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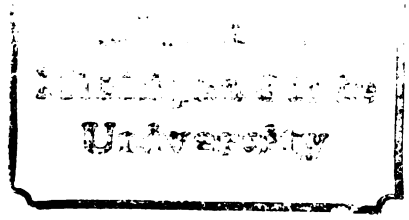

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OF A SOCIAL PROBLEM

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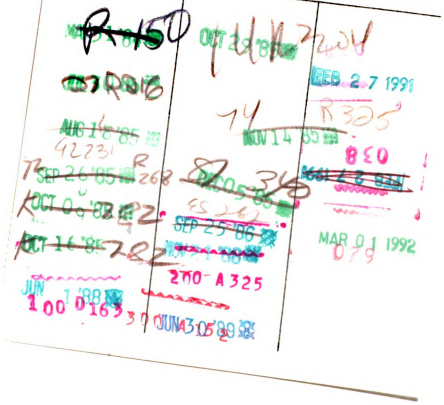

REDEFINING WOMAN BATTERING:

THE CONSTRUCTION OF A SOCIAL PROBLEM

By

Carol S. Wharton

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
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in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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1982

ABSTRACT

REDEFINING WOMAN BATTERING:
THE CONSTRUCTION OF A SOCIAL PROBLEM

By

Carol S. Wharton

This study examined the relationship between the battered women's movement and changing social definitions of woman battering. The status of woman battering has changed dramatically in less than ten years, from a "private trouble" of individual women and their assailants to a public issue, a social problem. In addition, the ownership of the problem has shifted from the state, which owned it from the 19th century but chose to ignore it, to women as members of the social movement that developed in reaction to the state's absenteeism, mismanagement, and neglect. The battered women's movement expropriated (or reappropriated) the problem. At the same time, responsibility for the problem shifted from the battered woman herself to the social structure of patriarchal society. All of these changes can be attributed to the struggles of the battered women's movement, to its efforts on the local, state, and national levels to bring woman battering to the foreground of public consciousness.

The following specific social practices were analyzed: the origins of the battered women's movement, the rise of local and regional organizations within the movement, the relationship of ideology to the movement's development, and the sources of strain or conflict within the movement. The research was based upon in-depth interviews that were conducted between November, 1980, and May, 1981, among members of local groups providing services to battered women in two states. The relationship of individual groups to the battered women's movement and the issue of woman battering in general was evaluated.

Within the perspective that defines social problems as activities, rather than as conditions, Wiener (1981) identifies animation, legitimation, and demonstration as three types of activities which are involved in the process of "building an arena around a social problem." These three processes were examined as they were performed by groups within the battered women's movement, but with particular attention to issues of power and influence. Emphasis was placed on discovering exactly who engaged in these claims-making activities, and who was responsible for defining woman battering as a social problem. Battered women, the people who are directly affected by the issue, have not initiated or assumed control of most groups. Instead, the movement has for the most part been developed by and continues to

be composed of nonbattered women. The research demonstrated that structural and ideological constraints have prevented most battered women from engaging in claims-making activities in their own behalf.

The basic goal of the movement is to increase public awareness so that woman battering eventually will not be tolerated. This goal is articulated in different ways at the local and national levels of the battered women's movement. These differences are so great that it was sometimes difficult to find any common ties between local groups and the movement's national spokespeople. Local groups often become so involved in the specific, concrete tasks of rescuing battered women that they lose sight of the larger struggle to change social attitudes. Or they perceive the task as public education about their services in ways that will reassure the community that the group is not a threat to basic values. They modify their message in order to reassure their audience that the presence of a shelter and/or other services for battered women will not result in major social change. These findings suggest that client-focused movements, such as the battered women's movement, moderate their rhetoric and adapt their goals and structure to satisfy the expectations of their most promising supporters.

In sharp contrast, national leaders seem to be more concerned with challenging and changing ideology. They

also speak much more self-consciously of anti-battering as a social movement than do the local leaders. Tactical disagreements notwithstanding, it was concluded that an interactive process has developed between the local groups and the national movement. The movement is developing on both levels simultaneously and is responding to various transformation processes which make it appear radical at times, conservative at others. Both the "radical core" and "moderate penumbra" are contributing to the movement's viability.

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Sometimes not often, we'll see a pile of dust
Sitting in the corner, trying to break away before
being swept away
Frightened
Sniveling in a corner set
Tears hide the dust and the dust won't blow away.
Woman, I know you in a black and white storybook
read by the river.
I know you like the wild stallion knows the
circus horse madness.
Bruised with years, let your tears roll past your
cage
let your arms grow past the danger that won't let
you slip away.

Lori Lichtman
May, 1980

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Special thanks go to the women whom I interviewed. Their willingness to share information with me about the work they have done in providing services to battered women is deeply appreciated. More importantly, I salute

them for the work itself. Their's is an arduous, painful, and often unrewarding task; but one that is necessary for the survival of battered women today, and the eventual elimination of the problem.

Lori Lichtman, whose poem appears as the Dedication of this work, is a friend and former student. I thank her for this gift, and for its statement of understanding of the oppression and hope that women share.

Finally, I want to thank Reber Dunkel for his constant faith in me, and his unfailing patience when I lost faith in myself and the enterprise.

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Part One

THE EMERGENCE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AS A FEMINIST ISSUE: A MOVEMENT PERSPECTIVE

Chapter One

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AS DEFINERS OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Introduction

In every society certain objective conditions--e.g., poverty, alcoholism, racial inequality--might be considered social problems, in that they adversely affect large numbers of people. However, there is a distinction between objective conditions and subjective definitions of them; and socially problematic conditions are not always perceived as social problems. It is only when at least some members of a society come to define an issue as a "problem" that a social problem--as a recognized and protested phenomenon--exists. As Lewis Coser (1972: 217) writes with respect to the "sociology of poverty:"

> Historically, the poor emerge when society elects to recognize poverty as a special status and assigns specific persons to that category. The fact that some people may privately consider themselves poor is sociologically irrelevant. What is sociologically relevant is poverty as a socially recognized condition, as a social status. We are concerned with poverty as a property of the social structure.

Issues do not emerge spontaneously as social problems, but through the "claims-making activities" (Spector and Kitsuse, 1977) of socially-conscious individuals or groups. This research will examine ways in which issues emerge into public consciousness and concern, by focusing on the people and organizations who brought one such issue--woman battering--into focus as a social problem.

Recognition of a "new" social problem may indicate, in conventional sociological terms, a normative change in public perception. In Marxist terms, such recognition probably involves an ideological shift and therefore may be instructive about the conditions under which a particular interest group challenges or reinforces the cultural hegemony of dominant groups. In this sense, the study of the emergence of a social problem, and the reception by the members of the society of a group's definition of that problem become indices of the power of a particular group.

> In each major era the fundamental circumstance that has made possible the development of a revised sense of justice has been the rise in power and general standing of some major class (Turner, 1969: 397).

The interests of a group may be articulated by a social movement, which seeks to challenge the prevailing ideological hegemony by setting forth a new

definition of reality, including a reassessment of which conditions are considered problematic.

Social definitions are produced and transmitted ideologically (Smith, 1975); the decision as to whether or not a social condition is perceived as a social problem is ideological. I am defining ideology as a set of beliefs, connected to social action, that legitimate or challenge an existing status quo or social order. In a class society the dominant ideology is produced and controlled by the ruling class, and "ideas and images are thus imposed on others whose perspectives, interests, and experiences are not represented" (Smith, 1975: 353). I am using "ruling class" in the Marxist sense, to refer to the class which controls the means of production, including mental production, of a society. "The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas . . . The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships" (Marx and Engels, 1970: 64).

Ideological hegemony includes expression of the class interests of the dominant class and the acceptance by most members of society of a particular way of seeing the world and human relationships, a general acceptance of one definition of what is "normal" and what is "real" (Williams, 1976: 117-118). A change in perception, in consciousness,

requires some kind of revolutionary change in social relations; and, dialectically, such a change in social relations requires a new view of reality--an alternative hegemony (Gramsci, 1975).

In addition to, and interacting with, the class basis of hegemony, there has also been an organizing of sex and gender, with a dominance of men over women, in Western society. To a large extent, it is men rather than women who have controlled production of the dominant ideology.

> Women have been deprived of the means to participate in creating forms of thought relevant or adequate to express their own experience or to define and raise social consciousness about their situations and concerns (Smith, 1975: 354).

One consequence of this male control of ideology is that men have defined what is "appropriate" behavior by men toward women and women toward men. Battering and other forms of male violence against women are a result of and a means of enforcing male dominance over women. Because men have considered women their subordinates and property, women could be treated as property. Without the power to enforce a different interpretation, women often accepted the same perspective; it was "natural" for a man to beat his wife. It was not a social problem, but a personal problem of the individual woman.[1] But if these ideas are challenged, if men are no longer granted the right

to batter without comment, if significant portions of a society come to view woman battering as a social problem, what do these changes indicate about the power of men over women? Marx and Engels contended that changing ideas and new definitions are the result of changing class relationships. Might they also be the result of changing relationships between the sexes?

Although the intersection between sex/gender dominance and class dominance has not been clearly articulated, there are parallels between the two types of dominance which may be theoretically significant. The ultimate goal of this study is to contribute to an understanding of how ideology changes in a historical context, by studying the social conditions in American society in the decade of the 1970's which led to formation of the battered women's movement and its struggle to force the public to recognize and cope with woman battering as a social problem.

Review of the Literature

The Construction of Social Problems

Within sociology there is "a clear need to study the process by which a society comes to see, to define, and to handle their [sic] social problems"

(Blumer, 1971:301). But, as Spector and Kitsuse (1977: 1) point out, there is not even a clear and concise definition of social problems that is acceptable to all sociologists. Functionalists have concentrated on identifying objective conditions which are disruptive ("dysfunctional") to a society, that violate a society's values, and are therefore inherently social problems (for examples of this perspective see Merton and Nisbet, 1971). Value-conflict theorists, on the other hand, contend that the determination of what is functional or dysfunctional for a society is a value judgement, and that social problems are not objective, but are based on the selective perception of some conditions as problematic, and others as not (see Waller, 1936; Fuller and Myers, 1941).

Spector and Kitsuse (1977) charge that, for the most part, value-conflict theorists have been little more successful than the functionalists in developing a sociology of social problems based on definitional processes. Both schools have tended to become mired in trying to identify objective conditions which constitute social problems. Spector and Kitsuse contend that, on the contrary,

> . .a sociology of social problems must take the members' perspective as the starting point, focusing in particular on definitional claims-making activities as the primary subject matter. Rather than

> investigate how institutional arrangements produce certain social conditions, we examine how individuals and groups become engaged in collective activities that recognize putative conditions as problems, and attempt to establish institutional arrangements (1977: 72).

These authors, then, define social problems as activities, rather than as conditions; "the activities of those who assert the existence of conditions and define them as problems" (Spector and Kitsuse, 1977: 74). The question of whether the condition is objective or subjective is less sociologically relevant than whether or not the members of a society or social group perceive a condition as a problem, and their reactions to it.

Wiener (1981) distinguishes three types of activities involved in the process of "building an arena around a social problem" by increasing its visibility. These types, all forms of claims-making activity, are Animation, Legitimation, and Demonstration. Animation refers to the process of involving people and resources in the project of defining a social problem, recruiting experts from various fields and developing theories about the causes of and solutions to the problem. Legitimation involves establishing an issue as a problem in its own right--separate from already recognized social problems (although the legitimacy of these may be

borrowed or extended)--and building respectability in order to procure scientific and legislative sponsorship of the problem. Demonstration includes accumulating data about the extent of the problem, and the impact of programs which were designed to attack the problem, and reconciling opposing viewpoints about the nature, extent, and treatment of the problem. All of the above processes are types of claims-making activities, which contribute to the emergence of social problems.

Who engages in these claims-making activities? Who is responsible for defining social problems? Although providing a useful and innovative perspective on the process of defining social problems, Spector and Kitsuse and their proponents are not sufficiently attentive to issues of power and influence. They do not distinguish the definers of social problems as having any special access to public opinion. Thus, they imply that any individual or group could locate an issue and bring it to public attention as a social problem. If this were the case, it is probable that most social problems would be presented by the members of society who are directly affected by a condition or issue. The poor, for example, would convince the wealthy that poverty is a social problem. "Insiders" would be most likely to initiate claims-making activities to highlight their plight.

However, as I shall discuss below, there are structural and ideological constraints which prevent most individuals and groups from engaging in effective claims-making activities. Piven and Cloward (1979: 3) argue that "protest is not a matter of free choice; it is not freely available to all groups at all times . . . " By the same token, defining social problems is not an activity that is freely available at all times to all groups. It takes special resources and skills to bring a new social problem to light. What are these resources and who has access to them?

In contemporary society the mass media, the "consciousness industry" (Enzensberger, 1974), play an important role in defining social problems, by identifying a social condition and designating it problematic, analyzing it, relating it to other, ongoing issues, and eventually stirring public response. As Fishman (1978: 7) writes, in an analysis of "crime waves," newsworkers identify "themes" in their coverage of news, and then lump together numerous events as part of a larger issue. However, as Tuchman (1978: 133) demonstrates, it may take some precipitating factor to cause newsworkers to see those themes, since newswork is organized in such a way that existing issues are not always recognized as "public topics".

Smith (1975: 356) contends that any knowledge is

ideological, resulting from "learned forms of thought which serve to organize, order, and control the social relations, the working practices, the ideals and objectives of individual members of the society" so that people share an understanding of events around them. Thus, if a particular issue does not appear newsworthy to those who run the media, it may be because the issue is not relevant to their worldview. On the other hand, social conditions may not seem newsworthy because they are too familiar to the reporter. Newsworkers rarely discover conditions that have existed for long periods of time, since "some items are not noticed because they are taken for granted as aspects of the social world" (Tuchman, 1978: 8).

Hence, while eventual adoption of an issue by newsworkers is perhaps essential to widespread dissemination, the news media are probably not the point of origin of most redefinitions of conditions as social problems. It usually takes the prior effort of some type of change agent--an organization, interest group, social movement--to identify an issue and make it newsworthy. "Every use of the media presupposes manipulation . . . the question is therefore not whether the media are manipulated, but who manipulates them" (Enzensberger, 1970: 21). Anyone who demands services, fills out forms, lodges complaints, files

lawsuits, publishes exposes, places ads in newspapers, supports or opposes governmental practices or policies, or sets up picket lines or boycotts is participating in the process of defining social problems (Spector and Kitsuse, 1977: 79). This would include many different kinds of individuals and groups, although few of those actions actually result in the emergence of a new social problem. Again, the result depends on who is involved, on the skills and material resources they command.

Rose (1977: 75) uses the term "social problem movement" to refer to one means by which social problems are defined--through the development of collective efforts by interest groups to raise problems to public awareness:

> . . . collective definitions based upon subjective constructions of reality lead to interest group formation and action. In an attempt to influence public opinion on issues, interest groups become involved in social movements; social movements then contribute to the definition of social problems. Social problems, in this perspective, may be considered simply special kinds of social movements . . .

The state, however, also plays a major role in determining which issues will be designated as social problems; and such a designation may actually serve to defuse the political ramifications of an issue. Morgan (1981: 18) observes that many of the "more problematic aspects of capitalist social relations:

mental health, deviance, violence, and crime" have been labelled as social problems in order to obscure the political and economic causes of these conditions.

> The appearance of social problems in capitalist systems often masks political ends by being publically presented as problems against a society identified as a mass of individuals empty of class context . . . Social problem management through the capitalist state serves to depoliticize political questions: to incorporate demands through quasimedical models, to individualize and personalize structural problems, and to obscure any class interests inherent in them (Morgan, 1981: 21).

As a result, many issues which are recognized and introduced as social problems by socially critical movements or groups are eventually coopted by the state and "managed" in such a way that they do not threaten the existing social order. As Morgan emphasizes, left organizers need to understand how and why the state accomplishes this intervention, in order to prevent such cooptation.

The Role of Social Movements

The notion that social movements create social problems through a process of collective definition has been used to explain the emergence of various phenomena as targets of public concern. For example, the Civil Rights Movement rejected the myth of "separate but equal," and defined racial segregation

as a social problem (Piven and Cloward, 1979). Rose (1977) attributes the perception of rape as a social problem to activities of the contemporary women's movement. Similarly, the environmental movement challenged "one of the core tenets of the American ethic--a belief in growth" (Albrecht, 1973: 245), by arguing that nonstop industrial expansion will destroy our planet's ecological system. This contention has resulted in the widespread definition of pollution, chemical dumping, nuclear energy, and destruction of wildlife as social problems. As Turner (1969: 390) observes, "any major social movement depends on and promotes some normative revision" which often "takes the form of a new sense of what is just and unjust in society," especially of the conventional, commonsense notion of justice. Mauss (1975) and Blumer (1971) also focus on social problems as products of social movements.

Blumer (1971) identifies five stages in the process of collective identification of social problems: (1)the emergence of a social problem, (2)the legitimation of a social problem, (3)the mobilization of action with regard to the problem, (4)the formation of an official plan of action, and (5)the transformation of the official plan of action. Blumer implies that the same group will escort the social problem through all five stages; a monolithic

social movement will form and coalesce around an issue. However, this may not be the pattern followed in many collective efforts to identify social problems. Instead, the problem goes through a series of identities, as it is sponsored and dropped by different groups.

Spector and Kitsuse (1977), while adopting key elements of Blumer's model, charge that it does not go far enough in describing the history of a social problem. They have developed an alternative, four-stage model which extends the analysis. In Stage One efforts are focused on transforming "private troubles into public issues" (p. 143). Complaints are raised and strategies are devised to press claims, gain publicity, and arouse controversy. This stage corresponds to Wiener's (1981) activities of animation (see page six of this chapter). Stage Two, which includes the activities Wiener labels as legitimation, consists of the struggle for official recognition and support of the claims-making activities of groups which are involved in defining a new social problem.

Spector and Kitsuse contend that Blumer's five stages go no further than this; they can all be collapsed into these two steps. But after a social policy has been implemented with regard to the new social problem, renewed and counter claims and demands are made, which constitute Stages Three and Four of

Spector and Kitsuse's model. These include activities of demonstration, as well as further examples of animation and legitimation, since the three types of claims-making activities are "overlapping, not sequential, processes" (Wiener, 1981: 22). As the issue gains recognition and a wider audience, groups with competing claims vie for ownership and control of the problem.

Stage Three of Spector and Kitsuse's model consists of reactions to the solutions and policies which are initially devised around a social problem. In this stage, "the claims are not concerned directly with the imputed conditions asserted in Stage One. Rather, the claims are made against the organizations established to ameliorate, eliminate, and otherwise change those conditions" (Spector and Kitsuse, 1977: 152). Thus, for example, the group which originally identified a social problem may feel that the issue has been coopted by government agencies or other groups, and become dissatisfied with the way the problem is being handled. Conversely, other groups may have been attracted to the issue who are critical of the original group's interpretation, and they may propose a different program altogether.

Stage Four occurs when groups reject institutional solutions and begin to develop alternative institutions to deal with the problem: to

work "outside the system." This stage may never be reached unless movement organizers are aware of, and able to overcome, the processes by which state intervention undermines the critical nature of social movements. The first of these processes is bureaucratization, by which issues are fragmented to fit into existing structures. The second process is professionalization, by which collective forms of organization become stratified hierarchically. Individualization is the third process, and occurs when problems and solutions are viewed as separate from the social relations that produced them. Using the battered women's movement as her example, Morgan (1981) demonstrates how failing to understand these processes can result in the state's alteration of a movement, its goals and strategies. The claims-making activities themselves are affected by whether the actors are leftist (feminist) organizers or members of the state apparatus.

Although Spector and Kitsuse emphasize that the process of defining social problems is multi-directional, they agree that interest groups and popular movements often initiate actions which lead to reevaluations of conditions as social problems. If it is true that "a social movement is always possessed by a sense of mission" (Sherif and Sherif, 1956: 722), then one type of mission which motivates social

movements is surely that of identifying and correcting social problems. Movements have also been termed "ignorance-reducing devices" (Schwartz, 1976: 153), whose purpose is to educate the public about previously unknown or unremarked conditions.

The Development of Social Problem Movements

The social movement literature may be employed to explore the mechanisms by which the above stages are accomplished and a social problem movement is formed. For instance, prior to the stages of defining a social problem, certain prerequisite conditions must exist in order for a social problem movement to emerge. Freeman (1975), in exploring the question of why a social movement emerges at any particular time, has constructed one model of how structural conditions may give rise to a movement. As she states, "social strain does not create social movements; it only creates the potential for movements" (p. 44). Given that potential, several conditions are necessary for a movement to form. There must first be a pre-existing communications network that is responsive to the burgeoning movement and sympathetic to the movement's perspective, which links the spontaneous uncoordinated groups beginning to form around an issue. With these prerequisites, the next essential element is the

development of a precipitating event: a crisis occurs which energizes the network into taking some sort of action, and/or individuals decide to organize themselves into a group to disseminate their viewpoint. This type of action does not necessarily originate with the people who are immediately involved in the crisis.

Gary Marx and Michael Useem (1971) maintain that, in fact, reforms are not usually initiated by the people most in need of social change. "Rarely have oppressed minorities been entirely responsible for their own liberation" (p. 97). This observation may be extended to an analysis of many social conditions; deprived groups are often unable to articulate and organize around their condition in ways that will elicit public recognition. They lack power, because they are geographically dispersed, or economically dependent, or ideologically manipulated into submission. And they lack access to the molders of public consciousness. Members of deprived groups may also have a well-founded fear of repercussions from the dominant group.

Piven and Cloward (1979: 3), in their analysis of poor people's movements and why the poor do not protest more often, explain that

> The occasions when protest is possible among the poor, the forms that it must take, and the impact it can have are all

> delimited by the social structure in ways which usually diminish its extent and diminish its force.

The same constraints operate to limit the potential for protest among other groups besides those who are economically deprived.

Karl Marx (1975: 124) wrote, with respect to unorganized masses, that as long as "the identity of their interests begets no community, no national bond and no political organization among them, they do not form a class. They are consequently incapable of enforcing their class interest in their own name".[2] They are, at this point, merely a mass of people with a shared discontent and, as Freeman (1975: 48) states, "masses alone do not form movements, however discontented they may be."

Rather than the affected ones, it is often "outsiders" who initiate social movements on behalf of others. Marx and Useem (1971: 82) define outsiders as "individuals who do not share the stigma or socially debilitating attribute and who do not stand to gain in the same direct way from the desired social change." The outsiders, then, are not themselves directly affected by the issue; but they identify with the deprived, or feel that the specific condition is part of a larger, general injustice in which they are included as victims.

In later stages of a social movement, however,

outsiders are less likely to predominate, as the oppressed group gains a sense of its rights and the means to achieve them. The greater participation of "insiders" is usually the result of changes on two levels: transformations of consciousness and of behavior (Piven and Cloward, 1979). On the level of consciousness, the system of institutional arrangements which has previously been accepted as just (or inevitable) loses legitimacy. Also on the level of consciousness, the oppressed group becomes less fatalistic. It ceases to believe in the inevitability of current conditions, begins to demand changes, and to believe that change is possible.

On the level of behavior, members of the oppressed groups become defiant and act out their defiance collectively.

> . . . acts of defiance can be considered movement events when those involved perceive themselves to be acting as members of a group, and when they share a common set of protest beliefs (Piven and Cloward, 1979: 4).

Piven and Cloward, in the above passage, are introducing defiance as the key feature of protest movements. They concentrate on analyzing movements which are initiated by the oppressed group. However, I am contending that the same types of transformations might occur among the members of an oppressed group as a result of previous social movement activity on their

behalf by outsiders. The insiders might then take over the movement, or at least play a greater role in it.

Gerlach and Hine (1970: xvii) identify several other factors which they believe are essential for any group to become a true social movement. One of these factors is described as follows:

> An ideology which codifies values and goals, provides a conceptual framework by which all experiences or events relative to these goals may be interpreted, motivates and provides rationale for envisioned changes, defines the opposition, and forms the basis for conceptual unification of a segmented network of groups.

In the Introduction to this chapter, I defined ideology as a set of beliefs, connected to social action, that legitimate or challenge an existing status quo or social order. It is the acceptance of a particular way of seeing the world and human relationships, a generally accepted definition of reality. That is a macro definition, a view of ideology as it affects a total social system. But ideologies also operate on the micro level, as sets of beliefs which reflect how the members of a group or a segment of society behave and view their environment. Later, I want to examine the ways in which the battered women's movement has challenged the ideological hegemony of capitalist patriarchy, and the effects of the dominant ideology on the movement. I

am, however, also concerned with the belief system of the movement itself, and how that has affected the decisions which various groups have made concerning structure and content.

In her study of its development, Freeman (1975: 10) asserts that the contemporary women's movement

> began without an ideology, and has as yet only the rudiments of one. Thus feminist ideology has played an insignificant role in the development of its structures and strategies, . . . it is structure that has determined what kinds of activities are feasible and which more accurately explains how various groups have directed their energies.

Based on this premise, Nall (1976: 6) argues that one major weakness of mainstream social movement theories (e.g., Smelser, 1963; Oberschall, 1973) is the "assumption that collective behavior is organized around a belief system". She contends instead that "at least some social movement organizations are primarily organized around tasks, . . . ideology is developed as a rationale for previous activity." Nall (p. 124) goes on, however, to point out that Freeman seems to have confused ideology with "philosophical credos" (formalized belief systems). While Nall agrees that the women's movement lacks a "full-blown set of legitimations and a formal symbolic universe," it does possess a definition of reality which is shared among its members.

I think that the same condition is true of the

battered women's movement. It is my contention that such a shared definition is essential to the formation of a social movement; although that definition is created and shaped by the movement, and therefore changes over time. The process is interactive. In other words, while it may not be necessary for people to develop a "full-blown ideology" before they begin to form a social movement, it is essential that they possess a common perception of their basic goals and appropriate strategies for achieving them. Without such a perspective, the tasks of various social movement organizations would not even be defined in the same way across the movement. Applying this principle to the battered women's movement, the people who established groups to aid battered women in different communities must have shared the belief that woman battering is not legitimate. They believed that women have a right to seek alternatives to violence in their homes, and that the community has an obligation to aid women in that quest for alternatives.

Beyond these beliefs, different groups may have had little in common at their inception. But through contacts within the movement, groups developed their services in similar directions, while maintaining differences in structure and explanations of the problem. At the same time, the experiences of actually building a social movement led to changes in

the perception of the problem and the ways to deal with it--i.e., changes in ideology. I am contending that those similarities were the result of an ideology that is developing along with the movement. And the differences were the result of contradictions and the underdeveloped nature of that ideology, as well as the testing and adaption of the ideology in applying it to concrete situations.

In contrast to Freeman, Banks and Banks (1964: 556) assert that an ideology is essential to the development of a social movement. It gives the members a "slogan to work with," a raison d'etre, a basis for solidarity. Killian (1973: 20) puts this in another way, by referring to the importance of a common set of values: "Every social movement has, as the standard around which the adherents rally, some value or set of values--a vision of a goal to be obtained by the voluntary striving of the members." So Freeman may be correct in her assertion that social movements do not always begin with an ideology if, as Nall suspects, Freeman is defining ideology as a fully developed, formal statement. They probably do, however, at least begin with an idea, a vision, a motivating set of insights that represent the rudiments of a developing ideology. Tierney's (1979: 40) definition of ideology as a "general philosophical orientation which provides an overarching rationale or

justification for the goals and activities of a SMO [Social Movement Organization]" perhaps comes closest to describing the stage of development of the ideology of the battered women's movement. For this movement, the general orientation was the basis of a shared understanding of woman battering.

Definition of Social Movements

Nall (1976: 6) observes that for sociologists, social movements are often defined as any behavior which cannot easily be categorized as fitting into the institutionalized belief systems of a society. But this type of definition ignores the members' perception: whether or not the participants define their actions as being part of a social movement.[3] This study contends that if participants refer to their activities as being part of a social movement, they are indeed involved in one. Ash (1972: 1) perhaps comes closest to articulating this type of definition:

> A social movement is a set of attitudes and self-conscious actions on the part of a group of people directed toward change in the social structure and/or ideology of a society and carried on outside of ideologically legitimated channels or which uses these channels in innovative ways.

Thus, it is the attitudes and the self-conscious

actions of participants which distinguish a social movement from other phenomena. However, such a subjective perspective on social movements renders them inherently difficult to identify and delineate. If a social movement is defined as an attitude and the collective actions of people who see themselves as members of a movement, where do people fit in who do not perceive themselves as part of a movement and yet who belong to movement groups and/or participate in advancing the goals and ideas of the movement? This problem will be amply demonstrated in my analysis of the battered women's movement, since members of local groups who are working on the issue of woman battering are not always in accord with what national spokespeople represent as the movement's perspective. Indeed, sometimes local group members appear unaware of the existence of a movement dedicated to the same issue as they.

