based on sisterhood. However, several troublesome assumptions underlie this oppositional framework.

The framework assumes groups are either feminist or patriarchal, and that a specific set of characteristics is associated with each (Ahrens 1980; Bart 1987; Murray 1988; Reinharz 1984; Riger 1984). To be truly feminist, the organisation must reflect those characteristics on the left side of the oppositional framework specified in Figure 3. In addition, it is assumed that, "if the terms on the left [of Figure 3] come into contact with the terms on the right, the right will win; therefore, the left must maintain a rigid

boundary between itself and all that is on the right" (Reinelt 1995:92). Breaches to these boundaries are seen as responsible for the increasing conservatism, cooptation and deradicalisation of the feminist collective (Adamson, Briskin et al. 1988; Briskin 1991). Yet as Sirianni (1993:297) argues "[i]nstititutionalization did not lead to modifying goals in a conservative direction, as Weber and Michels might have predicted, but by expanding goals and enhancing internal democracy, while maintaining a sense of community" that resisted cooptation.

The binary framework assumes that feminist organisations cannot incorporate both collective and hierarchical elements, aspects of grassroots mobilisation and institutionalisation, or both participatory and bureaucratic practices (Reinelt 1995:91). Within such a framework, it becomes difficult to examine the repressive, indifferent or unfeeling aspects of collective practices and the impulses towards democratic practice that occur in bureaucracies. The oppositional framework "assumes that whatever is collective, participatory, and grassroots is open, democratic, and responsive to people's needs, while all hierarchies and bureaucracies are oppressive, static, and unresponsive" (Reinelt 1995:91-92).

This model confounds gender and sex by assuming a link between masculine values and organisational power, making it difficult to recognise and acknowledge the ways in which women in collectives are not always nurturing or supportive of one another, or committed to egalitarianism (Acker 1990:141). Power tends to be constructed as negative 'power over' in contrast to the empowerment of others (Ristock 1991). The terms power and leadership have negative associations with oppression, authoritarianism and domination over others, whilst empowerment is associated with equality of influence and a shared community of 'peers' or 'friends'. As Ristock argued, "the ideal of empowerment, of 'women helping women to help one another,' is usually contrasted to the patriarchal world of power where women are identified as 'other' and experience invalidation, separateness from male norms and powerlessness" (Ristock 1991:44). Empowerment and power are treated as opposites. The groups focus on attempts to remove differences in power and link power exclusively to negative, oppressive practice. Yet, as Ristock (1991:46) argues, there is a need to examine power as a part of all human interaction. She also asserts that the work of collectives does not always feel empowering to the workers or to users of these services.

In many studies of feminist collectives, the relationship between the collective and the state has been framed by the inside the state / outside the state opposition (Reinelt 1995:90-91). A profound sense of being simultaneously outside state organisations and structures and oppressed by them has shaped feminist collective political ideology. Nevertheless, Reinelt (1995) challenged the view that the state and mainstream institutions were wholly mechanisms through which the powerful maintained and managed the oppression of subordinate groups, and that subordinate groups were outsiders whose only source of power was mobilisation and protest against the establishment. Placing the collective in opposition to dominant institutions misses the way in which the relationships between the two 'sides' are a complex interweaving of influences.

Acceptance of government funding and the engagement with mainstream institutions has profoundly influenced collectives. However, this is not simply a one-way relationship in which the state changes the collective or simply coopts the collective. Rather, it is a reciprocal relationship. Reinelt describes this process as a 'politics of engagement', which "starts with the insight of radical feminists that autonomous institutions are essential for women in patriarchal society. At the same time, it views mainstream institutions as absolutely necessary terrains of political struggle" (Reinelt 1995:85). She argues that the state itself needs to be conceptualised as a "contradictory and uneven set of structures and processes that are the product of particular struggles" (Reinelt 1995:87). She challenges the tendency to conceive of feminist collective engagement with the state as always resulting in cooptation and de-radicalisation. She also argues that "[t]he state is neither a neutral arbiter of gender nor simply a reproducer of existing gender inequalities ... and power" (Reinelt 1995:87). In engaging with the state, collective organisations have also influenced legislative decisions and institutional practices. This alternative way of conceiving the relationship between the state and collective complicates and challenges assumptions of institutionalisation, cooptation and de-politicisation when groups engage with the state.

Ambiguities are also evident in the ways in which 'women's ways of working' are part of both radical and oppressive practices within feminist collective organisations. The focus on gender was at once challenging and oppressive within the politics of collectives. The categorisation of organisational characteristics into women's and men's ways of working shifts attention to the ways in which organisations are gendered (Acker

1990; 1998). Acker argued that gender is a central organising concept in organisations whereby "advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, meaning and identity, are patterned through and in terms of a distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine" (Acker 1990:146).

In constructing the feminist collective as 'women's ways of working', groups both challenged and reinforced gendered aspects of organisation. For example, these groups questioned the gendered nature of public and private by bringing what was considered private, such as emotions (Taylor 1995; Whittier 2001), into the public realm of organisations. Feminist collective members produced new discourses about femininity, feminist collective identities and perspectives that made their way into the state and dominant institutions (Whittier 2002:294). Many women who 'trained' and developed skills in collectives went on to work in major government institutions (Huygens 2001).

At the same time, the counter-hegemonic conceptualisation of femininity constructed within feminist collectives was premised on an identity always constructed under patriarchy. The 'ethic of care' underpinning 'women's ways of working' could be argued to be a product of gender oppression, rather than simply being counter-hegemonic (Heyes 2000:53). As Whittier argues, "activists simultaneously incorporate and challenge dominant definitions of their group and discourses about their issue" (Whittier 2002:294). This particular construction of 'women's ways of working' privileged and universalised one particular group's experience of femininity. 'Women's ways of working' have also been identified as part of the practices of exclusion and marginalisation of women who are not middle-class and white (for example, Ferree and Hess 1994; Heyes 2000). The privileging of 'women's ways of working' excludes and allows those women with the most power over feminist discourses "to construct accepted feminist accounts of women's identity, to mold oppositional feminist identities in their own images" (Heyes 2000:54). These representations deny the specificity of dominant women's identity; they remained unmarked by social class, race/ethnicity or sexuality. However, 'women's ways of working' was never constructed outside of patriarchal or other relations of oppression, nor was it simply an adoption of patriarchal notions of femininity. It operated to empower and value women as a group, and as individuals, in ways that challenged patriarchal power.

By organising as women-only non-hierarchical groups, feminist collectives tended to see themselves as outside of hetero-patriarchal relations. However, Sarah Oerton

(1996:26), in a study of 15 collectives, argued that alternative organisations were constituted by hetero-sexualised discourses, even while these groups develop counter-hegemonic identities. She questioned the tendency to view the collectives as simply circumventing the hetero-sexualised discourse by only including women and minimising the development of hierarchies. She argues that "such readings of the interconnections of gender, sexuality and hierarchy are not so straightforward, and the possibilities for women's manoeuvre and resistance in less or non-hierarchical organizations, are overstated" (Oerton 1996:27). Sexuality underpins not only hierarchical organisations, but non-hierarchical organisations as well. This occurs in ways that challenge hetero-patriarchy, but can also marginalise feminist collective organisations. Oerton argued that:

> When women workers organize in ways which challenge male-dominated hierarchy, their marginalization must *necessarily* take a lesbianized form because hierarchical power and control is not only gendered, but is also hetero-sexualized in ways which seek to position (imputed) lesbians and lesbianism as 'beyond the pale' (Oerton 1996:35, emphasis in original).

In these instances, feminism, separatism and lesbianism are elided in dominant discourses about feminist collectives. However, this "lesbianized form" can become part of the practices through which these organisations are marginalised and discriminated against, such as lack of credibility with government institutions and grant refusals (Oerton 1996:33).

The chapter has examined the ways in which being women-only, non-hierarchical and consensus decision-making came to be viewed as the hallmarks of radical feminist collective organising. This was commonly characterised by participants in these groups as 'women's ways of organising' and defined through a series of oppositions that distinguished it from patriarchal or 'men's ways of organising'. 'Women's ways of organising' was characterised as empowering, women-only, inclusive of all women, outside the state, non-hierarchical, and co-operative, while patriarchal organising was defined as based on power as domination, bureaucratic, inside the state and competitive. A rigid either/or opposition between collectives and bureaucratic forms of organising has framed many early studies of the feminist collective. Typically, changes in feminist

collectives were conceived as an inevitable progression from collectivism to hierarchy, and from alternative radical organisation to coopted service organisation.

The review of the literature discussing feminist collective organising challenges the simple oppositions that influence common understandings of change and conflict in the radical feminist activist service organisations. Contrary to the goals of being inclusive of all women, exclusion and marginalisation of some women emerges as an issue in the radical feminist organisation. Consensus processes were critiqued for the ways in which they participated in a 'will to agree' that made disagreement difficult to express or, if expressed, difficult to resolve. In situations of disagreement, consensus processes often involved reasserting informal hierarchy and member homogeneity. Collective organisations are neither completely 'outside of hetero-patriarchy', nor unquestionably empowering and inclusive of all women. Studies of change in feminist collectives highlight how groups have come to adopt a mix of collective and bureaucratic practice. They have developed hybrid forms of organisation and complex politics that challenges any simple dualistic framework. In these ways, it has been increasingly recognised that feminist collectives are constructed through, and by, a complex series of contradictions and tensions that challenge any simple dichotomies.

CHAPTER THREE

'DEALING WITH DIFFERENCES'[21]

Differences and inequalities between women in feminist politics have been major sources of debate and conflict in Western feminist organisations. This chapter draws together recent theoretical critiques of Western feminist complicity in practices of universalism and exclusion/marginalisation with examinations of attempts in Western feminist organisations to address practices and structural relations of inequality between women. This has involved a shift from assumptions of sameness and/or commonality between women to a 'politics of difference' within feminist theory and politics. This review moves between theoretical debates about 'difference' and the practical application of addressing differences between women within Western feminist organisations.

Western feminists' understandings of how to 'deal with difference' between women in feminist theories and organisations have changed over time. Initially, it was thought to be "all about women sharing their experiences of being women of particular classes, races, ethnicities, sexualities and so on" (Bondi 1993:95). Increasingly, it involved a shift to examining differences and complicity in relations of oppression between women in ways that challenged simple constructions of unity between women (for example, Ang 1995; Guy, Jones et al. 1990; Heyes 2000; Jones 1991). This shift in understanding implicated Western feminists and their organisations in practices such as racism, heterosexism, able-bodism, anti-semitism, and classism (for example, Acker 1995; Buechler 1990; Ferree and Hess 1994; Huygens 2001; Radford 1994). Finally, attention

[21] I have used Christine Crosby's (1992) title *Dealing with Differences.* She identifies the shift from focussing on identity to difference within women's studies in this article, but argues that 'differences' worked in much the same way as identity had previously.

shifted to examining the constitution of dominant group identities in ways that challenged their position of dominance in relation to marginalised groups (for example, Thompson 1999; Thompson 2002; Zajicek 2002).

In this chapter, the first section outlines the shift from universalising the category of 'woman' to examining differences between women as an integral aspect of feminist theory and politics. I then examine the parallel process of implementing organisational strategies that addressed differences and challenged complicity in relations of inequality.[22] Studies of feminist attempts to 'deal with differences' in their organisations mainly examine and analyse conflicts around race and racism. This is reflective of the fact that, over the last twenty years, race/ethnicity and racism have often been experienced as the most significant divide among women in the feminist organisations (Scott 2001:146). In the second section, I discuss the theoretical critiques of Western feminists' engagement with difference. These critiques have challenged the tendency to treat difference as 'benign diversity' and 'whiteness' as an absence even as groups addressed differences. 'Dealing with differences' has been a controversial process in both theoretical and practical terms.

Western Feminists' Engagement with Difference

Sexual differences between men and women have been an important feature of second wave women's movement politics. Western women's liberation politics of the 1970s often involved the affirmation of women's irreducible difference from men rather than the pursuit of the illusory goal of equality (Felski 1997:1). Within this politics, liberal notions of equality were increasingly critiqued and dismissed for engaging in a politics of sameness. It was argued that the liberal feminist goal of equality reasserted the dominance of men as it involved the pursuit of masculine values and norms (Grosz 1986). In focusing on women's difference from men, there was a desire to concentrate

[22] This is not to suggest that these other groups have not also struggled over differences between women. See Sudbury's (1998) exploration of black women's autonomous organisations in Britain for an example. The chapter only distinguishes collective from bureaucratic organisations where the author links addressing differences with organisational form (for example, Wilson 1996). The organisations used as examples are primarily drawn from the US, with some examples from Canada and Australia. This is reflective of the dominance of US writing on the second wave feminist movement.

on what women had in common, while bracketing out differences between women as irrelevant and/or as undermining the feminist focus on women's oppression and women's unity (Phelan 1994:xiii). This approach obscured race, class and sexuality differences between women.

The attempt to base feminist politics on a universal and/or essentialist category of women was criticised for conflating the condition of one group of women, in this case white middle-class women, with the condition of all women (Brah 1992; Heyes 2000; Phelan 1994; Spelman 1988). Only those women whose race, class or sexual preference were invisible had the luxury of perceiving gender difference as the fundamental and overriding difference (Felski 1997; Heyes 2000; Spelman 1988). Those women who were excluded rapidly contested political agendas based on an undifferentiated 'woman'. Critiques by lesbian, black, working-class, third world and/or indigenous women emphasised the irreducible complexity of gendered identities. Consequently, 'dealing with differences' has achieved a central but problematic place within Western feminist organisations. White, middle-class women's engagement with women's issues has been heavily criticised for the ways in which it often glossed over fundamental hierarchies and conflicts between women, and the ways in which it unintentionally reasserted white women's privileged position (for example, Christensen 1997; Felski 1997; Haggis and Schech 2000; Martin and Mohanty 1986; Mohanty 1998; Mohanty 2002; Sudbury 1998; Weedon 1999).

These debates were complex, and fraught with conflict and tension. On the one hand, some women decried the loss of the universal category of women as the basis of feminist politics and felt that dealing with differences between women undermined the whole feminist project (Freedman 2001; Hekman 1999). On the other hand, many others, racial/ethnic minority groups in particular, emphasised the centrality of differences between women and critiqued practices of universalising gender. They argued for theories and politics that started from the intersections of women's lives, such as race, class, sexual preference. They argued for theories and politics that addressed the 'intersectionality' of the axes of oppression, and challenged the use of 'single-axis' theory about sexism (for example, Brah 1992; Combahee River Collective 1983; Mohanty 1998; Mohanty 2002; Phelan 1994).[23] These debates signified an

[23] Poststructuralist debates about feminine identity were also part of the emerging critique of this universalising and essentialising practice around gender (See Felski 1997:3-8 for a discussion of these debates).

important shift from sameness and universalism to difference within feminist theory and politics (Felski 1997). Rather than arguing that the focus on difference destroys the feminist project, dealing with differences between women is fundamental to the survival of feminism (Ang 1995; Heyes 2000). Cressida Heyes describes "differences between women ... [as] the motor of feminist organizing not a barrier to its success, no matter how difficult they may be to negotiate" (Heyes 2000:8).

In this process, some differences emerged as more important than others in Western feminists' politics. The 1970s were dominated by debates arising from sexual preferences (Rudy 2001; Stein 1993; Valk 2002). Following that concerns with racial diversity and racism have been the most consistent focus of debate (Scott 2001; Zajicek 2002). Yet this focus on racial difference may obscure the politics of other differences such as class, sexuality, language, national origin, and ability/disability (Scott 2001:126). Which differences emerged as central, and when, was influenced by a combination of local politics, social movements, and the individuals involved.

The shift from sameness to difference among women was also occurring within many Western feminist organisations. As studies of feminist organisations and participant accounts demonstrate, acknowledging differences and addressing inequalities between women has not been an easy process within feminist organisations. It has involved much conflict and tension as minority groups struggled to have their issues heard by the dominant group. For example, within the US National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) at successive conferences, differences between women have been a frequent point of contention (for example, Farley 2002; Helmbold 2002; Heyes 2000; Mansbridge 1993; Sirianni 1993; Van Dyke 2002). In the early 1980s, the organisation "almost came apart over lesbianism"; in 1987 "we heard Jewish women weep because at two separate conferences in a row speakers asked everyone to invoke Jesus in the spirit of a 'Christian nation'". Then in 1989 "disabled women express[ed] their frustration" about the way in which their specific needs were ignored (Kolodny cited by Ruby and Douglas 1992:2).[24] This was followed by acrimonious discussions about racism in employment practices by the NWSA executive body in the early 1990s, which resulted in the 'women of color' caucus, and white women who supported the caucus, resigning from the NWSA (Franzen and Helmbold 1991; Ironplow 1991; Members of

[24] Rudy and Douglas quote Annette Kolodny's NWSA conference speech

the Former NWSA 1990; Peachey 1991; Ruby and Douglas 1992; Ruby, Elliott et al. 1990; Schweickart 1990).

Members of the Canadian Toronto Rape Crisis collective described the shift from assumptions of sameness to recognition of diversity between women in this group during the 1980s. They outlined how challenges by women of color, lesbians, Jewish women, working-class women and women with children changed many of their internal practices and the services they delivered (Ignagni, Parent et al. 1988:70). Reflecting on this process of change, they describe how their:

> Support for women and our passionate desire to 'end rape' has come to reflect the multi-faceted nature of oppression. However, none of these discoveries occurred in a vacuum: reflecting upon the diverse needs of women on the line made us realise that we could no longer gloss over the differences between us as collective members. We were not the same. Our differences reflect very real differences in power and privilege in this society (Ignagni, Parent et al. 1988:69).

This increasing attention to structural inequalities between women was experienced as "painful, often terrifying, but also groundbreaking" (Ignagni, Parent et al. 1988:69).

In response to criticisms by women excluded or marginalised, many women's organisations implemented a range of strategies that attempted to address differences among women. Most of these strategies were not unique to feminist politics.[25] Affirmative action strategies were implemented to increase membership heterogeneity and to contribute to developing culture specific services. A number of organisations focused on developing relationships between and within identity-specific groups, either in the form of caucuses within organisations or through the development of alliances/coalitions across identity-specific organisations. Often, feminist organisations implemented more than one strategy in order to address both individual and structural aspects of oppression.

Many feminist organisations established discussion groups and/or developed training programmes in the first instance to educate members about different forms of oppression (for example, Farley 2002; Helmbold 2002; MacGibbon 2002; Ristock 1987; Ristock 1990; Scott 1998; Van Dyke 2002; Zajicek 2002). For example, in the

[25] For example, anti-racism workshops have a long history of implementation in organisations in both the United States and Britain (Alcoff 2000; Bonnett 2000). Affirmative action strategies were not unique to these organisations, and have a long history within equal opportunity programmes (Bacchi 1996). They have been subject to considerable debates and criticism (Sher 2002). Likewise, the formation of caucuses and coalitions has been a part of many social and political movements.

NWSA during the 1980s and 1990s, the working-class caucus facilitated a series of workshops on working-class oppression (Helmbold 2002) and the lesbian caucus developed numerous homophobia and heterosexism workshops (Farley 2002). The Rape Crisis training programme used a "series of exercises on identity, life history and the dynamics of oppression" to help new trainees become aware of the ways in which relations of oppression shaped their identity (Scott 1996:10).

In addition, studies of anti-violence women's groups point out how they were committed to ongoing anti-racism work in their organisations (Scott 2000; Zajicek 2002). It was often argued that efforts to develop effective services addressing the effects of violence against women depended upon anti-racist work. For example, Zajieck in a study of a Women's Shelter in Southdown, in the US, describes Refuge workers understandings of anti-racism work at the Shelter:

> the work the shelter did around racism was rooted in the understanding of how 'all of the oppressions are tied together to overall sexism' and in the recognition that white women had to first address their own internalized racism 'because how could we support women of color ... at any level of the organization ... if we were a racist organization?' (Zajicek 2002:161).

Much of this work attempted to address practices of oppression internal to the organisations in order to create a context in which dominant and minority group women could work together productively. Anti-racist activities were premised on the idea that white people must take "responsibility for educating themselves about their privilege and potential participation in systems of structural advantage, be that a product of race, class or heterosexual privilege" (Scott 2000:809). Ignagni et al. (1988:70) described how a Toronto Rape Crisis group developed a range of techniques such as 'constructive criticism' to address issues around difference at each collective meeting. In a study of a US Rape Crisis group (Scott 2000), white women were required to attend a monthly anti-racism discussion meeting involving readings, questions and discussions. Another policy involved 'calling' oppressive incidents. A policy was implemented to "institutionalize a commitment ... to deal with the interpersonal situations that can arise when someone says something that's classist or racist or whatever" (Scott 2000:803). The Refuge also instituted 'Everyone Against Racism' meetings, which were called if a staff member felt a conflict within the refuge about racism or race needed to be resolved by all staff. Women of color saw these anti-racism discussion groups as important symbolic indicators of the commitment of white women to fighting racism, and they valued having this commitment institutionalised in the structure of the organisation

(Scott 1998:414). However, these types of responses to racism were often based on a prejudice model of racism rather than a model of racism as a product of structural oppression (Christensen 1997; Scott 2000; Scott 2001). They focused on the individual as the problem, and shifted attention to the ways in which individuals should change their attitudes through "education and dialogue" (Scott 2001:131).

Affirmative action strategies, an approach more congruent with liberal strategies of creating equality, were also used as organisations tried to increase heterogeneity of membership, especially that of racial/ethnic minority women (for example, Scott 2000; Scott 2001; Wilson 1996; Zajicek 2002). Additionally, some feminist organisations employed minority staff to provide culturally appropriate services to meet the needs of minority ethnic or indigenous groups (Scott 1998; Wilson 1996).

At their worst, affirmative action programmes did no more than increase organisational membership heterogeneity without changing the dominant culture of the organisation. In these situations the dominant group continued to define and control the way in which the organisation operated. A study of an attempt by a white Australian Refuge Collective to pursue an affirmative action strategy by employing two Koori[26] women failed when the Collective fired them for not 'fitting' into the organisation (Wilson 1996). (The issues raised by Wilson's study will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter). In these instances, where minority group women were simply expected to fit into existing structures and value systems of the organisation with no more than token changes, minority women often reported experiencing isolation and cultural conflicts (for example, Gayle 1989; Mueller 1995; Ristock 1990; Wilson 1996).

At their best, affirmative action strategies challenged the ways in which organisational values, practices and structures were premised on dominant group values, and in ways that decentred the dominant group. They involved addressing such questions as:

> Who holds power in the organization, who has access to information and decision-making, the origins and nature of practices, what cultural assumptions and norms underlie those practices, who feels comfortable with the 'ordinary' ways of doing things in the organization, how is exclusion structured and what does it look like, and who gets excluded, either literally or practically and emotionally? (Scott 2000:796).

[26] I have followed Wilson in her use of the term Koori to refer to the indigenous women who joined the Refuge organisation.

In what follows, Scott's arguments about affirmative action are outlined in detail as they illustrate the complexity of the outcomes of affirmative action. Affirmative action strategies, in both the Refuge and the Rape Crisis organisations Scott studied, successfully increased racial/ethnic heterogeneity. The predominantly white Rape Crisis group employed two women of colour, who ran volunteer training programmes specifically for women of colour. Racially mixed volunteer training programmes included greater numbers of women of colour relative to white women. Once women of colour joined the organisation, the two women of colour trainers held social events to ensure that connections established in the training programme were maintained. Using this strategy, in the space of two years, women of colour came to dominate the Rape Crisis group in ways that closely reflected the racial/ethnic population they were serving. At the same time, the split between white women and women of colour remained dominant, but in ways that equalised the relationship between the two groups.

In contrast, the Refuge she studied was organised and structured in terms of multiple ethnic/racial groups, rather than a white/women of colour split. The process of employing new staff in the Refuge frequently resulted in competition between multiple racial/ethnic groups, including African American, Latina, White and Asian groups. Consequently, debates about employment of new staff were about the most pressing organisational needs in terms of skills or service development and the pursuit of diversity. Scott argues that this reflected a decentring of whiteness within the Refuge. This occurred because multiple racial/ethnic group identities became more salient in interactions with shelter residents, and in decisions about hiring staff, than a simple opposition between white and black women (Scott 1998:418). She notes that, as the organisations became racially and ethnically heterogeneous, the meaning of racial diversity was increasingly contested (Scott 2000:801-802). Initially, the focus of affirmative action had been on having women of colour in all parts of the organisation. Once this had been achieved, the meaning of racial diversity shifted:

> When the management was no longer white dominated as it had once been, the women of color in the leadership insisted that then racial diversity could be defined as inclusive of whiteness and thereby white women became seen as equally appropriate to the overall vision of the organization. They pursued affirmative action strategies, and sometimes white women were hired. ... racial diversity seemed to be exclusive of no one and affirmative action was the primary mechanism for attaining that goal (Scott 2000:801).

In this way, affirmative action directly impacted on how racial and ethnic diversity was constructed in relation to organisational need.

Another strategy pursued within women's organisations involved processes of building alliances/coalitions across identity-specific groups, such as racial/ethnic, sexual preferences and class identities. Distinctions between coalitions and alliances have been made on the basis of the short or long term nature of the relationships (Albrecht and Brewer 1990). Coalitions involve short-term relationships between groups to address a specific issue. The groups remain autonomous and on achievement of goals, the relationship usually dissolves (Albrecht and Brewer 1990:3). In contrast, alliances brought groups and individuals together in ways that were based on "a new level of commitment that is longer-standing, deeper, and built upon more trusting political relationships. [Alliances were] ongoing, long term arrangements for more far-reaching structural change" (Albrecht and Brewer 1990:4).[27] In this section, I focus primarily on literature examining the attempts to form alliances by, or with, Western feminist organisations. Two strategies have been common: the use of identity-specific caucuses within organisations and the formation of alliances between autonomous identity-specific organisations.

Caucuses have been developed in many organisations as a way of creating identity-specific spaces within organisations in order to produce more equal power in structural conditions that would otherwise produce inequality. Robin Leidner (1991:275) argues that caucuses address some of the difficulties minority groups experience gaining power because of small numbers, and exercising power because of racist, heterosexist, elitist attitudes of other organisational members. Many feminist organisations have used a system of caucusing. Practices such as homophobia, racism, ablism, and classism, and instances where groups with comprehensive identities and ways of life that constitute them as distinctly oppressed, have been the basis of justification for caucus status. The multiplicity of women's oppression results in many claims for caucus status. One of the most widely cited caucus systems was developed by the NWSA (Farley 2002; Helmbold 2002; Sirianni 1993; Sirianni and Leidner 1993; Van Dyke 2002). Over the 1970s to 1980s, the NWSA developed a system of caucuses for women of color and lesbians, and later for poor and working-class women (Farley 2002; Helmbold 2002).

[27] The terms alliance and coalition are frequently used interchangeably in the literature.

Caucuses were also created for Women's Studies programme administrators, Jewish women and Community College women (Sirianni 1993). During the 1980s, caucuses were represented on the governing body and had greater representation relative to their numbers through the use of a weighted voting system (Leidner 1991:274). In another example, the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre Collective (TRCC) developed caucuses for working-class, women of colour, lesbian and Jewish women. The caucuses were "a mechanism for women dealing with an additional facet of oppression to take care of each other, discuss areas of shared reality and to work on policy and action plans as a whole" (Citing TRCC description Ristock 1990:180). In an innovative move, they also developed caucuses that comprised of those belonging to specific privileged groups, for example, heterosexual women, gentile women, white women or middle-class women. These groups examined power and complicity in oppression arising as a consequence of their membership in privileged group. Women who crossed privilege/oppression lines experienced the impact of being in both the oppressed and the privileged groups. Recommendations and criticisms made by the caucuses were addressed at meetings attended by all members of the organisation (Ignagni, Parent et al. 1988; Ristock 1990).

Caucuses also developed as a way of giving voice to all those who felt the need for distinctive representation. The proliferation of groups claiming caucus status points to some confusion over the purpose of caucuses. For some the system was seen as a "corporatist solution to diverse interests" (Heyes 2000:176). Yet others identified it as a way of giving additional representational weight to oppressed groups. At issue were questions about whether the caucus system was merely a way of representing 'different' interests, or whether it was intended to provide separate space and additional voice to members of groups that are relatively less powerful as a result of systematic oppression. The Toronto oppressed/privileged caucus system emphasised paying attention to specific relations of oppression among women by both the privileged and the oppressed groups.

Minority groups also struggled with the complexity of identities and questions about representation within and across caucuses. Recent articles discussing the NWSA caucuses reflect the increasing attention in feminist theoretical debates to individual heterogeneity of identity and to the ways in which the focus on one particular identity renders other aspects of identity invisible with political consequences. Tucker Farley (2002:31-32), reflecting on the early years of the lesbian caucus within the NWSA,

described how four distinct lesbian constituencies were identified in the setting up of the lesbian caucus, including Third World lesbians. However, the Third World Women's Caucus claimed that they could represent Third World lesbians. Thus, the caucuses were engaged in debates about who could represent whom within the organisation. As Farley (2002:40) shows, women who could claim membership in both caucuses were pressured in the process to choose one identity over another. This was further exacerbated by the tendency to hold many of the caucus meetings at the same time at conferences. Farley (2002:40) argues that this practice contributed to the structural invisibility of lesbians of colour, and Lois Helmbold (2002) argues that this reduced the visibility and influence of the poor and working-class caucus, as many working-class women also identified with other minority groups.

As a consequence of these processes, some writers have argued that the attempts to form alliances across identity-specific groups within organisations may not always be appropriate for minority groups (Anzaldúa 1990; Matthews 1989; Reagon 1983; Sudbury 1998). A number of the black women's groups had some links to the predominantly white Western feminist organisations. Possibly the best known of these was the Combahee River Collective, established in 1974 in Boston. They engaged in a variety of activities, from CR, challenging the abuse of sterilisation, addressing abortion rights, safety for battered women, rape and health care, as well as many workshops on Black feminism (Combahee River Collective 1983:281). A black women's group, which started in Brixton in the UK in 1973, developed a politics based on their racialised, gendered and class positions (Sudbury 1998:94). Yet, as Sudbury's exploration of ethnic minority women's groups in Britain suggests, the conceptual and political location of most autonomous black women's organisations was in the black voluntary service sector rather than the women's liberation sector (Breines 2002; Sudbury 1998). Sudbury insists it is unlikely that groups with superior resources and power would cede to minority groups demands unless minority groups operated from a position of strength. Power dynamics between black women, black men and whites tend to be replicated within multi-racial organisations, and black women were required to educate, reassure or otherwise emotionally support white women who were paralysed by guilt about racism (Sudbury 1998:180-181).

In situations where identity-specific groups have different histories and do not share a common ideology or philosophy, developing alliances between separate organisations

may be a better strategy. In a study of the US Los Angeles anti-rape movement, Nancy Matthews (1989:531) argued that "ethnically homogenous organizations … contributed more to diversifying the movement than integration within organizations". She added that working together in "mixed coalitions when they have powerful common interests, but independent bases" had been more successful among the groups she analysed. Different orientations, identities and subcultures of the black and white women's anti-rape groups created tensions, which were better managed by maintaining separate organisations. The black women's groups drew on a community action framework and social service orientation. The white groups had a radical feminist lesbian subculture that had emerged out of the 1970s women's liberation movement. The different histories and consequent orientations meant that the two groups did not have a shared ideological reference system or interpretation of feminist politics. "[T]he overlap of racial and sexuality differences exaggerates the schism" between the two groups where "both sides feel they have a moral cause for offense when someone from the other side [was] inadvertently racist or homophobic" (Matthews 1989:529-530). Racial and political tensions between white and black groups were compounded by homophobia. Black women experienced racism from the white women. White lesbian women experienced homophobia from the black women. Racism, homophobia and different meanings of feminism complicated the development of relationships between white and black groups.

Contesting Western Feminists' Engagement with Difference

Despite good intentions, shifting from a politics that universalised the identity 'woman' to a politics of difference has been fraught with conflict. As the following discussion suggests, there have been significant problems with the ways in which difference has been constructed within Western feminist organisations.

A Politics of inclusion

Much of the focus on dealing with differences emphasises practices of recognition, understanding and dialogue (Ang 1995; Cornell and Murphy 2002). It often seems as if dealing with differences has merely involved responding to the demands for political and cultural recognition. This "sounds all too deceptively easy ... as if differences

among women could unproblematically be turned into 'unity in diversity'" once differences have been properly recognised (Ang 1995:59). Unity in diversity refers to the assumption of a common ground underpinning the focus on differences between women. As Ang (1995) and others (Brah 1992; Felski 1997; Grosz 2002) suggest 'dealing with difference' is not quite so simple. For example, difference is often dealt with by "absorbing it into an already existing feminist community without challenging the naturalised legitimacy and status of that community *as* a community" (Ang 1995:60, emphasis in original). Thus feminism comes to resemble "the multicultural nation – the nation that, faced with cultural differences within its borders, simultaneously recognises and controls those differences amongst its population by containing them in a grid of pluralist diversity" (Ang 1995:60).

Claims about connection and sharing between women also become part of the erasure of differences between women. Shane Phelan (1994) and Iris Young (1990) identify the tendency by Western feminists to utilise a model of community that reproduces homogeneity. As Young suggests, the desire for community:

> privileges unity over difference, immediacy over mediation, sympathy over recognition of the limits of one's understanding of others from their point of view. Community is an understandable dream, expressing a desire for selves that are transparent to one another, relationships of mutual identification, social closeness and comfort. The dream is understandable, but politically problematic, I argue, because those motivated by it will tend to suppress difference among themselves or implicitly to exclude from their political groups persons with whom they do not identify (Young 1990:300).

Community becomes a site of exclusion of the 'other' through which group homogeneity is maintained (Phelan 1994:82). In this process, community is perceived to be constitutive of unified and fixed identities with a clear history, values and aims, a source of strength and place of belonging, and an emphasis on shared feelings of belonging and merging. Consequently, community expresses the desire for:

> a unification of particular persons through the sharing of subjectivities: Persons will ... become fused, mutually sympathetic, understanding one another as they understand themselves. Such an ideal of shared subjectivity, or the transparency of subjects to one another, denies difference in the sense of the basic asymmetry of subjects (Young 1990:309).

Difference between and within subjects is excluded in this model of community. This understanding of community underpins many Western feminist desires for unity and sisterhood between women. Furthermore, this same desire for sisterhood has been an integral part of many Western feminist organisations. Within Western feminist groups,

there have been immense pressures to share similar lifestyles or understandings of the world and "[s]uch pressure has often led to group and even more movement homogeneity – primarily straight, or primarily lesbian, or primarily white, or primarily academic" (Young 1990:312).

A number of issues emerge with this construction of community when Western feminists attempt to engage with differences in their organisations. Community is based on the desire for mutual understanding between members. Yet, as Young (1990:310) argues, the "same difference that makes sharing between us possible also makes misunderstanding, rejection, withdrawal, and conflict always possible conditions of social being". This model of community also assumes that individuals are transparent to themselves, when in our lived relations subjectivity is heterogeneous: "Subjects ... attach layers of meanings to objects without always being aware of each layer or their connections. Consequently, any individual subject is a play of differences that cannot be comprehended" (Young 1990:310).

Community, in this way, is structured by an ideal of shared subjectivity, denies differences and is linked to practices of marginalisation and exclusion of the 'other'. Understanding each other can only be achieved within a homogeneous group that defines itself by common characteristics, and is based on processes of defining other groups as 'other'. The identification of community involves an oppositional differentiation from other groups based on devaluing or marginalisation of the 'other'. Difference is placed outside of the individual's community and feared or ignored because it confronts individuals with different cultures, histories and views. Young outlines how: "Racism, ethnic chauvinism, and class devaluation, ... grow partly from a desire for community, that is, from the desire to understand others as they understand themselves and from the desire to be understood as I understand myself" (1990:311-12).

This process of othering and maintenance of group homogeneity played a major part in the conflicts that occurred at the predominantly white women's Australian Refuge when they employed and then fired two Koori women. White women in the Refuge claimed the dismissal was an employment issue, while the two Koori women argued it was an example of racism. In the process of employing Koori workers to work with Koori clients, the white feminist Refuge workers had assumed that the Koori workers would "speak/act in their own language/culture with clients, but switch to the dominant language/culture when relating to other workers" (1996:14). Difference was contained

within the private relationship between 'special' workers and their clients. What that meant in the context of the feminist Refuge collective was that:

> the Koori women [were expected] to act like Koories (whatever that might have meant to them) only in the context of Koori worker–Koori client relationships. In other contexts they expected the Koori women to act like 'normal' workers, that is, white, or more specifically, white feminist workers (Wilson 1996:14).

The white feminist collective workers tended to describe the anti-racist policies and the employment of Kooris as 'special' and even 'generous' (Wilson 1996:14).

The core values of the refuge were implicitly based on white women's analysis of gender oppression. This located the problem of violence within a gender hierarchy and women's systematic subordination to men.[28] The notions of 'sisterhood', 'empowerment' and 'the good feminist worker' were critical to the white women's construction of feminist collective practices. New workers became good workers by taking responsibility for themselves and actively seeking out information and the skills they needed, thus actively empowering themselves rather than depending on others. The focus on empowerment was part of an attempt to create a space in which all women were equal. The white Refuge women argued that the Koori women had not modelled feminist empowerment in their work and as a consequence they were dismissed (Wilson 1996).

These arguments reflected white women's racial privilege by enforcing compliance with job descriptions that reproduced feminist versions of Western middle-class professional workers. The white feminist collective members did not want to provide 'special' training to Koori workers additional to what was usually provided to new workers. The enforcement of an egalitarian regime, with regard to both work performance and training, negated significant racial differences in access to education and employment experience. These expectations maintained whiteness as 'normal' and Koori as 'special'. The employment of 'special' workers to provide culturally appropriate services became part of the processes of assimilation. White feminists

[28] Within the refuge, "[e]mpowering counselling practice envisioned workers and clients in egalitarian, non-hierarchical relationships in which the worker provided information, resources and emotional support. Furthermore, since violence was understood to be an outgrowth of hierarchy, a non-hierarchical collective form of workplace organization was an essential (in some cases the most essential) aspect of feminist intervention in domestic violence. ... The collective workplace of Matilda's was supposed to be egalitarian on every front: everyone equally responsible for the totality of the work, everyone able to do every job, everyone assuming leadership, everyone making decisions, everyone receiving the same pay" (Wilson 1996:15).

sought to include indigenous women without changing their fundamentally Anglo feminist values (Wilson 1996:13).

The above example highlights the invisibility of the ways in which race was a "fundamental organizing principle working to maintain the dominant/subordinant positions of white and Koori women" (Wilson 1996:9). Consequently, the Refuge privileged whiteness in ways that were and remained invisible to the white Refuge Collective members. What emerges from this Refuge example is the way in which difference is constructed as benign diversity and contained within specific spaces. It is assumed that, underlying their differences, there is a common ground or understanding amongst women that would form the basis of 'unity in diversity'.

The above issues also reflect how pluralist multiculturalism is often a focus of difference in Australian feminist politics (Ang 1995; Wilson 1996). As Ang writes, within this framework of Western feminism:

> [T]oo often the need to deal with difference is seen in the light of the greater need to save, expand, improve or enrich feminism as a political home which would ideally represent all women. In this way, the ultimate rationale of the politics of difference is cast in terms of an overall politics of *inclusion*: the desire for an overarching feminism to construct a pluralist sisterhood which can accommodate all differences and inequalities between women (Ang 1995:72, emphasis in original).

Ang goes on to argue that this politics of inclusion is a defensive position, one that is most often "characterised by a reluctance to question the status of feminism *itself* as a political home for all women" (1995:72, emphasis in original). Difference is only accepted when and where it does not challenge feminism. This kind of feminist politics of inclusion "functions as a nation which 'other' women are invited to join without disrupting the ultimate integrity of the nation" (Ang 1995:72). This politics can only be considered by those who have the power to include.

Within Aotearoa/New Zealand feminist politics, much of the focus on difference and hierarchy has been between Māori and Pākehā women (Larner 1995). Māori women challenged white feminist groups for their "white supremacy, monocultural use of organizational power and resources and the irrelevance of white feminism to Maori women" (Huygens 2001:395). This focus on Pākehā and Māori reflects the distinctive historical trajectories within Aotearoa/New Zealand. Radhika Mohanram (1999) reiterates the ways in which calls for biculturalism by Māori, the indigenous people, in contrast to calls for multiculturalism prevalent elsewhere (for example, the US and

Australia), result in different ways of engaging with debates over difference within Aotearoa/New Zealand feminist contexts. As she suggests, within this context:

> The prevailing feeling among Maori has been that inclusion of Asian women in the equation will render New Zealand a multicultural nation, completely bypassing indigenous rights and biculturalism. ... It is their special status in Aotearoa/New Zealand that leads Maori feminists to build alliances with Pakeha feminists rather than with their Asian or Pacific Islander counterparts (Mohanram 1999:92).

This bipolar understanding, which emphasises cultural and ethnic differences, reflects the specificity of developments within local versions of Aotearoa/New Zealand feminism (Larner 1995:177-178).[29] Māori and Pākehā ethnicities represent particular positions within debates about ethnicity, colonisation and wider political struggles in Aotearoa/New Zealand. For many, Pākehā is felt to be an expression of a "relationship to Maori and of an acknowledgment of the history of colonization" (Bell 1996:146). For those of European descent identifying as Pākehā involves a dual project: solidarity with Māori political aspirations, and the assertion of Pākehā rights and cultural distinctiveness (Bell 1996:146). In a sense, Avril Bell suggests that this reverses the demonisation of the Other. "Pakeha, whatever its original meaning, is the Other to Maori normality" (Bell 1996:154). It participates in the development of a relationship, mutually constituted in the process of living side by side in the same country. Yet at the same time, Māori and Pākehā identities are constructed out of a process of colonisation, and claiming a Māori identity represents an experience and history of oppression, and Pākehā participation and benefit from colonisation. This complicates the claiming of Pākehā identity. As Bell (1996:156) notes, Pākehā need to acknowledge historical complicity with colonisation at the same time as they critique the processes and consequences of colonisation. These themes are examined in more detail in Chapter Nine, which focuses on the development of bicultural partnerships within the activist service groups.

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[29] Particularly influential in this process was Donna Awatere's series on 'Maori Sovereignty' (Awatere 1982a; Awatere 1982b; Awatere 1983) which was widely read and debated within the pages of *Broadsheet* following publication in *Broadsheet* (for example, see letters published in *Broadsheet*, No 104, November 1982, *Broadsheet*, No 106, January/February 1983 and *Broadsheet* no 107, March 1983). Larner (1995:183) argues that within Aotearoa/New Zealand parallels between the feminist critique of patriarchy and struggle for Māori sovereignty came to provide the basis for possible alliances between Māori and Pākehā feminists. However, as Huygens (2001:396) notes, while many Pākehā feminists found the challenges extremely uncomfortable, many made sincere attempts to share power with Māori women in the ways promised by the Treaty of Waitangi with mixed outcomes in feminist organisations. These attempts are the subject of Chapter Nine.

Whiteness as absence

Increasingly, however, attention has been drawn to the ways in which white women remained invisible or unmarked within much Western feminist 'engagement with differences' between women. Zajicek (2002:171) argues that the white/other opposition operates within feminist organisations by maintaining whiteness as an absence. This binary opposition participates in the ongoing reproduction of racial hierarchy by simultaneously deracialising whiteness and racialising other identities. In the process, groups "simultaneously advance[d] the gender interests of white women and ultimately reproduce[d] the structures of racial inequality" (2002:172). These processes tend to remain invisible to white women. Within the Rape Crisis group Scott studied, there were expectations of simple unity, assumptions of strong bonds of friendship and easy alliances based on race/ethnicity among women of colour in the organisation (Scott 1998:416).[30] In contrast, the primary place in which white women came together was in the anti-racism discussion meeting that did not produce a strong sense of organisational solidarity for the white women. Whiteness did not become a category that was the basis for resistance or a conscious identification of race. In their attempts to construct an anti-racist subject position, white women tended to define this position not as racial, but as one based on political identity (Scott 1998:411).

Within many of these attempts to engage with racial differences and racism, whiteness remained an unmarked basis for alliance. It is this which leads Aileen Moreton-Robinson (2000) to argue that within much of white feminism, "'race' as difference" has not been an issue of concern to white women in the same way that it has been for racial/ethnic minority women. White women have tended to focus on "the effects of the reproduction of white domination (that is racial oppression) rather than an examination of white race privilege. The foci of analyses of racial oppression are usually non-white women" (Moreton-Robinson 2000:48-49). White women's conscious racialisation of 'Others' does not necessarily lead to a conscious racialistion of the white self (Frankenberg 1993). Within this politics whiteness remains naturalised, neutral and invisible, a cultural marker against which Otherness is defined. Emphasising

[30] However, as Scott suggests, the essentialism of these expectations resulted in feelings of betrayal and disappointment when unity did not occur (Scott 1998). Assumptions of unambiguous and consistent solidarity based on race exaggerated the shared subjective experience of racism.

heterogeneity has not included identifying whiteness as a difference that warrants interrogation (Bonnett 2000:120; Moreton-Robinson 2000:53).

Yet, as a number of writers note, it is difficult to claim white identity when it is so often associated with bigotry and domination (Alcoff 2000:264; Thompson 1999:65). As Kathy Rudy (2001:200-201) suggests, "[b]y claiming the shared status of victim in male, heterosexual culture", it was also possible to assert an unproblematic claim on one's status as oppressed, along with all other women, and in this way assert a commonality or unity among all women. However, including race in this analysis complicated the position of white women as oppressors, which meant that radical feminist politics "were now less absolute, we ourselves less pure. This move was quite painful" (Rudy 2001:201). There are multiple and vexing issues about identifying as white. There is the guilt and confusion about complicity in relations of domination, of white supremacy, and histories of colonisation. As Linda Alcoff suggests:

> But what is it to acknowledge one's whiteness? Is it to acknowledge that one is inherently tied to structures of domination and oppression, that one is irrevocably on the wrong side? ... [C]an the acknowledgment of whiteness produce only self-criticism, even shame and self-loathing? Is it possible to feel okay about being white? (Alcoff 2000:264).

Scott (2001:145) suggests that in spite of specific policies and frameworks to address racial politics and racism, a pervasive silence existed within both organisations she studied. "White people [were] afraid to talk about their own agency and responsibility in a system of white domination" (Scott 2001:136-137). Scott links this to the way in which individuals can usually only occupy one of two positions within anti-racist discourses, that of victim or perpetrator. "This discourse of agency in racial politics paralyzes action. Activists tend to vie for membership in the victim category and attach a great deal of shame to belonging to the perpetrator category. ... [S]ilence is the logical alternative" (2001:126). This perpetuated a tendency to not identify as having racial/ethnic identity. She goes on to suggest that white women in the position of perpetrator tended to deploy a number of unproductive strategies for addressing racism and racial privilege. There was a tendency to attack others in order to establish oneself as better than, or less racist than, another. Others engaged in confessions of guilt about their own racism (2001:137). Within this politics, there was a tendency to only see overt acts of racism and to miss the way in which everyday racism that was part of the taken-for-granted practices of the organisation was invisible to many of the white women

within these feminist organisations. Scott (2001:133) argued that the white women in the groups she studied were "race cognizant", in that they "articulated a discourse of racial consciousness".[31] They indicated they were "aware of having a racial identity and could recognize that identity as a relationship of power, with others defined racially" (Scott 2001:133). But they were not 'racism cognizant,' in that they were unable to address 'everyday racism' within the organisation in productive ways.

For white women, acknowledging privilege based on race involved examining the ways in which their experience, their way of viewing the world and their economic position was profoundly affected by being white (Alcoff 2000:264, citing Frankenberg, 1993). Increasingly, the focus has shifted to the way in which, despite the severity of sexism, white women do not escape race privilege (for example, Brah 1992; Frankenberg 1993; Frye 1996; Spelman 1988). This has been part of the drive to colour the racial category of white ((charles) 1992). Yet, there is a tendency to naturalise white identity and treat it as an ahistorical and geographically undifferentiated racial norm (Bonnett 2000).

Questions emerge about how to identify as white without becoming paralysed. Marilyn Frye (1996) argues that within a feminist politics, white women must become disloyal to whiteness; they must refuse its privilege/entitlements and authority. Alcoff (2000:281) reasons that white feminists need to develop a 'double consciousness'; one that "requires an everpresent acknowledgment of the historical legacy of white identity constructions in the persistent structures of inequality and exploitation", as well as necessitating the ongoing work of developing an identity not based on subjugating others.[32]

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[31] The term "race cognizant" comes from Ruth Frankenberg (1993).

[32] Yet as Becky Thompson suggests, key questions remain. She asks: "What does a White identity and politic look like that is based on undermining itself? Once domination, exploitation, and unearned privileges are accounted for, is there anything left to whiteness? What, outside of some one's class, ethnicity, sexuality, or religion, constitutes whiteness? Does standing against the racial order for White people require self-annihilation? If whiteness is nothing outside of an invented system of domination, then where does the power come to undermine it from the inside?" (Thompson 1999:72).

A Politics of partiality and specificity

The above discussion stresses the tendency to frame difference as a benign diversity or as a malignant identity that ignores systematic inequalities among women, fails to challenge the power of dominant groups to name and define differences, or to interrogate and decentre whiteness. Underpinning this politics of inclusion is a universal construction of 'women' that forecloses discussion of women's specificity, is politically exclusive and insensitive to power differences between women. The critiques have led a number of writers to reframe feminist politics in ways that reiterate partiality and specificity (for example, Ang 1995; Ang 1997; Heyes 2000; Mouffe 1992; Phelan 1994; Yuval-Davis 1993). Ang argues that a "politics of partiality implies that feminism must emphasise and consciously construct the *limits* of its own field of political intervention" (Ang 1995:73, emphasis in original). Yet what would a politics of partiality look like within feminist organisations? A number of key ideas have been connected with this feminist politics of partiality.

A politics of partiality assumes a multiplicity of subject positions constituting both the individual and the category 'women'. In this context, difference both "refer[s] to the multiplicity of voices, meanings and configurations which need to be considered when trying to understand the social world ... [and] to the multitude of different subject positions which constitute the individual" (Maynard 1994:16). This approach fragments the subject 'woman' and 'women', paying attention to the shifting multiplicity of positionings lived by women. Woman/women-only have meaning in "reference to a fusion of adjectives which symbolize particular historical trajectories, material circumstances and cultural experiences. Difference in this sense is a *difference of social condition*" (Brah 1992:131, emphasis in original). Difference involves interrogating the historical specificity of identity at the intersection of multiple and shifting relations of subordination and domination (Ang 1995; Brah 1992; Rudy 2001:211), and examining the borders and exclusions constituting this identity (Heyes 2000). This approach involves a refusal to isolate gender from other multiple positions, and emphasises attention to the material and institutional structures of power.[33]

[33] Two concepts with a similar emphasis include Gayatri Spivak and Ellen Rooney's (1994) concept of 'strategic essentialism', and the notion of hybridity (Felski 1997; Phelan 1994). Both concepts present alternative conceptualisations of identity as the basis of a feminist politics of difference.

Others have reiterated the need to question assumptions that women can always communicate with each other irrespective of other differences. Ang has argued for a recognition of systematic "asymmetrical and incommensurate cultural spheres situated within hierarchies of domination and resistance" as part of attempts to relate across differences (1995:60, quoting Mohanty 1989:181). Ang's notion of incommensurability identifies those moments where communication seems to fail and where no common ground appears to exist between different groups of women. Mis-communication, mis-recognition and the failure to understand one another are a part of attempts to work across differences between women. Difference in these contexts involves conflict, disruption and dissension rather than benign diversity (1995:68).

These tensions are central to Bernice Reagon's (1983) argument that the processes of doing coalition work are structured by profound differences in perspective, values and experiences. Experiences of difference can create serious difficulties, anxiety and a sense of danger to one's identities. The desire for 'home' in the sense of a comfortable space of close identification with others like ourselves gets in the way of working across differences (Anzaldúa 1990; Martin and Mohanty 1986; Pratt 1984; Reagon 1983). A politics of partiality involves accepting that recognition and understanding among different groups may sometimes be impossible. This involves the recognition that different groups of women will have other and, at times, conflicting interests. Among women, "other identifications are sometimes more important and politically pressing than, or even incompatible with, those related to their being women" (Ang 1995:73). Feminist politics in this framework becomes partial, shifting and complex rather than a 'home' for all women.

Yet what does the above mean for the focus on gender oppression, and the attempt to address difference within Western feminist organisations? As Chandra Mohanty (2002) and Rita Felski (1997) suggest, the focus on partiality and specificity does not preclude a framework of solidarity and shared values or a common feminist political project. This need not involve privileging difference over commonalities, the local over the systemic or arguing against all forms of generalisations. Mohanty, in her comments, emphasises the connection between difference and the universal.

> [D]ifferences are never just 'differences'. In knowing differences and particularities, we can better see the connections and commonalities because no border or boundary is ever complete or rigidly determining. The challenge is to see how differences allow us to explain the connections and border crossings better and more accurately, how specifying difference allows us to theorize universal concerns more fully (Mohanty 2002:505).

Politics becomes based on temporary and strategic alliances between women established in relation to specific connections, not an assumption of commonality of gender. Felski (1997:10) elaborates on this theme of alliance by arguing that "we need to … retain the broader categories as a way of demarcating possibilities for political coalition among diversely positioned women through the creation of 'imagined communities'".

Yet the focus on difference returns us to an ideal of equality. Insisting on the "specificity of difference is based on a vision of equality [that is] attentive to power differences within and among the various communities of women" (Mohanty 2002:502). In this debate, equality and difference are allied in the formation of political alliances among women. Felski argues against the opposition between equality and difference, calling it a false antithesis. Instead, the opposite of equality is inequality, and the opposite of difference is identity. Affirmation of differences presumes a tacit appeal to an ideal of equality, if it is not to result in the mere endorsement of existing hierarchies. Felski, citing Cornell (1993:141), draws on the concept of equivalence to develop a vision of 'equal differences' to argue that "'Equivalence' means of equal value, but not of equal value *because of likeness*" (1997:15, Felski's emphasis). She goes on to argue that "'[e]quivalence' includes both an attention to the irreducible particularity of certain forms of experience and a normative argument for treating that experience justly" (1997:16).

To argue for equality in the context of feminist organising involves expanding the meaning of equality to simultaneously respect differences. However, how does one assess which differences should be respected? Felski (1997:17) highlights two issues: the significance and the value of difference. At any point in time, some differences will be more important than other differences. Some forms of difference while significant, for example, poverty, may not be worthy of preservation. Determining significance and value involves appeals to intersubjective norms. Difference within this framework is not pre-given, but constructed through relationships in which there are often pervasive and systematic inequities in power, resources and materials. Argument about equality and

difference return the focus to the specific and the local. It involves undertaking "context-specific differentiated analyses of the ways in which [particular groups of] women are produced as a sociopolitical group within particular historical and cultural locations" (Felski 1997:10).

To summarise, in spite of Western feminist desires and good intentions, dealing with difference remains a highly contested area within feminist organisations. Many of the attempts are embedded in a politics of inclusion, which constructs difference as benign diversity. Frequently, within Western feminist organisations, this has involved a failure to examine whiteness as a specific site of privilege. Therefore, the attempts to deal with difference are often unproductive and increase the mis-trust of those excluded and marginalised from the Western feminist organisations.

Overall, the attempts to engage with differences have been implicated in practices of assimilation, assumptions of false unity and sameness, silence about complicity and participation in practices of oppression, and confessions of guilt by women of the dominant group. Attempts to deal with differences within this framework have been part of an ongoing process of othering and reassertion of relations of domination. This framework had been structured by a series of falsely constructed dichotomies: equality and difference; sisterhood and diversity. Attention has shifted to developing a feminist politics that undermines these dichotomies.

The strategies and issues discussed in this chapter illustrate how attempts to deal with difference between women in feminist organisations are complex, contradictory and fraught with conflict. Increasingly, feminist politics has been marked by a politics of partiality and specificity. Within this context, feminist politics shifts back and forth between identity and difference, equality and inequality between women in ways that complicate feminism as a political home. As will be examined through the thesis, feminists in activist service groups have grappled with the above issues, the specificity, multiplicity and ambiguity that constitute women's identities and relationships have increasingly come to the forefront of present day feminist politics.

PART TWO:

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ACTIVIST SERVICE GROUPS

CHAPTER FOUR

EMERGENCE OF THE SECOND WAVE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND, 1970-1975

The early to mid-1970s was characterised by a rapid growth of feminist groups as part of the growth and development of the second wave of women's movement in Aotearoa/New Zealand. These developments have much in common with Taylor's characterisation of the second wave women's movement in the United States, which she describes as "segmentary, that is, made up of many groups of varying sizes and scope; [and] polycephalous, that is, having many and competing leaders among its diverse groups or branches" (Taylor 1983:439, citing the work of Gerlach and Hine, 1970).[34] The segmentation and proliferation of groups was the consequence of "ideological,

[34] Gerlach and Hine's (1970) notion of social movements as segmented, decentralised and reticulated provides a useful way of examining the development of organisations in the women's liberation strand and the emergence of activist service groups out of the 1970s second wave women's movement. Decentralisation refers to the way in which leadership within the strand has no political or decision-making authority above the level of the local groups (Gerlach and Hine 1970:35). No centralised movement organisation controls the direction of the different groups that make up this strand. Segmentation draws out the ways in which the strand was composed of a great variety of independent localised groups (Gerlach and Hine 1970:40). Segmentation allows for different groups with different ideas about the ideology and goals of the movement to be a part of the same movement. Reticulation refers to the way in which the independent groups form into a network of shifting interrelationships. Organisations are "tied together, not through any central point, but rather through intersecting sets of personal relationships and other intergroup linkages" (Gerlach and Hine 1970:55). Gerlach and Hine (1970:63-70) argue that these characteristics are a strength rather than a weakness of a social movement. This type of movement structure supports ideological diversity, allowing for the widespread rapid development of a movement with many permutations of organisational forms. In addition, the processes of multiple and rapid group formation allow for innovation. Group failures have little impact as "[g]roup members can disband, re-form under new leadership, or simply be absorbed into other groups, and the movement goes on" (Gerlach and Hine 1970:77).

strategic and social cleavages" but also the ways in which participants were encouraged to initiate "new directions of feminist activities by launching new projects and groups" (Taylor 1983:439). The second wave women's movement was a decentralised movement comprising of many organisations and individuals (Buechler 1990; Ferree and Hess 1985; Ryan 1992; Taylor 1983). At the same time, while the groups were largely independent, they intersected at both individual and organisational levels to form what Taylor described as a "reticulate macrostructure" (Taylor 1983:439), thus constituting a degree of cohesion.

In Aotearoa/New Zealand the term 'second wave women's movement' describes those groups, organisations and events of the 1970s focused primarily on challenging women's subordination. Middle-class Pākehā women, who dominated the movement influenced the issues, goals and actions of the movement. At the same time, the second wave women's movement emerged out of and operated within a complex political field comprising of multiple social movements. This field influenced "[h]ow activists frame[d] issues, the strategies they choose [and] their central goals" (Whittier 2002:294). This chapter examines the context out of which the activist service groups (the Women's Centres, Rape Crisis, Refuge and Health Collectives) emerged in the early 1970s in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

The chapter first describes those organisations which specifically identified as being part of the emerging Aotearoa/New Zealand second wave women's movement and which influenced the establishment of the first of the 'by women for women' feminist activist service groups. I discuss the ideological influences, organisational practices and struggles to develop a politics based on sisterhood and how these influenced the setting up of the activist service groups. In particular, I focus on the emergence of two major orientations of this movement, women's liberation and women's rights, and the relationships of these organisations with other radical movements that were part of the political protest field in the early to mid-1970s.[35] The early women's liberation groups were influential in founding the first of the 'by women for women' activist service

[35] It is important to acknowledge that protest about women's oppression was occurring in multiple sites, for example, Māori women within the Māori radical protest groups were critiquing sexism (Alston 1973a; Alston 1973b; Bogle 1973; Rei, McDonald et al. 1993:12). Membership of the radical social movements of the early 1970s overlapped and, at times, members were debating the interrelationships between the different forms of oppression each movement was addressing.

collectives.[36] In the latter part of the chapter I outline the establishment of the first women's centres, women's health centres, women's refuges and rape crisis groups. I discuss the ideas, debates and politics that influenced the setting up of these activist service groups.

The Development of Second Wave Women's Movement Organisations

There was a phenomenal and rapid growth of organisations associated with the second wave women's movement in the early 1970s. The groups were important in the mobilisation of resources to the movement, the recruitment and education of new members and the implementation of radical feminist goals of social change (Buechler 1990; Reger and Taylor 2002; Rupp and Taylor 1986). The multiple groups that comprised the second wave women's movement worked to challenge women's oppression in the public and private spheres. Participants believed that women and men were unequally positioned and women experienced oppression because of their sex/gender.[37] Four major areas of sex/gender inequality shaped many of their campaigns for social change: equal pay and equal opportunity for women in the workplace, childcare facilities, improved access to contraception and abortion,[38] and an

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[36] From the mid 1970s, the women's rights groups became more involved in setting up the 'by women for women' activist service collectives that are the subject of this thesis. The influence of the women's rights groups will be examined in Chapter Five.

[37] Sex/gender refers to a "set of arrangements by which a society transforms biological sexuality into the products of human activity, and in which these transformed sexual needs are satisfied" (Rubin 1975:159). This links biological characteristics with socially constructed ones, which are then used to justify and define the different roles between men and women.

[38] Also established during this period were single issue groups specifically focused on reforming or repealing abortion laws. A number of factors influenced the focus on abortion. Firstly a "discrepancy existed between the severe law on abortion and the more liberal practices of a number of doctors, who were supported by … public opinion", and secondly, liberalisation of abortion laws had occurred in both the United Kingdom and Australia in the late 1960s (Hughes 1993:276). The groups protesting for liberalisation of abortion laws were linked with both reform of the law and radical protesting demanding 'women's right to choose'. The Abortion Law Reform Association of Aotearoa/New Zealand (ALRANZ) was set up in Auckland and Wellington in 1971 (Bunkle 1988:10). One of the earliest women's liberation groups to focus specifically on abortion was an Auckland group, SISTERS, which stood for 'Sisters in Struggle to end Repressive Sexism'. They were already arguing for complete repeal of all abortion laws in 1972 and argued that "[a]bortion should be the key issue concerning feminists as it is a basic form of oppression, and it is likely to introduce many women to a feminist consciousness" (Anonymous 1972a:10). Many of the women's liberation groups during the early 1970s, (for example, Dunedin Collective for Woman, and Palmerston North Women's Liberation), established subcommittees that were protesting abortion laws and demanding their repeal. The Women's National Abortion Action Campaign (WONAAC) was launched at the 1973 National Abortion Conference held in Wellington (Hughes 1993:276). WONAAC demanded repeal of all abortion laws and argued for a 'women's right to choose.' It emerged out of the abortion action committees of the early women's liberation groups (Smith 1973b). Bunkle (1988:11) suggests WONAAC emerged out of the

end to gender stereotyping. Aims and manifestos usually focused on these four areas (for example, Anonymous 1971:1; Anonymous 1993b:167; Anonymous 1993c:172-175; Anonymous 1993d:165; Jocelyn 1972:1; Poulter 1978:1).

Second wave women's movement developments have been described through a variety of schema, for example, small group sector and mass movement (Ryan 1992), collectivist and bureaucratic (Ferree and Hess 1985), or younger and older women (Freeman 1975). Each schema draws attention to some key differences between the two major types of social movement organisation developments. In this chapter, I utilise the distinction between women's rights and women's liberation as this draws attention to the groups different origins and ideological influences. I also draw on the collectivist and bureaucratic schema to underscore the major distinctions in organisational styles dominant in this early period. These represent ideal types. Many organisations were not so clearly distinguished in practice and embodied characteristics of both types. Women's liberation and women's rights groups engaged in joint protests, had overlapping memberships and members of both attended many of the UWCs.[39]

The following section outlines the development of the different organisations. I describe the developments in terms of ideological influences on activities and ways of organising. There was significant debate about the appropriate foci of protest and forms of organisation. There was also extensive discussion about the women's movements claims to represent all women. The section focuses on those ideas and debates that were particularly influential in the setting up of the 'by women for women' activist service groups.[40]

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conflict about goals and protest strategies, with ALRANZ focusing on reform of abortion laws by campaigning the politicians, whilst WONAAC argued for self-determination for women and the consequent focus on repeal of abortion laws through mass actions such as pickets and marches. By 1975, WONAAC had groups operating in Auckland and Dunedin, and contacts in Wellington, Christchurch, Palmerston North, Hamilton and New Plymouth (Anonymous 1975h:40).

[39] Appendix IV on the United Women's Conventions provides a summary of the age, ethnicity, education, organisation membership and occupations of the women who attended each of the four national conventions held during the 1970s. Description of attendee group memberships suggests that members of both strands did attend the conventions.

[40] Women's liberation groups of the 1970s were very influential in the development of the activist service groups that are the focus of this thesis and, consequently, more space is given to describing the development of these groups than to the early women's rights groups.

Women's movement organisation developments

The establishment of women's rights groups in Aotearoa/New Zealand was influenced by developments in the United States (US) and in Australia.[41] Unlike the United States, where the National Organisation for Women (NOW) preceded the development of the women's liberation groups, the first NOW group was not set up in Auckland until 1972, and in Christchurch and Wellington thereafter (Bunkle 1979a; Ferree and Hess 1985).[42] These were modelled on the US NOW (Dalziel 1993a:98). Between 1972 and 1975, another 13 NOW groups were established.[43] In 1975, the first Aotearoa/New Zealand Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL) groups were established in Auckland, Christchurch and Gisborne (Anonymous 1975f:40; Nelson 1975: 38). WEL was modelled on women's lobby groups in Australia, which had proved a powerful and effective political force in the 1970 and 1974/75 Australian elections (Julian 1993:104). Like their overseas counterparts, the WEL and NOW groups in Aotearoa/New Zealand developed bureaucratic structures, including voting, elected officers and committee structures that reported to executive committees.

