

**CHALLENGING NARRATIVES:
The Women's Liberation Movement in Pittsburgh in the 1970s**

by

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In the 1960s and 1970s, a women's movement thrived in the United States. Current explanations of the movement either privilege the equality strand, focusing on national networks and professional organizations, or they concentrate on the radical liberation strand in the largest urban settings in the United States. Explanations also historically locate the women's movement as a Second Wave of feminism and a product of the New Left, a reaction to gender and racial discrimination and earlier authoritarian practices. However, these explanations ignore local variations in the women's movement throughout the country, painting an unrepresentative picture of the movement as a whole. This study examines the women's liberation movement in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in the 1970s to challenge some dominant explanations of the movement and add another case to the literature. It compares and contrasts the complex local variations of the movement and explores the movement's origins to investigate an underlying theoretical connection to earlier movements for liberation. This study also examines narratives by movement participants, demonstrating the importance of analyzing subjectivities, and the intersection of biography and history, for a more holistic understanding of collective action.

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PREFACE

I would like to thank all of the former participants of the Pittsburgh women's movement who helped me piece together another narrative of women's liberation. I am extremely grateful to the women who spent time sharing their stories with me. Throughout the project, I had many discussions about the lack of intergenerational connections among feminists. It is my hope that this research can be a first step in a larger story-sharing effort. These recollections can aid in forging intergenerational alliances between radical women of the 1970s and today that don't currently exist. Such ties are valuable for movements to learn lessons from the past, avoid mistakes in the future and forge stronger, savvier movements for change. I am also extremely grateful to my advisor, Dr. Kathleen Blee, for her supportive, constructive criticism on draft after draft of this thesis. Dr. Blee's advisee workshop group members additionally provided fresh insight and helpful suggestions, for which I am very appreciative. Finally, I would like to thank my thesis committee members, Dr. Suzanne Staggenborg and Dr. Mohammed Bamyeh for their support.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

From the mid-1960s through the 1980s, a vibrant women's movement developed in the United States. Women and men worked to raise feminist consciousness. They fought for reproductive rights, equal pay and employment opportunities, and they struggled against domestic violence, sexual harassment and rape. The movement included both reformist and radical/revolutionary tendencies – with plenty of overlap – sometimes referred to as “women's equality” and “women's liberation,” respectively. Differing ideologies produced a diversity of practices that were influenced by the past and instrumental in shaping gender relations today.

However, some dominant explanations about the women's movement are not necessarily representative of the local forms of the movement that existed around the country. Some accounts privilege the equality tendency, focusing on national networks and organizations, their campaigns and the gains they achieved. Such a focus ignores the decentralized, radical efforts and their contributions to altering the gender landscape. Accounts that do focus on the liberation strand are not characteristic either, most telling of the radical movement in the largest urban centers of the United States.

Grand explanations also tend to ignore the subjectivities of the participants of collective action. But, as C. Wright Mills has said, “No social study that does not come back to the problems of biography, of history and of their intersections within a society has completed its

intellectual journey” (Mills 1959:6). Understanding the meanings that individuals assign to their lives and experiences is vital to grasping the story of the movement as a whole.

Another realm that deserves further exploration is the historical account that locates the origins of the liberation strand of the women’s movement in the New Left. This claims that the movement adopted and transformed the radical egalitarian beliefs and practices of the New Left, which were in part a response to the hierarchy of the Old Left and the Communist Party. But this version does not account for the possible influence of radical feminist efforts at the turn of the century, the anarchist women and men who challenged hierarchy and sexism within authoritarian socialist movements and society at large. Current explanations of the origin of the late 20th century women’s movement do not consider any connection or underlying theoretical thread with this movement.

1.1 PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

This study takes into account the existing explanations about the women’s liberation movement of the 1970s and raises some challenges. First, I reconstruct the women’s liberation movement in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, during this time period to examine whether the dominant explanations about the movement, based on studies of national organizations and the largest major metropolitan cities, are representative of the movement as a whole. Next, I explore the intersections of biography and movement history, examining the meanings that participants give to their experiences and contrasting them with the recollections of other participants as well as collective claims of the movement. Finally, I examine the beliefs and practices of participants of

the women's liberation movement to explore whether the roots of the liberation strand of the movement extend beyond the New Left.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I explore scholarship on the women's liberation movement and current challenges to women's movement explanations. Next, I survey the scholarship on the importance of personal narrative analysis in understanding the intersections of biography and history and the meanings of collective action. Finally, I review the literature that locates the origins of the liberation strand of the movement in the New Left, and propose further exploration of ideological links between the women's liberation movement and other radical movements.

2.1 WOMEN'S LIBERATION EXPLANATIONS

Many scholars examine the complexities of the "twin social bases" (Roth 2010:99) of liberation and equality tendencies of the women's movement (Baker 1982; Buechler 1990; Echols 1989; Evans 1979; Ferree and Hess 2000; Freeman 1975; Hole and Levine 1971; Ryan 1989; Staggenborg 1998; Taylor and Whittier 1992; Whittier 1995). They find that the distinctions between the liberation and equality strands of the women's movement are blurry; there was often issue overlap, and participants with differing ideologies chose similar tactics for different reasons. Sometimes movement participants were divided by organizing style or analyses of the importance of women-only separatism versus mixed-gender efforts. In other instances, ideological explanations based on gender essentialism separated the movement into competing

camps. Scholars and participants differed over the role of cultural efforts, sometimes considering them a tactic to radically transform societal values, other times viewing them as an apolitical distraction from more pressing issues. However, there do seem to be some basic defining generalizations of the liberation-leaning wing of the movement.

Many scholars of the women's liberation strand find that these activists acted on the belief that the system itself was rotten; they would not be satisfied with a reformist replastering. The liberationists rejected the party politics position that a socialist revolution alone would bring about women's liberation. They also refused the liberal feminist solution that an integration of women into the public sphere was the key to equalizing gender relations (Echols 1989). Other scholars, however, reject a divide based on ideology, arguing that goals of radical transformation vs. reform do not accurately distinguish the different strands. They see other factors as more salient, such as differences in structure and style across age groups entering the movement (Freeman 1975) or organizational preferences and identity claims (Ryan 1989).

According to Nancy Whittier, the women's liberation strand, what she terms "radical feminists," "distinguished themselves from 'liberal feminists' who engaged more directly with electoral politics, used more moderate tactics, and structured organizations more bureaucratically" (Whittier 1995:5). Additionally, Alice Echols argues that "Radical feminists placed great importance on developing counter-institutions as alternatives to institutions working within the system, such as health clinics, abortion referral services, rape crisis centers, and credit unions" (Echols 1989:16). Other research points out that radical feminists focused on creating non-hierarchical, decentralized organization structures, utilizing participatory democracy and collective decision-making processes – often said to be inherited from the New Left – and fostered a climate in which all participants were expected to learn leadership skills (Baker 1986;

Breines 1982; Brown 1989; Evans 1979). Many women liberationists refused to participate in hierarchical structures and strove for alternative forms of organization on the basis that such social hierarchies were fundamentally incompatible with their identity as women. They claimed that stratified structures were patriarchal, and that women were part of a lower caste sisterhood and would have to build new structures and processes if they were ever to be equal to men (Baker 1982; Ryan 1989).

Some scholars argue that radical feminism dissolved into “cultural feminism” by the mid- to late-’70s, losing its teeth (Echols 1989; Ferree and Hess 1985). Others argue the shift was toward “lesbian feminism” which continued radical feminism in a new form. Referring to it as cultural rather than lesbian, as Verta Taylor and Nancy Whittier argue, “erases the participation of lesbians and obscures the fact that a great deal of the current criticism leveled at cultural feminism is, in reality, directed at lesbian feminism” (Taylor and Whittier 1992:107).

2.1.1 Radical Feminism and Local Case Studies

There are several limitations in the literature documenting the women’s movement in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s. First, there is a bias toward the equality strand of the women’s movement, which favors an analysis of national organizations and formal campaigns. Nancy Whittier, in her study of radical feminist organizing in Columbus, Ohio, argues that, “the survival of radical feminism has been largely invisible to scholars precisely because the movement has never had a centralized or national organization but is based in grassroots, loosely organized groups. Any study of radical feminism is thus, by necessity, a local case study” (Whittier 1995:5). Formal social movement organizations may provide a clear unit of analysis but such a focus ignores activity that doesn’t fit into the mainstream, and overlooks the cultural

characteristics and community of a social movement that are vital to gaining a fuller understanding of movement mobilization (Staggenborg 1998).

Secondly, an urban bias exists. Much research into the liberation strand of the women's movement centers on activity in large urban areas, such as New York City, Chicago and Washington, D.C. (Echols 1989; Evans 1979; Ezekial 2002; Whittier 1995). Judith Ezekial, in her research on the feminist movement in Dayton, Ohio, in the 1970s, found that existing studies focusing on the largest cities were inadequate in describing the feminism that played out in the Midwestern heartland: "The amalgam of the experiences, writings, and organizations of a few visible leaders and those of feminists across the nation makes the assumption that feminist ideas take on the same meaning in different times and places. This negates the experiences of millions of women" (Ezekial 2002:ix). Additionally, activism that eventually gained national significance began at the grassroots level, in both urban and rural areas, indicating a need for local studies (Whittier 1995).¹

Finally, there is a bias in the source material used to construct dominant narratives of the women's movement. Ezekial found that histories based on primary-source material are lacking, and the existing narratives are often traced back to the same source, creating "an illusion of historiographic consensus" (Ezekial 2002:ix).

2.2 PARTICIPANT RECOLLECTIONS AND EXPERIENCES

Examining narratives can be an important tool for a sociologist. Lynn Davidman explains, "By placing individual experience within larger contexts, and by tracing the linkages between self and society, biography and history, sociology offers a broad perspective in which to understand

individuals' lives and the factors that shape us” (Davidman 1997:507). C. Wright Mills argues that the understanding of the larger historical scene is inextricably linked to the understanding of the lives of the participants in that scene (Mills 1959).

Javier Auyero adheres to this line of analysis in *Contentious Lives: Two Argentine Women, Two Protests, and the Quest for Recognition*. He examines the intersection of the life histories of two participants in Argentine uprisings with those episodes of contention. He shows how personal biography impacted their participation and, in turn, the subsequent impact of those uprisings on the participants' lives, making their stories “carriers of...the intersection of biography and history” (Auyero 2003:3). A goal of narrative collection and analysis is to uncover hidden insights into why participants enter into collective action and to get at the complexity of constructed meanings and collective understandings of those actions.

Scholars have found that narratives perform many functions. They help storytellers and audiences make sense of the world, they make experiences intelligible, and they define who we are, making sense of our choices and giving root to our identities (Auyero 2003; Davidman 1997; Nepstad 2001; Polletta 1998; Mills 1959).

Narratives can help scholars unearth connections between movements. Francesca Polletta argues that stories by social movement participants “have rich potential for illuminating features of the emergence, trajectories and consequences of movements that are not yet well understood” (Polletta 1998:419). Polletta posits that we are used to just accepting story beginnings as they are told but that this may cause us to “fail to question the chronological starting point of a narrative and ignore prior causes” (Polletta 1998: 440). Narrative analysis can help uncover the hidden origins of social movement waves, or the legacies from which participants draw. James C. Scott discusses the “infrapolitics of dissent” that can be found in movement narratives, discovering

that participants of the civil rights movement located their grievances much earlier than scholars previously thought, stretching back to Africans' enslavement (Scott 1992).

Some scholars argue that sociologists do not pay enough attention to the political socialization of movement participants, or they rely on assumptions. But understanding how actors come to adopt ideology, how it is formed and transmitted, is important if we are to understand the larger movements and its historical ideological ties (Zald 2000). Biographical narratives provide an opportunity to analyze the life processes of the participants.

Personal stories can provide insight into the reasons for initial and continued movement participation. Doug McAdam studied the relationship between the experience of Freedom Summer participants and the political life course subsequently taken by those participants and found that gender is a powerful mediator in social life. He believes that female Freedom Summer participants were more likely than men to be politically involved later in their lives because their prior involvement helped them overcome traditional gender expectations which enabled them to persevere through sexist opposition, deepening their commitment to justice (McAdam 1992). He does not explicitly address the concept of the importance of locating oneself in a movement but it is something worth exploring. Women's liberation movement historian Alice Echols argues that the rise of the draft resistance focus that dominated the anti-war movement following Freedom Summer was a semi-conscious attempt by whites, specifically white male leaders, to reframe a struggle in terms of self-location. Whites had been challenged by calls to leave the South and fight where they were, geographically and socially. This new focus added yet another layer of alienation onto women's participation as they were again encouraged to stand by their men for the greater good, which could be illustrated in popular slogans such as, "Women say yes to men who say no" (Echols 1989).

Narrative analysis can reveal whether the perceived self-location of a participant in a movement is an indication of continuing and future involvement. The women's liberation movement followed Freedom Summer and the subsequent anti-war movement. The later anti-nuke movement, that women continued participation in, had a strong feminist foundation from the start. It seems that a newfound central identity could be what sustained involvement years later and is at least as important as repeated experience with oppression, and practice overcoming traditional gender expectations, in these reconstructed biographies. Narrative analysis might provide insight into these questions of identity.

Personal narratives can challenge dominant explanations. Capturing the meanings that participants of collective action give to their experiences can uncover emphases and recollections that are radically different from those focused on by social movement scholars (Polletta 2006). Furthermore, examining participants' accounts of movement trajectories – looking at why splits occurred and what actions followed – can reveal hidden dynamics that theories based in logic or assumption might miss. For example, Polletta found that the participatory democracy notion put forth by Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in the early '60s was abandoned mid-decade – not because it had been tried and failed but, rather, because opponents, in favor of centralization, had been successful at connecting the concept to demeaning criticisms of the students (they were idealistic, unorganized). These undesirable qualities stood in for the practice and helped undermine those who promoted it, a concept she refers to as metonymy (Polletta 2006). A closer examination of internal dynamics and micro-processes might reveal new explanations for why and how social movements took a certain path, and reasons for successes and failures.

The fallibility of memory and subjective nature of personal experience is a tension that will exist when incorporating personal experiences into social research. However, as Auyero puts it, we are only ever able to understand an approximation of what occurred and that this is not a problem but, rather, the point and reason for utilizing narrative in the first place. He quotes Beth Roy on the subject: "...how that experience is formulated, remembered, and retold tells the hearer something beyond 'what happened,' which we cannot in any case know and which did not in any case happen, since what happened happened to many different people differently" (Auyero 2003:12). The subjective experience and recounting is actually a benefit. He explains, "[it] is extremely valuable because it provides a window into the interests of the teller, the desires and dreams beneath those interests" (Auyero 2003:184), the "errors, inventions, and myths lead us through and beyond facts to their meanings" (Portelli 1991:1).

In some situations, a narrative analysis approach may be even more advantageous for sociologists than other data collection methods. Polletta says, "[if] social life is always already storied, whether selves, temporality, and social relations are fundamentally narrative in structure...then narrative can capture the determinants and consequences of social action better than non-narrative and static sociological concepts like 'society' or 'structure'" (Polletta 1998:439). However, Polletta contends that important analyses and perspectives are gleaned from non-narrative data, too. Combined with a variety of forms of research, narratives can aid in a more holistic understanding of a movement.

2.3 VARIATIONS IN HISTORICAL LOCATION

The women's movement of the 1960s and 1970s is often referred to as the "Second Wave." The "First Wave" is said to have occurred in the late 19th and early 20th century, and revolved around the struggle for suffrage. As the dominant explanation goes, the women's equality portion of the movement claims the earlier suffrage struggle as its historical counterpart. Militant suffragists supposedly kept the movement alive during its abeyance (Rupp and Taylor 1987). The beliefs and practices of the women's liberation movement are said to have sprung out of the New Left (Evans 1979; Meyer and Whittier 1994). This tendency adopted the prefigurative, participatory democracy values of the New Left, furthering a vision beyond simple reform, and directed at an audience beyond the industrial working class.

However, historical similarities exist that raise questions about whether radical feminists of the Second Wave had more in common with other radical movements that came before and existed alongside the First Wave. For example, Nancy Cott argues that by the 1910s there were feminists preaching and practicing a feminism that may have prefigured women's liberation; the Greenwich Village Feminists promoted female self-assertion, challenged cultural gender notions, and were fiercely committed to radical politics (Cott 1987). Anarchist feminists, such as Emma Goldman, Lucy Parsons and Voltarine de Cleyre, had been writing about and agitating for women's liberation during the 19th and early 20th century. But they were not followers of Marx; they were critiquing the hierarchical practices and programs of the Old Left before the New Left emerged. And they did not consider themselves to be part of the First Wave, nor did they subscribe to many of the reformist goals of the First Wavers.

A well-known characteristic of women's liberation is the ethos, "the personal is the political" (Echols 1989). Consciousness-raising (CR) groups were formed by women to

“reinterpret personal experiences in political terms” (Taylor and Whittier 1992:119). Radical feminist practices placed a renewed emphasis on personal, individual experiences and grievances, connecting them to a communitarian struggle for collective liberation, and arguing the two were inextricably linked. The underlying premise is, in fact, quite similar to a belief promoted and acted upon by 19th century anarchists. Mikhail Bakunin is famous for his dictum, “Liberty without socialism is privilege and injustice; socialism without liberty is slavery and brutality” (Leier 2006:213). Women’s liberationists of the 1970s and anarchists at the turn of the century recognized the importance of a struggle that recognized both individual and collective justice.

Anarchism as an explicit political philosophy developed in the 19th century, aiming to create a society without economic, political or social hierarchies. It encompasses theories and attitudes that reject capitalism and compulsory government. An anarchist society would be a directly democratic, free society capable of maximizing human potential and freedom within a framework of collective responsibility, mutual aid and solidarity (McKay 2008). In the late 1990s, a contemporary anarchist movement emerged out of the broadly defined struggle for global justice. Participants of this movement continue the task of the classical anarchists to prefigure a new society by practicing alternative relations and maintaining a challenge to hierarchy that emphasizes an interconnection of oppressions. However, the roots of anarchism as a basic idea of unimposed order run deeper than their modern manifestations today – even prior to the 19th century – and continue to hold promise as an alternative to the structures of domination that exist in our society today (Bamyeh 2009).

According to feminist historian Alice Echols, “Whereas liberal feminism sought to include women in the mainstream, radical feminism embodied a rejection of the mainstream

itself. And while liberal feminists defined the problem as women's exclusion from the public sphere, radical feminists focused on the sexual politics of personal life" (Echols 1989:15). Participants of the women's liberation movement sought to deconstruct social, political and economic hierarchies through prefigurative practices that were influenced by the past and instrumental in shaping gender relations today.