There are different types of social movements. Ash (1972) divides them into revolutionary and reform movements. Revolutionary movements are those which advocate changing the relations of production, political system, central values and institutions of society through ideologically illegitimate methods. Reform movements merely aim to manipulate elites within the existing social structure through ideologically legitimate methods. Reform movements,

however, might evolve into revolutionary movements if their goals are repeatedly frustrated by the structure of class relations; or if the movement is so successful at achieving its original goals that its members escalate their demands.

On the other hand, it is possible that movements which begin with a radical perspective may modify their demands if members decide that such an approach is more effective. Or radical movements may unwittingly become instruments of reform because their members do not adequately understand the state's potential for cooptation. To my knowledge, there has been very little written about client-focused movements, which elect to provide expensive services to some target population, and must as a result rely on funding sources such as government or private-sector grants. I would conjecture, however, that this type of movement might moderate its rhetoric and adapt its goals and structure to satisfy the expectations of its most promising supporters.

In general, reform movements are more likely than revolutionary movements to succeed in achieving their goals, at least that has been the case historically in the U.S. There is less resistance from the ruling class to the narrow goals of reform movements, since those goals may be accomplished without upsetting the basic structure of society. Schwartz (1976) contends

that successful reform movements are those which understand the social structure well enough to anticipate and overcome its resistance, and in which the movement's rank and file membership uses its positions within the established social structure to develop and exercise power counter-institutionally.

Most research on social movements has been undertaken retrospectively, after the movement has developed completely and faded away. Few studies have examined social movements in their prime, while they remain vigorous. Thus, the outcome of the movement--its sucess or failure in achieving its goals--is known before the research is begun; and the focus is often directed toward why the movement failed or succeeded (Freeman, 1975: 7). An exception to this trend are recent studies of the contemporary women's movement, a viable, ongoing movement about which a great deal of research has already been done (e.g., Cassell, 1977; Deckard, 1979; Evans, 1979; Freeman, 1975; Mandle, 1979). Other exceptions are ethnographic studies, in which the researcher becomes part of the movement in order to understand the movement's internal processes and the worldview of its members (see, for example, Thorne, 1971). There is still a need for empirical evidence of the formative processes involved in creating social problem movements, of how the movement's goals and definitions are shaped and

reshaped by the existing conditions and experiences which members encounter.

Methods of Study

The purpose of this research was to study the battered women's movement and its impact on changing social definitions of woman battering, in an attempt to contribute empirical data to the development of a theory of the formation of social problem movements. Insights may be provided into how social movements contribute to the definition of social problems, by examining the origins of the battered women's movement, the rise of local and regional organizations within the movement, the relationship of ideology to the movement's development and continuity, and the sources of strain or conflict within the movement. I have traced the development of the movement by analyzing how local groups got started, the dynamics and conflicts involved in group formation, the types of services which are offered to battered women, how the strategy of shelter building emerged, the alternative models of service which have developed in different communities, and the relationship of these services to the movement as a whole. It is hoped that the battered women's movement, understood in its

development through time, will serve as a substantive example of social problem movements, that the analysis will have theoretical relevance.

The method of data collection was oriented toward generating theory rather than testing previously formulated hypotheses. The questions asked were of an exploratory nature, designed to allow the issues to emerge from the perspective of the participants, rather than being predetermined by the researcher. In the tradition of grounded theory:

> To be sure one goes out and studies an area with a particular sociological perspective and with a focus, a general question, or a problem in mind. But he [sic] can (and we believe should) also study an area without any preconceived theory that dictates, prior to the research, "relevancies" in concepts and hypotheses. Indeed it is presumptuous to assume that one begins to know the relevant categories and hypotheses until the "first days in the field," at least, are over (Glaser and Strauss, 1967: 33-4).

My goal was to use empirical research to generate better theoretical understanding. I decided that the best way to accomplish this was through in-depth interviews with the members of local groups--"shelter builders" and the like--the people who conceived of services for battered women in their own communities. I wanted to study several groups in order to determine whether the formation process was the same or different in various settings.

The interviews began with broad general questions from which conceptual categories were derived, and which led to a discussion of more specific issues. This type of relatively unstructured, "conversational" interview enabled me to follow up on pertinent topics as they were introduced by the respondents, by asking for further clarification, and spontaneously exploring new hypotheses as they came to mind (Becker and Geer, 1970: 133). The interview schedule has been included in Appendix A; questions were modified according to the dictates of the field experience. The interviews were taped, with permission of the respondents, who signed Informed Consent forms and were assured that their answers would remain confidential. I also took notes during the interviews.

My preliminary "feel" for the types of questions to be asked came from prior contact with members of the battered women's movement, through attending the first conference of the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV), in February, 1980. I had opportunity to observe the delegates, establish contacts, explain my research interests, conduct individual interviews, and discover some background information about similarities and differences among groups within the movement.

After observing participants and listening to the discussions at the NCADV conference, it seemed to me

that although participants may share the basic perspective of "opposing the use of violence as a means of control and supporting equality in relationships and self-empowerment of women" (NCADV Handbook, 1980: 17), there was wide variation in philosophies and in strategies for achieving these goals. For example, there was great diversity in racial, ethnic, religious, and economic backgrounds of participants--differences which were touted as a positive factor and a great strength of the movement; but which may cluster to distinguish some local groups from each other. As one illustration, inner-city groups seemed much more concerned with statements of equality and providing bilingual and welfare-funded services than those in wealthy suburbs. Also, groups in large urban areas seemed less hesitant to connect the causes of woman battering to a patriarchal, capitalist system than did those from small towns or rural areas. I designed some of my interview questions with the intention of determining whether these differences did indeed exist, and if they were related to ideology and structure, as I suspected.

I also acquired background orientation to the world of movement participants through an initial field study, and as a participant observer in one group. In 1977 I had the opportunity to observe the trial of a battered woman accused of murdering her

former husband, in which the experience of being battered was presented as her motive. I observed the meetings and activities of her defense committee before, during, and for a few weeks after the trial. The defense committee was a coalition of feminists from various community organizations which formed to publicize the case and relate it to the general issue of woman battering. My observation of this case was performed within the context of a field research methods course, and included approximately 26 hours of observation over a six-week period.

In addition to generating theoretical understanding and empirical evidence, my role as a participant observer in the defense committee awakened a personal concern about battered women. Until that time I was unaware of the existence of woman battering. Exposure to the issue through this trial and the work of the defense committee made me a "part-time" activist in the developing battered women's movement. This exposure also enabled me to establish contacts with other local members of the movement.

Many members of the defense committee were later involved in a group which was formed in 1978 to provide services for battered women, and opened a shelter in February, 1980. I joined this group during its first membership drive and have attended its meetings and received its mailings since then. In

January, 1980, I participated in a fifty-hour training session which the group requires of its volunteers before they can become "counselor advocates" (C/A's). Working as a C/A is the only way that volunteers can become involved in "direct services"--working with battered women--at this shelter. As Blum (1970: 83) observes, one of the best ways to become acquainted with workers is to share their work, and this process of becoming acquainted also includes becoming more familiar with the type of work that is done. From February to September, 1980 I worked at least four hours a week as a C/A in the shelter, and had many conversations with board members and full-time staff about the group's development.

My data on this group constitutes a local case study, based on interviews and observations, as well as documentary research into the group's archives--its newsletters and other records of its founding. My knowledge of this group also served a valuable orienting function, helping me anticipate and understand the issues which are most compelling to service providers and other members of the battered women's movement. These experiences, as well as a pretest interview of a woman from another city who had worked in a shelter there for two years, provided an opportunity to "learn the native language" of shelter people (Becker and Geer, 1970). I discovered the

kinds of questions I wanted to ask and the way to ask them.

Strictly speaking, because of my concern about woman battering, and my involvement in the movement as an activist, I was never "just an observer" of the movement. I located myself as a partisan on the issue before I even began to observe the defense committee. Later, when I was interviewing members of each group in my sample, I told them that I had worked with one group as a volunteer. I felt that sharing this information would help to establish my credentials as someone with more than an academic interest in the issue (I had heard sentiments expressed which were hostile to academics who studied battered women and remained aloof from involvement). But I was also identifying myself as sympathetic to battered women and to the people who are working in the movement.

However, I also felt a deep ambivalence about my dual roles of movement participant and sociological observer. Although open about my research interest and intent, there were many times when I felt that I was observing things which should not be included in my fieldnotes. I had acquired the insider's "guilty knowledge," and was unsure of what to do with it. My decision was to not include information acquired through observation while performing duties as a volunteer. I am reasonably certain, though, that that

knowledge colored my perception of what I was told during formal interviews (Thorne, 1980, discusses many of the dilemmas of informed consent in fieldwork, and of the guilt which ethnographers often feel about observing a group from inside.)

When I began studying other groups, the emphasis of my interviews was on why, when, and how different individuals became committed to the claims-making activities involved in establishing woman battering as a social problem, the history of specific local movement groups, a comparison of the sources and foci of their concern, and the relationship of individual groups to, and impact on, the battered women's movement and the issue of woman battering in general. Questions were asked in an effort to discover how woman battering became visible in various communities and how groups went about highlighting the issue as a social problem. I was interested in analyzing differences and similarities among groups in origins, ideology, membership, services, goals and tactics, and in determining what factors--such as location in a rural or urban, conservative or progressive community, or grassroots versus institutional social service sponsorship--account for these differences. In other words, how do community and cultural values affect the movement's ideology and structure, at both the local and the national levels? I was also concerned with

the relationship between battered and nonbattered women (oppressed minority versus outsiders) in movement groups, and what impact the relative presence or absence of each type of participant had on the development of the group and the movement.

I evaluated the effect of these differences through a comparison of carefully chosen cases. The context of this research was limited to groups in one geographic region, which I have called the Heartland: a broad swath cutting from the upper Great Lakes to the southern Appalachians. I initially contacted all (as of October, 1980) of the groups who were providing services, or working to provide such services, in two states, which I have referred to as State One and State Two. State One has a relatively well-developed statewide network of shelters and several "mature" groups--i.e., in existence for two or more years. In State Two, most groups are "embryonic"--i.e., work is only beginning in most areas on assessing needs and planning services for battered women, there are few shelters, and coalition and support networks have only recently begun to develop between groups. There are also considerable differences in size and population between the two states, a fact which I thought might be significant in determining the types of programs and intergroup connections which developed; State One has five times more population and is two and one-half

times as large in area as State Two (WORLD ALMANAC, 1979). However, as will become apparent, none of these factors seem to be consistently connected to differences in group structure or ideology.

My first contact with each group occurred through a letter (see Appendix B) which was mailed to 47 groups who were providing services to battered women. This included all 33 groups in State One and all 14 groups in State Two. The names and addresses of each group were obtained from their state coalition. I received a response from 39 groups: 29 from State One and 10 from State Two (see Table 1). This represents an 83 percent total return: 88 percent from State One, 71 percent from State Two. The letter was brief, and served mainly to introduce my research interests and determine the type of services which a group was offering, the size of its staff and number of volunteers, and the age of the group (see Table 2). I also asked for a brief statement of why the group had decided to offer services for battered women.

Although none of these questions could be answered fully in the letter, the responses served as an initial screen which helped me select a theoretical sample (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) of groups representing a variety of characteristics, to be described below. This selection resulted in a sample of 25 groups. 18 groups were from State One, seven

groups were from State Two. These are their approximate proportions of the total number of groups in both states; i.e., 70 percent of the total number of 47 groups were in State One, 30 percent were in State Two.

Table 1.

Rate of Response to Initial Contact Letter

	State One	State Two	Total
Total Number of Letters Mailed	33	14	47
Number of Letters Returned	29	10	39
Percentage Return	88%	71%	83%

Table 2.

Characteristics of Groups Responding to Contact Letter

	State One	State Two	Total
Year the Group Was Formed			
1975	2	1	3
1976	6	0	6
1977	8	2	10
1978	5	6	11
1979	6	1	7
1980	2	0	2
Type of Services Offered*			
Shelter	18	6	24
Safe Homes	5	1	6
Other	6	3	9
Size of Paid Staff			
None	0	2	2
One to Three People	10	4	14
Four to Six People	9	3	12
Seven to Ten People	9	1	10
11 or More People	1	0	1
Number of Volunteers			
One to Five People	4	0	4
Six to Ten People	8	1	9
11 to 15 People	3	2	5
16 or more People	14	7	21
Community Size			
Rural (Towns of less than 20,000)	6	2	8
Small Towns (20,001 to 50,000)	11	3	14
Medium Cities (50,001 to 150,000)	7	5	12
Large Cities (150,001 and more)	5	0	5

*Types of Services are described in Chapter Three.

Sample Characteristics

The groups which I selected were based on my expectation that certain categories of analysis would reveal significant differences in group origins, that would explain how social problem movements develop under varying conditions. For instance, I believed that a comparison of ideologies and operating procedures between groups in more "conservative" areas (such as small towns in rural areas) and those in more "liberal" areas (such as large cities and university communities) would be theoretically important. Although most groups may share a general definition of the problem of woman battering, their specific tactics and goals for dealing with the problem may vary, or may be a source of conflict within some groups, and result in the emergence of differing conceptions of the problem of woman battering.

As another example, I gathered information concerning the chronological order of group formation, since I expected that those formed more recently might have evolved as a result of people in their community hearing about services already established in other areas, whereas the earliest groups would have had their genesis in a different source (although none of the groups in my sample are among the earliest nationally). One way to theoretically saturate a

category is by maximizing differences among groups (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), so as much variation as possible was sought in selecting groups. A description of the general characteristics of the groups in my sample follows.

The groups providing services to battered women which I studied were located in a variety of community settings. Some were located in small towns of 20,000 to 30,000 people, others in medium-sized cities of 50,000 to 150,000 people, and a few in large cities with populations of more than 150,000. I interviewed groups in isolated rural communities, where respondents said most residents were very conservative; university towns, where residents were perceived by group members to be progressive and liberal-minded; and cities where the groups said they were banned by residents from opening a shelter in some neighborhoods, but were able to locate other neighborhoods where residents were supportive.

In spite of this attention to selecting groups with different characteristics, however, I found no consistent ideological or structural differences among the groups studied which could be attributed to any of the comparative categories which I analyzed. Rural versus urban, relative age of the group, State One versus State Two, and community setting could not be isolated as the source of differences among groups. I

found that variations were greater among groups in each category than between categories. I cannot assume from my data that these categories are not significant, but rather that my method did not reveal any significant relationship between these categories and group ideology or structure.

Obtaining the Data

After selecting the 25 groups which I thought would represent as wide a variation of characteristics as possible, I contacted each group and interviewed key people, usually those who were involved in the formative stages of the group's development. These "elite interviewees" were selected because, as Dexter (1970: 7) states, it was assumed that "they are the ones who both know and can articulate how things [were] actually done." Each time I called a group to request an interview, I explained that I was particularly interested in the group's beginnings, and would prefer to talk to someone who was involved in forming the group, or who was well-acquainted with its history. In most cases, I was immediately put in contact with one of the founders (all of the groups are fairly young, so it was relatively easy to trace the history, and the original people were either still active or usually living in the area.) In the few

cases in which a founder was unavailable, I was able to talk to someone who was well acquainted with the founders and the group's history. I asked indepth questions concerning how, when, why, and by whom their organization was started, methods of publicity/community outreach, funding sources, ideology, and sources of conflict within the group and its larger context, and compared my groups on each dimension.

Thirteen of the interviews took place at the group's office or shelter: nine at the shelter, four at the office of groups who do not have a shelter. Seven interviews took place at the interviewee's home; and one at an interviewee's office (she did not work at the shelter). Two interviews were taped at a "neutral" place--a restaurant--and two were administered by telephone, because of their great distance from me. Thus, I was able to observe a majority of the interviewees in their group's work environment--shelter or office.

The research design was flexible enough to allow for continuing modification of the categories of analysis, in accordance with the constant comparative method of qualitative analysis. This flexibility is one of the advantages of unstructured methods (Dean, et al., 1969). For example, I found that the interviews "flowed" much more smoothly if I rearranged

the order of my questions; if I began by asking what services the group provided and how those services had evolved, the group structure became clear to me earlier, and the group's origins and history began to emerge more naturally as the conversation progressed.

Based on my interview sample, I have not attempted to make conclusive generalizations about the nature of the formation process for all groups which are involved in helping battered women. Other variables may have influenced people in different parts of the country which were not present anywhere in the two states which I studied. It is also possible that my findings would have been different, even for the same groups, if I had used another method of study. For example, I might have found that different members had varying perceptions of group origins, philosophy, and definitions of woman battering if I had selected three or four groups and conducted extended case studies. This would have involved several months of observation and interviews with many members of each group.

The above possibility did prove to be true of the one group in which I conducted a case study. The group's collective image, its official ideology and public "presentation of self" (Goffman, 1959), was quite different from its internal operating procedures and explanations of events. I am not implying that

there was deliberate collusion. For the most part, group members were probably unaware of discrepancies between what they said the group did or believed and what actually happened. That is, they were unaware that they were participating in "dramaturgical cooperation" (Goffman, 1959: 211). But my contact with most of the other groups was limited to one visit and an interview with only one or two group members; I never went "backstage." Hence, there was no way for me to learn of similar discrepancies in other groups. I shall, however, give examples of locations of possible discrepancies throughout my analysis of the data.

As a further limitation, I did not control for type of person interviewed. I allowed the participants to select themselves, based on their determination of who was most appropriate when I asked to speak to "someone who was involved in the group from the beginning" or "someone who is well-acquainted with the group's origins." Usually this turned out to be a group's Director or a member of its board of directors. Occasionally it included a volunteer. But rarely did it lead me to an interview with a "lesser" staff member, and never to separate interviews with different group members, who might have contradicted each other. Thus, the disadvantage of "elite interviews" is that they may bias the data in favor of

the elite's view of a group.

In summary then, the mode of gathering data could not yield conclusive results about similarities and differences among groups or about sources of intragroup struggle and contention. But the experience of limited contact with 25 groups had the advantage of exposing me to many more groups involved in the battered women's movement than I could have encountered with case studies. It also provided me with a broader view of the movement at the local level than would have been possible had I studied a few groups in depth. At the same time, one-shot person-to-person interviews provided a more in-depth study than a survey could have done, even had it employed an open-ended questionnaire. This is because my method of informal, taped interviews allowed the respondents to talk at length about each question and clarify meanings before they answered. It also allowed me to follow up on pertinent material which the respondents introduced, and change my questions as the situation warranted.

To expand my focus, I also referred to documents (brochures, leaflets, newsletters) published by groups in various other states to gather information pertinent to my interests. Pizzey's (1974) book is a valuable source, since she includes an extensive description of how Chiswick Women's Aid in England

became a battered women's shelter. Martin (1976) visited and interviewed workers at several of the early shelters in the U.S. I collected printed materials from many groups at the NCADV conference, and at a regional conference--for Region V, which includes a large portion of the Heartland, including State One of my sample--held in May, 1981 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Many of these printed materials include descriptions of group beginnings. I have gleaned as much information as possible which was pertinent to my categories of analysis from each of these sources. Finally, a few other publications have emerged very recently (Bako, 1980; Fleming, 1979; Klein, 1979; Roberts, 1980; Tierney, 1979; and Yoder, 1980) which have been helpful in checking my findings.

Summary

This chapter has presented a review of the literature on social problem movements, and a description of the method by which I chose to study the battered women's movement. The analysis of the data is the subject of the remaining chapters; but a brief description of each chapter is included here.

Chapter Two, Historical Origins of the Battered Women's Movement, traces the factors which contributed

to the emergence of woman battering as a social problem by examining the evolution of the contemporary women's movement and how it gradually became concerned with specific issues such as violence against women. After woman battering was identified as one form of such violence, feminists began to study the problem and try to learn more about its causes and extent. A brief overview of this research is presented, and an analysis of how the issue continues to be related to feminism.

Chapter Three, The Beginnings of the Battered Women's Movement, examines how a separate social movement developed to articulate and confront the problem of woman battering. Some of the founders of the movement are described, as well as the evolution of the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) and local groups. In addition, this chapter discusses the decision of groups within the movement to provide direct services; and five models of services are described in detail. The structure of local groups and the ties between groups, through state, regional, and national coalitions, as well as through informal channels of communication are also presented.

Part Two, Claims-Making Activities in the Heartland, describes the processes of animation, legitimation, and demonstration, by which local groups

were organized and infused with life. Chapter Four, Carving a Niche for Woman Battering in the Public Consciousness, discusses the factors which brought various groups into existence, the steps involved in becoming viable, and the ways in which they learned about woman battering. The chapter also presents an analysis of how groups define the causes of woman battering, and what they see as the solutions. The philosophies of local groups, as manifestations of movement ideology, are examined.

Chapter Five, Putting Woman Battering on the Community's Agenda of Concern, analyzes the terminology each group preferred--e.g., "battering", "domestic violence", "spouse abuse"--the "politics of naming," and the kinds of compromises which groups make for the sake of public image and legitimacy within their communities. These compromises are revealed in the strategies of public outreach which groups devise, and in the content of their public addresses. The strategies may be evaluated through the reactions of other community organizations to local groups. This chapter also traces the influence of the women's movement and the meaning of feminism in various groups. Finally, the decision of most groups to provide direct services to battered women is critically examined, and potential alternatives are considered.

In Part Three, Summary and Conclusions, Chapter Six describes the impact of local groups on the battered women's movement, and the impact of the movement on public perceptions of woman battering. It asks to what extent the movement has challenged cultural hegemony and created a new definition of reality. It also asks whether these changes are an index of the power of the contemporary women's movement, what were the social conditions of the 1970's which led to a redefinition, and what are the prospects for the 1980's.

Chapter Two

HISTORICAL ORIGINS OF THE BATTERED WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

> If it had not been for years of civil rights and anti-war struggles and if it had not been for years of struggle by women to articulate the fact that women are oppressed in this society, there would still be no such thing as a battered woman. Women would, of course, continue to be battered and killed. But it was the women's movement that set the groundwork so that we could later articulate that this behavior was not individual or aberrent but rather social and political (Schecter, 1981b: 42).

Woman battering came to public attention largely due to the efforts of the women's movement in the late 1960's and early 1970's. The discovery of battering was part of a process by which women gradually uncovered the forms of their own oppression. In this chapter I want to explore the evolution of that discovery.

The Development of the Women's Movement

Feminism emerged as one of the most influential movements of the 1970's. Originating in the 1960's from two major sources, the two strands increasingly

merged after 1970 (Freeman, 1975). But those differing points of origin continued to influence the kinds of issues that were identified as a focus for social protest, and the strategies that evolved to effect change. The two strands may be loosely identified as Women's Rights and Women's Liberation (Mandle, 1979). [1]

Women's Rights included groups such as the National Organization for Women (NOW), Women's Equity Action League (WEAL), and Federally Employed Women (FEW). These groups grew out of reform efforts in the early 1960's, and concentrated on improving women's access to opportunities within the existing social structure. For example, NOW was founded in 1966, and its stated goal was "to bring women into full participation in the mainstream of American society . . . in truly equal partnership with men" (Freeman, 1975: 55). Most of NOW's founders were professional women who had experienced discrimination in their careers and, often, had first attempted to resolve their grievances through the state Commissions on the Status of Women or the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (Deckard, 1979: 347). When it began to become apparent that these formal commissions were not sufficiently effective as advocates, a group of women decided to form an organization that would work actively for women's rights. NOW and most other

Women's Rights groups have been national organizations with centralized offices and members all over the country. Women's Rights groups have focused primarily on legal and economic issues (Freeman, 1975: 50).

Women's Liberation groups, on the other hand, were usually small, localized groups, such as Radical Women (later Redstockings), the Feminists (originally a splinter group from NOW), and the Chicago Women's Liberation Union. These groups formed simultaneously in different cities, with little communication between groups. They were often started by women who had been participants in the Civil Rights and New Left movements of the 1960's, and who had a critical perspective on society rather than seeking success within established business, legal, or academic professions.

Instead of reforms in the existing social structure, Women's Liberation groups demanded fundamental social changes, and formed only after men in the New Left had refused to acknowledge women's oppression. For example, Radical Women was organized in New York in 1967 after a women's resolution was ignored at the National Conference for a New Politics (Deckard, 1979: 351). The Women's Liberation branch soon splintered into two subbranches. Radical Feminists contend that the sex/gender system is the basis of women's oppression, and their primary

emphasis is on issues of sexuality. Socialist Feminists, on the other hand, believe that the economic system is the basis of women's as well as class oppression, and their focus is on the labor process. But both of these traditions can be distinguished from the Women's Rights groups in their demand for radical, structural changes, and there is considerable overlap in organization, analysis, and political activity between the two subbranches of Women's Liberation.[2]

There was, of course, an earlier women's movement in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which culminated in the achievement of women's suffrage in 1920, and then virtually disappeared for forty years. The Woman Suffrage Movement has often been categorized as a reform movement, and the Women's Rights groups of the 1960's and '70's are perceived as its modern descendants. But DuBois (1978) contends that woman suffrage was an antecedent to more radical changes in women's position. It was the first feminist movement in the United States, and represented the first attempt by women to gain some influence outside of the home and family. In itself it was actually quite radical for its time. Suffragism led to increasing strength, political awareness, and self esteem for women. Gaining the right to vote was the tangible goal which led women to challenge the formerly

accepted status quo and develop a social movement for their own liberation, in which their demands were much broader than the vote.

> . . . it was women's involvement in the movement, far more than the eventual enfranchisement of women, that created the basis for new social relations between men and women. In other words, activity in the woman suffrage movement . . . demonstrated that self-government and democratic participation in the life of the society was the key to women's emancipation. Therein lay its feminist power and its historical significance (DuBois, 1978: 201).

Unfortunately, the potential of suffragism was eventually submerged in a total obsession with the vote. During the earlier part of the long struggle, two main types of suffragists emerged. One group saw the vote as a symbol of a general change in public attitudes toward women, and championed many other issues as well as suffrage (this is the faction DuBois traced in her study of the movement up to 1869). Other suffragists wanted the vote less for their own liberation as women than for the chance to have a more influential voice in legislating general social reforms. And as Freeman (1975) points out, both factions eventually became bogged down in a single-minded campaign which gave the movement no purpose after the one goal of suffrage was achieved.

However, it is possible that an attempt to change society through democratic participation may lead to

more radical methods when disillusionment occurs. This was demonstrated in the 1960's by the shift in the Civil Rights Movement to the more militant tactics of the Black Power Movement.[3] It may be that a similar process occurred in the women's movement: the Suffrage Movement and the 1960's Women's Rights Movement were both sources of the Women's Liberation Movement; Civil Rights and Women's Rights groups continued their reform activities during the time that Black Power and Women's Liberation were advocating different approaches. Not everyone became militant; the radical response was only one reaction to injustice.

Harding (1981) contends that both the moderate and radical branches of the women's movement, in all of their manifestations, contribute essential components to a family reform movement, aimed at extending an ideology of equality, individualism, and reason to the structure of the family and woman's place in it. Each branch developed as a different response to the same phenomenon--the contradiction between the rhetoric of egalitarianism which predominated in the 1960's, and the reality of gender hierarchy which continued to define most women's lives. Arguing along similar lines, Easton (1979: 556) explains that in the contemporary period man's power over woman is weakest within the family; and "at

each stage the women's movement has wisely chosen to attack the weakest, not the strongest, area of male dominance."

In the nineteenth century, feminists were sometimes critical of marriage and family relations that oppressed women. They could not, however, make family reform their central focus because the material basis of male power within the family was too strong. The economy was structured to prevent women from being independent from men; and sexuality, reproduction, and the socialization of children were intertwined in a "monolithic condensation of functions" (Mitchell, 1966) that kept women trapped in domesticity. Instead, the nineteenth-century feminists challenged male dominance in the public arena, because that was a contradiction of the prevalent value of "equal opportunity" in the marketplace. In the 1960's and 1970's, however, the potential for a separation of the structures of sexuality, reproduction, and the socialization of children existed, and coupled with women's increasing entry into the labor force, began to undermine the legitimacy of male domination in the family. Hence, the weakest area became the family, and feminists developed a critical perspective on the family.

> The new feminists reversed the priorities of their predecessors: while they recognized the importance of continuing

> to fight for equality in the public arena, their central concern was the question of women's subordination within the family (Easton, 1979: 563).

