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WOMEN'S LIBERATION SMALL GROUPS:

A STUDY IN BEHAVIORAL ANTHROPOLOGY

by

BARBARA JOANS

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Anthropology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The City University of New York.

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Abstract

WOMEN'S LIBERATION SMALL GROUPS:

A STUDY IN BEHAVIORAL ANTHROPOLOGY

by

BARBARA JOANS

Adviser: Professor Delmos Jones

This paper examines the relationship between ideology and structure in two small, urban groups within the women's liberation movement. The groups were studied within the matrix of traditional small group theories and contemporary behavioral interactional analysis. Similarities within group structure have been traditionally viewed not only as empirical facts of group interaction, but as a function of tendencies within human social nature. One result of this view permits structure to be studied without reference to the purposes or beliefs of the group. I will argue that role relationships and internal structures within small groups reflect the already instilled cultural ideology of the society in which the members are raised. If the members have a counter ideology from that society, then the groups will have a different orientation to role relationships, and group structure will reflect this different orientation.

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I. Introduction

It is the goal of this thesis to analyze two women's liberation small groups in New York City in order to examine the relationship between the groups' ideology and structure. This is a study in behavioral anthropology which focuses upon face-to-face interaction in small groups (Arensberg:1972).

According to small group theorists (Bales:1950; Olmsted:1959; Hare:1962; Sprott:1958) all small groups (five to fifteen members) have a similar internal and informal structure. "Although there is no definite upper limit to the size of a 'small group' a group is usually defined as 'small' if each member has the opportunity for face-to-face interaction with all its members" (Hare 1962:21). Olmsted claims that: "Within the group not everyone behaves in the same way. For various reasons, a differentiation of role takes place..." (1959:30). The structure of the standard small group shows role differentiation consisting of a task, emotional and

solidarity specialists. "In the initially leaderless group the most apparent differentiation of informal roles is the gradual development of a task leader and a best-liked person or social-emotional leader" (Hare 1962:115).

The universal attributes ascribed to small groups have also been seen as analogous to the basic features of the nuclear family in American culture (Bales 1950:153-154). Within the small group "...the father represents the 'task specialist' and the mother the 'social-emotional specialist' (Olmsted 1959:131). The structure of each group is seen to resemble, structurally, every other. Insofar as small group structure is seen to mirror the nuclear family in this society, it is believed to serve as a fundamentally basic force in perpetuating accepted primary social-sexual divisions of labor (Bales:1950).

Similarities of structure within the small groups are viewed not only as observable facts of group interaction but as functions of inherent tendencies within human social nature. "The patterning of social relationships," according to Olmsted, "is not merely an empirical fact of group life ...it is related theoretically to fundamental tendencies of human behavior" (1959:119). Role specialization is seen to develop in response to specific requirements within the group. "Every group tends to develop a pyramidal structure,

to throw up leaders who are well thought of by their followers..." (Sprott 1958:52).

As a result of the above views, small group structure has traditionally been examined without reference to the ideology or stated purposes of the groups. Group beliefs are disregarded. It is my contention that since groups are composed of members who are reared as part of this society, they have, without realizing it, been socialized to accept family stratification. The specific ideology of the group would not be reflected in the structure because the prior joining of ideology and structure, modeled after the family, would have already occurred. Thus, the ideological foundation of the nuclear family, that it is good and right, that each parent complies with historically accepted socio-sexual divisions of labor, is generally accepted. Further, the small group, through its structure, can be shown to reinforce (albeit unconsciously) the positive values attributed to stratification and specialization characterized by family organization.

One can hypothesize that the role relationships and internal structure in small groups reflect the cultural ideology of the society in which the members were raised. Moreover, one can further hypothesize that if the members of a small group have a different ideology from the society in

which they were raised, then the group will have a different orientation to role relationships, and the group structure will reflect this different orientation.

Two small groups of the women's liberation movement were investigated to determine if they would conform to the standard small group model of internal specialization.

Women's liberation is a movement which developed a specific ideological position. This position ran explicitly counter to the standard ideology practiced in the society. Thus, it was anticipated that the two groups studied would not conform to the standard small group model of internal organization.

I hope to show that the change in ideology (as reflected in outlook and attitudes) and, specifically, the change to the ideology of the women's liberation movement with respect to family, marriage, and egalitarian philosophy produces a change in group structure.

In this thesis I will analyze in detail the structure of two women's liberation groups. If the standard model of small group structure reflects basic family role divisions, the finding that a women's liberation small group is structurally different would be of general anthropological significance. If the structural variation in small groups

is the result of the conscious rejection of traditional beliefs; i.e., the social-sexual division of labor within society, in favor of egalitarian beliefs, then the emergence of a radically different model for small groups has significance for social change. Such new emergent models, of which women's liberation groups are important examples, become alternatives to traditional models, and this sets up points of conflict between the old and new models.

In describing the nature of the women's liberation ideology, Sue Rubinstein at the Congress to Unite Women, December, 1969, said:

> Women want to be reared, trained, and recognized as competent human beings granted all the opportunities and conditions that are now available to men as members of this society. To accomplish this social goal, it is necessary to create alternative forms of living arrangements because family organization is one of the major institutions contributing to the sex-role typing of the individual woman. It is the role typing that creates the initial inequalities in the social order which lead to the continual oppression of women.

II. Theory

As previously stated, this dissertation which analyzes two small groups within the women's liberation movement is a study in behavioral anthropology, focusing on face-to-face interaction. Recently anthropology has expanded from traditional participant observation of small, rural, remote, kin-based cultures into a variety of fields and utilizing a variety of methods. Studies range from the culturally specific through the comparative; the synthetic or model-building to the historical-projective; from theoretical to applied or policy anthropology. It has been an era of the growth and proliferation of subjects, objectives and methods. This state within the discipline has often led from the defensiveness (vis á vis other fields) and denial that some work is anthropology at all, to benign acceptance of any study of humankind and its institutions as anthropology. Conrad Arensberg (1972) summed up the ambivalent mood of the discipline neatly:

> Model, structure, system, and forms in statics and trend, drift, change, emergence, and devolution in dynamics, are all invoked in the search for newer order in the study of cultural forms in the fluid if nervous anthropology of 1972 (2f).

Eliot Chapple (1970), avers that, following his earlier

work (1942) in genetics and other biological foundations of culture, a "...simpler level of description..." (1970:57) may be found in the term "behavioral anthropology." L e a v i n g aside, for purposes of this study, Chapple's physical or mathematical techniques, I will discuss his interactional approach. Both Chapple and Sayles (1961) have used the interactional approach in the study of task groups, leadership groups, and arbitration groups in industry and business. Sayles has said:

> We sought to interrelate technology (including the division of labor) and behavior by using interaction as the common denominator (1961:37).

Thus, behavioral anthropology permits us to focus on Chapple's (1970) unit of "face-to-face interaction" or, that of any group small enough for such interaction to be possible as a measurable and valid approach to human behavior. Chapple writes:

> If the field of behavioral anthropology is defined as one which is concerned with predicting how the behavior of one individual (animal or human) changes as a consequence of the behavior of another, we are dealing with a state of functional dependency in the mathematical sense....As this book suggests, these functional relationships do exist between individuals and are predictable (1970:16).

Although behavioral anthropology may be a term of relatively recent vintage, its basic methodology is not.

Small group theorists have been writing since the middle 1940's. Some of their work, discussed below, is clearly within the scope of anthropology even though those early contributors were sociologists, psychologists, and social psychologists. Most prominent among them are Homans (1950), Bales (1950), Sprott (1958), Olmsted (1959), Hare (1962), and Hopkins (1964).

According to these small group theorists, the patterning of social relationships in small groups is not merely an empirical fact of group interaction, but a function of social tendencies in human behavior. As stated by Bales:

> ...We assume that in any small group engaged in a process of interaction, an internal differentiation between persons as concrete units exists initially or tends to develop (1950:72).

People interacting create structures by the very nature of a more-than-one relationship. Bales continues:

> The recognition that we are dealing with interaction and not simply with solipsistic acts of conceptually isolated individuals involves the recognition that there are certain fundamental characteristics which we cannot deduce from the conception of action in terms of cognition, affective and conative aspects. The idea that an act is a part of an interaction system which is distributed both in time and between members is a fundamental idea and must be accepted as axiomatic (1950:57).

Sprott (1958) has classified small groups into three

specific types: face-to-face groups which are family- or neighborhood-centered; ad hoc groups which form and disperse quickly; and non-neighborhood voluntary associations specializing around common interest. He adds:

> You live in the family, the village, or the neighborhood, and your relations with other people living in the family, village, or neighborhood are general, in the sense that they are not concerned with any particular aspect of life (1958:57).

The family is considered a "natural group" (Sprott 1958:57); it comes into being out of the process of having children and living in proximity with them. The ad hoc group emerges spontaneously under specific sets or conditions, i.e., a group enclosed in an elevator for the duration of the ride. The last segment of groups "...are specialized; they come into being through the need to form specialized groups to cater in particular social needs"(Sprott 1958:57).

The two groups reported on in this thesis are permanent specialized, voluntary associations. The group is defined as small since all of its members are able to interact on a continual face-to-face level (Hare 1962:21).

Specific roles develop in response to the requirements and goals of the group. The group structure is viewed as a reflection of role development. According to Olmsted:

> Social structure may be thought of as the

> patterns of relations among members of a society or of a group. In the small group this is largely a matter of role differentiation and interaction with respect to both instrumental and expressive activity (1959:94).

Instrumental activities are largely extra-group, goal-oriented activities. Expressive activities are generally intra-group, friendship-oriented activities.

Olmsted (1959:61) suggests that on the microcosmic level, the small group mimics the structure of the larger social units. Because small groups have been described as having similar internal and informal structures (i.e., role differentiation and norms), they have been examined without reference to their ideology or stated purposes.

Structures of marked uniformity have emerged from small group investigations and general statements about the isomorphism of the small group structure to that of the nuclear family have been expressed by Strodtbeck and Mann (1967:629). A task specialist within the small group is perceived as the male parent within the family and the emotional specialist has been identified with the female parent. Thus, the structure of the family is also seen to resemble the structure of the small group. Strodtbeck (1967) has demonstrated that "...in both father-mother-son and in husband-wife interaction there is a task and social-emotional specialization and, further, that is the husband or father

who preponderantly plays the task role and the mother-wife who plays the social-emotional role" (629).

Homans (1950) states that every group tends to develop a pyramidal structure, to produce leaders, who are well thought of by their followers, either because they possess special skills, are popular, or both. Where there is anything specific to be done, a leader nearly always emerges spontaneously. He continues:

> It is possible to pick out the leader of a group by following the chain of events of interaction in the group. The leader is at the center of the web of interaction: much interaction flows toward him and away from him (1950:418).

Sprott (1958) feels that every group involves emotional relations of like and dislike among its members. It develops a hierarchy of prestige positions often culminating in a single person who has a dominating influence. As a group continues to exist, single individuals nearly always emerge who perform leadership acts much more frequently than anyone else, who are not only required to initiate interaction with other members of the group but who are also looked up to as the group's representative. Gibb, like Sprott, sees the emergence of a leader as an aspect of group structure.

> ...leadership is not an attribute of

> the personality but a quality of his role within a particular and specific social system. Viewed in relation to the group, leadership is a quality of its structure (1967:88).

In terms of leadership Hare notes:

> Although in most groups a single individual has the most power and authority and is recognized as the formal leader, the leadership structures may be divided formally or informally among several group members. A common division of labor is that of having a task leader who is primarily concerned with task performance and a social-emotional leader or best-liked man who is primarily concerned with affectional relationships and member satisfaction (1962:291-292).

Hare continues to note that as groups grow in size and complexity, individuals tend to specialize in some aspects of the interaction process. In discussion groups, leadership rank is established by the relative amount of talking by each member. The person who talks most often generally becomes the leader.

In sum, there is general agreement among theorists about specific characteristics of small groups: they stratify (in terms of leaders and followers); they create divisions of labor (in the form of role specialists); and they attain solidarity (through friendship bonds).

While this is the background in small group theory and will be further discussed in terms of the specific women's groups tested, it is appropriate here to bring in the

synthesis of behavior and social science presented by Arensberg (1972) in his quest or plea for unifying or integrative perspectives. Arensberg quotes Selby who "...saw us as concerned with three large themes... Among these is:"white-box cognition"...[or] a search for a language for cultural study with which to describe behavioral processes...in short a behavioral anthropology" (1972:3).

Arensberg cites other theorists who have recognized the need for unifying theory--noting that most of them have not succeeded completely--but going on to propose:

> ...a minimal-sequence modeling of human social interactional behavior...[which is not] formal or mental...but generative in ordering our data (1972:6).