It seems the theoretical underpinnings of anarchism have much in common with the professed characteristics of the New Left and women's liberation, despite the lack of recognition of their influence by New Left historians. According to Echols, "The radicalism of the '60s was less concerned with reforming society than with developing forms that would prefigure the utopian community of the future. Thus there was little interest in electoral politics and enormous interest in creating political processes that would maximize individual participation and equalize power. Anxious to avoid the 'manipulated consent' that they felt typified American politics, '60s radicals struggled to develop alternatives to hierarchy and centralized decision-making" (Echols 1989:16). Due to sexism within the civil rights and anti-war groups of the New Left, many participants of the women's liberation movement broke away with a strong commitment to these new practices, experimenting with forms of consensus decision-making and horizontal organization, and putting forth sharp critiques of hierarchical systems of control.

Where is the theoretical overlap with explicitly anarchist feminist writers and activists of the First Wave? Where are the departures? Radical feminists who came out of the civil rights movement became politicized through experience as well as Simone de Beauvoir's writings (Brownmiller 1999). Was de Beauvoir's challenge to hierarchy informed by previous anarchist theory? How did early Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee women volunteers – who later went on to jumpstart the Second Wave of feminism – come to choose and promote one

radical ideology over another? Were feminist anarchists post-1940 participating in activities that might be looked at as sustaining the movement during what some might consider a cleavage, as they certainly weren't participating in the League of Women Voters, or the National Woman's Party? Examining the literature and narratives of participants of the women's liberation movement of the 1960s and '70s, and exploring their radical influences, could elucidate a thread between the emergence of women's liberation and earlier liberation-based movements.

2.4 IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH

This study seeks to challenge dominant explanations of the women's liberation movement. By reconstructing a history of the women's liberation movement in Pittsburgh during the 1970s and examining narratives by movement participants, I investigate whether the current explanations are representative of the movement in Pittsburgh. I will also explore whether the movement was a radical strand of a new feminist wave, as dominant explanations claim, or simply a new wave of earlier feminist radicalism, an alternative historical perspective.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

To answer my research questions, I used data triangulation and interpretive epistemological perspectives. Triangulation is the strategy of collecting data from a variety of sources in order to minimize bias and maximize a more secure generality of explanations (Fielding and Fielding 1986; Maxwell 2005). An interpretive approach allows for an exploration of the meaning participants give to their experiences. This method allows the researcher to go beyond a simple account of events to examine the reality as constructed by the actors (Maxwell 2005).

In order to compare and contrast the women's liberation movement in Pittsburgh in the 1970s with accounts of the movement in larger cities during the same time period, I reconstructed a history, triangulating information from both written and oral sources. The variety of data sources included articles from Pittsburgh daily newspapers, movement news sources and organization memorabilia. I also conducted interviews to provide texture and supplementary documentary evidence for a richer reconstruction.

To examine the meanings participants give to their experiences, I used an interpretive epistemological stance in my interviews with movement members. This stance privileges the reality of the participants as the important perspective under analysis (Taylor & Bogdan 1998). I solicited their life histories to understand how people experience and process today the memories they have of the past. Analyzing participants' narratives uncovered the differences and similarities in transformation stories, their personal points of emphasis, and their individual

relationships to the collective beliefs and practices that are commonly considered characteristic of the women's movement. The interviews also allowed for an investigation into a theoretical and practical link between the women's liberation movement and earlier movements for liberation. The questions allowed for inquiry into the practices utilized by participants, as well as their underlying beliefs and ideologies. I was able to probe the participants' recollections of influences that impacted their individual movement participation, as well as their perspectives on the origins of liberatory beliefs and praxis of the movement.

3.1 DEFINING THE SAMPLE

In this section, I detail the written and oral sources that I drew from for this study.

3.1.1 Written Sources

First, I examined the following Pittsburgh social movement newspapers and literature. The *Pittsburgh Fair Witness*, published from 1970 to 1973, was a popular counter-culture newspaper utilized by women's liberation movement participants and other members of the New Left. The *Allegheny Feminist*, published from 1976 to 1981, was a communications and networking tool for feminists throughout Allegheny County. I perused materials in the Susanna Downie collection at the University of Pittsburgh Archives Service Center. Downie was active in the Pittsburgh Feminist Network and her files concentrate on local Pittsburgh organizations. I also examined other resources, including magazines, newsletters, pamphlets, flyers and posters, preserved by women who were active in the movement in Pittsburgh during the 1970s. One of

these newsletters was *Synthesis*, the communications organ of the University of Pittsburgh Women's Center. I also obtained articles from the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, a daily city newspaper, for reports on major events cited by movement participants.

I chose the *Fair Witness*, *Synthesis*, and the *Allegheny Feminist* as the three movement news sources to examine because they were frequently cited by my informants as the popular forums for debate and discussion in the women's liberation movement. They also cover the range of the 1970s, excepting a short period of time following the demise of the *Fair Witness* and the inception of *Synthesis*. The miscellaneous memorabilia I was able to inspect came from informants, interviewees and contacts whom I discuss below.

3.1.2 Oral Sources

Next, I assembled a pool of five informants and five interviewees to supplement documentary evidence. I conducted in-depth, semi-structured, one-on-one interviews, that spanned between two and four hours, with a snowball sample of five women who were active in the women's liberation movement in Pittsburgh between 1969 and 1981. I identified these participants through personal connections and informants. I drew from networks I built during my time as an employee at the Thomas Merton Center, a Pittsburgh peace and justice organization with members who were active in Leftist social movements in the region since the 1960s. I also drew on the contacts I made through my own participation in social justice movements in Pittsburgh from 2000-2010.

The informants were contacts I made through my social movement participation who were active in the women's liberation movement or the New Left in Pittsburgh in the 1970s. I collected information from them through face-to-face and phone conversations, as well as

through e-mail. I ultimately did not choose these informants to be interviewees because two did not identify the women's movement as their main focus in the 1970 (they identified more closely with the labor movement and socialist groups that were not explicitly feminist), two were too busy for longer interviews, and one man was involved in the women's movement – which I will discuss in more detail below.

The five participants I chose as interviewees are women who were active in a variety of efforts in the women's movement in Pittsburgh in the 1970s. I sought out women who self-identified as having been part of the radical tendency within the movement that was fighting for systemic change, rather than (or in addition to) reforms. See appendix A for my screening script. All identified as members of the radical, autonomous or liberation strands of the women's movement during this time period. I followed the logic of Nancy Whittier who, in her study of radical feminists in Ohio, was careful not to construct movement participants' identities for them:

“The category of radical feminist is more usefully understood as an identity that is constructed by activists, and is subject to debate and redefinition, than as a historically constant ideology. My concern is not to classify organizations and individuals according to whether they adhere to a particular definition of radical feminism but rather to understand the changing beliefs and activities associated with this sector of the women's movement” (Whittier 1995:5).

For this reason, I did not provide an exact definition of the participants I was looking to interview. I instead allowed the participants to classify themselves and to construct the meaning of radical activity in Pittsburgh in the 1970s from their own experiences and perceptions. I also did not identify or seek out people who had been members of specific groups or activities in a further attempt to limit my influence and preconceptions. I ultimately chose the interviewees based on: 1) their self-identification as part of the radical strand, 2) their involvement in Pittsburgh during the 1970s and 3) the seeming uniqueness of the background and group activity

information that they provided about themselves. In regards to this last point, my goal was to interview movement members who were involved in a variety of activities to be able to cover a wide range of the women's liberation movement community.

My research included information from men who were involved in women's liberation activities. One of my informants was a male who was active in efforts to dismantle patriarchy with other men, and led workshops to teach men how to fight violence against women. This was an experience that was certainly unique from many other participants I spoke with. However, I chose to focus on five women because their narratives would be more comparable, given their shared gender oppression and central positions as women in a movement for women's liberation. Additionally, participants related the relatively low involvement of men in the movement in Pittsburgh. Thus, the inclusion of a man would be privileging a very small minority experience.

All interviewees were white women. Conversations with interviewees and informants about the racial-ethnic constituency of the Pittsburgh movement indicated that it was a majority white community, and that Leftist women of color were mainly involved in struggles for racial equality and liberation. An additional obstacle I encountered was the common response that so many women who identified with the radical, liberation tendency have passed away or moved away and lost contact with the women who remained in the Pittsburgh area. This made it less likely that I would come into contact with a woman of color who had been active in the movement, as there was a relatively small pool, 30-40 years ago at the height of the movement, to begin with. I did not inquire about the class background or sexuality of the interviewees before deciding to interview them. This information did become apparent in the narratives, however. See Table 1 for interviewee demographics.

Table 1. Interviewee Demographics

Participant	Age	Race	Sexuality	Main Activities during the 1970s	Years in Pittsburgh
Olivia	65	white	came out as a lesbian in 1974	Pittsburgh Radical Women’s Union, New American Movement, socialist-feminist study group, socialist-feminist blues band	1970-1976
Patricia	72	white	heterosexual	New American Movement, Save Our Selves, Take Back the Night	From the late ‘60s until the late ‘70s
Barbara	In her 60s	white	lesbian	Women’s Studies, American Women in Psychology, Lesbian Feminist Study Clearinghouse, Feminist Karate Union, Karate Women, Take Back the Night	From 1976 to present
Rose	Between 62 and 71	white	heterosexual	<i>Fair Witness</i> , New American Movement, Wobbly Joe’s, Pittsburgh Working Women, Save Our Selves, Gay Pride Parade	From 1969 to present
Evelyn	60	white	heterosexual	Pittsburgh Action Against Rape, Wobbly Joe’s, performed at Wild Sisters coffeehouses, <i>Fair Witness</i> , Women for Racial and Economic Equality, New American Movement, National Organization for Women	Pittsburgh native

This table shows the age and race of interviewees, as well as their main activities during the 1970s and the years they lived in Pittsburgh.

I began with five participants. The goal was to reach redundancy with the data I sought so I planned to expand my sample size as necessary. On one hand, the information I received – particularly in regards to a historical reconstruction – indicated that I was beginning to achieve saturation of the field. On the other hand, I became aware of more potential participants as the interviews were taking place and cannot confidently say that there is no further information to gather. Additionally, in regards to examining meaning-making in the participants’ narrative

analysis, five proved to be an adequate sample size because the interviews lasted between 2 and 4 hours, yielding a large amount of data – any more might have overwhelmed the scope of this study. It took some time for interviewees to warm-up and recollect their experiences from the 1970s. Once they got started, however, they had so much to say. One interview, for example, resulted in a 58-page transcript.

As mentioned above, I believe my sample was fairly representative, demographically, of the women's liberation movement in Pittsburgh, for a historical reconstruction. I, however, do not believe representation is a main goal in the collection of individual interpretations of experiences of collective action. The analysis is important because it allows the researcher to approach new understandings that may have been previously hidden or under-explored. Javier Auyero discovered, in his study of the life experiences of two Argentine women participants in contentious action, that audiences – consisting mainly of sociologists – wanted to know about the representativeness of the women he chose. Auyero replied:

[They] incarnate the many ways in which contention and everyday life, popular struggle and biography, intertwine. [The two women] represent, in ways I couldn't quite have anticipated when I began this research, some of the modes in which protesters' (young or old, men or women) experiences and memories of collective struggle are sunk in intricate seams of biographical issues. The question of how many people like [them] are out there is here replaced by the investigation of the forms in which the life histories of protesters are linked to their participation in contention (Auyero 2003:203).

Following Auyero's lead, I elicited accounts of the varying life trajectories and circumstances that led women to the movement. Their memories of the collective struggles emphasized the personal nature of their participation, their individual beliefs, and their reasons for being involved. Although some social movement scholars have delved into this area of the intersection of biography and protest (Jasper 1997), particularly the impact social movements

have on participants' lives (McAdam 1999, Whittier 1995), Auyero argues that it is as an under-explored realm for sociologists. I sought to contribute to this area of research.

I chose to focus on the period between 1969 and 1981. Although the first Pittsburgh National Organization for Women (NOW) chapter was founded in 1967, oral and written sources that I consulted cited the birth of the radical, autonomous tendency in Pittsburgh as stemming from the consciousness-raising prevalent in the city two years later. I ended with 1981 for several reasons. First, the social and political atmosphere in the United States in the 1980s was widely viewed as becoming significantly more conservative. Interviewees, informants and movement literature all cited this as a period of movement decline in Pittsburgh, too. A new cycle of feminist activism emerged to battle this shift. More resources and energy were devoted to professional and electoral efforts in Pittsburgh and around the country. Some social movement scholars argue that a radical strand persisted in lesbian feminist communities in places such as Columbus, Ohio (Taylor and Whittier 1992). However, my research for this study did not uncover a similar phenomenon in Pittsburgh and further research is necessary to determine its existence.² I chose to focus on the period interviewees and informants described as the radical and autonomous women's liberation movement in Pittsburgh and bounded my research with the final issue of the *Allegheny Feminist* in 1981.³

3.2 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

In one-on-one interviews, I talked casually with the participants, encouraging them to take the lead in emphasizing what was important to them about the movement and their lives and minimize my own influence. I conducted the interviews in a semi-structured manner, using an

interview template (see appendix B) as a topic guide, to encourage interviewees to focus on their personal recollections. I allowed them to talk freely and asked for elaboration when necessary. The guide was divided into two sections: the first part delved into their pre-1970s life histories, and the events and practices of the women's movement; the second part focused on the participants' underlying beliefs. The purpose of this was to acquire data for the research questions, allowing participants to reconstruct their biographies, movement histories, recollections of the practices and structures of the movement, and their personal ideologies.

When I contacted the participants for interviews, I asked them to choose an interview location that would be convenient and comfortable for them, reminding them that the interview would be conducted as an informal conversation and likely last approximately two hours. Two of the interviewees chose their own homes and one interviewee chose a coffee shop adjacent to her place of employment. Two interviewees were currently living in other cities at the time of the interview; one chose to do a phone interview and the other chose to answer questions electronically via e-mail. I also explained that I was interested in what they identified as influential memories and experiences, and encouraged them to think about their past in preparation for the interview.

With the exception of the out-of-town interviews, I recorded the sessions on a digital voice recorder and transcribed each one.

To allow the participants to talk as openly and candidly as possible about a movement with often heated, emotionally-charged fractures along personal and ideological lines, I gained exempt research status from the Institutional Review Board and assured anonymity to the individual respondents. Throughout this study, pseudonyms are used to protect the identity of the participants.

I was conscious of my status as a white, 33-year-old woman who was previously known to some participants as a feminist social justice activist and Pittsburgh-native. The participants who were not already privy to this information were made aware of it by other interviewees and informants who referred them to me; they included this information, as if for referential vouching purposes, in e-mail introductions. I am aware that as a researcher I bring “characteristics, a history, a gender, class, race, and social attributes” into the field (Olesen 2003:350). Although my age prevented me from having complete insider status, my social location as a feminist woman with a social justice background in Pittsburgh likely gave me access to participants who may not have been as eager to share their beliefs and experiences with someone of unknown political and experiential standing.

For data collection of my written sources, I obtained materials from the interviewees at the time of the interview sessions. I took extensive notes on the information in the archives and publication collections, and I photocopied select materials for closer scrutiny and repeat examination.

3.3 ANALYSIS

I began by extracting historical recollections about the women’s movement from the interview transcripts to aid in a timeline reconstruction. Next, for the narrative analysis of experience interpretation and beliefs, I inductively coded the interviewees’ narratives, using open coding in a qualitative analysis software program. I wrote memos during this process to capture my thinking at the time and to help facilitate analysis (Maxwell 2005). After identifying common themes, I carried out deductive coding of each interview, using physical coding methods. The

goal of this type of deduction is to rearrange the data into categories that allow for comparison and the generation of new theory (Maxwell 2005). The physical coding consisted of highlighting, cutting and pasting chunks of interview transcripts and notes onto large poster boards to allow for a visual analysis and careful examination of the narratives' relationships. Chapter 5 reports the coded themes and findings from this analysis.

For the narrative analysis, I followed the Grounded Theory tradition to inductively build theoretical concepts from data collected from women's movement participants (Corbin and Strauss 2008). The questions I asked and the influences I explored were constructed as a challenge to dominant narratives, thus it was important to minimize an imposed movement framework and instead tease out new theories from the information that I received.

3.4 CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

One limitation of my research was the time constraints on the completion of my Master's Thesis. Three potential participants were unavailable for interviews until after the data collection process was to be completed. Additionally, due to the process of life history collection – the lengthy interviews and subsequent transcriptions – I was unable to expand my interview sample size and follow up on leads that may have produced more information on a wider variety of activities of the women's liberation movement.

During my data analysis phase, I noticed that the interviewee who opted to answer questions electronically provided the most succinct information. She relayed that she had time to think and reflect before answering the questions – she answered a few each day – so her responses were more precise, intentional and direct. The open-ended nature of the questions still

allowed for her own interpretations and for her to emphasize what mattered most to her. But this data collection method noticeably cut down on tangential asides and other tortuous, rhetorical devices rampant in the other interviews. Additionally, it avoided the lengthy task of transcription. If I were to recreate or expand on this project, I would seriously consider this as my main form of data collection. However, not all potential participants would have the time, ability or desire to write out their thoughts on such a lengthy questionnaire, which presents a limitation to this type of data collection. Another limitation is that interviewees might polish their thoughts, editing memories and experiences that appear inconsistent with other recollections. Or they may opt not to introduce material they may be unable to make sense of. This method loses the interaction of a real-time interview, in which the researcher can challenge, question and ask for clarification, capturing the recollections at the forefront of interviewees' minds.

There is a possibility that the inclusion of one carefully premeditated narrative in my sample may have skewed the findings. However, I did not notice a content difference in the information provided, only a variation in its concise form, which allowed for greater ease in coding and analysis. For consistency, I could have chosen to only contrast and compare the narratives that I obtained through one type of method. More research is necessary to determine whether the bias is significant.

Another limitation is that interpretive analysis, by nature, is inevitably shaded by the researcher's biases and worldview. Though I worked hard to retain the meaning of the participants' experiences from *their* social locations, the final product cannot be entirely separated from my own assumptions (Davidman 1997).

Additionally, possible bias exists with interviewees' retrospective accounts. Memory is inaccurate and decays over time. Some researchers find that people tend to store memories in

systematic ways for easy recall, “But these mnemonics are obviously mere abstractions—systematically distorted shorthand for an immense amount of data about behavior” (Bernard, Killworth, Kronenfeld & Sailor 1984: 508). Sometimes, people may present fabricated information in the absence of memory to make sense of an experience, accounting for what must have been. Interviewees may also provide answers according to cultural norms seeking to fulfill interviewers expectations. Scholars have sought to minimize these problems and maximize validity by collecting information independently and matching it to others’ accounts to achieve higher levels of accuracy (Bernard, et al 1984). As described above, I triangulated data with a variety of sources to approximate a historical reconstruction as accurately as possible.

3.5 RESEARCH ETHICS

As mentioned above, I received “exempt” status from the University of Pittsburgh’s Institutional Review Board (IRB). I notified all of the participants that their participation in this study was voluntary, that there are few risks to this research and that they may decline to answer any questions or conclude the interview at any time. In accordance with the IRB guidelines, I conducted all of the data collection personally, limited the interviews to one session per person, did not record any identifying information, and maintained all data in my private home office, accessible only to me.