These early women's rights groups focused mainly on legal change and issues of gender discrimination. NOW groups espoused a liberal feminist focus on achieving equality of opportunity between women and men by challenging gender discrimination and roles in the public and private sphere. NOW was a bureaucratic organisation which "appealed to educated women in their late twenties and thirties, whose careers were often fairly well established and who wished to bring about change in an orderly, constitutional way" (Dalziel 1993a:98). WEL's aims also included the "achievement of social, economic,

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41 A number of women's organisation focusing on issues such as equal pay preceded establishment of women's rights groups in the 1970s. For example, the National Council of Women (1916-) were participating in the 1960s and 1970s in campaigns that led to the "Government Service Equal Pay Act 1960 and the Equal Pay Act 1972" (Nicholls and Page 1993:84). Activists in the PSA, set up the Council for Equal Pay and Opportunity in 1957 (Bunkle 1979b:28; Hutchison 1993:229). In terms of the issue they were addressing - equal pay for women with men – these groups were the forerunners of the women's rights groups that were part of the 1970s second wave women's movement.

42 The US NOW had first been established by Betty Friedan in 1966 (Dalziel 1993a:98).

43 Others groups included the Hamilton Organisation for Women, the Nelson Organisation for Women's Rights, and six more NOW groups in Auckland (Sandringham/Mount Albert, Eastern Suburbs, Remuera, Eden-Epsom, Takapuna, and Devonport). In 1973, NOW groups were set up in Hastings (Anonymous 1973f:16), and Gisborne after a visit from Sharyn Cederman who had been one of the founders of Auckland NOW (Anonymous 1973e:16). In 1974, NOW groups were established in Tawa and Wellington. NOW Marlborough was formed in October 1975 after an IWY Seminar where it was "decided to form a single feminist group in Marlborough incorporating all feminist aims" because it was "felt that Marlborough's population was too small to support more than one feminist group" (Anonymous 1980c:17).

educational and political equality for all women" (Nelson 1975: 38). It described itself as a non-partisan political lobby group (Ranstead 1977d:47). Both NOW and WEL in the early to mid-1970s focused on "indirect change, through … political pressure, or 'moral suasion' (mobilising public opinion)" (Ferree and Hess 1985:67).

The women's liberation groups that were set up in the early 1970s were also involved in indirect change through making submissions and lobbying government for law changes, but were specifically focused on changing "institutional patterns directly, by providing alternative ways of meeting members' needs" (Ferree and Hess 1985:67). Women's liberation groups emphasised the need to redistribute rewards and had a goal of equal outcomes for all, which required radical change of society (Rupp and Taylor 1986:84-88). The women's liberation groups tended to appeal more to younger, mainly Pākehā, university students and housewives (Dalziel 1993a:98).

The early women's liberation groups were influenced by diverse ideological influences in the early 1970s. These first women's liberation groups, the Wellington Women's Liberation Front and the Auckland Women's Liberation Front, were established in 1970 and emerged out of the New Left (Dann 1987:36). Indirectly, the US radical feminist movement of the late 1960s and the emerging gay liberation movement also influenced the early women's liberation groups. The Wellington Women's Liberation Front had roots in the Victoria University Socialist Club (Bunkle 1988:9): Therese O'Connell, a member of the Victoria Club, obtained a University Students' Association grant to found a separate women's liberation group (Dalziel 1993b:63). In June 1970, a mixed sex group, Auckland Women's Liberation Front, developed out of the Progressive Youth Movement, but only survived a few months (Dann 1987:37). Members of the Auckland Women's Liberation Front believed that women's liberation should occur within the framework of the "general socialist movement, because, they contended, the liberation of women would only be successful within a socialist society" (Dann 1985:5). Women who disagreed with the position and politics of the Auckland Women's Liberation Front, but identified as Socialist or Marxist feminists, set up Women for Equality. This group emphasised working-class women's issues and were involved in protesting the unequal pay of factory women (Anonymous 1972b). Few of these groups survived more than a few years, but in that time they had been politically influential by engaging in CR, direct political protest and debating women's oppression.

Socialism remained central to the analysis of oppression for many women coming out of the Left social movements into the new feminist groups (Dann 1987). Former members of one of the early women's liberation group put it this way:

> Barb: The things we were trying to fight were outside of us, against the Vietnam war, against racism. ...
> Fiona: We believed in radical change. We believed in revolution. It was that sort of class analysis. You have to have radical change. And radical change has to come from the theory... You had to get down to the root essence, the bottom of the situation and then change it. ...
> Barb: We had all escaped from post Victorian families. So there were lots of things that I wasn't even aware I was trying to leave behind, that I didn't even know I was carrying. ... I hadn't really looked at myself at all, except that I had to get out of [that post Victorian paradigm] ... We were talking about childcare, wages for housework.
> Susan: It was very fluid. We were involved in so many issues. ... We had more than simply feminist issues. There were quite a few other radical issues that we campaigned about.
> Fiona: It is hard to know in a way, whether feminism is the fundamental thing that underlies the whole thing. When did that come through? (WL Group Interview 21/9/97).

These reflections highlight the complexity involved in attempting to construct a feminist position. They indicate some of the conceptual shifts that started to occur as radical feminist analysis became increasingly influential, for example, in terms of starting analysis from personal experience and the shift to seeing gender oppression as the primary oppression.

These early women's liberation groups were characterised by a diversity of interests and allegiances. For example, Women for Equality included women who had been involved in New Left groups, such as the Progressive Youth Movement, Nga Tamatoa (a Māori radical protest group), the gay liberation movement, and those who had had no previous involvement in radical protest movements (Jesson 1982:46). There was a similar diversity in the Wellington Women's Liberation Front, which included "a member of a Trotskyist social group", someone who was "politically aligned with the rather chaotic New Leftism popular in Aotearoa/New Zealand universities at the time", and also a group of women "uninterested in socialism or revolutions but rather in the hindrances suffered by middle-class women in their efforts to get on in life" (Dann 1987: 36-37). This same type of ideological and class diversity was blamed for the splitting of the Auckland Women's Liberation group from Women for Equality in 1972 (Jesson 1982:46).

Radical feminism became increasingly influential in the development of later women's liberation groups. Groups such as Christchurch Women's Liberation, which initially included "members of the Trotskyist socialist group [and] the Socialist Action League", quickly developed a radical feminist orientation (Dann 1987:37). One of the earliest and longest surviving women's liberation groups, the Dunedin Collective for Woman (DCW), was established in 1971 by members of one CR group (Harrison 1988; Mercier 1991). Many of the founding members had spent time participating in the US women's liberation movement (Judy 1972:1). The DCW developed and ran a women's liberation course in their local community. Espousing many of the principles of US radical feminism, the course reiterated the primacy of gender oppression and the notion of women as a sex class (Jocelyn 1972:1-4).[44]

Lesbian feminist groups, which identified primarily with the women's liberation movement rather than gay liberation, also were formed in the early 1970s. In 1973, Sisters for Homophile Equality (SHE) was set up in Christchurch, Wellington and Palmerston North (Suddens 1983:24). In Auckland, the Gay Feminist Collective was set up in 1974 (Anonymous 1973j; Anonymous 1974b). Some of the original members of Christchurch SHE recounted that the group formed "out of a consciousness that evolved from our awareness of our oppression as lesbians, as women, and as feminists" (Eagle and Argent 1978:8). The group networked with other radical social groups but "[b]it by bit … realised that [their] main allegiances were with the Women's Liberation movement and that the issues of male left and Gay Liberation politics were not primarily concerned with [their] needs" (Eagle and Argent 1978:8). The group was set up because these lesbians "were looking for a group catering specifically for their needs as homosexuals and as women" (Anonymous 1974b:16). These developments were part of a distinct lesbian feminist politics that emerged during the 1970s, but these groups were also closely associated with the women's liberation sector of that period.[45]

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[44] The six week course was developed by members of the Dunedin Collective of Woman in order to introduce women to the ideas of women's liberation. The course drew on many of the resources developed by the US Women's Liberation groups in the late 1960s. The course outlined radical feminist democratic collective forms of organising. They ran the first course during June-August of 1972. The Auckland *Broadsheet* collective recommended the written course as an excellent resource about Women's Liberation (Dunedin Collective for Woman 1972:11).

[45] Many of the emerging lesbian feminist groups adopted the same women-only collective forms of organising as the radical feminist groups outlined above because many of the new lesbians were coming from the radical feminist groups (Laurie 1975).

Women from across the spectrum networked and undertook joint protests, and attended national conferences, such as the 1972 National Women's Liberation Conference, and the United Women's Conventions of 1973 and 1975.[46] Wellington Women's Workshop participated in a NOW week-end teach-in about making submissions to the Select Committee on the Status of Women (Coralie 1973:1). A member of Palmerston North Women's Liberation described attending a joint forum to discuss women's issues with government ministers on International Women's Day 1973. The meeting included members from NOW Christchurch, Auckland Women's Liberation, the Dunedin Collective for Woman and the Nelson Organisation for Women's Rights (Anonymous 1973k: no page numbers). Wellington Women's Workshop joined with NOW to picket the Miss Wellington Beauty Contest (Anonymous 1973h:13) and Wellington groups joined forces for a Suffrage Day march protesting abortion law (Anonymous 1973g:16).

The decentralised development of the organisations suggests ideological cleavages between women's rights and women's liberation groups were powerful and further divided by lesbian feminist, socialist and radical feminist ideologies and interests. At the same time, the groups were united by enough common issues, common membership and national events to create a sense of participating in a 'women's movement'.

Organisational practices

In the early 1970s, different organisational structures and practises distinguished the women's rights and women's liberation groups. Both emphasised a commitment to democratic processes in their organisations, but democracy had different meanings to the two types of groups. The early women's rights organisations set up formal bureaucratic systems, including elected positions and decision-making by majority voting. In contrast, many of the women's liberation groups were described as collectivist (Dann 1978d; 1985). They attempted to organise without formal positions and to implement decision-making by consensus. In arenas where members of both women's rights and women's liberation groups came together, how decisions were

[46] See Appendices IV and V for a description of these national and regional meetings and the debates about goals and strategies that took place in these meetings.

made and what counted as democratic procedures were often points of contention (Hunt 1975:2-3; Michalka 1976b:2; Nelson 1975:38; Thompson 1976a:4-5).[47]

Organisations with a women's rights orientation were characterised by formal division of labour, written rules and hierarchical offices (Rothschild-Whitt 1979). Many of the groups used meeting procedures based on Robert's Rules of Order.[48] At the first WEL group in Auckland, the meeting concentrated on electing officers, the use of motions and majority voting to make decisions (Nelson 1975:38). Participants did not see the way in which women's rights groups organised as radical and political; instead they emphasised efficiency and formal systems of accountability. Democratic procedure was conceptualised in terms of representation and majority rule (Hunt 1975). Membership often included both men and women, and these groups attempted to develop a mass membership base that could be mobilised for specific campaigns.

In contrast, the organisations with a women's liberation orientation were characterised by a minimal division of labour, few rules or formal positions, personalised, informal relations and consensus decision-making (Rothschild-Whitt 1979).[49] In her examination of writings from the Aotearoa/New Zealand women's movement between 1970 and 1984, Holmes (1998:133) describes how "organising encompassed a range of 'processes' based on ideals of consensus, openness, and structurelessness (the avoidance of hierarchies)". Decision-making in the groups often involved the whole membership and groups utilised consensus decision-making procedures. Many of the women's liberation groups were open to any woman who wanted to join. Ideally, this meant that any woman could attend a meeting and actively participate in the meetings and activities of the group. The groups were striving for structurelessness – this involved the rejection of leaders and hierarchies, and an effort to pursue more egalitarian ways of working together (Holmes 1998:135).

The earliest women's liberation groups were influenced by the New Left's "emphasis on direct democracy", and engagement in a variety of collectivist experiments and

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[47] See Appendix IV for a description of the increasing focus on how to organise non-hierarchically and the debates about what counted as democratic processes that took place at the United Women's Conventions

[48] Robert's Rules of Order provides rules for chairing and running a democratically-based meeting. It was first developed in 1887 by Major Henry M. Robert for the efficient running of meetings and decision-making based on parliamentary procedure. It sets out a formal process of motions, acceptance of motions, discussions, resolutions and voting (Robert McConnell Productions 2001).

[49] I examined women's liberation groups and their ideals in greater detail than women's rights in this chapter, because it was these groups that were most influential in the development of activist service organisations.

direct protest groups (Ferree and Hess 1985:59). In the very early groups, such as Women for Equality, collective ways of organising did not have a specifically radical feminist meaning (Sirianni 1993). The focus was on experimenting with communal living and included both female and male members (Dalziel 1993b:63). However, within two years of the first women's liberation groups being established, the idea of the collective as 'women's ways of working' was influencing the organisation of women's liberation groups. Groups embodied radical feminist organisational principles, such as CR, being women-only and non-hierarchical (Dann 1978d). These strategies were seen to be important in the development of unity and solidarity amongst women. The method women's liberation groups used to organise themselves was deemed to be political. Wellington Women's Workshop argued that working together in ways that established trust, unity/consensus and openness between women acts was a "meaningful political experience" (Ruthie 1973:3). The small, decentralised, non-hierarchical, women-only group represented both a way of challenging patriarchal relations of domination and a vision of how society itself should be organised.

The small, women-only CR group was defined as the building block of the movement (Jocelyn 1972), and many of the women's liberation groups established CR groups. The Dunedin Collective for Woman (DCW) was running six CR groups in mid 1973 (Dunedin Collective for Woman 1973:15). Similarly, Women for Equality reported operating CR groups in order to take a critical look at themselves (Anonymous 1973i: 11). In 1973, the Auckland Women's Liberation group reported operating two CR groups (Anonymous 1973b:11). As the DCW *Women's Liberation Course* stated, CR involved sharing personal experiences as the starting point for political analysis of women's common oppression in a patriarchal society (Jocelyn 1972:2). The course reader asserted that participation in small women-only groups and sharing experiences were critical for women to realise that they were "a class, a political class, sharing similar experiences and disadvantages, and this must be recognised before we even begin to be strong" (Jocelyn 1972:2, emphasis in original).[50] As the writer maintained;

[50] These issues were also a major part of the regional and national radical feminist caucuses described in Appendix V. The desire for sisterhood was also a part of the United Women's Conventions described in Appendix IV. However, the focus on non-hierarchical organising did not become a major theme until the 1977 UWC. Within this context, questions about democratic organising were first raised at the 1977 UWC, and then non-hierarchy was pursued as a key goal at the 1979 UWC. It was a much later development.

"[w]e must know and trust one another just because we are all women" (Jocelyn 1972:2, emphasis in original).

Not all of the early women's liberation groups excluded men initially. However, by 1975 this was the norm. Working together in women-only groups was believed to challenge the divisions between women created by patriarchy and to support the development of solidarity between women: "Women have been trying to go it alone for too long, and the strain for many is intolerable. There are no individual solutions; we need communal strength" (Jocelyn 1972:2). Groups challenged "a mythologised 'natural' conflict between women" and instead aimed at constructing a "politicised state of consensus" among women (Holmes 1998:134). It was frequently argued that organising separately from men was an important radical feminist strategy enabling women to explore their experiences without being dominated by men and, thus to develop solidarity (for example, Anonymous 1972a; Fraser 1973; MacNeill 1971 ; Smith 1973a). SISTERS, a women's liberation group, described how their "group does not allow men at meetings as we, as women must gain self-confidence, trust and leadership qualities" (Anonymous 1972a:10). In the DCW *Women's Liberation Course*, it was argued that "when men are present, we women automatically behave differently, becoming either more conspicuous or less so, according to what we have been trained to do. Either way we are not being our true selves" and that men, even sympathetic men, could not help but dominate meetings (Jocelyn 1972:2). Julie Thompson, active in the women's movement of that period, wrote in *Broadsheet* that separatism from men was critical to "consolidating our sense of identity first. We are the oppressed people, and it is around that that we have to organise. If we do not we will continue to defer to those who have the power in this society" (1975b:7).

Hierarchy and bureaucracy came to be seen as masculine, patriarchal or male ways of working (Jocelyn 1972:1). Organising without formal leadership or hierarchy was seen as a liberating way of working for women. For example, the 1974 Auckland University Women's Liberation Group described their organisation as "a form of structure which does not oppress or intimidate anybody. So, we have no leader, and positions such as secretary, chairperson, are revolved around the group" (Anonymous 1974h:3). They explicitly linked this to direct resistance to masculine/patriarchal forms of organisation, or as they described it "the male patter of organisation beloved of Rotary, boardrooms

and other bastions of Male Chauvinism" (Anonymous 1974h:3). They also resisted using voting, motions and executive committees.

Bureaucratic, hierarchical organisations were seen as maintaining masculine and patriarchal systems of domination and, as a consequence, were incompatible with feminist goals and values (Ferguson 1984). As Denny, a writer in the DCW *Women's Liberation Course,* stated: bureaucratic, hierarchical organisation "works against the liberation of women. Membership of the organising groups must be a liberating experience for every woman in them, or the movement will fail in its basic objectives" (Denny 1972:26, emphasis in original). Another writer in the same course argued that women were unable to be free to develop "in systems modelled on male, hierarchical organisations, to find out what they themselves truly are and truly need, to find out what other women are and need" (Jocelyn 1972:2). Working within a woman-only collective was believed to create a space outside of patriarchy in which they would be able to discover "women's 'true' identity" (Holmes 1998:139).

Hierarchical, formal procedural ways of operating, such as the use of Robert's Rules of Order, were commonly identified as patriarchal, but rarely linked with Pākehā ways of working within the writing of women's liberation during this period. An early exception was Helen Nelson's critique of the first WEL in Auckland as operating on patriarchal, white ways of operating:

> My main reason for writing this article is a fear that as women organising together, we will fall into white male patterns of behaviour. This I felt particularly about the way the meeting was run. As a woman, I felt that the rules of the meeting were ones that men have developed. How much worse it was then, when women of minority racial groups were alienated and excluded by these rules that were foreign to my understanding of how we as women can function together! (Nelson 1975:38).

She argued that the attempt to construct an organisation open to all women was counteracted by failing "to be just in their structures even as they fight for social justice" (Nelson 1975:38). She linked voting and passing of motions with the dominant white male way of operating and argued that they contributed further to the divisions between women.

The early women's liberation groups were attempting to build an oppositional culture based on 'female values' of co-operation, sharing and consensus between women. By the mid-1970s the open unstructured form of organising had become increasingly prescriptive. Writing about the influence of women's liberation ideas on the new lesbian

feminists, Alison Laurie (1975:3-6) states, it was "believed that to have a structure ... was to imitate the male-dominated establishment" and any characteristic linked with males was condemned. Organising in a woman-only collective way was seen as fundamental to radical feminist goals of social change. It was a key aspect distinguishing women's rights and women's liberation groups in this early period.[51]

Challenging claims to sisterhood

The groups described above were dominated by Pākehā, middle-class, heterosexual women. Others, identifying as lesbian, working-class and/or as part of ethnic minority groups, were a part of the women's liberation groups, but often struggled to have their specific oppression addressed in these groups. Despite much fervent activity to involve all women in the establishment and development of the second wave women's movement, the importance of race, class and sexuality differences was often overlooked. Nevertheless, the movement of this period was dominated by a powerful belief in working for change for all women. Arguments for the centrality of sisterhood were part of the feminist collectivist way of organising, and the early UWCs and manifestos emphasised the power of sisterhood. Early participants often believed that differences between women were less important than their commonality. For example, the 1972 course developed by the Dunedin Collective for Woman described the movement as "an incredibly fast-growing grass-roots movement, *genuinely transcending barriers of age, class, nationalism, religion and race"* (Jocelyn 1972: 3, emphasis added).

In the North Island, however, claims of unity and sisterhood were being contested around race/ethnic differences, more so than in the South Island.[52] As Rei et al. (1993:11) point out: "With the rise in political consciousness of the 1960s, a number of protest-related Maori groups emerged". These groups were questioning the notion of a commonality of interests between white and black women (Alston 1973a; Alston 1973b; Bogle 1973). Interviews with Māori women activists published in *Broadsheet* in 1973 show how they were developing their own critique of sexism within the 'black'

[51] The distinction was rapidly lost and women's rights groups adopted many practices common to the women's liberation groups. This will be examined in Chapter Five.

[52] This is also influenced by the fact that 93% of Māori lived in the North Island (Department of Statistics 1975:61).

movements (Alston 1973a; Alston 1973b; Bogle 1973). Māori women were attempting to address issues of sexism by Māori men in these groups. Tania Rei, Geraldine McDonald and Ngahuia Te Awekotuku, in a history of these developments describe how:

> Within Nga Tamatoa there were a number of motivated Maori women, a few of whom were also involved with women's liberation. Their attempts to focus on more feminist issues with other female group members were generally discouraged by the men involved. These women then began to meet separately; those for whom sexism became a major issue shifted their energies to women's and later gay liberation (Rei, McDonald et al. 1993:12).

Māori and Pacific Island women activists from Auckland groups like the Polynesian Panthers and Nga Tamatoa perceived the emerging second wave women's movement of this time to be a Pākehā movement and many of the goals as more relevant to Pākehā women (Alston 1973a:12; Bogle 1973:9-10). For example, in interviews, Māori activists such as Ngahuia Te Awekotuku and Hana Jackson, identified issues of racism in the women's movement and how Māori land rights, language, and economic issues were more significant than the issues that the Pākehā dominated women's liberation movement was addressing at the time (1973a; Alston 1973b). At the 1973 UWC, Mira Szaszy, president of the Maori Women's Welfare League, outlined the different interests of Māori and Pākehā women. She argued there was no certainty that the interests of Māori and Pākehā women would coincide (Szaszy 1973:24). Racism and assumptions of the superiority of Pākehā culture were also being criticised, especially the failure of Pākehā to engage with Māori in ways that valued their cultural heritage and experience (Alston 1973a; Alston 1973b; Bogle 1973; Dann 1976).[53]

At the same time, the dominance of white middle-class interests resulted in a number of women pointing out the limited relevance of the second wave women's movement to working-class women (Alston 1973b; Bogle 1973; Dann 1987; Else and Else 1973:5). Te Awekotuku in an interview with Sharon Alston (1973b:7) maintained that "there is one thing lacking in women's liberation and that is the constructive contact on the part of their members with women who really need emancipation most of all", that of working-class women. At the same time, Te Awekotuku reiterated the importance of

[53] The interviews highlighted issues that were to become increasingly prominent in interactions between Māori, Pacific Island and Pākehā women over the 1970s and 1980s. At issue was the failure of Pākehā groups to (a) address Māori concerns such as land rights and sovereignty in their feminist politics, (b) identify the ways in which ethnicity and racism structured gender oppression, and (c) acknowledge Pākehā women's complicity in relations of domination.

recognising the distinctive positions and experiences of Pākehā and Māori working-class women in attempts to address class differences. This theme of class as entwined with ethnicity was repeated by many of the women interviewed for the 1973 *Broadsheet* 'Talking to Polynesian Women' series (for example, Alston 1973a; Alston 1973b; Bogle 1973).

Ethnicity and class were not the only differences between women to be emphasised in the debates about oppression and goals of the second wave women's movement. Lesbian feminists were arguing for the recognition of lesbians as a distinct group with separate interests and were identifying issues of heterosexism in the movement. At the first Women's Liberation Conference held in 1972 in Wellington, one of the areas focused on was increasing lesbian visibility and challenging lesbian oppression (Dann 1985:15). However, this was not specifically followed up at 1973 and 1975 UWCs. Later UWCs and radical feminist gatherings held in the latter half of the 1970s became key arenas in which lesbian feminists publicly criticised their invisibility, marginalisation and exclusion within the women's movement.[54]

In response to the failure to have their specific interests, identities and issues acknowledged and addressed, marginalised groups of women challenged the movement to acknowledge their specificity. Working class women (of all race/ethnicities and sexualities) continued to challenge the middle class bias of practices and values in the movement, and these challenges increased over the 1970s. Both lesbian feminist and/or Māori activist women developed responses and relationships to the second wave women's movement in this period.[55] Lesbian feminists remained closely aligned with the women's liberation movement of the 1970s and often participated in women's liberation groups or national meetings. At the same time, they formed many specific lesbian feminist groups (for example, SHE, Gay Feminist Collective) and a distinct protest movement (Te Awekotuku, Tamihana et al. 1993). For Māori women, the issues of racism and failure of the women's movement to address their specific interests resulted in separate development. By 1973, Donna Awatere and Ngahuia Te Awetokutu

[54] See Appendix IV and Appendix V for a detailed description of these debates and issues

[55] These relationships changed over time. Appendix IV and Appendix V highlight some of the shifts in relationships between differently positioned identity groups, based on class, race/ethnicity and sexuality that took place in the national and regional women's movement gatherings of the 1970s. The ways in which these debates are implicated in the development of activist service groups are examined in Chapters Six, Seven and Nine.

along with "other Maori feminists were more involved in Maori organisations, and worked with Maori men on issues of joint concern, such as language and land" (Dann 1985:34). Nevertheless, many of these Māori women activists continued to participate in, and network with, Pākehā dominated groups in the second wave women's movement. The above outline discussion demonstrates that differences and inequality between women were being raised as issues. Questions about whose interests were represented by the second wave women's movement were asked and a number of minority identity women's groups were challenging the claims of Pākehā dominated feminist groups to represent all women.

This examination of developments and debates illustrates the decentralised, segmented nature of the women's movement as groups sprang up all through Aotearoa/New Zealand with allegiances to different ideologies and with roots in different protest movements. It was in this movement context that the first of the activist service groups emerged. The debates about feminist ideology, forms of protest, movement goals, how to organise and identity were important issues in the setting up of the first activist service collectives.

The Emergence of the 'By Women for Women' Activist Service Groups and Centres

A key issue for many participants in the early women's liberation groups was the need to shift from ideas to political action. Although some participants argued that CR and personal transformation was a form of political activity, others were emphasising the need to engage in direct political action that challenged gender oppression and promoted the ideas of women's liberation (Coates, Starey et al. 1976:6; Coralie 1973; Helene 1974). A member of the Wellington Women's workshop wrote:

> Maybe the group serves well for consciousness-raising purposes without immediate action for social change necessarily being implied. Personally, after one and a half years of discussing the same problems about women and group functioning, I wanted to go beyond repetitious verbalizing (Anonymous 1974f:4).

The shift from ideas to action was an important reason for setting up *Broadsheet.* As a founding member pointed out: "We were in consciousness-raising groups, had been to seminars, discussion groups, had read books, … and felt ready to initiate some project which would further the ideals of the women's movement. … A magazine seemed an

obvious choice" (Coney and Cederman 1975:30). The need to move from ideas to action was also a significant factor in the emergence of the activist service collectives. Some of the women's liberation groups were exploring the development of alternative services for women by women.

The service groups were part of a wider shift in the women's liberation sector. As a number of authors (Ferree and Hess 1985; Freeman 1975; Rupp and Taylor 1986; Ryan 1992) have demonstrated the women's liberation sector rapidly:

> shifted from an emphasis on theory-building and consciousness-raising to a focus on specific issues such as violence against women, women's health, reproductive freedom, pornography, and the creation of women's culture through the production of women's music and the establishment of alternative institutions such as bookstores, coffee houses, and festivals (Rupp and Taylor 1986:89).

Matthews argued this involved a merging of radical feminist political ideas and service work. Within a radical feminist paradigm "this blend made complete sense, but practically, these orientations lent an uneasy tension to the movement's goals and strategies" (Matthews 1994:150).[56] Matthews also observed that "[o]nce the commitment to providing services took hold in the movement, it remained constant (cf. Burt, Gornick et al. 1984), and shaped the course of the movement" (Matthews 1994:150). The early 1970s Aotearoa/New Zealand service groups emerged out of women's liberation groups and were part of a move from consciousness-raising to political action.

Women's Centres – feminist bases, networking and information

Women's Centres were first established in Dunedin and Christchurch in 1974 and in Auckland, Wellington, Wairoa and New Plymouth in 1975. Apart from Wairoa and Wellington, women's liberation groups established them all. As early as 1973 Auckland Women's Liberation group and Women for Equality were "looking for suitable accommodation for a centre for feminist activities" (Anonymous 1973a:14), but it was not until 1975 that a Women's Centre was established in Auckland (Anonymous

[56] The tensions that were central to the 1970s and 1980s developments will be examined in Chapters Five and Six, and those that emerged as prominent in the 1990s will be discussed in Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine.

1975a:13-14).[57] The Christchurch Centre was set up in 1974 as a joint refuge and women's centre by a coalition of three Christchurch feminist groups, Radical Feminists, University Feminists and SHE (McCallum 1993: 143). The idea for the joint refuge/women's centre occurred as a result of a visit by an English feminist who had been involved in women's aid projects in the United Kingdom (Fenwick and McKenzie 1979b:22). The New Plymouth Women's Action Group set up the Women's Centre in 1975 in order to develop a women-only space in the city (Anonymous 1976b:39; Gill 1982).

Women's centres were set up to provide a primary location for the development of feminist activities and a place for feminists to meet. This is reflected in the aims of the Auckland Women's Centre, which were "1) to bring together women interested in feminism; 2) to provide a meeting place for feminist groups; 3) to provide a voice for feminism in Auckland" (Anonymous 1975g:39). A report in October 1975 suggested that the Auckland Women's Centre was achieving these aims when they reported having 50 women attend their last meeting, 275 women on the mailing list as well the following feminist groups meeting at the centre; "Halfway House, Women's National Abortion Action Campaign (WONAAC), Rape Crisis Centre and two consciousness-raising groups" (Anonymous 1975g:39). They reported that the Rape Crisis group and CR groups had been set up by members of the Centre (Anonymous 1975g:39). There were also a feminist political action group and feminist discussion group operating from the Centre during 1975, as well as a library being developed (Anonymous 1975l; Barry, Casswell et al. 1975; Casswell 1975b; Casswell, Chapman et al. 1975; Casswell, Coates et al. 1975). The Centre also provided information and referrals for women in the local area. The founding committee identified the Centre as "a place for women fulfilling the functions of a community centre, providing a meeting place, legal, accommodation and employment information, and counselling if necessary" (Anonymous 1974a:16). The Christchurch Centre was described as "primarily a refuge and referral centre", providing: "advice on abortion, contraception, law, sympathetic doctors, or any other problem affecting women", along with providing accommodation, and a place for group meetings and "sometimes all-female parties that allow the group to meet and individuals

[57] Auckland Women's Centre Collective (1975-1977) appears to have replaced the Auckland Women's Liberation group by 1975 (See Auckland Women's Centre newsletters and *Broadsheet* Group Reports during 1975).

to get to know each other" (Anonymous 1974d:40).[58] An early report about the Christchurch Refuge Centre suggested that the Centre supported feminists "coming together and sharing ideas and energy, and [supporting] the whole feminist thing … [to] grow and develop" (Diane 1975a:24).

Groups undertook fund-raising activities, such as jumble sales,[59] collected donations from the public, and set up pledge systems. Auckland Women's Centre only required a couple of hundred dollars a month to operate, with key sources of funding coming from donations, sales of feminist items (for example, stickers, badges), jumble sales, newsletter subscriptions and pledges from members (Anonymous 1975l; Barry, Casswell et al. 1975; Casswell 1975b; Casswell, Chapman et al. 1975; Casswell, Coates et al. 1975). Each Auckland Women's Centre newsletter contained requests for jumble sales goods or for members to pay the money they had pledged. The Centre was wholly reliant on volunteers. In the same newsletter, both Halfway House and Rape Crisis were asking for donations and goods for jumble sales. The Christchurch Women's Centre raised funds to cover most of the basic running costs through the implementation of a pledge system (McCallum 1993:143) and a member of the Community Volunteers Organisation co-ordinated the centre activities (Diane 1975a:20).[60] The New Plymouth Women's Centre received an International Women's Year (IWY) working party grant of $750 (Anonymous 1976b:39).

It was not only those groups linked with the women's liberation sector of the early 1970s movement that were establishing women's centres. NOW Wellington reported opening a NOW Women's Centre in early 1974 with 100 financial members. It was to be "used as a meeting place, information centre and library" (Anonymous 1974c:16). The Wairoa International Women's Year Committee also established a Women's Centre in Wairoa (1975-1981) (Dann 1985:17-18). They obtained a rent-free house from a men's group called Greater Wairoa. The Centre was described as a place for women to meet, have a cup of tea, and wait for the buses in comfort (Piaggi 1975:40).

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[58] By late 1976, the Refuge Centre had been re-established elsewhere, and a Women's House Collective had been formed by members from the Radical Feminists, University Feminists, SHE, Women Artists and NOW (Anonymous 1976c:38).

[59] Jumble sales involve the selling of mostly second hand goods at public events, usually for a specific charity.

[60] Community Volunteers was a national grassroots organisation focused on community development. They provided training, worked to obtain funding and developed networks between community groups. The Department of Social Welfare funded the organisation to employ co-ordinators from the early 1970s to the mid-1980s (Rankine 1986:9).

This Centre appeared to be more focused on social support for women than political activism for women's liberation.

Women's Health Groups – self-help action

During this period, the first of the women's self-help health groups were formed. Lorraine Rothman, a well-known US feminist health activist toured Aotearoa/New Zealand in 1974. This tour had been organised by the Auckland based group called Organisation for Women's Health (Burns 1977:72). Rothman encouraged women to get to know their own bodies and to treat themselves for minor health problems. Sandra Coney (1993: 249) suggests that the early groups tended to focus on addressing the ill-effects of the pill and experimenting with yoghurt and other homemade remedies to heal thrush.[61] Within the pages of various women's liberation movement newsletters there are scattered references to the development of largely informal women's self-help groups following Rothman's tour in Dunedin, Palmerston North and Wellington. A self-help health group attempted to set up the first women's health centre in Wellington.[62]

After attending one of Rothman's workshops, Maureen Marshall, a registered nurse, midwife, and member of Wellington Women's Workshop, went on to visit the US Women's Health Centres in early 1974. Lorraine Rothman, with Carol Downer, had developed women's health centres based on self-help principles in Los Angeles (Burns 1977:71). On her return, Marshall met with a small group of women regularly during 1974. "This group [called Organisation for Women's Health][63] was largely a consciousness-raising, planning and educative one, as well as being involved in their own self-help and self-health" (Burns 1977:75). Early in 1975, the group decided to set up a Health Centre in Wellington. This development was also supported by NOW

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61 Also influential during this time was *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, first published by the Boston Women's Health Book Collective in 1971. This was a key source of information about women's health for women's groups (Coney 1993:249). They emphasised information, self-help, women's autonomy over their own bodies and a focus on regaining control from patriarchal institutions (Coney 1993: 249).

62 A Well-Woman clinic was also set up in this year in Dunedin by the Otago Branch of the New Zealand Nurses Association. The aim of this centre was to "achieve a high standard of medical care in the community, to encourage women to attend a doctor, and to encourage better relationships between doctors and patients" (Norris, Maskill et al. 1989:21). The development of community health centres was part of a move towards establishing primary health care centres in the community that was occurring in Aotearoa/New Zealand at the time (New Zealand Centre Advisory Committee Report 1976).

63 This is a different group from the Auckland group identified earlier in the section.

Wellington, who organised a Women's Health Seminar attended by 40-50 people (Anonymous 1975d:39).

The Wellington Organisation for Women's Health acquired a room at the Aro Street Community Centre, which was owned by the Wellington City Council. The group was to provide limited medical services, such as cervical smear tests, information and referral on health problems, doctors at the Centre to provide family planning sessions, as well as pregnancy testing, abortion referral and supportive counselling. The group had "commanded a wide spectrum of skills in the health area, and had secured the support, in consultancy capacity, of a female doctor". The group stressed that they were not "health 'experts'" and that the focus was on women sharing and developing new skills. The emphasis of the centre was described as "education by women for women on their own common health problems, stressing the preventative side of medicine and the self-help principle; that is, every woman's responsibility for her own body" (Burns 1977:75-76). The Centre opened in March 1975, but within two days "received notice from the City Council to vacate the premises" (Burns 1977:77). Thus, the Wellington Women's Health Centre was closed within three days. Burns (1977:77-79) suggests that the council was responding to pressures from medical bodies such as the Medical Association, the Cancer Society of Aotearoa/New Zealand and the School of Advanced Nursing. These groups were expressing concerns about the lack of medical training and lack of adequate medical supervision for centre volunteers, and the possible duplication of services. Centre organisers maintained that the Council withdrew its support because it was afraid the group would perform abortions. For a short period the group continued to meet in private homes and tried to set up a Centre at another location. This failed because the new location was difficult for women to access and did not have facilities, such as a phone, critical in the operation of a health centre (Burns 1977:80-81).

Refuges and Rape Crisis Groups - addressing violence against women

Initially, violence against women was not a central focus of the women's movement groups. The focus on violence emerged as women became aware of overseas refuges[64] and rape crisis groups, the development of radical feminist theorising of violence

[64] The term Refuge is used in New Zealand, rather than the term Battered Women's Shelters which is commonly used in the US.

against women as a means of social control and the recognition of rape and domestic violence as common experiences raised in CR groups. In 1974, two 'speak-outs' were organised by Auckland Women's Liberation and were attended by many women who shared their experiences of health, sexuality and violence (Dann 1985:136-7).

The 1974 August *Broadsheet* focused on the issue of violence for women. Sandi Hall (1974:15) critiqued the view that domestic violence was predominantly a working-class issue, and emphasised inequality in marriage as contributing to domestic violence. She described the inadequate responses of charity agencies, church groups and police in failing to protect women and for encouraging women to remain in violent situations. She also criticised women's liberation groups for "not [being] terribly helpful in these situations, urging as we do that women learn to defend themselves, and offering succour to the wounded, but as yet unable to do more than point out the need for social change to eradicate the problem" (Hall 1974:15-16). In the same issue, a number of articles examined the issue of rape. In one of these articles, Sandra Coney (1974:21-22) challenged many of the common rape myths and reiterated the way in which all women were vulnerable to being raped. She concluded that this:

> aspect of discrimination against women [was] hardly touched on yet by New Zealand feminist groups. … Maybe it's time we started working towards changing the law here for the sake of our sisters who will be raped in the future (Coney 1974:22).

Broadsheet published articles that described some of the overseas groups, such as Elsie Women's Refuge in Sydney (Anonymous 1974e:34-5) and an American Women Against Rape group (Skinner 1975:3). In 1975, a *Broadsheet* article stated that some groups were considering setting up rape crisis centres in "answer to the growing incidence of this ultimate violation of a woman's body" (Skinner 1975:3).

Feminist groups providing support for women who had experienced domestic violence were emerging alongside the increased attention to issues of violence in the women's movement. Penny Fenwick and Margaret McKenzie described how, in the early 1970s in Christchurch, "many feminists were feeling that endless discussion and theory meetings were not enough; there was a feeling of frustration at the state of women's position in society and the need to take action against this" (Fenwick and McKenzie 1979b:22). First to be set up in Aotearoa/New Zealand was the Christchurch Women's Centre and Refuge in 1974. It was initially set up for homeless single women, but increasingly supported women and their children fleeing violence in the home (Dann

1985:129). In 1975, Auckland Women's Liberation members were involved in setting up Halfway House, after one of their members visited the Melbourne Refuge (Thompson 1976b:19). Halfway House was a 'Women's Liberation Project', started by a "small group of women who had been interested in women's liberation in the past, but had found that endless discussions and theory meetings did not satisfy their need to further expand their feminist awareness" (Thompson 1976b:19). Financial support came from the Auckland City Council, which purchased a house for Halfway House to use for women needing shelter and safety from domestic violence (Banks, Florence et al. 1979:29), and from the International Women's Year Committee on Women (COW), which granted Halfway House $4,000 for operating costs (Anonymous 1975j:21). The same year, members of the Dunedin Collective for Woman began planning a women's refuge after one member had read Erin Pizzey's *Scream Quietly or the Neighbours Will Hear You* (Pizzey 1974).[65] In March 1975, the Collective held a "seminar where it was suggested a women's shelter be established for women facing extreme situations at home and in need of a haven for themselves and their children" (Cammock 1994:9). The Refuge was set up by a group of women with members from the Dunedin Collective for Woman and a Working Women's Alliance group (Cammock 1994:9-10).[66] Other Refuges were also established in this period, but not on the basis of the women's liberation principles of setting up women-only services run by women for women (Hancock 1979).[67] For example, Strawberry Villa, which was run by Takapuna NOW, provided refuge for women but was also "open to everyone" as it provided emergency housing for families (Hamer 1974:9).

The first attempts to set up Rape Crisis Centres also occurred in 1974 and 1975, but were largely unsuccessful. The Wellington Women's Workshop tried setting up a rape crisis phone line in 1974. After one of their group members had been raped, they initially engaged in direct protest by going to the workplace of the male involved and publicly accusing him of rape, and then went on to develop a rape crisis-line service for women (Anonymous 1974g:24-25). However, this closed within a year (Dann 1985: 132). The only other reported attempt was a Rape Crisis group based at the Auckland

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[65] Erin Pizzey is noted as one of the founders of the British Women's Refuge movement. Pizzey is the founder of the first British feminist refuge, Chiswick Women's Aid (Jackson 1978b). It was founded on self-help principles.

[66] The Working Women's Alliance group formed in 1974 to oppose exploitation of working people, especially women (Holmes 1998:40).

[67] Personal communication, Brenda Campbell, 1/5/2003

Women's Centre (Anonymous 1975g:39). The *Auckland Women's Centre Newsletter* reported that the Rape Crisis group was developing a phone crisis line, putting together information pamphlets for women who had been raped, undertaking a survey to identify the prevalence of unreported sexual violence, as well as going on the popular Brian Edwards television show to make the public aware that rape was a serious crime (Anonymous 1975l; Barry, Casswell et al. 1975; Casswell 1975b; Casswell, Chapman et al. 1975; Casswell, Coates et al. 1975). However, there were no further written reports about the Auckland Rape Crisis group until 1978.

Prior to the development of the feminist women's refuges described above, there had mostly been church and other charity groups involved in providing emergency accommodation. Church and charity groups usually identified women as the problem and would urge women to return home to keep the family together (Dann 1985:129). Women's Refuges set up by Women's Liberation group members challenged these practices. The Christchurch Refuge aimed to empower women through providing a safe space "where women can make a decision about the best way to live their future life" and offering the information needed to make that decision (Anonymous 1975i:26). The feminist refuges also challenged "traditional attitudes toward women as victims, or as helpless, dependent, passive and submissive people" (Cammock 1994:19) by operating as self-help groups. This involved: "providing an informal atmosphere where people felt at home. No-one was 'in-charge' or authorised to instruct women what to do because members were convinced that this was the best situation in which women could make choices about their futures" (Cammock 1994:30).

The service groups were also promoted as a way of mobilising and recruiting women into the women's movement. Diana Skinner (1975:3), a member of a US Women Against Rape group, published an article in *Broadsheet* which argued that organising around "specific issues which touch individual women personally" would encourage more women to become involved and join the women's movement. In the *Auckland Women's Centre Newsletter*, Halfway House was said to be "vitally important for the movement" (Casswell, Coates et al. 1975:3) as a way of both mobilising women to join the movement and to enact women's liberation principles – the woman-only non-hierarchical form of organising. Sally Casswell (1975:3) argued that Halfway House politicised different groups of women, including the "[r]esidents – women who need to stay", but who might also join the movement, when they heard about women's

liberation from the feminists who worked at the Refuge. She also highlighted the ways in which Halfway House involved feminists in action, as the "Roster women – that's us (the women's movement)" and "[f]eminists – to work in self-management groups in the House" (Casswell, Coates et al. 1975:3). She went on to argue that it would "only be successful if every feminist in Auckland sees the House as her responsibility" and supported the project (Casswell, Coates et al. 1975:3). Activist service groups emerged from the desire to do something practical, the increasing recognition of the need for a service 'by women for women' that challenged patriarchal understandings and from responses to the issues of sexual and domestic violence against women and children.

The decentralised loosely networked organisations were characteristic of the early 1970s women's movement. The women's liberation and women's rights sectors formed the major division in terms of ideology and ways of organising. The women's liberation sector of the movement established most of the first activist service groups. At the same time, groups and individuals were networked through overlapping organisation membership, local and national networks, and meetings, as well as through movement publications and events as part of a wider second wave women's movement. The informal networks amongst these women's liberation groups, plus the input from overseas visitors and overseas service group developments, were influential in the establishment of activist service groups.

Few of the early 1970s activist service groups survived and those that did battled to remain in existence. It was difficult to obtain resources to maintain the services and there was no institutional support. Dann (1985: 132) suggests the Wellington Rape Crisis line "ran into the usual shortages of money and personnel", while the Wellington Women's Health Centre was evicted from its premises by the City Council. The Auckland Women's Centre, along with Auckland Rape Crisis, seemed to disappear from public view. Most of the activist service groups were wholly reliant on volunteers to run the organisations and community fund-raising to support the development of services. By 1975, the groups started to obtain grants and housing assistance from local

councils and agencies such as the Committee on Women,[68] but the groups still struggled to recruit volunteers and/or obtain sufficient funds.

The next chapter outlines the emergence of activist service groups over the latter half of the 1970s and the debates that took place regarding whether or not the service groups counted as political action or revolutionary feminist activism.

[68] Some groups obtained grants from the International Women's Year Committee on Women, a government committee which, in 1975, had $45,000 for IWY projects. Funding was for projects that advanced women, but the grants were not recurring (Anonymous 1975k:10; Anonymous 1975m).

CHAPTER FIVE

THE SECOND WAVE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND, 1976-1980

This chapter provides an overview of the development of activist service organisations from 1976 to 1980. During the second half of the 1970s, second wave women's movement politics became increasingly visible with a proliferation of new groups. The segmentation of the movement evident in the earlier period was even more pronounced, with multiple groups organising around different ideologies, identities, issues and occupations. However, the distinction between women's liberation and women's rights became less useful for describing the development of activist service organisations. Groups associated with both movement sectors adopted the women-only collective model and became involved in the development of services for women. In this period, movement participants debated whether or not the activist service groups were simply liberal reformist activity or contributed to the goals of radical feminist revolution.

This chapter first examines the setting up of new service groups by both women's liberation and women's rights groups. Next, the rapid development of activist service groups and the factors influencing their development are discussed, with a particular focus on the influence of local women's movement organisation networks. Finally, I analyse the debates about the role of the activist service groups in furthering the goals of radical feminist revolutionary change. There was considerable ambivalence about the revolutionary potential of the feminist activist service groups.

There was a phenomenal increase in women's movement organisations during the second half of the 1970s. Many more multi-issue broadbased women's groups were set

up alongside a range of single-issue groups, such as groups focused on abortion reform,[69] those organised around specific ideologies and/or ethnic and sexuality identities,[70] and those representing specific occupational or professional groups.[71] However, this thesis does not address the proliferation of these groups except where they influenced the establishment of activist service groups.

[69] In 1975, the government of the day established a Royal Commission to examine abortion laws and, as a consequence, abortion increasingly dominated feminist protest activities. By the end of the 1970s, Women's National Abortion Action Campaign (WONAAC) and Abortion Law Reform Association, New Zealand (ALRANZ) groups had been set up in most cities and towns in Aotearoa/New Zealand. ALRANZ was set up in 1971 and very much focused on legislative change. A 1977 Grapevine report described how "[t]hey work to reform the abortion law in NZ so that, subject to safeguards, women can choose whether or not to terminate an unwanted pregnancy" (Ranstead 1977d:48). ALRANZ was perceived to be less radical than WONAAC with its focus predominantly on lobbying members of parliament (Dann 1978b:7). WONAAC and ALRANZ differed in politics and organisational styles. An April 1978 *Broadsheet* editorial described WONAAC groups in the main cities as being largely influenced by members of the Socialist Action League and action focused predominantly on marches and rallies (Dann 1978b:7-8). Hughes describes how many of the early WONAAC members were initially drawn from university students and left-wing groups, especially from the Socialist Action League (Hughes 1993:276). Men were also active in WONAAC, but women retained control of the organisation and decision-making (Hughes 1993:276-277). Many local WONAAC groups were reported to be active in 1976, such as in Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin, Greymouth, Hamilton, Hastings, Nelson, New Plymouth, Palmerston North, Tokoroa, Greymouth and Wellington (Anonymous 1976d; Anonymous 1976e; Anonymous 1976f; Anonymous 1976g; Ranstead 1977d:48). By 1977, there were WONAAC groups in Auckland, Dunedin, Gisborne, Whakatane and Wanganui (Ranstead 1977d:48). By 1978, groups were reported to be operating in Christchurch, Blenheim, Napier, Nelson, and New Plymouth (Anonymous 1978f; Anonymous 1978g; Anonymous 1978h). A few towns had both WONAAC and ALRANZ groups. Only some of these groups persisted into the 1980s. Ten WONAAC groups were listed in the Women's Information Network of New Zealand newsletter (Anonymous 1980c:19-23).

[70] For example, lesbian feminist, socialist feminist and black women's feminist groups. Socialist feminist study groups were listed in *Broadsheet* for Napier and Wellington between 1976 and 1977, a Wages for Housework group in Auckland was listed between 1977 and 1978. Reports in *Broadsheet* suggest that there were a number of lesbian feminist groups established, for example a Dunedin Lesbian group was listed in *Broadsheet* (1976-1980), a Gay Women's group in Palmerston North (1976-1978), a Gay Women's Collective in Whangerei (1977-82) and a Lesbian Women's group in Gisborne (1978-82). In the late 1970s, several Māori women's groups also emerged out of the 1970s Māori protest/sovereignty movement. Donna Awatere highlighted the development of "The Auckland Black Women's group, the Otara Black Women's Group, the Black feminist Collective, Nga Tuahine from Wellington which includes the Women in Prison Collective, all began as true consciousness-raising groups and now take an active feminist stance. An anti-racist, marxist analysis is an integral part of their politics" (Awatere 1980:10).

[71] For example, Feminist Lawyers, Feminist Teachers and Feminist Journalists were all set up in 1979.

Women's Movement Organisations, 1976 to 1980

Most of the new groups took the label feminist rather than using women's liberation.[72] For example, in 1976 Christchurch Feminists, Gisborne Feminists, Hutt Valley Feminists, Palmerston North Feminists, Te Awamutu Feminists, and Hamilton Feminists were established. Between 1977 and 1979, more feminist groups were set up, many in small rural towns around Aotearoa/New Zealand, including Upper Hutt, Whakatane, Cambridge, Huntly, Onekaka and Motueka.(Anonymous 1977a:40; Anonymous 1977b:40; Anonymous 1978h:41; Anonymous 1979c:41; Harris 1979:8). These feminist groups were not affiliated to any national organisation.

Most of the above groups were women-only open collectives and most operated CR groups. The following description of one of these groups shows the continuity of organisational style and broadbased goals with earlier women's liberation groups:

> There was a small group of women involved in the collective ... [I]t became an empowering organisation for other women. It was really political. ... We always advertised ourselves as a support and action group. ... We took it in turns to be responsible for things. We had a regular night when we always met. Something would crop up that we would decide that we wanted to do something about and some people, depending on where they were at in terms of other commitments and some people would get involved in that, while others took a back seat. When it came to the next issue, maybe it would be the other way. ... It was very much who wanted to do it (Anne 22/4/97).

The collective was both a political action group and a CR group. It was open to any woman who wanted to join.

As well as operating as political action and CR groups, these groups were also involved in establishing Women's Refuges, Women's Centres and Women's Health Centres. Hamilton Feminists described themselves as "a small group who at present sustain two C.R. groups; a theory group, a health group (self-help and the starting of a health

[72] It seemed that the term 'women's liberation' had gone out of favour during this period. It is suggested that the increasing conservatism of feminist politics over this period was symbolised by the shift away from use of the term 'Women's Liberation' to 'Feminism' and the replacement of the identity 'women's liberationist' by 'radical feminist' (Dann 1977; Dann 1978e; Poulter 1978). Poulter argues that the term feminism was much broader in scope and less radical. However, those "women who wanted to maintain some radical stance could no longer call themselves women's liberationists, but they didn't want to be just feminists either, so they called themselves 'radical feminists'" (Poulter 1978:5). She went on to argue that "[r]adical women are fighting a losing battle with conservative women because the reformists are prepared to work the system for compromises" (Poulter 1978:7). The debates over inclusion and exclusion describe the shifts in naming different groups of feminists i.e. the shifts from women identifying as women's liberationists to radical feminists, and the increasing use of the 'women's movement' and 'feminist' in contrast to the 'women's liberation movement'.

centre), as well as monthly socials, poetry evenings, and ordinary business meetings" (Sarah 1976:39). They also reported providing "shelter and legal advice for women in domestic problems and disputes. … a health and contraceptive advice service, and a lesbian women's group" (Ranstead 1977c:40). Christchurch Women's Liberation collective, established in 1978, held general meetings for political action, and established smaller project groups, such as lesbian feminist, feminist theory, health group, the set up of a mobile women's liberation display, and CR groups. Their goals included:

> sharing of information and experiences from small groups; the exchange of political ideas; a group where women new to WL ideas can meet and talk with other women, and form more CR or interest groups; a group where we can give/gain support for the ideas and actions of other women (Lawley 1978:20).

In the Nelson region, the feminist groups developed Self-help Health groups, a Mental Health Centre, a Day Care Centre and a Health Collective (Harris 1979:8).

Approximately eighteen WEL groups were established in rural towns between 1976 and 1979. WEL formed a national body complete with national secretary (Ranstead 1977d:47). A December 1976 *Broadsheet* list of NOW groups identifies nine around the country (Anonymous 1976a: 40). The division between women's liberation and women's rights became blurred as women's rights groups adopted many of the organising principles of women's liberation. WEL and NOW groups started to implement CR and develop non-hierarchical forms of organising (Gatward 1976:39). A WEL Rotorua report described how the group had set themselves up to avoid the development of hierarchy and encourage shared leadership; "the organisation was established without any executive positions except for coordinators. Each group elected its first convenor and the position rotates every six months" (East 1977:38).

Women's rights groups were also becoming involved in developing services 'by women for women'. For example, Marlborough NOW first established a temporary drop-in centre in early 1976 and by November 1977 had established a permanent Women's Centre. They set up a Sisters Overseas Service (SOS) group which supported women to obtain abortions in Australia, ran CR groups at the Women's Centre, and in November 1978 established a Women's Refuge (N.O.W 1979:5). Whangerei NOW provided a loan system, found accommodation for solo parents and ran a halfway house for women finding themselves homeless overnight (Ranstead 1977d:48). Blenheim NOW set up a

Women's Centre (Gatward 1976:39). The women's rights groups, like the women's liberation groups described earlier, were active in protesting multiple aspects of women's lives. The discontent they expressed with patriarchal services and organisations resulted in many more of these groups becoming involved in the development of services 'by women for women'.

Development of Activist Feminist Service Projects 1976 to 1980

Women's Centres

The Dunedin Women's Centre and the New Plymouth Women's Centre continued to operate during this period. The Christchurch Women's Centre separated from the Women's Refuge and moved into another house. The Auckland Women's Centre had closed during 1977, but was re-established again in 1978. Between 1978 and 1980, new Women's Centres were set up in Wellington, Hamilton, Palmerston North, Sumner, Tauranga, Tokoroa and Dunedin. A Dunedin Women's Resource Centre was opened in 1980 and was run by the Otago University Feminists. It was open to all women as a drop-in centre and meeting place (Anonymous 1980c:8). Some of the Women's Centres had their genesis as part of local feminist activism generated by attendance at the national meetings and UWCs. The re-establishment of the Auckland Women's Centre was proposed at the 1978 Piha Women's Convention (Fill and Hill 1996:19). In Tauranga, two CR groups were established after the 1979 UWC in Hamilton, and participants decided to set up a Women's Centre (Kent 1981:28-29). The Tauranga Women's Centre evolved from women's desire to do something practical, and the need for a local focus for feminist activity (Kent 1981:28-29).

The Women's Centres established during this period focused on providing information, referrals and support to women in their local communities. For example, Palmerston North Women's Centre aims were: a) to provide a drop-in centre for women, b) to provide information and a resource centre, c) to provide a support centre for women in crisis, d) to initiate discussion groups, craft groups, self-help groups, support with childcare (Anonymous 1979e:9-10). A 1980 *Broadsheet* article described the Wellington Women's Resource Centre (WWRC) in the following way:

> The WWRC acts as a drop-in centre for women and children in Wellington where women can meet informally in a comfortable environment and find out current information on workshops, events, groups and meetings from notice boards and the women at the centre. It also offers a referral centre; putting women in touch with sources of information or help either from individual women or organisations (Harrod and Quade 1980:18-19).

Often a number of local activist service groups operated from the Women's Centres. For example, when the Auckland Women's Centre was re-established in 1978, the Auckland Women's Health Collective, Womanline, the Council for the Single Mother and her Child, Rape Crisis, and a Māori and Pacific Women's Health Collective all shared the centre (Fill and Hill 1996:19). The Hecate Women's Health Collective and the Wellington Lesbian Centre operated from the Wellington Women's Resource Centre (Anonymous 1980b:2). Women's centres were important in developing information services for women by women and networking among feminists. In addition, the centres often provided a physical base from which other activist service groups could operate.

Women's Health Centres and Self-Help Health Groups

Health initiatives were a major focus of feminist activism during this period (Anonymous 1978e:20). A 1978 *Broadsheet* suggested that there were approximately 30-40 women's health groups active in Aotearoa/New Zealand at that time (Anonymous 1978e:20).[73] At times it was difficult to separate out the development of women's health groups from women's centres. For example, the Auckland Women's Centre was re-established principally by the Auckland Women's Health Collective. The histories of these groups were often entwined and many of their members and goals overlapped. A number of factors influenced the development of these women's health groups, such as prominent activists and/or events. Sarah Calvert, a leading Aotearoa/New Zealand women's health activist, was particularly influential in promoting the development of many women's self-help health groups. She, with others, established the Hamilton Health Collective during 1976.[74] During 1979, Calvert travelled around Aotearoa/New Zealand speaking to many women's groups promoting the development of self-help

[73] This figure would include a mix of SOS groups, health groups linked with some of the women's centres, and independent self-help health groups. Many appear to have operated informally and left few, if any, public records of their existence.

health collectives (Anonymous 1979e:6; Anonymous 1979f:23; O'Brien 1980:19). For example, Whakatane Women's Collective held a workshop on women's health attended by 40 to 50 women at which Calvert spoke of the need for women to take responsibility for their own health. Later in the year some of the participants went on to organise a women's self-help health group in Whakatane (Anonymous 1979e:6; Anonymous 1979f:23). A Women's Health Collective was set up in Nelson following Calvert's workshop at a feminist week-end workshop there (Anonymous 1979e:8; Harris 1979:8; Maclean 1979:9). The group met fortnightly during 1979 (Davis 1979:4), and held monthly learning exchanges focused on different health topics during 1980 (Anonymous 1980g:13), although this did not develop into a fully fledged women's health centre.

Reproductive issues have been a significant focus of feminist activism, particularly access to contraceptive advice and abortion. With the passing of the restrictive Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion Act in December 1977, which made it more difficult to obtain an abortion, Sister Overseas Service (SOS) groups were established throughout Aotearoa/New Zealand in order to support women to go to Sydney, Australia, to obtain abortions. The Auckland SOS group was established just 24 hours after the Act was passed (Bunkle 1988:26). The group was started by women working for the Council for the Single Mother and her Child. The SOS group saw about 60 women a week (Coney 1978a:10). At the end of 1978, it was reported that the SOS groups had assisted 3,500 women to go to Australia in the previous 12 months (Bunkle 1988:26). SOS groups were operating in Auckland, Blenheim Christchurch, Dunedin, Gisborne, Hamilton, Hastings , Napier, Nelson, New Plymouth, Palmerston North, Rotorua, Tauranga, Wanganui, Wellington and Whakatane (Anonymous 1978a; Anonymous 1978f; Anonymous 1978g; Anonymous 1978h; Anonymous 1978k). By 1980, eighteen SOS groups were listed in the *Women's Information Network of New Zealand* newsletter (Anonymous 1980c:19-23).

Women's health centres were established in a number of cities and towns from 1977. A Women's Self-help Health Centre was established in 1977 in Christchurch as a result of a foundation grant of $5,000 by the 1977 UWC committee (Flaws 1977:14). The Women's Self-help Health Centre was primarily focused on counselling and therapy

[74] In 1977, she also established the National Women's Health Network and its associated newsletter of the same name.

based on a radical feminist model of peer relations (Flaws 1977:14-15). In Wellington, Hecate Women's Health Centre was established by a group who had been involved in alternative health-care in one form or another for several years. Some of the members of the Hecate group had also been part of the earlier 1975 Wellington Women's Health Centre (Anonymous 1979f:15). Hecate began operating in January 1979 with a 'closed' collective of seven women in rooms at the Wellington Women's Resource Centre.

SOS groups were influential in establishing some of the Women's Health Centres during 1979 and 1980. Auckland SOS started the Auckland Women's Health Centre in 1979, when SOS members "started putting files together on women's health issues which later formed the basis for the Health Centre's resource file" (Anonymous 1979b:13). The collective met weekly and was open to all women (Anonymous 1979b:13). Christchurch SOS started The Health Alternatives for Women Collective (THAW) in 1980, after the group had decided to gather more general resources relating to women's health. THAW focused on the promotion of self-help and preventative healthcare (Bird, Cumming et al. 1983:28).

The Women's Health Centres provided information, developed a range of self-help groups, and challenged medical professionals. These groups argued that they engaged in feminist protest by empowering women. Quite a number of the groups developed 'hot and cold' doctors files which provided women with information from other women about their experiences of the service quality of local doctors. For example, Wellington Hecate Women's Health Collective described their focus as "primarily preventative medicine in a radical feminist context. … We place a lot of emphasis on the value of Self-Help and have connected up several dozen women on self-chosen specific themes" (Anonymous 1979d:14). The Wellington Hecate Women's Health Collective had nearly a dozen self-help groups running. They described them as follows: "[T]hese groups, all consciousness-raising in intent, have a specific focus such as 'Women working in the system', 'Maori Women' … 'Massage and Body Image' 'Fat is a Feminist Issue Groups' and general 'Support Groups' and consciousness-raising groups" (Anonymous 1979e:13). They also reported holding individual counselling and therapy groups (Anonymous 1979e:13). In contrast, the Auckland Women's Health Centre emphasised the provision of both conventional and alternative health services for women. At the Auckland Centre "consultations with conventionally trained doctors were offered as well as access to alternative therapies" (Norris, Maskill et al. 1989:21). The group had

"the help of an iridologist, masseuses, doctors, and naturopaths" who believed in alternative health care, which involved "the sharing of knowledge, and exploring natural remedies" (Anonymous 1980f:18). Women's health groups and centres were a continuation of the focus on women's health issues that had been a part of the early second wave women's movement.

Women's Refuges

By the mid-1970s, there was a major focus on violence against women and children by men as part of the second wave women's movement. Groups and individuals engaged in research and in public discussions about domestic violence in Aotearoa/New Zealand. In 1978, 200 women responded to Miriam Jackson's[75] self-report survey of domestic violence printed in the *New Zealand Women's Weekly* (Jackson 1978a:26-27). In the same year, the Mental Health Foundation sponsored Erin Pizzey's tour of the country. Mary Hancock (1979), researched and published a report about the development of refuges both here and overseas.[76] At this time, *Broadsheet* was publishing articles about the setting up of Refuges in Christchurch, Auckland and Dunedin (Anonymous 1978d; Diane 1975a; Diane 1975b; Ranstead 1977a; Ranstead 1977b; Thompson 1976b). Together these events and publications were influential in highlighting the need for women's refuges and contributed to their establishment around Aotearoa/New Zealand.

More Women's Refuges for battered women and their children were established in Aotearoa/New Zealand during the second half of the 1970s. Groups previously described, such as the Christchurch Refuge and Halfway House in Auckland, continued to provide shelter and assistance to women and children leaving violent relationships. In 1976, Dunedin Refuge and Nelson Women's Emergency Centre were established (Hancock 1979:22). Between 1977 and 1979, more Refuges opened in Blenheim, Lower Hutt, Palmerston North, Rotorua, Tauranga, Wanganui and Wellington, Upper Hutt, and a second Refuge in Christchurch (Hancock 1979:32; McCallum 1993:144).

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[75] Later work by this author was published under the name of Miriam Saphira.

[76] Other examples include the 1977 Women and Health Conference, which addressed the issue of domestic violence with a paper on 'Wife Assaulting' (Inglis 1977). It tended to identify women as the problem. Men who had wives with dominant controlling personalities, or negative relationships with their dominant aggressive mothers, were seen as more likely to be violent to their wives (Inglis 1977:3-4).

A range of factors led to the development of these Women's Refuges. The Nelson and Napier groups emerged out of the International Women's Year projects (Hancock 1979:22). In Christchurch, a group of women who had experienced domestic violence set up the Christchurch Battered Women's Support Group and spoke to the media about their stories. After Pizzey had given a lecture at the local Palmerston North hospital, "[s]everal women's groups who were concerned about the plight of battered women called a public meeting in January 1979" with the aim of establishing a Refuge (Hann 2001:57).[77] The second half of the decade was dominated by the growth of Women's Refuges.[78] At the same time, activist feminist services focussed specifically on addressing sexual violence against women were also being established in Aotearoa.

Rape Crisis Centres

From the mid to late 1970s the issue of sexual violence was receiving increasing attention within the women's movement. Auckland NOW ran a rape seminar in 1976 (Simmons 1976). Wellington Women's Resource Centre, in conjunction with the Wellington Rape Crisis Centre, organised Aotearoa/New Zealand's first 'Take Back the Night' march in 1979. Women marched "through city streets proclaiming [their] right to be anywhere, any time, with or without whoever we choose" (Anonymous 1979f:15; Davidson, Ingram et al. 1979:7). Research on women's experiences of sexual violence was being published in various magazines. In 1976 NOW undertook a rape research project, by printing a questionnaire in the *New Zealand Women's Weekly*, which received 96 responses. The results were used to challenge many of the myths about rape (Anonymous 1977c). Miriam Jackson published research about the experiences of incest victims in *Broadsheet* (Jackson 1979; Jackson 1980). Lee, who drew on the work of United States feminists, Sue Griffin (1971) *Rape the All-American Crime* and Susan Brownmiller's (1975) *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape*, published an article about rape in *Broadsheet* (Lee 1977:14-17). She argued that rape was "the ultimate violation of the self, short of homicide, with invasion of one's inner and more private

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[77] The Community Volunteers (Palmerston North) organisation took on the lead role of setting up the Palmerston North Women's Refuge and acquiring funds (Hann 2001:57). "Community Volunteers (Palmerston North) was part of a national organisation that grew out of the pacifist and human rights movements and was established to encourage people to be involved in community work and public education in their own local areas" (Hann 2001:57-58).