He mentions several scholars who have successfully attempted behavioral anthropology itself "...using both operational procedures and definitions...through the discrimination, measurement, and sequencing of interpersonal interactions" (1972:7). These efforts, he states, date from his own work with Chapple in Measuring Human Relationships (1940:9) and Chapple's own Principles of Anthropology, a "classic" written in 1942.

It seems to me that, in summarizing Arensberg's article and the work of others he cites, the essence of his prescribed methodology is:

1. The acknowledgment of small-group behavior as legitimate and necessary anthropology--with or without the language of other social sciences (e.g., "interactional," "transactional," etc.) being used.

2. The listing of "universal operations" (or methods) for recording and analyzing such phenomena as [paraphrased]:
   a) identification--or, "Who?" or "What?" [and "How?"]
   b) ordering the action--or, "When?"
   c) timing action--or, "How often?"
   d) interpretation--or, "Why?"

In seeking such unification as a method, as a "...view of culture itself..." (1972:19) or as a way of model-making of behavior as a panhuman phenomenon, Arensberg feels that we will also achieve the ultimate power of generalizing (1972:20). Arensberg continues:

> With the recent publication of Chapple's book, Culture and Biological Man, it is clear that ever more systematic and quantitative observation of human interpersonal interaction has won through to remarkably rich results (1972:6).

Chapple, (1970) uses operational procedures and definitions invented for the study of cultural behavior. The procedures are discrimination, measurement, and sequencing of interpersonal interaction.

Dell Hymes, addressing himself to the problems of understanding the communication within group behavior, adds:

> Ethnographic accounts are rife with terms that in fact denote ways of speaking, though they are not always recognized to be such. ...members of the world's cultures pray, curse, reproach, taunt, invoke, gossip, answer, instruct, report, joke, insult, greet, take

> leave, announce, interpret, advise, preach, command, inquire, duel verbally, etc., etc. At least they do so in the language of ethnography. What they would be found to be doing in terms of their own language and cultures--or in terms of a general theory and terminology of speech, one that was systematic, not ad hoc adaptations from the ethnographic culture--it is seldom possible to tell. Sometimes who may or shall speak, how, when, and where, to whom, can be glimpsed but seldom in sufficient detail to permit explicit formulation (1974:357).

In behavioral anthropology, it is possible to analyze the who, how, when, where, and the whom of speech as it relates to the formation of strucures within small groups.

Small group structures, according to Sherif, are fundamentally hierarchical:

> In actual groups, communication among members becomes stabilized in directions and ways reflecting the hierarchical arrangements and reciprocities in the structure (1956:232).

Specific hierarchically ranked roles are always seen to develop. Therefore, group structures are studied without reference to any specific group purposes or ideology.

I will argue that since group members are already enculturated to accept hierarchical structures within the nuclear family, they automatically duplicate this family structure when forming new groups. Specific group ideology would not be reflected in structure because the unacknowledged

belief in the correctness of family-type structures would have already served to erect asymmetrical role relationships within the group. I therefore hypothesize that the role relationships and internal structure within small groups reflect the cultural ideology of the society in which the group's members were raised. I further hypothesize that, if the members of a small group have a different ideology from the society in which they were raised, then the group will have a different orientation to role relationships and the group structure will reflect this different orientation.

In order to test the above hypotheses, I analyzed two women's liberation groups which were assumed to stand in ideological contrast to the society.

III. Methodology

The dynamics of Bales' interaction process analysis describes group activity from the individual's vantage point. The major foci of Bales' methodology (1950:9) are: Who interacts? What are the intergroup solidarities, divisions, ego gratifications, motivations, leadership, personality and the interpersonal problem-solving capacity of the group?

Group interaction is observed and rated on a scale of intra-group participation. The external concern, the problem or ideal that motivated an individual to join the group is placed in the background of concern while group functioning occupies the forefront. The principle in doing so is that it is individual relationships and not group ideology which is the crucial determinant of intra-group behavior.

In Bales' system of observational categories (1950:9) he sociometrically rates each individual within the small group in the following manner.

POSITIVE	social-emotional area	1) shows solidarity--gives help and rewards 2) shows tension release--jokes 3) agrees with stated ideas--complies
NEUTRAL	task area	4) gives suggestions 5) gives opinions 6) gives orientation

		7) asks for orientation
		8) asks for opinion
		9) asks for suggestions
NEGATIVE	social-emotional area	10) disagrees--withholds help
		11) shows tension--withdraws
		12) shows antagonism--deflates others

Each member of the group is asked to rate other members on the positive-neutral-negative scale of personal interaction. By employing these indicators (objective and subjective) he is able to describe small group structures.

Another method of analyzing relationships between individuals which can be expanded to include the small group behavior known as interaction was first described by anthropologists. As early as 1942, Chapple and Coon defined interaction as "...the reciprocal relationship between two or more human beings..." (1942:40). Thirty years later Chapple was to reiterate:

> This method, based on measuring the time duration of actions and inactions and their frequencies, made possible a description of the individual personality in interaction with others (1970:11).

He measures interaction in terms of origins and responses (who initiates the interaction), orderings (who speaks and in what order), frequency (the observable amount of interaction), and individuality (personality differences within the group). Thus, origins, orderings, frequency and individuality within group interaction can be used as

methods to discover role division structures within a small group. Arensberg later (1972) was to refer to this as "coaction structure" (1972:17).

Within the context of small group methodology as proposed in Arensberg's monograph (1972), it is vital to point out that, although he does not present a recipe for such research, he does insist on several essential "operational" approaches. The first is that the field of study be identified as "set-events". The second is that the data be "specific, quantified, and comparable" (1972:17). The third is that both the field and the language used to describe it be empirical and real (not "analogues," "metaphors" or "meta-language") "...about events or acts of people..." (1972:13). The "final test" of these criteria met, he feels, "...is that separate observers can find them [observations, orderings, qualifications, etc.] again when we check" (1972:18). These techniques have been utilized recently and notably within the context of business and administration, leadership training and effectiveness programs and their offshoot--the sensitivity or T group.

I observed the emergence of the internal structure of two women's liberation groups. In testing for the structure, a modified form of interaction process analysis was used.

The three dimensions which constitute standard small group structure, i.e., stratification, role specialization, and solidarity were tested, using the criteria of:

> 1) access to resources (in these instances the resources were meeting time, i.e., who spoke the most and for how long?),
>
> 2) dominance position (who had the most authority and/or showed the most concern for others?), and
>
> 3) decision making (how did the group choose between alternative suggestions?).

Access to resources was recorded using the interaction process analysis, with a stop watch, graph paper, and a pencil. Taping of the meetings was not allowed. Dominance position required interviews in addition to participant observation and interaction process analysis. Dominance position was also gauged by group members responding to such questions as, "Who do you think has the best ideas?" "Who do you like the best?" "How did you find out about this women's liberation group?" "Who do you most often agree with? "Who do you agree with the least?" "Who suggested that you join?"

As the small groups stand as a physical and social bridge between the nuclear family and the larger society,

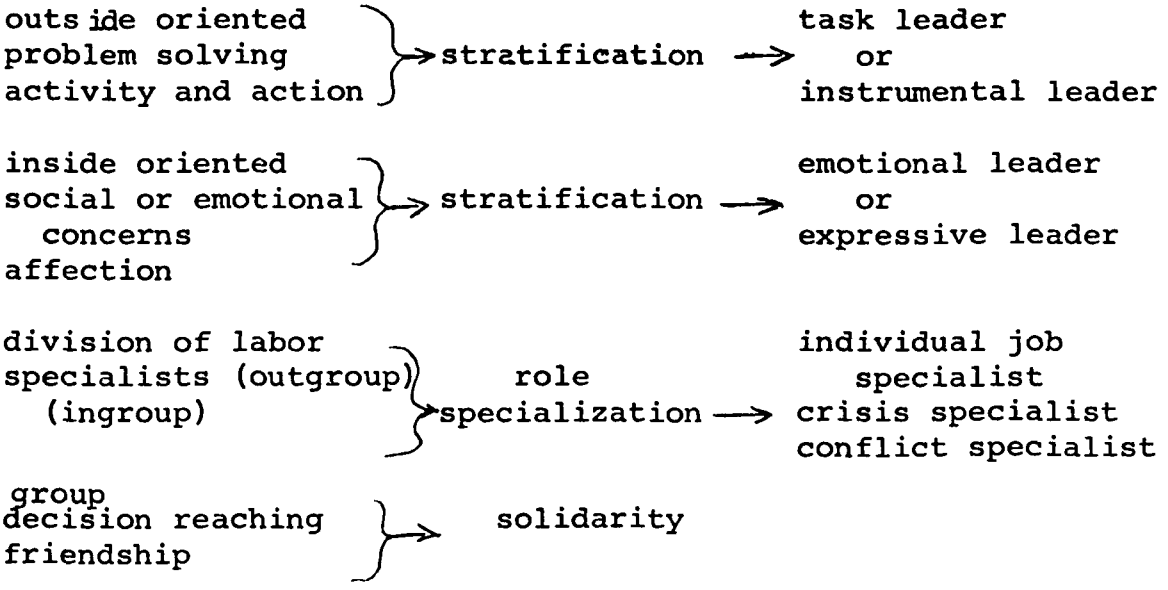
they also stand as the empirically testable pivot of this study. I will analyze the structures of both groups because I anticipate that they will stand in contrast to standard models.

In testing role relationship within the women's liberation small groups, I attempted to determine the effectiveness of the new beliefs in relation to the groups' actual structure.

Expected traditional group leadership (or stratification) evolves from the following phenomena: that every group involves emotional relations of like and dislike among its members; that it develops norms of its own and develops a hierarchy of prestige often culminating in a single dominant person. As a group continues, single individuals nearly always emerge who perform leadership acts most frequently and who are required to initiate interaction with other members of the group, and who are looked up to as the group's representative. As groups grow in size and complexity individuals tend to specialize in some aspects of the interaction process. As specialization occurs, members become hierarchically ranked within the

group. The higher a member's rank the more often he originates interaction as well as the more he receives it. The structure of a small group is largely a matter of role specialization and integration with respect to both instrumental and expressive activities. Instrumental activities are largely extra-group, and goal-oriented. Expressive activities are generally intra-group and friendship-oriented.

Stratification, role specialization and solidarity are the three major dimensions of group structure. These relate as follows:



Leadership can be formal or informal. Formal leadership consists of elected or appointed officials who possess recognized and legitimate authority. Informal leadership develops as the group stratifies. The two attributes of leadership potential, outward instrumental leadership and ingroup expressive leadership were divided in the following three ways:

Type 1	instrumental and expressive	One person may occupy both roles. Rare, but not impossible.
Type 2	instrumental leadership 1 task specialist expressive leadership 1 emotional specialist	Two different people may occupy these two leadership positions.
Type 3	instrumental leadership 1 task specialist ideas 2 task specialists action 3 task specialists motivation expressive leadership 1 emotional specialist advice 2 emotional specialists solving fights 3 emotional specialists joking	In this type of small group structure the leadership roles would be divided among several people depending upon the specific situation. A leader might be a follower in another. There is shared leadership. The standard small group varies between Type 2 and Type 3.

In testing for leadership in the two women's liberation small groups I used the following criterion for each meeting. The ability to "hold the floor" and command attention was considered a measure of leadership. There appears to be an initial unequal distribution of access to resources, i.e., who takes the most talking time in the group and this inequality is seen to produce an asymmetrical relationship between members. Some are in positions of advantage and can give help while others are disadvantaged and need help.

"A person who is deemed to be productive at one meeting is expected to be productive at the next, and this is likely to heighten his confidence and loquacity" (Sprott 1958:136). Leaders of both types were expected to talk and interact with greater frequency than followers. A method used was to note who speaks, how often and the length of time. Leadership may be established by observing the relative amount of time each member talked. The person who talked the most was often the leader. Frequent talking (Bales:1950; Homans:1950) correlated well with such other types of leadership activities as initiating actions and giving advice. According to Strodtbeck:

> The finding that the frequency of opinion and analysis acts is higher for the most talking person is in general agreement with Bales' notion that acts of this type have a central generative function which results in there being heavily represented in the profile of the most talking person in groups of any size (1967:598).

Small therapy groups, however, would not follow the "talk most" criterion for leadership. "Therapy groups differ from more ordinary groups in that their aim is individual change and their structure is more amorphous and labile" (Olmsted 1959:78). They are different, too, because the therapist has a central role in deciding how the group should be structured. In standard small groups

non-approved or non-productive speakers appear to become discouraged by group censure.

Interaction rates were correlated with either instrumental or expressive leadership. On an ongoing basis, records of interaction rates (how often and how long one speaks) were kept. Ideas and advice are expected to come from the leaders. The person who gave most advice and seemed most interested in ingroup functions was designated the expressive leader. The one who initiated actions, called for programs and contributed ideas was designated the instrumental leader. I noted, among those who spoke, whether they generally gave advice and smoothed quarrels or contributed ideas, initiated actions and motivated responses.