4.0 WOMEN'S LIBERATION IN PITTSBURGH, 1969-1981

In June of 1970, an article appeared in the *Pittsburgh Fair Witness (FW)* questioning the gender gains that had been made over the past century and a half. The tone of the article was in keeping with the revolutionary spirit of the radical Leftist newspaper as well as the turbulent times around the nation. The Vietnam War was still raging and everywhere challenges were being posed to the state and its policies, its blatantly violent repression abroad and domestically in the streets, and its less visible policing of societal norms. The authors of this article, known only by their byline, "The Sisters," made the case that men and women are an oppressed majority that must struggle together to buck the assigned social roles and responsibilities. Criticizing the high school tracking system, the nuclear family structure, and the pressure to live up to physical beauty standards and adopt the correct characteristics to be desirable or motherly, The Sisters made connections between general discontent and gender oppression. They questioned what past victories meant: access to universities had not changed the expectation of becoming better lovers, mothers or housewives; many jobs were still not open to women; unequal pay abounded; no pay existed for the job of mother and housewife. "Our vote has won us years of unwanted wars made by a few rich and powerful men for their own benefit; it has not won us the basic right to things like child care centers for our children," wrote The Sisters. They called for a strong women's organization, "broad-based and unified."⁴

The Sisters were not the first to call for a women's movement in Pittsburgh. A year earlier, the radical strand of the women's liberation movement had already begun to emerge. According to another article in the *Fair Witness*, students at the University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon University came together to "rap" in consciousness-raising groups about "their place in society as females."⁵ Local chapters of the National Organization for Women (NOW) took root in Pittsburgh as early as 1967⁶ and boasted at least 19 chapters, plus a regional council coordinating committee, in Southwest Pennsylvania a decade later. The overarching Pennsylvania NOW purpose, listed in a local directory, was "to eliminate sexism and create a society in which each individual can live with dignity, security, and pleasure."⁷ Some locals adopted this mission, others modified it to include a promotion of equality (such as the First Pittsburgh NOW chapter), consciousness awakening or the elimination of racism and sexism. Although NOW may have constituted the earliest, explicitly feminist organization in Pittsburgh, women's liberation sentiment soon existed beyond the confines of the national organization's mission and there was a local desire to round out the movement and connect women's efforts to a more radical, systemic change. As the PRWU explained in 1970, "Until a few weeks ago, the only existing Women's Liberation groups in Pittsburgh were university/professional or middle-class based, dealing primarily within the context of women's rights in a capitalist society,"⁸ and that there was a need for an alliance that crossed class, race and culture lines.

Despite the earlier efforts on campus and by NOW, The Sisters were the first to try to unify a radical current in Pittsburgh. The first couple meetings that sprung from The Sisters' militant call attracted media workers, a teacher, a mother and a laundry worker, among others. By the fall of 1970, the group had become the Pittsburgh Radical Women's Union (PRWU) and attracted many participants who continued to carry on rap groups and organize public

demonstrations, childcare, health services and a newsletter. However, the PRWU existed less than a year and, according to another writer in the *Fair Witness*, its only lasting accomplishment was “personal change in the lives of its members – many of whom came there for help in making personal changes.”⁹

By the early 1970s, the women’s liberation movement blossomed in Pittsburgh. A women’s cultural festival and a symposium on feminism brought in liberation groups from other cities; a women’s newsletter began, dedicating their first issue to women’s relationship to war; KNOW Inc. was founded as Pittsburgh’s own feminist press¹⁰; the Pittsburgh Association for the Advancement of Women emerged; a Feminist Defense Collective discussed starting a rape counseling group; Pittsburgh Action Against Rape was founded; the Pittsburgh Free Clinic began a local patient advocacy program; and the pages of the *Fair Witness* provided a forum for information on the status of abortion legislation, discussions of medical pornography, and debates on race and contraception.¹¹

However, the period was not without internal struggle. By the end of 1972, a retrospective appeared in the *Fair Witness* looking back over the women’s liberation movement trajectory in Pittsburgh. The fall of the East End Women’s Center precipitated this analysis. The center was based in Pittsburgh’s East Liberty neighborhood and hosted women’s empowerment workshops and skill building, consciousness-raising, a free store, child care, speaking events, a feminist library, exploration into self-help medicine, and organizing for welfare rights. The article on the Center’s decline focused on the isolation many women’s groups in the city began to experience by the spring of 1971. Internal conflicts went unaddressed. They intensified and caused many efforts to be relatively short-lived. New groups were often unaware of each other and those that survived were disempowered by a seeming loss of support from the masses and

the increasing segmentation of the local women's movement. The Women's Center was one such attempt to patch the movement's fault lines. However, unresolved conflicts that had been brewing from the start, and discussed in more detail below, resulted in the untimely demise of the Center, six months after opening. The remaining Center resources were moved to an unused office in the Oakland Co-op building but when the building burned to the ground in August 1972, no one showed up to claim the surviving materials.¹²

By 1975, the University of Pittsburgh Women's Center opened, "serving individuals from the university community and the community of universities."¹³ The new Center's services included referrals to feminist health and legal services, a resource directory for women, a childcare exchange, counseling groups and sessions, and legislative information on women's issues. The Center published a newsletter, *Synthesis*, and housed a resource library and bulletin board that listed meetings and other notices to connect current and potential members of the women's movement.¹⁴

In 1976, the *Allegheny Feminist (AF)* took another stab at fostering unity among women's groups in Pittsburgh. Published by the Pittsburgh Feminist Network, the *AF* printed news, articles, events, and a directory of women-owned or feminist businesses (in a section called WOMANDOLLARS) and services on a monthly basis. The paper existed "to provide a communications medium for all feminists in Allegheny County."¹⁵ The first issue printed information on supporting women in prison, a self-help section, and an article about an upcoming NOW state convention, suggesting an attempt to conceive an even broader women's movement community, discussed in more detail below. The calendar of events noted the probability that the groups and happenings were overlooked or inadvertently left out of the issue.

The editors urged those groups to be in touch noting, “A network can’t exist in a vacuum. Let us hear from you!”¹⁶

By the time the *Allegheny Feminist* ceased publication in 1981, at least 75 organizations utilized it for visibility and networking. Some of these groups included the Feminist Writers Guild, the Women’s Center and Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh, a Lesbian Feminist Theatre Collective, the Feminist Karate Union and Karate Women, college campus women’s groups, a Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights, a Committee for the Equal Rights Amendment, efforts to support women on parole in finding steady employment, and women’s collectives within local radio stations, law firms, and industrial labor unions. Even the Center for the History of American Needlework, that promoted education about the role of needlework and textiles in women’s lives in American culture, was a part of the women’s movement community as patched together by the *Allegheny Feminist*. See appendix C for this comprehensive list of the organizations, their missions and activities.

One project, the Wild Sisters Coffeehouse, was a staple of the women’s movement community – and more specifically the lesbian feminist community – promoting women’s culture through music, poetry, drama and the visual arts. The collective floated around holding events at different venues each month but eventually found a home after purchasing Wobbly Joe’s, a bar in Pittsburgh’s South Side that was popular with the city’s New Left, especially the radical labor union community.¹⁷

Another organization sprouted from a conference on violence against women held at the downtown YWCA in May of 1977. Save Our Selves (SOS) began by bringing 170 people together to talk about ways women can “take their lives into their own hands and start fighting for their self-respect.”¹⁸ The group put on educational and empowerment workshops on rape and

domestic violence laws, pornography and sexual harassment. As one interviewee recalls, “we were...public agitators and educators, trying to raise consciousness and awareness and concern about things that the mainstream wasn’t addressing.” They also worked to set up self-defense classes in high-crime areas and were one of the initial sponsors of the very first Take Back the Night march in Pittsburgh, along with Pittsburgh Action Against Rape and Karate Women.¹⁹

In the fall of 1977, Pittsburgh saw its first concerted effort to take the night – and the streets – back from abusers, attackers, harassers, pornographers and rapists. More than 300 people marched downtown “to raise the issue of violence against women as a political crime, and put the city of Pittsburgh on notice that women here are determined to put an end to it.”²⁰ The organizers pointed to the economic, social and cultural root causes of sexual violence in their messaging around the event. They framed it not just as an “angry protest” but also “a celebration of the strength and spirit of women joining together to fight a common fight.” The event included demonstrations by Karate Women to prepare women both physically and mentally to be prepared to defend themselves. By 1979, the numbers in the streets for the annual TBTN march increased to 2,500. An addition to the event was the explicit connection to the role of pornography in perpetuating violence against women. Later marches toured the sex work industry lining downtown’s Liberty Avenue and a new group, Pittsburgh Women Against Pornography (PWAP), was born.²¹

PWAP (which later became Women Against Sexist Violence in Pornography and Media [WASV/PM]) put on slide shows of women in pornography, and facilitated accompanying analysis and discussion. The group’s tactics included picketing newsstands and bookstores that displayed or sold porn, letter writing and phone harassment campaigns directed at purveyors of misogynist materials, and demonstrated in front of movie openings, such as the screening of the

film “Windows,” a story of a woman who orchestrates the rape of another woman. The *Allegheny Feminist* reports that the picket successfully turned potential movie-goers away after talking with protesters. The group also established a “Womyn’s Tours of the Liberty Avenue district.” Its mission was “to provide a direct experience with pornography, its purveyors and its consumers,”²² pointing to the running theme present in the products and services – the objectification of women – and shedding light on the shadier side of the industry.²³

Another hot organizing issue in the late ‘70s and early ‘80s for feminists around the country was the ERA and Pittsburgh was no exception. Although the ERA had passed both houses of Congress in 1972, and Pennsylvania added a state ERA to its constitution by a large margin in a statewide referendum in 1971, the push for ratification continued in other states and Pittsburgh feminists lent their muscle to the struggle. The *Allegheny Feminist* regularly published legislative updates and bus trips for lobbying and demonstrations in other cities.

However, mobilization around the ERA should not indicate homogenous, uncritical support of the amendment. As a 1980 article in the *Allegheny Feminist* made clear, among the women from Pittsburgh who attended a Chicago ERA march, “Some of us went believing in the ERA and some of us not. All of us did feel that a defeat for the ERA would constitute a loss to the Women’s Movement both spiritually and politically.”²⁴ As in other cities, a feminist constituency existed that rejected the notion that an amendment reform – and all of the organizing energy that went into such an effort – was going to fundamentally change the unequal power relations between men and women (Echols 1989).

In Pittsburgh, the Lesbian Feminist Political Study Group of Pittsburgh took issue with the ERA march because of its connection to NOW. Despite NOW’s policy of openness and support of lesbian presence, members of the Study Group pointed to battles that had been waged

in NOW over the issue of lesbian visibility and claimed that they experienced exclusion and discrimination at the march. In an *AF* article, members of the group explained that they felt alienated over their frustrated attempts to secure an all-woman bus, and they had endured insults and allegations of sexism for such a request. They also took issue with the chosen bus company, Greyhound, whose customers included anti-choice, anti-ERA, and anti-lesbian groups. The Study Group experienced further estrangement at the march when it seemed that lesbians were getting second-class treatment when it came to contingent designation and framing of the demonstration message. They claimed there was a clear omission of lesbian visibility while spotlighting heterosexist institutions, which took the form of speakers claiming a “‘natural’ unity of male and female.” “The rally was a frightening denial of choice and the possible futures of womankind,” wrote the Study Group.²⁵

Another active and vocal sector of the Pittsburgh women’s liberation movement that held radical critiques was the socialist-feminist community. A number of different socialist organizations existed in Pittsburgh in the ‘70s, including Trotskyist and Leninist organizations that directed members to find jobs in the steel mills to, as one informant put it, “organize the workers toward the socialist revolution.” However, the New American Movement (NAM) seems to be the only group explicitly espousing socialist-feminism in the pages of the *Allegheny Feminist*, and in interviews. NAM began, on a national level, in 1972 by anti-war and women’s movement activists (Cohen 2010). Members rejected the need to organize a vanguard, unlike many other socialist groups of that time period, and concentrated on Marxist study and class-consciousness-raising. NAM chapters – including both men and women – existed in cities throughout the U.S. and members worked in their communities to raise socialist awareness and to support and organize around local labor issues. In Pittsburgh, NAM organized explicitly

feminist events such as international women's day celebrations, socialist-feminist study groups, concerts and other feminist cultural gatherings.²⁶ The group also worked on grounded socialist issues including, as one interviewee recalled, "the People's Power Project, which worked to protest escalating rates for electricity and gas, and was a force in getting lifeline rates for low-income people; the city budget campaign, which worked to make the Pittsburgh city budget fairer to low-income and working people, for example, by keeping city ambulance services from being cut; the Pittsburgh People's History slide show and calendar." An *AF* article describes the chapter as the only explicitly socialist-feminist organization in Pittsburgh, desiring "to be understood as revolutionaries who intend to transform both traditional socialism and bourgeois feminism."²⁷ According to one interviewee, the chapter boasted 40 people, slightly more men than women, but much of the leadership in the chapter came from women.

In 1973, a socialist-feminist study group was formed, by women in NAM, for the autonomous women's community – women who did not want to be in NAM because men were part of the group, or they simply did not have time for all the activities. The group lasted until 1975 and worked to educate themselves about socialist feminism. Another effort in this same political vein included a Pittsburgh Socialist Feminist Blues Band, which only lasted for one year. Women from NAM were also instrumental in the founding of Save Our Selves, described above.²⁸

Throughout the late 1970s, the pages of the *Allegheny Feminist* continued to report on feminist efforts and keep groups in contact with one another. In January of 1981, the *AF* editorial collective announced that it would cease publication and propose, at an upcoming networking conference at the downtown YWCA, that the paper officially become the network newsletter of the Pittsburgh feminist community, its new form to be determined later. The authors note the

growth and proliferation of the women's movement over the late 1970s, including the newfound interest in feminism of more conservative groups. However, citing the increasingly Right-leaning social and political atmosphere, they stressed a greater need for solidarity and resource sharing in the face of such growth. The upcoming conference would concentrate on setting up a structure for more effective communication.

These actions are in accordance with a nationwide trend, as scholars refer to the 1980s as a negative political opportunity structure or a defensive period for the women's movement (Ferree and Hess 2000; Staggenborg 1998; Taylor and Whittier 1997). The *AF* article celebrates the "increasing legitimacy" of the movement and explains, "With conservatives in the White House and in control of Senate, feminists face even tougher battles than ever in getting their issues before the public and taken seriously by legislators."²⁹ A major forum for the feminist community in Pittsburgh over the latter half of the 1970s, the *Allegheny Feminist* was articulating a decisive, directional turn for greater acceptance of equality initiatives through institution-building and electoral work, and an accompanying assimilation of the movement into mainstream society. This mirrored another trend across the rest of the United States during the same time period; liberal feminist groups became the most prominent face of the movement with their high-profile legislative campaigns (Echols 1989). Scholars note the importance of campaigns and centralized coalition efforts in sustaining movements, keeping them politicized, and strengthening connections (Staggenborg and Lecomte 2009). The Pittsburgh Feminist Network is a good example; organizers realized the need for a stronger coalition effort beyond a newspaper (the *Allegheny Feminist*) in the face of greater political threats and possible movement decline and moved to formalize those ties in a network. They recognized that formalization can actually facilitate coalition work (Staggenborg 1988).

During this period, radical feminism gave way to a quieter, less visible cycle of change, sustained by lesbian feminist communities in some cities. Taylor and Whittier examined generational identity shifts in feminist communities and found that members were socialized “into a collective oppositional consciousness that channel[ed] women into a variety of actions geared toward personal, social, and political change” (Taylor and Whittier 1992:109). This study could be extended into the mid-1980s and beyond to determine whether radical feminism was carried on through lesbian feminist communities in Pittsburgh.

4.1 PITTSBURGH WOMEN’S LIBERATION V. EXISTING HISTORIES

This history of the Pittsburgh women’s liberation movement challenges some of the existing literature, as I predicted in chapter 2. First, considering whether a bias toward the equality strand of the movement exists, I found that a variety of feminist efforts existed in Pittsburgh during the 1970s – some with an explicit rejection of professional organization and institutions. These findings are similar to Nancy Whittier’s results in her study of radical feminist organizing in Columbus, Ohio, and support her argument that radical feminist studies must be examinations of local communities, given their decentralized nature. The ephemeral and less formalized nature of these groups resulted in spotty documentation but it makes them no less integral to the history of the movement. Their exclusion from, or devaluation in, movement analysis would likely result in incomplete and over-simplified conclusions about the dynamics and relations in the women’s movement of this region.

Through interviews and archival research, I learned that Pittsburgh NOW chapters kept the most complete and thorough records of their work, and were the longest-lasting, explicitly

activist women's groups in the city. However, further research is necessary to determine whether all of NOW's success claims are entirely accurate. For example, one interviewee vividly recounted a version of the founding of Pittsburgh Action Against Rape (PAAR) that greatly conflicts with a claim on the current PAAR website that the organization "was founded in 1972 by the Pittsburgh Chapter of the National Organization of Women in response to a series of rapes." The interviewee learned about rape crisis centers at an out-of-state conference and came back to Pittsburgh determined to start one. She did outreach and ended up with a motley crew. Together, the small group founded PAAR:

So when I came back [to Pittsburgh] I found out there was nothing like that. So I started putting index cards up on bulletin boards all over Pitt saying, "We need a rape crisis center and if you're interested call this number." And I can't say I was flooded with calls. Some of the calls were creepy and I ended up with a fairly bizarre committee of people who were committed to this, but somewhere along the line I had internalized that you don't run off and do something like this by yourself. You have to have a group working with you. And I thought, "Well, it's not the group I would pick but here's the group that we have."

Interviews and conversations with informants indicated that many women in Pittsburgh who remained in the movement throughout the 1970s and '80s were eventually either recruited into NOW or ended up co-sponsoring events with NOW, regardless of their earlier – and, in some cases, ongoing – critiques of the organization. It would be interesting to look into whether this led to any historical revisionism as, for example, the above interviewee who discussed her efforts toward founding PAAR was one of these eventual NOW members. In another case, the *Fair Witness* cites KNOW as an off-shoot of a university group³⁰; however, NOW also claims founder status of this feminist press.

My findings also support the claim by Judith Ezekial of urban bias in existing movement histories. The narratives relayed by women's liberation participants in larger cities do not characterize the movement in Pittsburgh. Historian Alice Echols claims that, from the very start

of the women's liberation movement, a split existed and widened over the early years between two groups that became known as the "politicos" and the "feminists." Politicos were women who came to the movement through the New Left. They maintained strong ties to their male comrades and saw women's liberation as a response to the sexism within the larger anti-war movement. They wanted to work on gender relations in addition to anti-capitalism and anti-imperialism. The feminists were not necessarily aligned with the existing Leftist groups, they drew from Black Power ideas of liberation and autonomy, and considered the smashing of patriarchy a task to extend far beyond the New Left. Feminists were not necessarily against capitalism – or at least did not see it as the root of the problem – and sometimes came off as dismissing the Left in general rather than critiquing the Left from an allied position. Politicos saw capitalism and/or "the system" as the underlying evil, and some saw patriarchy as inextricably linked to economic and social stratification.