[78] Moves towards establishing a national coalition of refuges that occurred during 1979 and 1980 will be described in the following chapter.

space as well as the loss of autonomy and control" (1977:15). In the article, rape was reinterpreted as an act of violence rather than of sexual lust. "Rape is a constant threat and reminder of the power of men over women. … all rape is an exercise in power". Lee went on to criticise patriarchal institutions for failing to protect women (Lee 1977:15-17). This analysis of rape was an increasingly common theme among the activist service organisations and was the basis for developing rape crisis services 'by women for women'.

It was in this context of increasing publication about issues of sexual violence and radical feminist reinterpretation of sexual violence that the first permanent Rape Crisis services were developed in Auckland and Wellington in the late 1970s (Dann 1985:133). Auckland Rape Crisis was once again reported to be operating from the new Auckland Women's Centre in 1979 (Anonymous 1980c:21; Fill and Hill 1996:19). Wellington Rape Crisis was "established by a group of former rape victims" in May 1977 because they had "found little direct support in dealing with their crisis and felt there was strong need within the community for a specific counselling/helping agency" (Black 1982:163). Late in 1979 another Rape Crisis group was set up in Christchurch and in 1980 another was set up in Hamilton (Anonymous 1980c:19-23). These Rape Crisis groups offered crisis support lines for women who had been raped. They also actively worked to raise public awareness about the issue of rape (Mowbray 1980:4).

Funding the activist service organisations

The development and running of the Women's Centres, Health Collectives, Refuge and Rape Crisis groups were mostly undertaken by volunteers and operating costs were supported by community fundraising activities. By the close of the decade, groups were obtaining some support from a variety of organisations and institutions such as the Committee on Women (initially established by the government to distribute International Women's Year funds), the Mental Health Foundation, the Department of Labour, the Housing Corporation and local City Councils.

However, the groups were reliant on volunteers for delivering most of the services. The New Plymouth Women's Centre reported that they had 20 volunteers to keep the centre open each week (O'Brien 1980:19). During 1980, the Tauranga Women's Centre was run by a small core group, having 12 volunteers keeping the centre open three days a

week (Kent 1981:29). After nine months of operating Auckland Women's Health Centre reported that:

> About 12 women voluntarily take full or half day rosters to keep the Centre open during the week. An important role of these women is to answer the telephone ... and give information on health issues or social events, lend a sympathetic ear, and make appointments (Anonymous 1979b:13).

By the late 1970s, some groups were starting to use the Labour Department schemes to employ women in their organisations.[79] The Wellington Women's Resource Centre was run by a combination of Temporary Employment Programme (TEP) workers, volunteers and student workers paid under a Student Community Service programme (SCSP) directed by the Department of Labour (Carolyn 1979:1-2). Wellington Refuge obtained a three month TEP worker to act as house manager and co-ordinator, along with an assistant employed on the SCSP (Anonymous 1979g:2). In 1980, the New Plymouth Women's Centre was able to employ a full-time social worker under another Labour Department temporary work scheme (O'Brien 1980:19).

The groups rarely charged for services and, as a consequence, had to obtain funding from other sources. Women staying at the Refuges were often asked to contribute towards the day to day expenses of running the house, but the money requested did not cover the costs of running the refuge service (Hancock 1979:23). Auckland Halfway House asked women living at the house to provide their own food. In Napier, women using the refuge service were asked to pay $1.50 per night when they had money. Nelson Refuge asked women to pay $2.50 per night. In Dunedin Refuge, the women were asked to contribute towards the rent if they were receiving a social welfare benefit (Hancock 1979:23).

Some City Councils provided groups with free or cheap housing. For example, the New Plymouth Women's Centre was housed rent-free in the city's first community house from 1977 to 1986 (Cameron, Allison et al. 1993: 141). The Auckland City Council provided a house for the Auckland Women's Centre until the 1990s (Norris, Maskill et al. 1989:21).[80] Auckland Halfway House obtained a council house rent-free and the

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[79] The Labour Department Employment Schemes are described in detail in Chapter Seven.

[80] This came about because: "C.S.M.C. and S.O.S. became cramped for space after having to share a house following a fire at the S.O.S. office. The council was approached and came up with a larger house – 63 Ponsonby Road. The house seemed big enough to accommodate not only C.S.M.C. and S.O.S. but also the Health Centre and Rape Crisis. Several meetings were called of interested women, and work on the House began. Women offered their labour and skills free and painted and worked to make the house look attractive and welcoming" (Anonymous 1979b:13).

Christchurch Refuge rented a council house (Hancock 1979:23). In November 1979, the Wellington Refuge reported that the City Council had acquired a nine-bedroom house for their use (Anonymous 1979g:1).

Apart from housing, many of the early service groups were almost entirely dependent on pledges and donations for cash flow. Groups developed a range of strategies for raising funds. There were frequent requests in newsletters for pledges from individuals, goods for jumble sales or for donations. Dunedin Refuge's Collective "had a list of women and families who would be prepared to give money on a regular basis, and they would phone around as things became desperate. … Appeals for financial support were very personal and the money was needed for the day to day running of the Refuge" (Cammock 1994:16). In Tauranga, funding was obtained through "a continual flow of subscriptions and donations. We are selling badges and menstrual sponges, and each library book hired brings in 20 cents. Women pay 10 cents for a cup of tea or coffee. A garage sale has brought in $200, and another is planned" (Kent 1981:29).

Increasingly, groups began applying for and receiving grants.[81] Many groups obtained one-off grants from the Committee on Women (COW), a government funded committee that developed from International Women's Year Committee, to establish services for women or to develop specific projects. For example, Palmerston North Women's Drop-in Centre received $1,000 (Anonymous 1979a:3). Auckland Women's Centre received $1,000 contribution towards basic running expenses of communal premises (Anonymous 1980a:2). Hecate Women's Health Collective received $1,000 to develop a health, information and counselling centre for women (Anonymous 1979a:3). Wellington Women's Refuge received $1,000 from COW to furnish the Refuge (Anonymous 1980a:2). Halfway House also received $2,000 for the publication of a book on the Halfway House Refuge (Anonymous 1979a:2).

The groups also received grants from trusts and foundations. The Palmerston North Women's Centre received $1,000 from the Mental Health Foundation, $1,000 from Sport and Recreation and $500 from the Sutherland Self Help Trust in 1979 (Anonymous 1979f:25). Palmerston North Refuge received a $1,500 from the local hospital board (Hann 2001) and Auckland Halfway house received a grant from the Dental Health Foundation (Hancock 1979:23). These grants often required much work

[81] The increasing reliance on government grants-in-aid is described in Chapter Seven.

by way of applications and garnering community support. The grants were mostly ad hoc one-off contributions of small amounts that allowed for specific activities and did not cover the costs of employing people. The use of Department of Labour employment schemes enabled some groups to start paying women to provide services where they had previously relied on volunteers. These avenues of funding and resources did facilitate the growth of the services.

Constructing Activist Services as Political

Associated with the expansion of the activist service groups outlined above was a debate about what counted as feminist and political, and questions about whether the service groups contributed to social change for women both here and overseas.

Writers reflecting on the US women's liberation movement argued for and against the emergence of the service collective. Freeman argues that this shift was ineffective and short-lived, as the service groups had a tendency to transform their goals "in practice if not in theory, from radical social change to ameliorative service projects" (Freeman 1975:145). Ferree and Hess (1985), on the other hand, link the development of the service projects with the emergence of direct-action/self-help in the second wave women's movement. They suggest that the groups represented a way of women acting together to create immediate change in members and other women's lives. Self-help was a way for people who "defined themselves as powerless and oppressed to realise that they do have options and the ability to change things" (Ferree and Hess 1985:94).

Rupp and Taylor (1986:89), observed that although it was ironic that the women's liberation groups took on what were basically service activities which addressed individual problems rather than revolutionary social and political change, two convictions lay behind the development of the service projects. Firstly, "the provision of alternative structures for women [was conceived as a] means of transforming society", and secondly, "working within these structures result[ed] in and sustain[ed] fundamental changes in individual women's consciousness that, in turn, [was] another means of changing society" (Rupp and Taylor 1986:89).

The different viewpoints expressed above highlight the ambivalence about the growth of the activist service groups in the second wave women's movement. Activists in Aotearoa/New Zealand who were questioning the political potential of the service

organisations expressed this same ambivalence. The arguments made by movement participants questioned both the revolutionary potential of the services the groups were delivering and the internal organisation of the groups.

Some Aotearoa/New Zealand participants argued that the very existence of the women-only activist service organisations was political and provided a key strategy for radical feminist social change. Thompson argued strongly in *Broadsheet* that setting up alternative feminist organisations was a constructive move, a way of creating "long term structural changes, which will give power to women. … They will also pose a challenge which will weaken male power over our lives" (Thompson 1976a:4-5). A member of the Wellington Women's Resource Centre maintained that "the resources imply by their presence and availability that women are not alone, that women can have power collectively and individually" (Harrod and Quade 1980:19). The Wellington Women's Resource Centre was described as "an affirmation that women need places where they do not have to conform to rules set down by others; … that women can create an alternative" (Harrod and Quade 1980:19). A member of the Auckland Health Centre emphasised how, by being a feminist Health Centre, it had "a political role which is to alter the existing male-dominated monopoly … lead[ing] to a change in the … treatment of women by the existing health system" (Anonymous 1979b:14). Another writer described the very existence of the Wellington Women's Resource Centre (WWRC) as political because it changed women. She wrote, the Centre "leads to change in individual[s], … [We] can never know how visitors may carry on once they have been through our rooms. … The fact that the [WWRC] exists is a political act and is important to women" (Anonymous 1980e:6). Leah Poulter suggested that organisations like Halfway House provided "a breeding ground of feminism, the roster women would do cr [sic], and they would be doing something for women 'out there'" (Poulter 1978: 2). In this way, working in the women-only service collective was thought to be an important feminist activity by politicising the women who became involved in the service either as providers or users of the services.

Arguments for the activist service groups also emphasised how the groups contributed to challenging male control of female bodies. Much of the political activity in the Women's Health groups, the Refuges and Rape Crisis groups was about male control of female bodies. On this basis, it was argued that the services had relevance for all women. These arguments were underpinned by a radical feminist analysis of women's

oppression as primary and as the basis of commonality among women. This analysis privileged gender identity over all other identities, and was premised on a simple unitary opposition between men and women. In effect, all women were oppressed as women, all men were oppressors. For example, Calvert argued, "[i]t is our physical reality that joins us to all other women, that is our common ground, and in the acts of rape and violence remains the first battleground" (Calvert 1980:96).[82] Within this politics, women's bodies were given foundational status. They were the focus of women's oppression and the basis of their commonality (Weedon 1999:35). For many participants in the service groups, gender oppression was the primary oppression. Auckland Halfway House's definition of feminism, stated:

> FEMINISM: aims to destroy patriarchy. It is the only ideology that will bring about universal freedom because the oppression of women is the primary oppression on which all forms of oppression, e.g. racism and classism, are based (Banks, Florence et al. 1979:9).

The status and control of women's bodies under patriarchy became a unifying focus in radical feminist analysis (Weedon 1999:35). This strong tenet became the basis for oppositional notions of sisterhood through which women everywhere would unite in the struggle against patriarchy (Weedon 1999:35).[83]

However, others challenged the views that the services would radicalise women to challenge patriarchy and that the alternative feminist organisation would contribute to long term radical social change. There was some debate about whether the services developed by the groups were political. A member of the Christchurch Refuge wrote:

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[82] The quote starts: "our bodies represent the full spectrum of power and powerlessness; that our physical reality has a political significance which has to be attacked on personal, reformist and revolutionary levels (the within/without system of making a revolution referred to by Adrienne Rich)" (Calvert 1980:96).

[83] The initial emphasis on inclusion was based on assuming women's "similarities in oppression to be more significant than differences in ideology" (Dann 1978d:5). In this way, women's liberation groups stressed the principle of sisterhood, and the power of women united for the liberation of women. It was argued that "all women are oppressed and therefore a women's liberation movement [was] in the interests of all women" (Dann 1978d:5). This was perceived to allow for diversity in the movement and "fruitful examination of basic problems and strategies, without an effort being made to cram different opinions into one narrow ideological mould" (Dann 1977:15). Within much women's liberation work, the emphasis on women as a sex class tended to draw attention away from recognising women's different class positions and the impact that had on their experience of oppression and instead focused on women's commonality. For example, focusing on economic class was perceived to detract from unity among women (Cole 1976b), and was usually linked with debates, common at that time, about which oppression was primary – capitalism or patriarchy. In attempting to maintain a central focus on women's oppression, it was usually argued that patriarchy was the first oppression.

> We realise the Women's Centre is just treating the symptoms of male-dominated society by providing refuge to women. … I feel that it is good to include a refuge centre in the place, but that our main aim should be to change our society, not just to patch up its victims and send them back to the same old situations (Diane 1975a:20-21).

These themes, concerning the need to create wider social and political change, were reiterated by those promoting the 'by women for women' service collective (Anonymous 1975i:26; Thompson 1976b:21). A member of the Christchurch Refuge

wrote: "[w]e do not want to reinforce the role of women as the traditional female ... We do not want to 'help' women but rather want to provide the space for women to start helping themselves" (Anonymous 1975i:26). The same themes were also evident in the description of the role of Halfway House in creating social change for women. It was argued that Halfway House was "not an 'emergency shelter' where women can hide while their men calm down. ... [It] is a self-help refuge where women who have *decided* to leave a violent situation can ... shape new lives" (Thompson 1976b:21).[84] Early members of Halfway House emphasised the ways in which the services were political in empowering individual women through offering an alternative that challenged the patriarchal gender relations, such as dependence and passivity of women in the family. In this way, they constructed the services as part of the oppositional politics of the early women's liberation groups.

However, others were questioning the value of these alternatives in terms of furthering the goals of the women's movement and argued that being pro-woman was not political (Coney 1978b; Fenwick and McKenzie 1979a; Fenwick and McKenzie 1979b; Michalka 1976b). The Wellington Women's Resource Centre Collective were debating whether or not they could be a "service to all women ... [and a] hotbed of radicalism and political action" (Anonymous 1980e:7). They were asking: "Can both co-exist and survive? [Does] energy going into the first prevent the second [from] happening" (Anonymous 1980e:7). They identified three issues: the time it took to run a service; the shift to focusing on delivering a good service to individuals; and the possible negative effects that engaging in radical direct political protest would have on the service. Veronica Harrod and Victoria Quade (1980:19) suggest that running a service left women without energy to engage in political protest. The group also reported that "[d]irect political protest was reduced due to expressed fears that public funding would be cut off" (Anonymous 1980e:6). The reduction in direct political protest actions was also linked with a "fear of alienating those women who need the centre as a crisis shelter, or who are not yet involved actively in feminism" (Anonymous 1980e:6).

[84] Halfway House workers also reiterated the importance of collecting information about the issue. They wrote "[w]e also consider that as a social statement, Halfway House will achieve very little unless we [publish] ... information about the nature of the problems of 'homeless' and beaten wives to society at large" (Anonymous 1975i:26).

Pilar Michalka's (1976b:2) letter in the October 1976 *Broadsheet* asserted that the emphasis on establishing alternative services would simply dissipate the movement.

> [T]he centre of women's oppression is power – male class power. No feminist alternative will eliminate that. … Service organisations might be useful, but they are hardly what one would call political action. If we keep insisting on service organisation the movement will operate as a service providing a model rather than as a tool for achieving women's liberation. ... If we insist on putting our energy into alternatives and servicing, the movement will become a service agency and will lose all of its political impact (Michalka 1976b:2)

She goes on to argue that, in fact, "[m]en can destroy our feminist alternatives as soon as they feel they constitute a threat" (Michalka 1976b:2). Michalka believed that the development of the activist service groups failed to politicise women, reached only a limited group of already 'converted' women, and took energy away from the 'real' political battles. She pointed out that "the havens they provide can make us lose sight of reality. They can make us lose sight of the real fight. The fight out there" (Michalka 1976b:2). Jill, a worker at the Wellington Women's Resource Centre, suggested: "We do a lot of important and worthwhile social service work at the centre, ... Most women are content with the process of improving the personal conditions of their lives without making attempts towards major social change" (Jill 1980:4). Jill also argued that: "[w]hile the aims and objectives of the WWRC are clearly feminist and political, I often find the atmosphere at the centre apolitical, and while always pro-women, not particularly feminist" (Jill 1980:3-4).

Others argued that service organisations were vulnerable to losing the radical feminist agenda of social change and simply becoming part of the established social services that maintain the status quo. Harrod and Quade suggest that the Wellington Women's Centre "could easily be absorbed into the mainstream of society and become just another way to relieve some of the pressure so that women never get quite angry enough" (Harrod and Quade 1980:19). Penny Fenwick and Margaret McKenzie (1979b), in a study of Christchurch Women's Refuge wrote that : "[t]he Refuge's role, [had] become more of a social agency, providing services to an underprivileged group, rather than a catalyst for altering the position of women" (Fenwick and McKenzie 1979b:23). They concluded that, while the Refuges continued to force public discussion on the issue of domestic violence and make things a bit better for some individual women, they had "done little to destroy the patriarchal nuclear family which is seen as the arena for the battering" (Fenwick and McKenzie 1979b:29). Thus, a number of movement activists

were concluding that the groups were vulnerable to cooptation and deradicalisation by 'the system'. Fenwick and McKenzie linked deradicalisation of Refuge with the loss of radical feminist members and an influx of volunteers with no previous experience in radical feminist politics (Cammock 1994; Fenwick and McKenzie 1979b; Hancock 1979).

Fenwick and McKenzie argued that the loss of radical feminists from the groups, once they had been established, had a number of consequences: "the gap left by their departure was filled with women whose prime criterion for involvement was often time available" (Fenwick and McKenzie 1979b:23). This resulted in changes in the orientation of the centre. It remained a self-help centre, but:

> roster women were now no longer required to have feminist ideals or a feminist understanding of women's situation. Instead, women who were able to help were welcomed simply on the basis of time available. This meant a more traditional volunteer orientation arose. As the feminist perspective faded from the organisational structure, the Refuge has been incorporated into the spread of welfare service provision in Christchurch (Fenwick and McKenzie 1979b:23).

As a consequence what was "missing [was] the continued involvement of feminists, focusing on the manufacturers of women's oppression – male domination" (Fenwick and McKenzie 1979b:29). Fenwick and McKenzie also argued that the Refuges did not result in raised political consciousness or political action on the part of women using the services provided. Refuges were not:

> a recruiting ground for the feminist movement. Many of the women using them return to their former oppressive marital situation, or form a new equally oppressive relationship. Self-help has become a mechanism for adjustment, not change (Fenwick and McKenzie 1979b:23).

It was these processes of organisational change that led Fenwick to argue that "co-option [was] almost total" and that the services posed minimal threat to the Establishment (Fenwick and McKenzie 1979b:23). She concluded that:

> While it might be argued that pursuing the 'feminist alternatives' strategy is a necessary phase in the development of a feminist consciousness, it can also be a dead-end, functioning as a safety valve not just for the system but for feminist's own consciences (Fenwick and McKenzie 1979b:23).[85]

[85] She goes on to suggest that the greatest gains have been for the feminists establishing these alternatives by supporting them to sort out political strategy. She suggests that "several have since moved into lesbian separatism. Others have withdrawn from active feminism" (Fenwick and McKenzie 1979b:23).

Fenwick saw the Christchurch Refuge as an example of an alternative feminist organisation that was coopted by welfare services. The Refuge was only "providing sisterhood and support to women [which] more often enabled these women's lives to be just a little more bearable so that they could return to the system rather than make real changes" (Fenwick and McKenzie 1979b:23). These patterns of shifting away from the original radical feminist frameworks in the work of the Refuge were also reported to have occurred in Dunedin and Napier (Anonymous 1978d; Cammock 1994; Hancock 1979).[86]

In many ways, the above arguments draw on a narrow interpretation of political action as focused on direct political protest and action 'outside of the system'. It reflects the 'reform versus revolution' divide dominant in social movement politics of this time. Yet, there were others who focused on the ways in which the internal organisation of the groups as democratic collectives, and as women-only, was radical and political. Definitions of these strategies, however, "were not fixed"; they "formed a set of 'policies' on how to organise politically which were continually being [debated,] constructed and revised" within the service organisations (Holmes 1998:133). However, the writers were emphasising the radical potential of internal processes in the activist service groups and the ways in which internal organisation strategies were political.

Working in women-only groups was seen as empowering women and creating positive relationships between women.[87] Camille Guy suggested that working in groups like *Broadsheet,* Halfway House or the Rape Crisis group was the best personal and political

[86] In Napier, women left "as they felt the centre was being used as a 'dumping ground' for government departments, and that women were 'bandaged up' and encouraged to return to the oppressive situation" (Hancock 1979:23).

[87] Not all of the service groups excluded men during this time, and their exclusion was frequently a source of debate as new women came into the organisations. Within the broader context of the movement, the exclusion of men was also being debated. At the 1977 United Women's Convention, the inclusion of male media became a major focus of conflict (See Appendix IV for a discussion of this conflict). Nelson Women's Refuge had a heterosexual couple as live-in supervisors (Kolless 1981). A number of the Refuges included men in their management teams (for example, Palmerston North, Wanganui). As Sheryl Hann (2001:74) describes in a history of the Palmerston North Women's Centre, in the early days of the Refuge quite a few "of the women and men involved … believed that a women-centred approach still needed to involve 'good' non-abusive men". It was argued that "men could be positive role models for the children in the safehouse, showing the children that, for both men and women, there were alternatives to violence" (Hann 2001:74). Hann goes on to report that the "men would come around to the safehouse to do gardening and maintenance, and were also involved in the fundraising and publicity side of Palmerston North Women's Refuge. Furthermore, many of the women who spent long hours working for Refuge were supported financially, emotionally and practically by their male partners" (Hann 2001:74). This practice was also promoted by the Wellington Refuge (Anonymous 1980d:1-2). In their newsletter, they were requesting for

growth experience for a feminist. She stated: "Working with women only in a collective way makes you feel good about women, [it] develops new skills and increases confidence" (Guy 1976a:9). Leah Poulter (1978: 2) suggested that organisations like Halfway House provided "a model for women of women working independently" of men. Dann (1979:3) reiterated the importance of the "all-women environment ... in developing the trust and friendship among women" and learning to "co-operate with each other to build a better society". A member of the Auckland Women's Health Centre argued that they should exclude men because "women need a place where they can act affirmatively for themselves in a safe and supportive environment" (Anonymous 1979b:14).[88] Among the Aotearoa/New Zealand Refuges (Hancock 1979:22), feminists were arguing that "[w]hat women needed was a safe space of their own where they could escape the violence and begin to rebuild their lives" (Reinelt 1995:88). Early activists were, in effect, arguing that this plethora of women-only feminist organisations was important as the groups created spaces free from the male gaze (Holmes 1998:85).[89] More separatist views advanced the argument that working in a women-only collective would contribute to removing "old patterns of interacting with one another ('male structures') from our heads and learn to interact with one another as people with a desire to share rather than a need to dominate and control" (Thompson 1976a:4-5). The collective was to be based on "values of compassion, warmth, honesty, and weakness, which can be accommodated in a system which is co-operative and supportive" (Thompson 1976c:40).[90] Typically, the groups developed organisations that

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"Any people, male or female, interested in taking organised play activities" (Anonymous 1980d). Both the Wellington Refuge and Palmerston North Refuge wanted to involve men in the children's programme. Services were constructed as political by attempting to model an ideal vision of heterosexual relations.

88 The quote continues: "This is not an anti-male attitude, so much as a pro-women one in line with the sort of action taken by other oppressed groups in society" (Anonymous 1979b:14).

89 It is important to recognise that the degrees of separatism varied over time and by group, and by whether it was perceived to be a temporary or permanent strategy. This resulted in significant debates about separatism as a strategy among those involved in the early groups. For many of the early women's liberation groups, it was more about setting up autonomous groups that would enable women to develop their leadership skills and connection with one another. An increasingly radical emphasis emerged that was associated with the lesbian feminist separatist position, which involved a refusal to have anything to do with men, and was linked to a critique of the institution of heterosexuality. For some, this meant that a heterosexual lifestyle was perceived to be incompatible with feminism, and to relate to men sexually was to consort with the enemy (Weedon 1999:36-37).

90 In her first editorial, 'No Room at the Top', Thompson argued that male/patriarchal structures exclude feminist principles. The patriarchal system forces women be competitive and "adhere to male values of arrogance, assertive confidence (often false), dishonest, punctuality, efficiency (male defined and bounded by time not quality), cold impersonal relationships, logic and rationality" in order to succeed (Thompson 1976c:40). She went on to argue that women who have succeeded in this system have internalised male values and are no use to the feminist movement (Thompson 1976c:40).

utilised strategies such as consensus decision-making, task sharing and rotation of positions.

Halfway House provides a useful example of the debates occurring about radical feminist organising in the activist service groups. The Halfway House Collective initially attempted to operate meetings without a chair and without recording minutes, but in subsequent meetings there were difficulties resolving conflicts about decisions made in the past. As a consequence, the group implemented some formal processes, such as recording minutes and appointing a new chairperson each meeting. The Halfway House Collective used consensus decision-making processes because majority voting was seen as patriarchal, alienating and resulting in inequality between members. It was contended that consensus decision-making "foster[ed] a sense of responsibility to the group, a feeling of everyone being in control. The people involved [would] feel a far greater respect of each others viewpoints. Coercion is removed" (Banks, Florence et al. 1979:118).

The aim of developing a more formal structure in the organisation was to enable them to deliver services whilst still maintaining non-hierarchy in the organisation between all collective members and the house residents. Instead of having one matron responsible for the running of the shelter, they operated a twenty-four hour roster involving six four hour shifts with two women responsible for each shift (Thompson 1976b:19-21). The tasks of running Halfway House were divided among six co-ordinator positions. The positions were to be held for a maximum of four months and then passed onto someone else. They decided against having a matron run the Refuge shelter. The collective argued that having a matron would "generate a 'them/us' situation by setting up yet another figure of authority. We considered that to do this would have created an unnecessary and even harmful barrier in front of what we wanted to achieve", that of being "a self-help group – women helping ourselves" (Banks, Florence et al. 1979: 98). In this way, the early commitment to so-called 'structureless' open ways of operating was rapidly replaced with a commitment to implementing more formal closed groups to run the 'by women for women' activist service projects, but within this process of formalisation the groups retained a commitment to non-hierarchy.

As the group struggled to find feminist volunteers, they developed training that included feminist CR and an exploration of the shelter's self-help feminist ideology. They decided that 'committed feminists' could go straight onto the roster and everybody else

had to have some training. However, they then spent two months debating what a committed feminist was without coming to an agreement and so decided that everyone had to do the training. Women who simply wanted to do 'charity work' were to be excluded. However, it was difficult to find women willing to fill the co-ordinator positions and all the rosters at the shelter, with a few women doing most of the work. A shortage of volunteers meant that, in practice, any woman willing to volunteer was put on the roster without training (Banks, Florence et al. 1979:96).

Other groups, such as the Auckland Women's Centre, a women-only group, had open collective meetings operated by consensus, no elected officials and rotation of all responsibilities and roles every three months (Casswell 1975b:1-2).[91] Volunteers ran Dunedin Refuge on a 24-hour, seven-day week roster. Women ran the Refuge:

> on a collective basis with no formal leadership – which makes for occasional confusion and 'inefficiency'. It means a lot more work has to go into things like communicating with one another and making sure new members feel at home, but it also means that there is less need to feel one-down to a super-efficient committee or elite, and it encourages people to try new skills, and new roles (Anonymous 1978d:22).

There was a focus on reframing professional service relationships and the relation between 'helper' and 'helped' to a relationship based on equality and structured by 'women's ways of working'.[92] For example, members of the Auckland Women's Health Centre outlined how they aimed for "women to regain the knowledge, and control and care of their own bodies and minds by taking personal responsibility for these things" and by changing the "power relationships inherent in the workings of the 'helping professions'" (Anonymous 1980f:18). Fenwick pointed out that the Christchurch Refuge encouraged women "helping themselves and each other" so that, in this way they could "regain the lost confidence and self-respect that is vital if they are to establish independent lives" (Fenwick and McKenzie 1979b:22). She contrasts this with the "traditional social service approach of professionals telling women what to do" and, in this way, suggests that the Refuge "is clearly a radical action, a directed self-

[91] It is not clear if this plan was successfully implemented.

[92] Not all service groups shared this same philosophy. Nelson and Napier Refuges focused on providing emergency accommodation and having the centres run, organised and controlled by members on a 24-hour roster. Women utilising these Refuges did not have a major role running them (Hancock 1979:22). In their early period of development, both Wellington Refuge and the Palmerston North Refuge had management groups with overall organising roles that were separate from the volunteers and residents.

help activity which has arisen out of the feminist movement" (Fenwick and McKenzie 1979b:22). Central to 'women's ways of working' was the undermining of relationships of inequality between professional and client through women becoming assertive and independent, and so challenging patriarchal constructions of femininity.[93]

Within the Refuges, the focus was on "providing the time, space and support which are necessary for a woman to reach a stage where she can realise her full potential to control her own life", which also involved "providing an informal supportive atmosphere where women can feel at home and without anyone being 'in charge', or telling them what to do" (Hancock 1979:22). In these situations, the women involved in using the Refuges were also involved in the running of the house and making collective decisions (Hancock 1979:22).

The period 1976-1980 was marked by a rapid growth of Women's Centres, Health Centres and Refuges. This chapter described how women's rights and women's liberation groups were both involved in the development of the activist service groups during this period. Opportunities for funding improved, but remained ad hoc with most grants being for specific projects. Nevertheless, grants were used by many of the groups to establish and maintain services.

Most of the groups developed as women-only collectives and struggled to find ways of working that facilitated non-hierarchy amongst collective members, as well as for those women using the services. The groups debated whether the services constituted political action and what counted as radical feminist activity. Many of the predominantly Pākehā, middle-class groups based their analysis on the notion of a shared oppression, irrespective of class, race, ethnicity or culture. For many members of the service groups, organising as woman-only collectives and utilising principles of self-help was conceived as political. Yet for others, those developing the Refuges in particular, the

[93] These were also identified as issues by participants in the service collectives of this period. Groups like the Wellington Women's Resource Centre and Auckland Women's Health Centre were identified as being dominated by white, middle-class women (Anonymous 1979b; Harrod and Quade 1980:19). There were major difficulties with the development of an informal elite between collective members (Kleist and Levett 1980:1). Others highlighted the difficulties of addressing conflict and disagreement in these groups (Livestre, Lyn et al. 1980:20). Each of these reports highlights how groups struggled to implement and sustain the radical feminist principles of this period.

provision of services was about meeting a need. These latter groups tended to include men in their organisations and to set up as hierarchical organisations. As will be examined in the following chapter, tensions about what counted as political and how to organise in the service groups increased over the 1980s.

CHAPTER SIX

ACTIVIST SERVICE ORGANISATION

DEVELOPMENTS AND DEBATES IN THE 1980s

The politics and organisation of the second wave women's movement underwent significant changes during the 1980s. On the one hand, most of the multi-issue women's liberation and women's rights groups had closed by the end of the decade. But, on the other hand, there was a rapid growth of activist feminist service organisations, and most of the activist service groups that had been set up in the late 1970s continued to thrive throughout the 1980s. The radical feminist collective was institutionalised as the vast majority of the feminist activist service groups adopted this form of organisation. These groups continued to embody many of the ideals that had come to dominate the second wave women's movement, albeit in relation to the delivery of services by women for women rather than in direct political protest. These changes reflected a shift in the focus of feminist protest during the 1980s in many Western countries away from mass mobilisation and direct confrontation with the social system (Bagguley 2002; Buechler 1990; Taylor and Whittier 1993). Although this was associated with a sense of loss and decline of feminist activism in the women's movement, it reflected the changed nature of feminist activism (Taylor and Whittier 1993:543). Feminist resistance continued in different forms.

This chapter examines the growth of the activist service groups in Aotearoa/New Zealand during the 1980s.[94] The first section describes the service group developments during the 1980s. In the second section, the formation of local and national networks among the various service groups is outlined. Particular focus is given to the development of two national collectives, the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges (NCIWR) and the National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa (NCRC). The activist service groups formed important local and national networks for sustaining radical feminist social movement communities. Although, the nature of feminist activism moved away from the mass mobilisation and direct protest of the 1970s, feminist activism continued to evolve and develop in different directions within the activist service groups.

Survey of 1980s Activist Service Organisations

Nearly all of the broadbased women's liberation collectives had disbanded by the end of the 1980s.[95] One of the longest running, the Dunedin Collective for Woman, was disbanded in the early 1980s. The last newsletter was produced in 1981 and by 1982 "many of the early members had moved on to full-time jobs and in some cases [had] left Dunedin" (Harrison 1993:97). The last of the 1970s women's liberation collectives, the Whakatane Women's Liberation Collective, wound up in 1988 (Anne 22/4/97). Likewise, most NOW groups had closed by the early 1980s. Only Christchurch and Marlborough remained in existence in the early 1990s (Anonymous 1993a:31).[96] Dalziel suggests that in the case of NOW, those "who had founded [NOW] in the early, enthusiastic days of second-wave feminism discovered they were an élite without a following. Meetings grew smaller as women moved off to form other organisations or to pursue careers" (Dalziel 1993a:99). WEL fared slightly better than NOW, with seven groups reported to still be in existence in 1992, "mainly in North Island areas where

[94] There was also a significant growth in the number of feminist organisations representing different professions and/or occupations, as well as an increase in the number of ethnic and/or sexuality specific women's organisations. The former developments will not be examined in this thesis, whilst the latter will be addressed where they overlap with the development of feminist activist service organisation.

[95] It was rare for the groups to formally close; many gradually declined or simply disappeared. Consequently, it is difficult to ascertain exact closing dates for most groups and thus many of the dates are estimates.

[96] Marlborough NOW was reported to have a membership of 35 and operated as a collective, "actively addressing political issues and working for change in women's lives" (Dalziel 1993a:99).

there are few other active feminist groups", while half the membership was based in Wellington (Julian 1993:105). However, there were many Women's Centres, Women Health Centres, Refuges and Rape Crisis groups set up around Aotearoa/New Zealand during the 1980s. Their development was part of a pattern of increasing specialisation taking place within the second wave women's movement organisations (Dalziel 1993b:67).

Women's Centres and Women's Health Centres

Women's Centres and Women's Health Centres became more commonplace in cities and towns around Aotearoa/New Zealand during the 1980s. Many of the Centres were set up in smaller rural centres such as Whangerei, (Larkin and Gray 1986:10), Te Awamutu (Anonymous 1996f:26) and Wanganui.[97] More Women's Centres were also established in the outlying areas of Auckland, for example, the Papakura Women's Support Centre (Anonymous 1996e:24), and the North Shore Women's Centre (Anonymous 1996c:23). A number of Māori/Black Women's Centres were also established. In Whangerei, there was a Black Women's Centre (Anonymous 1982b:1) and, in 1985, a Māori Women's Centre was opened in Hamilton (Kohu 1985b:43). There were also a number of Women's Health Centres set up, such as the West Auckland Women's Centre (Anonymous 1988), and the Waikato Women's Health Action Centre in 1986 (Norris, Maskill et al. 1989:77). The Pacific Island Women's Health Collective began to operate from the Auckland Women's Health Centre. Some Māori women's health groups were formed as a consequence of a Black Women's Day Health Hui[98] held in Otara in 1982 (Coney 1993:251). Quite a number of the Women's Centres and Health Centres described in the previous chapter persisted throughout the 1980s (for example, New Plymouth, Hamilton, Nelson). However, some Centres, such as Whangerei Women's Centre, Wellington Women's Resource Centre, and Hecate Health Collective, closed down (Anonymous 2000; Larkin and Gray 1986; Norris, Maskill et al. 1989). Pauline Norris et al. reported how, "[a]fter five years of operation Hecate in Wellington closed in 1984. Funds and energy had run out and the centre's

[97] Information for the Wanganui Centre was drawn from an undated pamphlet describing the service. There was conflicting information about the Thames Women's Centre with some suggesting that it started in the 1950s and others in the 1980s (Personal communication, Anonymous, 6/5/2003).

[98] Māori term for gathering or meeting.

resources were shifted to the Porirua Women's Health Project and the Newtown Health Centre" (Norris, Maskill et al. 1989:22).

Women's Centres and the Women's Health Centres developed services and programmes to support and empower women through information, counselling and/or health for women. The Papakura Women's Support Centre was opened after a group of women identified the lack of space in the city for women to meet other women in a mutually supportive environment. The group addressed the lack of services specifically for women, for example, in areas of domestic violence, women's health and the stress of parenting (Anonymous 1996e:24). The West Auckland Women's Centre provided information, referrals, workshops and classes on such things as self-esteem, parenting and other skills (Anonymous 1988:23-24). In an unusual situation for women's health centres, the initial impetus for opening the West Auckland Centre came about through a partnership between three local women and the Auckland Methodist Mission. The Mission saw the Centre as part of its commitment to working for change in society (Anonymous 1988:11,14). The Palmerston North Women's Health Collective was established after public meetings of women in the community indicated a need for greater access to information and support on health matters. They took over the 'hot and cold' file on doctors that the local Women's Centre had established (Palmerston North Women's Health Collective 1997:1).

Other Women's Centres promoted the importance of feminist networking activity and service provision based on self-help philosophy. For example, the Whangerei Women's Resource Centre was set up by a group of ten women who had met weekly for over a year as a CR group and were involved in organising meetings to establish the centre. These ten women became the 'managing' core group once the centre was set up. Initially there were also a "large group of volunteer women who staffed … the centre from nine until four each weekday" (Larkin and Gray 1986:10). Two of the founders of the Centre reported that they opened the Centre with the express purpose of providing "a focus for feminist activities and to offer a place where we could all learn and get support" (Larkin and Gray 1986:10). The Centre operated within a framework of self-help, where "groups met and worked on women's health, self-defence, assertiveness, racism, sexuality, anger, grief, women's studies and many other issues" (Larkin and Gray 1986:11).

Ethnic and sexuality specific organising was also occurring among the Women's Centres. The Māori Women's Centre in Hamilton emerged out of one Māori woman's vision of "a centre, whare,[99] home where troubled women could come to korero,[100] cry and feel utterly safe. My vision was of all Maori take[101] - many women and men, dealing with the pain, sadness, and happiness of the Maori. It was a vision of self-help" (Kohu 1985b:43). Rape, incest, domestic violence and Māori issues were identified as the centre's priorities (Kohu 1985b:43). The Nelson Womin's Centre had a lesbian support group meeting weekly (McDonald and Allenye 1985:10)[102] and the Wellington Women's Resource Centre had a Lesbian Centre running from one of the rooms (Anonymous 1980b:2). Thus, identity-specific organisations around ethnicity and sexuality were emerging as part of the activist service groups, either as separate organisations or as separate groups within one larger organisation.

Women's Groups working in the area of domestic and sexual violence

During the 1980s, there was widespread publicity about the issues of domestic and sexual violence. Miriam Saphira gave public talks about incest and sexual abuse (Alannah 1982:4; Barbara 1985:9). Two films were shown in towns and cities all over Aotearoa/New Zealand. The film *Quebecois - Scream from Silence* was hired out by the Auckland YWCA. The film showed the effects rape had on women and talked about incestuous rape, the court process, and other violence against women. *Rape Culture* was a 40 minute American film hired out by Auckland Rape Crisis. The film featured interviews with Rape Crisis workers and convicted rapists, and critiqued popular movies (Anonymous 1982a). The YWCA organised a conference on sexual violence in 1983, which was attended by government officials and community groups. Rape Crisis groups presented papers about their work (Peteru 1983). With funding from the Sir Roy McKenzie Trust, the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges (NCIWR) undertook a nationwide study of family violence and, in 1988, produced a report

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[99] Māori term for house; see glossary for further detail.
[100] Māori term for speaking and communicating.
[101] The term 'take' used in this quote is a Māori word for cause or focus of action.
[102] The spelling 'womin', 'wommin' or 'wimmin' was used by a number of Women's Groups and by individual women. In cases where the group is using these terms to name their group, I limit the addition [sic] as a rule after such spellings as the spelling was deliberate.

'*Attitudes to Violence – A Study Across Cultures*' (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 2003a).

As a consequence of research, publicity and lobbying by individuals and women's movement groups, legislative changes addressing feminist issues in the area of domestic and sexual violence against women and children were being made in the early 1980s. For example, in 1982 the Domestic Protection Act was passed (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 2003a; Synergy Applied Research 1983).[103] Many local Rape Crisis groups became involved in lobbying government agencies to improve the laws regarding rape (Abel and Kore 1983; Anonymous 1982d). Publicity about the widespread incidence of rape and domestic violence increased as local Rape Crisis and Women's Refuge groups collated and published their service statistics (Synergy Applied Research 1983; Vanderpyl 1998b).

Over the decade, associated with this widespread national publicity, there was a rapid growth of groups providing services for women and children experiencing male violence. Between 1981 and 1984 twenty new Women's Refuges opened, bringing the total to 34 Refuges around the country (Dann 1985: 130-131). By the end of the decade there were over 50 Women's Refuges operating (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1991:1). There was also an enormous growth of groups addressing sexual violence. In 1987, there were 35 local Rape Crisis groups. The numbers of Rape Crisis groups peaked in 1989 at 36, but had declined to 27 by 1992 (Harvey and Moon 1993:147).[104]

There were also some joint Refuge/Rape Crisis groups established in smaller rural centres, for example, in Marlborough, Taumaranui, Taihape and Invercargill (Myhill 1987:17). Invercargill's 'Southland Women's Support Group' set up in 1981 as a joint

[103] The Act "provided four types of remedies; a non-violence order; a non-molestation order; and occupation and tenancy orders and it gave the Courts jurisdiction to recommend that one or both parties attend counselling". If the non-violence order was breached, the Police could arrest without a warrant and hold a person for 24 hours - unless earlier released by a Judge or Justice of the Peace - as a cooling-off period. This report suggests that the Christchurch Battered Women's Support Group had a strong influence on this legislation. The 1982 Act was replaced in 1995 by the Domestic Violence Act (Mahony 2003).

[104] In terms of groups working in the area of sexual violence, the thesis focuses primarily on those groups that identified as groups that emerged out of the second wave women's movement and those who came to be affiliated to the National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa. An unpublished report on funding identified over 40 groups who received funding from the DSW sexual abuse groups' funding in 1987, 20 Rape Crisis groups, 15 Te Kakano o te Whanau, five Pacific Island Women's Project groups, as well as four groups not part of any of the above organisations (Anonymous 1987:1).

Refuge and Rape Crisis service. It was felt that "in a city such as ours we would be hard pressed to find enough committed women to operate two separate lines and the group felt strongly that rape and incest must be included in our brief" (Fraser and Peterson 1982:5, emphasis in original). In Marlborough, an initial attempt to set up an independent Rape Crisis Group was abandoned due to "lack of women" (Ash 1982:3). They decided to work through the local Women's Refuge. The group reported "[w]e have since then used the Refuge's emergency contact number ... The Refuge roster women pass on any calls and referrals to those of us who are willing to take such calls" (Ash 1982:3).

Pākehā women dominated many of the Rape Crisis and Refuge Centres that emerged during the 1970s. Yet, there were reports of ethnic-specific services being set up by tangata whenua in the area of domestic and sexual violence during the 1980s. An Auckland Black Women's Movement group member spoke of setting up a Black Women's Refuge (Rankine 1983a:18).[105] Like many of the Māori groups, they were working across multiple issues, such as racism, anti-nuclear movement, health, and Māori land struggles (Rankine 1983a:17). In March 1987, Te Whakaruruhau in Hamilton was the first Māori Women's Refuge to open. The second Māori Women's Refuge, Te Whare Roko Roko, opened in May 1987 in Wellington. By 1989, nine of the fifty Refuges affiliated to the National Collective of Women's Refuges were Māori Refuges and one was a Pacific Island Women's Refuge (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1989:1). Twenty-one Māori and five Pacific Island groups working in the area of sexual violence were established between 1985 and 1989 (Anonymous 1987:1; Rei 1993:50).[106]

The process of establishing Rape Crisis and Refuge Centres began with local women identifying a need for services in their locality. For example, the Invercargill based Southland Women's Support Group "began when two women decided that a real need existed for a special support system for the female victims of violence in Invercargill. They went to the press and the two became fifteen" (Fraser and Peterson 1982:5). The

[105] I was unable to ascertain if the refuge they refer to was set up. It could be the South Auckland Refuge that was set up a couple of years later.

[106] Te Kakano o te Whanau was a national organisation established in 1985, and part of its brief was to develop services in the area of sexual abuse for Māori women (Rei 1993). This will be discussed further in the section on national collective developments. The number of groups affiliated to Te Kakano o te Whanau in 1989 was nineteen as two groups had been disaffiliated (Rei 1993:50).

group was "united only by our concern for women and our commitment to the cause" (Fraser and Peterson 1982:5). Similar genesis occurred for the Tauranga Rape Crisis Centre which was started in 1982 after a meeting was called by the local Women's Centre.

> It was believed that a need existed for a sexual assault counselling centre in the Tauranga area. Three broad-spectrum needs were identified at the initial stage ... co-ordination with such services as the Police, doctors and the Department of Social Welfare; for the education of the general public about the issues surrounding sexual abuse; for ongoing support and group self-help (Myhill 1987:19).

Some high profile rapes in the area precipitated the setting up of a Rape Crisis Centre by the Palmerston North Women's Neighbourhood Action group. A member described how "[t]he perpetuation of rape mythology and general ignorance of both public and media was as much an activating factor as the needs of rape victims" (Thelma 1983:13). In Wellington, the Refuge Te Whare Roko Roko was established by a "small collective of women [who] held two public meetings to seek support from the Māori community and raise awareness of the service they intended to provide for Māori women and children" (McCallum 1993:146).

Radical feminist organising and the activist service groups

The majority of the service groups saw their activities as political and as working towards radical feminist goals of social change, both in terms of the delivery of the services and in the organisation of the groups as non-hierarchical and women-only. Following Fried's (1994:570) distinction between politicised and service organisations,[107] the goals of the activist service groups were conceptualised in terms of trying to change the wider society, not just helping individuals.[108] These themes were central to the description of Rape Crisis goals by the Tauranga Rape Crisis group:

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[107] See Chapter Two for a discussion of Fried's (1994) political versus service model of organisation.

[108] Unexamined in this thesis, but central to these debates, is the way in which the activist services challenged the hierarchical relationship of 'expert' or 'professional' working with 'their client' that had been part of the 1970s service group developments. The services shifted the focus from treating 'clients' as 'victims' to enabling 'clients' to become 'survivors' of violence. The Tauranga Rape Crisis manual described the shift from victim to survivor as part of a process of delivering an alternative service to mainstream institutions:

> Rape Crisis Centres then evolved out of a need for an alternative support system for women who had been sexually abused and that primary need for an alternative system still exists. ... Rape Crisis Centres are set up to create an environment in which victims can become survivors. ... Operating along alternative lines is also important as a way of challenging existing structures that perpetuate roles and unequal status for women, a central place in fighting rape and sexual violation (Myhill 1987:12).

> Rape Crisis Centres have been, and continue to be, established by feminists as part of the world fight back against violence against women. The aims of Rape Crisis are to simultaneously support individual victims and to work to eliminate the male structures which condone and perpetuate violence against women in all its forms. Thus the philosophies and goals of rape crisis organisations identify them as part of the women's movement, which is a many faceted effort organised by women to obtain political, economic, social and human rights and privileges and freedoms (Myhill 1987:12).

Like the activist service groups established in the 1970s, the 1980s organisations emphasised the need for relationships and dynamics that challenged inequality between members (Fried 1994:570). For many participants in the service groups, this meant operating as women-only non-hierarchical collectives utilising consensus decision-making. For example, Palmerston North Rape Crisis reported that their establishment training included discussions about working collectively, and they "spent many hours discussing feminism, racism, consensus, elitism, and power-tripping (control). At times discussion has been frustrating, but seems [a] prerequisite to working together and has given us more cohesion as a group" (Thelma 1983:14). Like the Auckland Halfway House described in Chapter Five, some of the newly formed groups such as Wellington Rape Crisis attempted to maintain informal ways of working. However, they reported significant internal tensions in attempting to work within a loose informal collective model. Their attempts to organise without an explicit structure resulted in the workload tending to fall on one or two women. In response, at the end of 1982 they had elected a management collective of nine women, while policy decisions were to be left to the wider membership. Denese Black, reported, "[w]e felt that such a collective would be able to deal with the work more effectively and efficiently" (Black 1983:15).

The commitment to consensus decision-making and participation of all collective members appears widespread. For example, the Hamilton Rape Crisis Collective reported that they had a lot to learn about consensus decision-making, but they were

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They also highlighted the focus on political change work – changing the structures of society through education and challenging patriarchal institutions (Myhill 1987:13-14). Belinda Trainor (1988:69) describes how The Health Alternatives for Women (THAW) in Christchurch opened a "well women's room" in 1984. The room had "resources which enable[d] women to learn how their bodies work, what symptoms [were] normal for themselves and what to look out for" (Trainor 1988:69). Each woman filled "in a detailed chart, giving a monthly overview of her general health, both mental and physical" (Trainor 1988:69). In this way, the focus was on empowering individual women to know their own bodies. As Trainor (1988:70) notes, the overall aim was "for women themselves to learn, as THAW [was] determined not to be used as a service, where THAW women [kept] the skills and knowledge and others are [kept] dependent". The 'well women's room' was an attempt to empower women by "redefining ourselves as healthy; overcoming our ignorance; attacking sexism; [and] seizing the means of reproduction" (Trainor 1988:69).

working on it (Kore and Abel 1983b:7). Gisborne Rape Crisis described how they had "a collective of 16 members, of whom eight staff the telephone. The collective meets fortnightly. We have an agenda which we try to follow and we aim at consensus decision-making" (Anonymous 1982d:2). The Maori Women's Centre was also attempting to work with a consensus decision-making model (Kohu 1985b:43). However, others who participated in decision-making reported some variations. Among Refuges, it was reported in the early 1980s that the groups elected some of their collective members onto management committees. The groups tended to operate "on a collective basis with an elected Management Committee that meets either fortnightly or monthly to discuss administrative matters". Paid workers attended the Management Committee meetings (Synergy Applied Research 1983:43).[109]

Many of the groups did develop some formal specialisation of roles and responsibilities, while retaining a commitment to non-hierarchy and consensus decision-making processes (Iannello 1992; Riger 1994; Thomas 1999). The Hamilton Maori Women's Centre reported dividing up the areas of responsibility among collective members and employing a secretary, a finance person and a male and female counsellor (Kohu 1985b:43). The Women's Refuges developed some specialisation in the roles of paid and unpaid workers, and differentiations were made in the responsibilities of the management committee, paid and unpaid workers. In a 1983 report summarising the organisation of local Refuges, some differentiation in positions and roles was noted:

> Paid workers and volunteers perform essentially the same duties, however, areas of primary responsibility are delegated to paid workers. Paid workers undertake such duties as the co-ordination of volunteer tasks, the organisation and development of programmes involving resident women and their children, clerical and administrative duties as well as attendance at fortnightly/monthly Management Committee meetings and the submission of written reports (Synergy Applied Research 1983:43).

The description suggests that there was some horizontal and vertical differentiation within the early Women's Refuges.

Not all of the Refuges and Rape Crisis groups that were set up in the early 1980s had a commitment to non-hierarchy and consensus decision-making. For example, Christchurch Rape Crisis reported having a management committee and majority voting

[109] Further details are not provided in the report about the way in which they operated. It is not specified if paid workers participated in the management committee decisions, or if the committees utilised consensus decision-making processes.

(Edmundson and Thorpe 1985:28). However, in April 1984, Christchurch Rape Crisis Collective reported shifting from a committee to a collective structure with a change in full-time staff and new volunteers coming on board who argued for greater equality amongst collective members (Edmundson and Thorpe 1985:28). As will be examined in the final section of this chapter, many of the Refuge and Rape Crisis groups that came to be affiliated to either the National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa (NCRC) or the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges (NCIWR) from the mid-1980s were required to organise as non-hierarchical collectives and only involve women members in decision-making.

Developing and Sustaining Feminist Service Communities

The activist service groups described above and in earlier chapters were not isolated developments; the groups often formed informal feminist social communities in their geographical localities. These communities were "characterized by a decentralised leadership, and are loosely connected by multiple and overlapping membership, friendship networks, and cooperation in working for common goals" (Taylor 1983:438-439). At a local level, there were informal social networks consisting of "preexisting social networks where people communicate every day, develop close affective ties, and share cultural values and practices" (Taylor 2000:222).[110] In many towns and cities, co-operative relations developed between the service groups. At the same time, both the Refuges and Rape Crisis groups developed formal national networks through the setting up of the national federations: the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges (NCIWR) and the National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa (NCRC).

Local radical feminist service networks

Many of the Women's Centres had close links with the Women's Health, Refuge and Rape Crisis groups in their geographical localities. In descriptions of their activities, the Women's Centres often had a local rather than national focus. They did not develop a formal national coalition. Women's Centres were important in the development of

[110] The concept is similar to Melucci's submerged networks (Reger and Taylor 2002; Whittier 2002).

feminist communities at a local level and were influential in establishing local Rape Crisis and Refuge groups. For example, the Papakura Women's Centre was involved in establishing a 'Violence Against Women' group of nine women who were trained by Auckland Rape Crisis. In 1986, the Papakura Centre supported the setting up of the Manukau Women's Refuge (Anonymous 1996e:24). The New Plymouth Women's Centre was involved in establishing a variety of women's groups, such as a New Plymouth Rape Crisis group, and Women for Non-Violence (Pearce 1996:28). Tauranga Women's Centre supported the development of the Tauranga Rape Crisis Centre (Myhill 1987:20).

In local communities, Women's Centres, Refuges and Rape Crisis group developments were often entwined through members from one service group establishing other service groups. For example, in Nelson, Joi Rosoman, a worker from the Nelson Womin's Centre Collective, reported:

> We are also exploring Rape Crisis and how we can best deal with it on limited resources. We are unsure whether a Rape Crisis Centre like other centres is possible here; yet are considering establishing a Network of womin [sic] in association with the Womin's Refuge and the Womin's Centre (Rosoman 1983:15).

However, in the next newsletter, they reported that they were unable to set up a Rape Crisis Centre due to lack of women and suitable space at the Nelson Womin's Centre. Instead, the group was "operating as best we can from the Women's Centre, using the Refuge as a resource, considering possible rape law changes, and working with black women" (Rosiman 1983:16). But by February 1985, a Nelson Rape Crisis Centre had been set up, as part of a Nelson Rape Crisis Network that also included Centres in Motueka, Golden Bay and Murchison (Anonymous 1985a:8). In Te Awamutu, both the Rape Crisis and Refuge groups supported the development of the Women's Centre (Anonymous 1996f:26). The Te Awamutu Women's Centre was set up as a "separate, more general group that women could join in without having to do [the] training" that was required in order to join either the Rape Crisis or Refuge groups and often these three groups had overlapping membership (Anonymous 1996f:26).

Many of the local feminist activist service groups shared premises. The Whangerei Rape Crisis group first operated from the local Women's Centre, using their rooms as a base, and they supported the Women's Centre by ensuring it was able to stay open during the day when it was short of volunteers (Larkin and Gray 1986:11). The

Tauranga Women's Centre and Tauranga Rape Crisis shared rooms (Anonymous 1982e:29). The Whakatu Womin's Centre in Nelson shared premises with the Nelson Region Rape Crisis Network and the two paid Rape Crisis workers at the Centre shared a room with the Women's Centre receptionist, who was also a member of the Rape Crisis Collective (McDonald and Allenye 1985:10). In Palmerston North, the Women's Centre, the Health Collective, Rape Crisis and Refuge all shared a house provided by the local City Council. Each group had its own workers; each provided a telephone service and in-person counselling and they shared a large meeting room (Anonymous 1996d:23-24). Often women would be involved in a number of the collectives. It was not uncommon for women to be involved in the local Women's Centre, and work at a Refuge and/or a Rape Crisis group, as well as another group such as an anti-racism group (Donna 1/11/97).

Many informal social networks emerged out of, and were embedded in, specific ethnic, class, and often sexuality networks, thereby contributing to the ongoing dominance of Pākehā, middle-class women in the groups. Some of the Pākehā dominated groups were identifying this as an issue in terms of the failure to represent a diverse range of women. For example, Invercargill 'Southland Women's Support Group' members were diverse in age and occupations; "age range 20 to 50; occupations wide and varied (nurses, an accountant, a lawyer, office, hotel and shop workers and full time mothers)" (Fraser and Peterson 1982:5). However, the writer went on to state: "Our only regret is that we have not as yet any Maori or Polynesian women" (Fraser and Peterson 1982:5). The sexual identity of service group members was rarely discussed in newsletters. In the research interviews, a number of participants stated that the 1980s collectives often included a mixture of lesbian and heterosexual women, but tended to be dominated by one or the other identity group (Bronwyn 27/8/97; Judith 30/1/97).

At the same time, some of the groups were networking across ethnic and class boundaries/differences in their local communities. Auckland Rape Crisis established a network of groups addressing issues of sexual and domestic violence that included ethnic minority and Pākehā groups (Rankine 1983a:17-18). Emerging Māori groups attempted to build relations in their own communities while also developing links with Pākehā feminist groups. In developing community support for a Māori Women's Centre, Hinewirangi Kohu invited Māori women and some Pākehā women who belonged to the Hamilton Rape Crisis and Hamilton Refuge to a meeting. Twenty

women came to the meeting, six of whom were Māori. The group split into Māori and non-Māori, with Māori discussing their needs for a Centre, and non-Māori discussing how they could aid the Centre's development (Kohu 1985b:43). The Centre initially shared premises with the Hamilton Rape Crisis group, a predominantly Pākehā collective. The two groups maintained separate identities, workers and collectives.

The above description of the networking between local activist service groups highlights the ways in which these local groups often formed informal geographically-based feminist communities. In these instances the service groups had overlapping memberships, shared premises and/or supported each other's activities. This resulted in a sharing of information about ways of working and discussion of issues across the local service groups. In this way, ideas and practices constituting the radical feminist politics of many of the service groups were often implemented by all of the networked groups.

The development of national collectives

In the 1980s, very few meetings brought the different feminist groups together in the manner that the 1970s UWCs had achieved. There was much less of a sense of being part of a multi-issue 'women's movement' (Bird 1991; Coney 1978b; Dann 1978a; Dann 1978e; Dann 1991). National meetings were mostly organised around a single issue or professional/occupational group.

For women's health groups, the *National Women's Health Newsletter* provided a national focus to their activities. However, these newsletters rarely contained news of local health group activities. Few national meetings brought all the women's health centres and groups together during the 1980s. In 1982, a group involved in women's health organised and ran a Women's Health Conference in Auckland (Anonymous 1982c:7).[111] In 1988, a Women's Health Group Hui was organised by a local Health Centre collective (HC Group Interview 10/9/97). The *National Women's Health Network Newsletter* was published until 1992, when Calvert suggested it was no longer necessary as the Federation of Women's Health Councils and Fertility Action, an Auckland based group, had replaced the networking role of the newsletter (Calvert 1992:no page numbers).

[111] The Conference resulted in major debates about racism in the women's movement (Anonymous 1982c; Fairbrother 1982; Halkyard 1982; Honor 1982; McLeish 1982; Phillips 1982).

Among the service groups, formal national organisations were developed among the groups working in the areas of domestic and sexual violence. The national federations included the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges (NCIWR) which was established during 1979 and 1980 (McCallum 1993:144), the National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa (NCRC), Te Kakano o te Whanau, and the Pacific Island Women's Project[112] established during 1985 and 1986 (Anonymous circa 1988:1). The national federations were set up to lobby government for changes in law, and to obtain and distribute funds to local group members.

The development of national federations created new forms of organising and entailed ongoing discussions about the nature of the relationships between local and national groups. This development has some similarity to the fourth stage of the model of feminist organisational transformation outlined by Riger (1994:290) and named the 'elaboration stage'. She described this stage as involving the development of a "large, multiunit organization, [that has] a central headquarters and decentralized divisions" (Riger 1994:290). Riger stressed the importance of personal ties among members in creating cross-group linkages, and a common ideology in unifying the multiunit organisation (Riger 1994:290). She (1994:290) argued that this stage enabled local groups "to return to the participatory practices of earlier stages". Within the Aotearoa/New Zealand context, the federations emerged out of networks of local groups, but their development was encouraged by the state through making the national federations responsible for distributing state funding to local groups.[113] As the following description of the development of the NCIWR and NCRC illustrates, even though the NCRC was established much later then NCIWR, they had developed similar organisational structures and a similar radical feminist philosophy by the mid-1980s. In the mid-1980s, both the NCIWR and the NCRC developed a commitment to non-hierarchy, consensus decision-making and women-only decision-making groups in their constitutions and code of ethics. In this way, both the NCIWR and the NCRC encouraged participatory processes in local groups.

[112] Neither Te Kakano o te Whanau nor Pacific Island Women's Project specifically identified as 'feminist organisations' that were women-only or organised non-hierarchically. As a consequence, the development of the local groups affiliated to them is not examined in this thesis. However, the relationship between the three national federations, NCRC, Te Kakano o te Whanau and Pacific Island Women's Project are important and are examined in this chapter, and again in Chapter Seven in relation to funding.

[113] The role of the national collectives in distributing funding to local groups will be described in Chapter Seven.

The formation of a national federation of Refuges began in 1979, when the public affairs officer of the Mental Health Foundation, Cherry Raymond, called a public meeting of Refuge advocates (Hann 2001:60). During 1979 and 1980, with the help of the Mental Health Foundation and subsequent funding from the New Zealand Lottery Board, Refuge groups met nationally every six months to facilitate the sharing of information and develop connections, as well as to distribute $50,000 from Lottery Welfare to local groups (Anonymous 1980c:7).[114] In 1981, fifteen Refuges formed the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges (NCIWR). A national constitution was accepted and a management committee of six Refuge workers and co-ordinator were elected to manage the affairs of the National Collective (Review Team 1986:3). Refuge workers continued to meet six monthly "to share information, ideas, problems, find common solutions and plan for the future" (Synergy Applied Research 1983:22). In 1986, as a consequence of the increase to 27 Refuges (Review Team 1986), the number of paid workers in the national office was increased and four regional collectives of five to eight local groups were formed. One representative from each regional collective was elected by their region to go on the management group (Review Team 1986).[115]

A few years later Rape Crisis groups reported similar developments in the formation of a national collective. In the early 1980s, Rape Crisis groups produced a national newsletter which was an important source of information about the local Rape Crisis Centre activities and national campaigns relevant to the groups.[116] With the support of the Mental Health Foundation, Rape Crisis groups met nationally in 1982 (Anonymous 1982b:1). Prior to 1985, there was some discussion about the formation of regional and national coalition of groups working in this area (Donna 1/11/97; Heather 27/10/97). The first discussions took place at a national meeting in September 1982, just prior to the government organised Rape Symposium, but it failed to result in the formation of a

[114] Refuges at the meeting allocated $2,500 to existing groups and the remainder was used for new refuges (Anonymous 1980c:7).

[115] Today, there are still four regional Women's Refuge Collectives. There are three in the North Island (Auckland/Northland; Central North Island and Lower North Island) and one regional collective covering the whole of the South Island (Roma Balzer, NCIWR, personal communication, 3/5/2004).

[116] Local Rape Crisis groups took turns producing the newsletters and distributing them to Rape Crisis groups around the country. Many of the local Rape Crisis groups provided 'group reports' to the newsletters which provided descriptions of group activities, funding and service developments as well as highlighting issues they were experiencing. The newsletters also played a role in getting local groups involved in national campaigns, such as rape law reform.

national collective. Jenny Rankine reported that the participants discussed setting up a national umbrella organisation of Rape Crisis groups and workers. However, they "decided that until other women's groups doing rape crisis work – women's refuges, battered women's support groups, women-dominated unions, Māori and Pacific Island women's groups – could get together, a decision shouldn't be made" (Rankine 1982a:21). During 1984, there were various attempts to form a regional network of Māori and Pākehā groups working in the area of sexual violence. The idea for a regional collective was first mooted at a "regional hui for Maori and White Women involved in Rape Crisis" held in mid 1984 (Anonymous 1984b). After they had met, participants then invited other groups to join them in forming a regional/tribal collective of Rape Crisis and related groups for the purposes of lobbying the government for funding at a regional level, education exchange, law reform, statistical collation, and research (Abel 1984). In a letter to the Gisborne Rape Crisis group, Kate Abel of Hamilton Rape Crisis suggested that the regional collective be organised in similar lines to the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges. She suggested that they seemed:

> a long way from forming any kind of national umbrella body in the rape crisis movement, since there are enormous philosophical/political differences to work through and no dialogue is happening at the moment. And anyway, a national body should grow from the bottom up, with individual groups forming regional bonds first (Abel 1984).

The hui held in Rotorua in September 1984 was attended by ten groups, including Rape Crisis groups from Gisborne, Hamilton, Palmerston North, Rotorua, Taihape, Tauranga, Whakatane, as well as the Maori Women's Centre, Whakatane Maori Women's Group, Rotorua Maori Women's Group, and Waiouru Women's Group (Anonymous 1984c). However, the hui ended with the Māori women deciding to form their own regional collective, and the predominantly Pākehā Rape Crisis groups deciding to set up their own regional collective as well. The reports about the hui highlight issues of racism and the struggle to agree to a process for forming a regional collective across the Māori and Pākehā groups (Anonymous 1984c; Moore 1984; Mortland 1984). Over the following months, plans for the setting up of two regional Collectives of Rape Crisis groups in the North Island were developed (Anonymous 1984a; Mortland 1984). However, attempts to form regional collectives were overtaken by the formation of three ethnic-specific national coalitions of groups working in the area of sexual violence in 1985. The offer of government funding influenced these developments.