Division of labor within the group cannot be recorded in the same manner as stratification. Stratified leadership can be observed continually in intergroup behavior. The categories of role specialization, i.e., resource or individual job specialist, crisis and conflict specialist, vary from meeting to meeting and can only be observed at certain times. The outgroup crisis specialist handled difficulties which arose between the group and the external environment. The ingroup conflict specialist solved the problems <u>within</u> the small group. I measured the three categories of role specialization in the following ways for each meeting. Role special-

ists would be expected to hold meetings at their homes more often than those who do not have special positions. I recorded where the meeting was held each time. I also recorded how the actual work of the groups was divided taking note of the specific criteria employed:

a) Was there a chairwoman? How was she chosen? Was it the same woman each week?

b) Was there a secretary? Was she chosen? Was the same one chosen each week?

c) If a special job had to be performed (i.e., outside speaking or writing), who performed it? How was she chosen? Was it the resource person with specialist skills?

A person occupying a specific position may be either a leader or a follower. For example, the resource specialist may be a leader, but she is not necessarily one. When her special skills are required they can be mobilized. Use of the resource person's special skills vary in relation to their group's needs.

The critical difference between the leadership position and the special skills position is one of behavior. Leaders initiate action. Resource specialists apply their talents

or abilities to group needs, i.e., they react. The difference between acting and reacting is crucial to an understanding of small group dynamics and stratification. If a leader used any special skills, at that moment, she was reacting as a resource person and not as a leader.

A similar situation occurs in relation to the positions of expressive leaders and conflict specialists. The expressive leader or emotional specialist is a person who fills a permanent position in the stratification of the small group. The crisis mediator (specialist) may respond one or more times to specific group situations. The crisis specialist and the expressive leader may be the same person but they do not have to be. But, even when they turn out to be the same person, the structural components of the position are different.

Solidarity, the third aspect of group structure, was tested in the following manner: decision making was assessed by recording the process by which the group moved from one action or viewpoint to another and by seeing how these outcomes were reached. Was a vote taken? Was a consensus necessary? Were alternatives used? Once a decision was reached, did the membership of the group accept it?

In viewing friendship I recorded the general mood.

Admittedly, this is a most subjective category but should be included. Were there feelings of warmth? Did members laugh or joke a lot? Did members appear comfortable in their surroundings? What were the seating arrangements? Were refreshments served? Who provided them?

For purposes of gathering demographic and other basic data about group members, each filled out a questionnaire which I handed around at a meeting. The findings, discussed in detail in Chapter V, are the result of the groups' members' own evaluations and statements.

IV. The Historical Background

Since the women's liberation movement provides the ideological background against which the new small group structures emerged, it is important to present both historical data and theoretical information on the movement before describing the small groups themselves.

The feminism of the nineteenth century has evolved into what has come to be referred to as the women's liberation movement or the women's movement of the 1960's. While the movement covers many groups both large and small, each emphasizing a different interest or activity, all members believe that women are oppressed and that they must unite to successfully combat oppression.

I define oppression as an aspect of human servitude which obtains when three conditions are present. These are 1) natal membership in a category which is pejoratively perceived by those born into other categories, 2) inequality and consequent roles, rules, limitations, and taboos being ascribed to members of the denigrated group by others, and 3) relative powerlessness of the disparaged category. Awareness of oppression by the oppressed is not a necessary condition of oppression, although oppression can only be ended when it is perceived by the members of the low-rated group and action is taken against the oppressors.

While a movement against oppression does not necessarily lead to its abolition, it does lead to a definition of the parameters

of oppression. The women's movement serves to explain the basis of female oppression.

Traditionally the main goals of a woman's life were considered to be domestic and family oriented. Women were expected to restrict their activities and abilities to the home. This remains true for today. According to Cynthia Fuchs Epstein:

> For most women, getting married and becoming a mother are still the most salient decisions in the setting of a life course. These decisions usually follow a fairly certain pattern and serve as limits on the acquisition of other statuses, especially occupational ones (1973:924).

The oppression of women is far from new. From Biblical and Greco-Roman injunctions, Islamic and far eastern religious prescriptions, proscriptions, myths, fairy tales, and folklore, we have inherited the doctrine of female inferiority. The idea that this is not the necessary or natural order of the universe has been put forward with varying degrees of militance in different media and from different fields of expertise, beginning most notably in the nineteenth century.

An early monument to protest against the subjugation of women is Henrik Ibsen's play "A Doll's House" (1879). Ibsen's radical polemics were presented in dramatic form rather than public protest, but he was a man clearly seeing the oppression and frustration felt by a genteel daughter, wife, mother, and homemaker. As Nora tries to explain to her husband:

> ...I was simply transferred from Papa's

> hands into yours. You arranged everything according to your taste, and so I got the same tastes as you--or else I pretended to....I have existed merely to perform tricks for you....You and Papa have committed a great sin against me. It is your fault that I have made nothing of my life....
>
> (Act III)

In 1848, thirty-one years earlier than Ibsen's play, the Seneca Falls Women's Rights Conference was held in the United States. It began the process which eventually influenced Congress to enact the National Suffrage Laws, the Nineteenth Amendment, in 1920--seventy years later (1).

Women began occupying positions formerly restricted to men. These areas have rarely been entered or maintained without a struggle, and usually with a condescending view of the woman's goals, often at the cost of personal, private desires, and always with less than equal positions and salaries. While women began attending and graduating from colleges and universities, it was more often than not as a stopgap activity to fill postadolescent years. After college, secretarial jobs and teaching in elementary or high schools were acceptable positions for women provided they led to m a r r i a g e and motherhood. A woman, once married, was thought to be successful and assumed to be happy.

There have been many creative, brilliant women painfully aware of the sexual inequities within society. Pearl S. Buck

(1962), writing about men and women, Margaret Mead (1955), concentrating upon women's roles in this and other societies, and Simone de Beauvoir (1948) all communicated their understanding of the positions of women in their writings. But it took the 1960's to usher in new forms of feminism.

The older feminist struggle had burned itself out by 1920. The vote was achieved but equality of position was not. Even though exceptional women had climbed out of narrowly defined sex roles, most women simply married, had children, and lived in virtual ignorance of the history of feminist rebellion or of their own potential power or options.

As the 1950's came to a close, several social developments contributed to the revitalization of the women's movement. First, women were a part of the underpaid, overexploited working class. Second, suburbia, that female- and child-centered world, turned out to be more of a woman's prison than a dream. Third, many women who had had babies early in life were "retired" from the job of motherhood by the time they reached their forties. Fourth, there was a growing civil rights movement sweeping the nation. While the first three conditions were in existence for over a quarter of a century, it was the occurrence of the fourth, the civil rights movement, that helped catalyze women into action.

As women began working for the equality of blacks they began to realize that they themselves were not free. In many instances white women began to recognize that they had more in common with black women than either had with men of either group. Finally, women belonging to New Left radical political groups began withdrawing from these groups and forming their own associations. Working for the liberation of others raised the consciousness of women in the 1960's just as it had for w o m e n in 1860. Women abolitionists became suffragettes as easily as women civil rightists became women's liberationists. Women, working for the freedom of others, seemed first to come to a recognition of their own bondage and second to the formation of groups to end that bondage. "...the civil rights movement provided the training for many another movement's organizers, including the young women of the women's liberation movement" (Freeman 1973:807).

With the publication of Betty Friedan's The Feminine Mystique (1963), two potentially revolutionary things occurred. The first was that millions of wasted and wasting women began to see themselves as not alone. They acknowledged that they were not as happy as they were supposed to be. Their loneliness, anxieties, boredom, and frustration were shared and, second, they perceived that there was something that might be done.

Educated for positions requiring far more specialized skills than those of homemaker, middle- and upperclass white American women of the early 1960's were able to identify with the central problem of unfulfillment described in Friedan's book. These women, although not representative of what the movement later became, were nevertheless early examples reflecting the disquiet and social unrest among several classes of American women.

It was during the middle 1960's that professional women in the social sciences began questioning the validity of the male-originated definition of females. Naomi Weisstein, in Kinder, Kuche, Kirche as Scientific Law: Psychology Constructs the Female, states:

> Psychology has nothing to say about what women are really like, what they need and what they want, essentially, because psychology does not know (1969:7).

According to Marlene Dixon:

> The 1960's have been a decade of liberation; women have been swept up by that ferment along with blacks, Latins, American Indians and poor whites--the whole soft underbelly of this society (1969:57-63).

By 1969 there was a growing body of original women's liberation writings. It can be divided into three categories: the professional, the fictional, and the personal. On the professional side there was Marlene Dixon's (1969) The Restless Eagles in sociology; Phyllis Chesler's (1973)

Women and Madness in psychology; and Kate Millet's (1969) Sexual Politics, analyzing literature.

On the fictional side there was Lila Karp's (1969). The Queen Is in the Garbage; Kate Shulman's (1971) Memoirs of an Ex-Prom Queen; Marge Piercy's (1973) Small Changes; June Arnold's (1973) The Cook and the Carpenter; and Marlo Thomas and Friends' (1972) Free To Be You and Me; and a large number of emerging women poets.

On the autobiographical side there were women such as Roxanne Dunbar and Cathy Sarachild (1969) who wrote about the positions of women in their magazine No More Fun and Games. Women began writing about the feminine experience, not just as educational tracts but also as cries of pain from disenfranchised human beings. Angry, bitter, explosive series of articles, circulating in pamphlet form, written by many women, explained in very plain language what it meant for them to grow up as women in American society.

By the late 1960's women began publishing small journals and newsletters for distribution around the country. The underground press (2), initially as male-dominated and sex-segregated as the aboveground newspapers, started to carry articles by women who were beginning to refer to themselves as feminists or liberationists, women's righters, and, of course, as Ms., thus eliminating the marital status labeling

of women. Terms such as sexist and male chauvinist began to creep into the language. 'Person' began to replace 'man' which had been the tacitly accepted noun for various occupations, resulting in 'chairperson,' 'salesperson,' etc. In fact, classified advertising sections in newspapers across the country began dropping their dichotomous male-female "help-wanted" headings in favor of ungendered listings.

Following the rise of the women's movement came the detractors. The popular backlash emerged first and was soon followed by scholarly works of enthusiastic academicians. Phyllis McGinley (1969), extolling housewifely virtues, and Midge Dector (1971), claiming that most women were already free and equal in their opportunities with men, are two of the more prominent of the movement's opponents. Steven Goldberg (1973), a sociologist, has as his major thesis in The Inevitability of Patriarchy the belief that the superior position of men is based upon biological differences. He claims that because of hormonal differences, men are inherently more aggressive than women and therefore have an innate, ineradicable advantage in pursuing power and status.

The actual movement gained momentum slowly, out of the body of writing mentioned previously and by the formation of, at first, loosely knit groups. But even the groups had different goals, forms, and beliefs.

Few of the groups felt that slow legislative procedures would change the sex roles or modify the inferior position of women. The early radical groups (1968-69) felt that only dramatic, civil disobedience and protest political protest behavior would effectively influence institutional structures. The Feminists, an early group, charged into the marriage license bureau of New York City in the winter of 1969 and rewrote the marriage contract from a feminist point of view. In February 1969, WITCH (Women's International Terrorist Conspiracy from Hell) picketed the New York Bridal Fair claiming that the woman is always a bride and never a person. According to the WITCH Manifesto (Morgan 1970:540) "A woman said, 'I am a witch' and she was." In 1968, Red Stocking, a group that said that all men oppress women, made their stand by interrupting a conference on sexuality held at the New York Statler Hotel by a group of psychologists. Answering the question as to their politics, the Red Stockings replied, "We will not ask what is revolutionary or reformist, only what is good for women" (Morgan 1970:535).

The liberation groups, of which these are three examples, desired to restructure society on all levels from the basic sex-role divisions to the redistributing of power, goods, and services. Socialist by political choice, liberationist by personal decision, they considered feminism, activism, and socialism necessary conditions for the liberation of

women.

Women began to form small groups. Sometimes they joined with specific grievances in mind or personal awareness of oppression. Sometimes they joined to explore alternative lifestyles for themselves and/or their families. The groups were small, five to fifteen women who met in their homes. Groups of this type are the target of this study.

These are the groups which became the backbone of the movement as they evolved either into action groups or consciousness raising groups or both. The movement also included many special interest or self-help groups, including medical aid, day care, welfare mothers, divorce and legal action, and lesbian groups. The nationwide, liberalized abortion laws passed in 1970 were one direct outcome of the influence of the women's groups who protested, lobbied, and pressured their state legislatures.

In spite of the wide variety of interests within the movement, small consciousness raising groups form its basic structure. The ideology that links all women's groups is the basic belief that women are oppressed. Their oppression is seen on three levels: ideological, personal, and political. Each level of oppression reinforces the others. In order to create a society free from the oppression, all three levels must be examined, understood, and changed. The dream, shared

by most of the women in the movement, that society can change from oppressiveness to egalitarianism, is an underlying ideological premise of the movement.