However, in Pittsburgh, the early push for a women's liberation movement came from women within the Left, yet called for a united autonomy. The intent was not to focus solely on the sexism within the movement but to organize Pittsburgh women across different backgrounds and levels of consciousness against the oppression they were facing as women, an oppression that still had its roots in capitalism and imperialism. This effort – with its New Left origins but autonomous, broader focus – seems to have been a bridge of the politico/ feminist divide recorded by Echols in New York and Chicago. It signals, rather, a desire to remain ideologically separate from the professional organizations – a divide that existed in larger urban centers but took on a seemingly far less antagonistic character in Pittsburgh. Except for critical opinions of NOW expressed in interviews (see chapter 5), and *Fair Witness* and *Allegheny Feminist*

commentaries, there did not seem to be openly hostile counter-organizing of the sort that existed in New York and Washington, D.C., for example, in the early 1970s.

One could theorize about why this was, considering the size of the city. As one interviewee described the women's movement in relation to the New Left in Pittsburgh, "That was a miniscule part of a miniscule movement." Individuals with differing ideas may not have had the luxury of separate scene space or interpersonal distance to maintain entirely separate factions; having to confront similar issues and work in the same spaces may have resulted in enough overlap and continued bonds that didn't exist in cities where scenes could thrive isolated from one another. This is an issue that deserves further exploration. However, one thing is known that may have played a role in the politico/feminist hybridized version; the women's liberation movement in Pittsburgh began after the initial formations in other cities.³¹ According to Echols, "Although the politico-feminist fracture was already somewhat in evidence that fall in Chicago and New York groups, the January 1968 Jeannette Rankin Brigade protest in Washington, D.C. marked the first of many serious disagreements between these factions" (Echols 1989:54). The dust may have somewhat settled, or have at least become a less important concern to women who were inspired and eager to work on gender issues in their respective cities.

Politicos and feminists together constituted the early Pittsburgh movement, initially carving out a separate, radical, autonomous space from the more formal organizations, to realize a "common oppression as women, workers, freaks, wives, mothers."³² For example, Pittsburgh Radical Women's Union participants discussed plans to set up their own childcare center, a library for and about women, discussion groups, Karate classes, and collective living and working situations for women, while hatching plans for "dealing with the pig media."³³

Congruent with scholars' accounts of the radical/liberal feminist divide discussed in chapter 2, the PRWU placed great importance on autonomy from the state. They explained in an article, "social change lies not with the United States government, but with us"³⁴ and they refer to the U.S. government as "racist, sexist, and fascist"³⁵ for controlling women's lives. The government "promises no freedoms; it never has,"³⁶ they maintained. Early Pittsburgh liberationists viewed women's liberation as human liberation; each individual has the right to define their lives, their needs, and a new society to meet those needs. "In order to build that kind of society," they claimed, "it is necessary to talk about ending capitalism, imperialism and racism as well as chauvinism or, for that matter, any force that prevents people from dealing with each other as human beings."³⁷

Pointing to the explicit division between PWRU and NOW, and the early radical/liberal split, is not to downplay the important legislative and legal work that professional institutions and local chapters of national groups achieved over this time period in Pittsburgh. The landmark victories that occurred in Pittsburgh undoubtedly had very positive implications for an increase in equal treatment of women that we enjoy today. For example, members of NOW worked to pass a city ordinance through the Pittsburgh Human Rights Commission forbidding sex discrimination in employment practices. They subsequently were able to pressure the *Pittsburgh Press* to cease publication of their gender segregated "Help Wanted" classified advertisements. A 1973 U.S. Supreme Court decision upheld the ordinance, ruling that the ads were a violation of First Amendment rights, kick-starting a push for advertisement desegregation across the nation.³⁸ The examination of ideological movement divisions is simply to remedy the current lack of recognition of these less formal groups and expanded community, as an initial foray into their complex role in the women's movement in Pittsburgh during the 1970s.

The *Fair Witness* painted a picture of unity among the anti-capitalist Left in these early years, and attempts to keep unity by recognizing the connections between micro and macro grievances, stressing the importance of solidarity between women and men, Blacks and whites. The paper provided a forum for debates on these topics. One article printed a call from Black men to Black women to reject birth control on racist, genocidal grounds – that it constituted a white supremacist sterilization – and then printed a counterpoint explaining, from a Black feminist woman’s perspective, the importance economic and social autonomy, and sexual and reproductive freedom. Other articles argued for women to unite across racial ethnic groups and class lines to achieve necessary political power, called for ending racist politics by recognizing white skin privilege and the role it plays in racial subjugation, and concerns about how the movement could not afford divisiveness.³⁹

Another *Fair Witness* spread contained an article by a man about his fears related to the increasing separatism, calling for other men to deal with their chauvinism so women won’t want to separate and an accompanying article, by a woman, on the need for gender segregation, yet recognition of the dangers, issuing an ultimatum for men to deal with their sexism and become allies. “Separatism is negative,” the author stated. “There is a positive way.”⁴⁰ This unity push may have been in response to the separatism that had already taken hold in other cities. The gender separatism didn’t largely occur in Pittsburgh until a bit later and may have played a role in the formation of the Pittsburgh Men’s Collective, in 1976, “to encourage and support men who are dealing with the changes that the Women’s Movement has brought about, as well as to be a supportive resource for the women’s struggles.”⁴¹

The racial divisions that characterized the women’s movement in many other parts of the country seemed to have existed in Pittsburgh from the start, however, becoming more

pronounced as the decade continued. The Pittsburgh movement continued to discuss and work on the divisions. For example, a 1978 issue of the *Allegheny Feminist* was focused entirely on Black women and one article asked, “Why so few Black women in the movement?”⁴²

Efforts were also made toward maintaining a diverse unity in action messaging and group identity to accommodate differing ideological perspectives. For example, a series on rape that appeared in the *Fair Witness* discussed defense tactics and what to expect with doctors and law enforcement. It addressed both the audience that would seek police engagement as well as those who did not want to involve the law, citing efforts in Berkeley of women’s militias who dealt with rapists “in their own ways.”⁴³ In another example, the PRWU disrupted Mayor Pete Flaherty’s address at a public “Women’s Rights Day” event. During the proceedings a PRWU spokeswoman addressed the presence of men, as well as the presence of the media, at the event. Her critique made clear that some women were unhappy with both but a compromise could be reached: “...most of us are not going to exclude men from our daily lives. But if there are to be men present, then they should be dealing with their chauvinism; they should be in men’s caucuses, not disrupting women’s discussions.”⁴⁴

Attempted unity had a cost, however, as common spaces became an incubator for growing resentment. A retrospective analysis in the *Fair Witness* cited an unrealistic goal of keeping people together by any means necessary as leading to the ultimate demise of the East End Women’s Center in 1972. The Center provides an interesting case, illustrating increasing division, as well as foreshadowing the splits of the mid- to late-1970s:

By [fall of] 1971, a Women’s Center Organizing Committee was well established, but because of the general lack of other women’s liberation groups...it was already being subverted into a catch-all women’s liberation group. It seemed to attract other would-be organizers who saw the Organizing Committee as a ready source of “sisters” to support their favorite causes. The women who wanted to concentrate on establishing a women’s center found they had to re-explain their cause at every meeting.⁴⁵

Slurs of “elitist” and “opportunism” were hurled. Some women participated in the suppression of the formation of a lesbian rap group, splits developed between self-identified “radicals” and non-self-identified “compromisers.” Interestingly, the split did not fall along sexual preference lines. It wasn’t until later that two outspoken lesbians were targeted for disruption and shunned from the group. Compounded by financial mismanagement, the Center collapsed.⁴⁶

The lesbian/hetero split became very pronounced in Pittsburgh during the organizing for the first Take Back the Night march in 1977. Interviewees’ narratives relayed the impact of the splits on local organizing. This is discussed in more detail in chapter 5. The *Allegheny Feminist* provided a forum for women movement participants to state their positions. Some movement participants rejected separatism on the grounds that total liberation could not be achieved with only half the population. Others, such as members of the Lesbian Feminist Political Study Group of Pittsburgh, shed light on a different local sentiment behind the split. In their criticism of NOW’s stated policy that was against all-women buses to demonstrations they responded, “it is no more acceptable to call a lesbian a sexist than it is to call a black person a racist when she asks for space free of oppression as she defines it.”⁴⁷ Another article spells out “What Political Lesbianism OUGHT to be.”⁴⁸ This phenomenon corresponded with what was occurring in cities across the country at the time (Baker 1982; Echols 1989; Ryan 1989; Taylor and Whittier 1992). It would be interesting to examine how these debates played out in Pittsburgh, as compared to other cities at the time. Were ideological critiques coming primarily from the lesbian feminist community? Were they dismissed as “cultural” differences, as was occurring in other regions?

In Pittsburgh, the split that occurred between two self-defense groups was reportedly a difference in ideology but also, coincidentally, fell along sexuality lines. While both groups

taught women how to defend and empower themselves, physically and emotionally, the Feminist Karate Union (FKU) critiqued karate as non-feminist without a modifier: “FKU is unique – traditional (male) martial arts training was designed for men’s bodies. [Our classes] are designed for women’s bodies and women’s minds.”⁴⁹ By 1979, Karate Women (KW) split from FKU. An article in the *Allegheny Feminist* about the new KW stated that the FKU “is organized along the guidelines of the U.S. Karate Association – that is, it has a traditional hierarchical structure and is apolitical.”⁵⁰ This is cited as a primary reason for the split. But, one interviewee focused on the KW’s dual function as an informal center for the lesbian separatist community:

We were the lesbian Dojo. The first one, the Feminist Karate Union, it continued then. I don’t know, they didn’t like the lesbian ones anyway. So people who would come to our school, would be very often on the verge of either trying this, or coming out, or whatever it was. So, it had that function, too. It was a very lesbian setting, if you were straight, you didn’t say much about it. And so it was sort of a gathering place. It had a political purpose because it was about women’s self-defense. It wasn’t just a karate school.

On paper, it would seem as though the FKU and KW differ on ways to make a more explicit feminist effort. However, scholars have identified a tendency for historians to obscure the fact that criticisms over structural or ideological differences were also based in differences over sexual politics (Taylor and Whittier 1992). Furthermore, by not recognizing such differences, it is easy to miss the importance of community dynamics and space. KW clearly served another purpose. Scholars point to the importance of social movement community centers. They are vital for visibility; a physical space can attract new participants and foster community interactions (Staggenborg 1998). Investigating the ways KW facilitated the Pittsburgh lesbian separatist community makes for a deeper examination into the movement community. This case highlights the importance of supplementing publication history with participant narratives.

As the 1970s wore on into the '80s, project participation overlap increased, complicating and blurring ideological divides. Separation took the form of different communities that revolved around activities, such as self-defense. NOW soldiered on, ignoring criticism, focusing on their campaign efforts, and recruiting women who had been hesitant or outright hostile toward them in the past. The *Allegheny Feminist* strategy of uniting all women's groups, without ideological exclusion, most likely played a role in shaping – and solidifying – this new movement identity, as described above in its mission and expressed narrative throughout its pages, evident by the types of activities they chose to feature. NOW news and events had been part of the *AF*, and thus part of this re-envisioned movement, but it would be difficult to imagine the inclusion of groups that regularly graced the pages of the *AF*, such as the Women's Political Caucus, the League of Women's Voters, and the Executive Women's Council, in the *Fair Witness*. It seems as though different collective identities of the women's movement, bounding different movement parameters and centralizing different tendencies, were reflected in the pages of the *Fair Witness* and the *Allegheny Feminist*.

In conclusion, my findings challenge the explanations that focus on the professional, national organizations and campaigns as most characteristic of the women's movement. This chapter reveals an active liberation strand in Pittsburgh, autonomous and decentralized during the early 1970s, and perpetuated through socialist-feminist and lesbian separatist communities as the decade wore on. The inclusion of these activities is vital to painting a more complete picture of the women's movement as a whole. This examination of Pittsburgh women's liberation also uncovers divergences from explanations about women's liberation in larger urban areas. In Pittsburgh, radical feminist efforts emerged from the anti-war New Left but sought to unite other radical women autonomously. This was evident in action messaging and declarations of group

identification that defined radicalism broadly to accommodate varying ideological perspectives under a unified front. This effort appears to have successfully bypassed the early politico/feminist divide experienced by movement participants in many other cities. A more prominent divide was the desire of the radical strand to remain separate from professional organizations. This occurred in larger cities, too, but seems to have played out in a less antagonistic way in Pittsburgh. Similarities also existed between Pittsburgh radical women and their counterparts in other major metropolitan areas. They emphasized autonomy from capitalism and the state, and expressed the desire to alter the power dynamics in personal relations. A lack of racial diversity was also apparent in the women's movement in Pittsburgh in general, as was the case around the country. Additionally, the lesbian/hetero split occurred in Pittsburgh around the same time as it did elsewhere.

What is clear is that Pittsburgh was a reflection of the larger movement of the time, but it played out in its own unique way. Pittsburgh feminists did have connections to the larger national movement. A Symposium on Feminism, held in September of 1970, brought in representatives from the Chicago Women's Liberation Union and the New Orleans Women's Liberation Union, and featured a demonstration by the Boston Female Karate Team.⁵¹ One interviewee recalls reading "the very small amount of feminist literature available at the time, mostly mimeographed articles, most of them written by women in New York, articles that were handed around and eagerly read for their insights." The *Fair Witness* was a member of the Underground Press Syndicate and the Liberation News Service – a network of countercultural newspapers and magazines formed in the mid-1960s. Newspapers around the country freely reprinted the widely shared content circulated by UPS and LNS. But Pittsburgh also had its own dynamics, successes and failures, alliances and divisions. Such differences create a distinctive

movement community, which is important to any comprehensive history of the women's liberation movement in the United States.

5.0 NARRATIVE ANALYSIS

In this chapter, I begin with brief biographies of the interviewees, five women who were participants in the women's liberation movement in Pittsburgh in the 1970s. I then organize the narrative analysis around common themes into three sections – personal, structural, and historical – and I draw conclusions about these findings of participant experience in the movement. Some of these findings support existing claims and literature about the women's movement and others raise new challenges.

Olivia

Olivia was born in Los Angeles in 1946, and grew up in Denver, Colorado and Houston, Texas. In 1969 she graduated with a philosophy major from Rice University. In 1966, she dropped out of Rice for a semester and went to Paris, France, where she worked as an au pair and fashion model, and also studied French. She dropped out for another semester in 1967, when she got married and went to Fort Worth, Texas, for her then-husband's last semester at Texas Christian University. From 1967-1969, Olivia lived with her husband in Fort Worth, Texas, Oakland, California and Albuquerque, New Mexico, where he began graduate school. She worked as a secretary at a pharmaceutical company, a museum receptionist, a secretary at a medical school, and as a counselor in a federal and state government-funded anti-poverty program to move unemployed people into jobs. During these years, she marched in anti-war marches and worked

on the McCarthy campaign in Houston. Olivia separated from her husband in the spring of 1970. She spent the summer hitchhiking around the western U.S. with her younger sister. That fall, she moved to Pittsburgh to start graduate school at Duquesne University. It was a program leading to a Ph D in clinical psychology (which she later dropped out of, citing the compelling nature of the movement and a desire to commit more time and energy to activism). As soon as Olivia moved to Pittsburgh in 1970, she became involved with the Pittsburgh Radical Women's Union. She joined the New American Movement in 1972, and became part of the local leadership. In 1973, she helped start the socialist-feminist study group and was part of a socialist-feminist blues band. She came out as a lesbian in 1974. Olivia was an active member of the women's liberation movement in Pittsburgh until she left the city in 1976 when she became part of the national NAM leadership collective in Chicago.

Rose

Rose grew up in the suburbs of New York in the 1940s and 1950s. Her parents were communist activists and her father was a lawyer who represented labor unions and people who were attacked by McCarthy. Her mother was a homemaker who also worked in the community to integrate the schools. Rose went to Antioch College in the early 1960s and got involved with a student peace movement around nuclear weapons and a Fair Play for Cuba group that included a trip to Cuba after the revolution. Rose worked on voter registration in southwest Georgia with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. After college graduation, Rose spent time in California working with migrant ministries and later worked for the welfare department in New York City. She was also active in a union and participated in draft counseling for the Vietnam War through the union, where she met her husband. After he filed for conscientious objector status from the

Vietnam War in 1969, they moved to Pittsburgh so that he could complete alternative service. Rose helped distribute the *Fair Witness* newspaper. She became very active in NAM. She took on miscellaneous employment as a nanny and a school bus driver and also worked at Wobbly Joe's – the Leftie hangout in Pittsburgh's Southside. She eventually got a Masters of Social Work degree. She was very active in labor organizing attempts and worked with the Pittsburgh Working Women and Save Our Selves. Rose was also instrumental in the first Gay Pride events in Pittsburgh. Throughout her social justice work she's been arrested 13 times.

Evelyn

Evelyn was born just south of Pittsburgh in 1951. She grew up in Brookline in an Irish Catholic family. Her father worked in the sciences and her mother had been a secretary until she got married and quit her job to be a homemaker. Evelyn attended the University of Pittsburgh but dropped out for a while to live and work in New York City. Evelyn went to law school but eventually became a full-time singer-songwriter. During the 1970s in Pittsburgh, she helped found Pittsburgh Action Against Rape, one of the first rape crisis centers in the United States. She worked at Wobbly Joe's and performed at many Wild Sisters coffeehouses. Evelyn was involved in a variety of peace and justice efforts including the *Fair Witness* newspaper, anti-war and anti-nuclear projects, labor efforts, NAM events, and she was a member of Women for Racial and Economic Equality. She eventually joined NOW.

Patricia

Patricia was born in 1939 in Chicago. She grew up in a well-off family and went to Smith College. However, she was unhappy there, dropped out and went to the University of Chicago

where she met her husband, an economics professor. They moved to Pittsburgh when he got a job at Carnegie Mellon University. During the 1970s, Patricia was in a leadership role in NAM and was a co-founder of Save Our Selves. She left Pittsburgh at the end of the 1970s when she perceived the movement to be slowing down and felt as though she had outgrown the city.

Barbara

Barbara was one of the first few women in the social psychology program at Duke University in the late 1960s, where she was politically active. She married another man in the program when his conscientious objector status was denied and he decided to flee the country. They moved to Australia and eventually enrolled in a graduate program there. Barbara was very involved in a libertarian socialist group there. She moved to Montreal, Canada in 1973 and taught at a community college for three years. She was part of a founding committee of a women's studies program and developed a psychology of women course. During that time, she also took self-defense classes, lived in a commune, and engaged in consciousness-raising groups. Barbara moved to Pittsburgh in 1976 and taught in the women's studies program at the University of Pittsburgh. She was most involved in the radical lesbian separatist community of the women's movement from 1976-1982. Her two main areas of involvement were the university and lesbian self-defense communities. In the academic sector of the women's movement she developed a course on Lesbian Women in Society, was an active member of American Women in Psychology, and founded the Lesbian Feminist Studies Clearinghouse, which was a way for women to circulate their work when there was no other place that it would be published. She connected with the feminist KNOW Press to help distribute this material. Barbara was very involved with the Feminist Karate Union and then Karate Women, a center of the lesbian

community in Pittsburgh. She had a black belt and practiced for seven years. She aided Take Back the Night, taking on a role as marshal, and participated in other feminist demonstrations in Pittsburgh during the '70s and early '80s.