In March 1985, Ann Hercus, then Minister for Women's Affairs, organised a national meeting for groups working in the area of rape and sexual abuse in order to "assist in the setting up of criteria" for distributing $150,000 among the groups and to develop criteria for further funding (Abel 1985:1). This was the first Department of Social Welfare funding to be specifically earmarked for groups working in the area of sexual violence. Twenty-eight Rape Crisis and eleven or twelve Māori Women's Groups came together and proposed that the funds be distributed by giving half to the predominantly Pākehā groups and half to the Māori groups (Rankine 1982a:21).[117] However, the Minister disagreed with the plan for funding because only incorporated groups could apply for funding. As only three of the Māori groups were incorporated, many were excluded (Kohu 1985a:11). Instead, a seeding grant of $23,500 was given to support Māori women's groups to become incorporated (Abel 1985:2).[118] Funds were also given to a steering committee comprising representatives of those Rape Crisis and Māori Women's groups who had attended the meeting in order to support the development of a national organisation to distribute government funding to all the groups. The steering committee met with Māori and Pacific Island women who were providing services in the area of rape and sexual abuse. In September 1985, at a second steering committee meeting, the Māori women decided to set up Te Kakano o te Whanau as a national body for Māori women's groups working in this area. The Pacific Island Women also developed their own national organisation, the Pacific Island Women's Project (PIWP) (Anonymous circa 1988).[119] Consequently, the National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa (NCRC) was set up as a

[117] The groups met for two days prior to the meeting to discuss how they would share the money and future developments. The group set up a steering committee comprising eight Māori, Pākehā and Pacific Island women. The steering group was responsible for developing a formal national structure of community groups working in the area of rape and incest. At this pre-meeting, the groups decided that they would use $10,000 to develop a national structure, and that the remaining money was to be divided between the groups, with half going to the Māori women's groups and half to the Rape Crisis Centres (Abel 1985:2).

[118] This came to be referred to as the Te Kakano Project which was set up to "help Maori women's groups working with Maori health (including rape and incest) to become eligible for grants from the Government and other sources" (Abel 1985:2).

[119] The Pacific Island Women's Project (PIWP) developed as a national umbrella organisation for Pacific Island groups working in the area of violence and sexual abuse. It was a part of the YWCA until 1989. They had a goal of empowering Pacific Island women, families and communities. In 1984, Carmel Peteru became full-time co-ordinator. She collated information and developed a network of groups, while Betty Sio (1984) set up regional groups. Then in 1986, the Department of Social Welfare's Rape and Sexual Abuse fund became the PIWP's major income source. This funding enabled PIWP to appoint a national co-ordinator, administrator and office manager. PIWP was incorporated in 1989 and at the same time became independent from YWCA. In 1992, there were 12 member groups run by over 100 paid workers and volunteers (Peteru 1993:541-542).

predominantly Pākehā women's organisation.[120] It became an incorporated society in December 1986 (McDonald 1987c:1). The NCRC developed a similar system to that set up by NCIWR with seven regional collectives. This was later reduced to five regional groups. At a national level, there was a national Core Group (national executive) made up of two representatives from each of the regional Collectives, and a National Office was set up in Wellington. The first Core Group meeting was held in June 1986 and involved a ritual to celebrate the birth of a National Collective. The Core Group appointed three part-time national workers to run the National Office. In December 1986, the Core Group initiated three work groups to support the work of the National Collective: one each for employment support, funding and political action (Anonymous circa 1988).

At this time, there was some concern expressed about the loss of local group autonomy with the development of the NCRC. Rowan reported that local groups "fear[ed] that the NCRC Core Group and specifically the National Office and the workers employed there [would] become too powerful and exert their authority over the regions" (Rowan 1986:15), or that the NCRC Core Group "would one day turn around and become authoritative and threatening to our local autonomy" (Rowan 1986:17). In order to allay these fears, Rowan argued that collective power lay with the regions. She used the symbol of a wheel to describe the national structure and relationships between local, regional and national levels. National Office and Core Group formed the hub of the wheel, "the focal point of our voice" (Rowan 1986:16). The spokes of the wheel represented the "channels of flow for information, decisions and womin [sic] power which connect each region to the core" (Rowan 1986:16). The outer rim was made up of each region and every local group in the region. She described the outer rim as follows; "[i]t is weighty and strong. It [is] ... the grass roots level which has created the core. It has the collective power which when focused on the core can set the whole wheel in motion" (Rowan 1986:16-17). Rowan emphasised the way in which the National Collective was potentially much more powerful than individual groups:

> Organising nationally is a step on from this because in the past the messages and the demands for change have been diluted because each R[ape] Crisis group has been speaking out in isolation from all the others in the country. By creating a national voice made up of all these previously separate ones we are giving weight to the statements and demands of each and every local group.

[120] The 'Related Groups' refers to those groups who had named themselves as something other than Rape Crisis.

> ... When our power-together is focused and directed at the 'enemy' it carries a clout and a weight which we can never achieve separately. There is potential for growth and change in that collective strength which we would never have dreamed of two years ago (Rowan 1986:16).

In this way, a national federation of Rape Crisis groups was finally underway after years of debate. Although the beginnings of both the NCIWR and the NCRC differed, by 1986 both had enshrined radical feminist principles of organisation in their constitutions and code of ethics.

Implementing radical feminist constitutions and codes of ethics

In the mid-1980s, the NCIWR developed a Code of Ethics and the NCRC developed a Constitution. The initial NCIWR management committee, set up in 1981, used a voting system and included a permanent chairperson/national co-ordinator, secretary, treasurer and other areas of responsibility. The 1981 NCIWR Constitution simply emphasised the role of the NCIWR as an administrative body for grants and the employment of national workers, as well as having a political aim to increase public awareness about the work of Women's Refuges in Aotearoa/New Zealand, and a goal of "[e]ffecting changes in the law intended to benefit women whose domestic situation is no longer tolerable to themselves" (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1982:3). [121]

However, by 1985 the NCIWR adopted a Code of Ethics which emphasised their radical feminist agenda and assumptions. The Code of Ethics included a commitment to actively seek to overcome the oppression of women in all facets of society and emphasised that the NCIWR was a feminist/woman-based organisation that actively sought to overcome multiple oppressions that women and children experienced (Church and Church 1985; National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 2003a). The Code of Ethics reiterated a commitment to a politics of diversity, to challenging multiple forms of oppression, as well as a commitment to unity and equality between

[121] The aims and objectives of the National Refuge Collective were:
1) To provide an administrative body to organise and allocate grants, loans and other financial aid.
2) To provide grants and other assistance ... to committees ... set up ... by Women's Refuge Societies for the purpose of:
   a) Increasing public awareness of the works of Women's Refuges ...
   b) Effective changes in the law intended to benefit women whose domestic situation is no longer tolerable to themselves.
   c) Any other purpose . . .
3) To provide for salaries, wages and expenses of persons employed by the Society to implement and further its aims and objects (Synergy Applied Research 1983:22-25).

women. The Code of Ethics stated a commitment to consensus decision making and limited men's involvement to peripheral roles. For example, clauses included:

> 7.7 Refuge, in its operation, sees all women as equal. ...
> 7.9 Because Refuges work with women who have been abused (usually by males) only women should be the initial contacts and be on the roster. ...
> 7.14 Refuges should work co-operatively and towards consensus decision-making. ...
> 7.17 Because Refuges are working with women, decisions should be made by women (Church and Church 1985:29-30).

The NCIWR management committee was renamed 'Core Group' or 'Core Management Group'. This appeared to be a move away from the previous way in which the NCIWR executive had operated. Associated with the development of the NCIWR Code of Ethics was the adoption of a NCIWR Refuge Workers agreement at the 1985 NCIWR Annual General Meeting (AGM). This provided "for paid leave to look after any sick person 'with whom the worker is maintaining a relationship, heterosexual or homosexual, in the nature of marriage, whether or not they are living in the same house'" (Church and Church 1985:8). In these ways, the NCIWR signalled the increasing importance of radical feminist principles of organisation and politics throughout the national and local collectives, a politics in which both unity and equality between women as well as diversity among women was enshrined.

The National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa (NCRC) Constitution and Code of Ethics embodied very similar principles (National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa 1987). In describing the finalisation of the NCRC Constitution and Code of Ethics, Heather McDonald, a NRCR National Office worker, argued the documents embodied the "principles of cooperation, co-ordination, collectivity and caring", it was "about wimmin's [sic] strength, wimmin's empowerment, wimmin's ability and determination" (McDonald 1987c:1). She went on to state that the documents defined "who we are, what we want, and generally how we go about what we do" (McDonald 1987c:1). The constitution limited men to support roles: "Individual groups may have male members, but they must not counsel women, take part in decision-making, be representatives at regional or national level, or be given paid employment before women" (National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa 1987:Clause 5.11). The Code of Ethics included a commitment to consensus decision-making by local, regional and national groups. It stated: "We uphold the principle of consensus decision making and affirm that all wimmin [sic] involved in

a Rape Crisis or Related Group can participate in decision making" (National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa 1987:Clause 7). The consensus decision-making process was described as follows in the Constitution:

> By this process decisions are reached by mutual participation of the members in discussion and debate. Each member has a responsibility to put forward differing points of view for mutual discussion. Each member is responsible for her silence. Each member makes her contribution in the interests of the Collective as a whole, is responsible for ensuring that her dissent does not stand in the way of the Collective and may have to acknowledge that others have heard her views and that while the decision may not be ideal for her, it is in the interests of the Collective as a whole. If agreement cannot be reached, the decision shall be deferred to later in that meeting to enable members or some of them to meet to further their understanding of the issue through seeking more information and having further discussion, or deferred to a later meeting (National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa 1987:Clause 7.3)

The clause on consensus decision-making in the Rape Crisis constitution (National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa 1987) drew on two problematic assumptions. First, the process of consensus decision-making assumed that everyone would be equal in terms of personal power and skills needed for participation (Ristock 1991). It assumed an equality of status and influence irrespective of differences in length of involvement, confidence in speaking, skills in articulation and differences in status within the collective. These differences were rendered both invisible and unproblematic. Second, there was an assumption that there was a commonality of interests between all collective members. Yet, the process also encouraged the expression of individual interests. Tensions arose when the interests of the individual and the collective did not coincide, and when two factions made conflicting claims about the common interests of the collective. The NCRC Constitution clauses regarding decision-making did not provide a voting mechanism to deal with irresolvable disagreements. Different clauses asserted a common oppression of women, as well as multiple oppressions on the basis of racism, classism and heterosexism (National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa 1987:Clause 2.9 and 2.10).

The Constitution stated that all women were affected by rape all of the time. Another clause identified the NCRC as a "pressure group to change the present society which condones and perpetuates rape" (National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa 1987:Clause 2.11.2a). They specified a "pro-women philosophy [that] all women have the right of free choice in areas that affect their social, mental, physical,

economic, political, cultural, spiritual and sexual well-being" (National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa 1987:in Clause 2.11.7b). It was the responsibility of the NCRC to "secure freedom of choice for women through education and radical action" as women did not have free choice (National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa 1987:in Clause 2.11.7b).

The NCIWR Code of Ethics and NCRC Constitution and Code of Ethics attempt to combine a service orientation with a radical feminist political orientation (Fried 1994). However, these developments were contested. A major issue was the role of men in local groups. Prior to the acceptance of the Code of Ethics, quite a few local groups included men in their organisations. The Battered Women's Support Group resigned from the NCIWR because of the adoption of the Code of Ethics (Review Team 1986). As a consequence of including men in their decision-making groups, organisations such as Wanganui Rape Crisis were unable to affiliate to the NCRC (Heather 27/10/97).

There had been debates in the early 1980s about excluding men from these groups. A series of letters in *Broadsheet* debated whether or not Wanganui Refuge was feminist as it included men (Ash 1983; Milsom, Davies et al. 1983; Shields 1982). In 1982 and 1983, the Wellington Rape Crisis became the focus of criticism when it hired a male worker (Visser and Charters 1983; Wellington Rape Crisis Centre Women 1983). It was argued that this "contradicted several principles which feminist support services in New Zealand had up till then considered to be their baseline rules of operation" (Dann 1985:134). Central to these principles was the argument that victims of male violence should not be made to share their experiences with men. Also:

> [I]f women are to become strong they must have strong female role models to learn from - and men by definition can not provide such models. Finally, women need all the job-training, employment and income they can get, since they are already so far behind men in the job market (Dann 1985:134).

The arguments for excluding men tended to focus on the need to empower women within the service groups and the way in which this reflected the organisations' commitment to radical feminist politics. With regard to the NCRC developments, McDonald wrote of the decision to limit the role of men in the Rape Crisis groups:

> This is an important clause in the maintenance of our belief in the strengths and abilities of wimmin [sic] to do for ourselves what we need to. ... Our constitution verifies the feminist pro-wimmin [sic] base we come from in ensuring men can be part, but not lead our movement (McDonald 1987c:1-2).

She emphasised that "unless men take responsibility for working with boys and men to change role models, attitudes and the power structure that condones rape, not a lot is going to change" (McDonald 1987c:1). However, Buller Rape Crisis collective responded by arguing that Rape Crisis was "a wimmin's movement" and that "[i]f men want to support wimmin [sic] in the movement, and wimmin [sic] want to accept male support, it should come from outside the movement and not from within it" (Kathryn on behalf of Buller Rape Crisis Collective 1987:7, emphasis in original). The clause represented a compromise:

> We uphold locl [sic] group autonomy and each groups ability to know how best to work in their own community. For some groups, this means men have a role. Altho [sic] groups work in different ways we have constantly sought out common aims. In order to work together we found we had to accept our differences and find ways of being inclusive (without compromising principles) rather than exclusive (McDonald 1987b:8).

The exclusion of men from counselling and decision-making roles was also a major source of conflict within the development of the Refuge Code of Ethics.

Doris Church and John Church (1985), members of the Christchurch Battered Women's Support Group, published a book, *The Future of Refuge in New Zealand,* criticising the NCIWR adoption of the 1985 Code of Ethics. In the book, they argued that the movement had been taken over by separatists, or more specifically lesbian separatists. They described the separatists as follows:

> We use this term to refer to women who believe that all men are potential wife bashers, who believe that women are everywhere oppressed by men, and who believe that refuges should be actively engaged in the 'struggle against male oppression'. ... Not all separatists are lesbians. The separatist women who control the majority of New Zealand's refuges include both heterosexual and lesbian separatists. However, it would be true to say that the refuges of the lesbian separatists tend often to be the most extreme of all. It is not unusual to hear the lesbian separatists arguing that women should have nothing to do with men at all. … The distinguishing characteristics of separatist women are their extreme and inflexible political beliefs, their very strong 'anti-men' attitude and their beliefs that there is no role for men within the refuge movement (Church and Church 1985:4).

The Churches attempt to describe the shift to becoming women-only as reflective of a takeover by extreme lesbian separatists resonates with Oerton's (1996:32) observation that "imputations of lesbianism can attach at the organizational level as well as at the level of the individual".

Church and Church (1985:2-3,11) accused the separatist women of intimidating the 'moderate' refuges at the NCIWR 1985 Annual General Meeting. They stated that the reason they resigned was because of the takeover of the movement by separatists and the binding 1985 constitutional changes they did not agree with. The key issues of contention concerned the shift in the organisation to a mandatory political focus on challenging the oppression of women and children, the commitment to affirmative actions on racism, the clause on unconditional support for those who use Refuge services, and the decision to restrict decision-making to women, consequently limiting the roles of men involved with Refuge groups (Church and Church 1985:6-8). They resigned because "the majority of the refuges within the Collective had become more interested in playing politics than in developing the kinds of services which battered women need and want" (Church and Church 1985:2). This resulted in a move away from what they perceived the key role of Refuges, which was "helping abused and frightened women" or providing "victim-oriented" services (Church and Church 1985:3, 11). The debate very clearly highlights the tensions between two models, one in which delivering services is framed within a social service model and the other the delivery of services within an explicit radical feminist political framework.

In conclusion, the growth of the service groups was a continuation and an elaboration of the patterns of feminist organisation development described in previous chapters. There was a significant increase in the number of activist service groups established in the 1980s. They represented a shift in the form of feminist resistance away from broadbased multi-issue direct protest groups to single issue service oriented groups.

The service groups reflected wider societal class, ethnic and sexuality patterns of mobilisation to the groups that had been part of the second wave women's movement in Aotearoa/New Zealand. In many groups, this resulted in ongoing dominance of Pākehā middle-class women in the service groups. At the same time, increasing numbers of minority ethnic service groups were set up to specifically address the areas of women's health, and domestic and sexual violence against women. The Māori women's groups were working at the intersection of feminist activist service developments and Māori protest and community developments (Kohu 1985b).

At a local level, the service groups formed strong local feminist networks in many communities and contributed to a sense of feminist community. In this way, the activist service groups were engaged in sustaining local radical feminist communities. The implementation of the NCIWR Code of Ethics and the NCRC Constitution and Code of Ethics resulted in local groups affiliated to these national federations having to implement non-hierarchical forms of organisation, utilise consensus decision-making processes and limit the role of men in their groups to auxiliary roles.

The next three chapters, which make up Part Three of the thesis, examine the ways in which feminist collective organising changed in the activist service groups during the 1990s. Part Three builds on the historical description of the emergence of activist service groups outlined in Part Two. Continuity and change in the internal politics of organising in activist service groups over the 1990s are investigated in relation to state funding, workforce governance and bicultural partnerships. Chapter Seven analyses the ways in which state funding was dynamically interwoven in these developments and the ways in which changes to government funding in the 1990s challenged the groups' commitment to radical feminist collective organising.

PART THREE:

TENSIONS IN THE ACTIVIST SERVICE GROUPS

CHAPTER SEVEN

A POLITICS OF ENGAGEMENT: ACHIEVING STABLE GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Contemporary feminist organisations differ markedly from their predecessors. Many groups started as grassroots voluntary groups based on collective democratic forms of organisation, yet went on to develop some form of bureaucratic organisation over the years (for example, Gilson 2001; Hyde 2000; Iannello 1992; Riger 1984; Riger 1994; Vanderpyl 1998b). This deinstitutionalisation of the feminist collective was reflected in the closure of many of the early collective organisations, as well as modification of those collective organisations that remained in existence (Bordt 1997). By the end of the 1990s, collective ways of organising were no longer the taken-for-granted feminist norm amongst the activist service organisations as they had been in the mid-1980s.

This chapter outlines the tensions groups experienced as they became increasingly reliant on state funding in the 1980s and 1990s. Increased reliance on government funding has often been blamed for the loss of activist service group autonomy, the replacement of collective principles with bureaucratic forms of organisation, and the undermining of feminist goals of radical social change (Ahrens 1980; Murray 1988; Otto 1985; Stevens 1985). In short, these authors have argued that government funding led to depoliticisation and cooptation of the service organisations, and resulted in the services becoming an extension of the welfare state. Cooptation of the groups by the state has been associated with the shift from collective to hierarchical organisation, as well as a shift away from the radical feminist goals of social and political change to 'managing women's issues' (Ahrens 1980; Matthews 1994).

This chapter first examines debates about the risks identified with the acceptance of government funding by activist service groups. Next, major changes to state funding of

activist service groups between 1980 and the late 1990s are described, including the replacement of the early 1980s temporary employment schemes with grants-in-aid, and the increased use of a purchase of services contract funding model in the early 1990s. The final part of the chapter examines how funding contributed to the institutionalisation of the services provided by the groups, and the ways in which contract funding is implicated in the deinstitutionalisation of the radical feminist collective form of organisation.

Debating State Funding – Assessing the Risk of Cooptation

The question of whether or not activist service groups became depoliticised and coopted has been a major source of debate among feminist scholars and activists (for example, Bordt 1997; Gilson 2001; Martin 1990; Reinelt 1995). As Reinelt (1995:90) suggests, "[i]n part, the answer depends on the conceptual framework used to understand processes of social change and political transformation". As discussed earlier, the 1970s women's liberation sector engaged in confrontation and protest. It was an oppositional politics that saw the state and its associated agencies as patriarchal (for example, Denny 1972; Jocelyn 1972; Thompson 1976c). Groups which accepted state funding were thought to be inevitably coopted and depoliticised. However, this framework assumes that if the feminist collective becomes involved with the state, then the collective will inevitably lose, and the collective must therefore maintain a rigid boundary between itself and the state. As Reinelt explains:

> It is not possible within this framework to understand feminist mobilization within institutions, feminist engagement with existing institutions, and the formalization of feminism within alternative institutions. ... we need a conceptual framework that allows us to understand how feminists are using institutional and state resources to build their movements and to open up terrains of political activism (Reinelt 1995:92).

A number of writers argue for a recognition of the complexity of the state when examining the relationship between the state and the service groups (Du Plessis Novitz 1990; Franzway, Court et al. 1989; Matthews 1995; Matthews 1994; Reinelt 1995). They suggest the state is composed of numerous organisations and should not be treated as a fixed, stable or unitary organisation. Reinelt argues "the state itself is a contradictory and uneven set of structures and processes that are the product of

particular struggles" (Reinelt 1995:87).[122] This view challenges the idea that engaging with the state, for example through acceptance of funding or promoting law changes, will inevitably result in the cooptation of the activist service organisations.

In examining feminist organisation demands on the state (especially for funding), Reinelt (1995:85) puts forward an approach that begins "with the insight of radical feminists that autonomous institutions are essential for women in patriarchal society. At the same time, it views mainstream institutions as absolutely necessary terrains of political struggle". The challenge for feminist activists "is to negotiate a path that provides support for [autonomous] services ... and at the same time promotes a feminist program for change" (Reinelt 1995:85). As Reinelt (1995:85) proposes, the process of negotiating with the state is "full of political contradictions" as it offers more opportunities to further movement goals, while at the same time increasing the risk of divisions and cooptation of the autonomous activist service organisations. This approach draws attention to the ways in which state funding can negatively impact on the service organisations and undermine their commitment to collective forms of organisation, and also to the ways in which activist service organisations work to sustain their feminist politics when engaging with the state.

In the early 1980s, activist service groups were concerned about the potential loss of organisational autonomy and control over the organisation structure and feminist politics if they accepted government funding. These issues were also being raised by feminist activist service groups in Australia and the United States (Broom 1991:107; Markowitz and Tice 2002:943; Otto 1985; Reinelt 1995:89; Weeks 1994:118). Groups and individuals were suggesting that state funding might result in funding agencies both determining how services were to be delivered and enforcing bureaucratic systems of administration. They were concerned that this would result in the development of a professional service based on hierarchical relationships that was no longer specifically 'feminist'.

The acceptance of government funding has often been linked to the loss of commitment to collective forms of organising. A number of overseas and Aotearoa/New Zealand writers have argued that acceptance of external funding increased the pressures to

[122] As Reinelt goes on to argue, "the state is neither a neutral arbiter of gender nor simply a reproducer of existing gender inequalities. It is a site of active contestation over the construction of gender inequalities and power" (Reinelt 1995:87).

formalise organisations through the introduction of bureaucratic systems of reporting, the specification of positions, specialisation of tasks, and professionalisation of services (Ahrens 1980; Gilson 2001; Markowitz and Tice 2002; Murray 1988; Schechter 1982; Wharton 1987). A number of studies have identified how funding enabled groups to employ people, but that then this was associated with specialisation, professionalism and career development, and a move away from the initial ideals of feminist collectives (see Epstein, Russell et al. 1988; Reinharz 1984; Riger 1994). In Wharton's (1987:155) study of women's refuges in the United States, funding restrictions were the most commonly cited reason for adopting bureaucratic forms of organising. Funding agencies influenced groups by linking funding to the development of boards of directors and employment of professional staff (Murray 1988). Consequently, the acceptance of government funding was argued to have had a depoliticising effect (Ahrens 1980; Ristock 1990).[123]

A major area of concern among early 1980s activist service groups was the loss of autonomy to determine their own practices and philosophy, along with fears that the groups would simply become extensions of the welfare state. The 1983 Synergy study of New Zealand Women's Refuges described how "[e]ach refuge felt a need to protect its autonomy which it felt would be endangered by becoming 'an extension of the Social Welfare system'" (Synergy Applied Research 1983:46). The groups believed their effectiveness was:

> largely due to their independence, confidentiality and personal, caring and supportive atmosphere. ... [I]nclusion in a bureaucracy would greatly undermine these qualities ... Refuges do not want to become 'Establishment Institutions' (Synergy Applied Research 1983:46).

In outlining their concerns about receiving government funding, the service groups highlighted the tensions between their desire for stable adequate funding and the problem of becoming an extension of the welfare system through their accountability to government.

> [T]he general consensus among the refuges that Government funding is essential is coupled with a consensus that Government administration would be neither desirable, nor beneficial to the work of the refuges. ... [They do not want to] be accountable to the Government, as they feel that in the long term they must be accountable firstly to the women whom they serve. Therefore, while Government funding is seen to be essential, the refuges would not like

[123] See Adamson (1988), Reinharz (1984) and Ristock (1991) for a further discussion of the issue of depoliticisation.

> to see any associated changes to present refuge management and operation (Synergy Applied Research 1983:46).

Groups were afraid that government demands would alter the ways they worked by undermining their autonomy to determine for whom and how they would provide services. As Kramer (1994:51) observes, accountability and autonomy are often placed in opposition in the non-profit organisation, with accountability implying some type of external control.[124]

Loss of autonomy as a result of government funding was also an issue for the Rape Crisis groups. A 1982 Rape Crisis Manual produced by Wellington Rape Crisis states that:

> When considering any financial assistance, Rape Crisis Centres must insist on retaining their complete independence, especially from government authority or any form of institutionalisation. Rape Crisis should be an alternative to 'the system' rather than a part of it (Wellington Rape Crisis Centre 1982:38)[125]

A 1985 Rape Crisis regional report discussing acceptance of government funding records that they "would like the National Collective to co-operate, [and] liaise with Government officials" (Anonymous 1985b:no page numbers). However, they did not want officials to have access to Rape Crisis group meetings, and the writers expressed concerns about "[g]overnment trying to force their officials on us at a local, regional and national level" (Anonymous 1985b:no page numbers).

The Health Alternatives for Women (THAW) feared that the Department of Health would attempt to change their service philosophy when they accepted state funding. In an evaluation of a pilot project funded by the Health Department, THAW workers reported fears that "the funding might be used to channel the organisation into a role that they were not happy with" (Norris, Maskill et al. 1989:44). They were afraid that government funding would place pressures on the groups to move away from a radical feminist self-help model of empowering women based on egalitarian relationships to the development of a professional specialised social service based on a hierarchical relationship between helper and helped (Norris, Maskill et al. 1989:44). THAW was also concerned "that the Department of Health would expropriate some of the ideas and

[124] However, he goes on to suggest that the issue should be reframed to move away from attempting to preserving autonomy to examining how to put in place measures for accountability "without restricting the very qualities of flexibility and responsiveness that make them useful providers of public services" (Kramer 1994:51).

[125] A second edition of the manual published in 1986 no longer contained such a warning (Sullivan 1986).

methods of THAW which it would use and then leave THAW without funding" (Norris, Maskill et al. 1989:44).

There was also a belief that government funding of services would let the government 'off the hook' in terms of challenging patriarchal relations of power (Egan and Hoatson 1999; Markowitz and Tice 2002; Matthews 1994).[126] In reviewing the 1983 Synergy Applied Research recommendation of government funding for Women's Refuges, Miriam Saphira noted the potential depoliticising effects on the refuge movement because of government focus on support of individuals after the violence had occurred rather than challenging the occurrence of violence. Saphira (1983:9) argued:

> To rid our society of domestic violence we must change our power structures. We do need refuges in the interim, but they will not in themselves change the causes of domestic violence. In fact, the establishment could become a bit complacent about the need for change if it's doing its bit by funding the refuges. We have to be aware that setting up refuges is like setting up panel beating shops, it won't stop the traffic accidents.

Saphira's fear resonates with Matthews' conclusions in her study of the effects of state funding on the US Los Angeles anti-rape groups. Matthews argued that acceptance of government funding transformed the groups' "central orientation … from a political agenda of changing consciousness to a social service agenda of helping victims manage the trauma they experience" (Matthews 1994:149). As she explained:

> Feminist demands and state responses converged at the point of what happens after the fact of violence: having rape taken more seriously, having laws that do not blame the victim, having fairer standards of judging 'facts' in sexual assault cases, having stricter punishment of attackers, and ... providing services to victims. These goals are more or less amenable to state action (Matthews 1994:149).

Matthews named this practice "managing rape" rather than 'politicising rape'. She argues that the state "incorporates feminist goals only in limited ways. Because of the focus on after-the-fact treatment, I call the kind of responses made by state agencies 'managing rape'" (Matthews 1994:149). Within other activist service groups (for example, Women's Refuges and Women's Health Centres), similar issues and concerns were expressed that reflect a pattern of government funding supporting a culture of 'managing women's issues'. State funding is primarily supportive of service delivery and framed within a social service framework of helping victims. Funding of services

[126] Outside of the scope of this thesis are the ways in which the activist service groups engaged in ongoing political protest against the state and other institutions, for example the Women's Health Movement campaigns (Anonymous 1990a).

by the state focused primarily on solutions for individuals who had been harmed rather than funding strategies that would challenge the values and practices that supported the patriarchal relations of power and underpinned male violence.

This opposition between the state and the service groups was fundamental to the fears and concerns groups had about accepting government funding. Positioning the groups in opposition to the patriarchal state was a powerful way of framing the activities of the service groups (Reinelt 1995; Schechter 1982). This opposition was central to a description by two Rape Crisis group members of the 1982 Rape Law Reform Symposium. The Symposium involved government officials, as well as members of Rape Crisis and Māori groups providing services to victims of sexual violence (Kore and Abel 1983a; Rankine 1982a). Two of the participants reported:

> Again and again, we diverted cool rational discussion of technical points of rape law change back to some of the emotions generated by rape and racism: anguish, anger. When the painful experiences of raped women and children were revealed, we were not afraid to weep. When we expressed our deep anger by standing up and singing Holly Near's 'Fight Back' song to the symposium, many others wept with us. ... Much of our strength in 'discussing' rape and rape law with those in The System [sic] on our terms – as caring, feeling women – came from the feminist solidarity at the symposium. ... Getting down to a gut level with tears, anger and hugs helped to unite us with many other women present ... By the end of the emotional weekend, almost all the women present seemed united in the belief that 'the rape of one women is the rape of all women.' ... And in that most patriarchal of settings, we women took back some of our power (Kore and Abel 1983a:12).

For the groups power was maintained by remaining 'outside the system' (Reinelt 1995). The prevalent belief at this time was that this power was rooted in a radical feminist opposition between masculinity and femininity. Resistance involved challenging 'masculine' rationality and expressing powerful 'feminine' emotions. Engaging with the state redefined the dynamics of power. As Reinelt observes, "[t]hrough working together collectively, creating organizations, and challenging patriarchal practices, feminists began to experience their own power, based on energy, strength, effectiveness, not domination and control" (Reinelt 1995:99). This radical oppositional practice of femininity was a key aspect of the promotion of solidarity between women. It was a powerful philosophy from which to develop services 'by women for women' and locate this development as 'outside of' and in opposition to the state.

The above discussion suggests groups were aware of the risks associated with government funding in the early 1980s. They perceived the risks in terms of deradicalisation of their oppositional radical feminist politics and the loss of their position as a radical alternative service to government bureaucracies (Reinelt 1995:90-91). The analysis and management of these risks were structured by a particular view of the relationship between the state and the groups: the state was constructed as patriarchal (enacting dominant masculine values) and the service groups as feminist (enacting marginalised feminine values). Although the groups positioned themselves as being 'outside of' the state and as an alternative to state services, this was not a marginal position. It was a position in which the groups saw themselves as powerful and able to challenge the patriarchal state through promoting law reform, policy change, education, alternative models of service delivery and women's ways of working. Service delivery was modelled on egalitarian relationships, empowerment of individuals and ideals of feminist community.

Groups positioned themselves as 'outside of' the state at the same time that they engaged with the state. Published discussions by the early activist service groups record their ambivalence about accepting funding from the state. On the one hand, there was a belief that the state had an obligation to support the work the groups were doing. On the other hand, the groups feared funding would contribute to deradicalisation by shifting activism from 'politicising women's issues' in areas of health, sexual and domestic violence to 'managing women's issues' for women on an individual basis. Yet, there was a powerful belief that these risks were manageable by the groups and the potential benefits of ongoing state funding outweighed the risks.

Changes to State Funding

Over the 1980s, the Aotearoa/New Zealand government became the major funder of services provided by the activist service groups. This enabled the service groups to employ more workers, increase services and develop long term plans. By the early 1990s, groups rarely questioned their reliance on state funding. It was assumed that the

state would fund the services. The issues raised by groups shifted away from whether to accept state funding, to obtaining adequate levels of state funding to provide services.[127]

There were major changes to the nature of state funding of the groups between the late 1970s and 1990s. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, groups were reliant on ad hoc one-off grants from a variety of sources and on the temporary employment schemes funded by the Department of Labour. By the end of the 1980s, the major source of income for many activist service groups had become the recurring annual 'grants-in-aid' from government departments. In the early 1990s, there was a shift to 'purchase of services' which involved contracting groups to provide specific service outputs. (See Table 5 on page 187 for a description of major sources of funding for the activist service groups and see Table 6 on page 188 for a summary of the characteristics associated with three major funding models used by the state to fund the groups). This section describes the major changes to state funding of activist groups over the 1980s and 1990s.

Temporary Employment Schemes and the development of activist service groups

Temporary employment schemes were used by many of the activist service groups established in the late 1970s and early 1980s. [128] The schemes, such as the Temporary Employment Programme (TEP), the Voluntary Organisations Training Programme (VOTP) and the Project Employment Scheme (PEP) enabled organisations to employ staff for six to twelve months. [129]

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[127] Only one of the interviews exploring 1990s feminist service organisations specifically questioned whether groups should be reliant on government funding in the 1990s (Iris 29/1/97). However, other sources, such as funding workshops and the NCRC workshops for developing a five year plan, did consider other options for funding. The workshop on contracting with the Community Funding Agency suggested that an option for groups was to not contract with CFA (Seuffert and McGowan 1999). The 1996 Rape Crisis National Plan included a goal of self sufficiency in funding (Core Group 1997:3).

[128] Three of the women interviewed for this study described how they had been employed by their collectives on VOTP and PEP schemes during the early 1980s (Chris 11/9/97; Donna 1/11/97; Patricia 7/3/97).

[129] The differences between the Labour Department schemes are described in a report (Alternative Employment Programme Evaluation Working Party 1991:48-55). The Voluntary Organisations Job Creation Programme (VOJCP)aimed to "create temporary employment and provide work experience in community social services for registered unemployed" (Alternative Employment Programme Evaluation Working Party 1991:49). A number of these schemes required that the worker be supervised and given training. The VOJCP was replaced by the Voluntary Organisations Training Programme (VOTP) in 1982. This provided for up to 12 months work experience and training in a helping agency for individuals without recent experience in

In 1983, it was reported that Women's Refuges had an average of one paid worker on a temporary employment scheme, with one Refuge having four paid workers, some having only one, and others having no paid workers (Synergy Applied Research 1983:43-44, E-2). Groups had to apply to their local Department of Labour for access to the schemes. Acceptance depended on groups developing specific project applications, the availability of unemployed people meeting the scheme criteria and on obtaining approval from the local Department of Labour officer.[130] Many of the Refuge groups used the schemes to develop and co-ordinate services (Synergy Applied Research 1983:43-44,E-2). Halfway House had four employment scheme workers (as well as five volunteers) who accompanied women to lawyers, social welfare and other agencies (Rankine 1983a:17). Rape Crisis groups employed many women through the schemes. In mid 1983 Auckland Rape Crisis reported having a total of twelve days a week worked by paid workers (Anonymous 1983b:17). Between 1984 and 1986, another local Rape Crisis group employed many collective members for periods of six or twelve months (Vanderpyl 1998b:17). Rape Crisis groups used the schemes to develop crisis, education and counselling services. For example, Wellington Rape Crisis employed full-time workers on the schemes to expand their service to provide a 24-hour, seven days a week telephone line, as well as to provide individual counselling (Black 1983:15). The Women's Health Centres and the Women's Centres also utilised the schemes. In 1982, THAW reported having seven workers employed on temporary employment schemes (Bird, Cumming et al. 1983:29). Whangerei Women's Centre

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paid or unpaid work. Groups also used the Project Employment Schemes (PEP) which provided short term work projects for job seekers. The work offered had to be additional to the organisation's existing workload and not normally carried out by other means such as volunteer labour. All these schemes paid 100 % of the employees wages for six or twelve month period. A later scheme available between 1985 and 1990 was the Job Opportunities Scheme (JOS) and this scheme offered a partial wage subsidy. In 1986, the schemes paid approximately $17,000 per worker per annum (Review Team 1986:19). The groups also obtained a number of one-off grants. For example, Auckland Rape Crisis appears to have been one of the more successful groups - $7,000 from Lotteries, $300 from the Auckland Savings Bank (Rankine 1982b:7). Hamilton Rape Crisis received $700 from JR McKenzie Trust, raised $300 on a pub crawl, and a local feminist pledged $50.00 a fortnight (Kore and Abel 1983b:10). Palmerston North Rape Crisis had received small amounts of money from Community Services Council, Mental Health Association and individual donations, as well as running a stall at the local flea market (Thelma 1983:13). Gisborne Rape Crisis had two PEP workers, grants of $1,000 from Sutherland Self-help, $2,000 from a Bikathon, $500 from another source for self-defence classes and $250 from Mental Health Foundation (Anonymous 1982d:2-3).

130 There were regional differences and inconsistencies. Discussion with one of the early members of a Rape Crisis group recounted how an application for TEP worker to develop and undertake preventative education work had been turned down although a number of other regional departments had approved the use of TEP workers for such a scheme. Letters to the Minister resulted in a reversal of the decision (personal communication, Kate Abel, 1/7/1999).

Table 5: Changes in the funding schemes available to the activist service organisations (1970s-1990s)

Period	Funding Scheme	Administered by
1970s to 1980s: Temporary Employment Schemes		
1970s-1982	Voluntary Organisations Job Creation Programme (VOJCP)	Department of Labour
1982-1986	Voluntary Organisations Training Programme (VOTP)	
1980s-1988	Project Employment Schemes (PEP)	
1985-1990	Job Opportunities Scheme (JOS)	
1980s:	**Grants-in-aid**	
	Examples:	
1983-	Social Welfare Community Funding programme	Department of Social Welfare
1988 -	Community Organisations Grants Scheme (COGS)	Department of Social Welfare and Internal Affairs.
1980s-	Lottery Welfare/Lottery Youth	Internal Affairs/Lottery Board
	City Council Community Development Grants	City Councils
1980s	**Housing assistance**	
	Housing or housing subsidies provided	Housing Corporation City Councils
Mid-1980s to 1990s: Payment for Outputs		
Mid-1980s	ACC Sexual Abuse Counselling	Accident Compensation Corporation
1990s	Community Funding Agency contracts (CFA)	Community Funding Agency

Table 6: Characteristics of three major types of state funding used by activist service groups (1970s – 1990s)

	Temporary Employment Schemes (1970s-1987)	**Grants-in-aid (1980s – 1990s)**	**Contract for Services (1990s)**
Goal of state funding:	Reduce unemployment	Community development	Meeting state objectives and outcomes
State funded:	Individual positions	Inputs into organisations	Service outputs
Grant characteristics:	- Funded project positions - Positions 6 or 12 months	- Annual grants - Funded positions in organisations to provide services - Part-funded organisations	- Annual or three year grants - Funded specified outputs - State part-funded service outputs but demanded full service
Reporting requirements:	- Position filled as agreed - Appropriate supervision or training provided	- Provision of Audited Financial Reports - Report on grant expenditure - Evidence of services provided	- Proof of meeting agency approval standards - Proof of effectiveness of policies and procedures - Evidence that service outputs achieved
Major pressures on how the groups organised:	- Provision of supervision - Project and job specifications	- Increase in reporting requirements - Formalisation of policies/procedure	- Demanded separation between employees and executive - Formalisation of policies and procedures in relation to funding agency standards and government legislation
Relationship with the state:	Indirect and flexible	Direct co-operative relationship	Non-negotiable contracts
Service group autonomy:	Strong	Medium	Weak
Service group outcome:	- Indirect contribution to organisation goals - Supported development of activist groups	- Development and growth of organisations and services - Institutionalised the services the groups provided	- Development of services related to specified state objectives - Institutionalised state agency approved organisation practices and policies

employed five women to keep the centre open between 1984 and 1986 on the schemes (Larkin and Gray 1986:11). The Hamilton Maori Women's Centre used the Voluntary Organisations Training Programme scheme to employ a secretary, an administrator and counsellor in 1985 (Kohu 1985b:43).

The advantages of this form of funding included the schemes' flexibility, and the ability to pay people to undertake specific projects and activities rather than relying on volunteers. The schemes could be used for a wide range of activities, as "criteria were broad and encompassed multi-purpose programmes, as well as accommodating more innovative projects which in many cases would not fit any other funding criteria" (Driver and Robinson 1986:18).[131] The flexibility of the schemes enabled the activist service groups to employ women on flexible hours or over longer periods of time. As one interviewee reported "we did not stick to the conditions, … we usually tried to undermine [the conditions of the temporary employment schemes]" (Donna 1/11/97). Much time was spent trying to work out how to extend the schemes for another six months (Donna 1/11/97). One interviewee argued that the short term nature of the employment schemes unintentionally supported collective goals of informality and equality between members. This maintained the radical orientation of the service group. She argued that "the PEP schemes supported the [organisational] philosophy" because people were not permanently employed, therefore they did not develop careers in the organisation (Iris 29/1/97). However, other activist service members argued that the short-term nature of the schemes meant activist service groups were unable to develop the necessary skill base and expertise in their organisations to develop and maintain services (Anonymous 1983a).

In the mid-1980s, the Labour government decided to phase out the schemes and replace them with the Community Organisations Grants Scheme (COGS) by 1987.[132] They

[131] Driver and Robinson (1986:18) reported "that over $30 million was going into voluntary social services as wages via the Labour Department". This was the primary source of funding for many voluntary service groups in the early to mid-1980s.

[132] Community Organisations Grants scheme grants were to cover (a) wages/salaries and volunteer expenses, (b) project development costs, and (c) activities which offered a direct service to consumers (for example, a community worker rather than an administrator). The Community Organisations Grants Scheme (COGS) was set up to replace service groups' reliance on the temporary employment schemes. The Women's Centres and Women's Health Centres could access COGS through local COGS committees, while Women's Refuges and Rape Crisis groups accessed COGS through their respective national collectives who applied to a National Distribution committee on behalf of the local groups. Both Women's Refuges and Rape Crisis were allocated a portion of $11.5 million to distribute to their local member groups. Another $8.5 million was distributed to local groups by local committees (Driver and Robinson 1986:27). Many of the local

argued that COGS was a more appropriate medium to provide funding to community organisations than the employment schemes which had been set up to reduce unemployment. The government decision to phase out the schemes was a major issue for many of the activist service groups in the mid-1980s. Service groups expressed concern regarding the loss of these schemes (Rankine 1986:10). As details were made known about COGS, groups who had employed more than one worker through the employment schemes reported that the scheme reduced their overall funding. For example, the minutes of a Rape Crisis regional meeting reported that groups working in the area of sexual violence would be granted $435,000 through the COGS scheme. However, with between 40 and 50 groups to share this money, they would receive "at most $10,000 each (not even a worker)" (Anonymous 1985b:no page numbers).[133] Similarly, it was reported that a grant which The Health Alternatives for Women (THAW) received from the Department of Health barely replaced the funding the group had previously received through the temporary employment schemes (Norris, Maskill et al. 1989:56). The replacement of the temporary employment schemes by COGS reflected the increased use of annual grants-in-aid by government departments to fund community groups during the latter half of the 1980s.

The increased use of grants-in-aid to fund the activist service groups

Grants-in-aid changed the nature of the funding relationship between the state and the activist service groups. The characteristics of grants-in-aid and the effects on the groups are summarised in Table 6 on page 188. Grants funded organisations and their activities rather than projects. Grants supplied direct annual funding to the groups for the development of their organisations, and funded 'inputs' such as salaries and overheads that supported the activities of the groups. Government grants-in-aid such as COGS and the Department of Social Welfare grants were intended to enhance community development (Higgins 1997:10; Levett, Keelan et al. 1988:5.11; Smith 1996:11).

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women's centres and health centres applied and received funding from the local COGS committees. Three government departments remained most involved in the scheme: these were Social Welfare, Maori Affairs and Internal Affairs. COGS was located in Social Welfare and paid for out of the DSW vote (Levett, Keelan et al. 1988:4,6).

[133] Quite a number of groups reported employing more than two workers through the temporary employment schemes (Larkin and Gray 1986:11; Vanderpyl 1998b:17).

From 1983, the Department of Social Welfare provided grants-in-aid to the NCIWR to distribute to local Women's Refuges and, from 1985, to the NCRC to distribute to local Rape Crisis groups. During the 1980s, these national collectives distributed grants from the Department of Social Welfare, Lotteries and the national COGS committee (Helen 25/11/97; Judith 30/1/97). Women's Centres and Women's Health Centres started to receive annual grants-in-aid from the state from 1986. Neither the Women's Centres nor the Women's Health Centres formed national collectives to negotiate and distribute state grants on their behalf. As a consequence, each local group applied individually for state grants, such as COGS and Department of Health funding.[134]

Government grants were first considered in 1981 for Women's Refuges, when Wellington and Upper Hutt Refuges together with two philanthropic trusts, the JR McKenzie Trust and the International Year of the Child Telethon Trust, approached the Minister of Social Welfare, George Gair, for funding (Gilson 2001:66; Good 1985). As Gilson reported, "[t]he Minister proposed that funding for refuges would only be considered on a national basis and that a funding proposal needed to include statistical and evaluation research components regarding the need for refuges" (Gilson 2001:66).

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[134] Women's Health Centres did not gain access to government grants-in-aid until 1986. In the mid-1980s "pressure from the Women's Health Committee of the Board of Health and a desire … to explore new ways of providing primary health services" resulted in women's health centres being able to access government funds (Norris, Maskill et al. 1989:22). This development was philosophically aligned with the empowerment model that the early feminist women's health centres had been promoting. In August 1986, the Ministers of Health and Women's Affairs, Michael Bassett and Ann Hercus announced that $125,000 was available to fund two or three 'Well-Women Clinics' as a one-year pilot project (Norris, Maskill et al. 1989:22). (See Norris et al. (1989:6-12) for a discussion on the United States origins of the Well-Women's Clinics, and a description of the New Zealand proposal). As Pat Rosier argues, the funding was open to any groups, not just the Women's Health Centres, and this was a point of contention for the Women's Health Centres.

> Women's health centres around the country have been struggling for years to gain recognition for their work. ... [THAW] opened a well women room in 1984, ... [A]ll of these organisations are struggling financially. ... [T]he concept of well women's clinics came from the feminist health centres – are 'professional' groups now being given the opportunity to parrot the form, while unfunded women's health centres provide the substance? (Rosier 1986:7).

The Well-Women Clinics were to centre "on wellness and the promotion and maintenance of good health rather than on curative services which treat illness. ... the clinics would complement and enhance the primary health care already provided by general practitioners" (Rosier 1986:6). In 1986, the Department began to fund some of the Women's Health Centres to run Well Woman Clinics. The Health Alternatives for Women received $50,000 and the Waikato Women's Health Action Group was granted $25,000 as part of the Well Women's pilot scheme in 1986. The groups received a further $30,000 each in the next year (Norris, Maskill et al. 1989:30). In 1988-89, the Taranaki Well Women's Network was allocated $30,000 and Te Kakano o Te Whanau was allocated $40,000 from this funding source (Norris, Maskill et al. 1989:30).
Over the late 1980s and 1990s, some of the Women's Health Centres also obtained grants from state regional health authorities (HC Group Interview 10/9/97; Karen 9/3/97). A number of Health Collectives attempted to gain contracts from the Health Funding Authorities during the early 1990s. However, only one Health Collective was able to achieve this for a couple of years and then lost the contract (personal communication, 1997, anonymous, Hamilton Health Action Collective member). Groups were often too small to receive contracts from the Health Funding Authorities (HC Group Interview 10/9/97).

In response, the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges (NCIWR) commissioned Synergy Applied Research to provide "an in-depth review of the activities and funding requirements of women's refuges in New Zealand" (Synergy Applied Research 1983:3). The report by Synergy Applied Research stated:

> [A]ll refuges were adamant that some Government funding is essential to enable them to continue their work. … [Government funding was necessary] to enable employment of more much-needed full-time workers in addition to expansion of present facilities and the establishment of more refuges and better housing. … [W]ith improved government funding a base level of activity can be guaranteed and refuges will be acknowledged for the important and necessary public service they provide (Synergy Applied Research 1983:46).

From mid 1983, the government decided to fund the Refuge groups annually through a national grant from the Department of Social Welfare (DSW). In 1983, NCIWR received its first grant of $190,000 from the DSW. In addition they received a $60,000 grant from the Lottery Board (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1983:13). By the 1990-1991 financial year, DSW funding had increased to $2.8 million out of a total of $3.2 million received by the NCIWR (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1991). Although other organisations also provided assistance to Women's Refuge, for example Lotteries and the Housing Corporation, the state rapidly became the major provider of funding to the NCIWR.[135]

In the early 1980s, arguments were being made for state funding of Rape Crisis groups. For example, a 1982 Rape Law Reform report observed:

> It will be evident that many Rape Crisis Centres are providing a worthwhile service to the community, which will undoubtedly benefit from their continued existence. However all Centres have had major financial problems. ... [They] generally live 'from hand to mouth', and are reliant on personal donations and frequent fund-raising efforts. Because they have to devote so much of their energies to fund-raising, they feel that with some justification that the effectiveness of the services they provide to victims is blunted, and they have difficulty in maintaining a continuity of interest and service for their volunteers. If Rape Crisis Centres are to be expected to provide a proper victim support service, therefore, adequate funding is in our view essential (Abel and Kore 1983:2-3 citing a section in the report).

[135] See the NCIWR AGM reports for information about the funding provided by these groups (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1983; 1985; 1986; 1989; 1991; 1992; 1993; 1994; 1995a; 1996; 1997; 1998; 1999).

A 1983 report by Barrington (1983:workshop 19) also argued that it was "desirable [for rape crisis groups] to try and obtain more secure annual funding from a permanent source". She identified the government as "likely to be the only such source".[136]

It was not until 1985 that Rape Crisis groups began to receive annual grants from the Department of Social Welfare. In 1985, Ann Hercus, Minister for Women's Affairs, offered the groups money on the condition that they set up a national organisation to administer the grants.[137] A similar DSW grant programme, offered to NCIWR, was extended to the three national organisations: Te Kakano o te Whanau, Pacific Island Women's Project (PIWP) and National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa (NCRC) (McDonald 1987a:18). In 1986, the NCRC received $213,000, Te Kakano o te Whanau received $196,00 and PIWP $97,000 (Anonymous circa 1988). The newly formed National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa (NCRC) was responsible for collecting information about services from the predominantly Pākehā local Rape Crisis groups and providing this to DSW (Patricia 7/3/97).

An important issue among many participants who attended the initial negotiations for government funding at Paraparaumu was the distribution of funding between the predominantly Pākehā Rape Crisis groups and the Māori groups working in the same area. Participants had initially proposed that half the funding should be distributed to Māori groups and the rest to non-Māori. However, the Minister had disagreed and instead proposed that funding be allocated only to incorporated groups.[138] At the same time, the Minister did provide funds for a Māori group to help other Māori groups become incorporated. The debates about funding with the state officials reflected the determination by both Māori and non-Māori activists in the service groups to support improved state funding for Māori groups in the mid-1980s. State funding for the Rape Crisis members was explicitly political by addressing wider equity issues between Māori and non-Māori.

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[136] Barrington (1983:workshop 19) suggested that, based on the Refuge experience, certain criteria and conditions needed to be met before Rape Crisis groups could obtain funding from the government. These criteria included: having a national organisation, evidence that there was a need for a service and that the groups could supply such a service, collection of some basic statistics, willingness to liaise with other groups in the community, and demonstration that the centres could manage funds.

[137] See Chapter Six, pages 162 to 168 for a description of the development of the three national federations, the NCRC, Te Kakano o te Whanau and the Pacific Island Women's Project.

[138] Few of the Māori groups were incorporated (Abel 1985).

Thus, the state became a major source of funding for the activist service groups during the 1980s. Funding was provided to the organisations in the form of grants to support the development and maintenance of service activities, which were used to employ staff, support volunteers and develop services for women. The acceptance of grants-in-aid required groups to adopt a variety of bureaucratic practices in order to fulfil grant agencies' demands for accountability. Funding agencies required groups to become incorporated,[139] to describe the services to be delivered (for example, 24-hour crisis service), to have detailed job descriptions, to submit financial reports as well as a report about service provision.

The early Department of Social Welfare funding for Women's Refuges required that "[t]he refuge must offer a complete counselling service to all members of the family, including the abuser. ... [T]he refuge must liaise with other agencies offering services in the locality especially in the area of child abuse" (Barrington 1983:workshop 19). Dealing with the abuser involved simply referring them to other agencies and thus was not seen as a threat to the groups' women-only policy or feminist politics. The DSW paid the money to the NCIWR, which then determined how to distribute the funds to local groups, but the DSW had to approve the allocation. In addition, "a Social Welfare Department Officer [joined] … the Management Committee of the National Collective of Refuges to ensure co-ordination" (Barrington 1983:workshop 19). However, Barrington (1983:workshop 19) assured her audience that there was "no control function exercised by the DSW over Refuges nor any attempt to dictate philosophy of the Refuges".[140] In spite of this comment, the Department of Social Welfare requirements illustrate how the state did become more involved in the operation of Refuge. Yet the early Women's Refuge groups did not report experiencing the increased influence of state officials as undermining their autonomy.

Granting agencies usually required reports about numbers of services delivered and grant expenditure. For example, in order to receive Department of Social Welfare grants in the early 1980s, Women's Refuges were required to provide the NCIWR with numbers of women using their services, numbers of phone calls received, as well as

[139] Incorporation required that groups establish particular kinds of board structures with specified meeting procedures, a yearly vote for president, treasurer and secretary positions, specified qualifications for membership, and written procedures for altering the constitution (Rickett 1990:11-15).

[140] By the late 1980s the Department of Social Welfare no longer held a position in the executive group of the NCIWR.

hours worked by Refuge co-ordinators and volunteers (Barrington 1983:workshop 19). This information was then collated by the NCIWR and given to the DSW. Similar demands were placed on the NCRC when they accepted government funding. The Community Organisation Grant Scheme (COGS) required the provision of financial and service reports (every three or six months), as well as attendance at yearly public accountability meetings at which grant recipients reported on their use of funds (Levett, Keelan et al. 1988:5.20-5.21). Both COGS and Lottery often provided grants for specialised positions such as a counsellor, education worker, or co-ordinator and thus required the development of formal job descriptions and formal titles (Heather 27/10/97). Consequently, grants-in-aid did require that groups formalise policies and procedures within their organisations, with written job descriptions, election of officials and mechanisms for reporting services delivered by groups.

State funding never fully covered the costs associated with running the local groups and most also raised funds from other trusts and their local communities. Lottery funding was the major non-government funding source to many of the activist service groups.[141] City Councils provided some grants to local activist service groups. Philanthropic bodies, such as the JR McKenzie Trust, also made major contributions to these groups. Many of the Rape Crisis groups were receiving funding from the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) for sexual abuse counselling (Chris 11/9/97; Jemma 8/9/97; Vanderpyl 1998b:20). Refuge was unique among the activist service groups in setting up a separate foundation to raise funds for Women's Refuges. [142]

[141] Lottery, through the Lottery Welfare group, was a major funder of many of the activist service groups through out the 1980s and 1990s. The Lottery Grants Board distributed funds raised through various lotteries such as the Golden Kiwi, and more recently Lotto (Fowke 1989:4-5). Groups mostly obtained grants from Lottery Welfare (called Welfare Services prior to mid-1980s) which provided grants to voluntary non-profit welfare organisations (Anonymous 1986a:4).

[142] The New Zealand Women's Refuge Foundation was established as the fundraising arm of Refuge in 1986. The Foundation organised the annual national appeals, developed corporate sponsorship and held fundraising events. Its role was to "bridge the gap between the financial assistance given to Women's Refuge and the true cost of Refuge services" (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 2003a:no page numbers). Between 1990 and 1998, the Foundation distributed nearly $1.9 million to the NCIWR and its affiliated groups (Hercus and O'Regan 1998:7). The Foundation was disestablished in 1999 and a fundraising unit was set in the National Office with parallel positions for both Tangata Whenua and non-Māori /Tauiwi (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 2003a). A final report by the New Zealand Refuge Foundation suggests closure was due to loss of staff, the end of an office lease and the NCIWR decision to examine its own fund-raising options (Hercus and O'Regan 1998:2). This closure may also have been influenced by tensions over the Foundation pursuing corporate sponsorship from Shell, but having to withdraw as local Refuge groups affiliated to the NCIWR rejected the sponsorship on ethical grounds. Local groups argued that the company had a poor human rights and environmental record in Nigeria (Barber 1997:15).

By the end of the 1980s, grants-in-aid had become the most common mechanism through which groups were funded. Arguments for state funding were made on the grounds that groups provided a valuable and needed service for women and children. The services that were funded (for example, Refuge Shelter, Rape Crisis counselling, Well Women's Clinics) did align with government objectives of providing both crisis and preventative services. Although grants-in-aid placed pressure on groups to develop more formal procedures, many of the service groups were able to continue to operate according to radical feminist collective principles, and accept grants from government during the 1980s. However, this situation was to change dramatically during the 1990s. The co-operative relationship and high level of autonomy experienced by the groups was challenged by the development of contract funding.

Contract funding by the state – the Community Funding Agency

The development of 'purchase of services', market rentals and community organisation approval processes by the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) occurred in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Saville-Smith and Bray 1994:13).[143] The developments heralded significant changes to funding of most community groups, not just the activist service groups examined in this thesis. The characteristics of contract funding are summarised in Table 6 on page 188. The changes to state funding were part of wider social and political changes to the role of government in the provision of welfare services, and occurred in the context of major legislative changes and restructuring of state services (Boston, Martin et al. 1991; Kelsey 1993; Kelsey 1997).[144] The following section will focus primarily on the impact of DSW contract funding on Women's

[143] Contracting for services was used by many of the agencies associated with the Department of Health, Department of Education and Department of Social Welfare (Saville-Smith and Bray 1994).

[144] This process had started in the 1980s with the election of the 1984 Labour government and was continued with the election of the National government in 1990 (Kelsey 1993; Kelsey 1997; Miller 2003). Each successive government introduced Acts that were influential in changing state funding assistance and the relationship between government and the voluntary sector. These included the Public Finance Act (1989), the State Sector Act (1988) and the Employment Contracts Act (1991) (Higgins 1997; Saville-Smith and Bray 1994; Smith 1996). Associated with the shift to contracting was the introduction of the 'good employer' provision in the States Services Sector Act (1988) (Boxall 1991; Walsh 1991). The 'good employer' provisions of the State Sector Act (1988) influenced state demands for accountability in terms of the internal management of organisations. The impact of the 'good employer' on the activist service groups is examined further in Chapter Eight.

Refuge and Rape Crisis groups.[145] The 'purchase of services' contract process developed by the DSW had a major impact on the autonomy and organisation of these activist service groups in the 1990s.

The Department of Social Welfare first introduced the 'purchase of services' contract model of funding community groups in 1990 (Smith 1996:10). By 1991, all funding had to be issued under the 'purchase for services' model rather than the 'grants-in-aid' model.[146] In 1992, as a consequence of state sector restructuring, the New Zealand Community Funding Agency (CFA) was established as one of three 'business units' of the Department of Social Welfare. CFA was responsible for negotiating and monitoring contracts with voluntary groups which were approved against standards set by the Agency (Smith 1996:10-11). The shift to contracting community groups for services by the DSW was part of an ongoing process of economic rationalism and redefinition of the funding relationship between the state sector and the voluntary sector. For example, the Public Finance Act (1989) introduced a whole chain of accountability, based around specified service 'outputs' in state departments, that impacted on the relationship between the state and community groups. The Children, Young Persons and their Families Act (1989) specifically "required all voluntary sector organisations be 'approved' against set standards of service quality before they were able to be funded to deliver services under the Act" (Smith 1996:10). Legislation, such as the Public Finance

[145] In 1991, the NCIWR had received a total of nearly $3 million from the Department of Social Welfare (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1991). The other two major funding agencies provided only a fraction of that amount, for example, Lottery Welfare ($152,000) and the JR McKenzie Trust ($80,000) (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1991). In 1997, the 24 Rape Crisis groups affiliated to the NCRC were reported to have received nearly $1 million in funding, of which at least 50% came from the Community Funding Agency (previously the Department of Social Welfare) (Anonymous 1996/97:no page numbers; Duggan 1997:3). Some of the Health Collectives and Women's Centres also received CFA contracts during the 1990s (for example, see Community Funding Agency 1998a). The following Women's Centres and Women's Health Centres are recorded as receiving funding from CFA in 1998 (Community Funding Agency 1998a:44-120): Pacific Island Women's Health Project (Auckland) Inc., Papakura Women's Support Centre, West Auckland Women's Centre, Women's Collective Wellsford Warkworth Inc., Te Awamutu Women's Centre Inc., The Thames Women's Centre Trust, Waikato Women's Health Action Centre Trust, New Plymouth Women's Centre Inc., Kapiti Women's Health Collective Inc., Lower Hutt Women's Centre.

[146] The shift to contracting affected many community groups. For example, in 1996 Verna Smith reported that CFA "had a budget for the purchase of Non Departmental Outputs of $100 million in the fiscal year 1995/6. Its budget [was] utilised to make a contribution to the costs of some 1600 providers of services" (Smith 1996:13). The introduction of contracting by CFA has attracted a much wider critique by those involved with voluntary agencies. MacKinlay Douglas Limited (1998) argued that the shift to contracting was in itself not the problem within the New Zealand context. The issue was the way in which CFA had introduced contracting as it failed to create partnerships between the state and the voluntary groups with whom they had service contracts. It was criticised for being one-sided in the interests of CFA and failed to acknowledge groups' value base or their philosophy.

Act (1989) or the State Sector Act (1988), did not specifically make contracts for services between the state and community groups compulsory. However, state officials argued that contracts were a better vehicle for achieving transparency and proving value for money. For example, Verna Smith, policy and strategy manager for CFA, argued that contracting fitted with the demands in the Public Finance Act for "achieving greater transparency for funding decisions and demonstrable value for money, [while] grants were seen to provide a weaker vehicle to achieve this by enabling service providers to retain considerable autonomy" (Smith 1996: 9). The DSW, and later CFA, promoted contracting or 'purchase of services' as facilitating the development of fairer, more open, client-oriented and culturally appropriate service funding agreements with community groups (Department of Social Welfare 1989: cited in Saville-Smith, 1994:13-14).

The above developments resulted in the relationship between voluntary sector and state sector shifting to that of a purchaser-provider relationship in which there was a "separation of interests, roles and functions between principals (funders) and agents (providers)" (McKinlay Douglas Limited 1998:19). Contracting was part of a wider focus on reducing the role of the public sector in provision of social welfare to "the functions of policy development, resource allocation, specification of services, setting standards, monitoring and evaluation" (McKinlay Douglas Limited 1998:18). For the voluntary sector, the process of contracting was associated with a tighter specification of services or 'outputs' that the government would fund, along with increased accountability and performance requirements (Nowland-Foreman 1995:13). Three aspects of CFA contracts specifically challenged the autonomy of the activist service groups:

1. Funding of specified government defined service 'outputs'

CFA contracts were given only to those organisations whose service provisions were aligned with specific government/departmental 'outputs' (Smith 1996:13). The public sector focused on the "specification of outputs intended to contribute to government's desired outcomes" (McKinlay Douglas Limited 1998:18). The relationship between the voluntary and state sector changed to one in which the state was involved in specifying and funding the "type, quality and quantity of outputs [required] from service providers" (McKinlay Douglas Limited 1998:18). As a consequence, the services

contracted were driven by government concerns rather than community initiatives (Leigh 1994:34-35).

2. The agency approval process

Activist service groups eligibility for CFA funding was dependent on achieving and maintaining approved agency status. The Community Funding Agency accredited and approved "all providers of social and welfare services prior to contracting with them for delivery of services" (Smith 1996:13). In order to be eligible to receive a funding contract from CFA, groups had to prove that they fulfilled the standards determined by CFA. The standards were framed in terms of legislative requirements of the State Sector Act, the Employment Contracts Act and a host of requirements related to safety and health legislation. The standards were set out in Key Operating Policies, Procedures and Control Systems (KOPPS). KOPPS required groups to describe services they provided, along with practice and operations documents in relation to the standards (Thompson Powell Consulting circa 1999:24). In addition, Human Resources and Operating Statistics (HROS) were to be provided in an annual report on the actual operation of the groups as required by CFA standards set out in KOPPS (Thompson Powell Consulting circa 1999:24). HROS demonstrated the effectiveness of the policies and procedures that groups had described in the KOPPS document. It focused on groups' internal control systems to ensure that groups did not breach government legislation and policies in areas of human resources, financial management and services (Gilson 2001:268). The process involved developing written policies and procedures on almost every aspect of the management and delivery of the service in relation to CFA standards.

3. Part funding of service 'outputs' while demanding full services

The Community Funding Agency demanded full service delivery in order for the group to receive funding but only partially funded the service, for example, groups had to provide a 24-hour crisis line that was only 50% funded by CFA. As Smith reported, in 1995/96 on "average the contribution [by CFA] represent[ed] 25% of the actual service cost to the service provider but the range [was] 5% to 100%" (Smith 1996:13). There was also an onerous claw back clause in the contract which "permit[ed] NZCFA to demand the return of funds from an organisation meeting, for example [only] 90 % of its service targets even when it may receive, for example, only 10 % of its income" from CFA (New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services 1998:15). The part-

funding was a major contradiction because CFA 'purchased' a service while only making a part contribution towards the costs of providing that service. CFA acted as if they had bought the whole organisation by firstly, requiring that the organisation go through an agency approval process, and by secondly, demanding much higher service outputs than paid for by CFA (New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services 1998:20-21).