Women see ideological oppression operating through cultural beliefs of female inferiority. The personal level of oppression refers to each woman's own private life. According to Robin Morgan:

> Women's liberation is the first radical movement to base its politics--in fact, create its politics--out of concrete personal experiences. We've learned that those experiences are not our private hang-ups. They are shared by every other woman, and are therefore political (1970:xvii).

Very quickly women in the movement found that what they had thought of as their own problems were in fact shared by many women. Each woman discovered that, while psychological oppression began at home in the form of a father, brother, or husband, it did not end there. Culture reinforced the personal oppression on the political or social level. The laws, customs, and mores are seen as reflections of male power.

While women are oppressed on an individual level within the home, they are also oppressed on the broader levels of the job (unequal pay for equal work), the courts (husband's signature needed for leases, property ownership, charge accounts, etc.), and the streets. Women everywhere experience

the horror of powerlessness when men feel free to comment on women's appearance, build, walk, or dress.

A relationship between the broader social and political picture and the isolated housewife emerges. What is personal is also political. Within the women's movement it is believed that the same forces that create the laws of oppression in society reinforce the stereotypes of male and female roles in the home. Man is seen as an oppressor of woman but not the only one. Society reinforces that oppression with its emphasis on all forms of competition and sex-defined roles.

Many women in combating their oppression attempt to confront the problems both on the personal and political levels. Some leave the nuclear family in favor of various forms of communal or solitary living, while others try to restructure their lives within their already existing household. Some somen see the movement as a chance to experiment with homosexuality and, among those, some become gay or bisexual. However their personal lives must be altered or changed, the women of the movement attempt to create in their own lives a sense of personal fulfillment, of independence, and of mutual support for other women.

On the political level the political and economic structures creating discriminating class, ethnic, or sex divisions are seen as damaging and in need of change. Some groups see changes

coming slowly through legislative processes (e.g., NOW [National Organization of Women]) while others (WITCH) see it only through revolution. Either way, the desire to restructure the laws, rules and roles of the land is shared.

Out of the movement and its goals has emerged a new use for the term "sisterhood." "Sister" has become a term of address and of reference (as in the reciprocal "take care of her--she's a sister"), but more significant, it points to an ethos of love, faith and equality in the fight against all forms of oppression.

Many women who joined the women's movement in the late 1960's were dropouts from new left political groups such as SDS (Students for a Democratic Society). Many were also graduate students in the social sciences. According to Jessie Bernard:

> The Women's Liberation Movement had been nurtured in the New Left, a disproportionate number of whose members were sociology students, if not professional sociologists. It retained this New Left sociological stamp even when it seceded from the male matrix (1973:777).

Many asked the same question of the New Left as Marge Piercy: "The movement is supposed to be for human liberation: how come the condition of women inside is no better than outside?"(1970:421). They abandoned it upon discovering that women were as oppressed in radical organizations as they were in conservative ones, but they moved into the women's movement with their

leftist beliefs of equality and anti-authoritarianism intact. Most women felt that all of society, from child-rearing to education, had to be changed in order to eliminate female oppression. The enormous task of explaining this dream of a free non-oppressive society to the rest of the country became a major priority of the movement.

The use of the psychological technique, consciousness raising is of major importance within the women's movement. Susan Brownmiller in her New York Times Magazine article Sisterhood Is Powerful (3/15/70) wrote:

> 'Consciousness raising' in which a woman's personal experience at the hands of men was analyzed as a political phenomena, soon became a keystone of the women's liberation movement.

While consciousness raising utilizes the group therapy techniques of individual participation and support it is different from therapy in its fundamental philosophy. Susan Brownmiller, quoting Carol Hanisch, in the above article says:

> Group therapy implies that we are sick and

> messed up, but the first function of the small group is to get rid of self blame. We start with the assumption that women are really 'neat' people. Therapy means adjusting. We desire to change the objective conditions.

Consciousness raising reinforces group solidarity through supporting a woman's identification with other women. Therapy groups stress individual psychic awareness through unique personal changes. According to Slavson:

> In therapy groups...the group must remain mobile... Each patient must remain a detached entity, in whom intrapsychic changes must occur (1950:10).

The movement did not invent consciousness raising. This personal testimony method has been used to enhance solidarity in such diverse groups as southern revival meetings and Chinese self-criticism sessions, but the women's movement used consciousness raising as a fundamental technique to arrive at an understanding of women's personal oppressions.

Women used the consciousness-raising sessions to examine their personal oppression, examine the oppression of their co-members, and forge from this understanding theories about the general nature of oppression. They also used the sessions to plan activities towards liberation. One result of consciousness raising was the politicizing of group members. Oppression was no longer seen to be the particular misfortune of individual women but a condition structured within the

fundamental fabric of society.

The movement has been characterized both as a vast revolutionary, nationwide (or even international) organization and, simply, as a state of mind. Neither is a complete picture of the movement.

I am and have been a committed member of the movement, while also being a trained social scientist. It will be noted that the actual field work was done during the years 1969-1970, the time of the movement's most dynamic growth.

The two groups to be analyzed, Local 55 and OWL, were two of the many consciousness-raising groups to emerge in the historical period described above. These groups will now be discussed within the methodological context of small groups.

CHAPTER IV:

Footnotes

1. For a more complete history of the women's suffrage movement consult A Century of Struggle, Flexner, (1959).

2. Underground press: L o osely connected counterculture media sharing revolutionary lifestyles.

V. Local 55

The first group studied, women's liberation Local 55, began meeting in May of 1969 and continued meeting once a week for a year. I observed and recorded the structure and content of twenty meetings during a six-month period and continued participating as a member for the rest of the year.

The group was founded by five women who had met while attending weekly meetings of SDS, a radical, New Left political organization. The five women decided to form a separate group to discuss their dissatisfaction with the treatment of women within SDS. They met one Thursday among themselves and afterwards ceased their participation in SDS. The following week each woman brought one friend and that was the beginning of Local 55.

The membership, consisting of the initial five women and their friends (ten altogether) determined (by total group decision) that no other women should be allowed to join. Ten was considered the best number to permit full interpersonal contact. If one woman left the group, another would have been allowed to take her place, but in the year I attended, no one dropped out.

During the third meeting discussion revolved around a name for the group. WITCH was already in existence and four women thought that the small group should join a WITCH coven but three objected to a WITCH affiliation. The three objectors felt that there was too much emphasis on street theater and dramatics by WITCH. One woman suggested the name Seneca Falls II, but that was rejected as being too grand for one small group. At the end of the third meeting someone said, "We might as well call ourselves 55." "Why 55?" was the response. "Why not!" was the rejoinder.

This was the beginning of small group proliferation within the movement and the women felt that people would believe that there were 54 groups already in existence. It was agreed to add the term 'Local' because of its political-left-union implications. All of the women had belonged previously to political-left groups and were steeped in movement egalitarian ideology.

The meetings were held in members' homes. They began about eight o'clock and continued until two and three in the morning. Most of the time everyone sat in a circle on the floor, smoked, drank coffee and munched potato chips.

The clothes were informal, with all of the women dressed in jeans or pants. Of the ten apartments, all but three were modestly, neatly and cheerfully furnished. Three were always crowded, disordered and dirty.

The meetings were all held in Manhattan, but some took place in neighborhoods that the women feared to enter at night alone. This was resolved by the women coming and leaving together.

The group took only two meetings to "get things rolling" even though five of the women were strangers to one another. There was uninhibited, easy, open talk and sometimes the consciousness raising sessions lasted all night.

At the second meeting I attended I asked and received permission to record the sessions. As investigator-member my presence was well received. Comments ranged from, "It's about time one of us is writing about the movement" to "Far out! Reporting from the inside."

The members of Local 55 accepted my dual position as both group participant and anthropological observer immediately. While this dual role did not produce difficulties among the members, it did create some problems within me. The problems were on two levels: mechanical and ideological.

Mechanical difficulties, like how to record speaking patterns while actively participating in discussions, or how to take notes and contribute to theoretical debates at the same time, were quickly solved. For the first 20 meetings I recorded continuously and participated sporadically. For the rest of the meetings, over 30, I participated fully and recorded the material after the meetings ended.

Ideological problems were more difficult to resolve. I was researching a group whose feminist philosophy of egalitarianism I deeply shared. I too struggled against the ridicule and anger forced upon members of the women's movement. It was difficult in 1969 to be an open member of women's liberation. According to Ester Newton, the media image reinforced the belief or "folk wisdom that women's liberationists were 'misfits', failures or ugly women who couldn't get a man" (1971:24). The press was so busy attacking the women as "bra burners" that the movement's beliefs were either ignored or discredited. I was in the sensitive position of researching a group whose ideological credibility had been damaged by mass media.

Not being able to know in advance the results of the research, I feared the possibility of uncovering information

that could be considered harmful to the movement. Since I had no intention of hurting a movement to which I belonged, I had the temporary problem of conflicting loyalties. I resolved the "what if" dilemma by deciding: 1) I would record group activity exactly as it occurred; 2) I would analyze the recordings as a trained anthropologist; 3) if the findings were to appear detrimental to either the small group or the movement, I would not present the findings. I was prepared at all times to abandon the project.

I also informed the women that they could see the notes of the meetings whenever they wished. Only one ever requested to see the data,and she was disappointed by the academic, formal arrangement of the material.

While I entered the group as a committed feminist and received emotional and intellectual support for that position, my own consciousness nevertheless was raised during the year of participation. I began to see some of my difficulties, combining the student and teacher role with that of full-time parent and wife role, as a feminist problem. I no longer perceived the hardships originating from the role conflict as personal ineptness but rather as structural difficulties built into the

framework of that position. As a housewife-mother I followed one set of rules and as an anthropologist another. Enculturated to be the first and desiring to be the second, I occupied two full-time positions simultaneously.

Consciousness raising helped me to view the situation more clearly and in part remedy it. I insisted on child care help and stopped being such a "good" housewife.

Consciousness raising allowed the women to relate their ideology to behavior. One of the members explained her interest in karate thus:

> I don't want street hassles but when some man starts making obscene remarks about me I want to be able to tell him off without being afraid for my life. Karate, Judo any defense system makes me feel safer and more secure...

and another:

> I'm so tired of being considered soft and weak. I want to be strong so I can defend myself but I also want to be strong for myself. I want to feel my body in good shape. For the first time in my life I really like my own body and I want to develop it.

The problems of home maintenance and hired help were often discussed. Since all of the women in the group worked (at least part time) outside the home,

there were temptations to hire housekeepers. The majority of the housekeeping day workers in New York City, however, were black and the majority of Local 55 members were white, and this presented ideological conflicts. As one member expressed it:

> I can't hire someone to do my shitwork. I don't think anyone should do anyone elses housework. Everyone should take care of herself.

Another member added:

> White women aren't more liberated than black women, we are just more privileged. But privilege and freedom aren't the same thing. Freedom is being able to choose among lots of alternatives, privilege is having few alternatives but being well off within them. ...like when white women hire black women to do housework, we are just buying our way out on the backs of other women. White women have the privilege of money, position and extra time but not the freedom to participate in a non-sexist society. We are all still tied to the female role of housewife. The house is ultimately our own responsibility.

And another:

> No one should serve another human being unless it's a give-and-take arrangement. People can take care of one another, but this is rea l l y different from serving. Serving means being in someone's service, and taking care of means loving and being loved.

The following exchange occurred between two members on the topic of serving:

> **Lots of people are in serving positions. Do you want to do away with all service? What about waiters and nurses? What about old people in nursing homes and invalids?**

And the reply:

> No! I just want to do away with personal service for healthy adults. Children need services and so do the sick and old but no one should be able to be so rich as to buy the services of another for their personal pleasure. It's like money. Everyone should have some but no one should have a lot. Every one should be able to support themselves economically and also be able to take care of themselves physically.

The most significant ideological statement came, rather drmatically, from one black woman of the group who said:

> I see myself as all women. When a woman dies of a messed up abortion, it could be me. When a woman cries over a sick child, it could be me. Someone raped or beaten in Georgia or robbed or killed in New York, it could be me. There will be no freedom for me until everyone is free.

Biographical data of two members follows. The women chosen were typical of the two types of women found in Local 55. One was single, childless and fully employed. The other was married, had children and was partially employed.

The first woman (no. X) was 27 years old, white, Jewish, single, childless and residing in Manhattan. She was also middle income ($8,700), middle class

and heterosexual. Before joining Local 55 she had had a long history of involvement in radical politics starting with SNCC (Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee), a Southern civil rights student organization, and ending with SDS. During that involvement she read Marxist literature, marched in demonstrations and wrote articles for the newsletter of the Free University (a non-denominational, politically radical, counter-culture school in New York). She considered herself a Marxist feminist.