5.1 ANALYSIS

A careful analysis of the narratives revealed several reoccurring themes. Some of the findings resonate with existing explanations of the women's movement and others pose new challenges. The remainder of this chapter is organized into three sections: personal, structural, and historical. The first explores personal transformations and recollections emphasized by movement participants. The second section delves into structural themes, such as the divisions in the women's liberation movement, Pittsburgh-specific movement distinctions, and individual departures from common movement beliefs and practices. The third section examines the participants' narratives about the origins of women's liberation and its historical location.

5.1.1 The Personal

This section begins by comparing participants' narratives about their personal transformations to existing social movement literature. It ends with an exploration of the participants' recollections of the importance of the movement and its outcomes, uncovering a common emphasis on their under-recognized roles in cultural transformations.

5.1.1.1 Transformation Narratives

Narratives told by social movement participants reveal the framework by which they make meaning of their experiences. Their voices are “keys that – as rusty, bent, and unpredictable as they are – can help us to understand the ways in which people make sense of collective struggle” (Auyero 2003:12). Their stories reveal their conversion to a new worldview, involving autobiographical events, cultural themes and movement ideologies (Blee 2002). The excerpts below show the intersections of individual biographies with the women’s movement as participants discuss their entrance into the movement and make sense of their transforming beliefs. I identify commonalities in the ways participants use experiences, illustrating their underlying beliefs and revealing their implicit needs and desires. This section will detail how interviewees describe their transformations into activism and radical feminism as due to: personal relationships, exposure to movement materials, brushes with oppression, or a desire for adventure, belonging or self-improvement. I also examine the role of individual agency, or lack thereof, in the transformation processes.

Social movement scholars show the importance of personal networks (McAdam 1986). All of the women interviewed expressed the importance of personal relationships in either their movement recruitment, or in shaping their political ideology, or both. In one example, Patricia explained how she had already begun volunteering with draft resistance efforts but it was not until she was recruited by feminists who were in the Pittsburgh chapter of the New American Movement (NAM), a nationwide socialist-feminist organization, that it all clicked and she became part of the movement:

These women came to me, a bourgeois housewife, with a big house, and said, “You have got to join NAM because your husband and others are dominating NAM in obnoxious ways.” They already had CR. I joined that. They convinced me I should go on. They just happened to be two people in NAM. People would come to meetings at my house and

didn't take me seriously, I was someone's wife, and a mother. In those days, most of us were not yet married or had children, but I did. They inspired me, they took me seriously. I was very surprised. So it was through CR first, and the enormous support that I got from these very strong, younger women who really were an enormous importance on my life – they made me see I should be a part.

Patricia's "obnoxious" husband was involved in the serious, political work. She felt dismissed and unimportant as "someone's wife" and a mother until these feminists gave her recognition as an individual rather than someone who supports others. They provided her with an opportunity to be taken seriously *as* a woman. She felt valued and supported by these new friends. All of this led to her greater participation in the New Left, and particularly the women's liberation movement.

In another case, Rose, the daughter of communist activists and already on the political Left, also emphasized her relationships with people as her *entrée* into the women's movement: "I realized how important it is – the people that we come in contact with – and how they often influence our direction. The people that I met and the things that they were saying were ones to convince me to look at things in a different way."

One manner by which participants learn or come to adopt movement ideologies is through exposure to movement propaganda or materials that influenced the movement. Three of the women recalled experiencing an awakening in this way. For example, before Patricia knew other women's movement participants, the books she read caused her to become sympathetic to feminism: "For me it was [Doris Lessing's] *The Golden Notebook*. I would hide that book at the bottom of my laundry basket. It would fill me with such ideas I hadn't thought of before!" Olivia explained that repeated exposure to feminist ideas in the media, in magazines and underground newspapers, eventually induced an understanding of gender consciousness:

The women's movement was just surfacing in the media, and I came into contact with it mostly through things I read. I remember at first rejecting the ideas as the complaints of

women who wished they were men, a common accusation at the time that was used to silence women who brought up discrimination, an accusation I initially bought into. But then I read a few more things, and they just made so much sense. I remember especially a cartoon strip that was reprinted in underground newspapers nationwide that simply and effectively described a woman waking up to all the discrimination she was facing, both in the larger society and in relationship to her boyfriend. I also remember an article in a magazine that included a sentence that said something like, “It is hard to fight an enemy who has outposts in your own head.”

The two women who did not cite printed materials as influential instead emphasized the transformative effect that movement music had on their beliefs as feminists or Leftists. Patricia, inspired by both books and music, noted that the radical ideas in popular music of the time were so important to her developing New Left political ideologies that she cited her husband’s later destruction of her Bob Dylan albums as the symbolic break in both their relationship and their life trajectories.

Transformation stories are often connected to accounts of personal experience with oppression. These stories precede exposure to movement ideologies through materials, or personal relationships, or both. Recounting brushes with inequality provides the impetus for a transformative shift. It is justification for later movement recruitment – the way out for participants from their frustrations or alienation. It offers a simple, logical, interest-based account for entrance into the movement.

All five interviewees recalled instances of individual oppression that would later lead to their involvement in the women’s movement. Rose first experienced gender discrimination – over the division of housework – when she was volunteering with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), an organization that played a major role in the civil rights movement:

I went down to southwest Georgia, to Albany, and worked on voter registration down there with SNCC. So I was there for a number of months...I wrote a lot of letters home,

so there's a lot of written stuff...about how I hated doing the housework and how they made the women do the housework and I really – we had some arguments over that.

In another example, Olivia explained that she began to feel limited by her husband's discouragement of her anti-war activism. His masculinity was threatened when she engaged in activities that he did not and there was pressure to stick with the work they could do together:

My activism against the war had been a cause of friction between me and my husband. He wasn't for the war, but he had strong feelings about how the man should be in the lead in a marriage. Because I got interested in protesting the war first, he felt like this was a way I was attacking his masculinity. It may sound funny, but pre-women's movement, women were supposed to be very careful not to do anything that was threatening to a man's masculinity. For example, women who did or said anything that implied they were smarter than their husbands about anything were seen as undermining him. My husband's feelings were hurt every time I went to those anti-war marches. He felt better about the work on the McCarthy campaign and we did that together harmoniously.

Patricia recalled her experiences of alienation and isolation. She was on an intellectual track and did not like the snooty environment that characterized her academic future. She wanted to get away, and saw her chance through marriage: “Just serve tea and sympathy to the kids as a professor's wife – that's what I would like!” Patricia was ultimately dissatisfied with this. During parties, she was not invited to talk about “serious things” as the men were. She spent most of her time at home with no one to talk to but her infant.

Rather than gender discrimination and acceptance into a general feminist sisterhood, one interviewee came to the movement community that was most important to her through her sexual transformation. While Barbara cited the sexist humiliation of a job search after college and the experience of having to be certified mentally unstable to secure an abortion as experiences that probably led her to Women's Studies and the women's movement in general, they were not part of what she considered her important transformation. Already politically on the radical Left and wary of reformist efforts toward change, Barbara was immersed in the academic side of the

movement when she started to question her sexuality. It was not until she began dating women that her transition occurred:

...I found that all of my friends, especially when I got to Pittsburgh, were all women. And the only interaction I had with men was to date them. By the time I got to Pittsburgh, I think I went out with one man who was a professor at CMU that I'd known before that, in graduate school. And I just remember thinking how odd. It just didn't feel, I felt very split. One part of life didn't go with the other part. And I just didn't like men very much and I considered them to be oppressors... Eventually I got involved with another person, a woman, and then it was clear to me that this was what I wanted...I started to pull the whole thing together because now I saw myself as a lesbian separatist feminist.

Narratives can also reveal a desire for belonging, adventure and excitement, and a need for self-improvement. Cultural and community aspects can sometimes be more important in attracting participants to a movement than political opportunities (Staggenborg 1998). Three of the participants' stories revealed an implicit desire for belonging in a newfound community and the women's movement was able to meet their needs. The only two who did not describe this to be an appealing element of the women's movement already expressed a sense of belonging to the larger Leftist movement from their anti-war and civil rights work. One interviewee, Barbara, started out going to lesbian bars with her friends and then began working on feminist activities with other members of this community. When the self-defense groups split over issues of politics and sexuality, she followed her friends. She considered the latter half of the 1970s and the early 1980s to be the prime time of the women's movement; this was during the rise of lesbian separatism. Although Barbara had been involved academically during the earlier women's liberation period, the movement did not hold the same appeal for her until she felt a sense of belonging in a community that corresponded to the transformed part of her central personal identity as a lesbian separatist. This community held great appeal: "I was in my late 20s then. I felt like I'd gotten a second chance to, almost like to be an adolescent again, discovering a whole different world of love, romance, possibility."

Most of the other women also cited a sense of adventure or excitement as a reason for their involvement in the women's movement – an opportunity to transform themselves and society. Olivia expressed a longing to be part of it and noted, "I didn't know what kind of person I would turn myself into. There was an element of adventure about it."

Another interviewee emphasized sexual practices as the transformative potential for personal liberation that the women's movement offered. Evelyn initially saw sexual promiscuity as liberation, and she felt very much a part of the women's movement because she practiced this sexual freedom that men were engaged in. Promiscuity gave her power; it freed her from becoming a man's property and enabled her to be on equal footing with these men:

For some quirky reason in my head I had just kind of associated promiscuity with liberation. I couldn't stand the way these guys were all totally obsessed with getting laid. And I thought, "Well now you're laid, now what are you really about?" And that really was my approach to dealing with men... I used to walk up and down the street humming under my breath, "You don't own me. I'm not just one of your many toys." And I just felt very, I thought that I was doing something cool... In the folk revival all the guys were singing songs about, you know, "I'm a free-roaming soul and you can't catch me." And that kind of stuff, and I really identified with the guys' songs. To actually hear women signing the same thing was very, very powerful to me. And I've got to say that I, without quite understanding what the women's movement was about, I felt like I was very much a part of it because of my lifestyle.

Transformations are often talked about as processes. Most of the women in this study described their transformation as a process. Most of the participants additionally offered certain moments or events, often happenstance, that were transformative.

In one example, Olivia had been reading feminist materials that helped her make sense of her experiences but a major moment of clarity occurred during an acid trip: "One important transformative experience for me was an LSD trip during my hitchhiking in summer of 1970, when all my swirling feminist thoughts just came together and consolidated themselves in my

head, and I realized I did not want to talk at all to the two men who were present during that acid trip.”

In another example, Evelyn talked about her experiences becoming heavily involved with drinking and drugs. She dropped out of school and moved to New York: “Being a young, attractive girl with a drinking problem is not a prescription for happiness in a big city. And a lot of things happened to me then that I wasn’t very proud of. I’d really begun to kind of rethink my liberated woman status.” Evelyn then described a traumatizing experience of being violated and objectified by male tourists, photographing and ridiculing her while she was wearing more decorative paint than clothing at a gathering in a park.

Some women recalled a very circumstantial movement entry. Evelyn, for example, recounted her feminist organizing experiences as a series of mere coincidences. “So many of the things that changed my life were just things I did on the spur of the moment,” she said, explaining that she got on a bus to South Carolina for a conference on Women and the Law simply because she was asked if she was going and decided she would because bus trips were fun. The impulsive decision to enjoy a road trip exposed her to feminist projects and led to her efforts toward setting up a rape crisis center in Pittsburgh:

So I get on the bus and it was the vanguard of the feminist movement of Pittsburgh, a bunch of young law students. Very cool gals. I found the ones who liked to smoke pot and drink. But it was a very profound experience. It was the first time I had been in the company of women for a weekend since I left high school. And I’d met these women from Philadelphia. They did a presentation. They had just gotten the charter and founded Women Organized Against Rape in Philadelphia. They described to me what they were doing: accompanying women who’d been raped to their court dates and providing support all during the trials, encouraging women to prosecute, and setting up a training police in sensitivity...I was like, “Oh my God, what an incredible idea! This is fantastic!” Of all the things that I heard and learned down there, that seemed like such a no-brainer to me. When you see something that is so right, you know. I had thought, well, that we have to have that in Pittsburgh.

Evelyn explained that her transformations were personal and that her move from anti-war work to work within the women's movement was a "fluke." She added, "It was just an adventure to get away for the weekend with a bunch of women and I'd never done that but it certainly changed my life."

Some women, though, described their entrance into the movement as the result of their own initiative rather than happenstance. For example, Olivia discussed actively seeking out movement activity, driven by her feelings of previously being held back by her husband:

I was aware that there was a whole movement of young people working to change many things, including our entire society, and to create alternative ways of living. It looked very exciting and compelling to me. By 1970, I felt eager to become part of this movement and felt I'd been deprived of contact with it by trying to please my husband. So I was ready for whatever radical activism I could find.

In summary, all of the interviewees relayed stories of their transformations into movement participants as well as transformations of their beliefs and ideologies. They all emphasized the importance of personal relationships and they all offered accounts of personal experience with oppression as part of these transformations. Movement materials and propaganda were cited as transformative to all of the women; some of them specifically focused on printed sources while others emphasized music. Most of the interviewees discussed their attraction to the adventure and excitement that characterized the movement and its potential for personal transformation. Some of the women expressed a desire for belonging that the movement satisfied. However, the ones who did not conveyed a sense of kinship with the New Left, suggesting this need had already been filled. While most of the interviewees described their transformation as a process, often punctuated by moments or events, not all of the interviewees saw their movement participation or ideology shift as a result of their own actions, but rather as happenstance.

5.1.1.2 The Importance of the Movement

Narratives reveal the memories that interviewees consider most important. Most of the women cited concrete, successful outcomes, such as the establishment of rape crisis centers, domestic violence shelters, childcare centers and abortion clinics, a narrowing of the pay equity gap, and the legalization of abortion as “changing the landscape.” However, cultural transformations and self-transformations were the biggest successes reported by all. Olivia recalled in her work with the PRWU and the socialist feminist efforts that outcomes included changed behavior by men in the Left, self-education and personal life transformation, and feminist education of the general public:

One outcome was that men who were part of the local Pittsburgh social change movement learned they needed to take feminism seriously and treat their women colleagues more respectfully, or risk being called a male chauvinist pig. Another outcome was that for many women who came through it, the PRWU was a way they declared to themselves and the world that women’s liberation was important to them, and it was part of a process where they changed their own lives. Another outcome was that lots of women learned about feminism through our outreach.

Olivia continues with her recollection of outcomes. She claims that the individual success of these efforts was difficult to gauge but it led to women changing their lives which, in turn, led to a larger cultural transformation:

I don’t think I can point to a single outcome that changed the larger Pittsburgh society, but I think the experience of the PRWU and groups of its kind was part of a self-education process that contributed to the vast social changes that have come about as a result of feminism in the past 40 years. Many women, particularly women in their twenties, were having experiences at that time that were part of their process of waking up to feminism... It was all part of women changing their lives and roles that have, in the long run, changed our culture...I’d say it was being part of a wave of actions by women, from the household level to every sphere of life, that changed the options women have now. It wasn’t some particular victory, but just being part of a force that changed the dynamics by trying to do that in every way we could think of.

All of the women emphasized the impact of ideas and beliefs, and by that a general cultural transformation was the goal and major success of the women’s movement. While all

women also relayed a sense of pride in being part of that cultural shift, one woman continuously compared past and present gender relations, as though speaking to an assumption that the cultural changes are not recognized as important today. For example, Patricia's narrative included reoccurrences such as this: "We were very angry. I think it was an important thing to remember. It's gone now. Most women, they don't understand what feminism is for them because they don't have to go through it. Everyone assumes that women will have careers; no one assumed that then."

All of the women made frequent references to the importance of culture. Some made a point of insisting that culture-changing work is essential and seemed to be arguing against having such work dismissed, undervalued or taken for granted. This raises the question of whether the work that achieved cultural transformation is given enough recognition in the current, dominant explanations of the Second Wave of the women's movement. Tangible legal gains and institutional establishments are regularly cited as the movement's concrete successes. As noted, various researchers discuss a shift in the movement to legal and professional arenas. Are these interviewees implicitly responding to a framing that is not representative or necessarily their own, a history that does not place enough value on the efforts that played a major role in their lives? My findings suggest such a phenomenon.

None of the interviewees reflected on their own participation with sadness or regret except one. But additional support for the above claim can also be found in Barbara's conclusion that institutionalization is to blame for the decline of radicalism in the women's movement. More importantly, because the liberation strand died, Barbara questioned her radicalism and pondered whether she should have lent her energies to efforts for more concrete reforms, such as helping NOW with the Equal Rights Amendment. This passage below reflects her recollection of the

general atmosphere during the decline of the women's movement in Pittsburgh, and the sense of loss she experienced when more powerful forces won:

...the powers that were arrayed against us were so incredibly strong, between all the institutions: the church, the capitalists, the whole thing was way more powerful than we were. But I still had sort of a hope for what we were doing. ...all that I believed in...seemed to be leading up to something more on a whole cultural level...was going to get stronger and, you know, there was going to be this sort of cultural uprising or flowering. And not only did it not sort of go forward, or even stand in place, we just lost it all...Radical feminism was gone.

Barbara viewed the death of radical, culture-changing feminism as the trade-off the movement was forced into making so that other institutional gains could be won:

I think feminism as a cultural phenomenon outside of the universities disappeared right around that time. It was co-opted in that women's studies, which used to be an arm of radical feminism, then became, I guess, institutionalized. And lost...Everybody else who was trying to make a difference was gone. But women's studies then became recognized within the academy and people could get certificates and that was the trade off, what we had to do get in. But at the same time, what was disappearing was, I guess, everything that was associated with the '70s, like marches, protests, demonstrations, all the things that were so much associated with the '70s. They just, very quickly, disappeared. Karate Women were still going and still did self-defense demonstrations but the whole tenor of it was just...be quiet, take your gains—which were significant, I mean, the gains that were happening in the culture were certainly, retrospectively, very big and they were continuing but it was like, okay, no more protest. That's it. Done. You just gotta shut up and you'll get your job at the law firm.

The feelings of lament relayed by other interviewees did not have to do with their movement participation; they focused on specific ideological sites of loss. For example, Olivia pinned failure on the socialist part of her socialist-feminism:

The biggest failure has to do with the socialist part of why I was a socialist-feminist. Fundamentally, I wanted justice for poor people and saw socialism as a way to achieve that. I believed then and believe now that it is not fair for so many people to be poor, hungry, and homeless and for others to be so wealthy. I wanted society organized in a different way. Feminism has made things better for many women, but for the poorest women, both in the U.S. and worldwide, things today are perhaps even harder than back then, because the gap between rich and poor has grown larger.