The 1990s signified major changes to the ways in which many of the activist service organisations were funded, along with threats to levels of funding.[147] During the 1990s contracting increased state influence and control over the activities of the activist service groups (Higgins 1997; Leigh 1994; New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services 1998; Nowland-Foreman 1995). The above outline of funding developments highlights the shift from reliance on temporary employment schemes, to grants-in-aid, and to contract/purchase of services during the 1980s and 1990s. It also emphasises the way in which service group reliance on state departments for funding increased dramatically over the 1980s and 1990s. The state became the major source of funding for activist service groups. The following section examines the impact of the shift from 'grants-in-aid' to 'purchase of services' on the activist service organisations.

Institutionalising Services, Deinstitutionalising Collectives

By the end of the 1980s, the state had become the major funder of many of the activist service groups and this trend continued throughout the 1990s.[148] State funding enabled

[147] The economic rationalism that influenced changes in CFA funding of community groups has also been part of changes in other sources of funding activist service groups depend upon. For example, changes to housing assistance by the New Zealand Housing Corporation for Women's Refuges were a major source of concern for the NCIWR during the 1990s and increased their dependence on CFA funding. In 1992, when responsibility for community housing was transferred to the Department of Social Welfare, NCIWR were assured that no additional costs would be borne by the Women's Refuges as a consequence of this change (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1992:30). The change brought to an end the Special Tenancy Housing Programme and the 'peppercorn rental' Women's Refuges had paid, and introduced market rents for many Women's Refuges. It was expected that the difference between the market rent and the housing subsidy from CFA would be met by a contribution from women using the services. Yet, as the NCIWR pointed out, the women using the services have always contributed and neither Refuges nor users of the service could afford the additional costs of housing (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1993:2-3). This trend also impacted on many of the other activist service groups as many local councils were questioning their role in providing community housing to local community groups. Both the Auckland Women's Centre and the Palmerston North Women's Centre groups were facing eviction as the councils threatened to sell their houses (Anonymous 1996d:24; Fill and Hill 1996).

[148] In the 1990s, there were few new activist service groups among the Rape Crisis, Refuge, Women's Centres and Women's Health Centres. New groups that were established during the 1990s, included the

the activist service groups to develop and maintain services 'by women for women'. In the late 1990s, groups were providing services in areas of information, counselling, crisis support, shelter and education for women and children.[149] Their services were seen as a necessary part of the provision of state welfare services to women and children. At the same time, the shift to contract funding challenged the activist service groups' commitment to collective democratic ways of working in ways that the groups had not experienced with grants-in-aid funding. The CFA agency approval process, and shift to partial funding of outputs, contributed to a process of deinstitutionalising the radical feminist collective. Groups struggled to maintain collective democratic practices as a result of increased demands for accountability and the shift to contract funding reduced service group autonomy from the state.

Activist service members' views of state funding had changed significantly from the early 1980s. In contrast to the early 1980s, few participants in the groups appeared to question (either in reports or interviews) whether or not the groups should accept state funding in the late 1980s and 1990s. It was accepted, almost without question, that state funding should support the development and maintenance of the service organisation. Funding by the state was an integral aspect of the ability of groups to provide services. The arguments made by the groups for increasing funding changed over time in response to the changes in funding regimes by the state. Prior to the impact of contract funding, groups argued that increases in funding were necessary because of the

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Hawera Rape Crisis group, Hutt Valley Counselling and Kapiti Rape Crisis (Anonymous 1997:no page numbers). Increasing numbers of groups were providing ethnic-specific services, for example, Te Puna O Te Aroha Maori Women's Refuge in Whangerei, which operates alongside Tryphina House, and Tangata Piringa, a Maori Women's Refuge based in Hawkes Bay (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1991:1). Over the 1990s, the number of Aotearoa/New Zealand Women's Refuges affiliated to the NCIWR remained at 51 (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1991; National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 2003a). Among the groups affiliated to the NCRC, there was a reduction from 27 groups in 1992 to 21 groups by 1999 (Harvey and Moon 1993:147; Vanderpyl and Sandbrook 2000:1). This was the result of some groups closing and others disaffiliating from the NCRC. Some, like Opotiki Rape Crisis, closed as other groups were providing many of the services they had provided (Personal Communication, Rauora Waterson, 16/5/99). Others closed in the early 1990s as a result of inadequate funding (Harvey and Moon 1993:147-148). A number of already existing groups affiliated to, or disaffiliated from, one of the two national collectives; for example, Wanganui Rape Crisis joined the NCRC in approximately 1995/96 (Personal Communication, Margot London, 20/7/97), while Battered Women's Trust affiliated to the NCIWR in 1991 after having disaffiliated in 1986 (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1991:1). Overall, many of the activist service groups established during the 1980s survived through to the end of the 1990s. The Women's Health Centres and the Women's Centres suggest similar trends to Refuge and Rape Crisis. Perusals of women's groups listed in today's New Zealand phone book highlight the ongoing existence of many of the groups identified in Chapter Six.

[149] Examples of services provided by these groups during the 1990s are described in the introduction to the thesis.

pressures voluntary groups experienced delivering much needed services, and to address increased demand for their services. As a result of low levels of overall funding, groups remained reliant on volunteers to deliver many of the services.[150] The groups were usually focused on increasing the amount of state funding they received. For example, a *Growth Research Project* report produced by the NCRC argued that local groups' required more funding (Lynch 1990; Wither 1990). The NCRC argued that inadequate funding was limiting "the range of services and resources available to a group for dealing with stress. This contributes to a higher turnover of paid and unpaid workers" (Lynch 1990:7). The NCRC presented the report to the Social Welfare Minister, Michael Cullen. However, the Minister responded that "the state could not afford to fund the organisation fully and urged the community to give financial support" (Lynch 1990:7).

In response to the CFA part-funding contract regime, groups began to demand full funding of the 'real' costs of providing the services they delivered (including the costs of replacing volunteers with paid workers). This involved developing more sophisticated analyses of the actual costs of delivering services. Increasingly, both the NCRC and NCIWR argued that the state had a responsibility to fully fund their services rather than partially funding the services and leaving groups struggling to find other funding or remaining reliant on the unpaid labour of many women. The 1996 report by Snively, commissioned by the NCIWR, argued that the government actually only funded 54% of Women's Refuge costs (Snively 1996:38). The NCIWR used the report to improve their ability to negotiate better funding from CFA (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1996:2).[151] A 1997 Rape Crisis study reported a funding shortfall of 37% to fully fund services provided by the groups (Duggan 1997:3). These reports were a response to the failure of the state to significantly increase funding levels during the 1990s even as demand for services increased, and to the partial funding of

[150] During the 1990s many of the activist service groups employed at least one paid worker to co-ordinate and deliver services, but had many unpaid workers involved in service delivery. For example, of 228 Rape Crisis collective members in 20 groups, only 22% were employed by the group and most of these women were employed part-time (Duggan 1997:3). The NCIWR reported that, in 1998, there were a total of 159 paid workers and 462 unpaid workers (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1999:10). Similar reports of few paid workers and many volunteers can be found in the 1996 *Broadsheet* on Women's Centres in Aotearoa/New Zealand; for example, the Lower Hutt Women's Centre reported having two paid workers and eight volunteers (Anonymous 1996b:21).

[151] A later NCIWR report suggests that CFA only contributed 26% of the economic cost of providing Refuge services (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1997:3).

services by CFA while demanding full services be delivered by the groups (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1994:7,10; 1997:3; 1998:22). Activist service groups had shifted away from the early 1980s ambivalence about accepting state funding. Instead, the arguments about state funding focused on increasing the level of funding they should receive from the state to deliver the services.

Yet, the implementation of contracting by CFA ultimately challenged activist service groups' autonomy from the state and contributed to the deinstitutionalisation of the radical feminist collective. The new contract funding regime added additional layers of bureaucracy to the organisations. The CFA contracts were implicated in the "micro management and excessive control of voluntary organisations" by CFA and gave CFA the potential to "control day to day operations and policies of contracting organisations" (New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services 1998:15).[152] The shift to CFA contracting involved a reduction in community group autonomy from the state.

Activist service groups' position vis-à-vis the major funding agencies of the state appeared to weaken considerably. The contract process was experienced as a largely non-negotiable process as CFA sent letters to groups telling them how much funding they could get and which services CFA would purchase. This was not simply an issue for the activist service groups examined in this study. Many welfare groups reported a lack of negotiation about funding of services with CFA. Complaints about the "take it or leave it" approach by CFA officials were common (Leigh 1994:85; New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services 1998:14-15). The NCIWR Annual General Meeting reports during the early 1990s suggest a struggle to maintain a co-operative relationship with CFA.[153] For example, in 1994, they reported being "frustrated at the lack of negotiation, or even consultation, with us over the [proposed CFA contract] changes (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1994:11).[154] Comments

[152] Other issues for voluntary groups included community groups having to "track down bits and pieces of funding and go through lengthy assessment, contracting, negotiation and accountability procedures" all in the interests of competition and efficiency (Anonymous 1990b:3). Often, salaries of community group employees were made up through several funding contracts, or parts of the service were simply not able to be funded. Also, the needs of clients rarely fitted tidily into the specified 'outputs', and, as a result, many community groups were working with multiple contracts and grants with different government and non-government organisations in order to meet the multiple needs of clients.

[153] This was also a feature of the relationship between the NCIWR and the Housing Corporation. The NCIWR outlined how the relationship had shifted from one of partnership with the Housing Corporation to a landlord-tenant relationship (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1993:29).

[154] For example, in 1986, as a consequence of major conflicts in the national collective, the NCIWR national executive requested that the Minister of Social Welfare conduct a review of Refuge structure, growth and

in the draft action plans developed by the NCRC also point to major tensions in the relationship with CFA and local Rape Crisis groups (Core Group 1997; National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa 1994). This reflected a change from the relationship that had developed during the 1980s, where references to ongoing networking, joint meetings and participation in initiatives sponsored by the DSW suggest the development of co-operative relations between the two national collectives and the DSW.[155]

The major issue with CFA contract funding for the activist service groups was the loss of autonomy from the state. More than the other models of funding (for example, temporary employment schemes and grants-in-aid), contracting was explicitly associated with the deinstitutionalisation of the radical feminist collective. These changes and the impact of the changes associated with each of the three funding models are summarised in Table 6 on page 188.

The 1980s 'grants-in-aid' environment supported significant levels of activist service group autonomy. The demands for accountability by funding agencies were managed by groups in ways that minimised challenges to collective values and practices in the groups.[156] Within this funding environment, groups retained autonomy in how they

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need for funding. The Review Team consisted of three members from the Departments of Social Welfare and Justice, and the Ministry of Women's Affairs (Review Team 1986:57). The Review Team supported the NCIWR call for the establishment and funding of ethnic-specific Refuges for Māori and Pacific Island groups (Review Team 1986:5,18), as well as a need for increased funding and the development of a more elaborate regional system of representation for local Women's Refuges.

[155] At the same time, it must be highlighted that the relationship between the NCRC and the government was tense in the late 1980s. A major issue emerged for Rape Crisis regarding a FVPCC project proposal to pilot a Domestic Violence programme from the US in New Zealand. Within the NCRC it was argued that Rape Crisis involvement in the programme would determine the organisations' future as engaging in "paternalism or empowerment" (Janey 1989:25). A NCRC participant in this debate argued:

> [The] process of intervention does not rely on wimmins [sic] choice which is in direct conflict with the Rape Crisis philosophy. It relies on the intervention of a system which is in itself patriarchal and oppressive - 'The Justice System' -, and which by our involvement in the system we condone. I believe that a consistant [sic] approach is important and that counselling for men is better than jail. However, I am also aware that wimmins [sic] groups have never been fully funded or resourced and so our ability to empower wimmin [sic] has never been tested" (Janey 1989:25).

While there was some approval for the programme, the national collective decided not to become involved in the FVPCC initiative on the basis that this system did not empower women (J. Underwood, 27/11/1995, Personal communication) and the NCRC resigned from the FVPCC. The decision by the NCRC to not support a major intervention by the FVPPC, and consequent withdrawal from the committee, reduced the level of co-operation between the NCRC and the state. This decision was revisited at the 1993 and 1994 AGM meetings when it was recognised that local Rape Crisis groups were in effect involved in many of these programmes (National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa 1993; National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa 1994).

[156] At the same time, it must be recognised that, even while receiving 'grants-in-aid' from the state, groups did experience ongoing challenges to maintaining radical feminist collective values and practices in their groups. Grants-in-aid encouraged the growth of services and with this growth came a need to formalise policies,

delivered services and managed their organisations. For the Rape Crisis and Women's Refuge groups, this sense of autonomy was enhanced by NCIWR and the NCRC negotiating funding for local groups during the 1980s (Gilson 2001:81).

In the 1990s, procedures associated with CFA contracts increased reporting and accountability demands on the groups in ways that made significant inroads on their autonomy. These demands are implicated in the adoption of hierarchical management structures within some of the activist service groups. As already described, the relationship between the CFA and the groups was a major area of concern. Yet few of the women interviewed identified CFA contract requirements as challenging the maintenance of collective practices and values within the activist service organisations (Helen 25/11/97; Iris 29/1/97). Most commonly, the increased paperwork generated by CFA demands was the focus of complaint (for example, Ingrid 27/2/97; Jemma 8/9/97). Only Helen, who worked with many of the local Refuge collectives, noted how tensions were increasing for Women's Refuges:

> I believe that Refuge is struggling with collective [ways of working] because we were basically under siege. . . . We have accountability to the outside funders. There is now a real pressure on us to meet demands that we have not had to do before. ... The fact that we are not a hierarchy and do not want to be is under threat. Consensus decision-making, through which individual women are equally valued for their input is being threatened [by the demands of CFA] (Helen 25/11/97).

Helen also linked the difficulties of retaining collective values with inadequate funding: "Working collectively is an expression of our values. We know [working collectively] has been undermined in the last few years because we are under such stress to deliver in a crisis situations in terms of resources" (Helen 25/11/97). Underfunding was associated with groups operating in a continual crisis and in these circumstances it was difficult to work collectively.

The NCRC and NCIWR responded differently to the changes wrought by the introduction of CFA funding. In the early 1990s, the NCRC devolved its funding role to local Rape Crisis groups (Julie McGowan, 28/4/2004, personal communication). Local Rape Crisis groups had to meet the KOPPS and HROS criteria and apply for funds

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procedures and record-keeping. Growth of services increased tensions within organisations as they attempted to sustain egalitarian relations while implementing more formal systems of administration, policies and procedures (Riger 1994; Vanderpyl 1998b; Wither 1990). However, the pressure to develop bureaucratic or hierarchical forms of organisation was not an explicit feature of 'grants-in-aid' provided by the Department of Social Welfare.

individually rather than the NCRC negotiating a national contract with CFA. Accountability and reporting was managed through a relationship between each local group and their local CFA official.[157] Local Rape Crisis groups around the country experienced significant variability in the quality of their relationship with local CFA outreach workers, the rates paid for services and reporting requirements.[158] This change was not simply a consequence of contract funding, but also influenced by Department of Social Welfare policy of decentralisation, and a move away from national to local funding by CFA (Leigh 1994:119; Smith 1996:13).

In contrast to the NCRC, the NCIWR elected to continue with a national funding contract for local groups with CFA. The NCIWR did not devolve funding to local groups and continued to distribute state funding to local groups. As Roma Balzer reports, the NCIWR "resisted the move to local funding in the early 1990s by yelling really loudly. We got Refuges activated and we also had a couple of friends within the department who advocated a strong line for us remaining as a nationally funded project" (Roma Balzer, NCIWR, personal communication 3/5/2004).[159] Maintaining the national funding role is implicated in some of the restructuring of the NCIWR National Office that took place over the 1990s (Piper 1994:9). The NCIWR retained Core Group, but reorganised the National Office to include: the employment of a Chief Executive Officer in 1996 (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1996:2); a Quality Assurance manager in 1997 (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1997:5); and during 1998/99 the introduction of multiple business units each run by a manager (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1999:9). The National Office was transformed into a hierarchical organisation with Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and managers of distinct business units. In this way, the structure of the National Office began to mirror the state agencies with which they were negotiating

[157] The decision to move to local groups applying for funding through local distribution committees altered the relationship between local groups and the NCRC. This will be examined in Chapter Nine in relation to the attempts by NCRC to implement bicultural partnership within the national organisation.

[158] This information came to me through my role as national statistics co-ordinator for Rape Crisis and in discussions with groups.

[159] Maintaining a national role in distributing funding strengthened the relationship between the national collective and local groups affiliated to the NCIWR during the 1990s. As will be examined in Chapter Nine, this role enabled the NCIWR to influence local group practices to a much greater extent than occurred in the NCRC, and is implicated in significant differences between the two organisations in relation to the implementation and development of bicultural partnerships. This theme will be examined in Chapter Nine. However, in 2004, the major state funding agency of the NCIWR has signalled a desire to shift to Women's Refuges applying individually at a local level for funding (Sheryl Hann, NCIWR, personal communication, 28/4/2004). It will be interesting to follow future developments that arise from any changes made.

national funding contracts. The changes appeared to be an attempt to develop an equivalent status in relationships with CFA officials as NCIWR managers and CEOs negotiated with CFA.

The new contracting environment added a considerable administrative burden to the activist service groups.[160] Groups responded by developing various administrative systems to report on service activities, as well as policies and procedures related to the CFA agency approval standards. Groups affiliated to the NCRC each developed their own systems of reporting as they negotiated individual service contracts with local CFA officials. For many of the groups affiliated to the NCRC, this doubled the burden of reporting as NCRC national statistics collection differed from CFA reporting requirements. In contrast, the NCIWR remained responsible for CFA funding distribution to local group and reporting to CFA on local group activities. Consequently, in 1997 they developed a quality control programme for local Women's Refuges that incorporated both KOPPS and HROS, along with reporting on service outputs (Lynch 1997:5; Lynch 1998:7). The programme sought to evaluate each refuge on how well they met the standards of service required by the national collective, legislation and funding bodies. It was recognised that many of the CFA standards heralded some important and desirable principles of service delivery. These principles included ensuring a service was based on identified need, the provision of culturally safe services, the competent management of the finances of the organisation and the inclusion of whānau/family and client advocate input into the organisation (Community Funding Agency 1998b). One of the NCIWR National Office workers involved in developing the quality control programme suggested there were some positive features associated with writing up of policies and procedures as required by CFA:

> The main job is to help Refuges get policies and procedures written up because they are required by funders. Whether they are required by funders or not I would like to see those policies and procedures in use because they ensure consistencies in our practice and then services can be reviewed. I see them as being a very useful way of bringing in consistency, accountability and ensuring women are quite clear about what they are able to or not able to do and how. As volunteers tend to have a high turnover, it means that there is something women can refer to on paper. I see it as a benefit (Helen 25/11/97).

[160] This was also a feature of ACC funding. ACC required that referral for counselling had to come from a registered medical practitioner and that counselling beyond 20 hours required special approval by the Corporation. They also required a report for every 20 hours of counselling that an individual received (Mason 1989).

Helen argued that the quality programme would improve services for both users of the services and for workers in the organisation as it formalised what had previously been informal unwritten rules.[161] Helen reported that many of the Refuge groups saw the reporting as a huge drag in terms of time. Yet "most see it as beneficial and a good idea and they do want to become more structured and professional" (Helen 25/11/97).

However, it was the increased reporting and compliance demanded by the state in terms of not only *what* services the groups delivered but also *how* the services were delivered (Piper 1994:9, emphasis added) that challenged the commitment to egalitarian and participatory processes in the activist service groups. Groups had to report on organisation structure and internal monitoring annually. Some of the standards related to how groups organised and these created tensions for the activist organisations. In particular, standard seven, which stated "the organisation has a defined management structure" and required that members of the group's executive should not also be employees of the organisation, created problems in collective organisations based on participatory management processes and equality between all members of the organisation. Groups were changing their organisational structure to meet the CFA agency approval standards. Gilson's (2001) study of an Aotearoa/New Zealand Women's Refuge identified how the group responded to funding changes by establishing a separate "governance structure that maintained overall responsibility for financial matters, employment issues and policies regarding service delivery and accountability measures as required through its KOPPS document" (Gilson 2001:269).[162] Gilson describes how, during the 1990s, the Refuge implemented a separate governance board responsible for the organisation and from which paid workers were excluded. The governance board employed a formal staff leader to manage the day to day operations of the Refuge and other staff. Gilson argues that this development was largely due to funder demands for accountability and also to the lack of friendship networks, historical connections and understanding of collective processes by members of the governing board (Gilson 2001:428-429). A similar pattern of adopting a separate governance board was noted by MacGibbon in her study of a Christchurch Refuge (MacGibbon 2002). The Christchurch Women's Centre reported

[161] Members of a health collective also reported that "[d]oing the standards, it is great to have them [for example, KOPPS and HROS]" (HC Group Interview 10/9/97).

[162] These issues will be examined in Chapter Eight in relation to the impact of addressing tensions in the employer-employee relationship.

changing from a Collective to a Management Team in 1996. The changes were made in response to the "increasingly tight accountability structures being imposed on us by our funders" (Anonymous 1996a:22). It was reported that the change averted closure of the Centre, but that there had been much debate and resistance to the adoption of what was seen as a hierarchical 'non-feminist' way of organising (Anonymous 1996a:22). Although the groups interviewees belonged to had not developed separate governance boards like those identified by Gilson, they were struggling with the maintenance of collective principles of organisation in the area of paid worker-volunteer and employee-employer relations. The struggles the groups reported were influenced by the shift to contracting as outlined in this chapter, as well as by wider social and political changes. These will be examined further in the next chapter.

In conclusion, services provided by the activist service groups had become part of the array of state funded welfare services by the end of the 1980s. In the early 1980s, acceptance of government funding was accompanied by fears about cooptation and deradicalisation of the organisations. However, activists in these service groups mostly concluded that it was possible to manage the risks associated with government funding. During the 1980s, this belief was supported by the development of a largely co-operative relationship with state departments such as the Department of Social Welfare. The acceptance of state funding by activist service groups does not permit simple conclusions of cooptation, deradicalisation or the positioning of the activist service groups as wholly inside the state.

The examination of how activist service groups obtained state funding from the 1980s points to a view of groups negotiating for stable funding, while also addressing equity issues in funding and maintaining their autonomy. By the 1990s, few groups questioned the acceptance of state funding. Indeed, most groups worked hard to obtain state funding. However, the introduction of contract funding in the early 1990s reduced the autonomy of the activist service groups. The introduction of standards that specified how groups organised challenged groups' commitment to collective ways of working, demanded increased formalisation of group policies and procedures to meet CFA standards and challenged the informal basis of collective organising. Consequently, the

state influenced the organisational structures and practices of service groups more than had been the case with the grants-in-aid model of funding. Contract funding contributed explicitly to the process of deinstitutionalising the radical feminist collective and also reduced service group autonomy from the state. Based on the above, it would be easy to conclude that the groups had been coopted and deradicalised by the state. Yet funding continued to be perceived as explicitly political by the groups. Groups positioned themselves as both inside and outside of the state. For the groups, accepting government funding was not just about providing services for women, but also about sustaining radical feminist politics and organisational practices in the groups.

The next two chapters examine the groups' struggle to maintain a commitment to collective democratic processes of organising and a radical politics of social justice. They further demonstrate the complexity of activist service groups' relationships with the state and the struggles over meanings and practices associated with activist service groups commitment to feminist politics. The next chapter examines debates about workplace governance. The relationship between employer and employee was a major source of conflict in the groups. It became a major difference that challenged the feminist commitment to egalitarian relationships between women in the activist service organisations.

CHAPTER EIGHT

EMPLOYMENT CONFLICTS: THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN COLLECTIVITY AND BUREAUCRACY IN THE ACTIVIST SERVICE ORGANISATIONS

Organisations do change over time. In this chapter I examine the formalisation of workplace relationships and the struggle over the emergence of formal hierarchy in the groups. These developments were associated with formalisation of policies and procedures, an increased division of labour and a stratification of authority (Gilson 2001; Riger 1994; Vanderpyl 1998b). Workplace relations, and the ways in which the groups managed these relationships, were key areas of tension and conflict during the 1990s. Many women I interviewed described major protracted conflicts that occurred between paid workers and other members of the collective. They identified two key areas of tension in these conflicts: first, the increased reliance on paid workers to undertake much of the work of the organisation; and second, the pressures to develop formal structures and procedures for managing employment relationships. Both areas challenged the ideals of feminist egalitarian non-hierarchical organisations. The management of the relationship between paid workers and other members of the organisation was pivotal in the struggle to sustain egalitarian relations in the service groups. By the 1990s, most of the activist service groups included in this study had developed a modified collective form of organisation.

In this chapter, I first outline models of feminist organisational change from grassroots collective-democratic organisation to feminist bureaucracy. Second, I examine processes of change in the activist service organisations as a result of increased

bureaucratisation. This process of change is examined in relation to increasing workforce specialisation and formalisation of employment relations. Third, I discuss the employment conflicts groups experienced as they modified the collective democratic way of working. The conflicts arose as a result of attempting to bring together two conflicting institutional logics, that of collectivity and of bureaucracy.

Processes of Change in the Activist Service Organisation

Over time, few collective groups were able to maintain a completely 'flat structure' (Gilson 2001; Riger 1984; Riger 1994). Many groups adopted methods of bureaucratic administration and control, in response to both external and internal factors, which resulted in increased differentiation of positions, authority and responsibilities. Many groups developed workplace governance relations based on hierarchical values. Workplace governance refers to the ways in which authority and responsibility are shared in organisations. It refers to both the 'executive' activities of the organisation (for example, the organisation philosophy, development of policies and long term planning activities) and the governance of employees of the organisation. This section examines some of the models various scholars have proposed for analysing processes of feminist organisational change (Hyde 2000; Iannello 1992; Riger 1994; Thomas 1999).

Stephanie Riger (1994) developed a life cycle model for examining organisational change among feminist collective groups. She outlined the shift from collectivity to bureaucracy in terms of a process of increasing formalisation of policies, procedures and positions in the organisation. Riger argued that many of the groups experienced immense pressures to formalise their organisation as a result of success and growth of services:

> Success during the "collectivity" stage sets in motion multiple forces that press toward institutionalization of the organization's policies and practices and the development of hierarchy of authority. Among those forces are an increase in the size of the staff, and the need to obtain funding from sources outside the organization. Each of these conditions generates pressures that move the organization toward the development of positions with specialized functions, a hierarchy of titles, and more informal and impersonal communication procedures (Riger 1994:283).

In this way, Riger (1984; 1994) like others (for example, Gilson 2001; Iannello 1992; Murray 1988; Reinharz 1984; Vanderpyl 1998b; Wharton 1987), identifies a number of

internal and external factors that influence organisational change. One of the major external factors was the impact of the acceptance of government funding.[163] Another external factor was the increased labour force participation of women and changes in expectations about career and financial rewards (Iannello 1992:87). The political or technical environment within which groups operated (for example, the medical, government, legislative and justice systems with which the groups interact) was another major external pressure to implement bureaucratic forms of administration and control. For as Bordt (1997:136) points out, "the technical environment is infused with the taken-for-granted notion that bureaucracy is the only way to structure an organization". Internal organisational factors included increasing the size of the organisation, the influence of new members with different ideologies and experiences, and rapid staff turnover (Iannello 1992:87). These internal and external factors were often interrelated in the processes of formalisation occurring in the activist service organisations.

The emergence of hierarchy which involved "a vertical and horizontal system of domination with varying degrees of centralized communication, resulting in unequal authority", has been an issue in the formalisation of feminist collectives (Iannello 1992:101). Horizontal differentiation describes the division of labour according to task, while vertical differentiation consists of the stratification of authority, which rests ultimately with individuals by virtue of their organisation position. The development of vertical and horizontal differentiation in collective organisations is associated with a shift from collective democratic methods of control to the reliance on bureaucratic forms of social control, such as written rules and a hierarchy of authority based on formal positions and professional, managerial and/or occupational status (Riger 1994; Rothschild-Whitt 1979). In this way, processes of formalisation result in a move away from the egalitarian and informal relations that characterise the workplace relations and governance styles of the collectivity stage. Riger (1994:283), however, argues against the view that this process is inevitable; she contends that the emergence of hierarchy is neither inevitable nor a linear progression from one state to another. Members in collectives make choices about how they organise and structure their organisations, and many groups go on to form collective-bureaucratic hybrids (Hyde 2000).

[163] See Chapter Seven for a discussion of the impact of government funding on the activist service groups.

Debates about processes of formalisation in feminist collectives have reiterated the need to decouple feminism from collectivism and the recognition of many different types of feminist organisations (Bordt 1997; Martin 1990; Riger 1994; Thomas 1999). Detailed examination of the processes of organisational change in groups that identify as feminist has resulted in the development of various typologies of feminist organisations (Hyde 2000; Iannello 1992; Thomas 1999).[164] These writers argue that feminist organisations can be placed along a continuum from collective to bureaucracy. They challenge the framing of a group as either collective or bureaucratic. Instead, there is a need to recognise a diversity of organisational practices as supportive of feminist values and goals (Bordt 1997; Martin 1990; Riger 1994; Thomas 1999). Jan Thomas, in a study of US Women's Health Centres, specifies three ideal types. These include feminist bureaucracy, participatory bureaucracy[165] and democratic collectivist (Thomas 1999:107-116).[166] The three ideal types differed in terms of whether the group adopted a dispersed or concentrated system of power, the relative importance of organisational growth over autonomy from the state or funders, and whether the feminist organisation was "framed primarily through its outcomes [for clients] (services) or through internal processes (consensus, empowerment of staff)" (Thomas 1999:107).

The most hierarchical organisation type specified by Thomas was the feminist bureaucracy. This type of group has four or more levels of hierarchy:

> with directors who did only administrative work, middle managers who had some supervisory responsibilities and clinical responsibilities, and those at the bottom who … received the least pay, had the least authority to make critical decisions, and had the most client contact (Thomas 1999:107).

The feminist bureaucracy is characterised by multi-layered vertical and horizontal differentiation. It has a concentrated system of power in which ultimate authority rests with an individual or a board of directors.[167] This type of organisation has a

[164] See Table 7 on page 220 for a summary drawing together the typologies developed by these authors.

[165] None of the groups in this study (as a result of selection criteria and research questions) resembled the feminist bureaucracy or participatory bureaucracy types. I describe them here in order to provide a framework for understanding the changes to the grassroots collective organisations and to emphasis the range of feminist organisational types.

[166] Hyde's typology differs in some regards; she includes bureaucracy and collective, and between these two she places "participatory democracy, in which 3 to 4 tiers of stratification are evident, various organizational parties are represented in an open decision making process, yet final authority rests within the executive subsystem (board director) and the modified collective, in which no more than two tiers are evident and consensus decision making primarily is used" (Hyde 2000:55-56).

[167] The development of a board of directors among grass-roots feminist organisations has often been associated in the US with incorporation and the acceptance of government funding (Hyde 2000:56). In Aotearoa/New Zealand, incorporation required election of specific officials and a management committee of at least 15

'proleadership' focus whereby individual women are supported to develop their leadership potential, which includes additional responsibility with increased pay. Empowerment is framed as an "external outcome [of empowering clients] *rather* than an internal process" focused on empowering all workers in the organisation (Thomas 1999:110, emphasis added). These types of organisations are strongly committed to organisational growth. At the same time, Thomas argues that the feminist bureaucracy contains anti-bureaucratic features, such as social relations that are more personal, recruitment based on friendship and common values, social controls usually based on personal or moral appeals (Thomas 1999:107-108). In this way, employer-employee relations and the hierarchy of authority is characterised by informal features that operate alongside formal bureaucratic processes.

Thomas's (1999) second type of feminist organisation is the participatory bureaucracy. It is characterised by a minimal division of labour with less than four levels of stratification. Rules are formalised and rewards are based on position, "but workers [have] various avenues open to them to participate in the critical decisions. … While a division of labor frequently existed on paper, it was often minimal in practice" (Thomas 1999:111). Feminism is framed as an internal process that emphasises staff input into decisions. Although structured input from staff is encouraged, ultimate authority usually resides with a director and external board of directors. The participatory bureaucracy attempts to keep the impact of formal authority as a result of vertical hierarchy in the organisation to a minimum. This type of group attempts to balance shared power among staff with organisational growth.

The third type identified by Thomas is the collectivist democratic organisation that has a low division of labour and shared decision-making. Thomas draws together all those groups where "priority [is] given to democratic methods of control rather than a

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members, but not the development of a separate board made up of community representatives (Desmond 1996:11-14). Hyde's (2000:55-56) exploration of six health and anti-violence feminist groups highlights that, although the development of a board of directors was commonplace, there was much variation in terms of types of representation, function and responsibility among the boards. Representation on boards ranged from corporate/business, professional and mainstream representation, through to social movement/community representation. Some of the boards also included paid workers and/or volunteers who were working in the organisation. Differences in board membership were implicated in the ways in which boards functioned and whether or not paid/unpaid workers of the organisation were included as board members (Hyde 2000; Stone 1996). Some boards were relatively non-functioning and simply 'rubber-stamped' decisions made by the organisation's workers and/or management team (Hyde 2000:57-58). Other nonprofit boards functioned primarily as an advisory group, while some focused explicitly on financial accountability, organisational efficiency and policy direction (Stone 1996).

particular organizational structure (collective or hierarchical)" (Thomas 1999:113). Within these groups "ultimate power for critical decision [is] held by the entire group (no external boards of directors). … [P]ower [is] distributed through procedures, which [gives] staff the authority to make critical decisions, not just offer input" (Thomas 1999:113). Power is dispersed throughout the organisation. Usually, the same people who work in the organisation (often including both paid and unpaid workers) comprise the 'executive' group. Participatory processes, minimisation of differences and equality of influence between all members dominate the style of governance within these organisations. The means of social control is diffuse, based on informal relations, shared values and solidary incentives (Rothschild-Whitt 1979). In these organisations, the formal authority due to horizontal and vertical differentiation is resisted. The creation of egalitarian and empowering workplaces for all members of the organisation is important. Within these groups, internal processes that facilitate egalitarian relations and staff empowerment are core feminist ideological values, they are as important, if not more important than the growth of the organisation.

The groups interviewees belonged to in this study were located at the collective-democratic end of the feminist organisation typology developed by Thomas (1999). However, grouping them all within this category fails to provide a way to examine the differences among these groups and to elaborate on the processes of formalisation the groups were undergoing, while still retaining collective-democratic practices and values. In this respect, Cheryl Hyde's (2000) and Kathleen Iannello's (1992) notion of the modified collective organisation is useful for this study. Hyde describes the modified collective as having two tiers of stratification of authority combined with a commitment to using consensus decision-making. Iannello (1992:93-97) describes how the modified consensual structure is characterised by the establishment of permanent positions with formal titles and differential rewards, and the delegation of routine decisions to some members and committees. These developments are the result of the desire for efficient decision-making, recognition of expertise and permanency of specific jobs. At the same time, processes for maintaining non-hierarchy, including consensus decision-making, empowerment and emerging leadership, remain integral to these modified consensual organisations. As Iannello states:

> [The] modified consensual organization may be seen to contain the following components: a distinction between critical and routine decisions, with critical decisions reserved for the many and routine decisions delegated horizontally to the few; recognition of ability or expertise rather than rank or position; empowerment as a basis of consensual process; and clear goals arrived at through consensual process (Iannello 1992:121).

Iannello makes an important distinction between routine decisions (related to the daily operations) and critical decisions (raising significant questions about policy). Routine decisions are delegated horizontally (not vertically) and thus do not result in a superordinate/subordinate relationship (Iannello 1992:118). Critical decisions remain within the domain of all members. As Iannello notes, many of the participants struggle to find an appropriate language to describe this structure, some call this type of organisation "a modified collective, some a semi-structure and some a hierarchy" (Iannello 1992:101). She refers to this process of change as a shift from a 'consensual' to a 'modified consensual' organisation (Iannello 1992:87). The modified collective type shifts attention to the ways in which groups adopt practices that result in the development of hierarchy in some parts of the organisation, but retain practices supportive of non-hierarchy in other parts of the organisation. Iannello stresses that the changes to the organisation were quite small, especially when viewed in terms of the collective to bureaucratic continuum outlined by Thomas (1999). Yet, participants in the groups frequently experienced the modification of the collective as a major change, and tension often occurred around workplace relations, in particular the relations between employees and employers. The rest of the chapter examines the Aotearoa/New Zealand context and the patterns of organisational change and conflict among the activist service organisations.

Positioning the Activist Service Organisations

There have been few published Aotearoa/New Zealand studies that specifically analyse the processes of organisational change among Aotearoa/New Zealand activist feminist service collectives (Gilson 2001; Vanderpyl 1998b).[168] Dorothy Gilson describes a

[168] However, there have been a number of studies examining Aotearoa/New Zealand feminist organisations. Christine Dann (1978d) developed an unpublished paper for the 1978 Piha Congress that identified the issues with feminist collective organising within the women's liberation collectives. Other studies, such as Mann's (1993) study of three feminist collectives, utilised Martin's (1990) model of feminist organisation to examine the gendering of organisations. Both Cammock (1994) and Burns (1977) analysed the processes of setting up

process by which one Aotearoa/New Zealand Women's Refuge was transformed from a collective-democratic organisation to something more closely resembling a hybrid of the feminist bureaucracy and the participatory bureaucracy outlined by Thomas (1999).[169] In an earlier study of a single Rape Crisis collective I described the process of formalisation, in terms of the adoption of bureaucratic practices that occurred between 1981 and 1991, which resulted in the modification of the collective (Vanderpyl 1998b).[170] Unlike the process of change in the Refuge described by Gilson, none of the 1990s activist service groups in this study had shifted to the feminist bureaucracy or the participatory bureaucracy end of the continuum developed by Thomas.[171] It is important to recognise that these studies differed in methodology from this current study. Both Gilson (2001) and Vanderpyl (1998b) used a case study approach, while this study examined interviewees' experiences of conflicts in collectives across many groups. In this section, I first examine interviewee descriptions of the two groups which most closely resembled the flat collective democratic organisation described by Thomas (Chris 11/9/97; Liz 6/3/97; RC2 Group Interview 23/7/97). Second, I discuss

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specific activist service groups, but did not specifically examine the process of formalisation in these organisations. Hann's (2001) study of the Palmerston North Women's Refuge describes many of the factors associated with formalising the Refuge, but does not specifically analyse these developments. Pringle, with others, has examined the different values and processes in a broad range of women's organisations (Pringle and Collins 1996; Pringle and Collins 1998; Pringle and Henry 1993). Else's (1993) edited collection on women's organisations in Aotearoa/New Zealand presents descriptions and discussions of the development of many of the feminist activist service collectives. There are scattered references to the processes of organisational change throughout the case studies and discussions of trends in the development of these women's organisations in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

[169] Gilson (2001), through the use of interviews, archival searches of documents and participant observation of a New Zealand Women's Refuge, describes the transformation of the Refuge in comparison to a Canadian Battered Women's Shelter.

[170] In a study of a single Rape Crisis group I undertook in the early 1990s, involving interviews with former members and archive searches of organisation documents, I outlined the increasing bureaucratisation and formalisation a collective underwent (Vanderpyl 1998b). Members formalised policies and procedures, developed specialised permanent staff positions, and focused on setting up a professional counselling service. The study identified the ways in which this was the result of both external funder pressures and internal pressures of developing continuity and professionalism in service delivery over the 1980s (Vanderpyl 1998b). At the same time, the group retained a commitment to the participation of all members in collective decisions through the use of consensus decision-making processes. The group was developing a modified form of collective organisation. None of the women interviewed for the earlier Rape Crisis case study were reinterviewed for the current study.

[171] Informal discussions highlight that the trend Gilson identifies was occurring in other collectives not included in this study. For example, Auckland Rape Crisis in approximately 2000 had disaffiliated from the NCRC and put in place two managers to manage the day to day work of the group and a board made up of community representatives (Liz Butterworth, over 2000, personal communication, co-ordinator Auckland Rape Crisis). Christchurch Women's Centre reported adopting a hierarchical form of organisation (Anonymous 1996a:22). A discussion with a NCIWR National Office worker suggests the trend, identified by Gilson, of developing separate governance boards was not widespread among the local Women's Refuges. She identified that only two had developed a governance board (Sheryl Hann, NCIWR, 28/4/2004, personal communication).

interviewee descriptions of those groups that had modified the collective-democratic organisations as a result of increasing complexity in the division of labour and employer-employee governance.[172] Fourteen groups in this study had, or were developing, what Iannello and Hyde referred to as the modified or hybrid collective organisation (Antonia 25/11/97; HC Group Interview 10/9/97; Heather 27/10/97; Helene 10/12/97; Ingrid 27/2/97; Iris 29/1/97; Janine 17/2/97; Jemma 8/9/97; Jo 6/12/97; Judith 30/1/97; Kaitlin 10/3/97; Karen 9/3/97; Nellie 22/4/97; RC1 Group Interview 9/9/97; Sandra 10/9/97; Sara 3/12/97; Shelley 12/1/98).[173]

Sustaining a 'flat' collective structure

Interviewees from two of the groups in this study described processes that placed their organisations at the collective democratic end of the collective-bureaucratic feminist organisation continuum. (See Table 7 on page 220 for a summary of the collective democratic organisations characteristics). They described their groups as having a flat structure based on participatory processes, equality of influence and minimal division of labour amongst all members (Chris 11/9/97; Liz 6/3/97; RC2 Group Interview 23/7/97). The emphasis on the 'flat' structure in terms of internal processes that facilitated equal participation, co-operation and individual empowerment was an important feature of

[172] Other areas, such as service delivery and financial management, are also important to consider in relation to collective-democratic practices. But the focus of this chapter is on the internal division of labour and the organisation of employer-employee relations among members of the activist service organisation. I do not examine the impact on service delivery models used by the organisations as the interviews focused primarily on the internal practices between members of the collective organisation. See Gilson (2001) Burt et al. (1984) and Campbell (1998). Within the Aotearoa/New Zealand context, Gilson argues that the local Women's Refuge she studied retained feminism as an outcome in their service delivery even while the group developed a bureaucratic organisation.

[173] For some groups, there were insufficient details to include them in this analysis (usually as a result of the interview focussing on other issues occurring in their group), and the remainder of the interviews had predominantly focused on collective organisations of the 1970s and 1980s.

Table 7: Continuum of feminist organisational structures

Feminist Bureaucracy	Participatory Bureaucracies	Modified Collective	Collectives
- High vertical and horizontal division of labour (>3 levels of stratification) - Board or directors ultimate authority - Feminist service outcomes as empowering clients	- Minimal vertical and horizontal division of labour (<4 levels of stratification) - Processes for staff input and participation - Ultimate authority not with the whole organisation - Feminist internal process emphasised input balanced with feminist service outcomes	- Consensus processes - Low vertical and horizontal division of labour (2 levels of stratification) - Ultimate authority with the collective - Feminist internal processes as shared authority among members	- Consensus process - The 'flat organisation' - Rotating tasks and positions - Ultimate authority with the collective - Feminist internal processes as shared authority among members

Adapted from Thomas (1999:107), Hyde (2000:55-56), and Iannello (1992:78-102)

other Aotearoa/New Zealand activist service groups as well. For example, Wellington Rape Crisis described their organisation in a report as follows:

> Our base is feminism, and we operate consensually with a 'flat' structure, no one group or person having more structural power than any other. … Collectivism is not a set of rules, but a process that operates within groups. This process seeks to empower individuals through creating safety, openness, acknowledging and honouring feelings, creating links with each other and promoting the growth of all members' personal power and esteem (Wellington Rape Crisis Collective circa 1999:7, 59).

Describing the organisation of the collective workplace as a 'flat structure', in which there was little, if any, hierarchy of authority based on formal positions in the organisation was not uncommon. Of the two organisations that interviewees described as a 'flat' structure, the emphasis was on sharing the paid work among as many members as was possible. The groups used the sharing of paid work as a structural strategy to support egalitarian participatory processes and relations between all collective members (Chris 11/9/97; Liz 6/3/97; RC2 Group Interview 23/7/97). In one collective, two interviewees described how paid work was shared among members who wanted paid work (Chris 11/9/97; Liz 6/3/97). Members of the other group described a recent shift from the employment of one person full-time to the employment of seven out of nine members for a few hours each weekly. The seven paid workers were all called co-ordinators and each had responsibility for a specific area of interest (RC2 Group Interview 23/7/97). In these organisations there was some specialisation of roles and responsibilities amongst workers, but they did not rotate tasks.

The two collectives attempted to empower all workers through internal processes that supported egalitarian relations. Members of both organisations (Chris 11/9/97; RC2 Group Interview 23/7/97) suggested that sharing the work ensured equality between women and the sharing of power. Chris reflected on the reasons for this strategy:

> We knew that we didn't need a leader, we never ever had one person in the office. We always shared it. ... The philosophy about that was that actually gives one person a lot of power because she will be the only person who knows what is coming in and out of that office. A lot of groups work on that basis and we just thought it was unhealthy. It gives too much power to one person. ... [The focus was on] sharing as much as possible. It was just women's stuff. There was this money that could be spent on wages. We had to share that as much as we could among everyone. That was the philosophy of the group. It was about sharing resources among us (Chris 11/9/97).

The other group described the change to employing seven co-ordinators as: "disjointed / Relaxed / It's equal / Equal power sharing / It is comfortable / Highly involving"

(Elizabeth, Patsy, Linda and Lucy in the RC2 Group Interview 23/7/97).[174] The women in both groups invoked an ideal of community in which relationships were characterised by equality, co-operation, affirmation, a sharing of interests and mutual understanding. For example, Liz reflected on the personal relationships among collective members and the support:

> For me, what stands out was the togetherness of that collective. The shared decision making, the non-ownership of the place. ... I guess there was that thing about sharing resources and everyone had equal chance to contribute in decision-making, that respecting each person's opinion, not overtalking (Liz 6/3/97).

Consensus decision-making symbolised the sharing of authority, leadership and creation of relations of solidarity among members of the organisation (for example, Holmes 1998; Iannello 1992; Radoslovich 1994). The groups wanted to achieve equal influence through participation by most members in the daily operation of the organisation and shared knowledge.

> Like information was seen to be in one person's hands before,[175] now everybody is finding out more about the information that we have got and if somebody comes in they wouldn't say, you better ask Julia. They might know more themselves, and so they can talk to people. Responsibility is shared (Susan in RC2 Group Interview 23/7/97).

Working in this way was often described as 'women's ways of working' and contrasted to patriarchal ways of working. As Chris said, "we did not want a manager, we didn't want the boys' structures; it doesn't work. It is about power over [rather] than power to do" (Chris 11/9/97). Chris defined male management systems as based on relations of domination. Others suggested things like: "it's about being a human being without those rigid, kind of patriarchal places" (RC2 Group Interview 23/7/97).[176]

All members were involved in both the governance and day to day operation of the organisation. There were few formal distinctions between members. The groups were

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[174] It is uncertain how long this structure could be maintained by this group as it had only been in place two months and the group had the unusual situation of having many women who were available to work part-time.

[175] This group had previously employed one paid worker full-time to manage the daily operation of the organisation.

[176] Their views had much in common with feminist academic critiques of hierarchical organisations as alienating, based on competition, excluding the private sphere from the public sphere, dehumanising and disempowering for workers (Brown 1992; Ferguson 1984; Iannello 1992). The desire for non-hierarchy in the workplace in many of the feminist collectives, included a challenge to the unequal valuing of public sphere and private sphere in the workplace. This has involved a reconstruction of the notion of work, with a critique of the separation of two kinds of work, one aligned with the public and implicitly masculine, the other aligned with the private and implicitly feminine (Fletcher 1998).

closely modelled on a self-managed worker collective model as they emphasised participation by every member in both governance and day to day activities (Weeks 1994). All members participated in the collective meetings in which consensus decision-making processes were used. Meetings made decisions about both routine (decisions about day to day operations) and critical issues (policy decisions). The boundaries between collective members as employers and employees were blurred and employment matters were usually managed at collective meetings. Negotiations about employment contracts, job descriptions, and supervision often involved the whole collective (RC2 Group Interview 23/7/97). However, a collective member of one of the groups described how the collective was dominated by an informal group of long term collective members (Liz 6/3/97). She also reported experiencing the sharing of work between all members who wanted paid work as disempowering when she was pressured into giving some of her paid hours to another collective member (Liz 6/3/97). Liz's experiences indicate how informal hierarchy could be an issue and the process of sharing did not always lead to equal satisfaction for all members (Freeman 1972; Leidner 1991:286-287).

In these organisations, interviewees argued that paying more women to work avoided the development of hierarchies associated with reliance on one or two paid workers. Sharing of paid work amongst members was seen as a way of resisting the development of patriarchal ways of working, by resisting the development of horizontal and vertical differentiation.

Modifying the democratic collective organisation

This next section examines the groups that modified the collective organisation. These groups most closely resemble the modified collective described in Table 7 on page 220. The groups were characterised by increased differentiation of roles, authority and responsibility.

The division of labour in the workplace

The division of labour structuring the workplaces of this group of activist services increased in complexity and became more specialised. Groups developed permanent long term positions and worker's roles and responsibilities within many of the

organisations became more specialised, for example, administrator, community support worker, counsellor/therapist, education worker, health worker, or crisis advocate (Helen 25/11/97; Iris 29/1/97). This pattern of workforce development reflected the increased complexity and breadth of the services delivered by many of the activist service groups. For example, long term counselling/therapy, preventative education and life-skills programmes, client advocacy as well as crisis phone services were provided by many of the Rape Crisis groups. The Refuges also provided a range of services from shelter, crisis support, advocacy, education and preventative work.[177]

Associated with this specialisation of roles and responsibilities in the workplace was an increase in the skills, training and qualifications required by many organisations.[178] For example, counselling in many of the Rape Crisis groups shifted from a peer-counselling model to the provision of therapy by ACC accredited therapists (Iris 29/1/97; Nellie 22/4/97). ACC influenced these developments through the implementation of accreditation processes for counsellors. To be eligible for ACC payment of counselling fees, counsellors had to have formal professional training and qualifications approved by ACC (Mason 1989).[179] Similarly, the position of co-ordinator and/or administrator had increased in complexity as a result of accountability demands by funding agencies (Helen 25/11/97; Nowland-Foreman 1995:21).[180]

As described in earlier chapters, in the early to mid-1980s most activist service groups had been largely reliant on volunteers or short term paid workers employed through the Labour Department schemes. By the 1990s, many of the activist service groups had become reliant on one or two permanent paid workers to undertake much of the day to day work. For example, both Rape Crisis and Women's Refuge activist service organisations reported having an average of two to three permanent paid workers and an

[177] The complexity of service delivery by these groups is reflected in the statistics and outline of activities included in reports (for example, National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1994; National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1998; National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1999; Palmerston North Women's Health Collective 1997; Vanderpyl and Sandbrook 2000).

[178] This also affected the two groups described in the previous section. However, they attempted to reduce the effect of this by distributing the work among many members.

[179] For some groups, this was associated with the development of professional status hierarchies and a move away from the peer relationship model between providers and service users. Iris argued that the ACC counsellor accreditation process redefined the relationship between workers and service users to professional and client (Iris 29/1/97). MacGibbon also noted an increased focus on developing professional relationships between refuge workers and women using the service that emphasised the maintenance of clearly delineated boundaries between client and provider in her study (MacGibbon 2002). She drew out how some of the refuge advocates experienced this as creating a formal hierarchy in which the refuge advocate "helped" the client in need.

average of eight to nine unpaid workers (Duggan 1997:3; National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1999:10). Published reports and interviewees identified similar patterns for many of the Women's Centres and Health Collectives (Anonymous 1996b:21; HC Group Interview 10/9/97; Heather 27/10/97; Judith 30/1/97; Karen 9/3/97).

The reliance on a few paid workers to manage the day to day operation of the organisations changed the relationship between paid and unpaid workers. A member of one of the health collectives described this change and the impact it had on her organisation:

> Our first paid worker was in the year that I joined, ... we had three part time workers for a few years, now we have had two full-time paid workers for about five years. ... But it has changed things, when I think back to when I first joined, the dynamics were very different, the whole place was run by volunteers, it was loosely open from 10 to 4, but it didn't matter if one day it didn't open. It was mostly run by people who didn't have full-time jobs (Mary in HC Group Interview 10/9/97).

Mary described how, in the late 1990s, only two full-time paid workers were involved in the daily operation of the organisation. They were responsible for all aspects of maintaining and running the organisation. Volunteers tended to only attend collective meetings. This situation was not uncommon amongst the women interviewed for this study and represents a major shift in the participation of volunteers in these activist service groups (for example, Antonia 25/11/97; Chris 11/9/97; HC Group Interview 10/9/97; Ingrid 27/2/97; Jemma 8/9/97; Nellie 22/4/97; Sandra 10/9/97; Shelley 12/1/98). A large number of volunteers remain involved in the activist service groups. However their participation in the organisations and relationship to paid workers has changed.

Two trends emerged in the interviews. Firstly, there was a reduction of volunteer participation in the day to day operations of the organisation. This was associated with the increased specialisation of roles and responsibilities, along with the raised levels of skills, knowledge and expertise to undertake service delivery and many administrative tasks. This pattern of specialisation in the activist service workplace was linked with an increased reliance on paid workers (HC Group Interview 10/9/97; Nellie 22/4/97). Lisa, a member of one Health Collective, described how: "now [there is] more and more

[180] This also is an issue for the rest of the collective in terms of accountability to funding agencies.

specialised knowledge needed to work here. There are more expectations in relation to funding. These things have resulted in fewer volunteers being able to be involved in centre" (HC Group Interview 10/9/97). The reduced participation of volunteers in the day to day operations was also the consequence of women's increased participation in the paid labourforce (Koopman-Boyden 1992:15).[181] Mary described how "volunteers found it harder and harder to come in during the day with other commitments. That is a big change from when I first joined. … Now most of the volunteers involved in the collective have got full-time jobs or full-time study" (HC Group Interview 10/9/97). Consequently, unpaid worker involvement in the day to day work of the organisation changed as the organisations relied on paid workers to undertake much of the administration and co-ordination of service delivery during office hours.

Secondly, many of the groups remained reliant on volunteers, but there was a narrowing of volunteer roles in the organisation. Volunteer participation narrowed to specific support roles such as staffing night-time crisis lines, crisis advocacy work and/or participation in collective meetings. As a result of inadequate funding, groups like Refuge and Rape Crisis who delivered 24-hour services, often relied on volunteers to deliver afterhours crisis services as a result of inadequate funding. In the groups that did not deliver 24-hour crisis services, volunteers mainly attended collective meetings (Janine 17/2/97; Judith 30/1/97; Karen 9/3/97; Nellie 22/4/97). Their role became focused on governance of the organisation and they provided support for additional one-off activities such as street fund raising appeals. In a study of volunteering based on three Aotearoa/New Zealand activist service groups, Klyn found that volunteers who were available during office hours, were often mostly responsible for tasks such as vacuuming, typing and photocopying (Klyn 1994:22-23). For these volunteers, their involvement in undervalued tasks was offset by participation in governance activities such as collective decision-making (Klyn 1994:22-23).

The above discussion outlines ways in which the activist service workplaces were marked by heightened differentiation in the division of labour and a modification of the collective structure. Increased specialisation of positions occurred in the groups. There was also greater reliance on paid workers in the day to day operation of the organisation, and changes to the participation of volunteers. These developments were

[181] Women's (aged 15 and above) paid labour force participation increased from 39% in 1976 to 58% in 1996 (Ross 1977:4; Statistics New Zealand 2004).

implicated in the formalisation of the organisations. At the same time, formalisation of the employee-employer role was also challenging the commitment to the 'flat structure' in the activist service organisations.

The employer-employee relationship

Activist service groups were struggling with the need to develop formal procedures for managing employment relations in ways that clearly differentiated employers from employees. This challenged the loose informal ways in which groups had previously managed employment relations where the 'employer' had tended to comprise of the rest of the collective including all employees. Each employee was defined as the employer of other paid workers. Specifying employer and employee positions and responsibilities was often confused or avoided because the focus was on minimising status and authority differences. Reflecting on this way of managing employment matters, a paid worker in a health collective described how "the employment relationship was hard in the collective. When you are a paid worker you are both the employee and the employer. That can present problems, like having to ask for a wage rise" (Mary in HC Group Interview 10/9/97). Rights and responsibilities of employers and employees were often blurred within this model of managing employment relations. Increasingly, however, groups were under pressure to formalise the structures and procedures for managing the employment relationship. This was difficult because the formalising of employment relations was associated with the development of status differences between paid workers, volunteers and collective members (Murray 1988: 153; Wharton 1987:91).

A number of external and internal factors contributed to the need to formalise the practices through which the employment relationship was clarified and managed. In the mid-1990s, the Community Funding Agency (CFA), when granting 'agency approval', required groups to fulfil the legislative imperatives of being good employers.[182] Public agencies demanded that the groups they funded fulfil legislative requirements around employment and workplace regulations; this came to include the 'good employer' requirements of the State Sector Act (1988) (Boxall 1991; National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1995b:no page numbers). The Refuge manual for

employers defined a 'good employer' as one who "operates a personnel policy with provisions generally accepted as necessary for the fair and proper treatment of employees" (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1995b:no page numbers). In addition, legislation such as the Employment Contracts Act (1991) "demanded that employees and employers be clearly identified in their specified roles" (MacGibbon 2002:21). Erling Rasmussen and Felicity Lamm (2002) describe how the Employment Contracts Act (1991) changed the view of employment relations from an earlier collective bargaining approach to a market view of the employment relation. The employment relation was framed as a private contractual relationship in which individual choice and freedom were to be promoted. It included both individual and collective bargaining. In addition, there was a personal grievance option for all employees. The Act impacted on the activist service groups by encouraging the development of formal written contracts, as well as the clarification of employer and employee rights and responsibilities.

Employment relations emerged as an issue in many collectives in the 1990s. A number of groups had personal grievance claims made against them by paid workers (Chris 11/9/97; Helen 25/11/97). The above legislative changes, state funder requirements and the risk of personal grievances all contributed to pressures on groups to clarify and develop better procedures for managing the employment relationship. The experience of conflict, and the ambiguous and contradictory roles between the collective as employer and paid workers resulted in more attention being given to how employees were managed within these organisations, for example, to the lines of authority, to job descriptions and to the negotiation of formal written contracts. This was part of the demand for greater clarity in the management and operation of each activist service organisation. For many groups, a major challenge was the recognition that they were employers with legal responsibilities and obligations to employees. Most groups responded by setting up temporary or permanent structures that identified a specific group as employer and the formalisation of many of the employment practices such as developing written employment contracts, job descriptions, formal appraisal and complaints procedures.

[182] CFA standards were reiterating the need for groups to separate employers from employees in their governance structures. These developments have been discussed in Chapter Seven.

Some collectives had only begun to develop formal procedures and documents for managing employment relations in the 1990s (Helen 25/11/97; Iris 29/1/97; Jo 6/12/97; Nellie 22/4/97; Sandra 10/9/97). Jo described how, in the early 1990s when she joined the collective, "there was no employment systems, no accountability, no recording. The job descriptions were old and out of date, there were no policies about access to training, or processes for leave. There were no employment contracts, all of those basic things" (Jo 6/12/97). Iris (29/1/97) and Nellie (22/4/97) described how the organisation they were a part of did have employment contracts and job descriptions in the early 1990s, but that these had mainly been used for funding applications. They were not designed to inform employer-employee relations. Increasingly, written employment contracts, job descriptions as well as employee performance appraisals became an integral aspect of employment practices in the groups (Jo 6/12/97; Nellie 22/4/97; Sandra 10/9/97).

Considerable diversity existed in practice with regard to the involvement of employees in employment discussions about their own positions and contracts, and whether paid workers were identified as employers of other paid workers. For some of the collectives, employment matters were most often addressed at regular collective meetings by the whole group, but discussion about employment conditions usually took place without the employees present (Iris 29/1/97; Janine 17/2/97; Jemma 8/9/97; Karen 9/3/97; Nellie 22/4/97; RC2 Group Interview 23/7/97; Sandra 10/9/97). Increasingly, "the unpaid volunteers [were] required to manage the employment of their colleagues and monitor their performance on behalf of the funding agencies" in the activist service organisations (Lupton 1994:70-71).

Groups introduced a variety of structures involving volunteers as employers in the attempt to clarify lines of authority and accountability between employers and employees. One collective assigned a volunteer to each paid worker to be an employment support person:

> We have a collective member who is our employment support person. [They do things like] when I did not feel good about sorting out my lieu time, that became their responsibility, and same with deciding on any time off, that became part of their job. Also when my contract was nearly finished, it became their responsibility to bring that to the collective's attention and make sure something was done about it. They took on managing the employment role (Janine 17/2/97).

In this case, the employment relationship remained between the collective and the employee, but the volunteer employment support person functioned to provide a regular contact and link between the two parties. In another collective, employees were supervised by one of the collective members fortnightly, and that collective member reported back to the collective (Judith 30/1/97). Quite a few groups established temporary committees of volunteers as employers to sort out specific employment matters such as negotiating employment contracts or the employment of a new worker (for example, HC Group Interview 10/9/97; Heather 27/10/97; Judith 30/1/97; WC 1 Group Interview 11/9/97). One of the health collectives set up an employment subcommittee made up of volunteer collective members and the two paid workers when job descriptions and wage rises had needed a major overhaul. The committee disbanded once these matters had been sorted out (HC Group Interview 10/9/97).

The establishment of permanent employment groups became more common, especially among the Women's Refuge groups (Antonia 25/11/97; Helene 10/12/97; Ingrid 27/2/97; Jo 6/12/97; Kaitlin 10/3/97; Robyn 26/1/97; Sara 3/12/97; Shelley 12/1/98; WC 2 Group Interview 16/2/98). Among local Women's Refuge groups, the employment subcommittee was one of a series of committees focused on a specific activity in the organisation. Women's Refuges had developed a model in which all members belonged to the collective (in the case of General Refuges either the Māori or Tauiwi caucus) which met regularly. From the collective, some members were elected to go on various subcommittees, for example the management, house or employment subcommittee.[183] They described how the "full collective is the employer. However, responsibility for matters concerning paid employment is usually delegated to a sub-committee (sometimes called a staff committee). The employment sub-committee has authority to act for the collective" (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1995b:no page numbers). They argued that having paid workers reporting to the whole collective was inefficient. The NCIWR promoted the development of permanent trained employment subcommittees to manage employment matters for the collective. A NCIWR member outlined how:

[183] This did vary among the Women's Refuges due to number of collective members. If the group was small, then the whole group would often be involved in all the activities (Sheryl Hann, 28/4/2004, NCIWR, personal communication).

> We are trying to get the local Refuge groups to put together an employment subcommittee, with a few women who are not paid workers and to get those women trained up in the rights and obligations of employees and employers. And put in place job descriptions, get in place processes that deal with concerns or problems, and performance appraisal (Helen 25/11/97).

They had developed a training manual *What about the workers?* to improve collective member skills in the area of employment matters. The manual described the employment subcommittee as "a convenient, manageable means of ensuring that your refuge meets these obligations. The sub-committee gives workers a clear line of authority and accountability" (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1995b:no page numbers). The manual set out guidelines for the management of employment relations in their organisations. The employment subcommittee was responsible for regular supervision of paid workers in order that employee needs were met and that the collective met its employer responsibilities appropriately. Two of the groups had developed a separate collective group that addressed governance, employment and policy issues, and which excluded paid workers as formal members of the collective (Heather 27/10/97; Judith 30/1/97; RC1 Group Interview 9/9/97). In the first group, paid workers reported to the collective, which comprised former members and community representatives. The other group elected a board of community representatives, but paid workers were unable to be elected to the collective (Heather 27/10/97; Judith 30/1/97).

The development of separate groups and specialised processes for managing the employer-employee relationship resulted in increased differentiation of roles and responsibilities in the activist service groups. These changes occurred in the context of increased formalisation of the employer-employee relationship, such as the implementation of formal separate arrangements for supervising employees. The groups were modifying collective structures as they adopted various bureaucratic and formal structures for managing employment relations. The establishment of specialised workplace roles plus the formalisation of the employee-employer relationship meant groups experienced increased pressure to formally differentiate positions, roles and responsibility. They struggled with the effects on the group of an unequal distribution of skills, knowledge, influence and participation among members.

The above groups did not entirely abandon their anti-hierarchical roots. The idea of genuine collectivity remained a powerful dream (Brown 1992:29) among the

interviewees. Many women recounted how their groups remained committed to equality of influence and participatory processes by practicing consensus decision-making, sharing information and knowledge among all members. The collective, usually comprising all members, remained the ultimate authority. In the majority of the groups, all members (paid and unpaid) participated in regular collective meetings that focused on tasks, making critical decisions, policies and direction of the organisation. Many of those interviewed highlighted an ongoing commitment to egalitarian practices such as consensus decision-making and 'shared power'. Within Refuge, the development of subcommittees involved a horizontal delegation of responsibility rather than permanent subordinate/superordinate relationships based on organisation position and rank (Iannello 1992:95). Even in those groups described above that had adopted a separate governance board, members emphasised participatory structures through which all members could provide input into decision-making processes. The Women's Centre reiterated the importance of informal inclusion of all those working at the Centre by participation in collective decision-making. Judith explained how:

> [T]he paid workers are not elected onto the collective, but they can attend [and speak at] collective meetings. If it came to a vote they wouldn't have a vote. But vote is only resorted to as a final option after every other avenue for decision making had been explored. The idea is that everybody is equal, that unpaid, the paid workers, everyone is equal is important (Judith 30/1/97).

Only in rare situations, where the collective could not come to an agreement, was a vote taken and paid workers were excluded from taking part in a formal vote. Paid workers of one of the Rape Crisis group interviews were challenging their exclusion from the collective (RC1 Group Interview 9/9/97). The paid workers and volunteers involved in the day to day work of the organisation had organised an independently facilitated workshop for collective members and paid workers to challenge their exclusion from the collective. They argued that this situation had to change because it was contrary to collective values. The above examples indicate how even as groups had modified their organisations, members were developing processes which challenged the development of formal vertical hierarchy (Iannello 1992; Thomas 1999).