When the women's movement began again in the 1960's, however, it lacked the type of concrete, unifying goal which suffrage had provided to the earlier movement. There was the demand for respect and equal opportunity, but those are abstract goals, subject to varying interpretations and strategies for achieving them. The Equal Rights Amendment, which had been introduced in every session of Congress since 1923 but always rejected until 1972, became a cause for many feminists. But not every woman was convinced that she would benefit from the ERA, and no one wanted to make the same mistake that the suffragists had made, in becoming so focused on one issue that its success or failure would spell the end of the contemporary movement.

Ideological splits developed between homemakers and professional working women, between working-class and middle-class women, and among other factions, all of whom considered themselves feminists, but who had differing perceptions of what "equality","respect", and even "feminism" meant. As a result of these differences and the lack of a commonly agreed upon goal, the women's movement began to split into groups who were working on specific issues. Sometimes groups

with different political orientations came together to solve concrete problems. The old Women's Rights/Women's Liberation dichotomy gradually gave way to coalitions and factions which cannot be so easily classified as reform or radical. Individuals often identify themselves as Radical-Feminists or Socialist-Feminists and label others as Bourgeois or Liberal Feminists, for example, but they work together on women's issues. A case in point is the struggle to maintain reproductive freedom, which involves feminists from radical, socialist, and liberal perspectives.

In contrast to the Suffrage Movement, which gradually narrowed its focus to only one issue, the women's movement of the 1970's continued to diversify, and to applaud its diversity. "The multitude of different groups reached out to different kinds of women, served different functions within the movement, and presented a wide variety of feminist ideas" (Freeman, 1975: 83). The heterogeneity of the movement is thus seen as one of its strengths, and may perhaps save it from the fate of anachronism which befell the earlier movement in 1920 (although others, particularly in the mass media, perceive the heterogeneity in a negative way--as factionalism and a sign of the movement's weakness).

Specific Issues

Some of the issues which have been addressed by the women's movement include sexual harassment and other working conditions for women in the labor force, equal pay and equal work, reproductive rights, childcare, displaced homemakers, and sexism in textbooks and media images. Within the past few years the general issue of violence against women, in such forms as physical assault, rape (sexual assault), incest, pornography, and sexual slavery, has begun to elicit widespread public concern, a concern pushed forward by the women's movement. Local and national activist groups have organized to confront violence aganst women, by increasing public awareness, supporting victims, and implementing policies to alleviate patterns of abuse. Each type of abuse has received extensive coverage in the national news media, and in many cases the government has funded studies of their prevalence and causes, as well as helping fund projects to solve the problems.

Rape was probably the first form of violence against women which became a focus of the women's movement.[4] All women are potential victims of rape (Brownmiller, 1975), and as women began to meet in consciousness-raising groups and other women's movement activities, they learned that the fear of

rape haunts women of every social class, race, and age. Thus, rape is inherently a broadly-based issue (Rose, 1977), and one which women feel that they "own" as a problem. Griffin (1977: 66) calls rape "the quintessential act of our civilization," and many feminists--especially radical feminists--came to see it as a metaphor of traditional gender relations--man as dominant, violent, active aggressor; woman as submissive, weak, passive victim. The first rape crisis telephone line opened in 1972 (according to Rose, who does not indicate where the first line was located), and by 1977 most major cities and college communities in the U.S. had some form of crisis line and/or crisis center for rape victims (Rose, 1977). The anti-rape movement, as a submovement of the women's movement, continues to be very active in educating the public about the prevalence of rape, teaching women how to defend themselves, pushing for legislative and judicial reforms in dealing with offenders, and developing support systems--through the police, hospitals, and counseling services--for the victim.

In a sense, rape was already an issue before the women's movement adopted it. The public was aware that rape existed and there were laws against rape, although most people were not cognizant of how widespread it is, and few people had made the

political connections which feminists made--linking rape to male dominance. The police and FBI already included rape statistics in their crime reports, but few law enforcement officials were sensitive to the victim's needs (they often did not even believe her), and thus, most rapes went unreported. Rape was considered a crime, but it took the women's movement's insistence that it was a serious crime to create concern and genuine efforts to alleviate the problem. Nevertheless, rape was previously in the public domain. A woman might never speak of her own rape experience; men and women might refuse to acknowledge that rape had ever touched their personal lives; but rape as a general topic could be a subject of conversation.

There were other issues, however, which were not part of public consciousness until the women's movement made them so. Many forms of violence against women fell into this category of "nonexistent" issues--there were victims but most people were unaware of the crime, or did not consider it a crime or even a collective problem. Sexual harassment is an example: women lost their jobs, or kept them by giving in to sexual demands by their employers; but few people conceived that it was more than an individual, rare occurrence until the late 1970's, when the problem was named by women--a crucial step toward visibility

(MacKinnon, 1979).

Battering is another form of violence against women which only emerged as a major social problem in the 1970's, after feminists brought it to public attention. Woman battering may be defined as repeated physical and/or psychological abuse of a woman by a man in the context of a romantic/sexual relationship (Nielsen, et al., 1979). In other words, this is a form of violence between sexual intimates--perpetrated by men against their wives or female lovers (cohabitees). Thus, this concept is differentiated from rape or other forms of abuse of women, which occur between strangers or casual acquaintances. (However, rape may be part of the battering context, when it occurs during an episode of "deliberate, severe, and repeated physical injury . . . with the minimal injury being severe bruising--Moore, 1979: 8.)[5] Woman battering has also been referred to as "wife beating," but since that term implies a legal marital relationship between the assailant and victim, woman battering is a more comprehensive term; it encompasses cohabitees as well as wives.[6]

Historical Evidence of Woman Battering

> "An unbeaten wife is like a dull scythe"
> (Ukrainian proverb--Stephens, 1963: 269).
>
> "A spaniel, a woman, and a walnut tree,
> the more they're beaten the better they be"
> Old English proverb--Rowbotham, 1972: 18).

> ". . . Scold her sharply, bully and
> terrify her . . . Readily beat her, not
> in rage but out of charity and concern
> for her soul, so that the beating will
> redound to your merit and her good."
> (Rules of Marriage, 1450, Friar Cherubino
> of Siena--Davidson, 1980: 99)

An attitude of casual acceptance of woman battering has prevailed in European and American societies in many periods of history. For example, a York woman produced witnesses and appeared before an ecclesiastical court in 1395 to testify that her husband had attacked her on different occasions with a knife and a dagger. She asked the court to grant her a divorce, but her husband asserted that his actions had merely been intended to "reduce her from her errors". The court denied the divorce, declaring that no cause had been presented (Freeman, 1979: 128).

> It is impossible to say who first
> declared that wives could and should be
> beaten by their husbands or when this
> practice began; it is equally difficult
> to find any historical period in which
> there were no formulas stating the form
> such beatings should take and specifying
> the conditions under which a wife was

> deserving of a good clout (Dobash and Dobash, 1979: 31).

Whether or not everyone approved, tacitly or expressly, of men "disciplining" their wives through physical force, it was usually considered a private, domestic matter rather than a public concern, at least so long as the punishment was not extreme. Unfortunately, what was considered extreme was a matter of subjective interpretation, and even after a community had become alarmed by a man's behavior toward his wife or cohabitee, they might decide not to intervene in the "private sphere" of the family. Sir William Blackstone, who wrote COMMENTARIES ON THE LAWS OF ENGLAND (1765-1769), thought it reasonable and just that a husband have the power to chastise his wife (Freeman, 1979). Apparently, many people agreed with him.

Often in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, European and American communities dealt with "wife beaters" informally, perhaps trying to shame them into changing their behavior without any direct outside intervention. For example, neighbors sometimes "serenaded" outside the home of a man who was known to beat his wife--clattering pots and pans in a cacophany which they called "rough music" (Davidson, 1980: 112). The most recalcitrant husbands might eventually receive a

flogging (Pleck, 1979), but most of the time the community did nothing.

> While wife beating has occurred in epidemic proportions for centuries, it has hardly caused a ripple in the law enforcement apparatus, the judiciary, the medical establishment, social agencies, or the psychiatric community (Warrior, 1976: 5).

However, there have also been times when individuals or groups have protested the right of men to physically control their wives/cohabitees. In the middle of the nineteenth century, a campaign began in Great Britain to publicize the prevalence of woman battering and devise some means of protecting women. John Stuart Mill wrote poignantly of the plight of battered women in 1869. He found that although the public was fascinated by the gruesome details of specific cases, they were inclined to ignore the widespread nature of the problem (Davidson, 1980: 111). Frances Power Cobbe, a British feminist, published a pamphlet in 1878 entitled WIFE TORTURE IN ENGLAND, in which she proposed a bill to protect battered women by allowing them a "judicial separation" from their husbands. As a result, public pressure was exerted and the Matrimonial Causes Act of 1878 was passed, giving magistrates' courts the power to grant a legal separation and charge the husband a weekly sum for his wife's maintenance, if the husband had been convicted of aggravated assault on his wife.

However, securing a conviction against a husband for aggravated assault was difficult and rare, and did not serve as a solution to battering. Securing passage of the bill apparently satisfied public concern at that time, though, and "little more is heard of violence against wives until the problem reemerged recently" (Freeman, 1979: 129).

In the United States, many states passed laws against woman battering in the nineteenth century. Pleck (1979: 60) contends that "wife beating was illegal in most states by 1870 and considered illegitimate by many American men as well as women." However, Pleck concedes that usually battered women were objects of neighborly or community concern only if they fit a traditional image of weak femininity, i.e., "we'll protect you if you're a good girl." In the same way that the victms of sexual slavery (selling women as prostitutes) became defined by their "purity" in the late nineteenth century--"the less sweet, innocent, and young she was, the less likely she could be a victim" (Barry, 1979: 27), a battered woman could only be considered abused if she were frail and submissive. Women who seemed to deviate from a meek wifely stereotype were often thought to deserve their husband's rage.

Pleck's data also indicate that in the nineteenth century, as today among many people, woman battering

was assumed to exist only among poor immigrants and Blacks, never among middle class or wealthy white segments of the population. And that stereotype made it easier to dismiss battered women from public concern. In a racist society few people with the power to affect change (i.e., white men) cared about an issue whose subjects were poor. Barry (1979:27) documents a similar pattern by which sexual slavery came to be known as literally "white slavery":

> While the term ["white slavery"] was initially meant to distinguish the practice from nineteenth-century black slavery, it had immediate appeal to racists who could and did conclude that the efforts were against an international traffic in white women. So in addition to being sweet, innocent, and young, victims were also coming to be seen only as white, despite the evidence that the traffic included black, brown, and yellow women.

The public roused itself to alarm only when the victims of sexual slavery were identified as white women. The same was generally true of the nineteenth-century response to woman battering.

Interestingly, most of the nineteenth century and earlier sanctions against woman battering were imposed by men. The suffragists briefly made protection for women against battering a part of their platform, and then forgot about it as they narrowed their focus to the vote (Dobash and Dobash, 1979: 5). Otherwise, women rarely had the means to protect each other from

violent men. Instead, churchmen and vigilante groups, e.g., the Ku Klux Klan and the Regulators, sometimes launched campaigns against wife beating, on the grounds that conjugal assailants threatened the integrity of the family. These groups were less concerned about women's safety and well-being than they were about maintaining the legitimacy of the patriarchal social system. Their "standards of justice were embedded in notions about proper definitions of manhood and womanhood and concepts of moral purity" (Pleck, 1979: 72). Most of the time, so long as the batterer and his family did not disrupt community life, battering remained a "domestic" matter and no one tried to stop him.

Woman battering was not considered a problem unless it threatened to disrupt community life, either literally by "disturbing the peace," or figuratively by contradicting the ideology of "just domination" (Dobash and Dobash, 1981: 568) if a man appeared unnecessarily cruel. When the batterer threatened to cause such a disruption, it became a community responsibility to deal with the offender. Thus, ultimately, the community "owned" the problem. Tomes (1978: 336) found that "surveillance" was the most common type of neighborly response in working class communities of the nineteenth century and earlier. Neighbors would keep an eye on a particularly violent

husband, and try to distract him or hide the wife when he became too abusive or disturbed the neighborhood. Otherwise, they felt that he had a right to beat his wife.

As state authority replaced community ritual, legislation became a more important means of dealing with those who threatened the social order. Thus, laws were written to punish severe "wife beaters" as ownership of the problem (Gusfield, 1975) passed to the state. This was a gradual process, as feudalism was replaced by capitalism and institutionalized order. But the nineteenth century was the period of greatest growth in state power (Dobash and Dobash, 1981), and this would account for the proliferation of laws concerning woman battering which Pleck found. However, as Dobash and Dobash (1981) illustrate, the increase in laws did not actually result in greater protection for battered women. In fact, due to the abstraction of legislative justice and the inconsistency of enforcement, many women were less well protected than they had been under the old system of community surveillance. Neighbors no longer saw it as their duty or right to interfere in domestic disturbances, and intervened less frequently than in the past. The title of a contemporary book on battered women, SCREAM QUIETLY OR THE NEIGHBORS WILL HEAR, poignantly conveys the attitude toward battering

which has prevailed since the nineteenth century.

Changes in perceptions about woman battering, and in response to the issue, began to occur in the recent past. In the early 1970's, among certain groups of people in England, Canada, the United States, and some other countries, the scope of woman battering began to be recognized as a social problem. An unprecendented number of newspaper and magazine articles, television documentaries and dramas, books, and scholarly monographs have been produced, which express concern about woman battering rather than covering up the issue, treating it as a joke, or brushing it aside as unimportant. As Straus, et al. (1980) observe, there has been a "radical shift in concern" since 1972 when there were no books on physical violence between spouses, to 1980 when there are at least a dozen books and many more articles entirely devoted to the subject.

The Extent of Woman Battering

> . . . it can be argued that a society bothers to keep accurate statistics mainly of those phenomena it deems worthy of attention (Coser, 1972: 219).

Until the mid 1970's, no attempt was made to measure the rates of woman battering. Police records of calls by battered women were lumped together with

all "domestic disturbances," including everything from neighbors' arguments to dog fights. One of the first tasks undertaken by researchers was to determine the extent of the problem of woman battering. Although the rates of battering are not the focus of my research, I shall summarize the data to indicate what is known about the actual prevalence of woman battering.

Walker (1979) estimates that 50 percent of all women in the United States will be victims of battering at least once in their lives. Straus, et al. (1980), from a national sample of 2,143 families, found that 28 percent of the families surveyed had engaged in some form of violence between the spouses at least once, and they think that this is probably an underestimate--that many people did not admit to experiencing a violent incident, or did not consider their experiences violent. Thus, Straus and his colleagues think that the true figure might be closer to 50 or 60 percent of all couple in the U.S. (Note: this percentage includes all interspousal violence: men battering women, women battering men. They have not made percentage estimates of the male-to-female violence, but they estimate in real figures that 1.8 million women are battered every year in the U.S.) The FBI estimates that woman battering occurs three times more frequently than sexual assault (rape), or

once every 18 seconds in the U.S. (Moore, 1979: 14).

As Loving (1980: 13) states, "The precise amount and frequency of spouse abuse and wife beating in America have not yet been determined." The task is complicated by the inherent difficulty of formulating the question. Gelles (1979) describes the dilemma of trying to examine such a sensitive issue, of violating the taken-for-granted privacy of the family. Furthermore, there is a wide disparity in the public's definition of battering, which determines how one responds to whether violence has occurred, and that, of course, affects the rates reported. Nevertheless, there is general agreement among researchers and law enforcement officials that woman battering affects a significant proportion of the population.

Causes of Woman Battering

A considerable amount of research in this period has concentrated on trying to find the causes of woman battering. One type of explanation, which Freeman (1979) refers to as the pathological interpretation, focuses on the individual personality traits or assailants and/or victims. According to this interpretation, battering occurs because the assailant is sick, has an "inadequate personality," is an alcoholic, drug addict, or psychopath. Serum (1978),

who counsels assailants in Midland, Michigan, contends that "In actual fact, the assaults are a product of the assailant's personality structure, and have little relationship to external events." From this perspective, the battered woman may also be seen as pathological, in exhibiting a victim orientation: she is passive, overly dependent, and somehow provokes violent reactions from her mate (see Gayford, 1975, for an example of this perspective).

McGrath (1979) is critical of this type of explanation, calling it the "ideology of victimology," which mystifies the real relationship between assailant and victim by either blaming the latter or some psychological factor which neither controls. Walker (1979) partially bridges the gap between this and a more sociological type of causal explanation, by describing a syndrome of "learned helplessness" which develops in women as a result of gender socialization and which leads them to participate as victims in a predictable cycle of violence.

Closely related to a pathological interpretation, although totally rejecting any notion that women are partially to blame for their role as victim, is the thesis put forth by many radical feminist writers, that battering occurs as a result of innate male aggression and misogyny. Pagelow (1978) links battering and other forms of male violence against

women to a "primordial anti-woman phobia," to biological defects/advantages in woman's body which cause man to demand power and domination over woman. Pagelow speculates that there are underlying genetic causes of male misogyny, and bases her thesis on the assumption that woman battering occurs universally (an as yet unproven hypothesis). Davidson (1980) would agree, since she contends that men use violence to bolster their fragile sense of superiority, "to ease the awful gnawing suspicion that they were in fact not superior at all" (p. 104). Davidson presents no empirical evidence, but she believes in the existence of an original matriachy, which was overthrown when men discovered their role in reproduction. Like Pagelow, Davidson views male dominance through physical force as men's compensation for their inability to bear children.

Dobash and Dobash (1979), Pizzey (1974), Martin (1976), and McGrath (1979) also view male violence against women as a way of enforcing male dominance, but they are inclined to view the social structuring of gender relations--the sex/gender system [7]--as the cause, rather than searching for biological sources. The sex/gender system determines how family relationships are organized, and in western societies, as Gelles (1979: 15, 18) states,

> To put it simply, people hit family

> members because they can . . . To prevent violence, we need to take steps to eliminate the norms and values which legitimize and glorify violence in the society and the family.

Gelles writes in general terms of violence among all family members. Others are more specific in describing the norms which legitimate violence on the part of the adult male member of the family--the husband/father. Dobash and Dobash (1979) contend that woman battering is the historically and socially constructed means by which husbands dominate and control their wives. Husbands (or cohabites) use violence to maintain a patriarchal marital relationship.[8] Rather than an innate propensity, male aggression is learned in our society, and Walker (1979) contends that aggression cannot be eliminated until total equality between women and men is attained.

McGrath (1979) and Stark, et al.(1979) also endorse the perspective that woman battering is related to maintaining male dominance in the family, to the material and historical conditions which have shaped the family. At different times in history, other conditions may have caused battering or different forms of violence to prevail.

> The economic, legal, sexual, ideological, and physical mechanisms of men's control over women operate differently throughout history, and while violence may arguably be the bottom line of male dominance, it

> doesn't always reveal itself in the same form (McGrath, 1979: 19).

It is pointless, according to this perspective, to seek some ahistorical, universal cause of battering. The cause depends on the economic and social factors which shape a society's sex/gender system. For modern western societies, McGrath believes that the explanation lies in two structures of capitalist patriarchy. First, the family structure of isolated nuclear units with decreased social functions places an overemphasis on the family as an "emotional haven" which can satisfy all of its members' nurturing needs. Second, the capitalist economic structure undermines the authority of the individual male and dehumanizes all workers in alienating labor. One of the last remaining arenas of individual male power is the home, and even there he feels threatened. He is no longer the head of a productive unit, or even necessarily the main "breadwinner;" at least the possibility exists that his wife could become economically independent. As a result of erosions in patriarchal authority, men may seek to reestablish dominance in whatever way they can. "The effective network of male control has been damaged, and the responses are likely to be violent" (McGrath, 1979: 22).

Stark and his colleagues contend that "patriarchy" has extended beyond its specific familial

form, to every aspect of life in our society, and that all of the social services (education, religion, recreation, medicine, law, police, and welfare) operate to defend male authority. Thus, they speak of the "social construction of battering," and say it is bolstered and defended by social institutions.

Both McGrath and Stark, et al. maintain that men do not resort to violence because of an innate aggressiveness, but because in our culture they have been taught to express themselves physically. Masculinity is defined by the repression of emotional needs. Woman battering of the conjugal partner has become the mode of violence which is most often resorted to because the nuclear family is expected to be the locus of all emotions; it is a "psychological hothouse" (McGrath), in which are acted out all feelings.

Hence, in addition to explaining that erosions in patriarchal authority are one cause of woman battering at the present time, McGrath also points to another possible cause--the increased isolation and privacy of the nuclear family. This factor has been linked to battering in other periods and places as well. Gelles (1979) cites Whiting's observation (in a personal communication with Gelles, 1975), deduced from her research on African societies in transition, that as people move from communal to private conjugal living

arrangements, intra-family violence increases: "When the walls went up, people began to hit each other."

Draper (1975) records the same pattern in comparing !Kung and Herero settlements. !Kung living arrangements are more communal and open, and Draper believes that this visiblity offers protection to women.

> When husbands and wives argue, people are at hand to intervene if either spouse loses control. Wife-beating in these settings is extremely difficult to effect (p. 109).

The Herero are further separated into private houses with doors and high fences around them (a style which the !Kung are beginning to emulate as they become more sedentary). Draper fears that wife beating is easier and perhaps more prevalent in this type of setting since, as one woman told her, "If a man is angry with his wife he can put her in the house, bolt the door and beat her. No one can get in to separate them" (Quoted in Draper, 1975: 109).

Laslett (1973) offers further support for this perspective, in her study of the increasing privacy of the American family in the twentieth century. She finds that privacy is inversely related to social control and accountability. Thus, there is greater potential for individual interpretations of acceptable behavior when family units are shielded from community scrutiny. This helps to explain why battering

continued to be a pervasive form of behavior after it was publicly denounced--after laws were passed against it and public consensus denied its continued existence. Woman battering may have gone "underground" as family relations became more private, but it did not diappear. It is quite possible, although undocumented, that the rates of battering increased as it disappeared from public display.

The Discovery of Woman Battering by the Women's Movement

If the modern cause of woman battering lies at least partially in the increased insularity of the nuclear family, the rediscovery of its existence as a widespread problem may be found in the contemporary women's movement and its emphasis on reintroducing "private" issues into the public domain. With the slogan "the personal is political" as an organizing principle, feminists have reversed the trend of capitalist patriarchy, which is toward making private troubles out of public issues (Mills, 1971; Dobash and Dobash, 1979). Although much of the research on woman battering which was done in recent years was influenced by diverse perspectives, woman battering has remained a feminist issue; and credit is usually given to the women's movement for bringing battering

to public attention in the 1970's.

> Violence against women is largely explained in terms of the subordinate position they occupy in society. For this reason it is hardly surprising that the problem of violence against women tend [sic] to be perceived as a problem in periods when there is an active feminist movement (Freeman, 1979: 128).

Stark, et al. (1979) provide one of the few attempts to locate the material conditions which led to increased concern for battered women. They state that there have been three periods when battering has been the focus of public and judicial concern--the mid and late nineteenth century and the 1970's--and all three coincide with periods of business expansion, when there was a great demand for female workers. These were also periods of feminist activism (probably also made possible by women's increased economic independence), and the attempts to protect women from physical abuse might represent a business concern with protecting female labor power, as well as a greater voice by women in drafting legislation and raising concern about woman's position.

Straus, et al. (1980) also attribute some of the attention to woman battering to an earlier interest in child abuse, an issue which began to receive attention in the 1960's and was apparently not a product of the women's movement. But they credit feminists with drawing the analogy between woman and child abuse, and

with extending awareness of family violence to include other victims besides children. Moore (1979: 11) agrees that the connection to child abuse is significant: "Once we enter the homes of abused children we see and cannot dismiss the fact that the women in many of those homes are also being brutalized." She too states that it was the feminist movement which was responsible for redefining what is an acceptable use of force against women. Others who concur that the women's movement is largely responsible for making battering an issue of public concern include, to cite a few, Deckard (1979), Dobasn and Dobash (1979), Fleming (1979), and Walker (1979).

While McGrath (1979) agrees that the "discovery" of woman battering is linked to the women's movement, she perceives two opposing types of connection. The new awareness and attention to the issue may either be a result of a feminist desire and ability to focus public resources on the problem or, more ominously, it could represent a "frightening male response" (p. 16) to feminism. The underlying assumption of this latter explanation is that increased attention indicates an increase in the actual rates of battering (or it assumes a conspiracy to "remind" women of men's ultimate ability to squelch "uppity" women with physical force). However, as McGrath herself admits, "The question of an absolute rise in battering is

difficult to answer" (p. 23). Since there are minimal historical data about changing rates, even for the last decade, there is no basis for comparison. But there seems to be little evidence to support or refute this perspective--that actual rates suddenly increased immensely at this period.

In any case, the question would remain: Why has public attention also increased? The two processes--changing rates and changing perceptions--are somewhat autonomous. Increased awareness of a problem does not necessarily correspond to a change in the frequency of occurrence (see for example Fishman, 1978, who shows that "crime waves" are independent from objective changes in actual rates of crime). Some impetus is needed to push an issue into public awareness, to make it "newsworthy."

As late as the mid-1970's, at least in the United States, the news media apparently did not regard woman battering as a newsworthy topic. In the NEW YORK TIMES INDEX, for example, there was no mention of woman battering under any likely category (e.g., Families, Marriages, Divorce, Women, Wife, Assaults, Domestic Relations, Spouses, Abuse, Battery) until 1974. In that year there was one article under "Families and Family Life" concerning "assaults on wives by husbands notes apparent reluctance of police to take punitive action" (Index notation, O 21, 38:

1).

In 1975 there were three notations in the NEW YORK TIMES INDEX: in the category "Women--U.S." there was one notation concerning a planned NOW march to protest violence against women (Ag.25, 58: 7. At that time violence against women may not have specifically included battering.) Also in the same category was a notation about a "Series on 'Battered Women,' Emily Jane Goodman comments on lack of adequate legal remedies for wife who is physically abused . . . " (O 7, 35: 3). In the category "Marriages," there was a notation of an article about a conference on the "abused wife" which was held in New York (F 1, 20: 6).

In 1976 there were six articles cited in the NEW YORK TIMES INDEX which concerned battered women (in the categories of "Families and Family Life", "Marriages", and "Women"). The number increased to forty-seven articles in 1977, under "Assaults", "Families and Family Life", and "Marriages" (the greatest number of articles cited were in this last category). The number of articles continued to rise in 1978 and 1979. This data indicate that woman battering became a newsworthy issue rather suddenly, at least in the NEW YORK TIMES.

Woman battering was also "discovered" by other media at that time (the mid-1970's). In 1975 CBS-TV

broadcast a series of short reports on "wifebeating" on their "Morning News" program. In 1976 NBC-TV produced a story for their "Weekend" show on battered women. In 1977 and 1978, three television dramas were broadcast on the subject.[9] "Wifebeating" was given its own number in the Library of Congress, under Conjugal Violence (Davidson, 1980).

Across the United States, numerous cases of women killing the men--husbands, ex-husbands, or lovers--who battered them were reported in the press over the last five or six years. And in several of those cases the legal system, either a judge or a jury, found the women not guilty of murder, by reason of temporary insanity or self defense.[10] Newspapers, radios, and television news reporters gave widespread coverage to some of these cases, and generated a great deal of public controversy with comments such as "Does this indicate an open season on men?" (TIME, 1977). Actually, cases of women who have killed the men who abused them can be found throughout history (see, for example, Jones, 1980), as can the opposite situation of men killing their wives or cohabitees as part of a battering episode. In fact, husbands and wives seem to kill each other with equal frequency; but wives are seven times more likely than husbands to have murdered in self defense (Pleck, et al., 1978: 6).

Thus, what was unique about the situation of the

late 1970's was not that women sometimes resorted to lethal violence, but the response from the legal system and the media. Usually in the past the woman was found guilty of murder and finished her life, or part of it, in prison. In the 1970's these women began to describe their experiences of abuse and try to explain their actions in the context of those experiences. One of the first cases in which the history of her abuse as a battered woman was used in her defense was that of Sandra Lowe, who killed her husband with a knife which she grabbed as he attacked her. In December, 1976, she was given five years' probation by the presiding judge in her New York trial, after even the prosecuting attorney said she had suffered enough as a battered woman (Davidson, 1980: 224).

The case of Francine Hughes, in 1977, was widely publicized and referred to by the press as a "cause celebre" of feminists. Her attorney did not use the plea of self-defense, but he presented abundant evidence that she had been battered by her ex-husband for thirteen years, and had finally been driven by desperation to try and escape him by burning down the house in which he slept. She was acquitted on the grounds of temporary insanity. Many of the newspaper and television reports on her trial included statistics and commentaries on the nationwide scope of

woman battering (these included the LANSING STATE JOURNAL, DETROIT FREE PRESS, CHICAGO TRIBUNE, and NBC-TV, ABC-TV, and CBS-TV Evening News broadcasts).