For another interviewee, egalitarian structures and decision-making were impractical.

Patricia explained that, in retrospect, such ideals were not viable:

One of the things very big in those days, which had its real problems, is that we believed that all women should be in leadership positions, that all women should be public speakers – I shouldn't say leadership, it's misleading for me to call it that – but that everyone would be, it was an egalitarian organization, everyone's opinion was as valuable as the others. It was not workable because some of us are more articulate and some have other skills... We did a lot of processing, in those kinds of organizations, five hours of decision-making it would be sometimes. It was unrealistic in that way. Idealistic and unrealistic. In fact, there was real leadership there. My friend and I really were the ones who did the ideas and things.

Most of the women relayed a sentiment of loss about the movement's passing in their narratives. The two who did not dwell on the loss are currently heavily involved in other Leftist movements. The two who conveyed the most crushing sadness are the same women who emphasized the feeling of belonging that attracted them to the movement, and neither are currently engaged in other social movement communities. Additionally, the same two women were the ones who said they truly believed revolution was about to take place. Patricia reflected on the movement atmosphere of excitement, action, unity and power that she believes no longer exists:

The good days. I miss them. You hear people say we were so naïve, all so silly – don't believe that! We were high on what we were doing. There was something exhilarating about waking up and knowing you were going to sit in on someone's office! Life was adventurous. People were getting arrested, doing civil disobedience. Heady stuff...I will always feel a deep sadness that the days of mass movement that were umbrellas that brought us all together [are over]. I still believe that. I don't believe it's going to happen again. It was a unique time in history, a model I still think is right...We were powerful then. We aren't now.

This section shows that cultural transformations were the important outcomes for participants and the ones in which they were heavily involved. The narratives were characterized by frequent attempts to instill the importance of cultural transformation, as though it does not receive sufficient recognition in existing movement explanations. Most of the women mourned

the loss of radical possibility in the movement, lamenting that egalitarian structures were not practical and efforts to overhaul the system had failed. While the decline of the Second Wave invoked sadness in the participants, those who were still engaged in activism were considerably less affected by its passing.

5.1.2 The Structural

This section explores themes in the participants' narratives about the character of the women's liberation movement in Pittsburgh, its divisions and distinctions, in comparison to existing, overarching explanations about the women's liberation movement. Sub-sections also present findings on departures and deviations that participants made from some of the hallmarks and popular practices of radical feminism and the women's movement.

5.1.2.1 Liberation vs. Equality in Pittsburgh

All the women interviewed identified as radical or autonomous feminist participants in the women's movement by making distinctions between their beliefs and practices and those of other women in the movement. Olivia articulated her position on the relationship between the radical liberation and liberal equality branches most succinctly by explaining that the former was building on limitations of the latter:

To me, women's equality was not enough, but it was worth fighting for nonetheless. Women's equality meant things like equal pay for equal work, and women being able to have careers that were men-only, such as doctor or bricklayer. Women's liberation included all that, but also included women being able to determine our own destiny, and to have the freedom to choose to have children or not, to love another woman if we chose. Women's liberation meant throwing off the cultural expectations that women would always be in a supportive role to men, whether at home or at work. Women needed to also be in charge. I was for women's equality and women's liberation. Some women

saw women's equality as a trick that would somehow undermine women's liberation. I didn't see it that way. I thought we should fight for, and work toward, and claim, both.

Patricia explained that the difference was sometimes over the types of issues worked on: "...the reason we were focused on domestic violence (DV) and not rape was because we were more concerned with working class women. Rape can happen to anyone. DV had a demographic we were more interested in." Rose called attention to the presence of a broader analysis of the same issues, such as including critiques of sterilization in work around reproductive rights:

There were people that were working on legal things, like voting rights, and abortion. Now, reproductive rights, we all worked on that. But I think that probably, we had a broader view of that because we included sterilization issues because we saw that as important reproductive rights issues that were in the low-income and the minority community that were happening. Some of the studies that were done...were shocking, the amount of forced sterilization that was done to people who didn't even know what was going on when they went to the hospital to deliver. So that was a part that we built on reproductive rights. NAM and the – I'll say "autonomous women's movement" just to kind of separate it from NOW – NOW had a more specific, they were more single-focused, and we had broader issues, broader campaigns, and we had a lot of cultural stuff.

5.1.2.2 An institutional divide

Scholars point to the stark divide between the "politicos" and "feminists" in large cities. In Pittsburgh in the late 1960s to mid-1970s, however, a more prominent division was over institutionalization. On one side was the Pittsburgh Radical Women's Union and many loosely structured women's communes and collectives. On the other side was NOW, other formal, professional organizations, and Women's Studies programs in the universities. Both included women who were already part of the Left through the anti-war and civil rights movements and others who were ignited by the feminist organizing in other cities (or recruited by the PRWU or women's studies program). Barbara recalled her growing distaste of working within the system in the university. If she stepped back from the spotlight, she could work on the strategies she felt better suited for that were more contentious but less visible:

It started to get clearer and clearer that that role was not suited to me. I was not going to play the game, the academic game...I was not going to fit into this academic culture...I wasn't going to get on the tenure track. So from then on, in terms of the academic side, I saw myself as able to do more things that I thought were kind of radical, such as that course, while the people who were on the inside, change agents...playing the game, the academic game, gave an opportunity for us, circle of radical types, to infiltrate the university system and do things that [others] could never do even if [they] wanted to. But I could sort of fly under the radar.

She saw a dichotomy, and a hierarchy, between formal and informal efforts: radicals were in the forefront because they focused on the root of problems while the formal groups chugged away at necessary reforms. The reformers provided cover for the radicals:

I was never part of any [of the formal feminist organizing] groups. And I typically looked down upon them as not in the forefront of things. So I guess, on that score, I thought, 'Okay, we'll leave it to them. Somebody has to do that part.' You know *our* part, us radicals, is to turn over some of the assumptions that they are still going on in order to—they were more reformist approach. And I thought...just like in the university, you've got to have somebody doing that so that the other people can be more radical. Otherwise, you'll be killed off. Somebody's got to be operating within the system.

This is not to say Pittsburgh was without its politico/feminist conflicts, just that the conflicts often occurred between women working on the same projects.⁵² Scholars believe that factionalism, especially over competing theories or identities, is a major obstacle to social movement success (Gamson 1975, Ryan 1989). Pittsburgh was no exception. Rather than resulting in organizational splits, as in New York and Chicago, the conflicts in Pittsburgh simply contributed to the demise of the group and feminist activity. Olivia recalled an early PRWU action against sexism within the Left that resulted in disempowerment and the loss of some members:

...a group of about 20 of us disrupted an anti-war forum because there were no women speakers. It was in November or December of 1970. We stormed on the stage and halted the meeting. There was an out-of-town anti-war speaker...and an audience of several hundred people. We were disappointed that all the women in the audience didn't immediately follow us out of the hall when we left the stage. I think this action made some PRWU women feel bad, and they left the group after that.

From the mid-1970s through the '80s, the radical/liberal divisions became a divide between revolutionary socialist feminists and feminists who maintained faith in the current system. The work of the former happened through NAM, or other socialist and labor organizations, and focused on direct empowerment of women, organizing women workers, and education, both internal and external, that linked women's oppression to larger societal problems. All feminist projects – NOW or otherwise – had a focus on women's issues. However, the interviewees recalled the relationship between liberal and radical efforts differently. Four of the interviewees remembered specific theoretical divisions between groups. Patricia relayed class divisions in both membership and issue-focus between NOW and Save Our Selves:

We always believed in the autonomous women's movement. Not NOW. The women in NOW were career women who wanted a bigger piece of the pie. I didn't fit in. I went to some meetings but I didn't fit in...We were far to the left of NOW. [Save Our Selves] worked on projects like making sure, setting up battered women's shelters, which were really geared much more toward the needs of working class, poor women, not women who had already made it. A lot of concerns of poor women, women of color, are not, have never really been attracted to mainstream feminism because it doesn't speak to them.

Olivia also saw a gap and emphasized the liberationists' class focus but, unlike Patricia, expressed solidarity with both sides:

We wanted to make sure women's liberation benefited poor and working-class women, and didn't just lead to more advantages for upper middle-class women, and that made us leery of more mainstream feminist groups around the country, like NOW or the National Women's Political Caucus. However, I, at least, felt a tremendous amount of sisterhood and solidarity with every feminist everywhere.

Olivia remembered that groups with conflicting ideologies just did their own activities and would come together every so often for a forum or debate, or they would see each other at demonstrations against the war or in support of the farmworkers, but that there was not much open hostility. Patricia also remembered some event overlap but made a clearer distinction, with most autonomous women not having much respect for NOW:

We held events together, celebrated Labor Day, which is a major holiday in Pittsburgh. But tension? Yeah. My kind of feminists were really, really hostile to NOW...[a friend] tried to cultivate an alliance but others weren't so big on it...NOW didn't care about much at all. We identified ourselves as beyond NOW. There was a certain amount of contempt. We didn't respect them, they didn't get it.

For some, ideological differences were less salient than personal relationships, or a group's ability to meet basic needs, in shaping what group they joined. Evelyn, for example, had been involved with socialist-feminist projects but also became a NOW member because the NOW meetings accepted children and provided quality childcare: "I had been to so many Leftie meetings...and they acted like I had a rash when I came in with my kids and I thought, 'Wow! Who knew? This is great!' So then I got real involved with NOW because they had childcare!" Evelyn believed that members of NOW tried to work on issues that bridged race and class lines: "...it's true, it was founded by a bunch of middle class white women but...they saw the web, the way everything was connected." However, she also remembered that most members of these ideologically different groups did not attend each other's events. In another case, Rose, when looking through her notes, expressed surprise that she had gone to some NOW conventions. She added that she, and others, had just been there as observers, emphasizing again that the connection between individual activists was the strong thread connecting local participants of the women's movement across ideological divides.

5.1.2.3 Further distinctions and divides

The distinction between socialist feminists and the traditional socialist Left organizations became increasingly sectarian during the 1970s. Four of the interviewees expressed similar sentiment to Patricia's sense that the traditional Left had ignored the changing culture:

The traditional Left were very uptight. For example, they would have rules about if anybody lit a joint at a party they would get up and leave. They would cut their hair short

to relate to the working class – but the working class were growing their hair long at the time!...We were more cool and hip. We got that pop culture was a major influence that would not destroy your brain. We were more liberated in terms of sexuality and pop culture. The organized Left was largely still living in the 1930s, that way of thinking about the Left. Pure Marxists or pure Trotskyists. The national organizations would send them to Pittsburgh to work in the steel industry and they would go. They were very centralist, the national structures, and people did what we were told.

Another very prominent divide in the women's movement during the late 1970s and into the '80s was over lesbian separatism (Echols 1989; Ryan 1989). The interviewees' testimonials echoed such divisions in Pittsburgh, too. Barbara recalled the general attitude during that time, that lesbians were the very definition of political correctness and thus separate from feminists who had relationships with men:

The lesbians were in the forefront and were the purists. The straight women, they were still sleeping with the enemy. The lesbians separated themselves from the patriarchy in terms of the personal. So, whenever you're talking about political correctness, we were it. So there was kind of a status hierarchy within [the women's movement] and it was the lesbians on top. So straight women would sometimes not admit that they were straight. They would come to the dance and definitely pretend that they fit right in, in order not to be judged, or rejected, or whatever was going to happen.

Three of the interviewees – two identified as straight, it should be noted – did not see separatism as a positive or healthy development in the movement, emphasizing a need for stronger, more united movement. The fifth interviewee recalled her ambivalence. Patricia had been excluded from speaking at an event because she lived with a man. She found it harsh but somewhat understandable:

What happened with Take Back the Night in Pittsburgh, it was also an autonomous lesbian movement. I was friends with all of these people but...I was living with a man. I was supposed to be a main speaker. I was told at the last minute that I couldn't speak because I lived with a man. Again, I can see both sides of this. I didn't think I should be shunned because I lived with a man, and a feminist man, but that's not always an easy sell – men will say they are feminist when they're not. It gets complicated because of all the changes that happened. In the women's movement, there were more and more out gay people and lesbians. They were resentful...lesbians rightly felt their issues were not addressed, and they were right.

Another division became evident through the liberationist views of the interviewees and the movement activities on the ground. As noted in Chapter 4, there was heavy organizing in Pittsburgh in opposition to pornography. The pages of the *Allegheny Feminist* chronicled the actions, campaigns and opinions of the anti-porn struggle participants. A report on a 1980 symposium suggested that there may not have been a unanimous stance on the issue. The article mentioned that the Pittsburgh ACLU Women's Rights Committee members were not in total agreement with those in Women Against Sexist Violence in Pornography and the Media, but that they were working together to share information and ideas, and they intended to form a steering committee to develop strategy together.⁵³ However, this was the only indication that contention existed around this issue. The informants and interviewees in this study indicated, rather, that strong sentiment against the push for censorship existed, even if no organized opposition materialized. Patricia explained why censorship was incompatible with socialist-feminist beliefs:

We didn't believe in censorship. The rape/porn people did believe in censorship. They got more attention because their critiques fit into the hegemonic views of American media: the answer to all problems is law enforcement. It's very familiar... getting into bed with the police would always be a mistake. Whether it's a pimp, a hustler or the police, you're still being the subject of some man telling you what to do. It's a male criminal justice system, as sexist as anyone else. Protect people from what?...we should either fear for our lives all the time and go to police for protection, other feminists would enforce the idea that sex is a powerful thing, part of women's liberation, free from the restraints of anyone.

Elsewhere in the country, opposition to groups such as Women Against Pornography came from radical gay and lesbian communities that were arguing for freedom of sexual expression. However, in Pittsburgh, Take Back the Night had both a heavy lesbian involvement and sharp criticism of the sex industry. In fact, Women Against Pornography and Violence in the Media came out of a Take Back the Night event. Were socialist feminists in Pittsburgh the main tendency of the women's movement harboring criticisms of censorship efforts? Was there local

lesbian separatist opposition? Did community splits impact an otherwise likely alliance over this issue? Was a lack of organized opposition an indicator of a radical strand in decline? The way these issues over pornography played out in Pittsburgh deserves further exploration.

5.1.2.4 Departures from feminist practice

Two of the three interviewees who rejected a lesbian separatist split also rejected another common separation at this time, the ethos of “organizing one’s own,” a cultural conception of the most authentic ways to organize as radicals; groups were encouraged to form along gender, sexuality and/or racial/ethnic lines to maintain difference in organizing (Roth 2004). These interviewees recalled a strong desire to organize across race and class lines, although mostly without success. Interestingly, Olivia, one interviewee who rejected a movement separation over sexuality, embraced organizing divided along racial lines:

All [PRWU members], as I recall, were white. But at that time, all the radical black people were separatists, and didn’t want to be around white people much. The black separatists said, white people, go organize among your own people. So we didn’t feel we were being racist to just have a group of white women, and if black women had shown up, they would have been welcomed, but probably the white radical culture of the meetings would have felt pretty alienating to them.

Embracing the ethos for separate organizing along racial and ethnic lines, but not over differences in sexuality, suggests a stratification of oppressions. This mirrored a tendency by hetero participants in the women’s movement elsewhere in the country to take racism more seriously than homophobia and heterosexism.

“The personal is political” was another important ethos of the women’s movement, an emphasis on the politicization of everyday life (Echols 1989, Evans 1979, Ezekiel 2002, Taylor and Whittier 1992, Whittier 1995). Consciousness-raising was a part of this ethos, as these personal discussion groups were often the first step to recognizing oppression and subsequently

organizing around it. Patricia explained that more structured Pittsburgh efforts came out of CR: "...people admitted things they never would have admitted to anyone," which led to concerted efforts to address issues, as women began to see patterns of oppression.

Surprisingly, consciousness-raising was important for only two interviewees. Three did not focus on CR and two explicitly distanced themselves from it. For example, Rose explained that a focus on introspection was not personally necessary:

I was never in [CR groups]...it's sort of like introspective stuff. I was never into that, you know, talking about yourself, thinking about your problems. I just never had the need for that, particularly...I was definitely outward-looking. I had female friends but it was always around outward things, like organizing things. It wasn't—I just wasn't interested in intro stuff, in particular.

Evelyn referred to direct actions as having a consciousness-raising effect but she did not participate in CR groups. "I felt my life was CR. And that's the truth. I went from one amazing experience to another in those days." Evelyn was, in fact, outwardly hostile toward women using personal testimony as a tactic, a favored practice by one of her Pittsburgh Action Against Rape cofounders with whom she butted heads. Evelyn went so far as to try to prevent issue personalization because it made her uncomfortable and she did not view it as relevant or tactically effective:

It was not, in my mind, the way we were going to sell the urgent need for a rape crisis center. So I was trying to shut her up when we were out. And she couldn't stand me either... Reporters always wanted to ask us, "Are you a rape victim?" And they were trying to make it into some grudge match, that we needed a rape crisis center because we'd been raped and sort of like some personal axe to grind. And I had tried not to consider whether or not I had been raped. It made it too ugly, there were so many situations where I know I was one step away from having my jaw broke and I said, "Hey, why don't we ball?" You know? [laughing] And they were not happy memories for me, but I certainly thought it was completely irrelevant, it actually had nothing to do with my decision to have a rape crisis in Pittsburgh. I knew enough about what was going on in women's heads to know that we needed support and that would be a valuable thing for my personal experience that I didn't feel like it was revenge, or a grudge, or personal at all...

She continued arguing that personalization, while important in many facets of life, would lead to defeat when applied to the struggle for a rape crisis center and people who used such a tactic did not understand strategy:

My fear at the time was that if any of us had said we'd been raped that they would have probed our stories, made it all about us... The date rape story, I figured they'd pick it a part and would undermine our chances for success for the organization, that we were just a bunch of harpies who were mad at men and whatever. It was so easy to dismiss anything women wanted to do back then. I felt like if we just kept it on the issue that rape was the most underreported crime. And even so there were more than 300 rapes reported in Allegheny County in 1970. I mean, we had the facts on our side and undisputedly, unless they dragged us into some personal testimony thing where then they could say, "Oh, she's just a nutcase," or "She's just got a grudge," or "She's a man hater." Certainly the personal is political. My personal experiences made, shaped who I am. My feminism, my anti-war activity, and almost all of the experiences... my values are based on personal things. You begin to see how personal experiences in your life shaped your values. But that certainly didn't seem to... Actually, I would say that people who would say "the personal is political" and use it as an excuse to throw their date rape story out really didn't get it. It would not have been a useful thing to do.

Some scholars have begun to examine the tendency of movement participants to eschew personal narratives that reflect negatively on the movement, painting actors as weak victims (Polletta 2006). Further research and follow-up interviews with the women who express conflicted opinions on experience, testimony and strategy is needed to really understand the complexity of the "personal as political" in the Pittsburgh women's movement.