Her relations with men while intense were short-lived, and she lived alone. She rejected permanent alliances. Her job as case worker for the welfare department was relatively satisfying in that it provided an acceptable income and an added outlet for her political beliefs. She helped organize a welfare workers union and served as union representative for over a year.

As one of the founders of Local 55 she found her interests in feminism increasing as her anger at male political control increased. Every left wing activity in which she participated, from SNCC to the Free University, from demonstration committees, to SDS, were all male

organized and male controlled. She left the male-oriented left with relief.

She stated that she did not want children. Work and political activities were the major concerns of her life, while social and emotional needs were kept to a minimum. She appeared to experience little conflict between her women's liberation activities and her lifestyle.

Like the first woman, the second (no. IX) was 27, white and lived in Manhattan. She, however, was Protestant, married and the mother of two small daughters. She was middle class, middle income (about $11,000 per year) and heterosexual. Her Lutheran background helped shape her general concerns for people, and after years of involvement in radical politics she still participated in church activities. "It is not," she claimed, "such a big step to go from being a Christian to being a communist...just a reshuffling of priorities. It's the same belief in equality and people." She knew from an early age that she wanted a family, but she also knew that she wanted more. Wanting more, in her case, meant getting a masters degree in social work (MSW) and working with the hospitalized poor in New York. She worked full time until her ninth

month of pregnancy and then returned to work part time six months after delivery. Her political actions included course taking at the Free University, clerking for anti-war demonstration organizers and attending mass peace rallies in New York and Washington.

Her husband, white, Methodist and several years older than she, shared both her religious and political interests. While he did not divide the housework equally, he did participate in child care. His work, teaching in elementary school, took him away from the home during the week.

The second woman appeared to accept the traditional female role. She baked often, kept her home spotless, and cared for the children. The social work and political activities, while important, occupied a secondary position in her life. Her family, very clearly, came first. She often admitted that her husband's cooperation enabled her to participate so fully in political and social activities. While she appeared to experience little strain between her women's liberation identity and her married lifestyle, she attributed this lack of conflict to the exceptional nature of her husband. He was actively supportive and sympathetic to her needs for independence.

The following table presents the background material

on the ten members. Each woman answered a questionnaire which I handed out at the fifth meeting. The recorded informational categories were age, race, religious background, marital status, number of children, level of education, occupation, income, husband's income, housing location, rent, class identification, sexual orientation, and political affiliation.

All of the women joined because of personal feelings of oppression within male-controlled New Left organizations. They wished to experiment with a new kind of group.

TABLE I LOCAL 55 DEMOGRAPHY

member no.	age	race	religion	marital status	no. of child	level ed.	work	own income	husband income	location	rent	class	sex pref	polit. affil.
1	28	w	P	m	1	BA	full civil	8,000	unempl	M	90	work	het	left
2	35	w	J	m	2	MA	part prof	2,000	8,000	M	140	-	het	left
3	28	w	P	s	0	BA	part civil	9,000		M	100	mid	bi	left
4	23	w	J	s	0	BA	part art	4,000		M	70	work	het	left
5	25	w	P	s	0	BA	full civil	7,000		M	62	prof	het	left
6	34	b	P	s	0	HS	full art	8,500		M	100	mid	het	left
7	28	w	J	d	0	PhD	full prof	13,000		M	120	mid	het	left
8	27	w	J	s	0	BA	full civil	8,000		M	130	work	het	left
9	27	w	P	m	2	MSW	part prof	2,000	9,000	M	80	mid	het	left
10	27	w	J	s	0	BA	full civil	8,700		M	72	mid	het	left
	range					1HS	3part	range	range		range	3w		
			5 J	3m		6BA	time					5m		
	23-	9w	5 P	1d	3yes	2MA	7full	2,000-	8,000-		62-	1p	9het	10
	35	1b	0 RC	6s	7no	1PHD	time	13,000	9,000	Man	140	1-	1bi	left

The objectives of Local 55 were:

1) to discover the causes of female oppression.
2) to understand one's own personal oppression.
3) to formulate programs that would result in liberation.
4) to act upon these programs.

The group implemented the four objectives in the following manner:

Objective 1) This was gained through studying and analyzing American society. Each member read a number of books and articles and reported on them.

Objective 2) This was accomplished through the psychological technique of consciousness raising. Each member talked about her own life in terms of specific oppressions and then compared this information with the experiences of others. In this way it was discovered that problems thought to be specific and unique to each member were actually universal in the group's experience. What started as an experiment in psychological probing turned into an awareness of sociological conditioning.

Objective 3) This was based upon the conclusions reached under objectives 1 and 2. Programs were formulated based upon an analysis of female oppression.

Objective 4) This was accomplished by acting upon the programs suggested in objective 3. Several of these actions were carried out by this small group, such as:

action 1) Local 55, in coalition with several other women's liberation small groups and a large women's rights organization, created the Congress to Unite Women in 1969.

action 2) Local 55, in coalition with several other women's liberation small groups and the Black Panthers, organized the New Haven march on November 22, 1969, to protest the treatment given three pregnant Panther women in the New Haven jail.

action 3) Local 55, in coalition with other small women's liberation groups, helped to create a Woman's Center which served the needs of the entire movement.

action 4) Local 55 helped to start several sister groups. It actively contributed to a proliferation of the movement's ideas.

Group structure was tested in terms of stratification, role specialization and solidarity.

Stratification

Stratification was tested using interaction frequency rates. Each spoken time became a unit of interaction. Access to resources was tested for by noting who spoke, how often, and what type of contribution occurred. The results of the test for stratification (leadership) showed that the difference in speaking time between the member who spoke the most and the member who spoke the least varied from meeting to meeting. The average frequency of interaction rates used to record speaking times showed that the variation between greatest and least speakers was 22 speaking times. Variation in interation rates may

differ slightly as group size differs but over time these differences disappear. I determined that when the interaction rates between the greatest and least speakers exceeded 25, leadership positions emerged. When the interaction rates were less than 25, no leaders emerged. The greatest variation of frequency of interaction rates between the most and least speaker was 30 times. The least variation of frequency of interaction rates between the most and least speaker was 14 times. I assess the standard model of frequency of interaction rates within small groups to show a variation of at least 50 speaking times between the most and least speakers. The average model of women's liberation small group Local 55 frequency of interaction rates based upon observation of fifteen recorded sessions showed the actual rates between the most and least speakers to be 22 times.

In conclusion, in the test for leadership (either type) using the criterion of the access to resources (group time), the following results were obtained:

1) Each meeting a different person interacted with the greatest frequency.
2) Each meeting a different person interacted with the least frequency.
3) The greatest difference between those who spoke the most and those who spoke the least was 30.
4) The least difference between those who spoke the most and those who spoke the least was 14.
5) The average difference between the two extremes was only 22.

Therefore, based on the interaction frequency, no leader emerged during those recorded sessions, and, since no leader emerged, there could be no testing for either instrumental or expressive leadership.

Role Specialization

The following information for role specialization, i.e., resource, crisis and/or conflict specialist, was obtained:

1) Each meeting was held in a different member's apartment. No person ever held a meeting twice consecutively at her home. Every home was used at least once.

2) The chairwoman was always the person at whose home the meeting was held. This way, every person in the group became chairwoman.

3) No one ever wished to be secretary and so notes were rarely taken.

4) Group tasks were allotted in several ways:
    a) If the task were considered by the group to be unpleasant (e.g., attending a NOW meeting), the person chosen for it was chosen by lot. In this way, everyone in the group had an equal chance of receiving the disliked assignment.
    b) If the task were considered important and liked (e.g., attending a Red Stockings meeting), volunteers were accepted. If several people volunteered, each person got the same task. Only one person might be considered necessary to represent the group at a coalition meeting but more members could go if they wished.
    c) If a task demanded special skills (e.g., writing for a publication or speaking before a public assembly), the lot system was used.

> **The person with the special skill would be consulted (if she did not draw the lot) but she was permitted to act only in an advisory capacity. In this manner no one could be identified with any special position. This exact situation occurred at the Congress to Unite Women. One of the members of Local 55 had to speak before the entire assembly of 500 women. She had to represent not only Local 55, but all the women's liberation small groups. The member picked by lot had no experience in public speaking. She asked advice from the rest of the group, most of whom had often spoken in public, and then proceeded to do the task herself.**

5) No out-group crisis situation occurred within Local 55 itself during the time the group was being observed. But a specific crisis situation occurred at one of the coalition meetings that several Local 55 members attended. The meeting took place in the basement of a church. Several women's liberation small groups had met to discuss the Panther action for the jailed pregnant women. There were twenty women present. About 9:30 in the evening a very drunk male interrupted the meeting and refused to leave. He was asked to leave several times by the woman who was chairing the meeting, but each time he refused. Finally, six women rose, unplanned and spontaneously (two were members of Local 55), surrounded the disrupter and slowly but surely edged him out of the room. He was then guided out of the church and the door was closed. The situation was handled by six unrelated members of four different women's liberation small groups. The situation was handled by group sanction and can be contrasted with a similar situation that occurred at a NOW meeting, when a male disrupted the meeting and refused to leave. The police were called by NOW but the crisis situation in the women's liberation small group was handled by the inside community.
6) In-group conflict occurred during the time I recorded the meetings. Six separate times one woman had angry disagreements with different members of the group. In each case the rest of the group deliberately changed the topic of conversation. The argument was never

> resolved. They were ignored and passed over. Each time the arguments revolved around political differences. Some wanted more political activism. Once one woman had an angry argument with another. The group responded by telling the injured woman to ignore the angry one that time because her anger came from being pregnant and not feeling well. No special person acted as mediator in any of the disagreements or conflicts. The typical response seemed to be ignoring the situation rather than attempting to resolve it. In none of the conflict situations did the anger and tension engendered by the hostility between members carry over to the next meeting.

Conclusions to be drawn from the foregoing observations about role specialization are as follows:

1) Meeting places and chairwomanship were rotated each week. Division of labor, or chairwoman specialization did not occur.

2) Tasks were assigned by lot if they were unpleasant or special. In this way specialization was avoided.

3) Ordinary business tasks, extra meeting attendance and demonstrations were always on a voluntary basis and often several members participated in the same activity.

4) Out-group crises did not occur during the recorded time.

5) In-group conflict was not resolved; it was ignored. It always dissolved before the next meeting. Specialists in resolving conflict situations did not appear.

Women's liberation Local 55 did not develop role specialists during the observation period.

Solidarity

The third category in small group structure is solidarity.

Solidarity was measured in terms of decision making and friendship.

Decision making was accomplished in Local 55 in the following ways:

1) If there was absolute agreement on a particular project, then the group decided to participate in that project (e.g., Congress to Unite Women);

   If there was absolute agreement not to participate in an action then the group did not participate (e.g., NOW action to liberate the Oak Room of the Plaza Hotel);

2) If there were differences of opinion, and some were for an action and some were against, the following procedure was used:
   Whoever did not wish to participate remained at home. In essence, each member "did her own thing." Complete group-sponsored action could only take place if there was total agreement.

3) Neither voting nor consensus was ever used as a method for settling differences. If the group had to vote it would be assumed that there was a minority position and the group would then have had to consider it legitimate to act against minority wishes. Consensus was considered a form of tyranny. It was believed that the ones who spoke most persuasively should not be allowed to coerce the less forceful. Therefore, unless decisions about actions were unanimous, individuals acted in their own behalf--not as representatives of the group.

Friendship was a difficult category to measure since it was the most subjective. Despite the difficulty, I recorded degrees of friendship because it seemed a crucial indicator of solidarity.

1) There were general feelings of warmth at almost every meeting.

2) There was a lot of friendly, good-natured gossip, talk, laughter, and joking before each meeting.

3) The meetings always started late because friendship needs were given priority over efficiency.

4) All members dressed casually. Most of the time the members sat on the floor on pillows or on low furniture. The group always sat in a circle.

5) There was always an abundance of food. Alcohol was not served. The member whose home the meeting was in always provided the food.

Using the criteria of decision-making and friendship, I would assess the group as high in solidarity.

The standard model of group structure is contrasted below with the structure observed in Local 55.

Standard structure	Local 55 actual structure
1) stratification	
instrumental leader	no leadership
expressive leader	no leadership
2) role specialization	
job specialist	no job specialist
crisis specialist	no crisis specialist
conflict specialist	no conflict specialist
3) solidarity	
decision reaching	unanimity for total group action
friendship	warmth, mutual concern, affection

Local 55 differs from the expected, standard small group in its lack both of identifiable leadership and specialists. Its egalitarian ideology was established prior to group formation.

VI. OWL (Older Women's Liberation)

OWL began meeting the second week in December 1969 and continued meeting once a week for a year and a half. I observed and recorded the structure and content of fifteen meetings during a five-month period and continued attending the meetings for the entire eighteen months. I requested permission to note the group's activity during the second meeting and was not granted that permission until the third meeting. Several women were suspicious of the possible uses of the research and had to be persuaded by the other members to permit me to record the sessions.