Schneider and Jordan (1978) document at least two dozen other cases of battered and sexually assaulted women who have been tried for murder of their assailants. Approximately half of them were acquitted on the grounds of self defense, or had their sentences reduced due to the circumstances of having been repeatedly battered. The rest were convicted of murder, and many women are serving sentences for convictions made before the feminist attempt to redefine self defense (a 1977 study found that forty percent of the women incarcerated in the Women's Correctional Center in Chicago for murder or manslaughter convictions had killed their husbands/lovers as a result of physical abuse--Schneider and Jordan, 1978: 8). However, even the few cases of acquittal represent a major new precedent-setting response for the legal system. Schneider and Jordon contend that the difference has been in succeeding or failing to convey to the judge and jury that

> due to a variety of societally-based factors, a woman may reasonably perceive imminent and lethal danger in a situation in which a man might not. This perception will justify . . . recourse to deadly force (1978: 5).

Whether or not lawyers succeed in all cases, perhaps the greatest impact of these cases has been on public awareness of woman battering; people who have never heard of the issue become educated through the publicity surrounding sensationalized cases. The problem for feminists becomes one of keeping the situation within the larger context of violence against women, and convincing the public that there need to be alternatives for battered women. In some communities a murder trial has helped to build support for shelters for battered women, a place to go instead of remaining in the violent situation and trying to defend themselves.

> . . . as such cases become more frequent and receive public attention, it becomes impossible to ignore issues of battering and their effects on family and society (Moore, 1979: 12).

This chapter has presented a summary of the women's movement and how woman battering emerged as a feminist issue. In the next chapter, I shall examine how a specific movement--the battered women's movement--developed in its own right.

Chapter Three

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE BATTERED WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

As discussed in the previous chapter, the issue of woman battering became a focus of public concern in the early 1970's, to an extent that is perhaps unprecedented in history. A social movement developed which defined the issue as a social problem and helped articulate this definition in a public way. The battered women's movement examined the causes of woman battering, and developed specific strategies for dealing with and alleviating the suffering of battered women. The movement's ultimate goal was to eliminate battering as an acceptable treatment of women. It was my contention in Chapter Two that the women's movement of the late 1960's and early 1970's played a central role in the process of redefining and giving visibility to woman battering as a social problem. I argued that the battered women's movement developed as a spin-off of the women's movement--a specific social movement growing out of the more general movement (Killian, 1973: 19).

The emphasis within the women's movement on recognizing that what are usually perceived as personal

troubles are in fact often public issues, the tactics of consciousness-raising, and the developing ideology of the contemporary feminist period helped reveal the experience of battering. For example, feminists explored the implications of the fact that such violence is usually perpetrated by men against women--that women wreak far less violence against men than vice versa,[1] and they related this finding to woman's historically oppressed condition. As Straus, et al. (1980) describe it, battering initially emerged as an "accidental issue" when women began to share their experiences of abuse, and discovered a common problem.

One of the fundamental principles of many early feminist groups was that by relating experiences in consciousness-raising sessions, women would discover common histories of oppression. The expressed goal of consciousness-raising is to understand that "the personal is political" (Bonetti, 1974). In such a group, a woman who had been (or was) a victim of battering might have begun to perceive of her personal situation as part of a much more widespread system of oppression. Furthermore, through the sharing of experience which has been so central to feminism, women who were not themselves battered began to become more aware of ways that other women were being abused. The battered women's movement deliberately used this tactic to expand women's consciousness of the widespread nature

of battering--through the vehicle of testimonials or public speakouts in which formerly battered women described their experiences of being abused. Both battered women and women who had never been battered were shocked to discover how many women had experienced this horror.

Non-battered women, particularly women who had already gained experience and feminist consciousness in the women's movement, were often the first to identify the issue as a problem. Thus, it was "outsiders" who were largely responsible for the beginnings of the battered women's movement. Gary Marx and Michael Useem (1971: 98) cite several reasons why outsiders are often the originators of organized concern about a social issue:

> Outsiders generally have had greater command over resources, have been freer to act, were likely to be closer to centers of power, and have often had essential "organizing" experience . . . In addition, in the germinal phase many members of the oppressed group may be isolated from alternate definitions of the situation, and, in the absence of a strong protest tradition, may not actively question the legitimacy of the system.

It is ironic, of course, that the outsiders with more awareness and resources in the battered women's movement were themselves the oppressed members of a sexist society, although in relation to battered women they had relatively greater autonomy. In any case, as

women they were not entirely outsiders; all women are potentially the victims of battering. Unity based on a common threat lead to an emotional understanding that, in a manner similar to the birth control movement of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, "created a politics based on women's shared experience which had the potential to unite masses of women" (Gordon, 1977: 207). Feminists had already begun to acquire a new perspective on "what is right and what is wrong; what is possible and what is impossible" (Piven and Cloward, 1970: 1) which women still locked in a battering situation might not have gained. Battered women are a disconnected group, usually isolated from each other, poor in resources, and often believing as individuals that they are alone in the condition of being battered. They do not inherently constitute a social movement.

According to Freeman's model (see Chapter One of this dissertation), the women's movement of the late 1960's and early 1970's represented the first precondition for the development of the battered women's movement. The more general women's movement, as well as not-specifically-feminist women's organizations--such as the YWCA and Junior League--supplied the prerequisites of an existing and supportive communications network and an infrastructure through which women could share the

knowledge of battering as a widespread problem.

Evans (1979: 219) has elaborated several more preconditions which are essential to the emergence of an "insurgent collective identity." These include (1)social spaces in which oppressed people can develop a new sense of self worth; (2)role models who have already broken out of patterns of passivity; (3)an ideology that can "explain the sources of oppression, justify revolt, and provide a vision of a qualitatively different future;" (4)a feeling that confrontation with the old cultural definitions is necessary to protect the newfound sense of self; and (5)a network of communication and friendship through which the new definitions are disseminated. Evans argues that participation in the southern Civil Rights and northern New Left movements created the preconditions for the Women's Liberation Movement. I believe that the women's movement provided these same preconditions for the battered women's movement.

The awareness of the battering of women in family and other private relationships with men often came to the attention of women's groups in the form of desperate calls from battered women to crisis centers (originally established to aid victims of rape or drug abuse) and women's centers. Nall (1977), in a case study of an early women's center, found that the organizers of some of the earliest women's centers did

not originally expect to provide services to battered women. The possibility often did not even occur to the founders; no one knew that such a need existed (or at least no one acknowledged the need). But as soon as these centers opened, or crisis lines began accepting calls, they were often beseiged with calls from battered women requesting shelter, or, at the very least, a referral to some other agency that could help them (see Fleming, 1979: 353, for a description of this process).

The women's centers and/or crisis centers constituted a pre-existing support network through which the battered women's movement was able to develop. Perhaps even more significantly, the calls from battered women requesting immediate help represented another important element in Freeman's model of prerequisites contributing to the development of a social movement: "a series of crises that galvanized into action people involved in this network" (Freeman, 1975: 62).

Pizzey (1974) documents perhaps the earliest case of such a phenomenon, which occurred in 1971 when she opened an "advice center" for married women in London. Battered women immediately became the majority of the center's clients. Pizzey and her supporters converted Chiswick Women's Aid into a sanctuary for battered women and began organizing a campaign for more

shelters in England. By 1974, there were more than twenty-five groups scattered all over Great Britain who were working to establish services for battered women. In the spring of 1974, many of those groups came together to form the National Women's Aid Federation (NWAF), which would serve as a network through which information, assistance, and publicity about the issue of woman battering could be coordinated (Dobash and Dobash, 1979: 223).

The same general process of discovery occurred in the United States in 1972, where Women's Advocates of St. Paul became perhaps the first group to organize specifically to provide services for battered women. As a collective which grew out of a consciousness-raising group, Women's Advocates started a phone service to provide local women with legal information. They found that the majority of their calls came from battered women; and shelter was as great a need as legal advice. Members of Women's Advocates began keeping women in their own homes, and raising money for a permanent shelter--Women's House--which opened in 1974. This was probably the first feminist-oriented women's refuge in the U.S. (Martin, 1976: 197).[2]

The groups which formed in different communities to establish shelters and other services for battered women constituted the third element in Freeman's model

of conditions which must be met in order for a social movement to develop: uncoordinated, often spontaneous, groups begin to form around an issue. In both England and the United States, as well as Canada, Australia, and several western European countries, the principle strategy of the 1970's for aiding battered women was to establish direct services.

Providing Direct Services

I identified five general models of the types of services which are currently being offered to battered women. All of the groups which I studied also have made provisions for serving battered men, but few have ever had occasion to do so. Services for battered men will not be described in this report, although groups' perspectives on making such provisions will be, in Chapter Four. My classification was based on the primary type of service that each group provides. Groups were differentiated on the basis of the degree of isolation which they provide the battered woman from her normal environment, i.e., the amount of safety from her assailant which each model can reasonably assure her. Although all of the groups have some sort of provision for emergency shelter, some consist of referrals to other groups and/or communities.

I labeled the five types as follows: (1)the Shelter model, (2)the Safe Homes model, (3)the Crisis Line model, (4)the Multi-Crisis model, and (5)the Satellite model. I shall now present a brief description of each model, and then proceed to an analysis of their differences in terms of safety and risk, and the reasons why various groups chose to offer a particular array of services.

The Shelter Model.

The most commonly adopted model nationally for providing services to battered women has been the Shelter model, and that is also true of the groups which I studied--13 of the 25 groups had developed this model. It includes some type of multi-family, short-term housing, offices for paid staff and volunteers who coordinate the residence and other services, a crisis (telephone) "hot" line for emergency calls, and provisions for counseling, advocacy, and referrals for battered women. The most typical shelter is a large, old house which was formerly a single-family dwelling, and has been either rented or purchased by the battered women's group. The house has been converted, through the installation of fire doors, additional bathrooms, storage cabinets, and dining facilities, into living space for several adults and children. There are usually communal rooms--living, dining, playrooms, and kitchen--on the

ground floor, and bedrooms on the second and third floors. There are also roll-away beds somewhere on the ground floor for overflow or handicapped residents.

Typically, the shelter has the capacity for 20 to 30 women and children; the smallest shelter in my sample had a capacity of ten. There is a limited residency of about 30 days; the range in my sample was from two weeks to six weeks. Household chores such as cooking and cleaning are shared by residents, often on a rotating basis which is determined by the residents and staff at "house meetings." Since many residents cannot safely leave the shelter to go shopping, food and supplies are usually brought in by staff or volunteers (although one group felt that providing food for herself and her children was important for a woman's self esteem, and so did not have food available to shelter residents.)

In the most common arrangement of this model, paid staff or volunteers are always present, on a 24-hour, rotating basis. There are some groups which have hired a "resident manager" who lives at the shelter and is the only staff person present at night. I interviewed one group whose founder and current director opened her own home to battered women. She and her family continue to live there, and additional staff are present only during the day.

Ordinarily in this model, there are provisions to house additional women, in the event of an overflow, in a local hotel which will be paid for by the Red Cross or Department of Social Services or, in one case, by the hotel management itself. Variations in the shelter model include situations in which the shelter is located in one building; the offices and crisis phones are located elsewhere. There are also some groups whose shelter and offices are housed within another instituton: on the top floor of a YWCA, for example (this is not the same as a situation in which the YWCA itself is sponsoring the battered women's group--that would fall under the Satellite model. Instead, the battered women's group makes arrangements with the YWCA to house their shelter facility there, but the group is separate). Other examples would be shelters located on the grounds of a state mental hospital (in a former director's home, perhaps), or in a former convent, still attached to a Catholic Church. But all of these variations share the characteristics of being temporary refuges for several women at a time, and providing supportive services such as counseling and referral for battered women within an environment of safety.

The Safe Homes Model

The second model of services for battered women was represented by three of the 25 groups in my

sample. In this model, there is no central refuge. Instead, individual families provide shelter for one woman and her children at a time, usually for only a few (one to five) days. These volunteers have received some training in crisis counseling, and an awareness of the battering situation which the woman has left. But any more formal counseling, advocacy and referrals to other agencies are handled by staff and volunteers at a central office. If the short-term refuge is not sufficient and the woman is willing to leave town, she may be referred to a shelter in another community after her stay at the "safe home."

The Crisis Line Model

The third model of services, which describes four of the 25 groups, includes no local refuge at all. The simplest variation of this model consists of an answering service which calls volunteers who return the battered woman's call and offer crisis, on-the-line counseling and, perhaps, referral to a refuge in another community (or, in a few cases, to a shelter in the same community, operated by a different group). A more complex variation consists of a group with a small paid staff and an office into which the crisis line rings during the day. Battered women may be able to come into the office for counseling and referrals or, if the office location is secret, a counselor/advocate will meet her at some other

location. Under this model, arrangements may be made with a local motel to house a woman in extreme crisis for one or two nights, but that is the only kind of refuge which the group itself can offer.

The Multi-Crisis Model

A fourth type, the Multi-Crisis model, resembles the previous one, in that it includes no refuge and staff work out of an office with a crisis line, but combines other kinds of crisis counseling with battering--most commonly, sexual assault. Three groups in my sample operated this type of model, usually as a multi-purpose women's center offering advice and referrals for battering, sexual assault, and numerous other issues. Interestingly, several of the groups which I interviewed, that now fit under one of the first three models described, began as this type of service and later narrowed their focus to battered women only.

The Satellite Model

The fifth type of services, which I have labeled the Satellite model, was represented by two groups in my sample. In this situation, an established agency with existing facilities incorporates services for battered women into their program without changing the basic structure of the organization. For example, a YWCA with residence facilities for single women might decide to allow battered women and their children to

stay there also. Gradually the YWCA would develop a more specific program to meet the needs of battered women, such as DSS and legal referrals, and crisis counseling. Or a Community Mental Health Center, which already accepts "walk-in" clients for counseling might begin reaching out to battered women and offering specific counseling to them and/or their assailants. Under this type of arrangement, services for battered women become a "satellite" package, connected to the agency's other programs and yet somewhat separate.

Other Models

There is possibly a sixth type of services, which might be called the Assailant Counseling model. I did not locate a group which would represent this model in my sample, although I have obtained documents on one such group in another state. This would be an indirect service to battered women, by offering counseling to their assailants which would, hopefully, enable them to find alternatives to physical aggression. Some groups in each of the above types also provide assailant counseling; but this is a separate model because it deals only with assailants. Its members staff an office, offer individual counseling sessions, or only hold weekly group counseling sessions to help assailants learn to control their violent behavior. However, I have not

obtained sufficient data on any groups of this type to include such a model in my analysis.

Comparison and Contrast of Five Service Models[3]

The Shelter model comes closest to providing a "total institution" (Goffman, 1961) of safety for battered women who are seeking an escape from domestic violence. Goffman defines a total institution as

> a place of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life (p. xiii).

Shelters for battered women are not total institutions in the strictest sense of the concept, because their residents do continue to interact with the outside world during their period of occupancy in the shelter. But those outside contacts--with friends, family members, and other social service agencies--are usually mediated through the policies and personnel of the shelter. And there is a definite feeling of separation between those who are part of the shelter environment and those who are outside it.

Battered women are perceived by shelter groups as needing a total institution in order to assure themselves of complete isolation from their assailants: to feel safe in order to have the "mental

space" necessary to begin rearranging their lives. Furthermore, women who have fled battering situations have often left everything behind--their homes, clothing and other personal belongs, friends, the facade of "domestic harmony" behind which they have lived. They need a total institution of physical and psychological equipment within which to begin their lives anew.

Battered women's shelters probably best fit into Goffman's fifth type of total institution: establishments which are "designed as retreats from the world even while often serving as training stations" (Goffman, 1961: 5). In this case, however, the retreat and training are not intended for religious adherents but for converts to a new ideology. Women in shelters learn that they can leave a battering situation, and are taught the necessary skills to live independently of their assailants.

It is true that in many shelters, the staff/volunteers/other administrators are explicitly committed to an egalitarian relationship with the residents, and would find the analogy to such institutions as prisons, mental hospitals, and Goffman's other illustrations of total institutions abhorrent. Nevertheless, there is an unavoidable separation between the residents and the supervisory staff, and residents are required to adhere to basic

rules of operation which were designed and are overseen by a group of people who are not residents. This "binary character" of the relationship between residents and shelter workers, and the uneven distribution of power between them, is also characteristic of total institutions. The purpose of these rules and regulations is what is unique about shelters. The rules are designed not to coerce shelter residents, or to facilitate surveillance but, by the shelter group's definition/standards, to create an optimal environment for the women who voluntarily enter a shelter as residents.

When a woman is accepted into a shelter, she is encouraged to believe that she is entering into an environment of safety, where her assailant cannot follow. The terms which are used--shelter, refuge, haven--connote this image of safety. (Although it is ironic that those same terms were employed by the nineteenth-century reformers of women's prisons. The first all-women's reformatory was established in Detroit in 1867 and known as the "House of Shelter." The first cottage system adult female reformatory opened in New York in 1887 and was called the "House of Refuge"--Freedman, 1981: 50, 77.) Many of the shelter workers to whom I spoke emphasized the importance of providing a "warm, safe place" for victims to go.

To achieve this sense of safety, most shelters have developed comprehensive security arrangements. Some have alarm systems which connect them to the police. Others merely keep their doors and windows locked, and have established procedures for opening them which will, hopefully, minimize the risk of intrusion by an assailant. That is, only staff may open the door, no one is admitted unless s/he has called ahead and those inside are certain of her/his identity; and/or there is an intercom system through which people inside may converse with whoever is outside before admitting anyone.

As part of their security system, some shelters have attempted to keep their locations secret. Only staff, volunteers, trusted supporters and, of course, present and former residents are told where the shelter is located. However, as experienced shelter workers have learned, such knowledge is very difficult to control. In some communities the local news media have broadcast a shelter's address. In others, the location has become widely known during zoning hearings or other matters which must be brought before the community's officials before a shelter opens or during its operation.

Several of the shelter workers whom I interviewed expressed consternation at how easily word spread within the community about where the shelter was

located. For example, one director learned that local taxi-cab drivers were willing to "sell" the shelter's address to whomever wanted it. Another said it became a "game" among local men's organizations to discover who knew the address of the shelter. With such experiences, many shelter groups have resigned themselves to the infeasibility of maintaining secrecy. As one staff person told me,

> We've had over 800 women stay here since the shelter opened; some tell their assailants when they leave (some are forced to tell). It's impossible to keep it a secret and it's unrealistic to expect it to continue to be a secret.

Other groups have never attempted to protect their location; and all groups have had to develop security arrangements on the assumption that at least some assailants would know where to find them. There is also a contradiction inherent in trying to keep the shelters' locations secret. Groups need to reach out and be visible to the public, in order to acquire resources, clients, and publicity for the problem of woman battering. Yet they also need to maintain a low profile to protect their current clients and to assure prospective residents that the shelter is a safe place to go.

Another type of secret helps to protect women from their assailants, whether the shelter's location is openly revealed in the community or not. Most

shelters have a policy of not answering inquiries about whether or not a woman is residing there. The following is a typical response:

> We do not give out information on which women we have heard from, but if you would like to leave a message, we'll be glad to give it to her if she ever contacts us.

Thus, an assailant is not usually certain if his wife/cohabitee is in the shelter, a further deterrent to forcing his way into it.

Within the Shelter model, then, an atmosphere of privacy and safety is maintained as much as possible, so that a woman enters into the world of a shelter through clearly demarcated barriers and rituals. Once inside, she is expected to respect these rules whether she is concerned about her own safety or not. The security of the other residents depends partially on the discretion of their co-inhabitants.

None of the other models of service to battered women offer the same image of safe refuge within a total environment of recuperation and redirection of a woman's life which is possible within a shelter. The Safe Homes model provides an escape, and may in some cases actually be safer than a shelter, since safe homes are usually dispersed throughout a community and would thus be more difficult for an assailant to locate. But the model is also different in that women are not sheltered together; they are dispersed in a

floating, individualized network of refuge.

In most groups which are types of the other models, overnight protection is offered in motels or other agency facilities (although the YWCA which I studied had set aside part of its residence,with additional security precautions, to be specifically used by battered women and their children, so in that respect it was identical to the Shelter model). In these models, women also are referred and/or transported to shelters in other communities. Again, with these models the benefits of the total institution are absent. The woman is temporarily safe; but she is not offered the supportive environment of shelter with her peers--other women in flight--with whom she can share the same feelings and the same experiences of dealing with her situation and making difficult decisions about her future.

The number of shelters increased dramatically during the 1970's. By 1979 there were over 150 refuges in England and Wales (Dobash and Dobash, 1980: 224), and more than 500 shelters or "safe homes" for battered women in the United States (NCADV Handbook, 1980). The number continues to grow.

One explanation of the initial emphasis on providing shelters was given by the St. Paul, Minnesota shelter group:

Refuges are the vitally necessary first

> step in eliminating domestic violence and oppression, because they serve to make the problem visible and to meet the immediate need for protection (Fleming, 1979: 354).

Nevertheless, there appears to have been little if any critical appraisal of the efficacy of providing direct services. Other strategies for aiding battered women and for making woman battering visible do not seem to have been considered, at least among the groups which I encountered. As will be further documented in Chapter Four, groups members recount a typical series of events by which they became committed to providing direct services, which may be briefly summarized as follows:

Local people who have a concern about battered women begin meeting to discuss the issue. Their concern gains local publicity, and word of their existence spreads around the community. At the same time, the developing group is attempting to gather information about the prevalence of woman battering in their community, and recruit other local residents into the group. But the publicity also attracts the attention of local battered women, who contact the group for help. Members of the group start looking for existing services to which they can recommend the battered women. Almost invariably, groups find that there are no existing agencies providing adequate services (i.e., comprehensive practical and emotional

support, which the battered women feel are responsive to their needs). As a result, the new group begins looking for ways to provide the needed services themselves.

Rather than holding existing social agencies accountable, demanding that they become more responsive to the needs of battered women, the battered women's group "starts from scratch" and develops separate services. (The Satellite model does work within existing agencies. But this model is much less frequently adopted than the other, autonomous models.) Some of the reasons for this pattern will be considered in later chapters of this dissertation.

In most cases, gaining initial support and funding for a battered women's shelter program was difficult, and some groups struggled for three or four years to do so. There is still great resistance in many communities to forming shelters, or even to acknowledging the existence of battered women. But other communities have developed coalitions with neighboring shelter groups, as well as sophisticated funding techniques. For example, in 1977 shelter staff and other service providers from eighty-five programs in California, Oregon, Washington, and Nevada joined together to form the Western States Shelter Network, a regional coalition which pools resources and coordinates legislative and funding campaigns

(Western States Shelter Network brochure, 1980).

One of the first objectives of many people starting services has been to build public awareness of the prevalence of woman battering in their own communities, and to spread concern about alleviating the problem. Often they have tried to attract the news media, to gain publicity for the issue. For instance, a group of YWCA members in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1976

> thought woman battering was a problem in our community (we got the idea that it was from national news networks)[4] and we wanted to make sure service was not already being rendered by someone else. We developed a questionnaire about personal experiences of battering and went to a reporter who was a friend and asked her to print it in the local newspaper. People mailed in their responses and from them[5] we organized a four-hour testimonial which got us all kinds of media attention and showed the community the need for services.[6] As a result we got funding for the Alice Paul House (Charlene Ventura, Public Relations and Funding Director, YWCA Alice Paul House, Cincinnati, Ohio--speaking at NCADV meeting, February 29, 1980, Washington, D.C.).

These types of claims-making activities (Spector and Kitsuse, 1977) were enacted by most groups in the process of bringing the issue of woman battering home to their own communities. People who were initially concerned with the issue at the local level (through a process to be analyzed in Chapter Four) wanted to convince community agencies, officials, and the

general public that woman battering was a local as well as a national problem. Circulating a questionnaire about personal experiences, securing newspaper coverage, and organizing "testimonials" are all part of what Wiener (1981) refers to as "animating the problem. In spite of the fact that many local groups sprang up almost simultaneously in different parts of the U.S. (and in many other countries as well), there is a striking similarity in the types of claims-making activities which the various groups employed to animate the problem of woman battering. These similarities are a result of a network of communication within the battered women's movement, the product of various types of linkages between local groups which characterize the structure of the movement.

Movement Structure

The battered women's movement is, for the most part, a loosely structured, grassroots organization: a "reticulated movement."

> We have chosen this term to describe an organization in which the cells, or nodes, are tied together, not through any central point, but rather through intersecting sets of personal relationships and other intergroup linkages . . . these nodes in the network of the movement intersect and are linked into a reticulate macrostructure. The

> linkages between cells are both personal and organizational; ties of various types operate at different levels of organization (Gerlach and Hine, 1970: 55-60).

Linkages within the battered women's movement include personal ties among members, who often knew each other through other organizations, such as NOW, the YWCA, church groups, or feminist activities. Or members of different groups developed friendships as a result of shelter activities, such as transferring "clients" or exchanging information. Another type of linkage consists of personal ties among leaders, who may meet at legislative hearings or funding meetings. Linkages also include national or regional associations, and ritual activities. For example, many local groups have joined with other feminists in communities across the United States for the past few years for "Take Back the Night" marches to protest violence against women on August 26, Women's Equality Day. Plans have also been discussed to sponsor a National Action Day, such as an annual "Mother's Day Collection for Battered Women" in local churches across the country. The Canton, Ohio shelter group devised this strategy to raise money and generate publicity and support; they proposed that other groups adopt the plan at the NCADV national conference in 1980.

Finally, there are ideological and extra-movement ties which are a source of new recruits, funding, and

information. For example, anti-rape and women's self-defense groups, anti-pornography organizations such as Women Against Violence Against Women--WAVAW--and other groups who share a philosophical perspective that opposes male violence towards women have participated in founding and supporting services for battered women. Extra-movement linkages have included YWCA, Junior League, and League of Women Voters members who, while not usually sharing a strongly feminist perspective (the meaning of the concept of feminism is discussed in Chapter Five), have shared a concern for battered women, and have contributed to efforts to organize support services. However, the types of linkages which bring different people into the movement may result in conflicts between individuals or groups. For example, women who join from the Junior League and those from a group such as WAVAW probably have different understandings of the causes of battering, solutions to the problem, and the appropriate organizing strategies for developing a group.

Some portions of the movement are working toward more central organization. Many of the shelter groups in the United States came together in 1978 to form the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV),

> a network of grassroots shelter and service programs . . . designed to help organizers develop local resources . . .

> and increase their effectiveness at the state and national level (NCADV Handbook, 1980: 17).

At its first national conference, held in February, 1980 in Washington, D.C., 560 people from Puerto Rico and every state except Hawaii (who were unable to attend because of the distance) who are working to provide services for battered women, met to plan future strategies, share information, and discuss the advantages and projected structure of a national coalition. As mentioned earlier, groups in Great Britain formed a similar national coalition--the National Women's Aid Federation (NWAF)--much earlier, in 1974. Formation of each of these national coalitions may have represented a turning point for the battered women's movement in their respective countries, in that a national coalition constitutes at least the potential for a more centralized organizational structure.

It appears to have been members of the organizing committee of the NCADV who first referred to themselves and their potential constituency as a separate and autonomous social movement--the battered women's movement.[7] The NCADV was formed in 1978, when people who were working in various parts of the U.S. to provide services for battered women attended the U.S. Civil Rights Commission hearings on domestic violence. During the hearings many of the women began

sharing their organizing experiences, the problems they were confronting in their communities in gaining funding and recognition, and the types of solutions they had developed. Those who were present felt that this exchange of information was valuable, and talked about the need for a national organization to facilitate communication. As the members of the interim steering committee recalled in their Welcome Letter to the first national conference, founders also felt the need to build "a major national movement" by

> building coalitions on both a state and national level; developing federal legislation for the funding of battered women's shelters; and organizing a national conference by and for grassroots people working in the movement (NCADV Handbook, 1980: 1).

NCADV has continued to characterize itself as representing a new social movement for battered women, or against woman battering. By emphasizing the grassroots origins of many programs, and the diversity of perspectives, approaches, and treatments of the issue, the coalition has sought to include as broad a range of potential members as possible.

But although the NCADV may have been the first medium through which the battered women's movement was recognized as an autonomous social phenomenon, the NCADV did not create the movement. It already existed in rudimentary form. The NCADV represents the fourth precondition in Freeman's model of how a social

movement forms: individuals decide to organize themselves into a group to disseminate a new idea. The organizing was already occurring in local communities all over the country. The NCADV brought the organizing to a national level.