This section shows that narratives by women's liberation participants in Pittsburgh separated their efforts from liberal campaigns in ways that are consistent with existing explanations of the divide. The women claimed a broader analysis of the root of inequality, expressing a desire to go beyond a single-issue focus and include cultural work. However, the narratives show that in Pittsburgh the divide between politicians and feminists was less salient than disagreements over professionalism and formal institutionalization. In Pittsburgh, the politico/feminist divide that existed resulted in the decline of radical activism in general as

members left the movement over disagreements. In larger cities, separate radical communities existed as havens in which disagreeing members could retreat. This luxury didn't exist in Pittsburgh and cases, such as the strong differences over pornography but lack of organized opposition, may be an indicator of the liberation strand's decline.

As the decade wore on, socialist-feminists and liberal groups co-existed. Personal relationships resulted in group or effort overlap, underscoring the importance of individual ties in social movement networks, documented by social movement scholars (McAdam 1986). In contrast to some scholars' claims that a turn toward cultural efforts ended women's liberation (Echols 1989), in Pittsburgh the radical-identified participants embraced cultural activism, in addition to other efforts. These women criticized the traditional Left for not understanding the importance and some placed a higher value on cultural change than the legal, institutional changes that liberal groups were working on. Other scholars claim that the cultural efforts fostered a new form of radicalism, to which my findings correspond. However, my findings reveal the cultural push was not mainly led by the lesbian separatist communities, as scholars have found in Ohio, for example (Taylor and Whittier 1992; Whittier 1995). In Pittsburgh, the socialist-feminist community was a strong proponent of cultural efforts. This is not to say that masked criticisms of the lesbian separatist community were not occurring in Pittsburgh, as chapter 4 and this chapter illustrate with the self-defense groups and Take Back the Night.

The narratives in this section also show a rejection, in some cases, of "organizing one's own" and "the personal is political," two important ethos of the women's movement. This requires further exploration.

5.1.3 The Historical

This final section illustrates that the narratives did not reveal explicit theoretical connections to earlier liberation movements, yet all of the interviewees shared underlying beliefs that resonate with those movements, prior to and contemporary with the heyday of the Communist Party. This shows that questions still remain about neatly-packaged historical explanations of the women's liberation movement as an obvious product of the New Left.

Interviewees echoed the dominant narrative – that the anti-hierarchical, egalitarian ethos that became popularized in the 1960s was simply a reaction to the authoritarian ways of the Communist Party, and the direct experiences with oppression by women and people of color (within the New Left and society at large) built on this philosophy, forging new ideas and practices. Olivia reiterated this popular perspective:

Women's liberation came out of the New Left, so there was a lot of consensus decision-making... Women were incredibly frustrated with the sexism we lived under, and many of us had been very moved by the Civil Rights struggle of African Americans. We applied some of the same type of thinking about our situation that we had seen black leaders applying to the situation of black people.

Patricia explained that the emergent philosophy was socialist feminism, an update of Marxism:

At first, it was not really a theory, but now we can see what's wrong. "Let's sit-in at Time [magazine] and make them hire us." But as we developed a more theoretical approach, we didn't separate patriarchy from capitalism. We believed patriarchy was an aspect... in America, patriarchy was used by the state in order to keep women of all classes and races in line... as I became more involved in Left politics, we couldn't end sexism without – it sounds so dumb but – without ending capitalism... What that meant was a revisionist version of Marxism. For Marx, the base was economic. But we saw them as being connected. We called ourselves that – "cultural Marxists" – because we believed in things like the redistribution of wealth. But we updated it to include feminism, pop culture, gay liberation, environmentalism as equally important.

The women's movement was undeniably instrumental in fine-tuning consensus processes, renewing a challenge to patriarchal relations and creating issue frames that spotlight an interconnected web of oppressions and resonate with the Left today (Breines 1982, Epstein 1991). However, the dominant origin narrative leaves unaddressed the striking similarities to earlier libertarian Left beliefs and practices explained in Chapter 2.

Some women pondered the possibility of an anarchist influence on the origins of the New Left and women's liberation. For example, Olivia, who drew inspiration from a popular anarchist feminist of the past offered one possible explanation, that anarchism may have indirectly impacted her by influencing the New Left:

I wasn't aware of anarchism back then, and didn't have a working definition for it. I still don't. I read a lot of Emma Goldman, who was an anarchist. But what I took from her was more lessons in courage about being the kind of women you want to be. If anarchism influenced me, I'm not aware of it. Perhaps anarchist thought influenced the New Left in general, and the New Left, in turn, influenced me.

In another case, Rose suspected there may be a connection with libertarian Left movements of the past, although she grew up with Marx and paid attention to those trying to bring him up to date. She recalled being part of an anti-leadership caucus, against consumer culture and believed in those days that doing electoral work was "a sell-out to the corporate class." Another interviewee, Barbara, had actually been a member of a libertarian socialist organization before coming to Pittsburgh. Evelyn referred to herself as an anarchist, when asked about anarchist activity in Pittsburgh in the 1970s: "Yeah, well, we were definitely all anarchists. I don't think we even called ourselves anarchists because you didn't want to label." Respecting Evelyn's persistent inclination toward fluidity of identity throughout her life history, it does not make sense to cite her reference as direct evidence of an explicitly anarchist movement in Pittsburgh during the 1970s, but it does seem that her actions and beliefs, and those of her fellow

movement participants, tended toward conceptions of personal and collective freedom that are consistent with anarchism.

It is also interesting that none of the women invoked the struggles of the First Wave feminists in their discussions about history and possible belief origins. Olivia noted, “Most of us thought the early suffrage movement had been good, as far as it went, except that some of those suffragists had used racist arguments that we wanted no part of.” Evelyn captured her perception of the spirit of the Second Wave in her answer to whether she saw the suffragists as part of an ongoing struggle for women: “Not at all. I felt like we were inventing the wheel and it was exciting, it was fun. No.”

This section shows that further investigation of a possible theoretical connection is necessary to make any solid claims. Perhaps a content analysis of underlying beliefs articulated in both printed materials of anarchist and libertarian Left journals at the turn of the 20th century and feminist writings of the 1960s-‘70s women’s liberation movement could reveal such theoretical threads. To further challenge the simple “reaction to the CP” narrative, it may also be valuable to explore the practical ways in which transmissions between movements from 1900-1960 may have occurred. The concept of social movement spillover might be useful for looking at alliance efforts, overlapping communities, and changes in the political environment (Meyer and Whittier 1994).

5.2 NARRATIVE ANALYSIS CONCLUSION

It is interesting to note that interviewees recounted very few details about group process and structure in their narratives. This is especially striking given the emphasis that scholars place on

the importance of process and structure in these movements. All the interviewees talked about the main efforts they were involved in but few could recall details about organizational structure and decision-making. Although Rose cited her involvement in Save Our Selves and Take Back the Night, for example, she said, “So who came together and how? I can’t – I just don’t remember,” and, “I can’t say. It’s all a blur to me.”

Of all the interviewees, Olivia relayed the most specific memories. She recalled, “I think we mostly made decisions by consensus, and that there was a steering committee, but it was just women who were committed to keeping the PRWU going, and anyone could be part of it. There were no elections. Everything was so chaotic. I recall very few decisions.” This is not surprising, if the efforts were as short-lived as many of the interviewees remember. Olivia continued: “I’m pretty sure there were other activities, but I didn’t take part in them or know about them. The group grew so fast, and so many women came through it, that many things were probably going on, and most of them may have lasted for only a month or so.”

Even in the case of longer-lasting efforts, some interviewees do not remember when or how the groups began, who gave workshops, or other structural and procedural details. For example, Rose pointed out that some efforts did persist: “I don’t want to use that term fleeting. I mean we had groups and we had committees that lasted for several years. Our Save Our Selves group, violence against women, we had a conference. We did some workshops. We were the key organizers of...There were some demonstrations, I think, around that. So it wasn’t like people just came together and had a discussion and then disbanded. There were definitely committed commitments to carry out a particular plan.”

Although most participants do not recall why groups ended, one interviewee attempted a firmer conclusion, seemingly frustrated that she could not remember. Patricia, a major force in

SOS, first hypothesized that its demise was due to financial reasons in a changing political atmosphere. Dissatisfied with this explanation, she then considered the movement splits occurring at the time. Hesitantly, she concluded that decreasing membership in the movement in general must have impacted SOS. She also cited the general divisions over sexuality, class and violence that she recalled occurring during this period as a factor that contributed to the group's demise, but did not confidently settle on any one reason.

Most participants instead talked about how they moved on to another project or life-stage. One reason for these types of responses could be captured in Olivia's recollection of a possible collective attitude at the time: "During summer 1971, I again spent several months hitchhiking across the country. When I returned to Pittsburgh in the fall, I don't think the PRWU was still going on. We were young. I felt no sense that I should stay around and keep the organization going, and I think I was fairly typical. There was a sense that the movement was everywhere, so you could find it wherever you went. If one organization faded away, we could always create something else to take its place. Or maybe just I felt that way."

Evelyn provides an interesting case because she did not remember some of the groups that were contemporary with her involvement. She also could not remember whether she identified as a feminist despite the fact that she founded one of the first rape crisis centers at the time, working with other members of the women's movement. This corresponds with her espoused beliefs evident throughout her narrative about eschewing labels and avoiding long-term commitments and memberships. Unlike the other interviewees, she did not cite a sense of belonging to the women's movement. Her reasons for engaging in any behavior were first fiercely individualistic, for her own sexual and political liberation and later, for the general

liberation of other women. But she held strong beliefs about how that change can come about and rejected the personalization of movement politics, as discussed in more detail above.

The fact that interviewees were not able to recall many details of the structures and processes of the groups in which they were involved is maybe not unexpected, as 30 years have passed, but it is unfortunate. Many groups and projects were not sustaining organizations with consistent record keeping. They were, understandably, caught up in the whirlwind of activity, not taking the time to write things down. The archives reflect this. Coupled with memory fallibility and the passage of time, it becomes nearly impossible to examine the particular practices of radical groups in this region and their potential relation to non-hierarchical, anti-authoritarian ethos.

However, the narratives could be telling us something else: perhaps these issues of structure and process are not remembered clearly because they were not as important to participants. This possibility deserves further exploration, as scholars of the women's movement, who have drawn from their own experiences as participants, emphasize the importance of egalitarian structures and process as defining features of the women's movement. The participants' lack of ability to recall these particular details, while easily recounting other specifics, suggests another case of non-representative explanations shaping the character of the movement.

This narrative analysis of participants of the women's liberation movement in Pittsburgh in the 1970s yielded some findings supported by current literature. They show that personal relationships are important in recruitment; people view their experiences with gender and sexuality oppression as catalysts for their transformation; and a sense of excitement and

adventure, as well as a desire for community and belonging – either the women’s movement or the larger Left – attracted participants to the movement.

The findings show that the divisions and collaborations in Pittsburgh were similar to those in other parts of the country (Echols 1989, Ryan 1989, Taylor and Whittier 1992). But they challenge some of the dominant narratives about a stark politico/feminist organizational divide. The stories of Pittsburgh women suggest that, early on the divisions over professionalization and institutionalization in this region and, throughout the 1970s between groups with more or less radical analyses, may have been the more salient points of contention. This exploration also suggests a complicated local saga over issues of pornography.

An unexpected finding in the narratives was a rejection of consciousness-raising by some of the interviewees – not on the typical grounds that more action was necessary for larger change but as a challenge to the “personal as political.” Whether this ethos factors into a viable strategy seems to be a point of contention with some participants of the Pittsburgh women’s movement.

Although no specific connection to earlier libertarian Left movements were uncovered, the beliefs that interviewees articulated still leave open the possibility of a movement overlap that challenges current historical narratives. A study with a different methodological approach is necessary to test this hypothesis.

Finally, the ways that participants remembered the movement illuminated the major emphasis they all placed on cultural transformation. Some of the narratives betrayed a desire to convince an audience, through story-retelling, of the importance of this goal, perhaps hinting at a sense of devaluation these participants feel about their roles in the movement as women with radical beliefs and matching visions for a very different, liberated society.

6.0 CONCLUSION

In this study, I sought to challenge dominant explanations of the women's movement of the 1970s by examining the documented history and the participant experiences of women who were part of this movement in Pittsburgh.

I find evidence to support the existing challenges to explanations that focus on large, professional organizations. In Pittsburgh the radical, decentralized efforts played an active role in the women's movement community, undoubtedly shaping the landscape. I also find support for localized studies of the radical strand, as the Pittsburgh case reveals more salient divisions between groups over narrow, mainstream analyses and institutionalization rather than the stark divides between New Left and autonomous feminists that some scholars have found in larger urban centers.

The movement reconstruction offers a scaffolding of women's liberation activity on which we, as scholars, can build. One avenue to explore is the advantages and disadvantages of a social movement community that is relatively smaller than its counterpart in major U.S. cities. In Pittsburgh, it was more difficult for separate factions to avoid one another, which impacted their ability to recruit and to thrive. Attempts at a diverse unity through rhetoric worked for a short period but a common physical space harbored such tension and resentment that splits occurred and, most importantly, resulted in general movement disintegration as disgruntled members had

no alternative efforts to join; many ended up leaving the movement entirely. An attempt at a unified feminist front was easier later in the decade after many radical efforts had faded away.

This study also underscores the importance of combining narrative analysis with other forms of data collection for a more holistic understanding. Even in a city with a relatively low number of movement publications, participant narratives reveal a lack of consensus with the official line on various efforts and they offer a glimpse into the complexity of intra-community dynamics. Any study of a movement must explore the fissures. It was not my original intent to focus on the splits; I was not interested in what is commonly referred to as personality differences. But I began to see the importance of the rifts through the ways movement participants emphasized difference and the frequency with which they referenced discord. Divisions are not to be dismissed – there is valuable information to be found in the cracks. They offer raw material to explore and offer insight into why incidents occurred the way they did. For example, publications indicated two self-defense groups split over organizational, ideological differences. But narratives revealed that the groups were additionally divided between the lesbian separatist community and the rest of the women’s movement, calling into question unspoken contention over sexuality and collective identity.

The narratives also raised questions about certain defining characteristics of the women’s movement. They revealed individual discomfort with the “personal as political” ethos. They also elucidated a curious inability of participants to remember process and structure, despite the emphasis scholars place on the processes used and refined by women’s movement participants. More than 30 years later, participants recall vivid details of actions and relations between groups, yet experiments with decision-making and decentralization are not memorable. By examining the important aspects of the movement to a sample of participants, I found that these hallmarks were

not the factors that stood out to them as defining feminist characteristics, which points to another avenue for further exploration.

This study has larger implications for the future of social movement research. It highlights the need for a decentralized approach to movement reconstruction. It calls for a methodology that explores the intersections of biography and history, delving into the meanings that participants give to their experiences. Scholars must recognize that individual understandings are vital for making sense of collective action. As sociologists, we must challenge domination, as the actors we study often do. But ours is the task of digging beneath the popular narratives to arrive at a well-rounded approximation for the fullest possible examination of a social movement. This is our contribution, another form of social justice.

APPENDIX A

SCREENING SCRIPT

Hello. My name is Marie Skoczylas and I'm a graduate student in sociology at the University of Pittsburgh. I'm researching the women's liberation strand of the larger women's movement in Western Pennsylvania in the 1970s and 1980s. There is currently some documentation available about the groups, such as the National Organization for Women, that worked toward equality. But I'm interested in learning more about the beliefs and practices of the radical tendency within the movement that was fighting for systemic change, rather than (or in addition to) reforms. Would you consider yourself to have been a part of that radical, liberation tendency of the women's movement during that time period?

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW TEMPLATE

Thank you for agreeing to answer questions about your experience in the women's liberation movement in Western Pennsylvania during the 1970s and early 1980s. First, I'd like to start by constructing a brief biographical chronology. Could you give me a summary of important dates, places and events, such as your year of birth, your schooling and employment, what groups, projects or major actions you were involved with and when, etc.?

[After constructing a general timeline, I will begin with the questions below and refer back to the chronology for specific questions about groups/actions/campaigns, taking them one at a time.]

1. Were you born and raised in Pittsburgh (if this is not apparent from the brief life history)?
 - A. If yes, go to question 2.
 - B. If no, what year did you move to Pittsburgh?
 1. Under what circumstances?
 2. Were you active in a social movement in your former city?
 - i. If yes, which one? How so? Did you introduce any beliefs or practices into the movement in Pittsburgh that you picked up in your former city?
2. When did you first get involved in activism?
 - A. What types of activities did you engage in? Around what issues?
3. (If Question 2 was about a non-explicitly feminist social movement, ask:) How and when did you first get involved in the women's movement? (Otherwise, begin with 3A.)
 - A. What attracted you?

- B. What (groups, efforts, campaigns) you involved in? (Refer to the timeline and take each effort one at a time. Ask about specific activities, outcomes, clarify group names, members, etc.)
 - C. How was the group or project structured? How big was it?
 - D. Who was considered a “member”?
 - E. What decision-making process did you use?
 - 1. Will you describe it?
 - 2. If consensus, how did using that process come about in your group?
 - F. How often did your group/s meet?
 - G. Where did you meet?
 - H. What were your common points of unity?
 - I. What were your goals?
 - J. What tactics did you use to achieve them?
 - K. Did you succeed?
 - L. When and why did the group dissolve?
4. Tell me about the women’s liberation groups that were less formal. (If these didn’t already fit into the above questions.)
- A. Were you part of them?
 - 1. If yes, probe into the details of what they were.
 - B. Were there people who might not be considered “leaders” because they are not in higher up positions in non-profits or the government but you would consider them as having impacted the movement?
 - 1. If yes, who were they and what did they do? Would you consider yourself one of these people?
5. Were you networked with other groups or projects in other cities?
- A. If yes, what groups and how did this happen?
6. How did you see the local movements’ efforts in relation to the women’s movement around the country at that time?
7. What was the local culture of the women’s movement like during that time? (Publications, music groups, gatherings, hang outs, social activities, etc.)
8. What kinds of activities did socialist feminists concentrate on?
- A. How big was the socialist/feminist community?
9. What kinds of activities did separatists concentrate on?
- A. How big was the separatist community?
10. Were there anarchist groups around then in Western PA?
- A. If yes, what did they do? Do you remember any names of who was involved?
11. How would you characterize the relations between the movement participants who identified as socialist, separatist, radical and mainstream?

12. How large would you say the women's liberation movement was?
 - A. What was the percentage of men involved?
 - B. What was the racial/ethnic make-up of the movement scene?
 - C. What percentage of the movement scene was explicitly lesbian?
 - D. What was the class make-up?
 - E. What was the age make-up?
 - F. Were the people involved concentrated in one region? Or neighborhood?

13. Were there women who would attend movement activities occasionally but not get involved in organizing?
 - A. If yes, why do you think they didn't?

14. In terms of the decline of the movement, when would you say it occurred?
 - A. What eventually happened to these groups/efforts/communities?