Members of these modified collective groups continued to frame how they organised in terms of an opposition to patriarchy. The descriptions of collective attributes were often based on an assumption that women worked differently than men. As Ingrid insisted "women do tend to approach things differently. ... I think women are more interested in each other's points of view. I think women will really sit down and listen to another

woman in that type of environment" (Ingrid 27/2/97). Working in this way was contrasted with the alienation and devaluation many of the participants had experienced when employed in a private sector that was patriarchal and male dominated. Jacqui described how "I had always worked in the private sector, within a hierarchy usually with males. When I came here I suddenly realised that I was worth a whole lot more. ... I am important. I am nurtured, valued" (Jacqui in RC1 Group Interview 9/9/97). The women interviewed tended to privilege stereotypical feminine attributes in their descriptions of relationships in the interviews. Non-hierarchy was seen as feminine and feminist, and contrasted with hierarchy as masculine and patriarchal.

The above discussion illustrates the ways in which activist service organisations had modified or were modifying the collective form of organisation. The participation of paid workers and volunteers was changing as service activities became more specialised and administration increased in complexity. Many of the groups were reliant on a few paid workers to manage most of the daily work of the organisation. The groups were implementing increasingly elaborate formal systems distinguishing roles and responsibilities of employers from employees. In these ways, the groups were developing some horizontal and vertical differentiation that challenged the original ideals of the 'flat' collective democratic organisation. Even so, the above discussion also shows how participants associated the collective with practices that supported egalitarian and participatory processes and continued to define them in terms of 'women's ways of working'. Feminism, within this organisational context, remained firmly linked to internal processes that supported egalitarian and nurturing relationships among all organisational members (Thomas 1999).

The Tension between Collectivity and Formalisation in the Employment Relationship

The increased differentiation of roles, participation and adoption of bureaucratic practices described above challenged the groups' commitment to collective values and practices. These developments are implicated in the many conflicts that occurred within the group in relation to employment. Conflict about formalising the employment relationship was a major theme in interviewees' reflections on organisational conflicts in the 1990s. Collective members often had high expectation that feminist collectives

would be different from ‘patriarchal organisations’, and that they would be supportive of women’s specific needs in nurturing and co-operative ways. As a result, when conflicts occurred, there was often a sense of having failed to work in feminist collective ways. It was not just an individual failure, but a failure to sustain feminist values of co-operation, caring and sisterhood.

Employer-employee relations that do not operate within a superordinate-subordinate relationship are difficult to imagine, especially because of the dominance of bureaucratic hierarchical organisations. Within bureaucratic organisations, vertical differentiation in terms of the employer/employee and manager/managed distinctions forms a critical aspect of a workplace’s formal hierarchy of authority and modus operandi. In bureaucratic workplaces, the employment relationship is essentially asymmetrical in nature (Wilson 1994:259). The employment relationship is one in which the “employee agrees to submit to the authority of the employer in exchange for certain physical and psychological rewards” (Boxall 1995:7). It is expected that the relationship is based on both common and conflicting interests. The relationship “contains elements of both conflict and co-operation. It is not all one or all the other but a blend of the two” (Boxall 1995:10). Erling Raumussen and Peter Boxall draw on Purcell’s model of workforce governance in order to examine elements of conflict and co-operation in the employment relationship. This model examines workforce governance practices that facilitate employee individualism and collectivism. Individualism refers to the “extent to which the firm gives credence to the feelings and sentiments of each employee and seeks to develop and encourage each employee’s capacity and role at work” (Purcell 1987:536, cited in Rasmussen and Boxall, 1995:58). Organisations with high levels of individualism support and empower individuals to achieve their potential. Collectivism refers to the extent an “organisation recognises the right of the employees to have a say in those aspects of management decision making which concern them” (Purcell 1987:538, cited in Rasmussen and Boxall, 1995:58). Collectivism includes the use of democratic structures such as information sharing and consultation between employers-employees (Rasmussen and Boxall 1995:58).

The collective democratic type of organisation was characterised by high levels of collectivism and individualism through the emphasis on empowerment of individuals, participatory processes in decision-making, and egalitarian relations among all members. Practices facilitating individualism and collectivism among workers in the

groups had very specific meanings in the collective democratic organisation, since these internal organisation processes embodied radical feminist political goals of egalitarianism among all members. The democratic collective organisation minimised the formal distinction between employer and employees. Implementation occurred through the commitment to participatory collective processes, ideals of individual worker empowerment and egalitarian relationships among members irrespective of position and participation in the organisation. Ideally, in the democratic collective, all members participated in governance activities through attendance at collective meetings. Collective meetings focused on both tasks and policies, and used consensus decision-making processes. The democratic collective emphasised maximum participation, shared decision-making and the dispersal of power. This placed the groups at the extreme end of Purcell's continuum in terms of high individualism and high collectivism. The groups managed these processes either informally or through processes that did not position employers in a formal hierarchical relationship to employees. Overall, there was an emphasis on democratic control that involved the minimisation of differences in authority and influence between members, as well as resistance to the development of vertical differentiation.

Any modification of the collective democratic form of organising was a major source of conflict in the management of workplace relations. Underpinning the conflicts about employment was the attempt to bring together two contradictory institutional logics within the activist service organisations. On the one hand, there was the commitment to democratic collectivism with their emphasis on minimal rules and avoidance of formal stable hierarchy of authority through informal relations and shared leadership, participatory co-operative practices and egalitarian relations. On the other hand, there was the adoption of bureaucratic forms of control with its emphasis on rationalising and regulating activity through formal rules, policies and procedures, authority based on formal positions and role based relations. The attempt to operate two very different systems of control, bureaucratic or collective, increased the complexity of the workplace relationships. As Sandra observed:

> You don't have hierarchy. You are not supposed to, it must be consensus. That really puzzles me. I think that is the thing that gets collectives, you have some paid workers, so therefore the collective is the employer of the paid workers. But the paid workers are a part of the collective. ... There doesn't seem to be the boundaries, what is a worker? What is the collective? Who is the employer? Who is the employee? Who is accountable? ... We want to work as a collective as feminists, but we also have to be employers, As a collective we want to be equal. It is just a conflict all the way and I think that is where you have problems (Sandra 10/9/97).

She suggested that in the confusion, collectives "end out with very bad employment situations and a lack of accountability between paid workers and the collective" (Sandra 10/9/97). Often, individuals were blamed for the conflicts. However, conflicts were not usually the result of paid workers being 'bad employees'. Indeed, many were very committed to the goals and values of their organisations. The unpaid workers who attempted to take on the employer role within these groups were not usually 'tyrants'. Like the paid workers, most were also very committed to the goals and values of their organisations.

Participants in these groups struggled to make sense of the complexity of workplace relations in light of their goal of egalitarian relations and ideas about 'women's ways of working'. The interviewees' descriptions of conflicts between organisation members in relation to managing employment illustrate how the different positions of paid workers, unpaid workers, employers and employees interacted in contradictory ways. There was much conflict over how to manage the employer-employee relationship, while still maintaining egalitarian relationships. Central to these conflicts were tensions between formal and informal leadership. A common cause of conflict involved situations where unpaid workers adopted a leadership position as employers and challenged the informal leadership of the paid workers. Another common cause of conflict centred on disagreements about what it meant to be a 'good employer'. Contrasting bureaucratic and collective imperatives resulted in conflicting value systems structuring the notion of 'good employer'. Collective values emphasised co-operation, support, and nurturing with a loose system of informal accountabilities, while bureaucratic values emphasised a tight system of accountability and employer responsibility for efficient management (a pressure that increased with the contract for 'outputs' funding environment described in Chapter Seven).[184]

[184] At the same time, it is important to recognise the ways in which informal relationships are an integral aspect of bureaucratic systems in practice.

It is important to recognise that conflict is an integral aspect of any organisation; what is important is not the absence of conflict, but the procedures for dealing with conflict. In the conflicts described below, the attempts to bring together two oppositional logics to the employment relationship emerge as a major source of tension. The conflicts were never simply a relationship of domination and subordination, but rather, reflected struggle over influence and a negotiated shifting practice of power.

As the organisations became more reliant on paid workers, paid workers often emerged as influential and informal leaders. Paid workers had greater influence because of more knowledge, involvement and expertise than volunteer/unpaid members (for example, Ingrid 27/2/97; Karen 9/3/97; Shelley 12/1/98). For example, Karen, a volunteer, described:

> I think I always tended to look to the [paid] workers for leadership, they are leaders because they have the knowledge. They know what is happening. If we say let's do this and they disagree, they have got a lot of wisdom behind that, that we don't know about (Karen 9/3/97).

Mary found that her influence as a full-time paid worker had increased vis-à-vis the unpaid collective members as many only attended collective meetings (Mary in HC Group Interview 10/9/97).

New members often saw the paid workers as leaders, especially in situations where paid workers were responsible for screening and co-ordinating volunteers. Shelley, a long term paid worker in one Women's Refuge, described how new volunteers identified her as the leader in the organisation, but her position was not formalised: "a lot of the members see me, well probably all of them see me as the boss. Not in the traditional sense, but a lot of them see me as the boss, they think that I'll just deal with everything" (Shelley 12/1/98). Shelley had a lot of influence as a result of her knowledge and experience gained through ten years working in the same organisation. In another example, Ingrid described how "when I first joined the collective, I looked to the paid workers for the lead. ... I felt the lead was meant to come from the paid workers, before it dawned on me that we [the volunteers] had to take this lead upon ourselves" (Ingrid 27/2/97). Ingrid reported that learning to take this lead involved recognition that "workers are supposed to be responsible to the collective". Yet as she pointed out, often "the collective don't take that responsibility seriously, or we just don't want to take that responsibility or don't understand that responsibility. It hasn't been well explained"

(Ingrid 27/2/97).[185] New volunteers struggled to understand the collective way of working as it was so different from what many were used to in bureaucratic organisations.

Groups encountered difficulties recruiting volunteers for the employment subcommittees. Volunteers joined in order to 'help women' rather than manage the organisation or the paid workers, and thus resisted the employer role (Jo 6/12/97; Kaitlin 10/3/97; Shelley 12/1/98). Often, there was also a lack of skills and experience for the negotiating and managing of employment among the volunteer group (Iris 29/1/97; Nellie 22/4/97).

In situations where there were problems between paid workers, the lack of involvement by volunteers in the management of employees was a major concern for paid workers. Shelley described how she was in conflict with one of the other paid workers, but that the volunteers would not step in and deal with the issues. The volunteers did not want to adopt an employer role. Instead, the volunteers assumed that she would sort things out with the other employee through personal appeals and informal influence as a long time paid worker. However, Shelley thought:

> It was getting to a situation where we really need an employment group, because I am not a boss really. I can't tell my co-workers they have to do something if they don't want to. I will give you an example. I was working on the roster, I was working it out so that we could all have about five days off each. When I gave the other paid worker the roster, she said, 'that doesn't suit me, I want to go away'. ... That was the end of the discussion. I don't feel like I can say to her, 'no you can't go away', because I can't really. I am not her boss. I don't feel that I should have to battle it out with her. ... We need an employment subgroup to fall back on (Shelley 12/1/98).

As Shelley observed, there was an expectation that she would take control of the situation:

> Our collective would say to me, that we expect you to be the boss, without [the formal authority] that the label entails, they would expect me to deal with it. That puts me in a difficult place. They have to decide that this is my role or the employment subcommittee have to deal with the other paid worker (Shelley 12/1/98).

There were increasing pressures to resolve conflicts through formalising the management of employment relations. However, in some groups, volunteers resisted

[185] Brosnahan suggests that this problem is widespread in organisations where the paid worker, who reports to the board, is also responsible for recruiting, selecting, orienting, training and supervision of new board

adopting the formal procedures for managing paid workers, which involved either taking on an employer role themselves or assigning a manager among the paid workers.

There were also major conflicts in those groups where volunteers did attempt to formalise the employer-employee relationship. In the context of increasing pressures to adopt formal differentiation between employers and employees, the role of volunteers as employers was a major source of contention. Paid workers argued that volunteers sometimes lacked a neutral position or the skills to manage employment matters. Helene, a paid worker, felt that: "Our employment subcommittee know nothing about employment [even after they had completed the *What about the Workers* training]. They have never been employers, one is a wage clerk. They have their own issues, like if I earn more than them, or if I have better working conditions. ... You are getting a group of people generally who know nothing about what you do. It is a bit of a joke really. How can they monitor you?" (Helene 10/12/97). Part of the struggles to formalise employment relations was about challenging informal hierarchy between the paid workers and other collective members (Ingrid 27/2/97; Nellie 22/4/97; Sandra 10/9/97). Sandra argued that as employers "we should be telling the paid workers what to do, but in our collective the paid worker has all the power. … It is a big contradiction" (Sandra 10/9/97). She described how:

> [a]nother collective member and myself tried to bring employment policies in to develop accountability between the collective and paid workers. ... The paid workers weren't doing any log sheets or anything. I said I want to know what you are doing when you are at work. We were ringing the office and no one would be there. I have pushed for things like that, I want accountability (Sandra 10/9/97)

However, the paid workers resisted the reporting procedures and the collective were unable to enforce the changes (Sandra 10/9/97). Sandra argued that the collective was unable to challenge a long term paid worker and this undermined the value of non-hierarchy in the collective: "We don't work as a collective. The collective process in our collective is bad. … There is one person in our collective that runs it basically. ... Not many of the volunteers will challenge that paid worker" (Sandra 10/9/97). In the above group, the informal influence of the long term paid workers was difficult to challenge.

Another source of conflict was disagreement about the nature of the relationship between paid workers and the employer subcommittees. In one collective, the conflicts

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members, and suggests the practice potentially undermines the ability of the board to be effective (Brosnahan

over the role of the employment subcommittee were particularly intense (Helene 10/12/97; Ingrid 27/2/97; Sara 3/12/97). One of the paid workers, Sara, described a conflict over whether the subcommittee was there to 'support' them or to 'police' them. She argued: "To me, the [employment subcommittee] should be supporting us, but they see themselves more as police women, they are very officious" (Sara 3/12/97). In this instance, the employer and employees were seen as adversaries as they attempted to negotiate employment contracts:

> We have had a lot of problems negotiating our contracts with them. My understanding of the employment committee is that they are our support. Then someone said, 'no, that is not our job, our job was to ensure good employment practices'. ... This woman said we should nominate a support person each from the collective to support us in negotiating our contracts (Sara 3/12/97).

Sara accused the employment subcommittee of 'not being feminist' (Sara 3/12/97). In the context of the activist service organisations, this was a very damning statement. Sara went on to argue, "if it was a feminist subcommittee, maybe they would look after the workers in a different way by being more supportive" (Sara 3/12/97).[186]

The question of processes being feminist or patriarchal did emerge as an issue in the attempt to formalise the employment relationship. When one collective introduced formal appraisal systems, the paid workers accused the initiators of being patriarchal (Sandra 10/9/97). Ingrid also described the way in which the attempt to formalise employment relations was seen as introducing hierarchy into the collective and defined as 'male ways of working':

> Just because we are a collective with equal voices and equal standing doesn't mean we can't have a structure or that someone can't control the meeting. There is ambivalence around leadership and power. I think people think every one has to be equal and that is true. But does that mean that no one can direct the proceedings or set a formal structure or ask for accountability from another leader of the collective. But my experience is that there has been no expectation of that and if someone tries to make that happen, then it is frowned upon or they are seen as dictatorial or they are getting into this hierarchical way of being. ... I have heard people say, that is the way men would deal with that, we don't want to be like that. ... Any structure is seen as male (Ingrid 27/2/97).

1997:28).

[186] The conflict between the paid workers and newly formed employment subcommittee described in this situation was not uncommon. Shelley, who had been a member of the NCIWR Core Group, pointed out that in the adoption of the employment subcommittee model: "what seemed to happen [among many Refuge groups] was that people took on that employer role. But they took it on so zealously, that they were overbearing, ... they became so controlling of their paid workers" (Shelley 12/1/98).

This seemed to be an issue particularly in instances where collectives attempted to challenge the informal power of the paid workers by formalisation of the procedures for managing the employer-employee relationship.

Discussions of collective conflicts and tensions in managing employee-employer relations within the organisation reveal a complex practice of power in which members struggled to enact relations that facilitated egalitarianism between members. Inequality between members was central to collective conflicts, irrespective of whether the influence originated through expertise, positional power or knowledge. At issue was the way in which the organisations reduced the impact of these differences so that they were not the basis of inequality. Each of the issues identified in the above discussion raised questions about the ideal of equality and community in the service groups. Shelley felt her collective failed to maintain participatory democratic practices by informally positioning her as 'boss' within the organisation. Both Sara and Helene experienced the development of a formal hierarchy of authority with the formation of the employment subcommittee as undermining the practice of support and nurturing within the organisation. They challenged this development as reflective of patriarchal practices (Ingrid 27/2/97). For Ingrid, who was a member of the employment subcommittee, the tensions revolved around challenging the informal power of the paid workers.[187]

In the above examples of tensions in the employment relationship (for example, Shelley, Ingrid Sara and Sandra), the failure to resolve issues around the formalisation of the employer-employee relationship was blamed on poor collective processes. However, the groups were attempting to operate two different organisational logics. Formalising the employer-employee relationship while remaining reliant on the informal collective-democratic methods of control with their emphasis on achieving co-operation and agreement by consensus was a major source of tension. The groups were attempting to bring formal and informal practices of power into unison. The examples illustrate the difficulties of utilising consensus decision-making processes in situations where there was a lack of agreement about the use of formal positions of authority such as employer, especially when this challenged the informal leadership of paid workers.

[187] What also emerged in the discussions of problems with the employment subcommittees was the way in which the local collectives were relying on National Collective reviews of their organisations to help them resolve these difficulties (Ingrid 27/2/97; Shelley 12/1/98).

Disagreements become difficult to address and resolve in these situations (Mansbridge 1980).

This chapter has described the processes of formalisation in the activist service organisations and the resultant areas of tension as groups struggled to work with two different institutional logics, those of collectivity and of bureaucracy. There was an increased differentiation in roles, responsibilities and authority among the activist service groups and, in the process, groups modified the collective democratic organisation. Yet what did this mean for the organisations? Did it imply the failure of collective principles, or the inevitability of bureaucratic hierarchy? As Bordt has argued, the modified collective organisation should not be interpreted as "either collectivist failure or collectivist 'wannabes,' rather [they reflect] new forms of organisation, purposively designed" (1997:150).

The diversity of practices and responses by the groups suggest that hierarchy was not inevitable in the groups, but something that was struggled over and which developed unevenly throughout the organisation (Riger 1994:283). Groups worked to reduce the impact of hierarchy even as increased differentiation structured their organisations. At the same time, it is important to recognise that this increased hierarchy was a matter of degree. The groups experienced the changes as a major challenge to their goals of equality between members. However, they did not emerge from this process of formalisation as mini bureaucracies or with elaborate formal and impersonal hierarchies. Instead, the practices were implemented in parts of the organisation, such as the employment subcommittees, or managed through temporary structures. For participants in the groups, these small shifts challenged the commitment to non-hierarchical organising as a feminist value.

The discussion of the tensions and conflicts the groups experienced indicates a complex, contradictory and ambiguous practice of equality and empowerment of women in the internal organisation of activist service organisations. The conflicts illustrate how the commitment to sustaining egalitarian relations was fraught with tension and contradictions as they struggled with pressures to formalise procedures and policies (Riger 1994). In the process of formalising employment relations, the groups modified

the organisations. Although groups modified collective practices to accommodate more formal employment relations, the commitment to non-hierarchy was sustained in different parts of the organisation, alongside the emergence of formal hierarchies and often the acceptance of informal hierarchies.

The women interviewed, and their groups, struggled with what it meant to be committed to feminist processes within these organisations The groups valued equality, respect and shared knowledge between members of the organisation. The conflicts demonstrated how groups engaged in a complex shifting practice of power within the context of increasing pressures to adopt bureaucratic forms of organising. The next chapter examines the activist groups' engagement with a politics of difference and implementation of bicultural practices. This engagement also challenged the groups commitment to feminist collective-democratic processes and their understandings of equality and differences among women in the groups.

CHAPTER NINE

ADDRESSING DIFFERENCES AND INEQUALITY IN THE SERVICE GROUPS

This chapter examines the ways in which the predominantly Pākehā activist service groups engaged with differences and inequality between women. Participants believed that addressing differences between women was part of their commitment to social change. At the same time, differences and inequalities were often a source of tension and conflict in the groups. Earlier chapters described how the activist service groups that had emerged out of the second wave women's movement were dominated by Pākehā, middle-class women. Marginalised groups of women challenged Pākehā, middle-class women to acknowledge their specificity and the ways in which they were complicit in relations of domination.[188] Challenges took place in a context of wider radical political protest about relations of oppression in the 1980s. Significant social movements and protest events included movements for Māori sovereignty and the 1981 Springbok tour (for example, Awatere 1984; Te Ahu Poata-Smith 1996; Walker 1990:186-247), which were also influential in the development of Pākehā anti-racism groups, as well as the emergence of lesbian feminist protest and the mid-1980s anti-homosexual law reform protests (for example, McNab 1997). These radical protest movements and events politicised participants in the activist service

[188] For example, Guy et al. (1990) described how at the Piha Women's Liberation Congress, as at other national women's movement events such as the 1979 United Women's Convention, it was the differences between women that created the most "bitter debates". See also Awatere's *Maori Sovereignty* (Awatere 1982b; Awatere 1983; Awatere 1984), and other writers (Dann 1985; Rankine 1983b). Appendix IV and V describe many of the debates and challenges around differences between women at the national women's movement meetings and conventions that took place during the 1970s.

groups (Bronwyn 27/8/97; Chris 11/9/97; Heather 27/10/97; Jemma 8/9/97; Judith 30/1/97; Sandra 10/9/97). It is in this wider social and political context that the predominantly Pākehā activist service groups were attempting to address differences and inequalities between women.

Pākehā attempts to engage with differences between women within the second wave Aotearoa/New Zealand women's movement has been analysed and critiqued by many writers (for example, Alice 1990; Dominy 1990; Gunby 1992; Guy, Jones et al. 1990; Johnson and Pihama 1995; Johnson 1998; Jones 1991; Jones 1992; Larner 1995; Mohanram 1995; Mohanram 1999; Ryan 1989). Two strands have dominated these critiques of the radical feminist engagement with differences between women. The first strand has applied poststructuralist ideas and concepts, and often developed within university contexts. The focus has been on deconstructing the category of woman and critiquing the binary hierarchical model of oppression central to radical feminist politics. The second strand is comprised of the critique of both the unitary assumptions of radical feminism and the fragmentation of radical politics implied by the deconstruction of the subject. This last strand was most often led by Māori women activists/academics (some of whom identified as feminists). The writers have contributed to a rich tradition of debate about what it meant to 'deal with difference' in the context of feminist activism in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Yet, it is not clear how participants in the activist service groups engaged with the critiques of radical feminism taking place within Aotearoa/New Zealand universities. The academic debates about radical feminist engagement with differences in Aotearoa/New Zealand have usually drawn on the experiences of national women's movement events such as the UWCs, socialist feminist conferences and the radical feminist caucuses (for example, Dann 1985; Guy, Jones et al. 1990). Few analyses have drawn on the attempts to engage with difference in the activist service collectives over the 1980s and 1990s.[189]

[189] Some exceptions include Lynne Alice's article (1990) on some of the National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa debates and Ingrid Huygens' (2001) examination of debates about Māori-Pākehā feminist attempts to form organisational partnerships. In addition, various articles in Anne Else's (1993) book on Aotearoa/New Zealand women's organisations discuss the debates and developments associated with organising for specific identity groups, for example, Māori women and lesbian women (Dalziel 1993b; Rei, McDonald et al. 1993; Te Awekotuku, Tamihana et al. 1993). Other writers have elaborated on specific strategies such as parallel development in the NCIWR (Balzer and Ash 1987; Glover and Sutton 1991; Lambourn 1993).

This chapter examines how activist service collectives acknowledged differences and inequality between women, and the specific strategies they implemented to 'deal with differences' between women in their organisations during the 1980s and 1990s. First, I investigate strategies that local Aotearoa/New Zealand activist service groups implemented in order to address inequalities between women in their groups, and the tensions associated with each strategy. Second, I examine attempts by predominantly Pākehā groups to develop bicultural partnerships between Māori and Pākehā women. In particular, I analyse the different strategies pursued by the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges (NCIWR) and the National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa (NCRC) to develop alliances between Māori and non-Māori. The chapter illustrates the ways in which addressing differences and inequality between women was fraught with tension and challenged any simple construction of activist service groups as a 'feminist home' for all women.

Strategies to Address Difference and Inequality

By the 1980s in Aotearoa/New Zealand, many of the activist service collectives that had emerged out of the second wave women's movement attempted to acknowledge and address differences and inequalities between women. These groups were committed to a politics of justice that supported equality whilst being responsive to, and respectful of, differences between women. Groups debated which differences were important and which injustices to address. Two processes were integral to these debates: firstly, specifying differences and inequalities between women; and secondly, implementing strategies that created organisations in which both differences and inequality between women were addressed. The following section first describes the politics of articulating increasingly specific racial/ethnic, sexual and/or class identities within the activist groups. This is followed by an examination of two strategies, training and caucusing, which groups implemented to develop organisations that were responsive to differences and inequalities between women.

Specifying differences and inequality between women

The constitutions, founding documents and pamphlets of the activist service groups reference the need to acknowledge diversity among women and a responsibility to

address all forms of discrimination and inequality women experience. Both the NCIWR and the NCRC constitution documents drew attention to issues of racism and heterosexism, and the need for members to address these forms of oppression (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges circa 1990; National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa 1987). Both constitutions emphasised the autonomy of Māori women and the need for ethnic-specific services. A Whanganui Women's Centre pamphlet described their commitment to "working cooperatively with all women, especially Maori women, women of colour, lesbians, bisexual women, lower income women, differently abled [sic] women, young, old, and working class women".[190]

Acknowledging one's identity around class, sexuality and race/ethnicity was part of the politics occurring in many of the activist service groups. Members were expected to identify their class, race/ethnicity and sexuality within the training workshops and caucus systems. Discussions about activist service groups' membership focused on the race/ethnic, sexuality and class distribution within the groups. Most often the women interviewed identified the groups they belonged to as predominantly Pākehā and middle-class, and either predominantly lesbian or heterosexual. Specifying identities in terms of race/ethnicity, class and sexuality had become commonplace.

The marginalisation of Māori, lesbian and/or working-class women was prominent in debates about difference and inequality between women in the activist service groups. There were ongoing discussions about developing a feminist politics that was anti-racist, anti-classist and anti-heterosexist. For example, reports by local groups in the *Rape Crisis Workers' of Aotearoa* newsletters during the 1980s made many references to the need to address racism, classism and heterosexism. The 1986 review of Women's Refuges pointed out that Māori needs for Women's Refuges had to be specifically addressed in Refuge, and that all Women's Refuges accept and support the involvement of both lesbian and heterosexual women in the movement (Review Team 1986:6). Many service groups attempted to develop organisations that were more inclusive of differences between women and political processes that challenged multiple forms of oppression, not just gender oppression.

[190] Details are from an undated pamphlet developed by the Whanganui Women's Centre. The pamphlet appears to have been produced sometime between the late 1980s to early 1990s. It was still in use in 1997.

However, not all groups did engage with differences between women. Some groups continued to emphasise gender oppression as primary in ways that ignored other forms of oppression between women (RC1 Group Interview 9/9/97). They failed to acknowledge that the experience of rape and sexual abuse was complicated by racial, class or other relations of oppression (Heyes 2000). They identified as being committed to anti-oppressive practice principles through "client centredness and the whole feminist philosophy, like recognising that rape and sexual abuse is an issue of power and social control" and suggested that racism and heterosexism were not an issue for the group (Maggie from RC1 Group Interview 9/9/97). This framework reduced issues, such as racism or heterosexism, to being outside of the activities of the feminist activist service group. Gender oppression remained the core underlying focus of the group. Describing a contemporary Women's Centre, Petra (16/2/98) identified how the group claimed to represent all women. However, group members were nearly all Pākehā. The group failed to either identify as a Pākehā group or work to increase representation of diverse groups of women (Petra 16/2/98). By omission, the Women's Centre group attempted to construct itself as undefined by differences between women and ignored the ways in which the group represented a narrow group of interests.

Many of the activist service groups did emphasise the importance of specifying identity and/or inequality between women. However, the effect of specifying identity by privileged groups was ambiguous and contradictory. Reflections by the women interviewed suggest how, even when groups identified as part of a more privileged identity group, this did not always decentre the privileged group. Even when groups were specifying and recognising ethnicity as an important aspect of social relations, often it was only the 'other' that had an ethnic identity. Iris described how "I don't think ethnicity was influential, there were very seldom any Māori women involved in the time I was involved" (Iris 29/1/97). She observed that it was easy to ignore the exclusion of Māori within the day to day work of her collective (Iris 29/1/97). She stated:

> Well, I don't think we ever went out of our way to encourage Māori women into the collective, or if they came into the collective to hold onto them. [Interviewer. How come?] It didn't provide a service to Māori women. I suppose basically we were insecure with the implications of having Māori women involved. And sort of just, it was one more thing that we chose to ignore, or not make a priority (Iris 29/1/97).

The quote begins to highlight a fear of difference and refusal to engage with differences unless challenged by those excluded. It also highlights how the 'other', in this instance

Māori, was marked, while Pākehā remained unmarked by race/ethnicity. Specifying identity often failed to challenge the underlying assumption of the centrality of gender oppression or to mark the groups' gender politics as representing a specific class or race/ethnicity.

There were contradictory shifts between examining ethnic differences and identifying commonality based on gender in the groups. The failure to mark whiteness as a racial/ethnic identity was reflected in the description of "almost half our clients now are ethnic" (Sara 3/12/97). At the same time, this was tempered with the argument that everybody was basically treated the same:

> In some ways, I can understand why [Māori women] wouldn't want to be a part of our collective[191] because it is a very white middle class collective. It is not supportive for Māori specifically. Actually, it is supportive to Māori as it is of anybody (Sara 3/12/97).

Sara illustrates the contradictory shifts between the group being supportive of all women, but then not meeting Māori women's needs as a specific ethnic group. Underpinning the claim that the service is "supportive to Māori as it is of anybody" is the assumption that there is a common experience of gender oppression, but that Māori have additional needs. In this framework, the ways in which the service might be marked by "white, middle-class" values of the members' remains unexamined. Sara highlights the ambiguous shifts between an unmarked commonality between women and marking difference as special and 'other'.

One interviewee highlighted how the middle-class dominance of the group she belonged to resulted in the group failing to acknowledge their ethnicity or their class. This was implicated in the group's resistance to the NCIWR parallel development model which aimed to facilitate equality between Māori and non-Māori. They viewed the commitment to parallel development as political while the work they did was non-political and for women in general. Antonia, a Women's Refuge worker, framed the tension in terms of the Pākehā, middle-class women's focus on services to women rather than on political action. Antonia described how her collective was "a middle class type … not full of very political women who are keen to tackle these issues and so on, they really want to work with women. [Implementing] parallel development is quite

[191] This was not an unusual viewpoint. A number of Pākehā interviewees stated that it was understandable that Māori women would want to work with Māori women rather than in their predominantly Pākehā groups (for example, Chris 11/9/97; Iris 29/1/97).

difficult for them to do" (Antonia 25/11/97). In this context, being white and middle-class resulted in a focus on helping women by providing services, while addressing ethnic inequality was seen as political. Underpinning this argument was an assumption that providing services to women was unmarked by ethnicity. The example also illustrated the way in which Pākehā were often identified as middle-class, but Māori were nearly always only marked by ethnicity. This practice is indicative of the ways in which attending to identity differences between women was narrow in focus and how Pākehā women often struggled to see the 'other' as having complex multiple identities.

Another interviewee, Jemma, discussed how her group had advertised as a "Pākehā group" in the local newspapers. She described how a Pākehā woman with a history of involvement in anti-racism activism had joined and challenged them to address their racism in the mid-1980s:

> We had a woman join the collective ... She wanted us to acknowledge that we were racist. First, we all kind of said we are not racist, she said we are racist. We went into this big thing about looking at our racism, it was very enlightening. We would sit there and put out all our garbage and it was [recognised that] we were as a nation quite racist at that point.
> Even though as feminists we were trying to acknowledge the women's rights, I believe perhaps we were less willing and ready to acknowledge the possibilities that we were racist and look at it and do something. It didn't make it pleasant (Jemma 8/9/97).

The interviewee drew out the struggle to identify with a position of oppressor for the Pākehā women in the group, and to examine their participation in racism. It was more comfortable to focus on gender oppression from the position of being oppressed.

The group was attempting to address the impact of having a predominantly Pākehā membership on service delivery (Jemma 8/9/97). They ran an advert for approximately a year that identified the group as a Pākehā service for women. With this advertising, the group received many calls from the public saying they were racist for identifying as a Pākehā group. Jemma outlined how:

> We held our ground and explained it was about being pro-choice [i.e. that women would have a choice about contacting a Pākehā group for support]. ... As a collective it was a very hard time for the white women. We believed it was the right thing and then we were lynched again. We then wrote an article explaining why our advert was running (Jemma 8/9/97).

At the same time, Jemma reported feeling ambivalent about the advertising. She pointed out how it could easily become part of the politics of reasserting Pākehā dominance and practices of racism through a politics of exclusion:

> Then we were looking at it as a collective asking "how do you know if this is being racist or not?" In acknowledging our racism, "were we being racist, how do we word it so as not to be seen as racist" (Jemma 8/9/97).

Group members struggled to identify as Pākehā and as racist by being exclusive. In the process, the group began to develop a politics of partiality. The strategy used (for example, advertising as a Pākehā group) indicated recognition of the ways in which the ethnicity of the group was an important factor in service delivery. However, in other ways, the action of advertising was limited in its impact, because the group did not develop other strategies to address relationships of inequality. Simply identifying a position can reassert a position of Pākehā centrality.

The above examples show Pākehā interviewees reflecting on how the groups they were a part of simply did not address the interests or needs of Māori women. However, they also highlight the tendency for Pākehā in the groups to describe Māori and other ethnic minority groups as having an ethnicity. Even when groups specified and acknowledged differences between women, they often still sustained a politics in which whiteness was unmarked. The implications of whiteness for the organisation and the service remained invisible. Often, there was an unstated assumption of gender-based commonality underpinning the service and a failure to do anything more than specify the dominant ethnic and class identity of the group. The above examples reiterate the complexity of specifying identity and examining complicity in relations of oppression. The simple act of specifying identity was important, but did not always result in significant challenges that decentred Pākehā privilege as the norm against which the 'other' was identified.

Developing organisations responsive to inequalities between women

The strategies developed by many of the activist service groups went beyond simply specifying identities and complicity in practices of oppression. Two major strategies were common, that of training programmes to politicise women in the groups and that of caucusing in which the relationship between oppressor and oppressed could be examined and addressed.

Many of the activist service groups attempted to develop and support increased awareness of inequality between women through training programmes. All new recruits to groups affiliated to either the NCIWR or NCRC were required to undertake an introductory training. Other activist service groups also required recruits to undergo

some training (HC Group Interview 10/9/97; WC 1 Group Interview 11/9/97), while some only accepted recruits who had the prerequisite skills, attitudes and knowledge (Judith 30/1/97; Karen 9/3/97). Many of the training programmes developed by the activist service groups included a focus on anti-racism, anti-heterosexism/homophobia workshops, and Treaty of Waitangi workshops (Antonia 25/11/97; HC Group Interview 10/9/97; Shelley 12/1/98; WC 1 Group Interview 11/9/97). These subjects were often a substantial part of the training programme for new recruits and focused on increasing knowledge, but also drew on individual experience to bring issues of oppression and difference between women to a more personal level (MacGibbon 2002; Shelley 12/1/98). Activist service groups also developed regular (often annual) workshops for all members on the Treaty of Waitangi, anti-racism or anti-homophobia. Based on the reports by interviewees, other studies, outlines of workshops and my own experience of the training programmes,[192] each area such as the Treaty of Waitangi, racism and heterosexism was addressed separately in the training at a workshop lasting anywhere between three hours or a full day. Many of the workshops were facilitated by outsiders with skills and expertise in a specific topic. The training programmes usually drew on a structural model of oppression. Issues of racism, sexism and heterosexism were seen as historically constituted and sustained by inequality of access to resources and practices of institutionalised discrimination against groups based on gender, race and/or sexuality (for example, Balzer 1990; MacGibbon 2002). The Treaty of Waitangi workshops focused on the history of colonisation in Aotearoa/New Zealand and on the Treaty as the basis for bicultural partnership between Māori and non-Māori (Balzer 1990; MacGibbon 2002; Shelley 12/1/98). In this way, training programmes for new recruits did specifically address relations of oppression, such as sexism, racism, heterosexism and homophobia.

Yet, the training programmes tended to be set up to address each relation of oppression separately and to address them in ways that maintained the notion of a commonality based on gender. MacGibbon (2002:127) in a participant observation study of one Aotearoa/New Zealand Women's Refuge group training, argued that training of new advocates remained structured by the assumptions of women as a universal group oppressed by patriarchy. She explained how the idea of all women being oppressed was

[192] The Rape Crisis training programme I undertook when I first joined Rape Crisis involved three four-hour workshops on racism and heterosexism.

used by the refuge trainers to "break down the barriers between the advocates and the clients using the Refuge" (MacGibbon 2002:142). MacGibbon observed that the exploration of relations of oppression in the training programme was framed in terms of a logic of either/or identities. For example, the trainee group examined inequality in terms of Pākehā versus Māori = racism, rich versus poor = classism, and heterosexual versus homosexual = heterosexism (MacGibbon 2002:172). However, they spent little time examining how the "systems [were] mutually reinforcing, or that we [could] be multiply positioned as both oppressor and oppressed" (MacGibbon 2002:172).

Interviewees described how, in the training programmes, there was an emphasis on the creation of spaces in which marginalised identity groups of women, such as lesbians, could be visible without experiencing prejudice from co-workers (Antonia 25/11/97; Chris 11/9/97; WC 1 Group Interview 11/9/97). Antonia stressed that "a key belief in Refuge was that you don't try to disguise the fact that you are lesbian in Refuge and that you can be open" (Antonia 25/11/97). The training shifted attention to how "heterosexuals have got a responsibility to look at the way that they treat lesbian women" (Antonia 25/11/97). One Women's Centre held heterosexism workshops with all members in order to ensure the Centre would be a safe place for lesbians (WC 1 Group Interview 11/9/97). Training programmes made marginalised identities visible within the history and contemporary politics of the activist service collectives. Individuals belonging to privileged groups had responsibility for ensuring minority groups were not further marginalised within the service collectives. Although the training programmes did address multiple forms of oppression, by treating them separately the training often failed to recognise the effects of intersections between multiple forms of oppressions.

Descriptions of the training programmes suggest that they drew on a structural model of oppression to explain relations of oppression, while emphasising a model of action to challenge personal prejudice (Scott 2000; 2001). Prejudicial ideas against minority groups were the focus of the workshops. The training programmes were seen as an important tool in screening new recruits and ensuring that they did not hold heterosexist or racist ideas:

> We send out a questionnaire that has got lots of questions about homophobia and racism and a few other things like that. If they don't know what it is, then

> that is fine. So we get a rough idea of how the women applying to do the training are from that. Then they come along. ... By the time you get to the end of the training, hopefully most of them that are not suitable are gone (Shelley 12/1/98).

As Shelley points out, these methods were not foolproof. New women could join by paying "lip service" to issues of racism and heterosexism, even though they might covertly disagree with the Refuge commitment to anti-racism or anti-heterosexism (Shelley 12/1/98). MacGibbon, in a study of a local Refuge training, argued that the training worked to ensure that prospective advocates adopted "particular subjectivities" that did "not allow any of their 'prejudices to come through'" (MacGibbon 2002:179). It was not always clear how the ideas of Pākehā or heterosexual privilege examined in the training programmes translated into organisational practice except by the practice of not expressing prejudiced views.

Another way in which groups attempted to 'deal with difference' and inequality between women was through the use of caucuses. The groups pursued a model closer to the Toronto Rape Crisis model of caucusing than the NWSA model. (These models of caucusing are described in Chapter Three, pages 80-82). Caucuses were widely used in the activist service groups, particularly by the NCIWR and NCRC. For example, regional and national meetings of the NCRC held lesbian/non-lesbian caucuses from the mid-1980s (Jemma 8/9/97; Liz 6/3/97). In the 1990s, the NCRC held Māori /non-Māori caucuses. The NCRC held its first bisexual/non-bisexual caucus in the mid-1990s (Liz 6/3/97). During the same period, the NCIWR held a bisexual caucus at the Tauiwi gathering (Shelley 12/1/98). Caucuses were used by the Aotearoa/New Zealand activist service groups to strengthen the positions of minority groups vis-à-vis the dominant group, and as a way of focusing the attention of privileged groups on their participation in relations of oppression.[193] Caucuses were an opportunity for those who were members of an oppressed group to gain strength from being together.

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[193] An article in the *Rape Crisis and Related Groups Newsletter* described how in caucus groups:

> Members share a common experience or state of being – age, gender, race specific experience. It is this common factor only that includes a group member. Exclusivity offers to members a potentially strengthening, growthful, empowering and safe place of sharing the common factor, unavailable anywhere else (Moon 1989:24).

Those excluded were advised to set up a group for themselves. Moon offered the following advice to those excluded from the oppressed group:

> If you are excluded from a Lesbian group, you may want to talk to others about your heterosexual privilege/disadvantage. If you are excluded from a Maori Womin's [sic] group, you many want to talk to other pakeha womin [sic] about what it means to be pakeha in a bi-cultural society (Moon 1989:24).

Caucusing was a way of acknowledging the inequalities of marginalised identity groups of women within the service groups. It involved shifting the focus from women's oppression to other forms of oppression. This emerged as a common understanding of caucuses in the interviews. A Pākehā Refuge worker described how caucuses encouraged dominant group women to shift from "looking at our own oppression ... to looking at our own role in oppression and how that works. … [We need to look at the] way in which we oppress others, and the way in which we can change [that situation]" (Helene 10/12/97). Some interviewees described how members of their groups struggled to identify as part of an oppressing group (Liz 6/3/97; WC 2 Group Interview 16/2/98). Libby described how, at each annual NCRC meeting she attended, new members would struggle to understand the purpose of the non-lesbian caucus:

> Every year there would be new heterosexual women going: What? Why? I would explain [how the caucus] was to deal with homophobia and heterosexual privilege. We were to discuss [these issues] amongst ourselves in terms of what are we going to do about making life easier for the people who didn't have the same privilege. Invariably we just got to the same point every year because we all had to start from scratch every year (Libby, from WC 2 Group Interview 16/2/98).

Caucuses based on a dichotomy of oppressed and oppressor struggled to address this complexity of lived identities.

Another issue with the caucuses related to the ways in which identities as lived were not always stable or fell so neatly into either 'oppressor' or 'oppressed' (Liz 6/3/97; Sandra 10/9/97; WC 2 Group Interview 16/2/98). Women changed their identity from heterosexual, to lesbian and/or to bisexual, and others reported identifying as both Māori and Pākehā:

> I have tried to bring things up as wahine Māori, and I have a bit of a problem with it myself. Part of me is wahine Māori, the part of me that is wahine Māori goes 'yeah, that is fine', the part of me that is wahine Tauiwi is like, 'oh no'. It's like two different people. ... That is the interesting thing with lesbian caucuses, I always used to go to the lesbian caucuses. Then when I wasn't lesbian any more, it was like where do I go to, the first regional meeting after this happened. I didn't want to go to either caucus. I said I am not going to a non-lesbian caucus because I am not a non-lesbian, and I just sat there. It was really interesting because it brought up a lot of issues, where do I fit any more, even as a bisexual, you end out sitting on your own (Sandra 10/9/97).

The binary caucus system assumed a stability of individual identity. It also assumed that every woman would fit in one of the two oppositional groups as oppressed or oppressor,

and that identities could be compartmentalised to fit either the oppressed or oppressor caucus.

Nevertheless, the caucuses gave an important space to marginalised groups, but assumed a commonality based on the marginalised identity, and rendered invisible the many other differences. The assumption of a similarity in position among all those in each caucus created problems for some identity-specific groups in the caucus. For example, among the Pacific Island women in NCIWR, the Māori /non-Māori caucusing system placed them in a difficult situation. As Helen noted, "we are having the Tauiwi gathering, but the Pacific Island women are reluctant to come to the Tauiwi gathering. They are Pākehā dominated and probably quite threatening and culturally inappropriate" (Helen 25/11/97). Pacific Island women did not belong in the Māori caucus, but neither did they really fit in the non-Māori caucus, where much of the focus was on Pākehā women's issues.

Both the NCRC and NCIWR struggled to obtain agreement on requests for caucus status by bisexual women. Those interviewees who had been to a national NCRC or NCIWR meeting in the year prior to the interview described numerous conflicts in response to the requests by bisexuals. This had been an ongoing source of contention in the NCRC. The first bisexual/non-bisexual caucus had been held in 1994, but the following year protests by other members had resulted in the caucus not occurring. Liz, describes how their request did not get treated seriously:

> I remember when I first joined Rape Crisis, bisexuality wasn't talked about at all. I went to my first AGM, and I remember listening to all the jokes and words that got thrown about when we were going off to the bisexual caucuses. ... The first caucus was good, we were really strong about who we were. I know there was quite a bit of conflict in the non-bisexual caucus in terms of whether bisexual women should have a caucus or not. Caucusing is based on oppression not just on sexuality. Certainly I have met bisexual women and they have been oppressed (Liz 6/3/97).

In 1996, members of the bisexual caucus developed a position paper arguing that their specific oppression be acknowledged by the organisation (National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa 1996). The request for caucus status by bisexuals also became a major source of contention in the NCIWR. Shelley described the response at an NCIWR national meeting to the request by bisexual women in the organisation for their own caucus:

> At our last AGM we had a major issue about bisexuality. It was so abusive. I came back from the last AGM thinking 'what is the point'. Just the way it was handled. The lesbians in our movement, they were the ones saying all this terrible stuff. … It was just ignorance. The issue was appallingly facilitated, because the woman who facilitated was obviously very biphobic (Shelley 12/1/98).

These claims triggered debates about who could claim to be oppressed.[194] Those meeting in the non-bisexual groups, especially lesbians, struggled to take the claims of bisexuals seriously. They challenged the request for caucus status on the grounds that bisexuals could not claim an equivalent oppressed status to lesbians. Significantly, two linked issues emerged in this process. First, those who opposed the bisexual caucus feared the proliferation of differences which would challenge their own special status. The claims of bisexual women threatened the maintenance of a dichotomous model of oppression in which lesbians were most oppressed and all others were the oppressors (Ryan 1989). Second, there were claims that bisexuality was not a 'real' identity, it was a transition from one identity to another, or an undecided state. In this respect, claims to the 'truth' of the identity were central to the challenges by members of both organisations.

Social class was an ambiguous difference in the politics of the activist service collectives. References to the need to examine and address class relations in the groups were scattered throughout the early Rape Crisis newsletters. Class relations were not specifically focused on in the training programmes (except for specifying a difference in terms of income and poverty between women). Nor was class set up as one of the caucuses in terms of having a working-class/non-working-class caucus. At the level of service provision, class inequality was addressed by providing services either free of charge or through the use of a sliding scale of charges based on income in order to ensure access to services for all women. However, class relations were rarely specified as an area of conflict and tension in the interviews. Most often, class was mentioned in passing to describe a group identity (for example, most members of the group were middle-class). Interviewees who identified as working-class reported experiences of marginalisation within the groups. For example, they struggled with the middle-class priorities and assumptions in some of the service collectives. They criticised the middle-class women for needing to create shelters full of middle-class furnishings (Jo 6/12/97;

[194] These issues and responses were not just unique to the activist service groups, but took place in other lesbian feminist and women's movement organisations as well (Came 1991).

Nellie 22/4/97), or for expecting working-class women to take on the cleaning role (Nellie 22/4/97). Others reported differences in women's capacity to make financial contributions to the service collectives impacted on levels of influence in the collective (Donna 1/11/97; Helen 25/11/97). Published descriptions of the experiences of working-class women in other women's groups report similar issues (for example, Bird 1991; Bird, Cumming et al. 1983).

Groups attempted to address the specific oppression of Māori, working-class and lesbian women through training programmes, service accessibility and/or caucuses. These different strategies were important in politicising individuals and in challenging members of more privileged groups. The strategies used by the service groups resulted in the acknowledgment and focus on particular differences, but framed these differences in ways that marginalised other identities. For example, much of the focus in the service groups has been on the relationship between Māori, as tangata whenua, and Pākehā women; ethnic minority groups such as Pacific Island women were often subsumed within the category of non-Māori, a group dominated by Pākehā women. Bisexual women were usually included within the non-lesbian group and their specificity rendered invisible. Within these politics, the focus was most often on building relationships between Māori and non- Māori, or between lesbian and non-lesbian women.

Differences in these politics were often addressed within a binary relationship between two specific groups, focused on just one aspect of identity, for example, race/ethnicity, social class or sexuality. This binary framework marginalised, or rendered invisible, many minority groups by subsuming them in the 'non' category, for example, non-Māori or non-lesbian. Women had to compartmentalise their identities to fit the identity categories the groups were using. The binary model of caucusing, while rendering particular relations of oppression visible, also rendered other relations of oppression invisible. It was difficult to acknowledge women as 'part oppressor, part oppressed' and the multiplicity of positions constituting individual subjectivities (Ryan 1989). Consequently, activist service groups often struggled to engage with the complexity of lived identities. The above discussion of the struggles of Pacific Island women, and bisexual women, point to some of the limits and tensions of binary models of addressing difference and inequality within the activist service organisations.

It can be argued that while the activist service groups had a history of acknowledging differences within their politics, working through the implications of difference and inequality between women within the groups often had resonance with Ang's (1995) politics of inclusion or 'unity in diversity'.[195] Differences, while recognised within many of the groups as important, were often contained within a framework of pluralist diversity. The acknowledgment of differences in terms of race/ethnicity, sexuality and class operated in contradictory ways that often failed to decentre the dominant group and the activist service groups remained locked in a simple binary construction of differences.

Developing Bicultural Partnerships between Māori and Pākehā

Challenges to 'Honour the Treaty' by Māori and Pākehā anti-racism groups in the 1970s and 1980s influenced Pākehā women in the service groups to address the exclusions, racism and monocultural nature of their organisations. Increasingly, there were calls for the development of bicultural partnerships between Māori and Pākehā women. Arguments for bicultural partnership were usually based on the Treaty of Waitangi [Māori version] as the founding document of Aotearoa/New Zealand which guaranteed tino rangatiratanga[196] to Māori. Biculturalism in this context placed the focus on the relationship between Māori and non-Māori.[197] The Māori group brought together all those self-identified as Māori.[198] Non-Māori were usually identified as Pākehā when referring to descendants of white European settlers, or Tauiwi which drew together all those who migrated to Aotearoa/New Zealand after the Māori. The articles of the Treaty promised equal partnership between Māori and Tauiwi, and the right of Māori to control their own institutions and resources.

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[195] Ang argues that it often seems as if dealing with differences has merely involved responding to the demands for political and cultural recognition. She states this "sounds all too deceptively easy ... as if differences among women could unproblematically be turned into 'unity in diversity'" once differences have been properly recognised (Ang 1995:59). Unity in diversity refers to the assumption of a common ground underpinning the focus on differences between women.

[196] Māori term for sovereignty, see glossary for further details.

[197] This chapter attends to the day to day relationships and organisational politics involved in developing bicultural partnerships. Another whole level of debate involves the relationship between the Crown and iwi. This area is not addressed in the thesis.

[198] Although, iwi identity is a central identity for many Māori, it was rarely addressed in the bicultural politics of activist feminist organisations.

A review of some of the attempts by the predominantly Pākehā activist service organisations to develop bicultural partnership highlights a history of struggle and conflict. Pākehā members in the activist service groups struggled to make sense of the complex issues that needed to be addressed in developing equal partnerships between Māori and Pākehā. Issues for Pākehā involved examining racism at a personal and institutional level. This entailed addressing complicity in histories of racism as Pākehā, while at the same time develop a positive identity as Pākehā. Groups had to work out how to share resources and power in ways that did not reassert a position of Pākehā privilege and domination. Three organisational models of building partnership between Māori and non-Māori were common among the predominantly Pākehā activist service groups included in this study. In the first model, individual Māori women were invited into existing organisations. Central to the second model was the development of an alliance between two autonomous Māori and non-Māori organisations. The third model involved building alliances between Māori and non-Māori groups within a single organisation.

The first model often simply aimed to bring ethnic minority women into an existing organisation dominated by Pākehā women. In this respect, the focus was on supporting and representing cultural diversity within the organisation and was also often on building multicultural organisations. Most of the attempts centred on recruiting both Māori and Pacific Island women into the organisation (Alice 30/1/97; Jemma 8/9/97). This is reflected in a 1987 report by the Auckland Women's Health Collective which stated that the group had "decided to become more multicultural, which means changing the membership of the group – at present it has one Māori woman and one Pacific Island woman" (Rosier 1987:8-9). They wanted to have equal numbers of Māori, Pacific Island and Pākehā women, and intended to provide a room for use by Māori and Pacific Island women (Rosier 1987:9). No further reports exist about the success or failure of this strategy. Other organisations were specifically focused on developing organisations in which there were greater numbers of Māori women. This was often conceived as part of 'Honouring the Treaty' rather than just enhancing ethnic minority group representation. In one of the Women's Refuges, Sara described how they often had a single Māori woman in their organisation, and that this was an issue in terms of isolation for that Māori woman. She also identified how Māori women in the area did

not have a Māori women's refuge to go to, and that the Refuge she belonged to needed to find a way of addressing this issue. She described how:

> I had a Māori co-worker at one time, she was involved in Māori Women's Welfare League I supported her in trying to find some other Māori women. I got a friend of mine to write an advert in Māori for the local paper, thinking that that might encourage them. But nobody replied (Sara 3/12/97).

The group was attempting to support the Māori woman to stay in the organisation by increasing the numbers of Māori women. However, they were unsuccessful in recruiting more Māori women into the organisation. Attempts to recruit Māori women into the predominantly Pākehā organisations were often unsuccessful (Alice 30/1/97; Jemma 8/9/97).

A major issue with this first model was the attempt to bring ethnic minority women into the organisation without specifically changing the organisation. There was an assumption that all women could work together and manage their differences through the feminist collective procedures already in place. A report evaluating the implementation of parallel development in the Te Awamutu Women's Refuge described some of the issues Māori women experienced after first joining the organisation (Glover and Sutton 1991). The Refuge initially made no specific changes to their organisation. The predominantly Pākehā group had recruited some Māori women, taken them through the Refuge training and then invited them to find a place in the existing organisation. The Pākehā members of the Refuge had assumed that collective processes ensured that the organisation would be responsive to Māori women's needs, and that by participating in the collective processes the Māori women would be able to contribute both as individuals and Māori. But the Māori women described how difficult they found it to join in and challenge what they experienced as a Pākehā structure in which Pākehā women and Pākehā values remained dominant (Glover and Sutton 1991:38-39). The Pākehā members assumed that their structures and practices were 'women-friendly' and would therefore, over time, become comfortable to all new members irrespective of ethnicity. This Refuge example depicts some of the tensions for Māori women coming into an organisation that expects women to fit into a pre-existing framework assumed to be unmarked by ethnicity or racism. Difficulties arose because the dominance of Pākehā values was not acknowledged, and the inequality structuring relationships between Māori and Pākehā members was not addressed. There was a failure to recognise that the unmodified Pākehā feminist organisation was not experienced as an open 'home' to all

women (Ang 1995). In these instances, the focus was on creating organisations representative of ethnic diversity. The Pākehā women in these groups were what Scott (2001) referred to as "race cognisant" in that they recognised they had an ethnic identity, that of Pākehā, and that this was implicated in the limitations to the groups' ability to represent women and provide services to minority group women. However, they were not "racism cognisant" because they failed to address and recognise the ways in which their organisations were structured by everyday racism (Scott 2001).

The second model focused on developing alliances between autonomous Māori and non-Māori organisations. Māori women often organised separately because of issues of racism, different agendas and different interests from Pākehā activist organisations. In many cases, the different ethnic groups reported that it was easier to set up separately rather than develop joint organisations that would respect cultural differences, meet the diverse needs of each group and deal with issues of racism. Quite a number of activist service groups pursued ethnic-specific organising. For example, three national organisations were set up to represent different ethnic groups working in the area of sexual violence. Māori women set up Te Kakano o te Whanau separate from the National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa in the mid-1980s (Anonymous circa 1988). As part of the same discussions, the Pacific Island Women's Project also decided to organise separately. The Pākehā women in Mann's study indicated a preference for separate Māori, Pacific Island and Pākehā organisations: "Members had found being inclusive of women of different cultures within their organisations difficult. [They] tended to hold and practice more separatist beliefs about their relationships with Māori and Pacific Island women's organisations" (Mann 1993:149-150). Similarly, Jenny van der Schoot (1986) described how Māori women in one town preferred to develop their own Women's Refuge organisation in the early to mid-1980s and how this had been supported by the predominantly Pākehā Women's Refuge.

At the same time, building relationships between the different organisations remained an important strategy for such activities as joint political projects, sharing resources (time, skills and money) or support in developing culturally responsive organisations. The activist service groups developed alliances across ethnic-specific organisations. These alliances were often formed for specific purposes. Among local groups, interviewees reported forming temporary alliances in order to provide support, share

skills and resources (Chris 11/9/97) and to develop funding applications (HC Group Interview 10/9/97). Those involved in the three national collectives focused on services for survivors of sexual abuse described how, during the mid to late 1980s, the groups formed an important informal network that addressed issues such as racism in funding (Chris 11/9/97; Patricia 7/3/97). Similarly, within Mann's study, the Pākehā participants identified how Māori and Pacific Island women provided an important role in supporting them to develop culturally safe and responsive services (Mann 1993:149-150). The development of autonomous separate organisations enabled Māori and Pacific Island women's groups to maintain separate ethnic-specific identities and develop ethnic-specific services.[199]

In the case of the three national groups working in the area of sexual violence, the alliance they formed in the mid-1980s was developed between Māori, Pacific Island and Pākehā in order to obtain an equitable distribution of state funding. A report on the 1985 Paraparaumu meeting to discuss the government funding proposal[200] outlines how:

> Māori women requested 50% of funding be available to them. Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Groups that went on to form the National Organisation supported that division of funds. This was in recognition of Māori Women as Tangata Whenua and of the need of the Māori community to have access to resources for combating sexual abuse in culturally appropriate ways. Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse groups, whilst still struggling for funds, have always had greater access to resources than Māori Women's Groups (Anonymous 1986b:no page numbers).

The argument was made on the grounds of the greater difficulties Māori groups experienced accessing funding and the status of Māori as tangata whenua. On these grounds, the activists argued that the Māori groups should be allocated half the state funds.

However, government representatives refused the proposal on the basis that groups had to be incorporated in order to receive funding.[201] In response, the groups present at the 1985 meeting decided to implement the distribution informally and "[t]his meant Local Groups committed themselves to supporting the work of Māori Women by

[199] Although the non-Māori, non-Pacific Island groups were often predominantly Pākehā, they rarely developed an ethnic-specific identity as Pākehā. This will be discussed further later in the chapter.

[200] As discussed in Chapter Six, Ann Hercus had called a meeting to discuss the setting up of a national organisation to distribute funds to groups working in this area.

[201] The debates between the groups providing services for victims of sexual violence and the state about funding allocations for Māori and non-Māori groups was described in Chapter Seven.

reimbursement, koha[202] or any other appropriate means" (Anonymous 1986b:no page numbers). Many of the Pākehā women went back to their local Rape Crisis collectives and found their groups opposed the decision on the basis that the funding was allocated for specific activities or that they did not support the decision to share funds (Anonymous 1986b:no page numbers). The government was also accused of racism by some of the activists who had attended the Paraparaumu meeting (Abel 1985:2; Kohu 1985a:11). The accusations of state racism focused on the way in which some of the Pākehā groups were receiving funding even though they were not incorporated, while those Māori groups who were not incorporated were ineligible for state funding (Abel 1985:2; Kohu 1985a:11).

In 1986, the NCRC reached a consensus that "40 % of funds be allocated to NCRC and 60% be allocated to Māori and Pacific Island Women's Groups" (Anonymous 1986b:no page numbers). The Rape Crisis groups, along with the Te Kakano o te Whanau groups, continued to debate the issue and promote this distribution of funds to the Department of Social Welfare (Anonymous 1986b; McDonald 1987a:19). Over 1986 and 1987, the Department of Social Welfare distributed funds to the groups working in the area of sexual violence as follows:

	August 1986*	Sept 1987*
National Offices		
- NCRC	$44,000	$44,000
- Te Kakano o te Whanau	$37,000	$44,000
- Pacific Island Women's Project (PIWP)	$13,000	$35,000
Local Groups[203]		
- Rape Crisis groups	$213,000	$271,000
- Te Kakano o te Whanau groups	$196,000	$224,000
- PIWP groups	$ 97,000	$110,000

*Information for the above table was obtained from a timeline in a local Rape Crisis Training kit (Anonymous circa 1988).

The work of obtaining equitable funding was influential in development of an informal alliance between NCRC and Te Kakano o te Whanau.

[202] Māori term for donation or gift, see glossary for further discussion.

[203] It is difficult to identify how many local groups shared this funding. The local group Rape Crisis funding in 1987 would have been distributed between 35 local groups, as well as seven groups that were being established (Harvey and Moon 1993:147). Anywhere up to 21 groups would have been sharing the Te Kakano o te Whanau group funding, as a 1993 report suggests that there had been 19 groups affiliated to Te Kakano o te Whanau in 1989, as well as two disaffiliated groups (Rei 1993:50-51). Approximately 12 groups shared the PIWP local group funding. A 1993 report about the group suggests that there were between six and twelve groups affiliated to PIWP during 1986 to 1992 (Peteru 1993:542).

Alliances between the organisations were vulnerable because they were often based on personal relationships between women in each of the groups. From the mid-1980s to the late 1980s, the alliance between Te Kakano o te Whanau and NCRC continued to be based on informal networks and friendships, as well as shared office space for some of that period. However, over time the alliance was not sustained as the women involved in establishing the alliance left the organisation (Brenda Smith, 3/2/95, personal communication). Consequently, even though the three organisations had goals and interests in common as they were working in the area of sexual violence against women and children, the three organisations developed largely in isolation. For the NCRC, this resulted in no consistent policies or practices about Pākehā counselling Māori, sharing of resources, developing joint protests, or Pākehā responsibilities to support the development of services for Māori. By the early 1990s, there was no explicit strategy to consult or build alliances with Te Kakano o te Whanau on issues they may have had in common in the NCRC. Relationships between Māori and non-Māori groups working in the area of sexual violence were non-existent at a national level and variable at a local level. The closure of Te Kakano o te Whanau in the early 1990s, and conflicts between Māori and Pākehā in a local Rape Crisis group over clause 2.8 in the NCRC constitution, precipitated a crisis in the NCRC about partnerships between Māori and Pākehā (National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa 1993:8-9).[204] As a result of these conflicts, the NCRC had to specifically address what it meant in practice to address Treaty obligations as a predominantly Pākehā organisation. However, the groups affiliated to the NCRC struggled to make sense of what it meant to be bicultural, or practice biculturalism, when they did not have a relationship with Te Kakano o te Whanau.

Overall, this model of developing alliances appeared to have a limited impact on the predominantly Pākehā activist service groups. The development of separate ethnic-specific organisations had the consequence of enabling the predominantly Pākehā groups to identify as mainly Pākehā groups. However, many of these groups identified as non-Māori rather than Pākehā. Identifying as non-Māori meant the organisations were for all women. As a consequence, there was rarely a sense of the organisations

[204] Clause 2.8 stated: "We recognize – Maori people as Tangata Whenua and we acknowledge our accountability to Maori people. We do not expect Maori people to be accountable to us" (National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa 1987: clause 2.8). The conflicts that occurred in the NCRC about this clause are discussed later in the chapter.

being seen as reflecting Pākehā identity or culture. Ways of organising were mostly described in terms of 'women's culture' and in opposition to patriarchal ways of working. 'Women's culture' in the groups was not explicitly seen as influenced by ethnicity. In these instances the Pākehā groups seemed cognisant of overt racism; they recognised they were complicit in practices of racism, and they were cognisant of having an ethnic identity at an individual level because they identified as Pākehā. But at an organisational level they were not "race cognisant". Their difference as Pākehā was experienced mainly in the moment of working with the 'other' through the formation of temporary alliances. Otherwise, the ways in which groups organised were not viewed as specifically marked by ethnicity.

The third model involved the formation of alliances between Māori and non-Māori within an organisation. Māori and non-Māori within the NCIWR, from 1985, and NCRC, from the mid-1990s, have made important attempts to develop bicultural partnerships within their respective national collectives. The rest of the chapter examines these attempts to address both structural (for example, sharing resources) and procedural (for example, voice and influence) issues between Māori and non-Māori in the NCIWR and NCRC.

In the mid-1980s, the NCIWR implemented parallel development to build partnership between Māori and non-Māori women based on sharing resources and power (Balzer and Ash 1987; Huygens 2001). Parallel development was introduced after tangata whenua voiced concerns about NCIWR not meeting their needs at the first 1984 National Annual General Meeting. An important issue raised by the Māori women was that "many 'clients' of Refuge were Maori yet few within the organisation were Maori" (Balzer and Ash 1987:6). In 1985, a national three-day Māori Refuge workers hui was held prior to the NCIWR AGM. At the AGM, Māori women in Refuge requested that the following changes be supported by NCIWR:

> [1] Equal representation of Maori and Pakeha on the [NCIWR] National Executive.
> [2] A National Maori Co-ordinator to co-ordinate Maori initiatives [and at] the national office. …
> [3] Any future movements to be complementary. That development or growth within Refuge be parallel (Balzer and Ash 1987:7).