Only nine of the 25 groups in my sample belong to the NCADV. Some have not joined because the dues are too expensive (they range from $25 to $100, depending on the group's operating budget;[8] others say they plan to join and just have not done so yet. A few said that they have reservations about the NCADV because they believe it is anti-male--that it discourages men from participating in groups as staff members or volunteers. (I heard this same reason for not joining explained to a NCADV steering committee member at the Region V conference; and she did not deny the charge--she simply nodded her head noncommitally and remained silent.)

Both of the states which I studied have formed state coalitions. All of the groups in my sample belong to their state's coalition; although some are more active than others. Some groups are also active in a regional coalition of several states. Regardless of official membership in coalitions, the groups benefit from intramovement linkages in the exchange of information and clients. Battered women who go to one group may be transferred to a group in another

community if they feel endangered in the first location, or the first group has no shelter or it is full. One shelter worker described the advantage of cooperating with other groups in exchanges of clients as a feeling of greater strength and support:

> It's fun. We tell assailants, "Your wife has now entered the network and could be anyplace out there in this vast network of shelters." It makes him think that she's beyond his reach.

Beyond the function of exchange of clients and information, people feel that the inter-group contacts provide emotional support. Several of the groups in State One have formed a small coalition of groups within one region of the state, and they have a monthly meeting to talk about mutual problems and discover solutions.

Intramovement linkages, then, appear to be informal for the most part, rather than being based on membership in coalitions. As one group's founder said,

> There's no real system of communication yet. Somebody hears about a group when they're on vacation or something, and they get in touch and give information to each other.

The coalitions and informal networks are important in spreading the culture of the battered women's movement, as well as giving individual groups more power in their long-range goals of affecting legislative changes and greater public concern about

woman battering.

The Structure of Local Groups

Members of the NCADV describe the battered women's movement as a grassroots movement and/or a self-help movement. Withorn (1980: 26) defines self help as

> the effort of people to come together in groups in order to resolve mutual individual needs . . . the major reasons for defining an activity as self help are that it involves group activity and meetings of people with the problem, not outside experts or professionals, and that the main means by which difficulties are addressed are mutual sharing, support, advice-giving, and the pooling of group resources and information.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, many of the founders of the battered women's movement were not "the people with the problem" (they were instead "outsiders"). Two of the basic tenets of self help, collective action and shared empowerment, are guiding principles of the battered women's movement, however; and the four "main means" mentioned by Withorn of dealing with a problem are widely employed. Those who provide shelter and other services for battered women generally believe that the battered woman must make decisions about her own life, within a safe, supportive environment (Fleming, 1980).

The editors of RADICAL AMERICA (May-June, 1980)

make the following observation about self-help movements, which is germane to the present situation in which many groups within the battered women's movement find themselves.

> A critical question for self-help, thus, is its relation to revolutionary social change. To assume a progressive character, it has to be tied to a radical political movement. This type of self-help then grows out of a political context, with the movement as the carrier of the politics. The clearest recent examples are the various self-help activities (around rape, consciousness raising, battered women and self-defense) developing from the feminist movement. Growing from the movement's understanding of the pervasiveness of sexual oppression in capitalist patriarchy, these groups represent both a challenge to the existing system, whose problems they confront, and a prefigurative vision of a new (socialist) society (p. 4).

The editors go on to stress the importance of conducting self-help activities within a movement context. Otherwise, the organization is vulnerable to cooptation by capitalist forms of organization. This process appears to have occurred among some groups who formed to provide services for battered women, and were eventually incorporated into existing social service agencies, in which principles of shared empowerment and collective action are not practiced. Other groups were part of an established agency from the beginning, and never attempted to operate on self-help principles.

On the other hand, as Withorn (1980) points out

in her historical overview of the self-help concept, groups which remain independent of established agencies deprive themselves of some public funding sources and, perhaps, of legitimation which is essential to long-term survival. These issues will be discussed further in Chapters Four and Five, in the context of specific group histories. But regardless of the present reality for community groups, the ideology of the battered women's movement has remained one of a self-help orientation.

In apparent contradiction to their commitment to the self-help concept, most of the groups in my sample have a formal structure that is arranged hierarchically. There is a board of directors at the top, which sets policy and hires the senior staff member--whose title is Director or Executive Director. Below the board is the staff, with the Director as the supervisor of other members. Occasionally there are further breakdowns of different staff as supervisors of various components. In a somewhat ambiguous relationship to the hierarchy are the volunteers. Some staff or board members consider the volunteers to be below the staff, but since they are not subject to being hired or fired, they might be considered as maintaining an independent relationship.

Some groups have a less hierarchical structure, often with an advisory board rather than a board of

directors. Very rarely, a staff is arranged as a collective, with everyone sharing equal pay and authority in decision making. The collective was an ideal of many groups in the beginning; they wanted to arrange their staff in an egalitarian fashion. But the collective is rare currently, at least among the groups in my sample. There seem to be two main reasons for a shift to hierarchy. The most commonly cited reason is funding restrictions. In writing grants, groups had to specify titles and responsibilities for each position, and salaries were funded according to traditional concepts of status. Martin (1976: 246) explains:

> Foundations are used to hierarchical structures and have a fetish for professionalism. Their executives do not easily take to the concept of self-help; they are suspicious of the horizontal organization of democratic collectivism where everyone involved in the project has a voice and a vote. What foundation executive or board member ever heard of a secretary with as much say as the "boss," not to mention an equal salary?

In order to acquire funding, groups designed hierarchies, and then fell into viewing them as the most appropriate structure under which to operate.

The second reason for the replacement of collectives with hierarchies was frustration with the slow process of decision-making in collectives, where everyone must be consulted. The following is a typical comment:

> We used to be really democratic in group process; but we found that to function effectively, we needed to delegate decision making.

In summary, staffing and decision-making within groups seems to be mostly hierarchical. There is little evidence remaining of the collective spirit which Ahrens (1980) and other national spokespeople describe as being typical of grassroots, feminist organizations within the battered women's movement, even among those who describe themselves as grassroots and/or feminist.

It is usually the Director who assumes the role of decision-maker and final authority among staff; although she defers to the board of directors. There was no dissatisfaction voiced with this type of arrangement during my interviews, but since I usually talked to Directors or people not on staff, I had little opportunity to discover the attitude of "subordinate" staff. I know of two groups in which there were general shake-ups when staff felt that the Director had become authoritarian (in both cases a new Director was appointed by the board). But in neither case was the old arrangement of responsibility replaced with a nonhierarchical one.

I also studied one group where the reverse situation occurred: the Director had held the same position previously in another state, in a group which

was organized collectively. One staff member explained:

> She wanted to do everything collectively here too, but the board wanted a hierarchy. There was a lot of conflict the whole time she was here, and she finally resigned. I think it was basically a personality conflict.

The staff member who was speaking said that her group is much happier now, with a hierarchical arrangement in which the new Director is staff supervisor and subordinate to the board.

Similarly, I always asked if there were an informal structure which was different from the formal structure. People either denied this or said that there was actually less hierarchy than the structure indicated; that staff at all levels had a great deal of autonomy and only deferred to the director or the board for ultimate decisions. Also, groups seem to have boards consisting of a few people who are really involved in group processes, and the remainder are seen as puppets, or nominal members only. But other than that, there did not seem to e a "hidden" structure that ran counter to the formal one.

The boards of directors range from voluntary entities to those formally elected by a membership of dues-paying supporters from the community. The latter arrangement is fully operable in only two cases. In these, anyone can become a member of the organization.

The strategy behind this arrangement is twofold: to involve the community in the support of the group, and to raise money. Several interviewees mentioned this idea, and said that they would eventually like to implement it in their own groups. Some of them had a task force, which is a larger body than the board of directors, of interested people from the community who help the group with specific topics. But a task force does not involve as many people as a general membership would.

Among groups without a larger membership, the board elects its own members, sometimes for predetermined periods, other times whenever a vacancy occurs. Or people are "asked to serve" by other board members. Some groups, particularly those in the Satellite model, but others as well who have been sponsored by an established agency, do not have their own board of directors. Instead, they are governed by the board of their host organization. The size of boards ranges from five to 22 members, with the usual size being ten or twelve.

In some communities, being a member of the board of directors is a status position: influential people join the board and serve mainly as figureheads. There is often a love/hate relationship between this sort of board and the staff. Staff members appreciate the legitimacy which influential people lend to the group,

but resent their distance from the problems encountered by staff, and the board's inability to understand how stressful it can be to work constantly with people in crisis. One Director described her group's board in the following way:

> Most of them are very upper-middle class, and they are so wrapped up in being seen and looking good and complaining that we [the staff] never do anything right. They don't have the faintest idea of where we're coming from; they just give us no support.

But in spite of her anger and frustration with the board, she felt that in her community it was essential to have this type of board. Without the board's respectability, the group would be dismissed as "radicals and feminists" and would be unable to obtain funding or clients (battered women would be unwilling to come to them).

In other places, groups have what they call a "working board." People who are on the board participate actively in fundraising, public education, and other group efforts. The relationship between board and staff members was more harmonious in this type of situation. The type of board--status respectable or working--depended on the origins of the group. Grassroots, feminist origins were likely to indicate the presence of working boards. Institutional origins usually resulted in status-respectable boards. Board members are often social

service professionals, or may be drawn from a wide cross-section of the community--lawyers, ministers, social workers, police officers, homemakers--in a deliberate attempt to involve various constituencies in the group.

If the person to whom I was speaking were a staff member, I asked her what kind of relationship existed in her group between staff and the board. The answers varied from very positive to negative, on the basis of whether the respondent felt that the board was supportive or hostile to the staff. Those who felt dissatisfied said it was because their board's goals and values are different from the staff's. Usually the board wants to encourage a "professional," social work approach to woman battering, or does not understand the pressures under which the staff works. Those who were pleased with their board often cited the fact that board members volunteered for shifts in the shelter or on the crisis line, and were therefore aware of the reality of staff experiences.

Staff size ranged from two to twelve people. Most groups have no more than five paid staff; and even those with more staff expect to lose positions this year, as funding tightens. The positions of Director and Counselor are found in almost every group. Some groups also have a Child Care Coordinator, a Housing Specialist, a Program Director,

a Resident Manager, and/or a secretary or office manager. Often, the Director's main responsibility is grant-writing and administration. The Directors may or may not be involved in direct services to clients, depending on how many other staff exist. Job qualifications vary, but Directors usually have some college training. Several Directors have Master's degrees in Social Work; and experience in grant-writing and/or administration is often required. Again, this is usually because of mandates from the funding source. Other staff tend to be less educated; many have been CETA-financed, and may not have finished high school.

Almost all of the groups had some sort of training program for staff and volunteers. Only three groups said that people pick up their training through on-the-job experience. The training programs are very similar across groups; they may vary in length from five to 50 or more hours, but most include empathy training, education about woman battering, and information on legal options and community services. Several groups mentioned that they obtained their training manuals from other groups, attended other trainings, or invited someone from another group to come in and do their training.

The number of volunteers ranged from two to 90; most groups had no more than ten active volunteers.

Answering the crisis line and crisis counseling, both by telephone and face-to-face, are the most common and desired jobs for volunteers. They also help with child-care programs, public outreach, and household maintenance--painting, repairs, moving furniture--around shelters.

Groups with large staff are less dependent on volunteers than groups which have only two or three staff people. Consequently, in those groups who need them the most, volunteers tend to be given more responsibility, and integrated into the operation or the group's services. But not even all of the most needy groups know how to utilize their volunteers effectively. Many spokespeople said that their group wants to learn how to do that and build up their volunteer program in the future.

All of the groups in my sample were incorporated as nonprofit organizations. Incorporating is necessary in order to solicit contributions and funding from nonprofit foundations, as well as state and federal grants. Incorporation generally occurred during the early formation and education process of the groups. If a group had not incorporated by the time it began applying for state and federal grants, it was forced to do so then.

The fact that becoming incorporated was such a routine move for most groups indicates the degree of

organizational sophistication of the battered women's movement. It may also indicate more readiness to depend on the state and/or private foundations than in other movements such as, for example, the women's health movement or the draft resistance movement--who rejected such forms of aid as cooptation. The goal of most groups within the battered women's movement is to provide expensive services to a large population of "clients," whose needs (unlike those of, for instance, draft resisters) are compatible with philanthropic and social welfare concerns. Consequently, groups in the battered women's movement needed to quickly conform to the regulations of their potential funding sources. Incorporating was one of the ground rules for tapping most of these sources.

Summary

This chapter has discussed the development of the battered women's movement as a specific social movement, growing out of the women's movement of the late 1960's and early 1970's. The role of feminists as outsiders to the issue of woman battering, who related it to the general oppression of women, and discovered the need for shelters and other services through calls from battered women to already established crisis lines and women's centers was

described. As groups began to form on the local level to provide specific services to battered women, strategies were developed to gain public support and recognition. These claims-making activities were disseminated to other groups in communities across the United States through the burgeoning network of communication which eventually resulted in the formation of the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the first indication that a centrally organized movement was evolving. As groups and the movement itself have gained legitimation, they have had to struggle to remain a grassroots, self-help movement, without alienating potential sources of funding and support. In the next chapter, I shall describe in greater detail the way the battered women's movement developed in one part of the United States.

Part Two

CLAIMS-MAKING ACTIVITIES IN THE HEARTLAND

In studying the battered women's movement, I gathered data on groups providing services for battered women in two states of the central United States--an area I have referred to as the Heartland. Based on an initial survey of all existing (as of October, 1980) services, I selected 25 groups in which to conduct in-depth interviews, and studied documents from groups in other geographic areas. As a result, I have developed an understanding of how local groups originate, how they learn of the issue of woman battering, how they interpret it--i.e., what the problem means to groups and individuals in various communities; and how they proceed to develop a strategy for making the issue visible as a social problem in their communities. I have also examined the influence of the national movement on various groups: the sources of conflict and contradiction which lead to differences between groups, the ways in which shared interpretations generate

similarities in experiences.

Weiner (1981) divides the claims-making activities by which groups introduce a new social problem into three processes: animation, legitimation, and demonstration. In the next two chapters, I shall describe how local groups and the national movement went about these processes in "building an arena" around the problem of woman battering.

Chapter Four

CARVING A NICHE FOR WOMAN BATTERING IN THE PUBLIC CONSCIOUSNESS

Animating the problem occurs at both the local and national level, and includes infusing the problem with life, carving out its dimensions, increasing the number of people who are drawn into concern about these dimensions, developing a common pool of knowledge for all participants, and increasing the visibility of the problem through all these subprocesses (Weiner, 1981: 25). In other words, animation refers to the activities of involving people and resources in the project of defining a social problem, recruiting experts from various fields, and developing theories about the causes of and solutions to the problem. In this chapter, I shall discuss how the battered women's movement performed each of these activities at the local level, among groups in the Heartland.

The battered women's movement is a grassroots movement (although, as will be discussed, each group may have had grassroots or "institutional" origins), springing up in numerous places somewhat independently

and simultaneously, and developing regional and national ties afterwards. Since my interest is in how social movements act to transform issues into social problems and to gain public support for "solving" these problems, I concentrated in my interviews on exploring how people at the local level discover and mobilize to confront the problem of woman battering.

Group Origins

In examining how groups got started and why their founders realized that there was need for such services, I discovered that groups' origins were idiosyncratic, although they also tended to be somewhat similar across all sites. Groups' origins may be divided into two general categories: grassroots or institutional. Those with grassroots beginnings were founded by a small number of local people, usually women and perhaps a few men who defined themselves as feminists. These people were sometimes members of a NOW chapter or a women's consciousness-raising group. They heard about battering through feminist channels such as NOW; or some said they saw a television show or read a newspaper article on the subject.

NOW established a National Task Force on Battered Women in October, 1975, with a mandate to "raise consciousness, do research, and exert pressure for the

establishment of refuge homes for women and their children" (Davidson, 1980: 17). After that, local NOW chapters received information from national headquarters, and recommendations to investigate the problem of battering locally. Hence, some groups were initiated as a result of outside influences, or top-down recommendations.

In other locales, individuals were in contact with women in different communities who had started to offer services, and decided to investigate the need for services in their own community. In these cases, initiation came from the local level. For example, one group was formed by a woman who had recently completed a graduate degree at a university which was 150 miles from her home town. She invited members of a shelter group in the university community to come and speak to her NOW chapter:

> They came down and talked to us about battering, what was going on, and so the NOW chapter voted to research the issue here, and we put together a feasibility study in 1977. When we put it together we asked the hospitals, the magistrate courts, the police, the Department of Welfare, and other social service agencies, and what we found was that over 200 women each month in January and February were looking for relief from a battering situation. We took our findings to the city council and they said "Alright, this is definitely a problem and we want it addressed." So council formed a task force, which included NOW.

Interestingly, as the above quote indicates, many

of these groups were started by people who were completely unaware of woman battering until some outside source of information brought the problem to them. Then they began to look for evidence that the problem existed in their community. The claims-making activities thus occurred in reverse order from the way Weiner presents them (she emphasizes, however, that they are overlapping and not sequential--Weiner, 1981: 22). In these groups, demonstration was the first step, as people gathered data on the local extent of woman battering and the (in)adequacy of available resources. Then legitimation took place, as people sought to convince local audiences of the need for special services for battered women in that community. Finally, animation began, as founders recruited more people to help them and started to develop a program.

Other groups did not originate with NOW. They were begun by a consciousness-raising group, a feminist minister, or a rape crisis center. But they followed the same general pattern of beginning by calling a meeting of potentially supportive people; although who they saw as potentially supportive depended on their personal perspectives and group affiliations. Ministers called other ministers and members of the area's religious community. The people who heard about battering at a rape crisis center contacted women in similar kinds of groups--women's

self defense clubs, university women's center affiliates, local feminist activists. As a result, their initial definition of the problem varied according to their frame of reference (more will be said about this below). The initiators next conducted a survey of local agencies to arrive at a rough estimate of need, and then formed a task force to study the problem and propose a solution. These were grassroots organizations, because they remained outside the traditional social service hierarchy. They sought to involve a wide cross-section of community residents in the task force.

The remaining groups had more institutional origins. Sometimes a local social service agency, such as Community Mental Health or the Department of Social Services, recognized that they were receiving a lot of requests for help from battered women, and had no organized structure for dealing with them. Then a meeting was called with other agencies to determine whether or not any of them had services for battered women. When they found that none did, a task force was formed to design such a service. As one woman, who was employed by her county's Department of Welfare, described the process,

> The group that started it [the Task Force on Battered Women] was composed of those counselors or social workers or primary workers who had dealt with a number of women in battering situations. It was

> the counselor from the police department, and the social work counselor from the Community Mental Health Center--whenever his agency got those calls he was assigned those cases, and the social worker from the hospital who had seen a lot of battered women come in there--entry level agency people. We had had a lot of battered women come in here, but we didn't have any one social worker seeing them, so we didn't have anybody emerge here like they did at other agencies. But we all knew each other socially, it was a social kind of thing, and we talked about how this was a real need and finally decided we wanted to try to get as many people as possible from the area who dealt with victims of domestic violence, and see if we could get a group together that would work on getting a shelter started--about five or six of us were the core.

It was people in local social agencies, responding to battered women, who recognized the need for further attention to the issue. In these cases, the processes of animation, legitimation, and demonstration began by occurring in the direction described by Weiner, although they continued to occur in simultaneous and interchangeable fashion. In rare cases, a local agency such as Community Mental Health, applied for a federal grant to develop services for battered women, "not so much because spouse abuse was a real interest to them, but it was a source of money." They then started educating themselves about battering, and involving other community agencies in the process.

I could identify no consistent pattern that

indicated a relationship between the size of the community and the type of group origins. Obviously, there had to be a local NOW chapter in order for that to be the source of a group. But NOW chapters are found in rural, small town, and urban areas. Other kinds of networking between community residents, whether it was a feminist contacting other social activists, a minister contacting local citizens, or a social worker notifying people in other agencies, occurred in all sizes of communities. I was particularly surprised by the role of feminist groups in small towns and conservative areas. I had anticipated that there would not be feminist activists in those settings. But these were often the places where a core of feminists had exerted the most influence on starting a battered women's group. As will be discussed in Chapter Five, however, the perception of feminism varied widely and tended to be more reformist in smaller towns.

It did seem to be true that groups which formed in smaller communities drew in people from a wider range of backgrounds than did urban groups. That was probably a form of integration, a sort of "organic solidarity" (Durkheim, 1893), born of necessity. With a smaller population, there were not enough of one "type" of people--feminists, ministers, lawyers, social workers--to form an effective group. Thus,

members had to be recruited from other subgroups.[1] Nevertheless, community size or political climate did not determine whether a group's origins were grassroots or institutional, or who the founders were.

Group Founders

When I interviewed the members of a group which was providing services to battered women, I asked them who were the first people in their group, and how did they find each other. I was interested in knowing what kinds of people were the founders of the battered women's movement at the local level. Were they battered (or formerly battered) women? If not, to what extent were they "outsiders" to the issue? Did they have other kinds of experiences which helped them to identify with the issue of woman battering? Were they feminists? Did they mobilize other formerly battered women, or feminists, or influential community members? Or were they social workers or other professionals?

My questions focused on exploring how individuals become engaged in a social movement. Is it because they are located in strategic positions in affiliated organizations, or do they become active through personal interest in the issue? I was not attempting

a psychological analysis of motivations, but rather a structural analysis of the social factors that lead various types of people into an involvement in social movements, as another indicator of how social problems gain visibility.

In a few instances, a group was started by a formerly battered woman, but in all such cases, she was a person who had moved into a position which put her into contact with currently battered women who were asking for help, and in which she had the means (power) to implement some sort of response. In other words, none of the groups in my sample were started by a woman currently in a battering situation, although some founders were more receptive to the issue because they were formerly battered women.

As an example of the above, a women's center, established to support returning women students at a small college, began receiving many phone calls from battered women and from the police and other agencies who did not know what to do when battered women called them. The staff at the women's center "sort of dealt with things as they came up"--someone would take the woman to a staff member's home or to the hospital emergency room. One of the center counselors was a formerly battered woman, for whom these requests for help became "a primary concern and she didn't want to drop it." She persuaded other people who were

affiliated with the women's center, including the Director (who was also a prominent city official) and a woman who was an attorney, to help her start a support group and weekly group counseling sessions for battered women.

In another case, a formerly battered woman, who had become active in Alcoholics Anonymous, mentioned her battering experience in empathy for another woman during the second woman's testimony at an AA meeting. A few days later a third woman, who had also been at the AA meeting, came to the first woman's home for help after being severely beaten by her husband. Other battered women heard of this woman's willingness to help and shelter them, primarily because of her committment to AA's principles of sharing with/supporting others, until the demand became so great that she had to ask for community support.

In none of these situations, however, was the founder of a group a member of the target population--battered women--at the time that she became active in the battered women's movement. Even when the founder was a formerly battered woman, she was an "outsider" in that she had already left the battering situation prior to her participation in the movement. (Although her experience with the stigma and pain of being physically abused by her husband/lover gave her insights into other women's needs, and "credentials"

as an expert within the movement.)

In the majority of cases, moreover, it was not even formerly battered women who were group founders. Rather, it tended to be people (usually women) in social welfare agencies or women's centers who dealt with large numbers of battered women, and saw the need for specific services for them. Some were attorneys, often with Legal Aid, who were surprised by the large number of cases of domestic violence among their clients, and by the discovery that there were no services available locally to which they could refer these clients. Others, as discussed previously under "Group Origins," were social workers, employees of various social agencies, or even a woman minister.

In each of these cases, the group's beginning can be traced to one or two people who were located in strategic positions, both to hear the need for services, and to contact significant others who could lend support and legitimacy to a project. Usually, those people had not been in that significant position until shortly before they became aware of and active in starting services.

In response to my question of why each group got started at the particular time that it did, interviewees explained that a unique constellation of events tended to have come together in their communities which had not been present before, and

which made it feasible for a group to emerge. As one important factor, the founder was often a person who was new in town or new in her/his position, and open to seeing new issues. Thus, the Legal Aid attorneys tended to be young lawyers who had recently finished law school and were the first feminists (a fact that was probably as crucial as their newness) to be hired in their agencies. Hence, although Legal Aid had existed previously, no other employees had been so receptive to the issue of woman battering. Or a woman minister had been hired, and battered women were more willing to discuss their home life with her.

> The minister had always been involved in social issues, and she'd read about domestic violence; but she had not been working as a counselor long, so when battered women started coming to her, she recognized it.

As has already been described in the section entitled "Group Origins," the individual founders mobilized significant others. The people mobilized were those who appeared significant to the founders. Thus, they might be prominent community residents (ministers, city officials) and/or other members of the founder's profession (lawyers, social workers), or members of the local feminist and/or activist community. What is important about the individual founders is that they were capable of recognizing the need for such a core group.

In other communities, it was not the individuals but the social agency which was new. Perhaps the women's center had recently opened; or another agency had changed its program in some way which made it more accessible to battered women. In some communities, the Department of Social Services (DSS), CETA, or Cooperative Extension had begun a home visitation program, and found many battered women; the worker may even have witnessed a battering incident during a home visit.

The factor of newness, whether of individuals to a community or a job, or of agencies and programs, was significant to the emergence of battered women's groups in many places. This demonstrates the importance of taking a fresh look at old situations. As Simmel (1950) perceived, the significance of the stranger or of strangeness lies in the capacity to confront the familiar, to be detached and curious about the group's most cherished traditions:

> [The stranger] is freer, practically and theoretically; he [sic] surveys conditions with less prejudice; his criteria for them are more general and more objective ideals; he is not tied down to them by habit, piety, and precedent (p. 405).

Thus, the new lawyer, the new minister, or the worker in a new social program were as yet unencumbered by the blinders which so often develop after a routine is established.

Most interviewees also acknowledged the importance of hearing that other groups were forming in different communities, although they may have had no direct contact with any of those groups. One founder, who was a social worker in a private agency, put it succinctly:

> When you're trying to provide a service that has never been provided before, you have to be spurred on from either what's going on in the times, or what you hear someone else is doing in another community. For me, it was a combination of both factors, plus the fact that I started getting a lot of calls from battered women here.

The preceeding section has been an analysis of how people in different communities who recognized a need for services for battered women identified a core group of people who would work on the project of establishing such services. In every case, the person who is seen by her/his colleagues as the group's founder was in a position in which s/he came into contact with large numbers of battered women, and in which s/he had access to other people in the community who were capable of and willing to accomplish the goal of animating--recruiting others and developing a program to deal with the problem of woman battering. At this point, developing groups found that they needed to widen their network of members and supporters, if woman battering was to become widely recognized as a problem in their community, and if

solutions were to be found.

Widening the Network of Support

The core group in each communiy found that, although it had evolved into a handful of hard-working members, it needed commitment from more people to accomplish the tasks it defined as important. With an issue such as woman battering, there was a great need for immediate, accessible solutions--for victim relief as well as for wider awareness of the proolem. Thus, local groups tended to emerge with a practical focus on providing services for battered women, although many saw their purpose as two-fold: to provide immediate and long-term relief for women who are in a battering situation, and to increase public awareness of the issue. Groups were sometimes frustrated by the need for both kinds of activity to occur simultaneously, since both require expenditures of valuable time and energy (the public outreach, legitimation process is discussed in Chapter Five.)

Having a needy clientele and concrete services to provide necessitates acquiring material resources, skills, and personnel (and leads to ideological contradictions and compromises--to be discussed). This results in pressures which are not present in all types of social movements. For example, a religious

movement would primarily need to provide a convincing ideology, a spiritual transformation, and could thus concentrate all of its organizing energy on an idealistic level. (Although groups within a religious movement often decide to build churches, this usually is not perceived as a necessity until the group becomes somewhat stable. Also, in the case of churches, money comes from the group's members themselves; they do not usually apply for grants or provide continuing services to a needy clientele.)

For the battered women's movement, however, there were both materialist and idealist needs to be met. If the task were staffing a twenty-four-hour crisis line, the group needed volunteers to do that. If the task were establishing emergency housing the group needed to have community residents offer their homes, or participate in fund-raising and other steps necessary to procuring a shelter. Whatever the group's goals, they could rarely be accomplished without additional input from the community.

Some groups asked for the support or sponsorship of a specific agency/organization. In one locale the group, which had been started by a woman minister, had formed a task force made up of people from various local social agencies to study the extent of woman battering and design a program. When it found itself overwhelmed with the magnitude of the problem, the

task force asked an interagency council for help. The YWCA, a member of that council, offered to become the sponsoring agency, and later invited the Junior League to form a coalition with them--the YWCA--to raise money, recruit volunteers, and direct the domestic violence program. One of the group's founders was a member of both the YWCA and the Junior League; and she suggested tapping the Junior League. No one in her group objected to involving the Junior League: "We were desperate for any help we could get." Several groups mentioned these kinds of inter-agency linkages as important in soliciting a large support base. An advantage of this type of recruitment process was that it immediately secured the commitment of a group of influential citizens, and gave the project legitimacy in the eyes of the community.