15. What would you say the biggest successes were?

16. What were the biggest failures/losses?

17. How did your actions work toward your vision of a better world?

18. Now I'm going to ask you some questions about your underlying beliefs. How did you define women's liberation?
 - A. How did you view it in relation to women's equality?
 - B. Did you see yourself as part of both tendencies, or another identity entirely? Why or why not?

19. Can you tell me about your politics at the time you decided to get involved in feminist activism?
 - A. Did this change over time? How so?

20. Going back even further than the 1960s and 1970s, what shaped your ideas about feminism?
 - A. Did you have feminist family members?
 - B. Did you have feminist teachers?
 - C. Did you read feminist and/or radical books?
 - D. Were there other feminists who may have influenced you?
 - E. How did activism shape your ideas about feminism?
 1. (If the participant had been involved in prior social movements) how did those movements influence your feminist ideas?

21. Who or what was most influential to the feminist movement you were a part of?
 - A. What did you think about the earlier suffrage efforts?
 - B. What did you think about the National Woman's Party?
 - C. What other people influenced your opinion?

1. If they don't mention specific people, ask: How did you view radical figures such as Emma Goldman (and name others: Crystal Eastman, Simone de Beauvoir, Rosa Luxemburg, etc.)?
 - D. Did the movements you were part of adopt any tactics or goals from earlier movements?
 1. If no, go to question 22.
 2. If yes, how so?
 - E. Did the movements you were part of adopt any processes from earlier movements?
 1. If yes, how so?
22. What do you believe was the root of oppression?
- A. If the participant doesn't say "patriarchy," ask: Some say that patriarchy was/is the root of oppression. Do you agree? Why or why not?
 - B. If they don't say "hierarchy," ask: Some say that hierarchy, rather, is the main problem. Do you agree? Why or why not?
 - C. If participant is aware of people/groups who disagree on this, ask: Were these groups in tension with one another?
 - D. How did your views on the root of oppression impact your participation in the movement?
 - E. Was there a general consensus in the movement that patriarchy or hierarchy was the root of oppression?
 1. If no, could you explain this further?
 2. If yes (or if the respondent identifies one or the other), in what ways was this apparent to you?
 - F. Did you get the sense that participants working within the system also saw patriarchy or hierarchy as the root of oppression?
 1. If no, could you explain this further?
 2. If yes (or if the respondent identifies one or the other), in what ways was this apparent to you?
 - G. Were there any tensions between those working within the system and those working outside of the system?
23. How would you define socialism?
- A. Does socialism fit in to feminism and the women's movement for you?
 - B. How important is/was it to your work?
 - C. How important is/was the label?
24. How would you define anarchism?
- A. Did anarchism influence the women's liberation movement? If yes, how?
 - B. Did anarchism influence you? If yes, how?
 - C. What do you think anarchism and feminism have in common?
25. How would you define separatism?
- A. Did you have separatist beliefs at the time? Why or why not?
26. What specific characteristics of the system were you aiming to change or replace?

- A. Did you want to overhaul the system? If yes, how?
- B. What was your vision of a better world?
- C. Have your beliefs changed over time? If so, how?

APPENDIX C

FEMINIST GROUPS IN PITTSBURGH, 1969-1981

Most of the groups below are taken from the “Feminist Groups, Places and Services in the Pittsburgh Area,” a guide compiled by the *Allegheny Feminist* (March 15, 1977 and September 1979 editions⁵⁴). The stated purpose of each group is included below. Some groups altered their statements of purpose from the 1977-79 listings. Only the original purposes are included in this appendix. See the *Allegheny Feminist* for statement changes as well as additional information on group projects, publications and membership details.

Allegheny County Bar Association Legal Rights of Women Section: to secure for women the rights afforded them under law, to expand the knowledge and expertise of lawyers interested in legal issues involving and affecting women by providing a forum for discussion, disseminating information to the legal community, and advocating changes in the law.

Allegheny County Center for the Victims of Violent Crimes: 24-hour medical and legal victim advocacy and counseling service; public, police and hospital education program; advocate for elderly victims of violent crime.

American Association of University Women: to further the advancement of women and encourage them to develop their special responsibility to society.

American Civil Liberties Union Women’s Rights Committee: to educate ourselves and others on issues of women’s rights, to litigate cases involving violation of such rights, and to advance the cause of equal rights and opportunities for women.

Center for the History of American Needlework: non-profit educational institution for the study of needlework and textiles in American culture, with special emphasis on their role in the lives of women.

Committee for the ERA: to work for the passage of the Federal Equal Rights Amendment through public education and activity.

Chatham [College] Feminists

Committee on Women in the Diocese of Pittsburgh: to convene persons committed to making full and equal participation of women in the Church a reality, to educate ourselves and promote the education of others on the historical and theological images of women, to plan and implement programs to facilitate the human and spiritual development of women in the Diocese, and to communicate to others the urgency of the need for equality of all persons in a just Church.

Duquesne Women Law Students Association: to promote and assist women law students at Duquesne, develop women's status in the legal community and contribute our legal skills to promote the equality of women.

East End Women's Center: Based in Pittsburgh's East Liberty neighborhood, the space hosted women's empowerment workshops and skill building, consciousness-raising, a free store, child care, speaking events, a feminist library, exploration into self-help medicine and organizing for welfare rights. Operated from 1971-1972. (Information taken from the *Pittsburgh Fair Witness*.)

Executive Women's Council, Greater Pittsburgh: to promote the professional development of women managers and administrators; to increase the numbers of women managers and administrators in the Pittsburgh area; to increase the significant decision- and policy-making positions held by women; to support each other; to develop our power as women and to use it effectively.

Female Offenders Program of Western Pennsylvania, Inc.: job development and job placement for women on probation and parole in Allegheny County, providing these women with a viable alternative to returning to jail or prison; we also help former offenders enroll in job-training programs, locate housing, arrange for child care, get into drug treatment or counseling programs, and obtain other support services.

Feminist Karate Union (FKU): to teach self-defense and rape prevention to women; to teach women that instead of being victims, they can learn to defend themselves.

Feminist Writers Guild: to become a support network for women writers in a true feminist sense; to critique each other's work and to share insights and expertise.

Freedom Feminist Federal Credit Union: to provide a self-help financial organization which is an alternative to sexist lending institutions.

Hardhatted Women: to provide psychological and emotional support for women who are in or trying to get in non-traditional jobs. Also seeks to bring pressure on government, industry and unions to hire more women and respond better to women's needs in the workplace.

Karate Women (KW): to teach women self-defense and Karate in a supportive feminist atmosphere. To help women develop strong minds and bodies.

Job Advisory Service: to help women deal with pressures resulting from the changes in society, develop a satisfying balance between responsibilities to self and others, and recognize each stage of life as a developmental opportunity.

KNOW, Inc.: to publish and distribute feminist materials; to disseminate information on the status and role of women; to effect change toward equality. We see ourselves as a communications network.

League of Women Voters of the Pittsburgh Area: to promote political responsibility and informed and active participation of citizens in government.

Lesbian-Feminist Study Clearinghouse: a non-profit established in the fall of 1978, dedicated to the study of lesbian experience from a feminist perspective. We aim to combat the patriarchal distortion of lesbian experience and history and the suppression or erasure of woman-identified scholarship.

Lesbian-Feminist Theatre Collective: to educate the community on lesbian and gay issues and to share the politics and experience of being a lesbian.

Mon-Yough Rape Crisis Center (re-named: Allegheny County Center for the Victims of Violent Crimes, see above)

Motherroot Publications: dedicated to the publication of serious work by women reflecting a woman's culture and combining the art and politics inherent to the female experience.

Mother's Support Group: an on-going support group for mothers whose children are not living with them. Focus is on the unique concerns of non-custodial mothers, the way society views this situation, the ways women view themselves and the socialization of women to be mothers.

New American Movement (NAM) Socialist Feminist Committee: to promote the development of socialist-feminist theory and practice; to develop this with other feminist groups.

New American Movement Reproductive Rights Committee: to develop a multi-issue approach to reproductive rights, including abortion, freedom from sterilization abuse, accessible contraceptive information, lesbian/gay rights, freedom of sexual expression, and others.

National Organization for Women (NOW): to eliminate sexism and create a society in which each individual can live with dignity, security and pleasure. The *Allegheny Feminist* lists 20 different chapters, some with slightly varying statements of purpose.

Parents Anonymous of Pittsburgh: self-help group for parents who have problems dealing with their children.

Pennsylvania Commission for Women: to be a strong advocate for the rights of women in all areas of the state and in all types of situations and to make certain that women have full opportunity to serve in every capacity as citizens of the state, and as equal participants in the economy, politics and government, social development, the system of justice, and in all facets of life.

Pennsylvania Women's Political Caucus/ Allegheny County: a coalition of women of various backgrounds, economic levels and political affiliations who have joined together to gain an equal voice and place in the political process.

Persad Center: counseling center for sexual minority people; support for subculture groups; consultation and education about sexual minorities for community groups.

Pittsburgh Action Against Rape (PAAR): to supply compassionate aid and information to victims of all sexual crimes, and to present to the public an educational program dedicated to the permanent eradication of sexual assault.

Pittsburgh Feminist Network (PFN): to provide a communications network for individual women and feminist groups in the Pittsburgh area.

Pittsburgh Feminist Therapy Consultants: referral agency for therapists, counselors with special sensitivity to feminist issues and women's needs.

Pittsburgh Free Clinic: to provide free or low-cost health care, in the belief that health is a right not a privilege. Services include: pregnancy and birth control counseling, contraceptive info, venereal disease treatment, health complaint mediation, health care referral, personal counseling, laboratory testing, patients' rights, preventative medicine and health education, general medical diagnosis and treatment.

Pittsburgh Gay Political Caucus

Pittsburgh Infant Formula Action Coalition: to educate Pittsburgh citizens about infant formula abuse in the third world and to promote the Nestle boycott.

Pittsburgh Radical Women's Union (PRWU): conducted rap groups and organized public demonstrations, connecting radical women around the Pittsburgh area. Existed from 1970-1971. (Information taken from the *Pittsburgh Fair Witness*.)

Pittsburgh Self-Help Group: intensive group on women's health, discussion, demonstration and personal instruction on self-examination.

Pittsburgh Working Women (PWW): membership organization of office workers in Pittsburgh, founded in 1979 to promote rights and respect for office workers. They conducted an office worker wage survey in 1981 and began a Higher Wage Campaign. (From the PWW Office Worker Wage Survey Report.)

Planned Parenthood Center of Pittsburgh: to provide a variety of medical, educational and counseling services for family planning; offering contraceptives, vasectomies, early abortion, and pregnancy tests; for community education with films, resource library and speakers.

Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights: Educational and lobbying group to support and uphold the Supreme Court's 1973 decision guaranteeing a woman's right to choose abortion.

Reproductive Counseling Institute: to provide non-sexist counseling: reproductive, including abortion (menstrual regulation, vacuum aspiration, saline and prostoglandin methods) also marital, sexual, relationship and individual counseling.

Save Our Selves (SOS): to empower women to take their lives into their own hands and start fighting for their self-respect; put on educational and empowerment workshops on rape and domestic violence laws, pornography and sexual harassment; one of the initial sponsors of Take Back the Night. Began in 1977. (Information taken from the pages of the *Allegheny Feminist*.)

Undergraduate Women's Union of the University of Pittsburgh: political and educational feminist organization for undergraduates.

University Women's Center: to provide advocacy and a supportive environment for women who are experiencing or contemplating change in their lives, who must cope with stressful situations, who experience discrimination in employment, personal or educational contexts, and who seek to take more responsibility for their own lives.

Welfare Rights Organization of Allegheny County: to serve as advocate for welfare recipients, educate recipients on rules and regulations, and provide some assistance in job and housing information.

Wild Sisters Coffeehouse: a non-profit collective committed to promoting women's culture, including music, poetry, drama, handicrafts, art, photography, and literature.

Women's Center and Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh: to provide a growth and crisis center for women who are victims of domestic violence and need temporary food, shelter and other resources.

Women's Center South: to provide a growth and crisis center for women. We provide shelter for up to a week for women in need of food and other resources.

Women's Health Services, Inc.: non-profit organization to provide patient-oriented, pregnancy-related services, on an out-patient basis. Services include abortion, contraceptive counseling, free

pregnancy testing, on-going contraceptive services, and sexuality counseling. Accepts medical assistance patients.

Women in Communications, Inc.: to unite those engaged in all fields of communications; to work for the advancement of women in communications.

Women for Racial and Economic Equality

Women in Steel: to better the condition of women working in the mills and to educate ourselves. We are a new group just finding out what the problems are. There is no national organization yet but there is an informal network of women in steelwork in various cities around the country.

Women in the Urban Crisis, Inc.: a non-profit umbrella organization to discover inner-city needs and to create relationships, programs and projects in the belief that Pittsburgh's urban problems can only be solved by the combined efforts of its diverse population.

Women's National Book Association, Pittsburgh Chapter

Women Writers of the University of Pittsburgh (re-named Feminist Writers Guild, see above): to work with each other as artists struggling to develop our writing, to share information, ideas and our writing.

Womanspeak: non-profit service to locate women to speak on various topics (ERA, credit, part-time work, starting your own business, etc. depending on the expertise available). There will be a \$25.00 fee for providing a speaker. Fee could be waived in appropriate circumstances.

Womansplace: to serve as a woman's center for the McKeesport area. It is free to all area women to drop in or borrow books. Womansplace provides educational programs, referral service and meeting space for women.

WYEP Women's Collective: to help women become involved in the traditionally all-male field of radio. We provide training for women in all aspects of broadcasting, and to insure women's input and involvement in all areas of station management and policy-making.

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¹ One local study of the Pittsburgh women's movement is "In Sisterhood: The Women's Movement in Pittsburgh," an oral history and multimedia project documenting the women's movement in Southwest Pennsylvania from the 1960s through the 1980s. Project director Dr. Patricia Ulbrich identified leaders to chart this history. Over the past few years, the project has been exhibited in arts and educational venues around Southwest PA highlighting

the women and men who worked in government, legal venues, national non-profit organizations, corporations and other sectors to promote equality for women.

² To the contrary, the interviewee who identified as a member of the radical lesbian separatist community most explicitly talked about the early 1980s as marking the “death” of the movement in Pittsburgh.

³ At the Feminist Network Conference on March 21, 1981, the editorial collective of the *Allegheny Feminist* proposed that the paper become the Pittsburgh Feminist Network newsletter. By October of 1981, the second issue of the *Network News* had come out. A note by the production staff on the cover read, “The *Network News* is still not airborne but we are definitely picking up speed and with your help will lift off by 1982.”

⁴ The *Pittsburgh Fair Witness* vol. 1, no. 5. 1970, pg.6. The radical Leftist counterculture newspaper published from 1970-1973. It was originally titled *Grok* but became the *Pittsburgh Fair Witness* after the first nine issues. I have edited the quoted text throughout this chapter for typos.

⁵ *FW* vol. 3, no. 20, pg. 4.

⁶ Ware, Susan and Stacy Braukman, editors. 2005. *Notable American Women: A Biographical Dictionary, Volume 5: Completing the Twentieth Century*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press: Pg. 290.

⁷ *Allegheny Feminist*, March 15, 1977, pg. 10.

⁸ *FW* vol. 1, no. 6, pg. 15.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ KNOW, Inc. was actually founded in 1969, prior to the “early 1970s.” *AF*, January 14, 1977, pg. 5.

¹¹ This information is from a collection of *Fair Witness* articles: vol. 3, no. 5, pg. 6; vol. 1, no. 8, pg. 30; vol. 2, no. 4, pg. 16; vol. 3, no. 20, pg. 4; vol. 3, no. 9, pg. 7; vol. 3, no. 9, pg. 18; vol. 4, no. 3, pg. 8; vol. 3, no. 12, pg. 7; vol. 1, no. 9, pg. 8-9. One *Allegheny Feminist* article was referenced, about the founding of KNOW in 1969: *AF* January 14, 1977, pg. 5.

¹² *FW* vol. 3, no. 20, pgs. 4 and 21.

¹³ *AF* November 13, 1976, pg. 11.

¹⁴ *AF* March 15, 1977, pg. 12.

¹⁵ *AF* November 13, 1976, pg. 1.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pg. 6.

¹⁷ *AF* October 15, 1977, pg. 5.

¹⁸ *AF* June 15, 1977, pgs. 10-11.

¹⁹ *AF* September 15, 1977, pgs. 1-2.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, and *AF* November-December 1977, pg. 1.

²¹ *Ibid.*, and *AF* November 1979, pg. 2.

²² *AF* November 1979, pg. 2 and October 1980, pg. 1.

²³ *Ibid.*, and *AF* April 1980, pg. 1, and June 1980, pg. 1.

²⁴ *AF* June 1980, pgs. 4-5.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *AF* March 15, 1977, pg. 10.

²⁷ *AF* January 15, 1978, pg. 3.

²⁸ This information about the socialist-feminist study group and blues band was obtained through interviews.

²⁹ *AF* January 1981, pg. 1

³⁰ *FW* vol. 3, no. 20, pg. 4.

³¹ Articles in the *FW* cite the liberation strand as beginning, in Pittsburgh, in the summer or fall of 1970. *FW* vol. 1, no. 5, pg. 6 and vol. 3, no. 20, pg. 4. Interviews corroborate this claim.

³² *FW* vol. 1, no. 6, pg. 15.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *FW* vol. 1, no. 8, pg. 12.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *FW* vol. 1, no. 8, pg. 5.

³⁸ Rodgers, Ann. "Obituary: Jo Ann Evansgardner / Zealous feminist who never backed down. April 19, 1925 - Feb. 16, 2010," in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, February 28, 2010.

³⁹ *FW* vol. 1, no. 9, pgs. 8-9; vol. 1, no. 8, pg.5.

⁴⁰ *FW* vol. 1, no. 8, pg. 31.

⁴¹ *AF* July/August 1977, pg. 7.

⁴² *AF* June 1978.

⁴³ *FW* vol. 3, no. 12, pg. 3.

⁴⁴ *FW* vol.1, no. 8, pg. 12.

⁴⁵ *FW* vol. 3, no. 20, pg. 4.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *AF* June 1980, pg. 4.

⁴⁸ *AF* October 1978, pg. 2.

⁴⁹ *AF* January 14, 1977, pg. 4.

⁵⁰ *AF* July/August 1977, pg. 6.

⁵¹ *FW* vol. 1, no. 8, pg. 30.

⁵² In the *FW*, vol. 3, no. 20, pg. 4, an article on the fall of the East End Women's Center explained that the project turned into a space for political opportunists to recruit women for their causes, rather than a center specifically for women to carve out their own space to organize around their own issues.

⁵³ *AF* November 1980, pg. 7.

⁵⁴ A third edition, updating the women's groups, may have been published in the October 1979 issue of the *Allegheny Feminist*. This update is not included in the appendix because the University of Pittsburgh Hillman Library is missing this issue in their collection.