There were reservations about the changes. Huygens (2001) states that the decision to remain within the NCIWR involved a dilemma for Māori women. Some felt that staying in the organisation was another way for Pākehā to keep the power, while others believed

that staying within the organisation reduced their vulnerability in a racist society. Reports about these developments highlighted resistance to the changes by individuals and groups affiliated to the NCIWR (Balzer and Ash 1987:8; Rosier and McNeill 1990:18). Quite a number of Pākehā women who disagreed with the changes left the organisation in the 1980s (Petra 16/2/98; Shelley 12/1/98). Reflecting on the changes, Balzer reported, "[t]here has been some pain. Some individuals could not adjust and have chosen to leave. Others are trying hard to come to terms with the present situation. Some people felt they had lost power; something they were familiar with had shifted" (Balzer and Ash 1987:8).[205]

Parallel development was to incorporate both elements of biculturalism and separate development within the NCIWR (Balzer and Ash 1987; Helen 25/11/97; Lambourn 1993; McCallum 1993; Rosier and McNeill 1990; Sara 3/12/97; Shelley 12/1/98).[206] The NCIWR adopted the following policies and organisational changes. They pursued a policy of achieving 50% representation of Māori and Tauiwi at national and regional collective meetings.[207] By the early 1990s this had been achieved (Shelley 12/1/98). Half of the positions on the NCIWR Core Group (national executive) were for Māori and the rest for Tauiwi. In addition, Māori members had veto status over NCIWR Tauiwi Core Group positions (Helen 25/11/97). In the National Office, the principle of parallel positions was adopted in 1986. This meant:

> [W]henever a non-Maori appointment was made at a national level a similar position was automatically created for a Maori woman, with equal decision-making powers. This ensures the equal distribution of resources to Maori and non-Maori for the development of culturally appropriate services (Rosier and McNeill 1990:17).

In the early 1990s, a Māori Development Unit was also set up in the National Office (Helen 25/11/97). A specific training package was developed for Māori Refuge workers (Balzer 1990). The NCIWR implemented Māori/Tauiwi caucuses at all regional and

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[205] These conflicts were occurring in the context of wider debates about the implementation of the Code of Ethics discussed in Chapter Six.

[206] Refuge uses the term biculturalism in a very specific way to refer to the those aspects of Refuge structure and practice where Māori and non-Māori work together. Consequently, the development of Māori Refuges is defined as separate development rather then bicultural. Following Mason Durie, I would argue that these practices reflect a continuum of bicultural practices in organisations. Durie views biculturalism as a process or continuum which encompasses several distinct forms, ranging from cultural pluralism through to partnership and rangatiratanga (Durie 1992:no page numbers).

[207] In the 1990s, the NCIWR adopted the use of the term Tauiwi rather than non-Māori, as it was felt that this term better reflected the identity of the group (Sheryl Hann, NCIWR, 28/4/2004, personal communication). For consistency, I will use the term Tauiwi when discussing NCIWR implementation of parallel development.

national meetings (Balzer and Ash 1987). The NCIWR also funded separate annual Māori and Tauiwi meetings in order that each group could explore their own issues and take time to develop caucus positions (Helen 25/11/97). Māori meetings were held annually from the mid-1980s. Tauiwi did not really begin to meet separately until the early 1990s (Shelley 12/1/98). In 1988, it was proposed that the NCIWR constitution be "amended to include specific reference to [include] 'te tino rangatiratanga' status of Maori women" and this was implemented in July 1990 (Rosier and McNeill 1990:17-18). In order to support Tauiwi Core Group understanding of what this implied for the organisation, a checklist was developed by the NCIWR Tauiwi group in the late 1980s. It included questions such as: how Māori women had self-determination in Refuge? Whether or not the processes supported Māori women making their own decisions? Did both Māori and Tauiwi have equal rights, duties and responsibilities? Did key documents in Women's Refuge protect Māori interests? (Wood 1989:Appendix II).[208]
In 2003, the NCIWR Refuge website described parallel development as:

- Tangata Whenua and Tauiwi are developing equally side by side
- Resources are shared equitably
- A model of complementary service delivery (culturally appropriate services)
- A system based on partnership consistent with Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- An organisational structure consistent with the feminist, women-based orientation of Refuge

(National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 2003b).

In effect, parallel development attempted to integrate a commitment to both the Treaty and feminist politics. Accordingly feminist and Māori issues were not placed in opposition. Instead, the focus was on creating an empowering organisation for both Māori and Tauiwi. The above developments show how the NCIWR as a national organisation was committed to parallel development in ways that focused attention on an equal sharing of resources and decision-making that supported Māori self-determination in the organisation. The NCIWR also supported the implementation of parallel development in the local Women's Refuges.

At a local level, the NCIWR committed resources and support to establishing local Māori groups. If a region was predominantly Māori, resources were targeted towards establishing a Māori refuge in that area (Balzer and Ash 1987; McCallum 1993; Rosier and McNeill 1990). Local Women's Refuge boundaries were adjusted to tribal

[208] Permission to quote archived report was granted by Sheryl Hann, Policy Analyst, NCIWR (3/5/2004).

boundaries for the Māori population (Balzer and Ash 1987:8). In towns and cities where separate Māori and Tauiwi Refuges operated, they were encouraged to develop a 'sister' relationship with each other. This involved Māori and Tauiwi organising separately, but also members from each respective Refuge engaging in joint consultation, sharing untagged funding and jointly attending public speaking engagements (Antonia 25/11/97; Sara 3/12/97). General Refuges, comprising both Māori and Tauiwi members, were encouraged to develop a Refuge membership reflective of the local Māori/Tauiwi population. They had to develop Māori and Tauiwi caucuses. Robyn described the caucus system in her General Refuge as follows:

> Caucuses were the place where all your concerns were supposed to go, that is where non-Māori women got together and talked about what was happening in the organisation, sort of like the grass roots [and Māori women also had their own caucus]. If anyone had a problem in the organisation, you were supposed to take it [to your own caucus] and that is where it would be discussed and then it would be taken further [to the management committee] (Robyn 26/1/97).

Each caucus elected an equal number of women to go onto a joint Māori/Tauiwi management committee. The views of the two caucuses were represented at this committee. Similar caucuses operated at regional and national levels of the NCIWR. The NCIWR also implemented a policy of refuge advocates working with clients of the same ethnic identities, for example, all Māori clients were referred to Māori refuges or Māori advocates (Helene 10/12/97; Ingrid 27/2/97; Verity 11/12/97).

By 1991, the NCIWR reported that 30% of advocates in local Refuge groups were Māori, and half of all paid Refuge workers were Māori (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1991:9). There was fifty percent representation of Māori and non-Māori at regional and national levels (Helen 25/11/97). Twelve Māori Women's Refuges had been established throughout Aotearoa. In addition, there were two Tangata Pasifika Women's Refuges[209] established in Auckland, and one Asian Women's Refuge that was established in 1996 (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 2003a). Most of the General Refuges were operating Māori /Tauiwi caucuses (Helene 10/12/97).

At the same time that the processes described above indicate real successes, conflict was an integral part of the developments as Māori and Tauiwi worked out how to relate

[209] Refers to Pacific Island Women's Refuges

across their differences in practice. There were many tensions in the process of implementing parallel development in the NCIWR. In the late 1980s, the predominantly Pākehā caucus of the NCIWR Core Group reported struggling with what parallel development meant for them. A report on a workshop held with Tauiwi Core Group members in 1989 highlighted a genuine commitment to parallel development. At the same time, Tauiwi Core Group members identified a "fear of making mistakes and … being ignorant of Maori kawa,[210] experiences of feeling 'done over' by Pakeha anti-racism trainers or Maori women which had led to paralysis in the refuges, [and] lack of practical ideas of how to share power and resources" among Tauiwi NCIWR members (Wood 1989:2-3).[211] Conflicts also arose when the Māori caucus vetoed a Tauiwi Core Group candidate put forward by a regional Tauiwi caucus (Helene 10/12/97). The Māori caucus argued that the Tauiwi caucus had not considered how the candidate would work with Māori in terms of awareness of racism and cultural safety (Helene 10/12/97). Some conflicts at a local refuge level were about sharing resources and the role of Tauiwi in supporting Māori women to set up Refuges for Māori women (Hann 2001; Van der Schoot 1986). One of the members of a Tauiwi Refuge described how they struggled to consult appropriately with their sister Māori Refuge and that the sister Refuge had decided they were not trustworthy partners (Antonia 25/11/97). In a General Women's Refuge, the Tauiwi women failed to challenge Māori women who were acting unconstitutionally, and this was not solved until the National Office came in and worked with the Refuge to address the issues (Jo 6/12/97; Robyn 26/1/97). The above examples suggest how the processes of implementing parallel development involved multiple conflicts and misunderstandings. Many struggles took place about how to share power, resources and decision-making between Māori and Tauiwi.

The National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa (NCRC) also attempted to develop a partnership between Māori and non-Māori within their organisation during the 1990s.[212] The following section analyses the struggles that took place as Māori and non-Māori attempted to form a partnership within the NCRC. As described earlier, there had been a loss of the alliance between the NCRC and Te Kakano o te Whanau in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Chris 11/9/97; Liz 6/3/97). By

[210] Māori term for tradition, etiquette and protocols.
[211] Permission to quote archived report was granted by Sheryl Hann, Policy Analyst, NCIWR (3/5/2004).
[212] The terms non-Māori and Tauiwi were both used by members of the NCRC.

1994/95, the focus shifted to forming a partnership between Māori and non-Māori within the NCRC (Janine 17/2/97; Liz 6/3/97; Sandra 10/9/97).[213] Increasing numbers of Māori women joined local Rape Crisis collectives and attended the NCRC Annual General Meetings in the early to mid-1990s (Chris 11/9/97; Liz 6/3/97; NCRC Group Interview).

At the same time, debates also took place at the 1993 and 1994 AGMs about rewording of a clause which defined Pākehā as accountable to Māori, but Māori as not accountable to Pākehā. In 1994, the Māori caucus held a hui to examine Māori women's place in the NCRC because they did not "feel catered for in the present Constitution" (National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa 1994:5). In 1995, the Māori caucus proposed rewording clause 2.8 and this was agreed to at the 1995 NCRC Annual General Meeting. Clause 2.8 specified:

> We recognise: … Maori people as Tangata Whenua and their unalienable birth right to sovereignty. We acknowledge our accountability to Maori people by honouring the Declaration of Independence and Te Tiriti O Waitangi (Maori version) and we actively support Maori aspirations for Te Tino Rangatiratanga Mo Te Iwi Maori (Maori self determination).[214]

Within this constitutional clause, accountability was linked to the sharing of resources, Māori and Pākehā were described as being equal but different, and the focus was on honouring differences between the two groups in organisation practices and values. At the 1995 Annual General Meeting, it was agreed that half the positions on NCRC Core Group should be filled by Māori and half by non-Māori. Māori were to determine who would fill the Māori Core Group positions. There was an increased commitment to holding Māori and non-Māori caucuses at national and regional meetings, and the employment of Māori women in the National Office. Funds were set aside for separate Māori and non-Māori meetings. At the 1996 AGM, the organisation accepted a Māori name, 'Nga Whitiki Whānau Ahuru Mowai o Aotearoa'.[215] During 1997, a sub-

[213] I was involved in this process as a participant both in the NCRC Annual General Meetings and in the National Workgroup that developed a plan for implementing bicultural processes within the NCRC.

[214] The Declaration of Independence of New Zealand was signed 28 October 1835. It recognised the sovereignty of the independent tribes of New Zealand and was seen as a forerunner of the Treaty of Waitangi (Pamphlet produced by Maori Congress, No Date).

[215] Te Rauhina Te Hau of Gisborne gave the name and described the meaning as follows: "*whitiki* meaning joining, *ahuru mowai* being a haven for women only, and *whanau* being the basis of society" (National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa 1996:no page numbers, emphasis in original). A discussion paper further defined ahuru mowai as follows: "[a] safe haven – like a woman's womb, Elevating the status of women, Papatuanuku – first woman primeval parent of the whole of nature, [a]llusion to tapu/sanctity of women – she must be protected from all negative / harmful influences. … The name is

committee of the NCRC formulated a set of policies for facilitating the implementation of bicultural practices within local groups. Policies outlined what biculturalism might mean in practice in specific areas, for example, policies addressed support for both whānau and women-only spaces in the local groups, encouraging the practice of Māori counselling Māori, and the supporting the inclusion of a Kaumātua and Kuia[216] as members of the NCRC. It was also agreed that Māori women were to be supported by their local Rape Crisis groups to work with whānau (Liz 6/3/97; NCRC Group Interview 7/3/97; Sandra 10/9/97).

In 1997, interviewees reported that the NCRC was struggling to implement the above changes (Liz 6/3/97; NCRC Group Interview 7/3/97; Sandra 10/9/97). The changing of NCRC Core Group to include fifty percent representation of Māori and non-Māori resulted in a huge change in Core Group membership over a short period of time. Māori women struggled to fill the Core Group positions, as there were so few Māori women in local groups. There were often major conflicts at Core Group meetings as members struggled to work out what a bicultural partnership meant in practice. Decisions about resource sharing were fraught with tension. For example, there were disagreements about funding bilingual adverts due to costs, about prioritising expenditure on various projects, and a challenging of expense claims (Liz 6/3/97; Sandra 10/9/97; Tessa 6/3/97). Another area of tension involved the Māori women not participating in the lesbian/non-lesbian caucuses at the NCRC Annual General Meetings. Māori women responded by arguing they were Māori first and lesbian second. Non-Māori argued that the lesbian caucus was an important part of Rape Crisis philosophy. Holding AGMs on a marae,[217] and including a Kaumātua as part of Rape Crisis challenged the women-only philosophy that had been a major part of what defined the NCRC as a radical feminist organisation in the 1980s. In the National Office, Māori women were employed, but this was not in a parallel model of complementary positions. Māori employees were slotted into the existing structure of the National Office. There was a lack of clarity over roles and the responsibility of Māori employees to Māori and non-Māori women in the organisation. There was a rapid turnover of Māori National Office workers. Māori women's participation at the NCRC Annual General Meetings between

intended to accentuate a positive view of healing and well-being out of the chaos created by the violence of rape" (National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa 1996:no page numbers).

[216] Māori terms for elders, see glossary for further meanings.

[217] Māori term for meeting ground, see glossary for discussion of meaning of term.

1993 and 1998 did not increase to more than approximately fifteen percent of the women attending each AGM. Many Māori women did not attend more than one AGM. Although, some local groups developed strong bicultural practices, most local groups made few changes to how they organised (Liz 6/3/97; NCRC Group Interview 7/3/97).

The attempts to develop partnerships between Māori and non-Māori by the NCIWR and NCRC had very different outcomes. A number of factors account for some of these differences. The implementation of parallel development had been occurring over a longer period in the NCIWR. Implementation of parallel development within the NCIWR was a systematic process addressing both procedural and structural issues, and occurring throughout the organisation among local groups, at regional and national meetings, in the National Office and in Core Group. Procedural issues attended to the strategies used for making processes consistent with aims; for example, ensuring voice, influence and participation in decision-making by all women. Structural issues involved equalising power and access to resources; for example, by sharing funding and employment. Huygens (2001:395) identifies both as central to "feminist groups attempts to share power". In the changes made by the NCIWR, Māori were not simply placed in a special category without changing the overall organisation, but emphasis was placed on the development of equal partnership through sharing resources and decision-making. Resources were used to support the implementation of parallel development. The model supported the development of Māori refuges in which it was possible to implement a kaupapa Māori[218] service (Helen 25/11/97; Verity 11/12/97). Another contributing factor was the continued involvement of NCIWR in distributing government funding to local groups. This enabled the NCIWR to mandate local group commitment to parallel development as part of their assessments of local Women's Refuges meeting the standards of practice set out by the NCIWR quality assurance programme (Helen 25/11/97). The NCIWR systematically addressed both procedural and structural issues in the organisation, and had the resources and power to enforce adherence to parallel development.

In contrast, the implementation of Māori and non-Māori partnership in the NCRC was ad hoc and lacked a systematic focus on sharing resources at local, regional and national levels of the organisation. In part, the process was introduced much later in the NCRC

[218] Māori term for service based on Māori traditions and culture, see glossary for further discussion.

than in NCIWR, and consequently the two collectives were at very different stages in development.[219] The changes in the NCRC were taking place in a very different funding environment than when NCIWR had started their journey of parallel development in the mid-1980s. Nevertheless, the NCRC process lacked the systematic focus on both structural and procedural issues that had been an integral part of the NCRIWR process. Most of the bicultural actions in the NCRC occurred in the area of procedural processes such as equal participation in decision-making and bringing cultural diversity into the organisation at a national level. The organisation struggled to address structural issues such as employment and resource sharing in the National Office and Core Group. The NCRC Core Group grappled with maintaining a sense of direction as members changed rapidly and it became difficult to fill both the non-Māori and Māori positions on Core Group. In the NCRC National Office, the NCRC attempted to bring Māori women in without really changing the organisation of National Office positions. Māori women were employed primarily as education trainers because there was funding available for this position. There was never more than one Māori woman employed in National Office at a time, and the organisation struggled to provide Māori women in this position with support from other Māori women. In addition, there were ongoing debates at the national meetings about including kaumātua as members of the national organisation and the attendance of males. These developments challenged the notion of the NCRC as being a woman-only organisation and having women-only national meetings.[220] Each local Rape Crisis Collective was to develop local partnerships between Māori and non-Māori in ways that were appropriate to their area. However, few local groups implemented bicultural practices within their organisations (NCRC Group Interview

[219] In addition, the comparison is affected by the different sources of information that I have drawn on. For the NCIWR material, a combination of interviews and published sources of information have informed my analysis. For the NCRC, a combination of interviews, unpublished sources, my own experiences and informal discussions with participants have informed my analysis. As a result, I had access to much more of the debate and the conflicts that occurred in the NCRC.

[220] This did not specifically emerge as an issue in interviews with NCIWR members or in their published accounts and documents. This may be the result of a number of factors. In 1988, the NCIWR supported the development of the HAIPP programme for violent men. They worked closely with the government sponsored Family Violence committee and the police in support of this and similar initiatives. Also, Women's Refuges were increasingly focused on in vivo interventions in the community, thus the boundaries around women-only and whānau services were more blurred. In addition, no Refuge members were about to challenge the women and children only policy of the Refuge shelters/houses as the focus was on creating safe spaces for women and children away from violent partners. Within Rape Crisis treatment interventions were not always so clear. For example, counselling an individual woman who had been sexually abused by her father could include her male partner as well. The focus on whānau demanded by Māori women was an argument about treatment that included the whole family (at times including the offender) and an argument about where this treatment might take place.

7/3/97). There were no systematic processes for ensuring local collective adherence to national collective policies. This situation was not helped by the loss of the NCRC role in distributing government funding to local groups, which reduced the ability of the NCRC to influence local group practices.

As described above, both the NCIWR and the NCRC attempted to develop processes enabling Māori and Tauiwi to form partnerships within the organisations while retaining distinct Māori and Tauiwi identities. The organisations aimed for equal partnership and influence. Both developed a system of caucusing to address the imbalance arising due to fewer Māori than non-Māori members. Caucuses enhanced Māori influence vis-à-vis the dominant group. The caucuses gave groups an opportunity to ascertain whether there was an identity-specific position about an issue. Caucusing in this context emphasised identity-specific groups meeting together to come to a decision that represented a caucus position and taking that position back to the combined group for discussion.

Using the caucus system in this way resulted in tension between articulating individual and group positions in the consensus process. In consensus decision-making, individuals usually presented their views to the collective and there was an attempt to develop agreement between the different individual perspectives. The development of caucus positions altered the consensus process to addressing group positions rather than individual viewpoints. Pākehā women, in particular, often struggled with the tensions of collective versus individual positions in the consensus process. Their focus was on understanding individual perspectives; often non-Māori caucus processes did not develop a unified position on an issue. There was an expectation that issues would be further discussed when Māori and non-Māori came together and consequently they struggled to engage with a unified Māori position on issues. The Māori caucus would reach a consensus on an issue, then one of the members would be selected to present the decision to the Collective as a whole. This caucus process challenged the non-Māori emphasis on hearing individual viewpoints in the consensus process. These tensions were reflected in the Te Awamutu Refuge report which described how the non-Māori members would insist on “hearing from each Maori woman on the issue under discussion” and, in this way, unintentionally undermining Māori caucus unity (Glover

and Sutton 1991:44).[221] The use of the caucus system to develop Māori and non-Māori positions on issues challenged assumptions of unity and of achieving agreements between women that were based on understanding others. The caucus system altered the relations of power between Māori and Pākehā in the organisation by creating a consensus process in which Māori as a group and non-Maori as a group were positioned as equal participants. It moved the notion of consensus decision-making away from a process through which individual members would achieve mutual understanding and connection to a process in which consensus was negotiated around collective caucus positions. In this way, the caucusing system emphasised differences between women, rather than an undifferentiated unity amongst all women.

The concern about lack of unity among all women in the organisation was also related to the tendency for Māori to call for caucuses more frequently than non-Māori. Non-Māori experienced this as emphasising separation and difference between women. This was reported as a source of frustration for Pākehā women (Glover and Sutton 1991; Liz 6/3/97; Sandra 10/9/97). Non-Māori rarely experienced caucusing as affirming a sense of unity between members of their caucus. In contexts where the non-Māori caucus was all Pākehā, participants did not experience the caucus as supporting ethnic unity (Liz 6/3/97). However, as the Tauiwi caucus usually also included Pacific Island women and other ethnic minority women, the caucus often struggled to find a basis for unity. In both the NCRC and the NCIWR, it took a few meetings before non-Māori started to caucus to discuss specific issues as a group when Māori called caucuses. Initially, the non-Māori group had scattered and waited for Māori to return from their caucus (Shelley 12/1/98). The tensions were also embedded in the conflicting cultural values systems of Pākehā individualism (in which the individual is elevated to a central ideological position) and Māori collectivism (in which the collective has a central

[221] Related to this issue was the question of what to do with disagreement between the two caucuses when the focus was on reaching agreement, but to ensuring that this did not challenge Māori self-determination. As Helen explained, "ideally if there is an issue that they want to caucus on, both groups will talk about it and come back with a recommendation, then it is like talking it through until you get the decision that everyone is happy with" (Helen 25/11/97). However, Helen also added, "Tauiwi may have their own feeling of obligation if it is a real crunch issue to defer to Māori. That is their own treaty process but there is not an automatic [overruling] of Tauiwi" (Helen 25/11/97). Although on the whole, it seemed that agreement was common. One Pākehā NCIWR member reported that Māori /non-Māori caucuses came back with similar proposals most of the time (Helene 10/12/97).

ideological position). The difficulties were tapping into deeper identity issues in ways that were generally unacknowledged by the non-Māori groups.[222]

The development of bicultural partnerships within the NCRC and the NCIWR also challenged the constitution of the organisations as a 'feminist home' for all women. This is implicated in the different understandings over what bicultural partnership meant in practice. Within the NCRC, there was an ongoing struggle over Treaty obligations and Rape Crisis philosophy. The development of bicultural partnership was experienced as accompanied by a loss of Rape Crisis culture by many of the Pākehā members. This feeling of loss emerged in relation to the commitment to a women-only space and the centrality of the lesbian/non-lesbian caucus as part of Rape Crisis culture. The different goals of Māori and Pākehā in relation to the partnership remained unexplored in Rape Crisis. As Glover and Sutton (1991) observed in their evaluation of the Te Awamutu Refuge, Māori and Pākehā members had different understandings of the goals of partnership. The non-Māori caucus viewed it as a process leading to closer relations and understanding, while the Māori caucus saw parallel development as the "development of equal division of resources and creation of equal opportunities". They linked this with aspirations for tino rangatiratanga involving the "'right to be in control of our own health and welfare programmes,' independent of non-Maori desires" (Glover and Sutton 1991:40). It was part of the movement towards Māori sovereignty for these members.

The increasing ideological and identity diversity, along with differences in goals among members, challenged the assumptions of homogeneity based on a common feminist identity. This had historically been a powerful part of radical feminist ideology in the activist service groups. Reflecting on these differences, some of the interviewees noted a shift away from requiring all members in the collectives to identify as feminist (Sandra 10/9/97; Shelley 12/1/98). As Shelley explains of the Refuge Movement:

> There are some Māori women in the Movement who are not feminist. A lot are, but a lot are not as well. There are feminists who think that this is not an issue. It is not what they are on about. ... But there are others who say [as a result] we are not political enough, in that we have lost a lot of our feminist drive (Shelley 12/1/98).

[222] James Ritchie (1992:chapter six) discusses the two different cultural value systems. In drawing attention to the differences, it is important to avoid simply reproducing simplistic stereotypes; for example, characterising Māori society as non-individualistic. The contrast is used to draw attention to the different cultural values of both cultures and the ways in which these can contribute to conflicts between different cultural groups in the attempts to form partnerships.

As Shelley argues, non-Māori, particularly Pākehā women, needed to develop a sense of their identity and resist the demand for unity based on a common feminist identity:

> But for Māori women, being Māori is a priority, some of them, they are feminists as well, some of them, they aren't. Trying to get non-Māori to understand that when they start all this crap about 'we are one,' you have to understand why we are not. ... That is what I say as Tauiwi women, we have to define how feminism is important for us. And that is the driving force, well it is for me, that is what I have said, we have to decide what that is (Shelley 12/1/98).

Some Pākehā members of activist service groups were also refusing to identify as feminist (HC Group Interview 10/9/97; MacGibbon 2002). Groups were distinguishing between identifying as a feminist and as supporting feminist goals. There was an increasing acceptance that organisation members did not have to identify as feminists but they needed to support the feminist goals of the organisations. These were contradictory processes. Reducing the centrality of feminist identity and politics has historically been associated with a 'non-political' service orientation and resistance to identifying with a radical feminist political position. Yet, arguing for the centrality of radical feminist identity in the activist service organisations worked to exclude women who did not identify with this position. As the above discussion outlines, the meaning of feminism within the context of activist service organisations was being increasingly contested by members and constantly challenged by the increased complexity of building organisations that embraced differences between women.

In conclusion, examination of attempts by the predominantly Pākehā activist service groups to address relations of inequality between women demonstrates how each strategy implemented was fraught with tension and contradiction. Many groups moved away from assumptions of the universality of women and the idea of a common shared oppression within patriarchal society. Lesbians, tangata whenua, other ethnic minority groups, and, more recently, bisexual women within the activist service groups challenged the notion of a common experience of gender oppression as the basis for unity in feminist organisations. The description of NCRC and NCIWR attempts to develop partnerships between Māori and non-Māori reflect the struggles to take seriously the challenges of differences between women, and the complexity of the relationship between non-Māori and Māori. These accounts illustrate how the NCIWR

was more successful in developing partnership between Māori and non-Māori than NCRC through their implementation of systematic strategies addressing both structural and procedural aspects of organising at local, regional and national levels.

Addressing differences and inequalities between women was an important aspect of the politics occurring within activist service groups. The outcome of the different strategies groups implemented suggest that there are no infallible strategies to address inequality between women. Each strategy challenged relations of domination, but also increased the complexity of negotiating ways to work together. This occurred in a context of increasing questions about what it meant to be a feminist organisation. The strategies implemented by the groups demonstrate the complexity of engaging with differences and inequality among women.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has examined the emergence and subsequent development of the activist service groups that were formed out of the 1970s women's liberation movement in Aotearoa/New Zealand. I drew on an extensive range of published and unpublished materials to outline the development of the groups. The large number of interviews provided in-depth studies of women's experiences of working in many activist service groups. The groups examined in this study struggled to sustain a radical feminist collective form of organising and 'deal with differences' between women. These organisations were a major site of Pākehā radical feminist political activism in the 1980s and 1990s. Particularly influential for these groups was the idea of organising as collectives structured as women-only, non-hierarchical with consensus decision-making, and aspirations of sisterhood. Feminism was closely linked with the internal processes of organising as a collective based on 'women's ways of working'. There were ongoing debates about what it meant to be feminist in the predominantly Pākehā groups.

Joining a Rape Crisis group in the 1990s, and participating in the NCRC national collective meetings, I was continually struck by these ongoing internal debates about how to organise and what it meant to be a feminist organisation. Members expressed a desire to create organisations that were non-hierarchical, that were inclusive and respectful of differences among women, and that also challenged practices of discrimination and relations of inequality. At the same time, the groups often experienced major protracted conflicts and tensions between women in the organisation. The conflicts were difficult to resolve and frequently individuals were seen as the problem: they were blamed for 'not being feminist enough', 'being power-hungry' and for 'working in male ways'. Participants experienced a gap between the practice and the ideals of women working together, and struggled to make sense of the tensions between ideals, expectations and practices in the internal organisation of the groups. A review of the Aotearoa/New Zealand and overseas Western feminist literature on feminist collective organisations reiterated the ways in which these conflicts and issues were

common across Western feminist activist service groups. For many, these conflicts were experienced as a failure to work as a 'proper feminist collective'. Nevertheless, activist service groups examined in this thesis emerged as a major site of feminist community activism and debate.

The development of the activist service groups

The emergence and proliferation of the Pākehā, activist service groups around New Zealand during the 1970s and early 1980s reflected the decentralised, segmented pattern of development that had characterised much of the second wave women's movement. Members of this movement rapidly set up multiple independent women's groups (Gerlach and Hine 1970; Taylor 1983:439). The first activist service groups were set up in the early 1970s by women's liberation group participants in the major cities. Members of the women's rights groups rapidly became involved in setting up the by activist services for women as well. Members were predominantly Pākehā and middle-class. Women were participating in consciousness raising groups, and in the various women's movement groups. Developing services for women by women within a radical feminist framework was seen as a way of moving from ideas to action and meeting the need for feminist services for women. The activist groups were part of a shift from multi-issue organisations, mass mobilisation and direct political protest to specialised single-issue groups engaged with indirect political protest and delivery of welfare services to women. Thus, the activist service groups of the 1980s and 1990s represent a continuation of the second wave women's movement ideas and politics.

By the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s, Women's Refuges, Rape Crisis groups and Women's Centres had been set up in towns and cities all over Aotearoa/New Zealand. Many of these groups formed informal, local and national, networks and communities of feminist activists. It was not until the development of the two national collectives, the NCIWR and the NCRC, during the 1980s, that the groups acquired national representation and co-ordination. The formation of the two national collectives was encouraged by the state as a mechanism for distributing government grants to local groups. Unlike the 1970s and 1980s, in the 1990s few new activist service groups were established. Approximately 100-125 women's activist service groups with an estimated average of eight members in each group were in existence at the end of the 1990s. These groups provided a range of state funded welfare services 'for women by women'.

The institutionalisation of the radical feminist collective

The activist service groups rapidly adopted a radical feminist collective form of organisation. The study demonstrates how the women-only, non-hierarchical collective model of organisation replaced the initial diversity of organisational styles among women's movement groups. The internal organisation of the activist service groups evolved to have specifically feminist meanings and expressed the radical political orientation of the groups. The earliest 1970s activist service groups had adapted both the loose informal collective model that was common in the women's liberation groups and the 'personal is political' style of the early 1970s consciousness raising groups. In the 1980s activist service groups, organising was characterised by shared authority among members, temporary leadership roles, participatory processes in decision-making, a minimal division of labour, and by social relations based on co-operative holistic values. Processes of organising had to be consistent with the desired end goals and vision of a better society. Feminist collective organising embodied a particular set of values and norms, although there was considerable diversity in actual organisational practices

Nevertheless, by the mid-1980s the women-only collective form of organising had become institutionalised among the activist service organisations. Institutionalisation involves a process by which "ideas, actions or structures become taken for granted or second nature" (Bordt 1997:134). By this time few groups questioned the need to organise as women-only collectives. In effect, the outcome of institutionalisation is that particular structures, in this case the collective, take on a rulelike status, that is beyond discussion in the political arena of the groups (Bordt 1997:134). The examination of 1970s and 1980s activist service group developments highlighted a process through which this alternative institutional form of organising achieved dominance. A number of factors contributed to this development. Feminism, especially radical feminism, was frequently confounded with collectivism in this period. Many of the local activist service groups were part of a local feminist community which provided an alternative environment in which collective ways of organising were taken for granted. The institutionalisation of the radical feminist collective was further supported by the NCIWR and NCRC which both included the commitment to non-hierarchy and consensus decision-making in their national constitutions and codes of ethics. As a

consequence, the radical feminist collective model became the dominant form of organising by the 1980s among the activist service groups considered in this study.

At the same time, the study has identified a second process of institutionalisation experienced by the activist service groups. The services delivered by the groups became part of an array of community welfare services provided by non-governmental organisations that were funded by the state over the 1980s. This process of institutionalisation has been associated with the adoption of practices acceptable to mainstream institutions and with issues of cooptation of the groups (Meyer and Tarrow 1998). Responding to state funding requirements ensured that services provided by the groups were aligned with state objectives of responding to individuals in crisis and need of help or support. The groups were increasingly focused on delivering professional and specialised services for women. Rape Crisis and Women's Refuge were especially focused on fixing the effects of violence against women. They could be seen as, in effect, 'managing issues' rather than challenging and undermining patriarchal relations of oppression (Ahrens 1980; Matthews 1994). This issue of the politics of service delivery and the nature of the services delivered has not been examined in depth in this study. An area for further study could examine changes in the strategic and political framing of actual groups' service delivery and its wider societal effects.

However, exploration of the internal politics of organising highlighted major tensions between the political and the service orientation of the activist service groups (Fried 1994). Matthews has argued that the groups merged radical feminist political ideas and service work. Within a radical feminist paradigm "this blend made complete sense, but practically, these orientations lent an uneasy tension to the movement's goals and strategies" (Matthews 1994:150). The groups' political and service orientation impacted on how they organised and the services they delivered. As a result, the feminist activism of the groups was expressed in two different ways. The radical political orientation emphasised 'feminism as an internal process' which empowered women by working collectively with goals of non-hierarchy, consensus and participation. In contrast, the service orientation emphasised 'feminism as an outcome'; delivering services which empowered the individuals who used the services.

These two orientations were frequently in tension within the activist service groups. The organisations brought together women with very diverse feminist perspectives and politics; those interested in radical feminist politics and those interested in 'helping

women'. These two orientations were often integral to the conflicts experienced in collective groups (Fried 1994; Herzog and Radford 1991; Mansbridge 1980). Women with a political orientation struggled to retain a commitment to collective democratic ways of working, while women with a service orientation emphasised the development of professional services. For the latter group, how the group organised was not closely identified with their feminist politics. The two orientations are implicated in many of the tensions the activist service groups experienced, and these tensions intensified with increased external pressures to adopt hierarchical and bureaucratic organisation.

Modifying the radical feminist collective organisation

By the 1990s, most of the groups included in this study had modified the radical feminist collective in ways that challenged their commitment to the 'flat collective structure'. These modifications included the adoption of bureaucratic systems of administration, formalisation of policies and procedures, specialisation of workforce positions, and the separation of employer and employee in workforce governance. The groups were developing internal differentiation and some formal hierarchy.

Similar to other studies, the thesis identified how external and internal factors interacted to challenge the informal collective organisation of activist service groups (Ahrens 1980; Reinharz 1984; Riger 1994). External factors, such as changes to state funding and legislative changes, and internal factors, such as changes to the participation of paid and unpaid workers in the daily operation of the organisation, led to modifications to the collective organisation. In particular, the loss of autonomy associated with the change from 'grants-in-aid' to contract funding by the state during the 1990s has been highlighted. Features of contract funding, such as the agency approval process and the purchase of specified service 'outputs', meant that the state not only influenced what the groups did, but also how the groups were organised and managed workforce governance relationships, in ways that had not been a feature of 'grants-in-aid' funding by the state. These features of contracting resulted in groups being specifically pressured by the state to adopt hierarchical models of governance, specialisation in the workforce, and increasingly complex bureaucratic forms of administration. Acceptance of government funding and the engagement with mainstream institutions has profoundly influenced collectives. Yet as Reinelt (1995) has pointed out, this is not simply a one-way relationship in which the state simply coopts the collective. Rather, it is a reciprocal relationship in which the groups have participated in a 'politics of engagement'. The service collectives attempted to use government resources while still retaining their autonomy and collective principles. However, the change to contracting for services by the state in the early 1990s increasingly challenged the activist service groups autonomy (See

Table 6 on page 188).

Alongside these external pressures, groups were experiencing major internal pressures as a result of changes in the participation of paid and unpaid workers in their organisations. Volunteer roles and participation in the day to day work of the organisation had reduced in many of the groups and the organisations were increasingly reliant on paid workers to manage the daily work. These changes interacted in complex ways with the pressures to formalise employer-employee relations. The groups experienced major tensions between the informal influence of the paid workers and the need for volunteers to formally assume employer responsibilities. In the modified groups, these shifts, and the resultant challenges to informal hierarchies of influence, were the basis of much conflict between paid and unpaid workers in the organisations.

The above changes were part of a wider social and political process of deinstitutionalisation of the radical feminist collective among the activist service organisations. There were increasing questions by group members about the appropriateness of the collective form of organisation. Published and unpublished accounts of some activist service groups highlight the shift to bureaucratic organisations, similar to the bureaucratic organisations in Thomas's continuum (1999). Many groups were experimenting with different types of organisation, such as community boards, and the development of formal vertical hierarchies of authority through the employment of managers (Anonymous 1996:22; Gilson 2001).

At the same time, the view that the deinstitutionalisation of the radical feminist collective reflects the inevitable transition to bureaucratic hierarchical organisations by all the activist service groups needs to be challenged. It is difficult not to construct changes to the collective simply in terms of the opposition between bureaucracy and collectivism, because of the ways in which bureaucracy fundamentally challenges many of the collective ideals (Rothschild-Whitt 1979) and is associated with the cooptation of radical feminist organisations. In addition, much of radical feminist collective practice is identified by what it is not, not patriarchy or not hierarchical. However, this study has outlined how many of the activist service groups remained positioned at the collective end of the collective-bureaucratic organisation continuum (See

Table 7 on page 220). Groups continued to be committed to radical feminist collective ways of organising into the 1990s, as evidenced by their ongoing use of consensus forms of decision-making, the participation of most, if not all members in critical decision-making, and their resistance to vertical hierarchies. Quite a number of the groups attempted to develop a model of employer-employee relations that minimised the development of vertical hierarchy by the horizontal delegation of authority in the permanent or temporary employment subcommittees, or by retaining the collective meeting which included all members as the place to address employment matters.

Most groups had developed a hybrid model of collective-bureaucratic organisation by the 1990s. Drawing on Hyde's (2000) notion of hybrid organisations and Iannello's (1992:92) concept of the modified consensual organisation, it is clear that the groups were attempting to bring the two different institutional logics together, collectivism and bureaucracy. Many of these groups remained strongly committed to feminism as an internal process. At the same time, it is important to recognise that the study is based on interviews carried out in the late 1990s, much may have changed in the groups since members were interviewed. This would require further study.

The tensions between collectivism and individualism increased as groups modified their collective organisations. The groups were committed to high levels of collectivism with their emphasis on unity, equality, consensus decision-making processes and on the common interests and goals among members (Mansbridge 1980:31). These all impelled a powerful 'will to agree' and the privileging of group unity (Holmes 1994: 5). The collective model as developed by the radical feminists always contained a tension between collectivism and individualism. On the one hand, there was an emphasis on hearing individual viewpoints and empowering individuals (Cassell 1977). On the other hand, there was an emphasis on unity, co-operation and achieving consensus. The ideal of equality within the groups often translated into a politics of sameness as groups struggled with individual differences that were seen to challenge group unity (Ristock 1990). The groups struggled to come to agreement in situations of conflicting interests, without either being paralysed by disagreement, subsuming or ousting the disagreeing individual/group, and as a consequence encouraging group homogeneity (Holmes 1994; Rodriguez 1988).

However, with the modification to the collective organisation, the tensions between collectivism and individualism were magnified as groups struggled with an increased focus on individual interests and differences among members in the collective. These included the emphasis on individual choice and rights contained in the employment contracts act, increased specialisation and professionalism in work that emphasised individual careers, along with the separation of employer-employee interests and positions. Groups struggled to negotiate collective and individual interests in a context that was still driven by the goal of non-hierarchy and equality based on a politics of sameness. In part, the issues related to a lack of clarity about the meaning of equality, for notions of equal power, equal opportunity, equal respect and equal satisfaction were often confused in collective group conflicts (Leidner 1991). Groups struggled to reframe the meaning and practice of equality, particularly in relation to inequalities of influence arising from the development of formal hierarchy in the groups. Differences between women that challenged equality were often a problem for the group.

Dealing with differences between women

Dealing with identity differences between women was a major area of tension and conflict in the activist service groups. Groups mostly focused on differences in relation to race/ethnicity, sexuality and class. The strategies, such as specifying identities, anti-discrimination training, and caucusing, were implemented by the activist service groups in order to both engage with differences and challenge relations of inequality between women. Within the Aotearoa/New Zealand context, a focus on developing bicultural relations between Māori and non-Māori was prominent in the groups. The activist groups struggled with assumptions of commonality between all women. The opposition between women and men was critical to how members of activist service groups understood the politics of organising in their groups. The commitment to collectivity, consensus, egalitarianism was framed as 'women's ways of working', and this was defined in opposition to 'men's ways of working' (Ferguson 1984; Sirianni and Leidner 1993). This opposition was the basis for group identity and a boundary differentiating women from men, and was critical to unifying the group (Cassell 1977:167-168). The feminist collective was constituted through a binary opposition of women versus men, which is implicated in the subsuming of differences between women in the groups and

the tendency to obscure race, class and sexuality differences between women (Heyes 2000).

The attempts to address relations of oppression were mostly framed in terms of a binary opposition between oppressed and oppressor, and along a single axis of oppression. It was often a politics that was contradictory, especially as women struggled to acknowledge and address complicity in relations of domination. This politics often failed to address the complexity of lived identities and the intersectionality of individual identities and experiences along multi-axes of difference and oppression. A number of the strategies implemented by groups failed to decentre 'whiteness' and how 'whiteness' easily remained an absence that was invisible and unmarked as groups focused on difference as 'other'. In these instances, it seemed that dealing with differences involved responding to the demands made by marginalised groups and the recognition of their specificity. This did not challenge the assumption of a common ground underpinning the focus on differences between women. In these instances, difference is addressed by bringing it into the existing feminist group, "without challenging the naturalised legitimacy and status of that community *as* a community" (Ang 1995:60, emphasis in original). The groups struggle to develop a politics among women based on specific connections, rather than an assumption of commonality of gender (Felski 1997; Mohanty 2002).

The system of caucusing used in the groups usually focused on one axis of oppression, and divided the group into oppressed group (for example, Māori or lesbian), and oppressor group (for example, non-Māori or non-lesbian). At the same time that caucuses were powerful tools to highlight relations of oppression, exploration of the caucusing systems adopted by the groups illustrate the difficulties with identity politics based on a binary model or single axis of oppression. The groups struggled to develop a politics that did not render invisible or exclude other identities. For example, the non-identity group often unravelled as sub-groups within the non-Māori or non-lesbian groups emphasised their own experience of oppression and argued for caucus status. The caucus system assumed a stability of identity, and assumed unity between members of the oppressed group based on the common experience of oppression. Nevertheless, the caucus did focus women's attention on complicity in relations of oppression and challenged assumptions of a commonality of experience based on gender.

There was a powerful focus on developing bicultural relations between Māori and non-Māori in the groups. This study identified three models of bicultural relations used by the predominantly Pākehā activist service groups. The first involved affirmative action programmes to bring Māori into an existing organisation. Often this was attempted without changing the organisation. The groups often assumed that the radical feminist collective democratic process was open to, and inclusive of, all women. The second model involved the development of, often temporary, alliances with separate Māori organisations. This model was not so common, and when used was often based on friendship networks between members of the groups. As a consequence, the relationship was vulnerable to membership change. This model did not specifically challenge the non-Māori group to engage with the implication of race or ethnic differences within their groups. The third model involved the formation of alliances between Māori and non-Māori groups within a single organisation or, in the case of NCRC and NCIWR, within the national collectives. The experiences of NCIWR and NCRC highlighted the complexity of working in this model. The aim of forming alliances was to develop an equal partnership between Māori and non-Māori in the organisation. Their experiences illustrated the need to develop systematic processes that addressed both structural (resource sharing) and procedural (voice and representation) matters between the two groups.

A number of areas of tension and conflict were identified, particularly for the non-Māori members, in attempting to develop as equal partners. First, the non-Māori group struggled to develop a positive identity, either as Pākehā or Tauiwi. It was an ambiguous identity from which to build a relationship with Māori in the organisation. The non-Māori groups often appeared to shift haphazardly between identifying as non-Māori, as Pākehā, or as Tauiwi, without clarifying what the shifts might mean. The shifts do not explicitly address the complexity of developing an ethnic identity in these groups and, almost by default, the groups come to represent and be inclusive of all women, except for Māori. In this way, the binary Māori /non-Māori caucus system failed to develop a specificity of ethnic identity, that could form the basis of equal partnership between the two groups.

Second, the groups did not examine the complexity of attempting to develop a positive identity for Pākehā. When this identity is linked to a largely negative history of colonisation, it is a difficult basis from which to create solidarity among Pākehā women.

Claiming a white identity and sense of solidarity is a complex process when it is dominated by guilt and confusion about complicity in relations of domination and white supremacy (Alcoff 2000; Rudy 2001; Thompson 1999). Third, the groups often did not appear to engage with the complexity of relations between different identity groups included in the non-Māori caucus. There is a difficulty in working out how to address this without slipping into arguments for multicultural diversity or a simple politics of inclusion.

Fourth, using caucusing to develop group positions on issues fundamentally challenged Pākehā understandings of consensus decision-making processes across the group. The tension related to the Pākehā practice of using the consensus process to understand individuals and their viewpoints, and the Māori use of caucus to further collectivism which involved returning to the combined group with a collectively agreed caucus decision. For Pākehā , the difficulty was the lack of opportunity to come to understand the other or the desire for a shared subjectivity, and the loss of a sense of unity that this process created. The above problems suggest how the binary model of caucusing fails to recognise that identities are created at the intersection of multiple and shifting relations of subordination and domination (Ang 1995; Brah 1992; Rudy 2001). At the same time, the NCIWR and NCRC commitment to bicultural relations represents a powerful engagement with biculturalism in contemporary activist service organisations in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

The insights gained from this study have helped me to better understand the questions and confusions about the conflicts experienced by many of the activist service groups. For many of the women who participated in the activist service groups, these were often incredibly painful and baffling experiences as good intentions and desires for connection failed to resolve the tensions between women in the groups. The thesis highlights the complexity of the politics that participants were engaged with as they attempted to develop egalitarian organisations that challenged inequalities between women, and engaged with differences in ways that also supported unity between members. These complexities were frequently unrecognised in the intensity of the debates and conflicts. Many of these groups have contributed to, and continue to promote, a politics of feminist social change, both in terms of the delivery of valuable services to women and the ongoing exploration of a collective democratic model of organising.

GLOSSARY OF MĀORI TERMS[223]

Aotearoa	Aotearoa is an ancient Māori name for New Zealand. It is often translated as meaning land of the long white cloud
Hui	Gathering, meeting
Kaumātua	Old man, elder
Kaupapa Māori	In the context of the services, it refers to those services based on Māori traditions and culture. Kaupapa Māori validates te reo Māori (Māori language) and tikanga Māori (Māori culture)
Kawa	Tradition, etiquette, protocols
Koha	Donation, gift. The giving of a koha stems from the tradition of bringing gifts (usually food) when visiting other marae. In contemporary society the koha can take the form of a monetary donation or other appropriate gifts.
Kōrero	To speak and communicate
Kuia	Old lady, matron
Marae	In traditional Māori society the term marae referred to the marae atea, the meeting ground directly in front of the whare nui (large meeting house). However within everyday usage the term marae is often used to refer to whole marae complex
Pākehā	Non-Māori Aotearoa/New Zealand citizens, mostly of European ancestry
Take	Cause, base, topic, subject matter
Tangata Pasifika	People of Pacific Island nations, either indigenous to their own islands or New Zealand born.
Tangata whenua	Local people. Within the every day context of Aotearoa/New Zealand it refers to all Māori. Tangata whenua also refers to the local iwi (tribe) or hapu (sub-tribe) of specific marae and rohe o te iwi (specific territory of iwi)
Tauiwi	Alien, foreigner, immigrant. In the NCIWR and NCRC context it is used to group together all those who immigrated to Aotearoa/New Zealand after the Māori
Tino rangatiratanga	Māori sovereignty and independence. Tino rangatiratanga is a radical Māori political movement
Wahine Māori	Māori woman/women
Whare	House. The central whare at the marae may be referred to as: whare nui (large house), whare tupuna (house of the ancestors), whare moe (house to sleep in)
Whānau	Family, including extended family

[223] Source for Māori – English translations (Ryan 1995).

APPENDICES

Appendix I: Published and Unpublished Documents

Journals and newsletters

A Collective for . . . Woman, (known as ***Woman***) Mar 5, 1972 to Aug 1981

The newsletter was produced by different groups belonging to the Dunedin Collective for Woman. The groups took turns to produce the newsletter. The newsletter kept members informed about collective events and, to a lesser extent, about issues such as declining membership or exclusion of men. The newsletter also printed members' reports about national conferences.

Auckland Women's Centre Newsletter, July 1975 - Nov 1975

The newsletter was produced by the Auckland Women's Centre Collective and provided a description of Centre developments as well as reports from the various women's groups that shared the Centre, for example, Rape Crisis and Halfway House. It kept members informed about events and the needs of the Centre

Bitches, Witches and Dykes: A Women's Liberation Newspaper, Issue 1, No 1, Aug 1980 – Issue 6, Aug 1982

The magazine was produced by a group of women who knew each other. The magazine frequently published descriptions of their attempts to work collectively and described many of the conflicts they experienced.

Broadsheet, No. 2, 1971

This newsletter was produced by a Wellington Women's Liberation group. It has no relationship to the Auckland *Broadsheet* publication. The newsletter outlined the group's activities and aims as well as including a paper on the issue of men in the movement. I was only able to locate the second newsletter that was produced by this group.

Broadsheet, No. 1, July 1972 – No. 214, 1997

Broadsheet was one of Aotearoa/New Zealand's longest running feminist magazines. It was run by an Auckland based collective of mostly volunteer women. In the early 1970s, the content and issues were very much focused on the Auckland women's liberation groups and activities. But by the middle of the decade, the magazine described itself as an Aotearoa/New Zealand rather than Auckland magazine. This was reflected in a name change from *Broadsheet, Auckland Women's Liberation*, to *Broadsheet, New Zealand's Feminist Magazine* in 1976.

Broadsheet was invaluable as a source of information about feminist groups and their

activities particularly throughout the 1970s and early 1980s. For much of this period they had a section called 'group news' or 'grapevine' that described the activities and plans of many Aotearoa/New Zealand feminist groups. In the late 1970s to late 1980s, they intermittently published a list of feminist groups. In addition, the magazine provided reports about various national and regional events. There were quite a few articles on issues concerning collective organising and debates about different strands of feminism.

By the late 1980s there were fewer reports about groups or debates about organising as a collective. The magazine instead focused more on in-depth articles about topical issues.

Circle (1973-1974) ***Lesbian Feminist Circle***, (1974-1985) No. 1, Dec 1973 - No. 44, Dec 1985

The Wellington SHE group produced the magazine. As Evans (1993) outlines, the magazine "covered the activities of lesbian groups, reflecting their developing politics, and reprinted articles from the overseas publications … It was always printed by lesbians, including, for five years, Herstory Press". Many articles in *Circle* debated how to organise and the problems of feminist collective organising.

Juno, Series II, Issue No. 2 and Issue No. 3, 1978, and ***A Juno Special***, Jan 1977

The Juno Collective consisted of a group of seven radical lesbian feminists who aimed to "provide a publication which created a dialogue between radical feminists, and for encouraging the continuation of such a dialogue" (Anonymous 1978i). The publication contained many articles debating feminist collective processes and what it meant to engage in radical feminist political action. The *Juno Special* published a critique of *Broadsheet* and its relationship to the women's movement.

New Zealand Women's Learning Web (NZWLW), No. 2, Aug 1979 with a name change to ***Women's Information Network of New Zealand***, Newsletter No. 3, Oct 1979 – No. 4, Jan 1980

The newsletter was produced and edited by Myra Kitchenmen with the help of a group of women from 1979 to approximately 1981. The newsletter was started with donations from women who attended the 1979 United Women's Convention. The newsletter aimed to produce a comprehensive list of women's groups and events. Groups provided a description of goals, activities and protest.

Newsletter; Auckland University Women's Liberation Group, Mar, April, June/July, Aug 1974, continued as ***University Feminists Newsletter***, Sept, Oct, Nov/Dec 1974

The newsletter was produced by Auckland University feminist groups and provided a list of events the groups had taken part in and snippets of information about other groups and publications.

NOUS: National Office Update Sheet Mar/Apr 1995 ; Issue 2 - Autumn 2000

The newsletter was published by the national office workers of the National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa (NCRC) and distributed to local rape crisis

groups. The newsletter provided reports on national media events, statistics on sexual violence, national office's reports, and grant application deadlines.

NZ Rape Crisis Workers' Newsletter, Vol 1, No. 1 (May 1982) - Vol. 1, No. 3 (Aug. 1982)
Rape Crisis Workers' Newsletter of Aotearoa. Vol.1: No.4 (1983:Jan.) - Vol.2: No.1 (1985:Feb.)
Rape Crisis and Related Groups Newsletter, May 1987- Dec 1987
National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa No. 12 (Aug 1989) – No. 16 (June 1990)

Prior to 1986, local rape crisis groups took turns producing the newsletters. The newsletter provided detailed reports on each local Rape Crisis group's activities. In addition, the newsletters provided information on events such as the 1982 Rape Law Symposium and the national gatherings of Rape Crisis workers. From 1987 the newsletters were produced by the National Office workers of the National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa. These later newsletters provided information to local groups about such things as national networking and funding developments.

NZ Women's Health Network Newsletter, No. 1, Aug 1977 - No. 75, Last Edition, 1992

The newsletter was produced by Sarah Calvert, a prominent Aotearoa/New Zealand women's health movement activist, in order to "be a clearing house for materials, to help NZ women stay in touch with women overseas and enable them to read the work being produced there" (Calvert 1992:3). Calvert produced and edited the newsletter with support from friends and family. The newsletter contained much material from overseas on health issues and protests. Scattered throughout the late 1970s into mid-1980s, these newsletters provide references to the development of overseas health collectives, as well as the debates and issues they were experiencing with implementing the egalitarian collective ideal. There were occasional reports from Aotearoa/New Zealand health groups. Between 1977 and 1980 there were over 400 subscribers and, for the last edition of the newsletter there were still 181 subscribers.

Palmerston North Women's Liberation Newsletter, Vol. 1, No. 2-4 (1973), later published as ***Unison***

The newsletter provided a list of upcoming events, reports on local events/speakers and reports by many of the group's subcommittees. Newsletters contained lists of recommended books for 'Women's Liberationists' to read. In addition, the newsletter provided information about events in other cities and countries. There were some references to debates about how the group worked and its purpose.

Wellington Women Resource Centre Newsletter/WRC Newsletter, July 1979, No. 2 (Sept 1979) – No. 15 (1982)

The newsletters were produced by the Wellington Women's Resource Centre Collective. They included detailed reports from the Core Group (administrative management group), paid worker reports, topical articles and debates, as well as reports by the groups that shared the Centre, such as Hecate, Women's Health Collective, the Lesbian Centre, and Wellington Rape Crisis.

Wellington Women's Refuge Newsletter, Nov 1979 and Mar 1981[224]

The newsletter was developed by members of the Wellington Women's Refuge. It contained information on the development of the service and acquiring a house as well as the employment of workers, and requests for funding and volunteers

Wellington Women's Workshop, No. 9 (1973) - No. 20 (1974); No. 22-26, 28 (1974)

The newsletter was produced by the Wellington Women's Workshop. The newsletter reported on events and advertised planned activities. There were frequent discussions in the newsletter about how the group was working and the problems they were having with collective processes, engaging in feminist action and maintaining members' interests. The newsletter had previously been produced under the name *Victoria University Feminists*, and *Up from Under*

Women in Nelson, No.1 (April 1979) - No.41 (July 1991).

The newsletter was published by a group called Women's Movement in Nelson. The newsletter provided a list of up and coming events for the wider Nelson region. It published reports about local group developments and networks.

Unpublished sources

Piha Women's Liberation Congress Papers, 1978[225]

The papers were sent to all those who were attending the camp. They covered a wide range of topics and were written by women active in the women's liberation movement of that period.

Rape Crisis Training Package, approximately 1987

The Rape Crisis Training Package was developed by Hamilton Rape Crisis workers. It contained a section on collective processes and another section describing the history of the establishment of the National Collective and a two page discussion on the Rape Crisis groups sharing of funding with Māori groups. The training package was incomplete.

Regional meetings among local Rape Crisis Groups and Māori women's groups, included pamphlets, letters, reports and minutes, 1984-1986

The letters and minutes were collected by a participant involved in the organisation of meetings and were given to me for use in this study. The letters and minutes described the

[224] Sourced from MS Papers 3940, Folder 132, Women's Electoral Lobby, Alexander Turnbull Library.
[225] The papers were obtained from one of the interviewees (Judith 30/1/97), and the Turnbull Library archives, reference 'Papers relating to the Women's Liberation Congress, 1977-1978, 98-162-1/11, Coney Sandra'.

attempt to set up one of the first joint regional collective of Rape Crisis and Māori women's groups and later attempts to set up a number of Rape Crisis regional collectives. These papers contained reports by a number of participants who were debating the reasons for the failure to establish the joint Māori /non-Māori regional collectives. The minutes and reports also described the debates that took place about the establishment of the National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups.

Tauranga Rape Crisis Operation Manual, January 1987, updated January 1990

The manual describes the work of the Tauranga Rape Crisis. It provided a feminist analysis of rape and child sexual abuse, a history of the regional and national collective developments, and gives background to the development of Tauranga Rape Crisis.

Appendix II: About the Interviews

Describing the interviewees

Of the sixty-five women who participated in the interviews, fifty identified as Pākehā, eight as Māori, three as Māori /Pākehā and one as English and one as Jewish (there were two missing responses). The majority of interviewees were aged between 30-39 (24/63), or between 40-49 (21/63). Only nine were aged between 20 and 29, and another nine interviewees were aged over 50 (there were 2 missing responses). Of the women interviewed, 33 identified as heterosexual, 22 as lesbian, and 6 as bisexual at the time of the interview (there were four missing responses).

In responding to a question about social class identity, most women interviewed identified as middle-class (23/50). A number of interviewees identified as either working class or as having grown up in a working-class home but, as a result of education, experienced a middle-class lifestyle (16/50). Some interviewees were ambivalent about the question and hesitated to give a response (11/50). In two of the group interviews the question was not answered (n=15).

Many of the interviewees had been employed by the service collectives (28/65). Of this group, the major paid roles among those interviewed included co-ordinators/administrators (19/28), counsellors or education project workers (9/28). Many of the paid workers had also been involved in an unpaid capacity either for the organisation that employed them or another collective (12/28). For many, this had involved being a Core Group member of either the National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa or the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges. Thirty-seven interviewees had mainly been involved in the various service collectives and women's liberation groups as volunteers. Volunteer roles included attending collective meetings, general administration, refuge advocacy, after-hours crisis line, or working on specific projects and campaigns.

At the time of the interviews all but twelve of the women interviewed were still actively involved in one or more of the activist service collectives examined in this thesis. Those

that were not currently involved in a feminist collective included; Bronwyn, Sue, Anne, Patricia, Iris, Chris, Donna, Su and the four members of the WLC group interview. Eight of this group had been active in the 1970s women's liberation groups. The other four had been members of activist service groups during the 1980s and 1990s. Of the fifty-three women who were currently members of feminist collectives, most had joined these collectives during the 1990s (42/53), or 1980s (11/53).

At the time of the interview many of the interviewees reported that they had been members of only one collective (42/65). However, a number of interviewees had belonged to two collectives (11/65) and some interviewees to three or more collectives (12/65, range 3-5 feminist collectives). This does not include membership of the two national collectives. Twelve of the women interviewed had been, or were, members of the National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa Core Group and two had been members of the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges Core Group.

Interviewees were asked how long they had been active in feminist collectives. Most of the group had been involved either one to five years (28/64), or between six and ten years (21/64). Eight interviewees had been involved for more than ten years and only seven had been involved in a feminist collective less than a year (there was one missing response). These times were estimated by the participants who usually gave an approximate year that they first joined a collective. Those who belonged to two or more collectives concurrently were asked to only include the overlapping time once.

Description of Interviewees and their Collectives

I have used pseudonyms in order to retain confidentiality of interviewees. I excluded details where this may have made someone easily identifiable in order to maintain confidentiality. Also, descriptions of the social class, ethnic and sexuality identification by interviewees refer to their identification at the time of the interview.

	Description of interviewee and interview focus
Women's Liberation Groups	
Women's Liberation Collective, 1970s (WL Group Interview 21/9/97)	Four members of one of the early 1970s women's liberation collectives described their experiences of women's liberation politics of that period. They reflected on how the radical movement influenced their group and the conflicts that took place. The group described their involvement in a wide range of protest activities. The group had attended many of the women's movement national and regional meetings during the 1970s. Members had also been involved in some of the early women-only activist service collectives. Members included Barb, Fiona, Linda, Susan
Women's Liberation Collectives, 1970s and 1980s (Bronwyn 27/8/97)	Bronwyn, who identified as heterosexual, middle-class and Pākehā, had briefly belonged to one of the early 1970s women's liberation collectives. The interview described the emerging feminist analysis and conflicts about ideology and identity politics that were part of the wider women's movement of the 1970s. She went on to join a long-running feminist service collective and was an unpaid worker in this collective for over ten years. The major focus of the interview was on the 1970s women's liberation movement
Women's Liberation groups and abortion campaign, 1970s (Sue 6/3/97)	Sue, who identified as heterosexual, middle-class and Pākehā, was active in the 1970s women's liberation groups and in the campaigns to repeal the restrictive 1977 abortion law. She had briefly been involved in the development of one of the early refuge collectives. Much of the interview focused on the politics of organising protests for abortion law repeal.
Women's Liberation Collective, late 1970s to early 1980s (Anne 22/4/97)	Anne identified as lesbian, middle-class and Pākehā. She had been active in one of the rural women's liberation collectives over the late 1970s and early 1980s. She described how the group had been involved in campaigns against sexist advertising and discrimination against women in paid work. The interview examined the dynamics in one rural women's liberation collective.

Rape Crisis Groups

Rape Crisis Collective 1, 1980s (Patricia 7/3/97)	Patricia, who identified as lesbian, middle-class and Pākehā, had been involved in an early women's self-help health collective and the development of a local women's movement network during the late 1970s and early 1980s. During the 1980s, Patricia had become involved in setting up a local rape crisis collective, the formation of the National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa (NCRC). The major focus of the interview was on the women's movement politics of the late 1970s to late 1980s and the formation of the NCRC.
Rape Crisis Collective 2, 1980s (Donna 1/11/97)	Donna identified as lesbian, middle-class and Pākehā. She became involved in a local Rape Crisis group in a major urban centre during the early to mid-1980s. She was employed on a number of projects through the temporary employment schemes. She was also involved in other women's liberation groups at the same time. In the late 1980s she became a paid worker for a Women's Centre.
Rape Crisis Collective 3, 1990s (RC2 Group Interview 23/7/97)	The interview involved seven of nine members of one Rape Crisis Collective in a rural township. The group was comprised of two members who had joined the collective in the late 1980s and five members who had joined in the 1990s. One of the women identified as Māori and the rest as Pākehā. Five of the group identified as heterosexual. The interview examined the recent transition from employing one full time worker to employing seven part-time co-ordinators. All seven of the interviewees were paid to be co-ordinators Members included Lucy, Julia, Patsy, Elizabeth, Susan, Linda and Jennifer
Rape Crisis Collective 4, 1990s (RC1 Group Interview 9/9/97)	The interview involved seven members of a local Rape Crisis Collective in a rural township. The group comprised of one member who was a paid worker and had been a member of the collective for five years, and the rest were volunteers, most of whom had only joined the collective in the last two to three years. The entire group identified as heterosexual, six identified as Pākehā and one as Māori. The group described how they worked collectively within the context of their day to day work. The group were called Jenny, Emma, Jacqui, Amanda, Carol, Maggie and Gwen
Rape Crisis Collective 5, late 1980s and 1990s (Chris 11/9/97)	Chris identified as a Pākehā working-class lesbian. She became involved in a rural Rape Crisis Collective in the late 1980s, where she was both a part-time paid worker and a volunteer for the next seven years. In the early 1990s for a period of three years, she also

	became a member of the National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa Core Group. The interview examined the experience of belonging to both the local and national collectives.
(Liz 6/3/97)	Liz, identified as a Pākehā working-class/middle-class bisexual. She joined the same collective in approximately 1989. She worked as a paid part-time counsellor and office worker. In the mid-1990s, she became a member of the National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa Core Group. The interview examined the experience of belonging to both the local and national collectives.
Rape Crisis Collective 6, mid-1980s and 1990s (Jemma 8/9/97)	Jemma identified as a Pākehā middle-class lesbian. She had been a member of a local Rape Crisis Collective for over ten years. For much of that time she had been a paid worker, employed as a counsellor. She had also been a National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa Core Group member for approximately five years. The interview examined the experience of belonging to both the local and national collectives.
(Sandra 10/9/97)	Sandra identified as both Māori and Pākehā, and as bisexual and middle-class. She had joined the Rape Crisis Centre in the early 1990s as an unpaid collective member. She worked on the evening phone crisis line and attended collective meetings. She had also been a member of the National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa Core Group as part of the Māori caucus. The interview examined the experience of belonging to both the local and national collectives.
Rape Crisis Collective 7, 1990s (Iris 29/1/97)	Iris, who identified as a Pākehā, middle-class lesbian, had been a member of the same Rape Crisis Collective for six years. She had initially started as a volunteer and then became a paid counsellor. The interview examined the protracted employment issues and the tensions in maintaining a commitment to equality in the organisation.
(Nellie 22/4/97)	Nellie, who identified as Pākehā, working class and heterosexual, had joined the collective in 1992 as a volunteer. Her roles included attending collective meetings, supporting the administrator as well as other jobs as required. As a working class woman, she reported struggling with the middle-class dominance of the collective. The major focus of the interview was on the conflicts between the paid and unpaid workers.