However, groups with grassroots, feminist origins tended to be ideologically opposed, at least initially, to depending on "influential citizens" or any nonfeminist support. This fact often made it more difficult for them to survive; and they were sometimes forced by economic necessity to make concessions later. Some of the groups who were committed to building a grassroots support base approached the task of enlisting a wider network of helpers in an entirely different way. After organizing themselves and determining their focus, they conducted a "membership

drive," in which anyone in the community (or elsewhere, for that matter) could join the group, volunteer for specific types of jobs, and often pay dues and vote for members of a board of directors or advisory board. A benefit of this method of enlistment was that it opened the project to the whole community and facilitated the development of a mass base of support, in contrast to the agency-sponsorship method, which tended to make participation somewhat exclusive or even elitist (in the case of the Junior League, for example).

Feminist-oriented groups who adopted the mass-based-support approach were more attuned to the importance of involving the general public in dealing with woman battering, in order to make the issue more visible. They often cited "public education" as their primary task, or at least put it on a par with providing direct services. In contrast, the groups who sought agency or private group sponsorship were usually more concerned with providing direct services, and only saw public outreach as a means of gaining more support for their services to battered women.

A few groups did not really succeed in enlisting a larger body of helpers, and managed to carry on the job of developing services with only a core group or very hard-working individuals. In some cases, this type of group succeeded by quickly acquiring

sophisticated funding, such as a Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) grant, which enabled them to hire a paid staff (often made up of their own members) and start a program without appealing to the community for money. But this type of situation was rare among the groups I studied, partially because LEAA and other sources of large, federal grants have been eliminated or severely curtailed in 1981, or are more difficult to obtain as more groups compete for limited amounts of money.

It may be that other groups which attempted to remain independent of broadly-based community support have failed and disappeared; I did not attempt to study defunct groups. Tierney (1979) did, however, and her conclusions appear to validate my suspicions. She found that groups which fail to obtain community support are likely to dissolve. Nall (1976) found the same pattern in a comparison of two women's centers. One, which failed, had never established networks of material and/or political support from the community. The other, which remained viable, had obtained early and continued support from influential community members.

The ways in which groups went about widening their networks of support were related to whether they had grassroots or institutional origins. However, the group's location in a rural or urban, conservative or

progressive community did not seem to be related to the methods of involving more people in the project of making woman battering more visible in their community. I expected, however, that the group's location would affect the composition of the group, and particularly the way members perceived of the importance of involving minorities and formerly battered women.

Group Composition: Insiders, Outsiders, Minorities, and Men

At the NCADV conference, and among the two groups which I studied first, there was a great deal of concern about issues of race, ethnicity, class, age, and religion. Groups wanted to be as diverse and tolerant of differences as possible, in group composition and appeal to client populations. There was also a commitment to involving formerly battered women, as staff, volunteers, and board members. Hence, I assumed that these would be important issues to most groups in the battered women's movement.

Nationally, the movement portrays itself as committed to full participation of women of every race and ethnic group, every class, age, and religion, in both providing and receiving a group's services. Concerning recipients of services, Fleming (1979:

364) writes:

> It is important to obtain as diverse a clientele as possible. Programs designed to provide services to women need to make sure that they meet the needs of all women, not simply those in the immediate neighborhood or those who already know how to utilize resources. Effective community work will help to insure diversity: a multi-cultural resident population. Black women, Spanish-speaking women, Native American women, Asian women, military wives (both Asian and white), undocumented alien women, and rural women . . . .

Many groups across the country have decided that one way to reach such a "diverse clientele" is to have a "multi-cultural" membership--on the staff, board of directors, and among volunteers. With this in mind, they have written their by-laws to deliberately construct such diversity, stating that the membership shall proportionately reflect the community's cultural make-up.

In addition to representation of different cultures and perspectives in the membership, these differences in background surface in concrete ways within the living experience of shelters. Scott (1980: 48-50) mentions some of these manifestations of difference:

> In our shelter, our biggest discussions have been around how different cultures view discipline . . . the next biggest issue has been around food . . . Do the surroundings--pictures, books, magazines, etc. reflect other women's experiences? Do books reflect multi-racial children--just as you would have them to be

nonsexist?

Since my research did not include a comparative ethnography of life within shelters, I cannot discuss whether or not the groups in my sample encountered these issues, or how groups dealt with them. However, I did ask each group about the composition of its board, staff, and volunteers, in terms of representation by race, ethnic group, class, age, religion, and formerly battered women.

None of the groups studied had specific articles in its by-laws which stated that its membership should include proportions based on race, ethnicity, class, age, or religion. A few said that there was an informal understanding that minorities would be recruited for openings on the board or staff, and encouraged to volunteer. Others explained the homogeneity of their membership as reflecting the composition of their communities:

> There are no racial minorities in town, except a few Native Americans, and we have one volunteer who is a Native American.

In some of the small, rural communities, it probably was true that there was no sizable minority population; but even in urban areas, many of the groups did not have Black or Hispanic members.

Most groups, however, seemed surprised by the question, and indicated that their groups had never

considered representation. On reflection, they realized that their groups were predominately white, middle-class, and under forty years old. Religious variation was common; but people were not members because they represented a religious affiliation. Several times, people told me that they had never thought about this idea of representation before, but it might be worth considering within their group in the future.

Representation by formerly battered women was slightly more common; although, as with founding cores, "outsiders" still predominate. 12 of the 25 groups had made the involvement of formerly battered women a priority. Among eight of the twelve, their by-laws specified that one or two (the maximum was one-third of one group) of the board members should be former clients--"consumers" was the jargon. Representation by consumers was mandated by one state's legislative funding agency, but not all of the groups in that state had yet complied. Other groups' spokespeople said there might be some formerly battered women among their members, but that was not a salient characteristic: "it's not an issue for us." In all cases, formerly battered women were a minority of the groups. "Outsiders" to the problem of woman battering were everywhere primarily responsible for the organization and delivery of services.

Among many local groups within the battered women's movement, then, it appears that diversity and/or representation are not considered important. Some groups have perhaps ignored these issues, simply because they were preoccupied with day-to-day considerations of obtaining funding and surviving as organizations. Others may have avoided this topic because they were hoping to minimize disagreements within the group. Or they may have been oblivious to the issue. If they have always been utilized to their maximum capacity, they may not have been concerned with trying to reach even more women. Whatever the reason, this ideological dimension of woman battering has not affected all groups equally. The intergroup linkages which have resulted in shared perspectives or common dilemmas on some grounds have not brought representation to a similar status.

The decision as to whether or not men would be welcome, or even permitted, to participate in a group, and the parameters of that participation, reflect the group's ideological stance, as well as that of the movement as a whole. Some groups are totally opposed to including men in their staff, volunteers, or board of directors. Others believe it is appropriate for men to be in some of those positions--perhaps on the board of directors--but not in others, direct services, for example. Other groups feel that it is

essential to have men participate fully in planning and delivering whatever services are offered. A fourth attitude might be described as one of grudging acceptance: women in the group are not enthusiastic about including men, but they accept the inevitability of the men's presence.

These positions seem to broadly "correlate" with the rest of the group's ideology: with how explicitly feminist the group is, for example. The most openly feminist groups are the least likely to accept men's full participation. There is also a relationship between these positions and the group's community setting. Those in smaller towns and rural areas, who have a smaller population from which to recruit members, are likely to be more tolerant of men's participation. Those in urban areas can be, and usually are, more exclusive.

Most of the earliest groups did not originally allow men to participate. They felt that battering was a women's issue, and that if a woman were leaving an oppressive relationship with a man, she would not want to have to accept help from other men; or that she needed to learn to not need help from men. "She's coming from a dependent relationship, and it would be too easy to just transfer that dependency onto another man, if any were here." Some of those groups have more recently admitted men, usually to their boards of

directors or to volunteer with childcare and other jobs that do not involve direct services to battered women (e.g., counseling and advocacy). Pragmatically, it is often beneficial to have men on the board who have some influential position in the community--a prosecuting attorney, a wealthy businessman, a minister (the composition of the board of directors and the rationale for it were discussed in Chapter Three).

The majority of the groups which I studied have male volunteers and/or male staff members, although never in large numbers. Some seem to have accepted men's participation reluctantly, because they could not avoid it due to affirmative action guidelines attached to state and federal funding. Others feel that it is an asset to have men involved, because they think battered women and their children need to see men in nonviolent roles: "It's important to provide positive male models to the women and children, so they don't think all men are like the one they just left."

However, in most groups the men cannot staff the shelter without any women staff/volunteers present "because of legal ramifications--he might get accused of rape or something--and the women might be uncomfortable." One group had a man as the only resident staffer. He lived in the shelter and served

as the night counselor. The group had serious doubts about hiring a man in that position, but "we had to have someone stay there and he was the only person who applied, so everyone agreed." In this case, "everyone" included other staff, volunteers, and the women who were residents at the shelter. The staff was concerned about whether future residents would also feel comfortable about the situation.

One group had a former batterer on their board, and the board members to whom I spoke felt ambivalent about his presence. They said he was "in the process of reforming" and thought he was particularly sensitive to the need for services for battered women and their assailants; but they worried about his sincerity. Although most groups have had support from a few men, for the most part woman battering is perceived as a women's issue, by both women and men, and men have not become involved in large numbers.

There is another way in which the battered women's movement has had to consider its acceptance of men, and that is as clients. Because of funding stipulations and affirmative action policies, all groups will provide services to battered men on request. For a few groups this would include keeping them in the shelter if they needed a place to stay. But for most it would mean finding them a bed at some other location--in a motel, a volunteer home, or in

another type of already existing refuge for homeless men (YMCA, Union Mission, or whatever exists in that community). None of the groups have actually ever had a man call them who needed shelter. Most have had a few men (usually no more than two or three--less than one percent of their clientele) call who wanted counseling or information, and that has been provided. The legitimacy of the issue of battered men is not included in this research. My only point is that all of the groups in my sample have developed some type of contingency plan to deal with any battered man who may appear, and as a response to audiences who may expect such accomodations (a part of the groups' "public ideologies").

Learning About the Problem

The groups that I studied had, almost without exception, been formed by people who said they knew nothing about woman battering or how to deal with it before they started working on the problem. How, then, did they gain the requisite knowledge for dealing with battered women and for educating the public about the issue?

There is a great deal of similarity in the ways that various groups educated themselves about woman battering. Most said that they knew nothing, or very

little, about the issue until they became involved in their local groups, and that a lot of knowledge was gained through practical experience. As one group's founder recalled, she put a notice of an organizational meeting in the newspaper and, instead of hearing from people interested in helping her form a group, she began to receive calls from battered women, who saw the ad and wanted her to help them. Her first reaction was "No, I'm not ready to actually help yet, I don't know enough;" but

> then I realized I couldn't say that to these women, and I started listening to them and looking for information to give them on other places they could call. I also started asking friends of mine if they could take a woman in, so that's how our volunteer homes got started, and how the hosts learned about battering.

The groups which started the earliest, in 1976 and 1977, had the most difficulty finding information with which to educate themselves. There simply was very little information available. Del Martin's book, BATTERED WIVES, was published in 1976, and many interviewees cited that as their first source of written information. Others mentioned a Ms. Magazine artice, "One of These Days--POW--Right in the Kisser," (Gingold, 1976). One woman had attended a NOW workshop on woman battering in Philadelphia in the fall of 1975, and others had read NOW literature which was distributed as a result of that workshop.

Surprisingly, most interviewees did not cite Pizzey's book, SCREAM QUIETLY OR THE NEIGHBORS WILL HEAR (1974), although it is perhaps the earliest publication of the 1970's on the subject of woman battering. Many of the later groups said that they had read Pizzey, so perhaps it was not widely distributed in the U.S. in its first years of publication--either because it was an English publication or because its subject was not of general interest.

Groups which formed later (1978 and afterward) had a wider selection of publications, as well as the experiences of their predecessors, from which to learn. Books commonly mentioned among these younger groups included Walker's THE BATTERED WOMAN (1979), Davidson's CONJUGAL CRIME (1978 and 1980), and Straus, et al.'s BEHIND CLOSED DOORS (1980). However, Martin (1976) continued to be the most frequently cited in response to my questions of "What was the first book which members of your group read to learn about battering?" and "If someone were just starting to learn about battering, what book or books would you recommend?"

Martin's book is widely accessible in paperback, and it is written in a clear, commonsense, "layperson's" language, which may be the reason for its popularity. But I think the predominance of this

one publication may also indicate communication among groups. Reading Martin and, to a lesser extent, Walker and a few others, is part of the culture of the battered women's movement. It seems too much of a coincidence that groups in different places serendipitously read the same book. Rather, it is probably because the groups influenced each other, both directly and indirectly as a result of intra-movement connections.

Another benefit of the movement's development was the dissemination of information through conferences and traveling speakers. One woman described driving 50 miles with several other members of her group to see and hear Erin Pizzey speak in 1976 or 1977 while on a U.S. tour. She could not remember the exact date, but her group was started in May, 1976, and she believes they heard Pizzey fairly soon after they got organized. Another woman said her group's founders "went to conferences wherever they heard about one, and just soaked up as much information as they could" during their first year of existence.

There have been several conferences in the United States--in New York City, Minneapolis, and Denver prior to the NCADV conference in Washington, D.C. in 1980, and more regional conferences since then. There have not been so many, however, that the various local groups had a wide selection from which to choose. It

is likely that representatives of many of the groups which I studied were present at the same conferences, another source of intergroup continuity. Indeed, this was true of the two conferences which I attended. I asked each group if any of its members had attended the NCADV meetings in Washington (held before I began interviewing), and six groups said yes. At the regional conference in Milwaukee which I attended (held after my interviews were completed), I saw members of five groups that I had interviewed.

Groups also invited people from battered women's organizations in other communities to speak to them or send them information about getting started, as mentioned in the earlier description of group origins. Different groups appear to have educated their members in similar ways, through reading the same literature, attending conferences, and sharing knowledge among organizations. As a result, all of the groups which I studied tended to share perspectives on the causes of and solutions to battering, as well as organizational structure, and problems such as "burn out" and funding cutbacks.

Causes and Solutions

Different groups tend to adapt their public presentations concerning causes of and solutions to

battering to the type of community and the specific organizations to which they speak (to be discussed later). But when speaking to me, all of the groups indicated a shared understanding of causes and solutions, based on similar experiences with battered women and a knowledge of the same literature and research into these issues.

When I asked "What does your group think causes battering?", I usually got an answer which cited four main components. However, some groups stress one cause more than another, depending on whether their perspective is individualized (psychological) or structural. The four components are society's attitudes toward violence and toward women, socialization into gender and into violent ways of expressing anger and frustration, a family history of abuse (adults who were abused as children or who saw their fathers battering their mothers), and economic frustration. As one woman stated,

> Society: the way that little girls and little boys are brought up, the history of abuse in the family. We don't see alcoholism or drug abuse as being a cause, that's just an excuse. We think that the economic situation right now is gonna cause a lot of problems, more than we've been seeing, because we feel the economy is going to get worse. He's real frustrated now, he doesn't know how he's going to make the next set of bills.

In another group, the explanation was expanded:

> What I think causes battering is conditioning, lack of self-esteem; that women believe that's how it's supposed to be. In an area like this, which is pretty traditional and conservative, there's a real strong sense of that, it's a patriarchal thing, that women are supposed to take it.

And another group's spokesperson:

> The way we raise our children--the kinds of attitudes we give kids. We raise half of our population to believe that they are in charge of the other half, and then it's everywhere reinforced--in the media, in the churches, in work settings--it's reinforced everywhere. Half of the population is in a one-down position all the time.

NCADV leaders and the national representatives of the movement generally cite the same types of causes, although they tend to put their explanations into stronger feminist terms and to see causes as more structural, or social. Susan Schecter is one of the movement's more articulate spokespeople. She has worked in battered women's groups in Chicago and New York, and presented her views to several conferences, including the 1980 NCADV and the 1981 Region V conference, where they were received enthusiastically. Schecter has written a book, WOMEN AND MALE VIOLENCE: THE STRUGGLES OF THE BATTERED WOMEN'S MOVEMENT (to be published by South End press in 1982).

Schecter (1981a: 9, 11) states that woman battering is caused by a "complex series of institutional and social arrangements" that maintain

male domination over women; and in which "sex and class domination operate together, at times to reinforce each other and at times to conflict with each other." She defines domination as

> . . . an organization of society in which certain groups of people are able to limit and determine the spheres of activity of other people while at the same time they profit materially or through privileges from that limiting. The control that these groups exercise always ultimately carries with it the threat or the use of force to coerce compliance. This use of force is often defined as legitimate by those who have power (p. 10).

Schecter emphasizes that male domination alone does not account for woman battering. It is the intersection of that domination with the interests of the state which legitimates it.

> My argument is that two of the predominant conditions of women's lives--women as wageless or as low-paid wage earners (class domination) and women as isolated, private appendages of individual males (sex domination)--are constantly interacting to reproduce abuse and reinforce the oppression of women (p. 12).

Schecter elaborates her explanation of the ways in which class and sex domination intersect, the material and ideological pressures that keep women in battering relationships with men. She also emphasizes that in some ways sex and class domination contradict each other, such as in the exploitation of working-class men in the labor market. She contends that the

contradictions also contribute to woman battering, although not in such a direct way as is implied by local spokespeople who said "economic frustration" leads men to batter women as their scapegoats. According to Schecter,

> The relationship is not that direct or that simple. Rather, I think that some combination of this exploitation, plus the privatization of the family and male right to beat lead to extraordinarily dangerous conditions for women. I would urge that we look at these processes as interrelated parts of a totality, rather than consider them in isolation of each other (p. 16).

Similarly, the solutions to woman battering which were suggested by my interviewees are consistent across groups and coincide with the short-range and long-range goals of changing ideology which are outlined by Schecter and other national spokespeople. Solutions, like causes, contained four basic components. Battering can only be eliminated through increasing public awareness and changing public attitudes to greater disapproval of batterers and stronger sanctions against violence; teaching children and adults new ways to express anger; ending violence in the media and in sports; and changing gender relations toward greater equality.

> A good place to start is spanking; spanking is such an accepted form of dealing with children and controlling children. We have to change the way we treat children.

> Little girls need to be taught that they are worth something, that they're important and they can do other things besides have babies and bruises.
>
> We must deal with the assailants. In order to stop the battering, society must take a look at the assailants and say, "No longer are we going to tolerate this."

The above solutions were cited by all of the groups in similar ways, indicating that they had read the same literature or communicated with other groups. Schecter (1981a: 16) states that "we need a total social program for our movement." She includes eliminating the sexual division of labor--both in the family and in the workplace, challenging the privatization and isolation of the nuclear family, socializing household labor and childcare, defining battering as "unacceptable under any circumstances" (p. 17), and challenging other "forms of degradation." The other forms cited are pornography, advertisements, and exploitative working conditions. Schecter believes that each of these may contribute to woman battering.

Most spokespeople stop short of explicitly advocating the elimination of capitalism, although Schecter (1981a: 17) states obliquely:

> And finally, I suggest that community life that is built to ensure a decent social existence and the well being of all cannot have as its dominant mode of organization private property.

She suggests no alternative.

None of those interviewed have a full-scale assailant counseling program, although a few have support groups for former assailants. They all agree, however, that such counseling is part or the solution to battering, and needs to be worked into their models.

> The long-range solution has to be to make men stop hitting women. I don't think the long-range solution is to harbor the women, the victims. I think that is the short-term solution, and that's what has to be done when the women are in danger and in pain; but someone has to work on making the men stop.

Thus, the future trend of all groups may be toward establishing a model which includes both temporary refuge for battered women and long-term counseling for their assailants, as well as public campaigns to make battering a less acceptable pattern of behavior. But they all believe that the availability of a safe place for battered women to go to is important as an immediate, short-term solution to battering, whether they have developed that model in their own community or not. In their statements of long-term solutions, local spokespeople tend to state goals which are compatible with Schecter's insistence on the need to eliminate the structural sources of violence against women. But none of them went so far as to advocate a complete change in society's "mode of organization."

Group Philosophies

The choices which a group makes about the way it animates a problem are partially determined by, and in turn have an influence on, the group's and the movement's ideology. The movement's perception of what are the causes of and solutions to the problem are indicators of ideology, as are the ways to which the problem is referred and the strategies devised for telling other people about the issue. Ideology may also be revealed by asking members of a movement group what their philosophy is, and what they perceive as the group/movement's purpose.

Fleming (1979: 357-394) includes many variables as part of a group's philosophy: decision-making (who makes what decisions), counseling models, whom the program serves, policies concerning the nature and extent of services, drugs and alcohol in the shelter, the way children are dealt with, and operation of the shelter. However, I deliberately asked the open-ended question, "What is your group's philosophy?" with no further indications of what I meant by philosophy, in order to allow interviewees to interpret the meaning of the concept themselves. None of them included any of the issues which Fleming raises, until I went on to

ask specific question about them later. Clearly, "philosophy" meant something different to my interviewees, perhaps something more abstract, certainly more general than Fleming's conceptualization. Some of the issues which Fleming raises have already been discussed, others will be included in Chapter Five.

Many of my interviewees answered immediately and without hesitation concerning their group's philosophy, making statements such as those which follow:

> Nobody deserves to be beaten.
>
> Client self-determination.
>
> To help women to help themselves.
>
> To provide women with enough self-esteem to realize their own powers as women. There should never be a battered woman.
>
> No one deserves to be beaten, no matter what they've done, for whatever reason. We want to help the individual who is willing to help herself. Everybody is equal and entitled to live her life to the fullest, the way she wants to, and we're going to do everything to insure that the individual gets to do that.

Others found a copy of their by-laws, on which the statement of the group's purpose or philosophy was printed, and read that to me (they made the decision that "purpose" equalled "philosophy"). These responses were therefore somewhat more polished, but seemed to convey the same general attitudes. For

example,

> By mobilizing community resources and subsequently providing a nonthreatening atmosphere conducive to supporting and promoting self-growth, we can enhance the potential of individuals to achieve family stability and provide a quality of life closer to what is considered ideal.
>
> To provide victims of domestic violence with desirable alternatives to their present lifestyle, for themselves and their children and also to prevent the further development of violent behavior in the children's lives.

It is interesting to note that the written statements of philosophy refer to "individuals", "victims", and other non-gender-specific recipients of services; whereas the spontaneous responses tend to specify that women are the target population. This is probably due to the fact that written philosophies are intended for public dissemination, and cannot imply any bias toward one part of the population (the written statements are a part of the group's "public ideology"). The unrehearsed answers were perhaps more a reflection of the speaker's own perceptions of whom the group serves.

I also asked people what they considered their group's most important function or purpose to be, and what the group's future goals are, as a way of measuring the movement's perception of its role and interest in affecting the issue of woman battering. Providing a safe place for battered women and their

children was most frequently seen as the group's primary function, among those groups who have a shelter or a safe homes network. However, some spokespersons for shelter groups said that they thought giving emotional support to women was even more important than the shelter; and many thought that the two functions were mutually important. A typical response was "providing shelter and support for battered women--no one else does that." The spokesperson for one shelter group perceived of a slightly different combination of functions as being most important: "public awareness and the effect we seem to be having on the women--they seem to blossom while they're here." Groups without a shelter or set of safe homes see their most important function as "being there" for women to call, and "keeping domestic violence before the public eye, keeping it a viable issue."

Most of the groups who do not yet have a shelter cited getting a shelter as their major goal for the future. Those with a shelter mentioned goals such as becoming more economically stable, expanding their staff and/or programming (to include assailant counseling, or a children's counseling program, perhaps), and extending their community education program. One group wants to establish a "second-stage housing" project. This would be an apartment building

for women who have left the shelter and want to start living independently, but still need emotional and financial support. A few shelter groups already have another building in mind, which they feel would be more appropriate for a shelter than their present location: it's bigger, or has a more convenient arrangement of rooms, or is in better condition.

In summary, most interviewees articulated very concrete goals for their groups, which were generally just expansions of their present services: "To be very effective at what we're already doing," as one woman said. One group leader described a somewhat different type of goal:

> To raise consciousness and build community support; eventually to have the community support the shelter entirely--like the churches are supported by their congregations--have money drives to pay the rent, buy food, etc.; become really integrated into the community so that the county as a whole is providing food, salaries, clothing, and so on.

The goals articulated do not indicate any new directions for the battered women's movement, or any dissatisfaction with the present general direction. Instead, they imply that local spokespeople do not even see themselves as part of an ideological transformation. They are focused on providing solutions for individual women, and on gaining stability for their direct service programs.

Summary

This chapter has presented an analysis of how local groups within the battered women's movement have gone about the process of animating the problem of woman battering, and some of the ideological issues which confronted various groups during that process. Through animation, groups developed in local communities to confront the issue of woman battering. But those groups quickly discovered that they needed wider community involvement if they were to meet their goals of arousing concern about the problem and eliminating it. They needed to have other people in the community share the responsibility. If the local battered women's group succeeded in carving a niche for itself, it faced obscurity as other members of the community appeared willing to relegate the issue of woman battering to that group and forget it.

Accomplishing the goal of making woman battering visible as a social problem, therefore, required more than establishing a group and carving a niche for the group. It required putting the issue on the agenda for the whole community. The next chapter will deal with ways that the battered women's movement performed the claims-making activities of legitimation and demonstration, in their struggle to put woman battering on the agenda.

Chapter Five

PUTTING WOMAN BATTERING ON THE COMMUNITY'S AGENDA OF CONCERN

Legitimation of a new social problem involves establishing the issue as a problem in its own right, as separate from other social problems although perhaps connected to and/or affecting them, and building respectability in order to procure scientific and legislative sponsorship. In legitimating the problem of woman battering, movement groups had to confront the issue of how woman battering differed from other forms of violence against women. Groups also had to decide what terms to use to refer to woman battering, and define what they meant by those terms. Different groups chose different terms to refer to the phenomenon, and that choice had political implications which affected the way the issue came to be viewed in a community. Public outreach was one of the primary ways in which groups went about establishing the issue and building respectability for it at the local level.

Demonstration of a social problem includes the activities of accumulating data about the extent of the

problem and the impact of programs that were designed to attack it, and reconciling opposing viewpoints about the nature, extent, and treatment of the problem. For this study, I did not collect much information concerning how groups accumulated data about the extent of the problem of woman battering or the impact of their programs. The initial accumulation of data to justify the establishment of groups was described in the previous chapter, in discussing "Group Origins" and how task forces were formed to determine the need for services. I also have data on how groups attempt to reconcile opposing viewpoints, through the kinds of controversies which groups confront and the compromises they make with their members and their communities.

The Politics of Naming

> The terms in which we name or speak of anything do more than designate it; they place it in a class of objects, thereby suggest with what it is to be judged and compared, and define the perspective from which it will be viewed and evaluated. . . Language is not just one more kind of activity; it is the key to the universe of speaker and audience (Edelman, 1967: 131).

Many terms have evolved to refer to woman battering, all of which have somewnat different connotations for their users and the audiences who hear them. "Domestic Violence", "Spouse Abuse",

"Family Violence", "Conjugal Crime", "Woman Abuse," all are used, often interchangeably, within the movement. Preference within groups for specific terms depends on internal perspectives as well as an awareness of the impact of certain words on the community.

At the first National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) conference, in February, 1980, there was extensive debate about the coalition's name. Many of the delegates were dissatisfied because "battered women" were not included in the name. Another contingent felt that "domestic violence" was a more appropriate term, because it implied a concern for men and children as well as women. Those who favored "domestic violence" emphasized diversity. They wanted to "encompass as broad a scope of people as possible and be legitimate in the eyes of the system." No consensus was reached; it was an old debate even then. The choice had been the outcome of a close vote at the time the coalition was founded (according to steering committee members whom I interviewed); and opinion is still divided within the movement. Those who support the use of the term "domestic violence" feel that it is part of a necessary compromise of explicit feminist rhetoric and actions, in order to accomplish the goal of providing services to battered women. Those who insist that the focus should remain on battered women

feel that it is unethical to compromise too much.

The voices of the "purists" who spurn compromise are usually heard at conferences, speaking theoretically, rather than from the standpoint of practical experience in dealing with local audiences and/or funding services. People who are actually involved in providing services and securing funding, at both the local and the national level, speak more often of the necessity of compromising in their language in order to achieve the movement's objectives. They also speak of the anguish they feel about that necessity.