OWL was founded by three women who met in the beginning of December at the Congress to Unite Women. The three women felt alienated from the women's movement because of their age. They were well over thirty and did not identify with the younger women.

The three women tacked up a notice with their names and numbers on the Congress bulletin board. They stated that they were middle-aged, home-centered women who wanted to form a new small group. They wanted other women to join. The next day over fifty women replied to the notice and the first twelve were invited to attend a meeting at the home of one of the three. The rest of the fifty were

given each other's phone numbers and many of them went on to form their own small groups. The founding three chose twelve women because they believed that any higher a number might prevent intimate communication and any fewer might be too small to initiate activities.

At the fifth meeting the women decided to name the group. In choosing the name OWL (Older Women's Liberation), they felt that they were making a political statement. A woman had to be over thirty to join and the members proclaimed their pride in maturity through their choice of the group name.

Of the fifteen members only seven had had any experience with political groups. Four of the seven had been associated with the old Communist left and the other three had dropped out of the new left. Only one of the seven had ever been a member of a women's group prior to joining OWL. The remaining eight women were either nonpolitical or middle-of-the-road, inactive liberals.

The women were not familiar with women's liberation ideology. They were just beginning to explore the nature of female oppression.

At the meetings they sat on comfortable chairs, sipped coffee or wine, nibbled cheese and crackers and ate fruit and cakes. Each week a different woman provided

the food. Most of the women dressed stylishly in pantsuits or dresses and rarely resorted to jeans. All but one of the homes were carefully furnished. The one, small, disordered apartment contrasted to the larger airy settings of the other homes. All of the meetings took place either in Brooklyn or Manhattan, even though there were several New Jersey members.

Most of the women who joined OWL had vague, amorphous feelings that "something" was wrong with their lives, the country, and the world, but they were not sure what it was, or what they could do about it. They joined OWL to see if their experiences, skills, and knowledge could help other women, and in doing so, help themselves. Their feminism appeared restricted to civil rights and job opportunity issues. As one woman stated:

> The way I see it, of the millions of people born all over the world, once in a while someone is born with a little bit of advantage. I know there is suffering all around me but I don't see why I can't accept my advantage and live with it. I don't want to be a martyr to any cause. We aren't treated well enough and I want to help change that but there is nothing I can do about all the poor and miserable people in the world. I'm not going to die for them.

And another:

> I've got my life pretty much the way I want it. Why should I have to give up what I've got for anyone else. I don't want to deprive my children of any of their inheritances. I want my daughters to have the same chances as my sons but I won't change my living. I really like having my house and all the middle-class comforts that you leftists put down.

A third woman, angered by the remarks of the first two replied:

> I'm just not that interested in making life better for white middle-class women. While I think that all women are oppressed under this system, some people are a lot more oppressed than others. I want to help those people. I think working class men and third world people have it worst of all. There is so much poverty and racism going on in America that I think those issues should be our priorities.

A fourth woman carried the discussions of discrimination further:

> Since I reached the age of 50, I'm not sure anymore whether I'm being discriminated against because I'm a woman, or poor, or a Jew, or because I've become obsolete. As I get older, more and more doors close to me. I want to work against the oppression of everyone, not just the oppression of women. There is so much that needs to be done, and we sit around just arguing about maids, and cosmetics and orgasms. I think we should be out organizing in our own communities, not complaining about our misfortunes.

In spite of the disagreements stated above, there was agreement about female oppression. The general mood of the group can best be summed up by the following remark:

> I never got a chance to do what I wanted. All my life I knew that it was better to be born a boy. My parents always made a fuss over my brother's grades and accomplishments. They just expected me to get married and have children. Now that I've done that I still feel empty. I've been oppressed by having to do what everyone else wanted of me. I listened to my parents' needs, then my husband's and now my children's. Never have I had a chance to listen to my own needs. Coming here, to these meetings, is the first time I've ever been able to listen to myself and others like me. Something is really wrong...something is really very wrong....

The following biographical data of three members follows. The women chosen were typical of the three types of women found in OWL. The first was 40, divorced, childless, and economically independent. The second was 34, married, mother of pre-school children, and economically dependent. The third was 43, married, mother of high school children, and economically dependent.

The first woman (no. XII), divorced, childless, and residing in Manhattan described herself as upper middle-class and financially secure. She inherited property that payed her $14,000 annually. She also inherited the lease on a luxury cooperative apartment. Her interest in politics was restricted to voting for presidential candidates every four years and her religious affiliations

ended with Sunday school. She showed no desire for motherhood.

Relationships with men were her main life interests, and much time was devoted to beautifying herself. She was also preoccupied with the problems of aging and treated her face with great care. While disliking her enslavement to cosmetics, she used them lavishly. In fact, after her first meeting with Ti Grace, an outstanding spokeswoman for the early movement, she responded by saying:

> I was so happy to see she was still wearing makeup. You couldn't see it from a distance, but when you got up close you could tell it was there. She had on eye cream and eye liner and rouge...it looked really natural, but you could tell it was there. I'm not the only one who wants to improve my looks.

Most of her energies were directed towards the focal points of her life: travel and men. Without either a job commitment or a family to tie her to a place, she was free to travel around the world. She wanted a permanent relationship with a man but never seemed able to work one out.

Joining OWL was a major step in her life. There appeared to be no precedent for it. When questioned as to why she joined, she answered:

> I'm so bored with everything I do. The only thing that still interests me is poetry, and I'm getting tired of that. Something's happening with women, and I want to find out what it is. I really don't like the way my life is going, and I have no confidence in myself. I really don't think I could survive without all the help I get. I've never even had to support myself. I don't think I could....

The movement's egalitarian feminist ideology caused some conflict within her. On the one hand she supported women's employment opportunity rights, but on the other she mistrusted the demands for equality agitated for by some of the politically left-wing OWL members.

The second woman of OWL (no. VI) described herself as married and miserable. At 34 she had a college degree and little hope of using it. Her children were both pre-schoolers. There was no available day care, and her husband was unsympathetic to her difficulties. While he, as a private high school teacher left daily for work he often enjoyed, she remained home and felt overworked, under-appreciated, and trapped. At $10,500 a year they had enough money for economic survival but not enough for comfort. She wanted a job but had no way of getting one. The consciousness-raising sessions reinforced her already high awareness of personal oppression and brought her in contact with other women in similar situations.

Feminist ideology, while supporting her previously existing leftist beliefs, nevertheless caused great conflict within her home environment. Her husband resented her participation in the women's movement and saw feminist ideology as undermining the structure of the home. Her marriage deteriorated rapidly and was on the verge of collapse at the end of the OWL meetings.

The third woman of OWL (no. II), married, and the mother of four teen-age children, described herself as middle class and middle income. She, however, resented the fact that it was her husband who brought in the $18,000 that supported them. They owned a large home in Brooklyn which they bought through his real estate business. Her family and home were the main interests of her life. Her political beliefs were left liberal, but she did not participate in political activities. She was sympathetic to the New Left with its emphasis on actions instead of theory but did not feel brave enough to join. Demonstrations and confrontations frightened her. She wanted to work outside the home for recreational and economic reasons but didn't know how to begin finding a job. Her restlessness parented interest in OWL. Her husband supported her membership, believing that it would fill friendship needs within her. As she became more conscious, however,

of her oppression as a married, mothering woman, her emerging feminist ideology began to conflict with her role as housewife. Family arguments became frequent and bitter, and she often withdrew homemaking services for short periods of time. At the termination of OWL she was seriously considering moving into Manhattan with her youngest child for a trial separation. Her interest in group activities can be best summed up in her own words:

> It was the most important experience of my life. OWL changed my whole life, my outlook on life, my beliefs about myself...everything. Before joining I was an appendage. I didn't believe I could be anything in my own right. I don't know what I'm going to do with myself, but I have a feeling of self for the first time...a feeling of being real and alive and a whole person.

As the OWL consciousness-raising sessions progressed, changes in the women became noticeable. The most visible changes were in the areas of makeup and dress. Changes in beliefs and behavior, while less immediately apparent, were nevertheless observed. One woman, commenting on her bodily image, said:

> I really like my body now. I like the way I look. I've stopped wearing all that armor. For so long I slaved over my body, making it the perfect magazine image with padded bras and girdles. Now I wear nothing but underpants and it's wonderful....

And another:

> When I stopped wearing makeup, my husband didn't say anything. When I stopped going to the beauty parlor, he didn't say anything. But yesterday, when I bought my first pair of jeans, he accused me of becoming an aging hippy.

The hidden attitudes of people around us sometimes surfaced after unexpected confrontations. One woman stated it this way:

> It really hit me hard. Right after the last peace demonstration, I went to my husband's office. I was still wearing my women's liberation button and carrying part of the 'bring the boys home' banner. The responses I got from the men in the elevator and in the lobby really floored me. These were men who, under other circumstances, would have smiled at me or asked me to dinner. Now they looked like they wanted to kill me. All my life I thought that being a woman protected me from male violence but, boy, was I wrong! I was protected playing the good, little wife and mother role. When I started working in the women's movement and going to peace demonstrations, I lost the protection of that role. Those men really hated me. Their rage was so strong it knocked me over.

And another:

> I always thought of myself as a pretty independent woman. Yet every morning, I would make breakfast for my husband and myself, and I would tremble, really tremble over fear that I would break the yolks of his eggs. He liked perfect fried eggs. Can you imagine the absurdity? I lived all those years with such stupid fears. Last week I handed him the frying pan and said 'make your own eggs.' It was the most liberating day of my life.

And another:

> God! What are we going to do about maids? I've always had one, my mother had one, my grandmother had one, and now I just can't. My husband's really beautiful. He's sharing the housework with me, and the kids are all helping,so it's not too bad, but I really miss that leisure, and I hate housework.

And another:

> When I first started coming here I thought of myself as a free woman making choices about my life. I wanted to get married. I wanted to have children. I wanted to move to Brooklyn...now I don't feel any freer than the people I used to feel sorry for... Negroes or Puerto Ricans...I couldn't have chosen any differently. In my life I had to do what I did. It was the only path really open to me. I think all of us in America,with the exception of maybe just a few very rich people, do what we have to, what we have been programmed to do. None of us really have many choices at all.

And finally:

> I could never go back. I'll never be the same. Once your eyes are opened to all the oppression around you, it's like living some enormous nightmare. Only I wake up each day, and it's real. We are in the middle of it. All of us taught to think we have to do what we do. Each of us thinking our individual way is best so no one rocks the boat for the people who really have it best... the people on top. It's all got to change, from top to bottom. We've got to make it change.

The following table presents the background material on the fifteen members. At the seventh meeting I handed

out the questionnaire. The categories recorded were the same as those for Local 55: age, race, religious background, marital status, number of children, level of education, occupation, income, husband's income, housing location, housing costs, class identification, sexual orientation, and political affiliation.

TABLE 11 OWL DEMOGRAPHY

member no.	age	race	religion	marital status	no. of child	level ed.	work	own income	husband income	location	rent	class	sex pref.	polit. affil
11	35	w	J	m	2	MA	prof part	2,000	8,000	M	140	-	het	left
2	43	w	J	m	4	BA	h w		12,000	B	own	mid	het	left
3	35	w	J	d	0	HS	bus full	6,000		NJ	100	work	het	non polit
4	35	w	RC	m	2	BA	h w		8,500	M	200	mid	het	left
5	42	w	J	m	2	HS	bus part	3,500	12,000	B	own	mid	het	center
6	34	w	P	m	2	BA	h w		10,500	M	190	mid	het	left
7	40	w	P	s	0	PhD	prof full	10500		M	132	mid	het	center
8	38	w	P	m	3	BA	h w		20,000	NJ	own	mid	het	center
9	40	w	P	d	0	BA	unemploy	5,600		M	140	mid	het	center
10	48	w	P	m	3	BA	prof full	17,000	18,000	B	own	up mid	het	left
11	32	w	RC	m	3	HS	h w		11,000	M	185	work	het	center
12	40	w	J	d	0	BA	unemploy	14,000		M	300	up mid	het	non polit
13	50	w	J	m	2	BA	h w		9,000	M	130	mid	het	left
14	42	w	J	m	0	BA	prof full	10 000	15 000	M	125	mid	het	left
15	54	w	J	w	4	MA	prof full	9,000	5,000 ss	M	own	mid	het	center
	range 32-54	15w	8 J 5 P 2 RC	10m 3d 1s 1w	10 y 5 no	3HS 9BA 2MA 1Phd	6hw 2unem 2 pt 5 ft	range 2,000-17,000	range 5,000-20,000	2 NJ 3 B 10M	range 100-300 5 own	2work 10m 2up m 1-	15 het	7left 6center 2non-p

The stated objectives of OWL were similar to those of Local 55's. They were:

1) to discover the causes of female oppression.
2) to understand one's own personal oppression.
3) to formulate programs that would result in liberation.
4) to act upon these programs.