Rape Crisis Collective 8, 1990s (Janine 17/2/97)	Janine worked as a paid co-ordinator for the Rape Crisis collective. She identified as Māori and heterosexual. She had also recently joined the National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa Core Group as part of the Māori caucus. The interview examined the experience of belonging to both the local and national collectives.
National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa (NCRC) (Tessa 6/3/97)	Tessa had been a paid worker for the National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups of Aotearoa (NCRC) during the 1990s. She identified as Pākehā, middle-class and heterosexual. She discussed the tensions in working for a national organisation that organised collectively.
(NCRC Group Interview 7/3/97)	Six members of the NCRC Core Group at the time of the interview described their experiences of being a Core Group member. The group included two Māori, three Pākehā and one who did not identify their ethnicity. The interview examined the experience of belonging to both the local and national collectives.

Women's Refuge Groups

Refuge Collective 1 (Sara 3/12/97)	Sara, who identified as Pākehā in the interview, had been a full-time paid co-ordinator for a general Refuge for nearly ten years. The interview examined her experience of working as a co-ordinator over that period, some major employment conflicts within the collective, and conflicts in the regional and national collectives.
(Ingrid 27/2/97)	Ingrid, a volunteer for three years at the same general Refuge as Sara, described her experiences of the employment conflicts. She identified as middle-class, Pākehā and heterosexual.
(Helene 10/12/97)	Helene had been working as a paid advocate for this Refuge for two years. She identified as lesbian and middle-class. She described the employment conflicts that had been taking place in the Refuge, and conflicts in regional and national meetings of the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges
Refuge Collective 2 (Jo 6/12/97)	Jo identified as Pākehā and lesbian with a working-class background/middle-class education. She had worked as a volunteer refuge advocate for the general Refuge. She had been involved in improving employment contracts and procedures. The interview described her experience of belonging to a general refuge.
(Robyn 26/1/97)	Robyn identified as Pākehā and lesbian. She had been a volunteer for both a local Rape Crisis group and a general Refuge. The

	interview explored her experiences of both collectives.
Refuge Collective 3 (RF1 Group Interview 11/9/97)	Both Marama and Kirsty identified as Māori and heterosexual. They had been volunteer advocates for the general refuge and members of the Māori caucus for nearly three years. The interview focused on the tensions and conflicts in the Refuge.
Refuge Collective 4 (Shelley 12/1/98)	Shelley identified as Pākehā, bisexual and as coming from a working-class background. She had been employed as a co-ordinator of the general Refuge for ten years. She had also been a member of the National Refuge of Independent Women's Refuges Core Group. The interview examined the dynamics between volunteers and paid workers in the general Refuge, and the politics around sexuality in the National Collective meeting.
Refuge Collective 5 (Antonia 25/11/97)	Antonia identified as Pākehā and lesbian with a working-class background/middle-class education. She had been involved in the non-Māori Refuge for between 2 to 3 years and employed as a full-time co-ordinator. The interview examined her experiences of the local refuge and the relationship between the non-Māori refuge and their 'sister' refuge.
Refuge Collective 6 (Pat 15/1/98)	Pat , who identified as Māori, heterosexual and working class, had been involved in the general Refuge for nearly two years. She had been employed as a co-ordinator for part of that time and was a member of the Māori caucus. She described the conflicts and tensions in her Collective around feminism and employment.
Refuge Collective 7 (Verity 11/12/97)	Jill identified as Māori and heterosexual. She had been a member the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges since the mid-1980s. Currently, she was employed as a full-time co-ordinator at a Māori Women's Refuge. The interview described some changes in the national organisation as a consequence of parallel development and the importance of whānau in the local refuge.
Refuge Collective 8 (Kaitlin 10/3/97)	Kaitlin identified as Pākehā and heterosexual. Kaitlin had a long history of involvement in feminist service collectives going back to 1985. She had been a member of a Women's Centre, Rape Crisis group and a general Refuge. At the time of the interview she was a full-time paid worker for the general Refuge. The interview described some of the struggles and conflicts Kaitlin had experienced in the different service groups.

National Collective of Independent Women's Refuge (Helen 25/11/97)	Helen, who identified as Pākehā, lesbian and with a working class upbringing, was working at the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges national office. The interview described her experiences of working with local refuges and the NCIWR.

Women's Centres

Women's Centre 1 (WC 1 Group Interview 11/9/97)	Lesley, Mary-Anne and Annmarie were all volunteers for a Women's Centre. They all identified as Pākehā and heterosexual, but experienced some ambiguity with identifying as working class or middle class. One member had been involved in the Centre for six years, the other for three years and one had only recently joined the collective. The group described the tensions and conflicts that they had experienced at the Centre.
Women's Centre 2 (Judith 30/1/97)	Judith has been a member of a Women's Centre Collective for about three years as a volunteer. She identified as Pākehā and lesbian. She undertook approximately 4 hours volunteer work for the Centre each week and attended the monthly collective meetings. The interview examined the tensions in managing employment relations and role of the collective in relation to the paid workers.
(Heather 27/10/97)	Heather has been a full-time paid co-ordinator at the centre for nearly five years, prior to that she had been a volunteer at the Centre. She identified as Pākehā and lesbian. The interview examined the ways in which the Centre had changed over the time that she had been involved as a result of internal and external tensions.
Women's Centre 3 (Petra 16/2/98)	Petra was involved as a volunteer collective members of the Women's Centre. She did odd jobs at the Centre and attended collective meetings. She identified as Pākehā and lesbian. Petra had also been involved in Refuge and Rape Crisis during the 1980s. The interview was a historical reflection on Petra's involvement in the different collectives since the early 1980s.
(WC 2 Group Interview 16/2/98)	Both Libby and Suzanne were volunteer members of the local Women's Centre and mainly attended collective meetings. They identified as lesbian, Pākehā and middle-class. Both had had long histories of involvement in many different feminist collectives, ranging from rape crisis groups through to lesbian collectives. The interview examined their involvement in these groups and the attempts to work collectively.
(Anita 15/2/97)	Anita, who identified as Pākehā, lesbian and middle-class, was also a volunteer member of the local Women's Centre. She mainly attended collective meetings. Anita had a long history of

	involvement in the women's movement and much of the interview described the changes in feminist activism over the 1970s and 1980s.

Health Collectives

Health Collective 1 (Karen 9/3/97)	Karen had been a volunteer member of the health collective for five years. She identified as Pākehā and bisexual. She mainly attended collective meetings as she worked full-time in another position.
(Marian 9/3/97)	Marian had been a volunteer member of the health collective for just over one year. She identified as Māori and bisexual. She mainly attended collective meetings. She was the only Māori woman on the collective.
Health Collective 2 (HC Group Interview 10/9/97)	Mary and Lisa were both paid workers at the Women's Health Centre. Mary had been a member of the collective for nearly five years, and Laura for over seven years. Both identified as Pākehā and heterosexual. The interview described their experiences of working in the Health Centre.

Other collectives

(Alice 30/1/97)	Alice identified as Pākehā, lesbian and middle-class. She had been a volunteer member of a women-only feminist newsletter collective for five years. The interview described the way in which the newsletter collective worked and the conflicts they had experienced.
(Su 19/2/98)	Su joined a lesbian collective in the 1990s and was a member for over five years. The group organised social activities for lesbians and provided support for newly identified lesbians. The group was involved in developing health resources and information for lesbians. The major focus of the interview was on changes in lesbian feminist communities and activism during the 1990s.

Appendix III: Participant Information Sheet

To

My name is Jane Vanderpyl. I am PhD student in the Women's Studies Programme at the University of Auckland. I have been a member of the Hamilton Rape and Sexual Abuse Healing Centre collective for the last three years and am currently a member of Auckland Rape Crisis collective.

I am conducting this research for the purpose of documenting women's experiences within feminist collectives. In particular, I am interested in the ways in which commonalities and differences amongst women collective members have been acknowledged and attended to in feminist collective organising. I have chosen this topic as I believe unity and differences amongst women remains a significant source of tension in feminist collectives. Yet this tension is also a source of many innovative practices and structures in feminist collectives. This research presents a unique opportunity to investigate feminist collective practices in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

You are invited to participate in this research. I would appreciate being able to include some of the Hamilton Rape Crisis herstory interview material. You can withdraw any information. The information given in the interview is confidential. Neither your name, nor the name of the collective will be used in the research report. A summary of the findings will be available if you are interested. You are under no obligation to take part in this research.

Thank you very much for your time and help in making this study possible. If you have any queries or wish to know more please phone me (09) 373 7599 ext. 4846 (University), or (09) 376 6615 (Home).

My supervisors are

Professor Maureen Molloy and Dr Phyllis Herda
Women's Studies Programme
University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019
Auckland

Dr Judith Pringle
Department of Management and Employment Relations
University of Auckland

Telephone: (09) 373 7599 Ext. 5057

The Director is: Professor Maureen Molloy (details as above)

For any queries regarding ethical concerns please contact:
Dr. Dennis Moore, Chair, The University of Auckland Human Subjects Ethics Committee, The University of Auckland, Finance Registry, Private Bag 92019. Tel 373-7999 Ext. 6204.

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

on 14/8/96 for a period of two years, from 14/8/96 Reference 1996/177

Appendix IV: National Women's Movement Conferences and Conventions

The United Women's Conventions (UWCs) were important in the construction of a national 'second wave' women's movement in Aotearoa/New Zealand during the 1970s. The UWCs tended to draw large numbers of participants, ranging from 1,500 women at the 1973 convention to 3,000 women at the 1977 convention (Baynes 1993:18; Church 1973:8). There was also an earlier conference in 1972 attracting 400 participants focused on women's liberation (Coney 1973:7). The UWCs significantly influenced the mobilisation of women towards joining the women's movement by introducing them to the ideas and politics of feminism. The dominant group at the conventions tended to be Pākehā, heterosexual, middle-class women. Nevertheless, there was considerable ideological and political diversity amongst conference participants. This resulted in some tensions between conservative women and feminists, especially over the issue of abortion. There were also tensions between liberal feminists and those identifying as women's liberationists or radical feminists, mostly around the issue of men's participation at the UWCs. The relationship between 'Women's Liberationists' and the UWCs was ambivalent. The conventions were often viewed by radical feminists as being too conservative and dominated by the concerns of liberal feminists or women new to the ideas of women's liberation.

The issues and tensions experienced in the conventions were reflective of the debates going on in the wider movement. Three trends are apparent on examining the issues that arose at the conventions. The first trend involves the increasing levels of conflict reported at each of the conventions between women over ideology and identity differences. Baynes argues that the 1979 convention was most remembered for "its divisiveness from which few of us escaped unscathed" (Baynes 1993:18). The second trend revolved around the role of men (for example, as reporters/media representatives) and their participation in the conventions. At the 1975 UWC there were murmurs of dissent about their presence; by the 1977 UWC the issue of men dominated the convention and publicity about the convention. It was the source of major conflicts between convention organisers. The 1979 UWC organisers excluded all men from the

convention. The third trend illustrated the increasing pressures to organise collectively in the 'second wave' women's movement. The early conventions utilised a committee structure with permanent chair and secretary to organise and run the convention. By the final convention, the organisers had set themselves up as a non-hierarchical collective utilising consensus decision-making. Thus the conventions mirrored many of the debates that were taking place within local second wave women's movement groups and publications.[226]

About the women who attended the conventions

Participants at all four UWCs were most likely to be Pākehā (Anonymous 1979h:123; Barrington and Mosby 1976:139; Novitz, Osborn et al. 1978:95). At the 1975 UWC, just over one percent of convention participants identified as Māori, Indian, Chinese or Pacific Island (Barrington and Mosby 1976:139). Only one percent identified as Māori at the 1977 UWC. However, 190 women refused to identify their ethnicity (Novitz, Osborn et al. 1978:95). At each of the conventions, the majority of participants were aged between 25 and 44, married and had children (Anonymous 1979h:131-132; Barrington and Mosby 1976:138-40; Green, Wannan et al. 1973:58; Novitz, Osborn et al. 1978:95-96). At the 1979 UWC there was an increase in the proportion of single women (from 20% to 30%) and a decrease in married women (from over 60% down to 40%) compared to previous conventions (Anonymous 1979h:79; Browne, Hargreaves et al. 1978:96). The women who attended the 1975 UWC were most likely to be in part-time or full-time employment (Barrington and Mosby 1976:143). The average level of educational attainment among each convention's participants was higher than that found among the adult female population (Anonymous 1979h:126; Barrington and Mosby 1976:141-142; Green, Wannan et al. 1973:59; Novitz, Osborn et al. 1978:96-97).

At each of the conventions after 1973, few women reported having attended earlier conventions. Of the participants at the 1977 UWC, only two percent had attended the 1973 UWC, 14 percent had attended the 1975 UWC, and only three percent had attended both the 1973 and 1975 UWCs (Novitz, Osborn et al. 1978:99). At the 1979 UWC, ten percent of convention participants had attended the 1977 UWC, four percent

226 The description of the conventions draws on the convention reports, articles and reviews published in *Broadsheet* and *Lesbian Feminist Circle*.

the 1975 UWC and five percent the 1973 UWC (Anonymous 1979h:131-132). Most convention participants attended the conventions in order to increase knowledge and understanding about women's issues and due to their personal involvement in the women's movement. Of the 1975 UWC participants, 51percent reported that they were attending to increase their knowledge and experience, 21 percent identified personal involvement in the Women's Movement; the latter was mainly identified by women aged 30 and under (Barrington and Mosby 1976:148). Again at the 1977 UWC, the main reasons for attending included increasing knowledge and experience (83%), personal involvement in the Women's Movement (34%), and curiosity (25%) (Novitz, Osborn et al. 1978:99).

The diversity of organisational memberships that convention participants identified with portrays the wide range of interests and political/ideological perspectives among convention attendees. At the 1975 UWC, 56 percent of respondents belonged to women's groups focused on status for example, WEL, NOW, SROW, and to Radical Feminist groups (compared to 41 percent at the 1973 UWC). Nine percent reported belonging to women's groups such as Health Action (not reported for the 1973 UWC). Twenty-six percent belonged to church affiliated groups, 21 percent to social reform groups such as ALRANZ and SPUC (Barrington and Mosby 1976:147). Of those who attended the 1977 UWC, 33 percent belonged to women's groups focused on improving women's status (this included both women's rights and radical feminist groups) and women's health (7%) (Novitz, Osborn et al. 1978:98-99). At the 1979 UWC, questions about group affiliation were vague (Anonymous 1979h:84). Of those who stated which groups they belonged to, 180 (of the 2186 participants) listed affiliations with local feminist groups, 46 belonged to Sisters Overseas Service and 50 to lesbian collectives (Anonymous 1979h:84). Over 300 women reported belonging to the organisations like WEL, SROW, NOW and WONAAC (Anonymous 1979h:84).

1972: National Women's Liberation Conference, Wellington

The first national conference associated with the 'second wave' women's movement in Aotearoa/New Zealand was held in Wellington in 1972. Over 400 participants, including 70 men, attended the Saturday workshops (Dann 1985:11). The workshops examined topics such as women's employment, Polynesian women, "the 'sexploitation' of women, living with men, the need for a women's movement, abortion and the

feminist movement, rational bisexuality, child-care centres, and the issues of women's liberation as election issues" (Dann 1985:11). One hundred and fifty women attended the women-only workshops on Sunday. They developed a series of proposals and resolutions on issues that subsequently became the major aims of the women's movement. Resolutions focused on equal pay for women, repeal of abortion laws, ending gender segregation of high-school students, payment for housewives, paid maternity leave provisions for employed women, and increased childcare facilities (Dann 1985:12-15). Resolutions also included open support for the rights of lesbian women, something that was not always so apparent at later UWCs.

1973: United Women's Convention, Auckland

Approximately 1,500 women attended the first of the UWCs held in Auckland, September 1973. The convention was organised by members of the Auckland Women's Liberation group with support from Zonta (Church 1973:8). It was sponsored by the Auckland Worker's Educational Association (WEA) and organised by Toni Church (Coney 1973:7). The convention aimed "to raise the status of women in New Zealand, to discuss their roles as modern women, to consider the ways of helping women to cope with their changing roles" (Coney 1973:ii). The key speakers and workshops focused on issues of sexism, inequality and representation of diverse women. Workshops focused on areas such as women's employment, education, peace, women as consumers, women's health, abortion, lesbian women, housewives, single women, Polynesian women, high school women, why marriage, women in advertising, and a workshop on "can we liberate men too?" (Coney 1973:62-74). Jill Ranstead described how the convention attempted "to bring together the different groups that had sprung up, or had been influenced by feminist ideas, and to attract, and radicalise the many, many women who had become interested in feminism" (Ranstead 1978:17).

Divisions and differences between women began to be articulated. The issue of abortion caused some women to walk out of the convention. It was reported that the "Convention deplores the discourtesy of those women who walked out of this gathering ... because during a democratic vote, the Convention had not endorsed their viewpoint on abortion" (Coney 1973:74). Sharon Alston asked for and was refused fifteen minutes to "make a lesbian statement" at the 1973 UWC (Suddens 1983:24). At the same convention, Mira Szaszy was pointing out that the interests of Māori women and Pākehā women were not

the same because of the impact of colonisation and ongoing poverty. The middle-class aspirations of Pākehā women did not relate to the immediate needs of Māori women which was to address economic poverty. She stated of the Pākehā women's movement "Of the future, I know not – except to say that if, in your surge towards sex-equality you carry Maori women with you, and uplift their status also – so be it!" (Szaszy 1973:24). At the same time, the convention affirmed the solidarity of sisterhood among all women, by developing a resolution on sisterhood.

> We believe that Sisterhood or loving kindness and respect for every woman is of more importance than conflict of opinion over any one issue affecting women.
>
> Resolution on Sisterhood: That we affirm the solidarity of our Sisterhood (Coney 1973:74).

1975: United Women's Convention, Wellington[227]

Approximately 2,200 women attended the 1975 UWC in Wellington (Meikle 1976:9). The range of workshop topics at the convention illustrates the diversity of political interests among participants, ranging from conservative to radical politics. SPUC led a workshop on pregnancy services, ALRANZ a workshop on abortion as a woman's choice and other workshops discussed radical and socialist feminism. The space given to "distinctly unfeminist groups such as SPUC" was questioned by some participants (Ranstead 1978:17). Ranstead argued that giving any group space simply because they have the right to express their views sounds great. However, "it is difficult to see how the views expressed by such a group [as SPUC] could actually benefit the liberation of women" (Ranstead 1978:17).

There were tensions between women at the convention around the role of men (Casswell 1975a:4; Thompson 1975a:6-7). Casswell (1975a:4) was very critical of the

[227] There was also a regional Waikato Women's Conference organised in 1974. The 1974 Waikato Women's gathering also emphasised solidarity and sisterhood among women. In the conference report, an emphasis on the desire for sisterhood was common. The conference was organised to bridge the gap between the 1973 United Women's Convention and the 1975 United Women's Convention. The conference organisers wrote that the aim of the conference had been to "provide the experience of being a woman among other women en masse, - the power of felt sisterhood, the feeling of the potential of solidarity" (Anonymous 1974i:4). However, they reported that this was not achieved to the same extent as had been experienced at the 1973 UWC. As Rosemary Seymour observed, "[t]he memory of the experience of solidarity of great numbers of women together, of quantity and quality of sisterhood, perhaps led to disappointment for those who expected repetition. The 1973 experience had had the power of an initiatory, unique occasion" (Anonymous 1974i:4).

presence of male reporters at the convention, and the way in which five out of eight members of the "Women and the Media" workshop panel were men. As she reports:

> By allowing men to participate in the Convention in their usual roles of 'expert' and interpreter of women's affairs via the media, the convenors destroyed the potential of an all female convention, which is the shared power and strength of women who are, for once, being deemed adequate to organise, participate and pass on wisdom gained without the often distorting 'assistance' of men (Casswell 1975a:4).

It was the difference between feminist and non-feminist politics that was at issue. For Casswell (1975a:7) this UWC was in the hands of women who were not feminists but were part of the 'establishment'.

Identity differences between women were starting to emerge in the debates about political protest at the UWCs. Lesbian feminists sat under a huge purple Lesbian Nation banner at the main session. Workshop convenors reported a shift in attitude among many participants in the lesbian workshop. This involved a shift from arguing lesbians were 'normal', just like heterosexuals to asserting the importance of the "woman identified woman [as] the key to becoming a whole woman" (Johnson 1979:5).

However, like the 1973 UWC described above, the participants articulated desires for sisterhood and connection between all women. For example, the radical feminist workshop emphasised "the overwhelming need for honesty, trust and communication between women" (Meikle 1976:82). Likewise, the workshop on Women as World Citizens reiterated a concern with fostering feelings of sisterhood. The workshop on Māori Women in a Changing World reported that the "workshop and the Convention made a stepping stone for Māori and Pākehā women. We crossed it and met one another. We talked honestly and frankly. There was a great feeling of warmth and involvement" (Meikle 1976:124). Casswell in an early report about the convention emphasised the "good feelings of sisterhood among the feminists at the convention and among many of the other women attending" (Casswell 1975a:4).

1977: United Women's Convention, Christchurch

In June 1977, 2,700 women attended the Christchurch UWC (Browne, Hargreaves et al. 1978:94). The opening convention speakers articulated on a range of issues. Rosemary Ronald (of the Broadsheet collective) (1978:11) argued for a need to "tear the Women's Movement loose from respectable liberalism – to focus at the grass roots level. Radical

change is needed". She lamented the focus on reforming the systems they lived in whilst remaining respectable. Ronald (1978:11-12) identified a number of groups of women who threatened the success of the Women's Liberation Movement. This included those who pushed a 'church morality,' those who wished to keep women's place in the nuclear family and women who were working against women's access to abortion. Toni Church emphasised the importance of respecting the work women do within traditional systems like the health system. She critiqued the schism between "women working within traditional systems and those working in and advocating alternate systems or revolution" (Church 1978:31). An opening convention speaker, Elizabeth Murchie (of Maori Women's Welfare League), reiterated the middle-class domination of the movement. She drew attention to the under-representation of Māori at the convention (there were only 20 Māori women attending the convention) and in organisations associated with the women's movement (Murchie 1978:13). Each speaker articulated concerns over the representation and inclusion of different identity groups of women, while debates about political strategy and the increasingly conservative political environment were debated and discussed (Browne, Hargreaves et al. 1978).

Within this broad spectrum of participation, minority groups were connecting across their differences. In part, this was reflective of the discrimination these groups experienced within the movement. For example, Ama Rauhihi and Vapi Kupenga, who convened the workshops on Māori women, reported a sense of connection with the women at the convention and, in particular the radical lesbian women. "[T]hey were impressed by the ideas expressed and sisterhood shown by the feminists at the conference"; a major aspect of this connection was the "sympathy with the lesbian women who, like the Maoris [sic], want to be accorded respect and dignity for what they *are*, not for what society wants them to be" (Ranstead, Rauhihi et al. 1977:20, emphasis in original). Lesbian feminists were visible and vocal at the 1977 United Women's convention. The request for time for a lesbian speaker in the main convention session created some debates among the organisers, but it was agreed to, and Linda Evans gave a speech on the final day (Johnson 1979:5-6). Johnson (1979:5-6) describes how the 1977 UWC "... saw the beginning of lesbians ... showing our power as a political force that could not only no longer be ignored but had to be recognised and respected" (Johnson 1979:5).

The issue of a male media presence dominated the convention. The General Organising Committee throughout the planning stages of the convention had supported the presence of the media (Browne, Hargreaves et al. 1978:68). Objections to the presence of male reporters at the convention had been over-ruled (Browne, Hargreaves et al. 1978:68). The Publicity Committee had invited media representatives to attend the convention with requests that they only send women reporters. The General Organising Committee was reported to be made up of women representing diverse ideological perspectives, from conservative groups such as Save Our Homes, women with liberal leanings and those identifying as radical feminists (Ranstead 1978:17). Ranstead argues "while diversity can be a strength, it was not so in this case. Witness the media issue. The committee was not able to come to any agreement over the media issue, precisely because of the attitudes held by the different women" (Ranstead 1978:17). However, three lesbians removed the last male reporter from the morning session of the convention. This created much outrage among the media and resulted in scathing media reports about the UWC. Johnson, one of the three who did this, argued that they were "enforcing … this, very basic, principle of Women's Liberation (i.e. the right to talk about and act on our oppression as women without the presence of men)" (Johnson 1979:5). That afternoon the lesbian women's workshop informed the Coordinating Committee that they would organise a protest if male members of the media were present at the Monday UWC plenary session. The Coordinating Committee then made a decision to exclude the media completely.

They argued that the decision was made on feminist principles and that organising the convention meant evolving:

> new women-oriented ways of getting things done i.e., in a non-hierarchical, sharing and learning way.[228] ... We believe that we made decisions along feminist principles. We are members of a social movement, not an organisation, and social movements do not have rules and regulations that their members must abide by (Chambers, Hall et al. 1978:68).

They went on to argue that neither the General Organising Committee nor the Publicity Committee had an understanding of the media issue from a feminist perspective. They identified the problem as being about women without a feminist perspective coming

[228] "In view of the way in which events developed we did not believe we should force decisions made previously by the General Organising Committee on to the women attending the convention" (Chambers, Hall et al. 1978:68).

into the movement and determining its direction.[229] The Publicity Committee then disbanded in protest and publicised a statement condemning the Coordinating Committee decision for its failure to follow proper democratic processes and acting unconstitutionally (Hercus, Hargreaves et al. 1978:70-71). They went on to argue:

> Perhaps ultimately the conflict is between radical feminists and the rest of the Women's Liberation Movement, which may not always be united on goals to be reached or the means to those ends. We believe, however, that if some in society are not prepared to adhere to what society (and most women) regard as normal democratic procedures, then it is inevitable that there will be division (Hercus, Hargreaves et al. 1978:71).

In this respect, this convention – more clearly than previous conventions – reflected tensions between the diverse perspectives of radical, moderate and conservative feminists. Underlying the conflicts were issues about feminist organising and divisions between feminists. Christine Dann, in a *Broadsheet* editorial about the 1977 UWC, argued that the conventions had been taken over by liberal or conservative women. She emphasised the central role that radical feminist and lesbians had had in establishing the movement and, in setting up many of the women's movement organisations.

> Radical feminists and lesbians have been cast as the corruptors and destroyers of the true Women's Movement. ... Right. Those dirty, Commo, radical, lesbian, extremist creeps - the Women's *Liberation* Movement. The ones who started it all, remember? The women who organised the first United Women's Convention. The women who worked at the abortion clinic before it became respectable ... The women who are honest about their sexuality and the importance they give to women. The women who don't see what is so great about getting to the top because their view of liberation doesn't include women taking shares in exploitative hierarchies. ... The women who have been setting up women's health groups, Rape Crisis Centres and refuges. The women who have kept up feminist agitation, within and without the 'proper' channels (Dann 1977:15-16).

Many radical feminists came to argue that the UWCs constructed a united "Women's Movement" rather than a united "Women's Liberation Movement" (Dann 1977:15). Dann went on to locate the problem in the difference between reformists who were involved in the women's movement and the revolutionaries who were involved in the Women's Liberation Movement. Discussions about divisions in the movement were framed in terms of distinctions between radical feminists and non-feminist conservative women, between liberal and radical feminists, or between reformists and

[229] And in a later interview, members of the group argued that "anything 'feminist' had to be fought for tooth and nail and that a great deal of their energy was directed at changing attitudes within the working party" (Robert 1977:11).

revolutionaries. The practice of organising non-hierarchically in women-only organisations came to be associated with the radical feminists of the Women's Liberation Movement and linked to debates about what counted as democratic processes.

1979: United Women's Convention, Hamilton

The last of the UWCs were held at Easter Week-end, 1979 in Hamilton and attracted 2,186 women (Anonymous 1979h:123). Dann (1985:23) states that "for feminists of all persuasions it was a problematic and sometimes painful event. No one offered to organise another". The convention focused on five major areas:

1. Women and health;
2. Women as chattels (looking at marriage, assertiveness training, violence against women);
3. Institutions of power (examining the law, workplace and church);
4. The women's movement (its history, key concepts, lesbianism and feminism, feminism and political pressure groups, feminism and Polynesian women); and
5. Communication (including education and the media).

Guest speakers included Charlotte Bunch, a well known radical lesbian from the United States, and Martine Levy, secretary of the Committee on Women in the Workforce in France (Anonymous 1979h:196, 25; Ranstead 1978). During the planning of the convention, the organising committee decided that the "convention would be 'feminist'" (Anonymous 1979h:92). They went on to define their feminist perspective as follows:

> We, as the co-ordinating committee of UWC, believe that all women have the right to equal choice and equal opportunity. Thus, it follows that:
> Patriarchy (male dominance) as a major omnipresent system must be ended;
> We recognise that each woman must make her own choices over compromise and survival within the patriarchal system;
> Believing that the personal is political we see feminists as having a responsibility to all women;
> We believe that feminism is an active commitment and involvement towards feminist goals;
> Certain basic premises are essential to a feminist conception.
>
> These include:
> Control of your own body, i.e., abortion, a woman's right to choose
> Freely available, quality, 24-hour child care as a right
> Abolition of sex role stereotyping in all areas of society
> Fostering and developing non-hierarchical organisations and institutions.
> Recognising that all forms of sexual preference are valid and that heterosexuality is not superior to any other lifestyle.

> Fostering the right of women to work for equal pay and with equal opportunity, a basic tenet of feminism.
>
> and the Convention will be run accordingly.
> (Anonymous 1979h:10).

Within the committee, debates about this statement revolved around who they were accountable to: the women's movement in general, or feminists in particular. Yet others felt that this placed one group of women in a position of judgement, so they compromised by saying they were accountable to all women.

In planning the convention, the organising committee decided to try an alternative to the "traditional tiered committee" structure and developed a non-hierarchical structure through the use of consensus decision-making processes and having a revolving chairperson (Anonymous 1979h:89-91). In the convention report they described themselves as a committee of 15 women "with equal responsibility and equal status" (Anonymous 1979h:89). In the same report they were very positive about the way in which the non-hierarchical way of organising had worked:

> Consensus Decision Making means commitment to a large amount of time so that issues can be worked through to the satisfaction of all. The reward is the development of a strong collective identity, a source of support and sisterhood. ... Equality of status created energy - each woman's opinion counted and issues involved an individual search for clarification because a collective decision also meant collective responsibility. We had to satisfy ourselves that the decision reached was congruent with our own personal values (Anonymous 1979h:89).

Flexible leadership was reported to be another key benefit in working non-hierarchically:

> In our experience, Consensus Decision Making encouraged flexible, natural leadership for different leaders emerged for different purposes. ... The open structure fostered the development of individual strengths and also the acceptance of individual differences. There was no pressure to conform to a group norm. ... We found that the fluid structure meant a sensitivity to the needs of the group. ... The advantage of a non-hierarchical group is that one person is not 'locked in' to the leadership role with the other members equally locked into subordinate roles (Anonymous 1979h:91).

However, they did report some difficulties with developing efficient processes of organisation (Anonymous 1979h:89-91). The committee observed that consensus decision-making worked well for making policy decisions. However, there was a conflict between the need for flexibility and the need for efficiency in terms of getting things done. They also found it was difficult to distinguish between the issues that

needed to go to the collective and those that could be dealt with by the individuals responsible. This led to many trivial matters being brought to meetings for consensus approval (Anonymous 1979h:90). In these respects they reported struggling with working non-hierarchically (Anonymous 1979h:91).

Convention participants were also highly critical of the organisation of the 1979 UWC (Coney 1979; Seule, Peterson et al. 1979). Peterson and Shawyer accused the Coordinating Committee of attempting to repress dissent (Seule, Peterson et al. 1979:22). Shawyer described how her group was prevented from making a statement at the press conference and that groups were prevented from giving statements at the closing ceremony. The organising committee was also reported to have abruptly ended the closing ceremony in order to forestall possible protest (Coney 1979:7). Peterson argued that the committee "wanted a surface niceness and unity at the expense of dialogue" (Seule, Peterson et al. 1979:22). In reflecting on these events, Shawyer linked the issues to the lack of accountability in feminist collective practices to a wider constituency:

> That none of us had the right to speak, nor the right to vote at our own conference, indicates to me that there is something badly wrong with the structure of the feminist movement. I came home from that convention questioning the structure of collectives. The one that ran that fiasco certainly wasn't answerable (read accountable) to any of us for any of its actions (Seule, Peterson et al. 1979:26).

In effect, Shawyer, amongst others (Coney 1979; Seule, Peterson et al. 1979) were critiquing the feminist collective processes for its undemocratic tendencies.

Identity politics were also central to the conflicts at the convention, in particular relationships between lesbian and heterosexual women, and between Pacific Island /tangata whenua and Pākehā women. Lesbians were more visible at this convention than at earlier conventions with an explicit recognition of lesbian sexuality as an alternative sexual preference in the feminist statement by convention organisers and a lesbian keynote speaker. Johnson reported, "we are all taken for [sic] more seriously, and we have increased our power as a motivating force in the Women's Liberation Movement" (Johnson 1979:8). There was widespread criticism both by lesbians and heterosexuals of one group of lesbian's methods of protest, such as disrupting Martine Levy, a key speaker, painting graffiti on the University walls, and expelling heterosexuals from some workshops (Coney 1979; Johnson 1979:7; Seule, Peterson et al. 1979:20). The conflicts centred around what counted as appropriate political protest and were between

those who approved of these protests and those who disapproved of these types of protests as exclusionary, too radical or too hostile/aggressive.

For tangata whenua, the issues were explicitly about representation, marginalisation and white racism. Rebecca Evans, speaking for the Māori and Pacific Peoples Revolutionary Front, stated "If the movement purports to represent united women, Māori and Pacific Island women must be there and fully participating. ... [T]he United Women's Convention should not have been a white female replica of a white racist male convention" (Seule, Peterson et al. 1979:24). Evans (Seule, Peterson et al. 1979:24) criticised the convention: firstly, for its failure to recognise Māori women as the most oppressed; secondly for the failure of white women to accept responsibility to change the white institutions; and thirdly for the failure to recognise the ways in which racism and sexism were entwined within the feminist analysis dominant at the convention. At issue was the way in which tangata whenua and ethnic minority women were marginalised by seen as additional to the main focus on sexism and gender oppression, and the failure to have a black woman as a keynote speaker. The convention organisers responded by outlining their unsuccessful attempts to engage in dialogue with tangata whenua and Pacific Island women's groups about increasing their representation at the convention (Anonymous 1979h:116).

The conventions tended to attract widespread media coverage and produced numerous resolutions aimed at challenging discrimination against women. Sylvia Baynes, who attended all four UWCs, believed these conventions:

> brought many women together from all walks of life: Maori women, Pacific women, trade union women, Christian women, business women, socialists, students, parents, lesbians, liberationists, teachers, etc. All came to talk, to listen and to debate - and a few of the more conservative to walk out when things got a little too radical (Baynes 1993:18).

The importance of the 1973 and 1975 UWCs was the way in which they participated in constructing a united women's movement. In emphasising this role, they became part of the mythology, against which the loss of sisterhood and unity was identified from the mid-1970s as the conflicts between identity groups became more overt. This myth of sisterhood contributed to the idea that the women's movement shifted from unity and sisterhood to division, conflict and fragmentation. Yet, as the above exploration of the UWCs highlight, differences were already being articulated at this early conventions.

The later conventions were marked by increasing conflicts about the direction and meaning of feminism, feminist principles of organisation, and issues of exclusion of minority group women. Yet each of these conflicts was already a part of the early 1970s movement, but the debates and conflicts were primarily taking place within the local movement groups and in the interactions between different radical social movements.

Appendix V: Radical Feminist Meetings

During the 1970s, a series of week-end meetings took place between feminists involved in the women's liberation sector of the second wave women's movement. The meetings provided these feminists with a forum for networking and exchanging ideas nationally. A number of the meetings were organised in response to the perceived failure of national meetings such as the UWCs to be sufficiently feminist or radical enough. Many of the women involved in local women's liberation groups and in the development of the 'by women for women' activist service groups attended these meetings. Important debates took place at these meetings. The debates were about how to organise, the meaning of feminism or women's liberation, and developing solidarity between women.

Those planning and running the meetings attempted to organise without adopting a formal leadership structure or a formal agenda during the meeting – a form of 'structurelessness' (Cassell 1977; Freeman 1972; Holmes 1998). The groups attempted a loose form of participatory democratic collective process in which a group collectively decided by consensus how it would organise meetings and activities. Organising was identified as revolutionary and as representing 'women's ways of working'. The meetings attempted to develop unity in the movement through the formation of a common ideology and a plan for political action. Yet, as the following description indicates, a series of tensions structured these ideals of organising and generated conflicts amongst those attending about what it meant to be a feminist, and a radical one at that. Each of the meetings generated a series of reports and letters, which formed an ongoing debate about the movement within the pages of *Broadsheet* and *Lesbian Feminist Circle*.[230]

Radical feminist camps were first held in the early 1970s in Hunua, Auckland, and Spencer Park in Christchurch (Dann 1985:17). These were followed by radical feminist camps in Glen Tui and Wainuiomata in 1974, and one in Hamilton in 1975 (Calvert 1975:2; Dann 1985:17). Thereafter, they tended to be referred to as Radical Feminist

[230] These published records, and two of the interviews, provided the material which forms the basis of the following description of these debates.

Caucuses, until the final one which was called the 'Women's Liberation Congress'. The radical feminist gatherings were characterised by small numbers; rarely more than one hundred women attended. Participants in the debates were mostly Pākehā women in their twenties (Bronwyn 27/8/97; Judith 30/1/97). As the following outline will illustrate, attempts to develop a collective identity among radical feminists were the cause of much tension at these gatherings.

1973 Easter Feminist Conference, Christchurch

The Christchurch Radical Feminist group wrote to *Broadsheet* and invited women to come to an informal feminist conference in Christchurch over Easter of 1973. They stated:

> If we get enough support from sisters in other centres we hope to hold an informal conference/gathering here in Christchurch during Easter 1973. We see this more as an opportunity for sisters from the various feminist groups throughout the country to come together, tell each other what they're doing, pool thought and energy, compare progress in different fields and advise each other, than as a formal conference coming out with any sort of national policy. We would like as many sisters as possible to come and we will provide accommodation for all (Anonymous 1973d:11).

Twenty-five women attended the camp, coming from Auckland Women's Liberation groups, Nelson's Organisation for Women's Rights, Dunedin Collective for Woman, and members of the Christchurch Radical Feminists and University Feminists groups. Reports about the meeting describe the successful experimentation with informal organisation that allowed rapport to develop between participants (Anonymous 1973c:13). Jocelyn Hewin, who attended the gathering, reported:

> The main feeling I obtained was one of immense solidarity and acceptance. The ability to communicate so openly with the total strangers who are my sisters was a novel experience. It is incredible and stirring to know I have a whole string of allies throughout the country. Twenty-five Feminists talked non-stop round a log fire. We covered an inexhaustible number of topics including self-defence, DH Lawrence's female characterisation, the position apropos abortion in each centre, household division of labour and censorship. Saturday night was for booze and pot. Sunday morning was for guest speakers (Hewin 1973:11)[231]

[231] Guest speakers included Brian Easton, a lecturer in Economics, speaking about the "Male Chauvinist Social Welfare system" and Mary Batchelor, a Labour member of parliament speaking, about women's role in New Zealand society.

The conference report emphasised the importance of sisterhood and solidarity through developing connections with other radical feminists around the country.

1975 Hamilton Feminist Camp

The next gathering reported was the March 1975 Hamilton Feminist Camp. Approximately 75 women from Auckland, Cambridge, Palmerston North, Wellington and Christchurch attended this gathering (Coates 1975:11). The week-end was organised by feminists who had attended Women 74 in Hamilton[232] and felt that feminist issues had not been addressed adequately at this conference (Calvert 1975:2). The advert announcing the gathering posted in *Circle* defined the aims of the week-end as:

> - consolidation of feminist movement
> - raising of personal and collective consciousness
> - construction of specific strategies for change
> - have fun together . . .
> Grassroots rap, small informal groups
> "WHAT FEMINISM MEANS FOR ME ". . .
> WHAT ARE YOU INITIATING . . .
> Concrete strategies for CHANGE . . .
> WHAT IS YOUR INVOLVEMENT? . . .
> WOMEN POWER TO WOMEN PEOPLE!!
> (Anonymous 1975b:25, emphasis in original)

At the Hamilton Feminist Camp, the organisers provided a broad framework with participants contributing topics for discussion and sharing in facilitating. Developing a common base of feminist knowledge from which a radical politics could emerge was a goal of the camp organisers. The emphasis was on having time for relaxing together, communal cooking and everybody entertaining each other. This environment was perceived as contributing to the development of sisterhood.

In spite of the aims, conflicts over differences in feminist strategies and ideology became a key feature of the meeting. Two factions emerged; one advocating a strategy of confrontation and the other arguing for compromise (Simmons 1975). Conflict over strategies for political protest occurred at the camp when the male camp manager threatened to call the police if the women who were sunbathing topless did not put their tops on (Simmonds 1975:4). Some participants argued that refusing to put their tops

[232] See footnote 227 for a description of this conference.

back on was an opportunity for direct political confrontation with authorities and linked this with a revolutionary politics. However, others argued that this was an ineffective political strategy. Those arguing for direct confrontation constructed the conflict as an opposition between radical revolutionary feminists and liberal reform oriented feminists (Simmonds 1975). This construction became central to many of the conflicts about appropriate political strategy. It reiterated a construction of politics as being either 'inside the system', and therefore reformist or liberal, or 'outside the system', and revolutionary or radical.

The reports also reflected the debates that occurred between those advocating separatism from men and those who did not agree with this position (Calvert 1975; Coates 1975; Simmonds 1975).[233] One group, which appeared to be dominant at the gathering, argued that lesbian feminist separatism was the only consistent feminist position. They emphasised fundamental differences between women and men, with a political strategy of separatism from men. Simmonds argued for political lesbianism as the basis for a consistent feminist politics. "Strong lesbian-feminist women take a stand that to be a consistant [sic] feminist one must also be a lesbian" (Simmonds 1975:4). The other position involved an emphasis that women were human, and change could be brought about through challenging the gender stereotypes and oppression that restricted women. Calvert responded "To me feminism is a freedom from male attitudes that define A as right and B as wrong. To me feminism is a movement to give women choice, to free them from male oriented restrictions"; it was about treating women as people (Calvert 1975:2). Underpinning the conflicts were different understandings about feminist strategies for social change (Freedman 2001).

The above debates also indicate how expression of differences, and disagreements between women, were troubling to many participants. Sisterhood, based on co-operation and agreement between women, was believed to be the basis of a powerful radical feminist politics. Sarah Calvert reflected this belief when she wrote:

> Nearly 100 women from all over New Zealand met together to discuss feminist issues and to reaffirm sisterhood. ... In New Zealand feminists are separated by distance and our sisterhood grows only slowly. ... I think that the weekend went some way to overcoming that, and did enable our sisterhood to grow ... Sisterhood means a feeling among all women (Calvert 1975:2).

[233] This article is introduced by Miranda Coates and is then followed by a transcript of a discussion among a group of Auckland women who attended the Hamilton Feminist Camp. These women are identified as follows: Jo, PM, Val, Eliz, GB, CL.

However, divisions and expressions of disagreement between women at the meeting indicated the impossibility of sisterhood and unity. Calvert (1975:2), in her letter, argued that women fighting each other was a male construction. In effect, conflict and division between women reflected patriarchy's work in keeping women divided. Calvert (1975:2) then reiterated the importance of sisterhood, arguing that the split between lesbian and heterosexual women was a threat to the strength of the women's movement. The power of the women's movement depended on emphasising women's common oppression as the basis for sisterhood.

1975 Wellington Radical Feminist Caucus, Wainuiomata

An announcement about the Wellington 1975 National Feminist Caucus was made in the May 1975 *Broadsheet* magazine (Anonymous 1975e:40). They reported that the meeting was organised because of dissatisfaction with the "non-feminist orientation of women's conferences" and the lack of focus on the activities of feminist groups. One hundred and twenty women attended the caucus. The Caucus started with a get-together on Friday night and a presentation on the question of ideology by Dunedin socialist feminists on Saturday morning. In the afternoon the group broke into four workshops, focusing on lesbian feminists; political activists; women's culture; and socialism and feminism. Participants also developed various performances. On Sunday morning there were reports from project groups such as Halfway House and the Women's Centre, and a discussion about the problems in running these groups (including leadership, structures, bringing new women into the movement, responsibility to the movement and so on). On Sunday afternoon the group attempted to agree on some policy statements and strategies (Cederman 1976:9). The Caucus aimed to "discuss where the movement is at, the structure of the groups within the movement, and active plans for the future" (Anonymous 1975e:40). The organising group reiterated the need for the Caucus to be a political decision-making group, and this involved defining movement goals, and then going on to discuss structure and strategies (Organisers of Radical Feminist Caucus 1976:6). However, reports about the gathering point out that this was not achieved (Casswell 1976; Cederman 1976).

The tension between CR and political action, and between working in informal ways versus developing of concrete plans for political action through formal structured discussion, emerged as central to the discussions that followed the meeting. Participants

were reporting frustration with the structurelessness of the gathering and with the failure to develop concrete political strategies. The participants linked the tensions to two conflicting agendas at the meeting: those who wanted to 'play' and those who wanted to 'work'. Casswell articulated this division in terms of those who came to spend time enjoying being with other women – the 'cultural feminists' – and those who wanted to focus on political issues – the 'political feminists' (Casswell 1976:8). There was resistance to establishing formal meeting procedures, but this worked against the equally important desire of establishing an agreed plan for political action and a common philosophy.

There was an overriding focus on process and ongoing debate about the appropriate radical feminist way of organising. Acts of leadership tended to result in accusations of elitism. The structurelessness of the meetings was reflective of the intense resistance to expressions of leadership by many movement participants. Cederman (1976:9) asserts that this form of organising had negative effects on the movement. She argued that the "lack of structure, the lack of stated goals for the session and the widely varying levels of understanding of the issues made the discussions a repitition [sic] of all that has been said many times in the past" (Cederman 1976:9). Frustrated with the lack of agreement on political aims and action, a small group went off on their own and developed statements of principle which they presented at the Sunday afternoon session. However, this group was then criticised for acting like a "self determined elite ... divorced from the majority of New Zealand women" (Casswell 1976:8). The writer observed that they had "aroused a lot of hostility among some of the other women present" (Casswell 1976:8), and that the ends achieved by this group (for example, agreement on some principles) did not justify the means employed. Casswell pointed out, "we are searching for new ways to achieve change. We don't know the answers yet, either the methodology or the ultimate aims". It was argued by participants that the goals and process were unknowable, "[t]he only ways we'll win and overthrow this mess we call society is by radical change, change so radical that we have yet to determine even the methods by which we'll eventually achieve that change" (Casswell 1976:8). These arguments were part of a wider debate about how to organise within the movement. In the struggle to articulate what was revolutionary about organising, writers resorted to its unknowable or indefinable quality. Revolutionary feminist organising was in the process of becoming: for example, Pilar Michalka argued:

> 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 feminists should do is think and talk. Perhaps then we would achieve that mutual trust the movement has always longed for but never achieved. ... Radical feminism is not something we can define dogmatically ... We are just beginning to learn what kind of world we want as we work for change. At this stage I don't think anyone can determine the exact shape of the future (Michalka 1976c:2-3).

The letter also valorised personal experience as the best source of feminist theory.

> We shouldn't have to fit 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 (Michalka 1976c:2-3)[234]

1976 Auckland Regional Caucus, Easter Week-end

In 1976, a regional caucus was held in Auckland and attended by women from the Auckland Women's Centre, Halfway House, Rape Crisis, Broadsheet and a number of women not connected with any particular group, including someone from Wanganui attending her first feminist week-end (Coates, Starey et al. 1976:6).[235] A report in *Broadsheet* (Coates, Starey et al. 1976) describing participant's experiences outlines a high level of agreement and satisfaction by the end of the week-end. This was probably due to the homogeneity of participants and the agreement regarding appropriate feminist strategies and politics. Most participants appeared to be supportive of the development of an alternative women's culture and the camp attempted to express this women's culture. They described how:

> We moved almost unguided into a number of group sensitivity exercises involving movement, trust, expression and communication ... It brought us into touch with the psychic energy of women - being - together - strength. We felt a blurring of the difference between alone-ness and togetherness; for many of us there was a turning point in our feminist experiences and vision. We experienced totally the reality of a dream we had of collective womanity [sic], an experience totally removed from old patriarchal modes of communication (Coates, Starey et al. 1976:7).

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[234] At this caucus, a small group got together and established a National Radical Feminist Network. "The network was to act as a co-ordinating body between groups in different centres and to provide a small manageable group who can act quickly on issues throughout the country" (Mack and Mercier 1976:40). This group held a week-end meeting early in 1976 in Christchurch. Mack and Mercier (1976:40) reported that the week-end had been exhilarating and democratic without trying, and that a strong solidarity emerged between the participants.

[235] The report gives no indication of actual numbers who attended this caucus.

They decided that "developing alternative value systems and ways of behaving and relating should be a top priority" and that their ideal was "of whole people relating to whole people" (Coates, Starey et al. 1976:7). They agreed that:

> [L]esbian separatism was an essential route to developing a human culture based on emerging woman-values and woman-concepts. These can only be expressed within and flow from a collective pool of woman-experience. True, profound woman-experience can only emerge from an environment – psychic and physical – in which women's relating is not affected by patriarchal values. The depths to which male games are entrenched in our minds can only be realised, exorcised and replaced by collective woman-experience (Coates, Starey et al. 1976:7).

The participants were attempting to create a space outside of patriarchal culture through which they could develop a feminist community. It reflected the increasing influence of cultural feminist visions and the development of alternative women-only communities. The report concludes by identifying how the participants had decided to explore getting a piece of land for a feminist community (Coates, Starey et al. 1976:8).

1976 National Radical Feminist Caucus, Auckland

The National Radical Feminist Caucus was held on Queens Birthday week-end in Auckland, June 1976.[236] The week-end was organised by many of those who had attended the Auckland Regional Caucus and the organisers envisaged a similarly fluid structure in which the week-end could be planned collectively as it progressed (Coates, Starey et al. 1976:8). The following discussion illustrates how participants struggled with differences over goals and ways of organising.

Rosemary Ronald argued that having feminists with socialist, cultural, reformist and radical politics present at the gathering caused major conflicts. She argued for a need to work out what all women have in common. "I feel we should have openly acknowledged our differing feminist ideologies early in the weekend and identified *what*, if anything, we have in *common*, and *what* are our irreconcilable *difference[s]*" (Ronald 1976:10, emphasis in original). Roth and Mulrennan (1976:11) believed that unity might be found in collective actions for change. However, some were beginning to

[236] The reports give no indication of the week-end activities or workshops, the numbers who attended or where they came from. Most of those who reported on the week-end in *Broadsheet* were active in Auckland women's liberation groups and activities.

contend that unity might be impossible. Ronald stated, "[p]erhaps our differences are too great to get any agreement" (Ronald 1976:10).

Tensions between those identifying with a lesbian separatist or cultural feminist position(s) and those identifying with radical feminism featured prominently in reports about this meeting. The former position involved a desire for an alternative matriarchal culture/utopia and the refusal to have anything to do with men. It was argued that lesbian feminist separatism emphasised a "political choice to be totally committed to women" without heterosexual privilege or male support (Eagle and Argent 1978:11). Heterosexual women felt they were being classed either as second rate feminists or accused of being 'week-end' feminists (Allen 1976:14; Guy 1976b:12). Sandy Barry (1976:15), in her report, argued that "the doubly oppressed vanguard" of lesbian separatism was intimidating and was silencing heterosexual women. In doing so, they were perpetrating the same practices of oppression they accused men of practising. Barry (1976:15) went on to argue that, "[w]hat is going on in a woman's head is what matters, what she does with her cunt is her business. The personal is political means getting the shit out of your head and life – not retreating from all the problems but overcoming them".[237] Others argued that the lesbian separatist ideology hindered the revolution. Pilar Michalka (1976a:14) stated, "[i]n order to be revolutionary feminists, we must understand the views of all women and then act to find common areas of oppression and potential avenues for alliances. We will never achieve this in perpetuating the division".

The other major issue examined was organisation and purpose of the Radical Feminist Caucuses. Debates over how to structure the meetings, and develop processes for decision-making, were common. Ronald believed the focus on co-operation and consensus processes made expression of difference and disagreement between women impossible to address. She argued that:

> *Structurally*, I feel we did not accept early in the weekend the strangling effect of our total commitment to collective organisation. We were so anxious not to structure along patriarchal lines, that we bent over backwards not to structure at all, instead of defining a loose acceptable structure within which to work. We did not acknowledge, given the diversity of politics present, the impossibility of decision making (Ronald 1976:10, emphasis in original).

[237] This report resulted in quite a number of letters to *Broadsheet* about whether heterosexual feminists who slept with men counted as a radical feminist and the place of the private in feminist politics (Butterworth 1976; Cole 1976a; Terpstra 1976; Terpstra 1977).

Many women expressed frustration with this resistance to formal structure at the meeting. There was a confounding of any structure/organisation with patriarchy or 'male ways of working', and its opposite, informal organisation of structurelessness with feminist or 'women's ways of working' (Cassell 1977). The group was unable to resolve conflicts when there was disagreement over what different groups of women wanted to do, such as go into small groups, or have a large group discussion, or even decide on the focus of discussion. This resulted in further inaction and questions about what the group was trying to achieve, its purpose and who it represented. At issue was the question of how to move from talking about feminist politics to action. The group debated representation in relation to the wider women's movement. Joy Allen reported:

> I was disappointed that it took so long and so many days of often fruit-less hassling for us to get down to thinking about just what these caucuses are and what their functions and power are. Some women made great efforts to talk about *how* decisions were made at the caucus. However by this stage we all seemed so paralysed by the problems of structurelessness that we could not even make a decision on whether to discuss decision making. It was not till late on Monday that we started questioning whether these caucuses have any decision making power at all, for themselves, for 'the movement' or for any organisation within the movement (1976:13, emphasis in original).

In effect, by Monday night the Caucus concluded they did not have any power to make decisions for 'the movement' because they were not representative of 'the movement' (Allen 1976:13). Joy Allen (1976:13) frames this issue in terms of either structurelessness or bureaucracy.

> I believe in structurelessness; I believe in collective responsibility; I do not believe in hierarchies and bureaucracies. However, we should scarcely expect a caucus to come up with positive plans and programmes for 'the movement' (whatever *that* may be) if our ideals preclude the setting up of a structure with power to do this (Allen 1976:13).

The debates at these gatherings were structured in terms of a dichotomy between hierarchy/bureaucracy and 'structurelessness'. This attempt at structurelessness translated into a desire for decentralised and informal processes of working together. This form of organising precluded the development of a planned programme of political action. Joy Allen expressed the tensions as follows:

> If our aim is an organised attack on the existing power structure and a feminist take-over we probably have to give up a lot of our ideas about structurelessness. If, however, our aim is to change society from grass roots levels, raising the consciousness of all women and building a mass movement, perhaps we can keep our structurelessness and put our energies into reaching the woman-power 'out there'. In any case, I believe we must start talking very hard to each other about *just what it is we want to do in our revolution* (Allen 1976:13, emphasis in original).

It was asserted that centralised and hierarchical systems of decision-making were required to develop and implement a programme of political action. When it came to making decisions, the caucus struggled over issues of efficiency and questions of whom they could represent in the movement.

1977 Radical Feminist Caucus, Christchurch

The next radical feminist caucus was organised by the Christchurch Womanshouse collective in early 1977. Based on the issues and conflicts experienced at previous caucuses, the collective decided that they would implement a clearly defined structure for the week-end. The structure was to allow for "small and large groups to convene, politic, debate, organise, decide strategies; ... groups to make proposals, network discussion; where we can exchange information" as well as relax and have fun (Christchurch Womanshouse Collective 1976:39). Approximately 100 women attended the caucus. Saturday was spent meeting in workshops of approximately 12 women to discuss topics such as "lifestyles, sexuality, energies (political) and class and privilege," while Sunday was spent in two large groups discussing decision-making (Hall 1977:10).

There are few reports about the gathering. Allie Eagle and Argent (1978:11) reported that like previous caucuses, lesbian feminists were again criticised for "their alignment with each other". Sandy Hall (1977:10) reported that the meeting contributed to a sense of belonging to a movement.

> I am now at a stage of feminist involvement, awareness, commitment and frustration where I need to feel part of a 'movement' in order to happily keep going. I need the feeling that there are others around headed in a similar direction with whom I can feel empathy and strength. On the whole the caucus gave me that feeling of movement and also direction (Hall 1977:10).

At the same time, Hall (1977) reported the usual issues of organising at the meeting. A major part of the issue was dealing with "the different needs and energy levels of all the women" and the sense of frustration among participants who failed to agree about

activities. Consequently, on Sunday they broke into two groups of 50 women to examine ways to work better as a group. The description illustrates how ongoing resistance to leadership was a part of these caucuses. Hall described how the group she was in agreed that some sort of flexible structure was necessary. They identified the need for groups to agree on aims, and to have a facilitator. However, the group emphasised that the facilitator was not "a 'leader' to be 'followed"', but to keep the group on track (Hall 1977:11). Until women were used to working in new structures without leaders, a facilitator was deemed necessary. The report does not indicate whether the caucus reached any sort of agreement regarding structure and instead described how, "[i]t was hard to talk about decision making. We all agree we need a framework for it, but there are so many issues (such as majority vote versus consensus decision making) on which women have differing views" (Hall 1977:11).[238] The caucus was once again dominated by a focus on process in a manner that expressed sisterhood and unity in the movement.

1978 Piha Women's Congress

The Women's Liberation Congress appears to have been one of the last women's liberation meetings.[239] It was organised by an Auckland Congress Collective who identified a sense of movement decline, uncertainty about movement goals and questions about the effectiveness of the movement as the reasons for having the meeting. The invitation to the meeting stated:

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[238] Hall (1977) finished the report by describing the shift in emphasis to regional caucuses as a way to become more focused on projects and activities relevant to each region. Hall (1977:11) wrote that the next national caucus was to take place in Dunedin. However, there are no reports about this gathering in *Broadsheet* or in *Circle*. The next gathering reported in *Broadsheet* was the 1978 Piha Women's Congress.

[239] There were other meetings organised, such as the Lesbian Feminist Camps. Lesbian feminist conferences were also a part of the feminist meetings taking place during the 1970s. One hundred and twenty-five gay women from all over New Zealand attended the first of the Lesbian conferences held in Wellington in 1974. Alston (1974:3) reported that the "dichotomy between 'women's liberation' and 'gay women's liberation' is weakened by our working together. Our political/Social strength must grow stronger". The next conference was held in Christchurch where forty lesbians joined together where it was reported that "a feeling of close sisterhood was prevalent, much unity and strength flowing from one to another" (Anonymous 1975c:39). The next conference was held at Wainuiomata in November 1978. The camp was intended to be part of the process of building a "strong lesbian movement and culture. . . . [W]e did not want to promote any false unity, but to explore differences among us in class, lifestyle, values and assumptions" (Evans and Campbell 1979:64). Differences amongst lesbians were receiving some attention. The reports about this gathering illustrate numerous conflicts, and tensions were a key part of lesbian feminist politics of the time (Evans 1979; Evans and Campbell 1979; Livestre 1979).

> What has happened to Women's Liberation in New Zealand? In the early 70s there were Women's Liberation groups active in the cities with a lot of women involved in a lot of activities. There were women researching, protesting and setting up groups to work on the issues of equal pay and opportunity, abortion and contraception, and child care. ... There was a lot of learning going on – almost everyone was in a consciousness-raising group, books and magazines from overseas were welcomed and read avidly, visiting feminist speakers drew large audiences.
> And now? 1977 has been a depressing year for Women's Liberationists. Our movement seems to have shrunk, to have lost its initial impetus and impact, to be struggling against an increasingly repressive government and a worsening economic situation. Times have changed, and so has the Women's Liberation Movement.
> How do we feel about the changes? What have we learnt since 1970? What more do we need to know? Are we on the right path? Can we organise better, be more effective, and if so, how? Just how serious are we about living and working for a feminist revolution? The Women's Liberation Congress is intended to provide a place and time for feminists to work collectively on finding answers to these questions and others which are troubling us (The Congress Collective 1978:1).

The Congress drew together a range of papers developed by Aotearoa/New Zealand feminists, and these were sent in advance to all those who enrolled to attend the Congress. Participants were encouraged to read, comment on and question the papers. The programme was organised to discuss each of the papers. The programme was set out as follows by the Piha Congress Collective (1978:2): the first presentation was "a paper on crucial themes in the herstory [sic] of New Zealand women" on Friday evening. Saturday morning sessions were to examine "What is Marxism? What is anarchism? Papers [were given] … to clarify ideas, definitions". The afternoon session was to explore "Marxism and feminism, Anarchism and feminism – what are the relationships between these ideologies?" Saturday evening the group was to explore "Race and feminism". On Sunday it was intended that "Papers on crucial aspects of the Women's Liberation Movement today [including] lesbian separatism, cultural feminism, radical feminism, socialist feminism" would be discussed. Sunday evening was to be spent defining "short and long term goals, strategy and tactics". Monday morning the congress was to look at "What way the Women's Liberation Movement? A paper on organisation, considering ways in which we can organise more effectively". And the final afternoon session was to look at "Organising now. What can we do?" (The Congress Collective 1978:2). The programme outlined the diversity of ideological perspectives to be represented and discussed at the Congress (Eagle 1978; Jones 1978). Other papers discussed trends in the movement (Poulter 1978) and how the groups

organised in the Women's Liberation Movement (Dann 1978d). Some papers discussed issues related to class and race/ethnicity between women in the movement (Awatere and Evans 1978; Sivewright 1978).

One hundred and ten women from many parts of Aotearoa/New Zealand attended the congress (Dann 1978c:10). For many it was an intense experience of conflict (Bronwyn 27/8/97; Judith 30/1/97). Dann (1985:21) frames the conflicts at the Congress as part of ideological debates that were already taking place within the second wave women's movement. Reflections on the Congress identify three factions. There were two major blocs; the lesbian separatist feminists and the Marxist or socialist feminists, many of whom were linked with the Socialist Action League (Dann 1978c:11). A third group, the "non-aligned radical feminists", did not support the other two positions and reported feeling alienated and excluded from the discussions (Dann 1978c:11). Reports about the week-end indicate a feeling of the crisis, conflict and divisions amongst women as insurmountable within the Women's Liberation Movement. A *Juno* writer asserted that, "[t]he womins Liberation Movement as we all once identified it no longer exists – each group is in the process of developing its politics and defining its goals. These goals are now different, so ways of achieving them will now differ" (Anonymous 1978c:5). The writer argued this need not have occurred if movement participants had been "consistently active in consciousness-raising during the past years. They would not have occurred had we been committed to working on a model of collectivism. We would then have been able to integrate our politics in a more balanced way with our personal lives" (Anonymous 1978c:5).

Accusation of classism, white middle-class dominance, intellectualism, elitism and racism were all part of the conflicts at the Congress. Sue Smith argued, "[i]f the movement is to reach the grass roots then jargon and big words are [useless] [spelt sueless [sic] in text]. ... So are the big words etc. to impress other middle-class intellectual women? It is already only too obvious that the movement is made up largely of middle class intellectual women. Why is this so? ... Who are the oppressors?" (Smith 1978:2). Another writer wrote, the congress "was an example of our continued seduction by traditional structures and processes in our attempts to clarify and build a Women's Liberation Movement. Consumer, middle-class, intellectual culture was assumed as the basis of our needs and we accepted this without question" (Anonymous

1978j:2). A number of lesbian feminist separatists were questioning the relevance of the women's liberation movement to their goals and politics.

> Lesbianism has been regarded by Heterosexual feminists as political only within the personal realm and never as part of WLM strategy, demands, goals, and action. Lesbianism is the one issue that deals with women relating positively to women. When we focus on this we find our vision, aims, and immediate demands begin to diverge from those of the WLM which deals with men and their society (Anonymous 1978j:3).

This was part of an ongoing debate about lesbian feminists withdrawing from the Women's Liberation Movement (for example, Juno Collective 1977a; Juno Collective 1977b; Lesbian Separatist Group 1977; Livestre 1979). Māori women were asserting issues of racism and their differences from Pākehā women (Te Awekotuku 1991a:60-65).[240] The congress failed to create a sense of a united movement with an agenda for social change. Instead, it became one of a number of events contributing to the belief that the movement was finished and the impossibility of achieving unity and sisterhood between women.[241]

In conclusion, the radical feminist gatherings are examples of the attempt to implement the principles of women's liberation or radical feminism. The meetings had a loose informal organisation, attempted to articulate a radical feminist collective identity among participants and intensely debated goals and strategies for transforming patriarchy. The desire for solidarity and unity among the women who attended was a key feature of these caucuses. However, conflicts around ideological and identity divisions between women frequently occurred. Reports about the conflicts at the meetings often reiterated the need to identify what women had in common as the basis for a radical feminist politics.

The caucuses point to the multiple struggles to agree on ways of working together that were consistent with the ideals of democratic collective processes and the vision of women working together for social change. The focus on co-operation and consensus

[240] At the same time, there were tensions between the different political perspectives among Māori activists at the Piha Congress (Te Awekotuku 1991b:31).

[241] Two events in the late 1970s have often been linked with the sense of demise of the women's movement, the 'Broadsheet split' (Anonymous 1978b; Curl 1978; Evans 1978; Gillies 1978), and the late 1970s United Women's Convention discussed in Appendix IV.

processes in which they all could reach agreement was overriding for many participants. The conflicts centred on the tension of trying to work in ways that expressed unity and solidarity between women. However, resolving disagreement and conflicts between women in these processes, such as informal discussions and consensus, was difficult and often impossible (Leidner 1991; Mansbridge 1980; Sirianni and Leidner 1993). Given the diversity of feminist ideological positions, the failure to develop an agreed programme for political action was not surprising.

List of Interviews

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