One workshop at the Region V conference in Milwaukee (April, 1981) was on the subject of "Names and What They Mean . . . Family Violence , Domestic Violence, Woman Abuse." Participants discussed several issues of naming, including the kinds of names groups had given themselves and the facilities they provide: whether they should be called "refuges", "shelters", "centers", or just "places". Some felt that "center" was the most encompassing term, indicating that other services are offered in addition to temporary refuge. Others felt that "center" was meaningless (too vague), or made them sound "too much like a mental health facility." Some participants felt that regardless of other services, the term "refuge" and "shelter" were important because they

convey the notion of safety, a battered woman's most pressing need.

Because of my promise to maintain groups' confidentiality, I cannot analyze the specific names of the individual groups in my sample. But both of these perspectives were evident among the various groups. Many have a name which emphasizes the safety which they offer, e.g., words such as home, shelter, refuge, haven. Members of these groups said that they had sought a name to symbolize protection and/or hope. Others were more concerned with devising an acronym which would easily become familiar. For a few, the acronym itself is a word connoting safety (e.g., "We liked the term -----, and we had to make it stand for something, so we thought the words up afterward!") But for most, the acronym itself is meaningless; and the words it stands for summarize the group's services or location (a fictitious example is DATA--Domestic Assault Treatment Agency). Still other groups have no acronym and no symbolic reference. Their name is simply utilitarian, summarizing who they are and what they do (e.g., "We're in this county and we work on domestic violence," so their name is The Blank County Domestic Violence Program).

A group's name usually includes one of the concepts that refers to the target population--woman battering, domestic violence, spouse abuse--and may

indicate how that group views the issue. On the other hand, the concept chosen may not reflect the group's perception so much as its awareness of the political climate in which their name (and their services) will be reviewed.

At the conference in Milwaukee, one speaker charged that groups who use gender-neutral terms are allowing the public to ignore the fact that women are usually the victims of domestic violence.

> By calling the problem spouse abuse or domestic violence, battered women are disappearing. We have spent the last six years putting battered women and their children on the agenda; now they're being taken off (Susan Schecter, keynote address, Region V conference, April 30, 1981).

Another speaker described how, in her state, new laws were written specifically incorporating the term "spouse abuse," because one legislator insisted on that term in order to not legitimize "living in sin" (his term). He wanted to be certain that protection was not extended to cohabiting couples.

The term "battered women" is also subject to criticism by some groups who want to maintain woman's visibility. As one workshop participant explained,

> Women don't define themselves as battered, but abused. They won't call us if we say we're here to help battered women, because they say "he just slapped me," or "he broke my jaw but I'm not a battered woman." We used "battered" in the beginning for its shock value; now we need to find a word that women are more

> likely to identify with. People don't want to think of themselves as battered because that makes them more clearly sound like a victim (Tape of workshop on "Names and What They Mean . . . Family Violence, Domestic Violence, Woman Abuse).

Another participant agreed with the above perspective, and added that using "battering" may obscure psychological forms of abuse.

Another issue of naming revolves around the words used to describe the battered women who apply for services--client, consumer, resident, target population, victim. Most participants in the worksnop felt that "client" is too utilitarian--"It implies that you know the answers and I, as client, need the answer." It places the battered woman in a dependent relationship with the people who work with her. "Consumer" had a similar connotation, as well as stressing a market relationship. "Resident," on the other hand, was seen as "neutral." No one favored "victim," feeling that it sounds even more degrading than "client," and depicts the subject as passive.[1]

Unfortunately, this topic was not included in my interview questions. I did notice, however, that some of my interviewees talked about "residents," some about "clients." Several used the term "consumer," but apologetically, explaining that it is a technical term used by their funding agency. This is another example of the effect of state intervention on the

movement.

Finally, the politics of naming includes the issue of how individuals and groups within the movement refer to their topic when speaking publicly about their work. Locally, group members either tend to be unaware of nuances in terms, and say that they have "no preference, I use whatever comes to mind;" or they say that they gauge their terminology to the audience they are addressing, although they might personally prefer another term. The concept of what terms are appropriate to different audiences varies from group to group. The following are some excerpts from my taped interviews:

> I use all the terms--domestic assault, domestic violence, family violence, battered women--it depends on the audience. I think "battered women" is a stronger term--it implies that she is a victim.
>
> I start with "domestic violence" and say "'domestic violence' is a nicer way of saying 'battered women'," and then I emphasize that our focus is on women.
>
> We use "domestic violence", "spouse abuse", "battered women", although they're bad interchangeably--they don't all mean the same thing. I try to stick to "domestic violence"--that indicates that it's total family involvement and/or there are repercussions to everybody in the family and the community, whereas "spouse abuse" indicates that just two people are involved, and "battering" doesn't get at the psychological kinds of damage.
>
> I prefer "battering relationship" because I think it's a two-way street. I think

> that the woman is battering herself when she is the victim, and certainly the assailant is battering her. I think "domestic violence" would turn people off, but I use it in some groups.

Local spokespeople never explained what kinds of audiences preferred, or objected to, what terms. They always spoke in a vague way of how "it depends on the audience." National spokespeople charge that conservative audiences prefer "domestic violence" and "spouse abuse." For the most part, however, movement speakers are willing to use the "safer" terms to reach as wide an audience as possible.

> Words like "feminist" or "battering" can become walls, barriers to people. It's more important to communicate what we're doing sometimes than it is to use particular words that can red flag, or get us way off track (Sharon Vaughn, workshop leader on "Names and What They Mean . . . Family Violence, Domestic Violence, Woman Abuse," Region V conference, April 29, 1981).

Vaughn also spoke of the "analogy of the dress behind the door": how she is willing in some situations to alter her appearance and/or her language in order to fit in (for example, taking the dress off the hook behind the door in her office and putting it on in place of the overalls or jeans in which she usually works, for a legislative hearing). Her primary goal is to communicate as effectively as possible with the legislature and the public. This attitude seems compatible with most of the groups I

encountered, and is probably necessary for many social movements who want to appeal to a large audience.

Lofland (1966) uses the concept of "embodied access" to refer to situations in which movement proponents come into face-to-face contact with audiences to whom they wish to appeal. In such cases, the "proselytizer" must adapt her/his demeanor and mode of presentation to the procedural rules of the group s/he is entering, in order to avoid antagonizing or alienating group members. Thus, the "dress behind the door" is a fitting metaphor for the kind of concessions necessary to succeed in presenting the movement's perspective through embodied communication.

Forms of Proselytization

> Like all collective outbursts, a norm-oriented movement requires a certain ability to communicate if beliefs are to be disseminated and action is to be mobilized. In this respect political control of the media of communication is important (Smelser, 1962: 286).

The groups in my sample either announced the group's formation in order to recruit members--as part of their process of animation; or news got out by word-of-mouth, inadvertently. As a result, these groups encountered the problem of being obliged to scramble to provide services before they were prepared

to do so. However, groups also constructed a conscious publicity and education policy, which generally was implemented in conjunction with the debut of their direct services. The goals of such a program were to gain volunteers and donations, make the public aware of the problem, reach battered women who needed their services, and gain legitimacy with their potential funding sources. The various groups employed a range of "forms of proselytization" (Lofland, 1966) to accomplish these goals.

In addition to embodied (face-to-face) communication, other forms of proselytization involve what Lofland refers to as "disembodied access." This type of communication occurs through indirect contact between movement members and their audience, by means of newspaper, television, and other media reports.

> The concept of access refers to circumstances where two or more people, not formerly in a situation of information flow, come into such a state. It connotes the gap between a prior state, in which a set of persons are not receiving some kind of written or spoken communication, and a subsequent state in which they are (Lofland, 1966: 65).

It is the responsibility of movement members, at both the local and national levels, to determine which form of access to seek.

Some groups employed a media event as the means of introducing the group and its services to the public. Yoder (1980) suggests a public forum

featuring an "outside expert"--a speaker from another community--as the specific event. The group can announce its program and its intentions at this meeting, and inform the community of ways it can help the group meet its needs. Some of the groups in my sample followed this type of pattern in their initial bid for publicity. They invited someone from another group or, in one case, an author of a book on woman battering to speak at a public meeting. They then discussed their group's formation and plans with the community members who attended.

To the general public, however, there are as yet no well-known personalities who are experts on this issue; i.e., there is no "Gloria Steinem" or "Betty Friedan" of the battered women's movement. Hence, it is difficult to create interest among the general public to whom the issue of woman battering is "unknown." By contrast, other movements are sometimes able to muster large audiences and proselytize as a result of curiosity about a well-known speaker. For example, people came to hear Jane Fonda and Tom Haydn speak on their cross-country tour who had no interest in "economic democracy" but wanted to see the celebrities, and may have been convinced by their message.

Another group organized a panel discussion at their YWCA, with several members of the group making

short presentations about various aspects of woman battering--its prevalence, causes, widespread myths and opposing facts--and the group's proposals to deal with the issue. They invited the public to attend the discussion, but also encouraged the press to be there and ask questions. Thus, the presentation served as a press conference, receiving good coverage on the T.V. and radio stations and in the newspapers. In this way, they reached a much wider audience than they would have through only a public meeting. Part of this group's strategy was to hold their meeting/press conference at a time when there was not much else happening that was "newsworthy." It was mid-January and the press was "hungry" for interesting events. Had they held their meeting in December or during some season of national political excitement, they might have been ignored, or given less prominent coverage.

Most other groups do not appear to have thought through their publicity strategy so carefully. However, I encountered one group whose leader demonstrated a great deal of knowledge of how publicity is generated, and used it to her group's advantage. The city council in this particular community was responsible for awarding Community Development Block Grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The group which wanted to open a shelter for battered women applied for such

a grant. According to the person I interviewed, the group's founder was fairly certain that city council would deny their group a grant; the council was notoriously conservative and predominately male and sexist. But the founder realized that applying for the grant would be a means of gaining public recognition and, hopefully, community support. As my interviewee said:

> She knew that the press always covers city council meetings, and every time our group attended those meetings, and spoke up, we'd get the group's name in the paper and on T.V. So even if we didn't get the grant, at least people would hear about us and start recognizing our name.

Her prediction proved accurate. The grant was denied them (although they got it the next year); but they generated "a huge amount of public sympathy," and became well known. They succeeded in acquiring funding through a local foundation, partially as a result of their enhanced public image. And their main goal in seeking publicity, that of informing the community of their presence, was accomplished.

The above group made a deliberate decision to use their city council's opposition to generate publicity and community support. But they did not succeed at that time in gaining the funds they had requested. However, another group used the same kind of publicity both to create public awareness of its existence, and to persuade its county commission to give the group

money. The group members and 75 supporters attended the commission meeting, wearing buttons that read "Shelter Yes," and had several people speak about the need for a shelter. The commission awarded them $20,000; and a local resident who heard about them as a result of this campaign offered to make house payments for a shelter for a year.

In most groups, though, there was no specific media event, either because they were unaware of the importance of such an event, or because they were unable to muster the necessary circumstances. Groups did, however, develop community education projects of some sort. Often this consisted of simply calling the media occasionally with announcements of group programs, such as a fundraising event, or to interest them in doing another story on woman battering and the services available locally.

Many groups spoke of getting off to a bad start with the press and needing to spend time and effort building a positive relationship. As one interviewee stated, "We're finally learning how, after all this time, to handle the newspaper constructively." In the beginning, the newspaper had written derisively of her group's efforts. The paper had written several sensationalized accounts of battering, and of the dangers of having a shelter ("attracting" angry assailants) in a neighborhood, and had published the

address of each building which was under consideration as a shelter. The publicity resulted in storms of protest from neighbors and in the abandonment of each building from consideration, since this group was committed to maintaining a shelter in a secret location.

This type of press insensitivity was typical for many groups in their early days. Group members, either of groups who experienced such negative reactions or of those who began with a supportive media, seem to have no explanation, except that those who develop good press relations usually attribute them to the presence of friends or, rarely, group members, on the newspaper, T.V., or radio staff. As an extreme example, one group had three reporters on its telephone crisis line and one on its Board of Directors; and this group had had excellent news coverage! Others have had to cultivate such contacts, and have done so conscientiously. Group members located reporters who had written sympathetic articles about them or a related issue, and made an effort to "feed" stories to those people specifically.

Other kinds of proselytization have consisted of organizing speakers' bureaus and distributing pamphlets, cards, and/or posters around town. The speakers' bureaus contact local organizations and offer to address their meetings. The pamphlets,

cards, and posters briefly describe battering and tell the reader where to call for information, assistance or to volunteer. Common locations for these materials are doctors' offices, grocery stores, laundramats, hospital emergency rooms: places where battered women are likely to see them. Many groups have produced Public Service Announcements (PSA's), to be broadcast on their local radio and/or T.V. stations. These are short (30-or 60-second) bulletins describing the group's services and giving a telephone number for crisis calls and information, and an address to which questions or contributions may be mailed.

In the early days of their existence, most groups had to "apply" to speak to community organizations. Members called acquaintances or known leaders and offered to address their meetings, or letters were mailed to all organizations of which members were aware. PSA's included information on how to obtain a speaker on the topic of woman battering. But after a few appearances, and several months of existence, groups started becoming well-known. Then most found that there was little need to continue advertising their willingness to speak. After people heard them at one meeting, word spread of their availability, and of the interesting content of their presentations. Many of the battered women's groups found that

> we have so many requests that we barely

> can manage to fill them--organizations have to plan programs for their meetings, and are glad when they find someone who is offering to give a presentation.

The content of these public addresses will be examined below, since they are a reflection of the movement's strategy of demonstration.

Some groups have a separate personnel, staff and/or (more typically) volunteers, who are responsible for public outreach and education. This may be known as a Speakers' Bureau or a Task Force. One group had split after its initial organizing into two branches: the direct services (shelter, counseling, and crisis line) component and an independent affiliate which exists for the purposes of public education, legislative lobbying, and fundraising. The reasons for this type of division are that it keeps members from becoming too overextended in trying to do everything, and it allows separate activities--fundraising and lobbying--which cannot be done by the direct services component because it is a United Way affiliate. In another group it is the duty of members of the Board of Directors to do speaking engagements. The group views this type of participation as a good way for the board members to learn about woman battering, and about the community's reactions to the group.

Public education and outreach have been shown to

be an integral part of every program which provides local services as part of the battered women's movement. As has been discussed, most groups consider greater public awareness to be one of the primary solutions to the problem of woman battering. Hence, each group must find a way to facilitate that process.

The Content of Public Addresses

In addition to concern about what words are used to refer to the subject of woman battering, and how groups went about gaining access to the public, I was interested in knowing what people say when they speak to community groups. Nall (1976: 132) describes the phenomenon of "public ideology." Groups construct an ideology for public presentation which may be "consciously developed as an attempt to fool the public" into believing that the group is not a threat to community values. While this public ideology may not be counter to the group's true beliefs, it places emphasis on those aspects of the group's perspective which will make outsiders most comfortable--the least "radical" beliefs. In Nall's example, "We tried to present the community with the image of a voluntary association doing good" (p. 133). She says that her group "invented a new ideology for each new audience

we became aware of" (p. 133).

I was curious about whether the groups I studied had invented a "public ideology" about themselves. I think that the answer is partially indicated by the fact that people admitted to adapting their language to suit the audiences they were addressing. But I wanted to know also if they were able to talk about the general issue of woman battering without appearing too threatening to their audience. If they do talk in detail about the problem, how do they explain its causes, effects, and so on? Or do they concentrate entirely on describing their group's services, because that allows them to avoid ideological questions?

The answers to these questions fell into two categories: groups who included an educational unit on the subject of woman battering, and those who concentrated solely on their groups' activities. Groups who prefer the latter type of presentation often explain that they originally included a more general discussion of battering, but later eliminated that part.

> I quit explaining why domestic violence occurs. Now I just talk about what we're doing and don't bother with philosophical questions--that's all people want to hear about anyway.

Others vary their content depending on how much time they have to speak and how much interest their audience shows.

> I'll speak to groups on whatever subject they want. If they're not ready to hear about domestic violence, I'll talk about sexual assault; if they're not ready for that, I'll talk about self defense. I always talk about our services, and I'll go further if they want me to.

This last comment was from a group which fits into the Multi-Crisis model; so their "repertoire" of subjects is greater than most groups. The speaker said that in her experience, domestic violence is the most threatening topic. Self-defense is the "safest" topic, because many audiences simply do not want to know more about domestic violence. She felt that this resistance is due to a reluctance on the part of many individuals to acknowledge that they might personally be affected by domestic violence.

Other groups feel that it is imperative to speak about battering, to force their audiences to face the reality of the problem.

> Our focus is on changing attitudes and on reaching people in the audience who are battered.

Those who agree with this necessity tend to follow a similar format in different groups. They present a brief history of woman battering, a summary of available statistics on the frequency of battering, an explanation of the causes of battering, perhaps a "profile" of the batterer and the battered woman, and then a history of the group and its purpose. Most people said that they use the same general explanation

of the causes and solutions as they had given me; but they usually "tone it down" some in terms of the language they use. They often said that they try to put their explanations into personal terms, to try to help their audiences identify with the battered woman. They ask people to think of times when they have been "victimized" (robbed, lied to, assaulted), and remember how they felt about the experience.

Many groups include an audio-visual component, either a film or a slide/tape show, in their presentations. Here is another manifestation of intramovement linkages, because the same titles were mentioned repeatedly. The most frequently cited film was "Violence Behind Closed Doors." The best-known slide/tape show was a four-part set on "Family Violence," with one part on battered women which they often showed without the other three parts. (Interestingly, the people who cited this series could not remember what the other three parts were, except for one part on child abuse.) Although a few groups mentioned other alternatives, there were none besides the above two that were used by more than one group. Several people named another film, "We Will Not Be Beaten," as their personal favorite, but said that they rarely showed it because it was "too radical" for most of their audiences. (It is a film which explains the causes of woman battering in terms of male

dominance much more explicitly than "Violence Behind Closed Doors.")

Community Reactions to the Increasing Visiblity of Woman Battering

Subsequent to gaining access to the public, social movements seek to win "some sort of consent within that access" (Lofland, 1966: 65). Community support and/or opposition to the goals and strategies of the battered women's movement, as presented by local groups, could possibly be manifested in different ways: in how the community responds to a shelter opening, the kinds of media coverage a group receives, the response to funding requests, or by the presence or absence of large numbers of volunteers in the group. But another useful way of gauging community attitudes is through the types of reactions which are elicited by group presentations. Nationally, the right wing has voiced a great deal of opposition to the battered women's movement, calling it anti-family and anti-church. Phyllis Schlafly has said that battered women's shelters are nothing more than luxury hotels for women to check into when they are bored with home life (according to Susan Schecter, keynote address at Region V conference, April 30, 1981). The so-called "Family Protection Act"

specifically mandates against government funding of services for battered women and children, on the grounds that such services interfere with the privacy of the family (Petcheskey, 1981).

Based on this knowledge of some of the national forms of opposition, I expected that local groups would meet with similar kinds of reactions, especially if they were speaking to conservative and/or religious organizations. Of course, it is likely that the most right-wing local organizations would not invite/permit a representative of a battered women's group to speak to them. But extremely conservative individuals would probably be present at times when group members spoke to other organizations.

For the most part, however, people said that they had not encountered opposition that was based on ideological differences. Instead, opposition usually revolved around material concerns, such as whether the presence of a shelter would decrease property values, cause noise and traffic congestion (parking problems), or mean that the neighbors would be endangered by angry assailants. (These alleged concerns might be smokescreens for more ideological objections; but that is difficult to confirm.) Several interviewees cited other areas of their state, or other states, where they thought religious and/or right-wing political opposition would likely be found. These were places

which they perceived as being pockets of conservatism. But when I had a chance to interview members of groups in those regions, they did not describe any more resistance than did groups in other areas.

One group spokesperson said that a member of the local chapter of a national right-wing women's organization had called her once to say that the shelter was not needed. No public objections were voiced, however, "probably because they're too busy fighting against abortion rights to take us on now." This might be a factor in the absence of organized opposition in other places. Anti-abortion has been a major focus of local right-wing campaigns, perhaps to the temporary exclusion of other issues. But it is also more difficult for the right wing to articulate an explicit oppositional ideology to the battered women's movement than to abortion. That is, it is easier to gain support for being "pro-life" than for being in favor of men battering their wives. Petchesky (1981: 226) points out the contradiction between the New Right's rhetoric of "protection" of women and children through dependence on husbands/fathers and the dangers inherent within the family.

> "Profamily" spokesmen have admittedly found this a tricky issue, since they don't wish to appear "indifferent to the plight of battered women and children." While accepting that domestic violence

> exists, they dispute feminist theories about its causes. [They insist that it is] the product of individual deviance--in other words, pathology, brought on by alcohol and drug abuse.

Furthermore, Petchesky argues, the New Right is opposed to the establishment of centers or shelters for battered women, which are perceived as encouraging battered women to leave home.

> The "profamily" alternative is to return women to the authority of their spouses, offer them counseling, and remove domestic violence services entirely from the public back to the private (preferably church-sponsored) domain (Petchesky, 1981: 226).

Some groups have had extensive support from local churches--usually moderate or progressive (i.e., Methodist, Presbyterian, Unitarian) Protestant denominations--some even to the extent of having a church provide them with a shelter building. None have an explanation of why their churches have or have not been supportive. But it seems to have depended on whether influential church members--ministers, their spouses, or other church leaders--were involved in the group early in its development. That, however, seems to have been a matter of chance; few group founders consciously developed a strategy of enlisting church people in order to gain church support.

Groups are more conscious of potential opposition arising over religion than over other differences, and tend to prevent it by a cautious approach to religious

issues. As one woman explained,

> When I'm speaking to groups, sometimes a little old lady will hold up her hand and ask "My dear, do you preach the word of God when you discuss their alternatives with these women?" I know where she's coming from, know they'd probably as soon tar and feather me, so I say, very politely, "No, ma'am, we do not do that as a rule, but if a woman wants to discuss religion our counselor is willing to talk with her about it." I just make sure not to say anything to offend them!

This kind of accomodation is part of what group members mean when they say their presentations "depend on the audience." They adapt their wording and explanation to the kind of audience they are addressing, and feel that as a result, they have defused opposition before it develops. One interviewee summarized community reactions in this way, "We haven't had any organized opposition, but we haven't had any real support either." Surmounting and/or avoiding public opposition is one of the motivations behind creating a "public ideology."

The Influence of Feminism on the Battered Women's Movement

Feminist principles of autonomy and self-empowerment of women are compatible with the goal of ending woman battering. Nationally, the battered women's movement, as represented by the NCADV, expresses a feminist perspective. One of the NCADV's

future goals, set forth in its first statement of objectives, is to "clarify and educate about the relationship between racism, sexism, and violence against women" (NCADV Handbook, 1980). Martin (1976: 216) emphasizes the importance of refuges being operated by feminists, because she contends that "Feminist-run shelters are more effective in helping a woman rebuild her self-esteem and become independent." Fleming (1980: 353) states that the "vast majority" of existing services for battered women were organized by feminists.

Like the grassroots-originated groups, many of the institutionally-begun groups trace their origins to the women's movement, which was responsible for bringing increasing numbers of battered women to a recognition that they could ask for help. However, the influence of feminism was very different from its influence on grassroots-initiated groups. In the grassroots groups it was often feminists, who had themselves never been battered, who first saw the need to make woman battering more visible. In the institutionally-begun groups, it was the effect of the women's movement on individual battered women, as clients,who then made new demands on the established social agencies for new services. As one social worker stated,

I think that more victims are reaching

> out to find solutions, they're not hiding at home. I think a lot of women are more aware that they have rights; their husband doesn't have the right to beat up on them as property.

Some groups, both grassroots-and institutionally-initiated, do not immediately acknowledge the influence of the women's movement. One woman, from a NOW-originated group, when asked why she thought so many groups are forming now if, as she believes, battering has existed for centuries, responded "I think it's just like salad bars, it's real popular." She then went on to say,

> Women's issues are popular right now, and battering as an issue is the result of nearly a century of struggle for women's rights--from suffrage to birth control to violence against women.

This woman was one of the rare spokespeople I interviewed who was not one of her group's founders. She had joined the group after NOW's influence had waned. Thus, she may not have been as cognizant of the importance of the women's movement; although she was well acquainted with the early role of the local NOW chapter. Her response may be indicative of a general tendency to gloss over the battered women's movement's connections to feminism by people who come into it after the early stages of formation. In my experience, interviewees who had been part of the founding core of groups were more likely to make connections to the women's movement.

Another woman, who had almost single-handedly started the shelter in her rural community after several battered women came to her home for help, said she became involved because of her own growth in self-esteem and desire to help other women. A formerly battered woman herself, she went back to college in the late 1970's, and began to identify with feminism after leaving her battering situation. So although she tends to individualize her experience as a result of independent recognition that battered women needed her help, she acknowledges that she would never have come to that realization until she felt herself to be, in her own phrase, "liberated."

I interviewed only one woman who did not, either directly or indirectly, attribute the development of services for battered women to some achievement of the women's movement (although individuals and different groups probably perceived of the women's movement in varying ways). This woman believed the need for services had increased in recent years because of increasing violence in our society; she talked at length about violence in the media. This woman thought the need for services was recognized only when home visitation programs began. She offered as an example a CETA program in which workers go into low-income homes and teach homemaking skills, and then become aware of domestic violence.

For the most part, however, both grassroots and institutionally originated groups appear to believe that the women's movement was responsible for the emergence of the issue of woman battering; although the form of that influence was seen differently in each group. Some saw the women's movement as the source of greater legitimacy for women's problems--making media coverage, legislation, and funding available as supports for tackling a new problem. Others saw women as more assertive about their own needs because of the women's movement. Still others perceived that they themselves had changed, become more aware of women's problems, as a result of the women's movement.

In spite of this connection to the women's movement, however, all groups are not consistently feminist, and some even reject a feminist identity and/or feminist principles of organization. Some groups define their membership, or parts of it--e.g., staff, but not board members, or staff and board but not volunteers--as feminist. But they have not structured their services in feminist ways (see Chapter Three), or they do not want to be perceived as feminists by the community. For others the reverse is true: they are assumed by the community to be feminists or they have followed feminist principles in organizing themselves, but they deny that their

members are feminist. The following are some typical responses to my questions "is the membership of your group feminist?" or "is this a feminist group?"

> A lot of the staff and volunteers have feminist ideals, but they keep a low profile.
>
> I am a feminist but I don't use that word. Staff wouldn't label themselves as feminists.
>
> I think I'm a feminist, but I don't think the membership is. Most people around here see feminist as a dirty word.
>
> Feminist? Not for the most part now, but all those who started the shelter were.
>
> Not primarily. Staff, yes, not volunteers, or at least they wouldn't identify themselves that way.

This kind of response--that people are feminists but they would not use that term to describe themselves--was repeated in many interviews, and indicated that the term feminist is perceived as pejorative by many members of the battered women's movement, or at least, that there is confusion about its definition.[2] I therefore decided to follow my question of whether the group was feminist with the question, "What is a feminist--what does that word mean?" To the people who said they would not use the word, a feminist is "political", "not feminine", "someone who stomps around, she walks around with a little sign, she stomps on men". Most people who gave me these types of definitions hastened to add that

they did not personally hold this view of feminism, but that is what the word means in their community, and they would therefore be careful not to be identified as a feminist. "I can get the same point across using other words." Then they would go on to tell me what a feminist really is, to them.

> A feminist is someone who can manage her own life and set her own goals, and is politically oriented--she looks at issues around her and sees forms of oppression.
>
> Feminists look at the equality of women; and women have a lot to contribute, and they recognize that in each other.
>
> Being a feminist is being political about women, seeing solutions to women's problems as being political, being historically and culturally created.
>
> People who think women deserve equal pay, equal treatment, equal opportunity with men.

Others preferred not to use the term feminist even privately to describe themselves or their groups. They believe that the word has acquired a too restrictive meaning and does not accurately reflect their perspective.

> We prefer to be humanists--believing in the rights of all people. Feminist is too restrictive--sounds like "not equal," just concentrates on women's rights.

Another group's spokesperson agreed:

> Feminism is synonymous with humanism--what's fair to everyone, benefits men too. It recognizes that right now the primary contradiction is between men and women; at this point in history the contradiction is most evident there.

Feminism, then, is not the universally accepted ideology of the battered women's movement. Indeed, it is not even universally understood in the same way by movement participants. There were, however, a few groups who saw themselves as unabashedly feminist, at least according to the spokespeople whom I interviewed.

> Yes, we are feminists--that means pro women having control over their lives, having power to get their needs met by agencies and systems. It comes down to women's power.