The group implemented the four objectives in the following manner:

Objective 1) was gained by reading, studying, and analyzing American society.

Objective 2) was accomplished through consciousness raising.

Objective 3) programs were formulated based upon analysis of female oppression.

Objective 4) actions were carried out:

action 1) OWL, in coalition with several other women's liberation small groups and NOW, organized the continuations committee of the Congress to Unite Women. The continuations committee met every other week.

action 2) OWL participated in a coalition action taking over a well known national women's magazine, The Ladies Home Journal.

action 3) The coalition of women's groups jointly published an alternate section in the magazine and thus reached women across the nation.

action 4) OWL, in coalition with other women's liberation small groups, helped create the Women's Center

> which served the needs of the movement. It was a central meeting place. It was financed and run by all the groups. This was the same action (number 3) that Local 55 worked on.

The basic differences between the objectives of Local 55 and OWL were those of emphasis and can best be understood by examining objective 3, programs formulated. OWL was formed with a membership criterion. No one under 30 was permitted to join. The age criterion plus the deliberate choice of the name Older Women's Liberation indicated one of the directions of the group. The general women's liberation movement was a young person's movement. Statistics of age were not available, but my observation indicated the average age of women participating to be around 25. OWL, unlike the younger women's liberation groups, was consciously created by women who:

1) felt alienated from the main body of the movement because of age, life experiences, family orientations, professional statuses, and goal commitments.

2) felt that their special skills and knowledge could be utilized for the benefit of all women.

OWL addressed itself to questions that rarely arose at Local 55 meetings, such as:

1) How to bring up children in an oppressive society?
2) How to live with a husband when the relationship is not egalitarian?

3) How to relate to adolescent sons who are attempting to reach male maturity by emulating male stereotyped role models?
4) How to cope with aging and dependent parents?
5) How to cope with personal aging in a youth-oriented culture?
6) How to pursue a job, career orprofession while raising a family?
7) How to participate in the movement if one's husband objects?
8) How to change from twenty to forty years of behaviorally-conditioned responses?
9) How to rear children when there is only one parent?
10) How to cope with problems of alimony?

The women of OWL believed that they could speak to a broad segment of American women. Having shared the problems of housewives, of the poor, of the dependent, OWL developed several programs that were unique within the movement at large.

1) A referral service for mothers without money who were unhappy in their marital situation and wished to leave it. The referral service was knowledgeable about urban institutions created to assist people in difficulty. There was also a commune set up to help women in transitional periods of their lives.

2) Pay for housewives with children. It was believed that, since most women in American raised their children at home, this occupation should be financially rewarded. In a capitalist society that evaluates individuals in terms of economic positions, only housewives were expected to work for "love."

The general ideology of OWL which supported its main objectives and actions, while similar to that of Local 55, did not emerge until after many months of meetings. The egalitarian credo was not a shared ideal prior to the group's formation. Understanding women's oppression within a stratified society led to an understanding of all oppression and a determination to eliminate it. Change in OWL from no conscious group ideology to an acceptance of liberationist ideology will be referred to as Time 1 and Time 2.

As with Local 55, the internal structure of the OWL small group was tested in terms of stratification, role specialization and solidarity.

Stratification

The testing for stratification (leadership--either type), was conducted in the same manner as it was for Local 55. Access to resources were tested for by noting who spoke, how often, how long and whether she contributed ideas or affection. A chart of the interaction frequency rates (speaking time) was compiled for each member of the group and for each group session. The

difference in speaking time between the member who spoke the most and the one who spoke the least varied from meeting to meeting. The average frequency interaction rate used to record speaking times shows that the variation between the greatest and least speakers was 35 times. The greatest variation of frequency of interaction rates between the most and least speaker was 50 times. The least variation of interaction rates between the most and least speaker was eighteen times.

In testing OWL leadership patterns using the interaction frequency rates, two separate patterns emerged. In early meetings (seven) which I call Time 1, a definite stratification pattern emerged. The difference between the most and least speaker was greater than 25 speaking times. This occurred at seven meetings. In the later, Time 2 meetings(eight), there was a definite lack of stratification with the difference between the greatest and least speaker under 25 times.

In detail, the results of the Time 1 meetings were as follows:

> The greatest variation between the greatest and the least speaker was 50 times.
>
> The least variation between the greatest and least speaker was 28 times.
>
> The average variation between the greatest and least speaker was 42 times.

In the average frequency interaction rate used to record Time 1, the average variation between the greatest and least speaker was 42 times. In the greatest variation of frequency of interaction rates for Time 1 the difference between the greatest and least speaker was 50 times. In the least variation of frequency of interaction rates for Time 1 the difference between the greatest and least speaker was 28 times.

In Time 2 meetings the picture was different. The average frequency of interaction rates used to record for Time 2 showed that the difference between the greatest and the least speaker was 21 times. In the greatest variation of interaction frequency rates in Time 2 the difference between the greatest and least speakers was 24 times in contrast to 50 for Time 1. In the least variation of the interaction frequency rates for Time 2 the difference between the greatest and least speakers was 18 times, as opposed to 28 in Time 1.

In the average model of interaction frequency rates

for the Time 1 meeting of OWL (seven sessions), the difference between the greatest and the least speakers was 42 speaking times. In the average model of interaction frequency rates for the Time 2 meeting (eight sessions) the difference between the greatest and the least speakers were 21 times, as opposed to 42 for Time 1.

Thus, using the test for leadership measured in terms of access to resources, the following results were obtained:

1) Out of the total fifteen meetings one member interacted with greater frequency than any other member.

2) Out of the total fifteen meetings a second member interacted with the second greatest frequency.

3) Out of the total fifteen meetings a third member interacted with the third greatest frequency.

4) The first member most often initiated ideas and started new topics of conversation.

5) During the fifteen meetings the second member also initiated ideas and created new programs.

6) The third member most often counseled, consolidated and soothed the group. If anyone needed guidance or direction she offered it. She was called if any member wanted information about the next meeting or wanted to know about a coalition meeting.

7) The Time 1 model of OWL was highly stratified showing an emergence of three leaders.

8) The Time 2 model of OWL showed no stratification.

9) The OWL Time 2 model resembled the structure of Local 55.

10) Despite the similarity in structure to Local 55 in OWL Time 2, the members who spoke the most were the same members who spoke the most in the Time 1 group.

Role Specialization

Using the criteria for crisis and conflict specialists, the following information was obtained on role specialization over the five-month period.

1) There was a chairwoman. The position of chairwoman rotated each week in alphabetical order.

2) There were no secretaries and no notes were taken.

3) Group tasks were allotted in two ways. Either the chairwoman asked for volunteers or she appointed someone to do the job. The members participated in other group activities (e.g., coalition meetings with other women's liberation small groups) on a volunteer basis. If no one wanted to volunteer for an outside job it did not get done. Inside tasks (e.g., working on the pay-for-housework campaign or the referral service) were done by volunteers or by assignment.

4) One serious out-group crisis situation occurred. The group was meeting in the office building. At about 10:30 p.m. a large man rapped on the glass door and aggressively said that he wanted to enter. Everyone in the room was frightened. One woman suggested that if he did not go away we should call the police or the janitor. She was about to call the police when the man decided to leave. A few minutes later, two cleaning people (men) arrived and the same woman told them both to leave. They went away very angry and threatened to report her to the janitor. She informed the rest of the members that each had better leave with at least one other woman because the area was unsafe.

   Another out-group crisis involved two children who were being disruptive and would not allow the meeting to continue. The mother was in the kitchen at the time and the same woman as before spoke to them until their mother could.

5) In-group crises arose many times in the fifteen recorded sessions. Most of the time the conflict consisted of angry words on the part of one member

towards another. These situation almost always ended quickly with someone else in the group changing the subject. One particular conflict situation, however, did not end quickly, but continued over three meetings and almost caused a schism within the group. The most politically minded three members wanted to discuss levels of oppression. They were more concerned with the oppression of the poor than any other type. The topic was discussed in a short and casual fashion and they were dissatisfied. The three women, because of this dissatisfaction, did not come to the next meeting and claimed that they were withdrawing from the group. One of these women wanted to work on the pay-for-housework proposal and felt that the group was too middle-class-oriented and not radical enough. The second came to the next meeting to explain their position. The chairwoman spent half of that meeting mediating between the dropouts' position and the position of the rest of the group. The rest of the members felt that it was too soon to activate the housework-pay program because it needed more research and OWL was not then in a position to do it. The chairwoman attempted to bridge the two positions. She pleaded with these dropouts to return. She asked the rest of the members to listen more carefully to the more radical women in the group. Two women returned to the next meeting. The third returned later.

The following conclusions are drawn from the foregoing observations about role specialization:

1) While the chairwomanship rotated each week, most of the meetings (ten) took place at one woman's home. She had a special place in the group. Her home was the focal point of the group.

2) No one ever acted as secretary. Thus, specialization did not arise in that area.

3) Tasks were usually voluntary and assigned only for inside activities. Specialization in this area was not tested because no situations arose that would have called for a resource specialist.

4) Out-group crisis was handled, in two instances, by the same woman.

5) In-group conflict, which occurred continually among many members in the form of short, angry quarrels over ideas, always ended when the rest of the group changed the topic of conversation. The serious conflict that threatened to disrupt the group was mediated successfully by the chairwoman.

Older Women's Liberation small group did develop role specialists during the observation time.

1) Division of labor--one woman.
2) Out-group crisis specialist--a different woman .
3) In-group conflict specialist--a third woman .

Solidarity

The third category in testing for small group structure, solidarity, was measured in terms of decision making and friendship.

Decision making was accomplished in OWL in the following ways:

1) All decisions pertaining to in-group structure were made by voting.

2) All decisions pertaining to out-group activities were made by voting. If the majority voted for a project or an action, then the group officially sponsored it. Those members in the minority absented themselves from the activity.

3) Topics for discussion each week were chosen by group consensus.

The degrees of friendship were recorded as follows:

1) I experienced general feelings of warmth most of the time, but on several occasions I experienced feelings of anger and hostility.

2) The meetings always started late because friendship needs were given priority over efficiency.

3) The home where the first ten meetings occurred was comfortable and the members appeared to be at ease, but one of the homes was uncomfortable. Only one member ever sat on the floor. All of the members sat facing one another.

4) There was always an abundance of food or coffee. Liquor was available but no one used it.

Using criteria of decision making and friendship, I would assess this group as high in solidarity but not as high as Local 55.

The following is a comparison of OWL Time 1 and Time 2 with the standard for small group stratification.

		OWL	
Standard		Time 1	Time 2
1) Stratification			
instrumental leader		woman 1	leadership lost
expressive leader		woman 2	leadership lost
		woman 3	leadership lost
2) Role specialization			
job specialist		no job spec't	no job spec't
crisis specialist		woman 4	woman 4
conflict specialist		woman 3	woman 3
3) Solidarity			
decision making		voting and consensus	voting and consensus
friendship		warmth, but also anger	warmth, but also anger

The first form of OWL group structure followed the standard for small groups. The second form of OWL structure began to approach the structure of Local 55.

VII. Conclusions

In comparing the two groups it can be seen that the older women were, not surprisingly, more affluent; more likely to be married and have children; and saw themselves as middle- or upper middleclass. The older women acknowledged their financial and psychological dependence on their husbands. Even when they had adequate independent incomes, they did not consider themselves economically self-sufficient in their own right.

Similarities between the groups lay in their sexual orientations; their levels of academic standing; their ethnic, racial, and religious backgrounds and their desire to "do something" about their positions in society and the world.

The older women had achieved high levels of education of which little use had been made and middle-class modes of dressing and socializing. They interacted with women suspiciously and with men submissively. It was hard for many of them to be in positions that demanded independent decision making. Nevertheless, as will be shown, all but four made drastic revisions in their lives.

The younger women already felt the social order to be oppressive, were determined not to fall into the housewife patterns of their mothers' generation, and entered the

women's movement without hesitation. While they, too, changed because of their experiences, it must be noted that they had less to risk and less to lose.

A composite portrait of a member of Local 55 would be a woman in her late twenties; single and childless; predominantly heterosexual; college-educated; employed at a civil service, middle-income-type job while working-class identified; who lived in a modest but comfortable apartment; dressed casually and comfortably; was politically conscious; angry at female inequality; and actively egalitarian in her values and relationships.

A composite picture of a member of OWL would be a woman in her early forties; with two to four children, well into their teens or grown; college-educated; married to the same man for some twenty years; no career or part-time job; high aspirations for her children but no specific ones for herself; with a comfortable home; who dressed well; with a college degree; an income (when combined with her husband's) that put her in the middle-income bracket; and was bored, restless, and resentful.

While the women of each group appear to belong to different socio-economic groups, this can be seen as a product of age and marital position rather than of their

class status. The women of Local 55 were younger and were therefore in a different time of their lives. If the members of Local 55 were to have married, they probably (given their educational, ethnic and religious backgrounds) would have belonged to and identified with the same middle- and upper-middle-class group as the OWL members. In many ways the women of Local 55 can be considered the spiritual daughters of the women of OWL.

The following table compares the two women's groups in terms of the previously mentioned fourteen informational categories.

TABLE 111 COMPARISONS BETWEEN

	LOCAL 55	CWL
age range	23-35	32-54
race	9 white 1 black	15 white
religious background	5 Jewish 5 Protestant 0 Roman Catholic	8 Jewish 5 Protestant 2 Roman Catholic
marital status	3 married 1 divorced 6 single	10 married 3 divorced 1 single 1 widowed
children	3 yes 7 none	10 yes 5 none
level of education	1 HS 6 BA 2 MA 1 PhD	3 HS 9 BA 2 MA 1 PhD
occupation	3 part time work 7 full time work	6 housewives 2 unemployed 2 part time work 5 full time work
own income range	2,000-13,000	2,000-20,000
husbands income r.	8,000-9,000	5,000-20,000
housing location	10 Manhattan	10 Manhattan 3 Brooklyn 2 New Jersey
housing cost-rent	62-140	100-3000 5 own homes
class identification	3 working 5 middle 1 professional 1-	2 working 10 middle 2 upper middle 1-
sexual orientation	9 heterosexual 1 bisexual	15 heterosexual
political affiliation	10 left	7 left 6 center 2 non-political

This dissertation, a study in behavioral anthropology, examined the relationship between ideology and structure in two small, urban groups within the women's liberation movement. The groups were studied within the matrix of traditional social-psychological small group analysis and contemporary anthropological interaction theories.

On the basis of my research I wish to restate the hypothesis that role relationships and internal structures within small groups reflect the cultural ideology of the society in which the members are raised. Further, if the members of a small group have a different ideology from the society in which they were raised, then the group will have a different orientation to role relationships and group structure will reflect this different orientation.

The standard model for small groups is seen by small-group theorists to reflect, in miniature, basic role divisions in society. The divisions are hierarchical. The traditional small group, through its structure, reinforces the values of role differentiation and specialization. The structural divisions are also seen as analogous to basic features of the nuclear family. The task specialist is compared to the male parent and the emotional

specialist is identified with the female parent.

Similarities within the structures of different groups are viewed not only as observable evidences of group interaction, but as functions of social predispositions within human beings. Role specialization is seen to develop in response to social requirements within any group.

As a result of this view it is possible to study small group structure without reference to the purposes or ideology of the group.

The first women's liberation group erected egalitarian, symmetrical structures in contrast to expected traditional small group structure. Other such groups have been similarly described in contemporary literature. According to Jo Freeman:

> During the years in which the women's liberation movement has been taking shape, a great emphasis has been placed on what is called leaderless, structureless groups as the main if not sole organizational form of the movement (1972, 73:151).

The second women's liberation group originally erected predictable, hierarchically ranked, asymmetrical internal structures and later shifted their internal structures to that of a symmetrical one, as their ideology began to mesh with the beliefs of the women's movement at

large. The changing of internal structure varied in direct proportion to the degree of acceptance of women's liberation ideology. After the first seven meetings the second group internally restructured itself. This restructuring to symmetrical relationships stood in sharp contrast to its former structure which resembled standard small group structure.

The structure of both groups developed in the absence of any preconceived rules for behavior. The shift in role-relatedness in the second group occurred in the absence of anyone's awareness of the shift. It was only after the change in structure had been completed that the group participants became aware of the change.

As members began to accept the ideology of equality, women who were previously quiet began to speak out, women who were politically apathetic became activists, and women who at first unequally participated in leadership positions withdrew sufficiently to permit the emergence of the initially less vocal members.

Verification of the hypothesis that small group structure is reflective of its ideology does not refute the conclusion drawn by traditional small group theorists about structural similarities. On the contrary, such verification could strengthen their conclusions about

general structural similarities. However, the groups traditionally studied would be seen to demonstrate role division and specialization because of the effect of culturally induced value systems. The social system would have produced the hierarchical structuring within the small groups.

The stated, conscious ideologies of small groups do not appear to affect their structure because the unstated ideology of the stratified family has already been inculcated and therefore is instrumental in structuring the group. Indeed, the acceptance of hierarchical positions in society as natural and "innate" has been restated by Gould quoting Millet:

> Patriarch has a tenacious or powerful hold through its successful habit of passing itself off as nature (1974:24).

The structural variation in the women's groups can be seen to be the direct result of the conscious rejection of the hierarchical social-sexual division of labor within society and the acceptance of an egalitarian ideology.

That the structure of the women's liberation groups is contrastive with that of the traditional groups illuminates the connection between belief and structure. As the conscious egalitarian ideology of the women's liberation groups contrasts with the unstated ideology structuring

traditional groups, the structures found in both types of small group may be shown to reflect their ideologies.

Finally, the major test of validity in behavioral anthropology lies in its observability. As Arensberg wrote, "Data discriminated in one place in real life turn up again combined together in another" (1972:18). It is my hope that this test of validity will be met by others following the methods described in this study.

VIII. Addendum

Since the time of this study, much change has taken place. At the present time, change can be seen as occurring in two major areas: within the movement itself and in the actual lives of women today.

The movement has produced profound changes in many institutions. Through advanced legislation, abortion has become a practical reality within reach of every urban and suburban woman. (It may still be difficult in more rural areas to find a willing doctor.) Child care, once only a wealthy woman's solution to the need for free time (i.e., time away from her children), is now available to many middleclass and poor women through the proliferation of day care centers. These centers, some cooperative, some community sponsored, some formerly government endowed, have blossomed around the country. Women's studies programs on the college, junior college, and even high school levels have been created over the past few years to meet the growing need of women to understand and acknowledge their place in American history. Aboveground newspapers such as Majority Report and magazines like Ms have become so appealing that they can be found on the traditional middle-class, middle-American coffee tables. Women-staffed, women-centered medical clinics emphasizing female anatomical problems have proliferated, and feminist therapy is becoming

a common and available answer for psychologically troubled women. There has also been an emergence of black feminism along with that of other minority groups. Bulletin boards at women-supported, women-run centers in urban areas provide a variety of services from female legal counseling to women plumbers; roommate listings to apartment hunting; job opportunities and career training. The women's information centers serve as links between the active movement and the rest of the growing, consciousness-aware female population. Women's theater groups, art centers and martial defense classes have sprung up in great number and women teaching women on every imaginable topic has reawakened interest both in academic and nonacademic topics.

Exploration of sexuality has become a major concern with many women who are testing homosexuality and bisexuality as possible alternatives to the traditional heterosexual establishment. Finally, there are ubiquitous weekly study groups dedicated to unraveling both the causes of social inequality and altering the social patterns to end inequality. According to Cassell:

> The movement is generated in response to existing, and unacceptable, social conditions. The perceived statement of society, that this is the way things are, and this is the way they always will be, is responded to by members of a social movement in terms

> of negation--no it is not!
>
> Movement ideology analyzes what is wrong with the status quo and with the social legitimations for the status quo (human nature, biology, etc.) at the same time that Movement activists work to change the current social reality (1972:91).

The movement has also changed individuals' lives. In Local 55, six of the women have returned to school to work towards advanced degrees and to upgrade their career goals; five say that their relationships with men have improved considerably due to their increased self-esteem; four have become homosexual and one initially bisexual woman has officially "come out," i.e., openly proclaimed her homosexuality; four have dropped out of establishment occupations to become members of the counter-culture; one has contracted a serious debilitating illness and through her movement contacts has been able to manipulate and utilize the welfare system sufficiently for her survival.

I will give several examples of specific changes that took place in the lives of the three women (no. II, I and IX). Each woman claims that the changes were able to occur because of her participation in Local 55. Of the three women married at the beginning of this study, only one remains so. The other two left their husbands to seek different lifestyles. The first woman left her husband, became pregnant and then

gay (within a few months after leaving him), organized an all-women's commune in Brooklyn and is now living with her two children, her female lover and several other women roommates. The second woman left her husband, moved across country with her children, helped form a heterosexual commune and is planning to retreat soon into mountain living. The third woman remained married but did not remain in the United States. She applied for and received employment in an East African country. Her social work skills were appreciated abroad but her husband's literary skills were not. He now cares for their three children (she had another one in Africa) while she earns money for the family.

Another example of change took place in the life of the one full-time professional of the group (no. VII). She was nationally acclaimed for publishing a major work in her field and now writes poetry, short stories and magazine articles with equal success.

All the women of Local 55 claimed that the meetings were high points in their lives primarily due to a sense of sisterhood, a new sense of self and a feeling of female worth. All missed the group but felt that for each of them the time of the consciousness raising small group was over.

The women of OWL, like those of Local 55, changed as a result of the weekly meetings. Their age, life positions and family responsibilities made the changes more difficult but no less dramatic. Out of the eight unemployed members, six got jobs outside the home. Only two (no. IV and XIII) remained housebound and economically dependent upon their husbands; ten became involved in community activity stressing female participation; two (no. IV and VI) had one more child each; one (no. I) became a member of the counter-culture and was imprisoned for revolutionary activities; one (no. XIV) wrote a book and created a publishing company; and six went back to school (no. I, III, V, VIII, XI and XIII).

The most salient differences between the groups are, of course, in their ages and consequently their lifestyles, expectations, and experiences. The older women were more affluent, sedentary and burdened with responsibilities. Six of the ten married women left their husbands after the consciousness raising meetings. Four improved their financial positions by alimony, by increasing their salaries, or by entering new fields. For example, three of the four women (no. I, V, and XI) became writers whose works have been published both in poetry and journalistic fields. The fourth woman (no. II) took up full-time employment. The other two (no. VI and VIII), having younger children to raise, were financially harmed by the dissolutions of their marriages. One had to give

up her formerly owned home in New Jersey and unwillingly move to a small, inexpensive New York City apartment. Of the five who were not married at the time of the meetings (one widow, one never-married, and three already-divorced) all were able to improve their financial circumstances. The woman who had always been single had been an instructor at a local college, with a Ph.D. and many publications to her credit. She acquired tenure and almost doubled her previous salary. The widow (whose children were all grown) fulfilled a life-long dream and moved to France where her social security, pension, and insurance moneys afforded her a more fulfilling life. The divorcees were able to maintain their middleclass statuses as their children grew less dependent and their work opportunities increased. None has remarried.

All of the older women were heterosexually oriented. The four group members who stayed married felt that their relationships with their husbands had improved since their participation in the movement. None established communal or homosexual living patterns.

Politically, all but two have now declared themselves to be leftists. Of the thirteen left-wing members, four were previously committed Marxists, two general socialists and one a Leninist. Indeed, the latter left OWL because she

considered its interests to be "too bourgeois." (See discussion on in-group conflict, page 93.) The six others became radical and then involved themselves in anti-poverty programs and third-world movements, in addition to their commitment to the women's movement.

What is of particular interest is that, of this older woman's group, six had joined in the first place out of a vague sense of "injustice." As these six became aware of their own oppression and that of their fellow group members, their consiousnesses expanded to include specific concerns for other peoples. They lost the feeling of helplessness with which they had joined the movement.

One of the most affluent group members had always lived a life of high style and fashion with a cosmopolitan education, annual trips to Europe, and an elegant cooperative apartment on Fifth Avenue (no.XII). Her participation in the movement changed her lifestyle. She opened her apartment to indigent women and helped them find their way financially and socially in New York. She has also published feminist articles in local newspapers.

All the women remembered the weekly meetings fondly and with gratitude since their participation in the small group was seen as a catalyst for further, positive life changes. The consciousness raising small groups allowed

them, with the support of other women, to view and then come to terms with themselves: their real needs, desires, ambitions, and goals.

The women's movement has had an impact far exceeding even the changes in institutions and particular participants. The movement has affected the lives of millions of women even without their conscious awareness. Newspapers, radio, television, in short, the mass media has capitalized upon many aspects of the movement. While some of the reporting and dramatization has been abusive and destructive, many positive statements about the changing position of women are being made. In the drama Tell Me Where It Hurts (3/12/74, C.B.S., Inc., T.V.) Kay Kanin created a highly sensitive, probing story about middle-aged women coming together to explore their friendships with one another and the directions for their future lives. National papers such as The New York Times and The New York Post have run syndicated series on the importance of fatherhood and the changing roles of the American male. The division of labor within the home, so long taken for granted by traditional American society, is being questioned. Women all over the country are benefiting from the movement. As women find their job opportunities and responsibilities increasing, their salaries growing and their statuses upgraded, they

may be having second thoughts about the women's libera-
tion movement.

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