> If people aren't feminist when they start working here, they soon become it. Working with battered women is probably the most radicalizing experience there is for a woman . . . A feminist is a woman who is mainly interested in dealing with women's issues and problems, and simply being in touch with women. It's a political stance. Feminism is a way of gaining the kind of power women need.

> We're fledgling feminists--we are starting to see that women's problems are political, need to be solved politically.

I was somewhat puzzled by this apparent ambivalence about feminism among people who are deeply involved in an issue which was first identified by feminists and which is so representative of feminist goals for women. However, it now appears that there are three possible reasons for a separation between feminism and groups within the battered women's movement. Those reasons might be loosely categorized as cooptation, camoutlage, and false consciousness.

Cooptation

Cooptation occurs where groups were either started by or later taken over by people who have no interest in feminist principles. Ahrens (1980: 41) warns that

> Refuges for battered women, like rape crisis centers, seem to be undergoing a transformation throughout the United States from feminist, nonhierarchical, community-based organizations to institutionalized social services agencies.

She documents the case of one such transformation, in a shelter group which she helped establish but later repudiated because she felt that the group was no longer feminist in "content" or "approach" (p. 47).

Some of the reasons Ahrens gives for cooptation by established social agencies are as follows. (1)Divisions arise when a group acquires funding and some people become "paid staff" while others are pushed aside or grow resentful at not being paid. (2)When a group incorporates, and organizes an election for board members, community residents who were not involved in the original formation processes, and may not be committed to the same perspective as the founders, may become involved in the group. (3)In an effort to secure funding and/or community legitimation, or because of their personal convictions, some groups become interested in

presenting themselves as "professionally" rather than politically motivated. (4)As groups succeed in acquiring funding, membership, staff, and facilities, their size often necessitates more specialization in tasks, which leads to hierachies of authority and expertise.

The results which Ahrens describes are not inevitable and are not necessarily the result of a shift away from feminist ideals (and it may not have been perceived in that way even by most of the other members of her group). However, among the group members whom I interviewed and in the conferences I attended, there was concern about whether "we are being coopted by our own success"--whether the movement was losing its feminist and/or grassroots orientation and becoming professionalized "like any other social service agency."

Some groups were "coopted" from the beginning. As mentioned in Chapter Four, one group was started by a counselor at a Community Mental Health Center, at the direction of his employers,

> Not so much because domestic violence was a real interest to them, but it was a source of money--the Feds had put a lot of money into it right then, so they thought, "Okay, we'll go after the money and then we'll do a lot of training in domestic violence."

I did not encounter any other groups who admitted to being founded on this type of mercenary pragmatism.

But it is at least one of the myths, if not reality, of the movement that more and more groups of this type are emerging, after the feminists have done the groundwork. A lot of anger is voiced at meetings about how much money is being awarded to opportunists; and the accusation is true to some extent. Groups with grant-writing expertise are more likely to attract funding; and that kind of expertise is often developed in professional social service fields. Then the temptation for grassroots groups is to hire a grant writer--indeed, many job descriptions for group directors specify grant writing experience as a major qualification--and the trend toward greater professionalization intensifies.

The tone of the Milwaukee conference (April, 1981), and of recent intramovement literature seems to be one of resignation to the necessity of some professionalization, but with the determination to maintain as much political integrity as possible. As one workshop leader expressed the prevailing theme,

> The emergence of traditional, conservative programs takes priority away from the grassroots, hardworking, founding programs. We can't exclude those traditional organizations--we must connect, relate, cooperate--but don't yield or allow those programs to replace the more feminist programs. We need constant reaffirmation of ourselves as a feminist movement, or the cooptation creeps in . . . (Barbara Shaw, Region V conference, "Family Violence: The Next Steps," April 30, 1981).

Camouflage

Other groups, who do not consider themselves coopted, are sometimes willing to camouflage their feminism. This approach is parallel to what Lofland (1966) describes as covert presentations, which were chosen by members of the "Divine Precepts" cult in situations where they felt that their message would be instantly rejected if their audience were aware of their doctrines. Instead, movement spokespeople sought to establish affective bonds and stimulate interest in their group before revealing their message.

In the battered women's movement, this approach was best expressed by the woman who told me that, "I am a feminist but I don't use that word. I can get the same point across using other words." She then went on to explain that when she started organizing a group to provide services for battered women, she had talked in feminist terms--about male oppression of women, the need for equality, raising children in nonsexist ways--and she had received some support from the local NOW chapter. But she was a newcomer in the community, and soon learned that

> NOW had a reputation at that time as feminist and people told me "If you want to make a positive impact it would be better if you don't have NOW affiliation."

She appealed instead for Title XX money through the Department of Social Services, and to community service groups--churches, Kiwanis Clubs, YWCA--for funding. She "toned down" her presentations and disguised her feminist perspective. In her opinion, these tactics resulted in the "success"--i.e., funding and support from community government and the public--of the program, which would have failed had it been perceived as a feminist project. However, she believes that the same goals are being accomplished and that feminist ideals have been maintained in spite of the need to camouflage them in more traditional guise.

In a study which seems to validate this kind of perspective, Bers and Mezey (1981) administered surveys designed to measure support for feminist goals to women holding board positions in suburban civic and women's organizations such as the League of Women Voters, parent-teacher organizations, garden clubs, and church-affiliated women's clubs. The majority of their respondents did not identify themselves as feminists; and only half were sympathetic to the women's movement. Nevertheless, when questioned about current efforts by the women's movement to improve women's status in society, and about specific issues such as programs for rape victims, battered women, and displaced homemakers, three-fourths of the respondents

said they supported such feminist goals.

> These data suggest that as questions become less ideological and move away from using emotionally charged labels, such as "feminist" or "women's liberation movement," toward eliciting attitudes about rights and opportunities for women, the content of responses becomes more supportive of feminist positions (Bers and Mezey, 1981: 740).

These authors conclude that feminists will need to consider modifying their rhetoric and joining or forming alliances with women's groups who are not overtly feminist, in order to gain the support of these groups. And such alliances are important because local women's groups are already established and respected in their communities, and are able to gain acceptance for women's issues more readily than are newly-formed groups.

> In our view, obtaining support for issues and programs is more important than ensuring that "pure" motives and appropriate feminist analyses of society are imposed on women's organizations (Bers and Mezey, 1981: 748).

Other interviewees in my sample talked about their groups keeping a "low profile," although their members were predominantly feminist. As with the group discussed above, for some this low profile has necessitated a disassociation from their earlier sponsorship or support by NOW. Another group's director explains,

> NOW has backed off. We felt that the group needed to be seen as somewhere in

> the middle rather than to the extreme of one end or the other, if the program is gonna glide in this community. NOW is still supportive of us; they've just backed off.

She acknowledges however, that

> If it hadn't been for NOW, the program never would've gotten here. They recognized it as an issue, as a real problem, and that was something no one else in this valley had ever done.

This kind of statement marks the crucial difference between camouflaged feminist groups and coopted ones. The camouflaged groups acknowledge their debt to early feminist efforts, and privately define themselves as feminists, while publicly portraying themselves as "middle of the road." In the words of one leader, whose group was feeling pressure to moderate their image in the face of diminishing funds,

> Financially we're gonna have to depend more and more on the community, so I'm thinking this agency is gonna have to lose its radical look and just become part of the social service community . . . I think to a degree it needs to lose its feminist look . . . for the majority of people at large, who we're going to be looking at to give us money, that's gonna have to be modified a little. I'm not saying give it [the feminist image] up, just sugar-coat it maybe a little.

In contrast, the coopted groups refuse to acknowledge a feminist influence (if ever there was one in their group), and the third type are unaware that there was any such motivation. These are the groups whose lack

of feminist identity I attribute to false consciousness.

False Consciousness

A small number of groups have simply forgotten, or never knew, that feminism was related to the development of the battered women's movement. I have previously stated that almost every group traced its origin to the women's movement, in one way or another. But not all groups considered their origins feminist. Some informants were surprised when I asked about feminism, indicating that they do not see a necessary connection between the women's movement and the ideology of feminism. As one woman replied,

> We probably are feminist, but it's not an issue; our behavior seems feminist, I definitely consider myself a feminist.

Groups who are unaware of feminist influences tend to be either the younger groups--who were more likely to have started as a result of hearing about services in other communities--or to have been the groups who have had a complete turnover in membership after they were started. In that case, their roots have been obscured.

Some members of the battered women's movement contend that the movement's relationship to feminism is being obscured by changes in terminology, which was discussed earlier in this chapter. But whatever the reason, it is apparent that the relationship is

complex; and that the movement's debt to feminism is not perceived in the same way by all of its members, either individually or as groups. Indeed, some groups are undoubtedly more indebted than others to feminism. In spite of this ambiguity, however, there was general consistency in the answers I received to the questions of what causes woman battering and what are the solutions; and these answers reflect a feminist orientation, whether the group acknowledges that orientation or not.

Providing Direct Services: Choice or Necessity?

I wondered why various groups had chosen to develop different models of services, and discovered that the answer usually lay in the amount of funding available. The source of funding was less important than the amount of funding in determining which model of services a group provides. Most groups applied for federal grants as quickly as possible, from LEAA or Title XX (the Social Security amendment that provides for all social services--Domestic Violence became a "target service" to be provided in the late 1970's). Many groups received CETA money to hire employees, and a few have been partially funded by their community United Way. In one of the two states studied, all of the groups receive part of their funding (no more than

half) from the state legislature, administered by a legislatively appointed board. Several groups sponsored fund-raising projects in the beginning--bake sales, raffles, spaghetti dinners--but none of these tactics ever garnered enough for operating expenses, and the groups were forced to apply for grants or for help from other existing community groups.

Groups with large grants are more likely to have shelters, whether those grants have come from federal, state, and local government, or from private foundations or individuals. Smaller grants, from the same sources, may be sufficient only to fund an answering service, an office with a small staff, or to coordinate a network of safe homes. With more money, most groups in the other four models say they would develop a shelter. For example, one group which currently has only a crisis line operating through an answering service recently received a Community Development Block Grant through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and is in the process of obtaining suitable housing for a shelter. I encountered only one group without a shelter whose spokesperson said her group was not interested in developing a shelter if more money became available. This group had a network of Safe Homes, and the reason given for choosing the Safe Homes rather than the Shelter model was that the group was located in "a

small community, and confidentiality would be too great a problem." (None of the other groups which I studied in comparable communities felt this way.)

More basic than why groups develop specific models of service, however, is the question ot why groups choose to develop direct services at all. This is a question which did not occur to me to ask. I asked why each group had chosen to offer the services it did. The usual response was either that they were providing as much as they could afford, or that they did not know of anything else they could do. But I was uncritical, in fact unaware myself, of my interviewees' apparent assumption that direct services was an inevitable path upon which groups must embark if they are seeking to make woman battering visible as a social problem. Only after I had completed my interviews and most of my analysis, did it occur to me that there might be other paths to visiblity, and that direct services might not always be the appropriate strategy.

Apparently, the same questions or reservations are beginning to occur to at least some members of the movement. Schecter recently raised this issue in AEGIS, a magazine which to some extent serves as an intramovement forum of ideas.

> We often have discussed the two necessary strands in our movement--a strand suggesting that we provide social

> services and a strand suggesting that we are a political movement to end violence against women. I have basically assumed that for most of us these two strands intertwine, even if there is internal disagreement about how they intertwine and how we should proceed. But this assumption is no longer safe to make. Some of us believe that providing services meets neither the needs of battered women nor your needs for survival as a program (Schecter, 1981b: 42).

Schecter explains that providing safety is only the first step in a long-range plan to end woman battering. But for many groups, shelter has become their only or ultimate goal. Such a perspective, Schecter contends, probably indicates that groups have shifted their analysis of woman battering and of their group's purpose away from a feminist and toward a social service analysis. She calls for a more complex series of activities aimed at changing the social conditions that allow violence against women to continue.

The following are some other paths which the movement could have taken in its quest to identify and alleviate the problem of woman battering. Local groups could have concentrated on accountability of social agencies, making existing services such as the Department of Social Services, police, hospitals, mental health clinics, and the judicial system more responsive to battered women. While most groups have included such accountability as one of their goals,

they have not perceived this demand as an alternative to providing direct services themselves. Thus, many groups cite "advocacy" as one of their services, and define that as accompanying the battered woman to these agencies and/or maintaining vigilance to make sure that the battered woman receives satisfactory responses from these groups. However, groups have not said that they exist solely to make existing agencies respond to the needs of battered women, including the need for emergency shelter, counseling, and redirection of their lives, and I am suggesting that such a purpose might be appropriate.

As another path, the movement could possibly have chosen to focus entirely on legislaive and judicial reforms, and/or on increasing the sense of public awareness and outrage about the lack of services for battered women. At the state and national level, the movement has succeeded in influencing legislation to provide better protection for battered women. But the legislation has also included substantial state and federal appropriations for direct services, a factor that makes the bills harder to pass as budget cuts affect funding for social programs.

Finally, the battered women's movement could have taken more radical directions, seeking visibility and solutions outside of socially accepted channels. For example, local groups might have formed vigilante

committees of angry women who retaliate against individual assailants--a feminist version of the "rough music" and public shamings practiced in other periods of history.

My point is not that providing direct services is the wrong path; but that it is not the only and inevitable choice. It is probably the most expensive, energy-consuming alternative and may eventually be perceived as a "blind alley" that will not lead to changes in the definition or visibility of woman battering. It is possible that providing direct services in the form of shelters, safe homes, and other emergency housing, counseling, and advocacy is actually in contradiction with the ideology of self help. Groups who provide these services see them as a way of helping battered women get out of their violent situations and acquire the necessary resources to become independent. But it is possible that such services foster dependence on yet another outside agency, especially since most groups maintain a policy of allowing women to return to the group if they elect to go back to the battering situation and need to leave it again and again.

In a sense, sheltering and related direct services are another form of what Barry (19/9: 38-9) labels as the "cult of the victim," which dominated left-liberal responses to racism and urban violence in

the late 1960's.

> In an attempt to respond sympathetically to the plight of oppressed racial minorities, academic and political liberals delineated and stressed black victimization at the hands of a white racist society.

As a result, liberals initiated reform programs aimed at removing poor blacks from the conditions of poverty, injustice, and slum life which they believed had caused the problems. However, while this approach

> attributes the causes of victimization to environmental forces, it still focuses the causes on the victim. Consequently, remedial programs and reform projects don't treat the objective social conditions which produce a racist society and trigger racial violence but try instead to improve the environment of the victim (Barry, 1979: 39).

The battered women's movement must ask itself whether the same process is occurring in their efforts to eliminate woman battering. Do shelters and other emergency services serve merely to "improve the environment of the victim," or do they address the objective conditions that produce such violence in the first place?

Many local and national spokespeople are beginning to talk of moving "beyond sheltering." To most, that apparently means taking actions in addition to providing emergency housing. Perhaps to some, it means "instead of" sheltering. Funding is becoming an increasing problem, both because of the current

political climate of general hostility to governmental spending for social programs, and because the specific issue of woman battering is less "popular" in the early 1980's than it was in the late 1970's. The reasons for the original choice of direct services may become less viable in the future. First, when battered women began calling newly formed groups, asking for help, the groups found no services that were already available and got channeled into providing those services themselves. But as a result of advocacy and public pressure, other agencies are starting to offer some services. For example, in some of the counties of State One of my sample, the Department of Social Services (DSS) has recently redefined eligibility for welfare payments so that a battered women who leaves her assailant can immediately qualify for housing and living expenses. This helps the local shelters because they can receive per diem payments from DSS for women who are residents. But it also makes it easier for a woman to leave the battering situation and establish a home for herself and her children. Thus, direct services might eventually be less necessary, as other agencies become more responsive.

A second reason that groups opted to provide their own shelters and other direct services is that the public "approved" of the strategy and supported

it. The strategy is not too radical (although the New Right thinks it is). It fits the traditional expectation of women's service societies. But with the rise in power of the New Right, which sees shelters as subversive to the privacy of the family, and the cutbacks in funding, there is less sanctioning of direct services. Some groups are already beginning to look for ways that they can consolidate with other agencies, and eliminate the need for their separate services. This may be a trend in the 1980's.

At the present time, however, direct services remain the dominant response of groups within the battered women's movement, and strategies revolve around how to secure alternative support for them, rather than seeking alternative paths for the movement. This fact may mark one of the major differences between the battered women's movement and many other social movements, which keep as their major goal the ideological transformations of society that would herald structural changes (e.g., the women's movement seeks to challenge the structural and ideological foundations of sexism). These movements maintain a critical stance toward mainstream society. The battered women's movement, on the other hand, in choosing to strive for expensive programs, must in some way mitigate its challenges in order to acquire support for its services. In order to gain funding

from government and private industry, movement groups must satisfy their sponsors' perceptions of appropriate organizational structure, focus, and analysis. Local groups become legitimate and entrenched in the community by camouflaging their ties to feminism and denying a radical understanding of the causes of and solutions to woman battering.

Summary

This chapter has focused on the ways in which the battered women's movement went about legitimating and demonstrating its subject. Local groups sought to gain legitimacy in their communities by developing "public ideologies" which reassured local residents that the group was not too radical or too feminist. Groups chose terminology and explanations of woman battering that were compatible with community values and perspectives. The movement has so far tended to direct its energies toward providing direct services, in the form of emergency housing, counseling, and advocacy, to battered women. This is an expensive, energy-consuming direction, and one of which the movement may need to become more critical in the future.

In Chapter Six, a more detailed analysis will be made of the "shared view of reality" which forms the

basis of the movement's developing ideology, and the ways in which the battered women's movement has influenced the ideological hegemony of the dominant culture.

Part Three

Summary and Conclusions

Chapter Six

Summary and Conclusions

> . . . the Women's Aid movement[1] stands as a landmark in the history of responses to the problems of individual battered women and the struggles against the problem itself. . . Both material and symbolic benefits have been gained from setting up refuges, educating the public, pressing for legislation, and attempting to get legal, medical, and social agencies to take up their full responsibilities for dealing with this violence . . . The overall significance of the [movement's] response to wife beating is in its combination of the strengths of female culture (supporting women and rejecting male abuses) with feminist principles that locate these abuses in the subordinate status of women. There is an unequivocal rejection of a man's right to use violence against his wife, and a challenge to the patriarchal assumptions and relationships that have so long supported that right (Dobash and Dobash, 1981: 575-6).

The status of woman battering has changed dramatically in less than ten years, from a "private trouble" of individual women and their assailants to a "public issue," a social problem. In addition, the "ownership of the problem" (Gusfield, 1975) has shifted from the state, which owned it from the nineteenth century but chose to ignore it (Dobash and

Dobash, 1981), to women as members of the social movement which developed in reaction to the state's absenteeism, mismanagement, and neglect. The battered women's movement expropriated (or reappropriated) the problem. At the same time, responsibility for the problem[2] shifted from the battered woman herself to the social structure of patriarchal society. All of these changes can be attributed to the struggles of the battered women's movement, to its efforts on the local, state, and national levels to bring woman battering to the foreground of public consciousness.

Woman battering has taken many paths to visibility. Feminists have spotted it in their search for women's issues. Battered women have forced their situation into public consciousness by appealing to police, religious, and social welfare agencies for help. The path to visibility began with the civil rights and new left movements of the 1960's, which led to the women's movement as women began to become aware of the contradictions between the ideology of equality espoused by both of these earlier movements and the reality of sex/gender oppression which persisted--the contradictions of capitalist patriarchy. Through the consciousness raising of the women's movement, women became aware of woman battering. Also, battered women learned that they had a right to ask for help and to demand that battering be stopped.

Women's centers and rape crisis centers were created as a development of the women's movement. Battered women began to call these places for help, as well as make new demands on already-established social service agencies. The development of a specific social movement to confront the issue of woman battering ideologically and structurally was the eventual result of these demands. The movement evolved on two levels, locally and nationally. Locally, groups formed to provide direct services to battered women, and to increase public awareness of the problem. Nationally, a coalition emerged which sought to create ideological transformations that would eliminate the social arrangements that make woman battering possible. The destination of all these paths is increased visibility of woman battering on various fronts: public awareness, media attention, legislative and judicial reforms, and police response. I have developed a model to illustrate the various paths to visibility, which is presented on the following page.

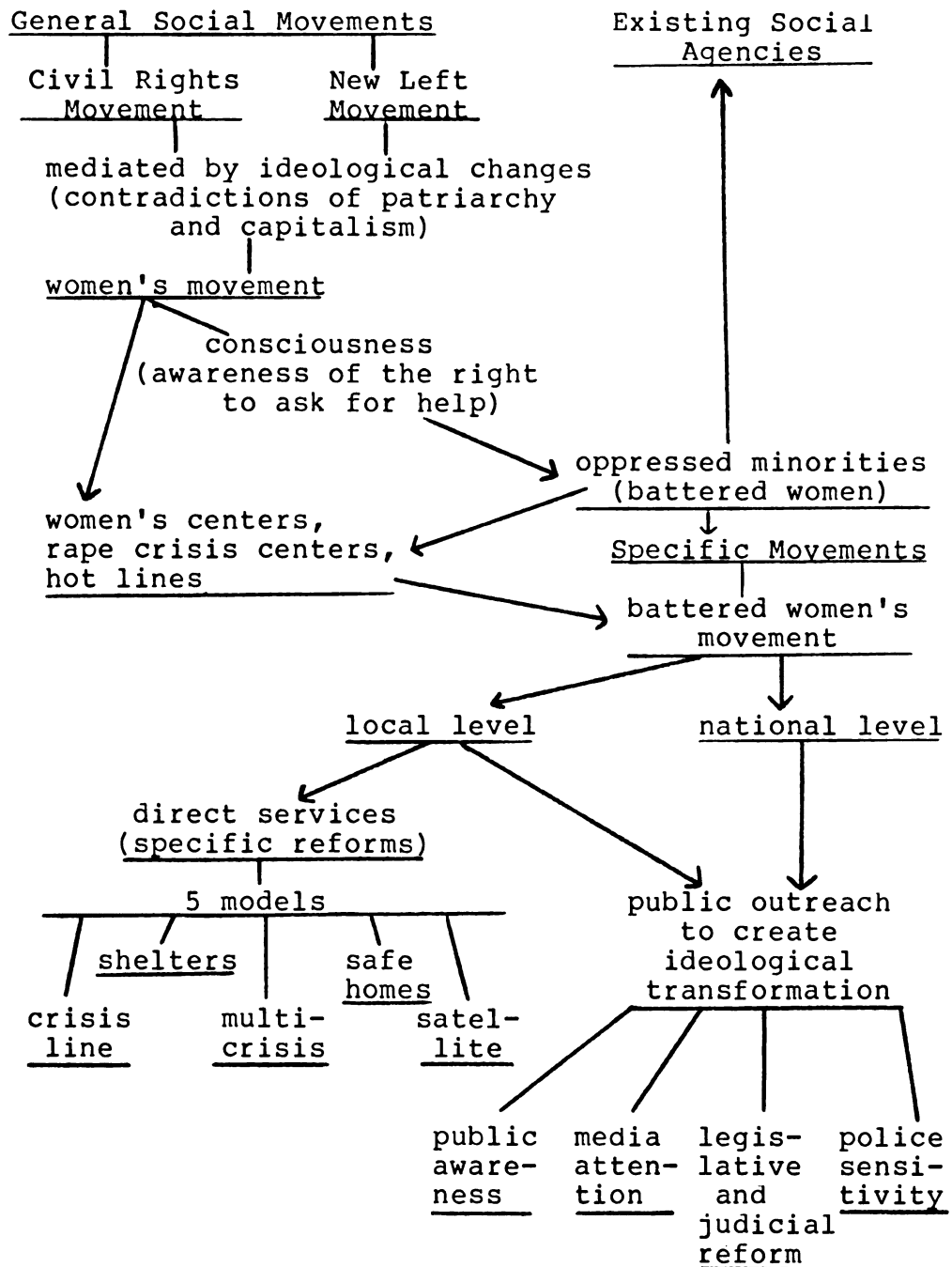

Figure 1.

Paths to Visibility

of the Issue of Woman Battering

The basic goal of increasing public awareness so that woman battering eventually will not be tolerated is articulated in different ways at the local and national levels. These differences are so great that it is sometimes difficult to find any common ties between local groups and the movement's national spokespeople. Local groups often become so involved in the specific, concrete tasks of rescuing battered women--providing refuge, crisis counseling, helping them find employment and permanent housing--and of financial survival of their group's services, that they lose sight of the larger struggle to change social attitudes. Or they perceive the task as public education about their services in ways that will reassure the community that the group is not a threat to basic values. They modify their message in order to reassure their audience that the presence of a shelter and/or other services for battered women will not result in major social change. Local spokespeople, in fact, often appear totally oblivious of their own participation in a social movement. Or they simply do not consider their group's actions to be part of a social movement.

For their part, national spokespeople, such as members of the NCADV steering committee, write and speak idealistically of not compromising their language, goals, and philosophy, forgetting the

necessity of compromising to maintain public harmony at the community level. They maintain that changing public attitudes and eliminating woman battering can be accomplished only by exposing the patriarchal structure of marriage and family patterns. Thus, national leaders seem to be more concerned with challenging and changing ideology. They also speak much more self-consciously of anti-battering as a social movement than do the local leaders.

As a result of these differences, it is difficult to discover the boundaries of the movement. Does the battered women's movement encompass all the local groups and individuals, as well as national coalition members, who are committed to helping battered women and ameliorating the phenomenon of woman battering? Or does it consist only of the national coalition and those local groups who belong to the coalition and/or refer to themselves as being part of a movement? In Chapter One, I defined a social movement as resting on its members' perception of themselves as part of a movement. Hence, those local groups and individuals who are oblivous to the existence of the battered women's movement, or who explicitly deny that they are a part of it cannot be categorically included in the movement. However, it is probably true that even the most isolated groups have been affected by the existence of the larger movement. Sometimes, it was

news of the national movement and participant groups that made local people aware of and responsive to the needs of battered women. At other times, it was the efforts of the national movement in making federal and state funding and legislation available which made it possible for local groups to exist and/or expand.

In addition, this tension between the local groups and the national leadership (as represented by NCADV spokespeople) is common to reform movements. According to Ash (1972: 136), such movements often have a "radical core and a large generally very moderate penumbra," both ideologically and structurally. The penumbra is unwilling or unable to totally accept the strategies and ideas of the core, and persists in modifying them to suit a conventional framework of reforms. But the local groups do, nevertheless, contribute to the goals of the national movement and are thus related to the social movement in some way.

At first glance it might appear that the local groups, in being more conservative than the national leadership, conform to the classic Weber-Michels model (see Zald and Ash, 1965-66) of social movement organizations as always evolving in the direction of greater conservatism and societal accomodation. However, a more careful inspection reveals an interactive process between the local groups and the

national movement. The movement is developing on both levels simultaneously and is responding to various transformation processes which make it appear radical at times, conservative at others. Both the "radical core" and the "moderate penumbra" are contributing to the movement's viability.

> Organizations exist in a changing environment to which they must adapt. Adaptation to the environment may itself require changes in goals and in the internal arrangement of the organization. This view of organizations treats goals as problematic, and as changing in response to both internal and external pressures. It is especially useful for the study of MO's [movement organizations] precisely because it focuses on conflict, environmental forces, and the ebb and flow of organizational viability (Zald and Ash, 1965-66: 328).

The environment of movement organizations consists of the broader social movement--supporters and other groups--and the society. With a movement such as that for battered women, its members must be particularly sensitive to the social climate of that environment; because its goals include not only the long-range transformation of ideology but the immediate provision of services to a needy target population. Those services are expensive, and depend on financial support from established funding agencies of the larger society. Thus, there is a constant need to mediate conflict with and dissolve opposition from mainstream society, while at the same time challenging

its prevailing ideologies. The same restraints acted on the birth control movement (Gordon, 1977: 249) when, after World War II, it chose to concentrate its efforts on the strategies of opening clinics and lobbying for legislative reforms. Both strategies were expensive, although support came from wealthy individuals, who consequently gained power and influence in the movement, more than from government sources.

The ideology and structure of groups within the battered women's movement are constantly modified by the mandates of its funding sources, either state or private foundations. I have presented examples of how the sponsors restrict the movement throughout this study. One example was the demand for hierarchical structure, versus the ideal of collectivity and egalitarian relationships. A second example was the state's interpretation of affirmative action as requiring the inclusion of men on staff and as part of the target population of clients. (This latter is a contradiction; affirmative action is consistent with the feminist principles of the national movement, but movement leaders tend to be more anxious to include women of all races, ethnic groups, sexual preference, and classes, than to include men.) As a third example, the state and the general public have imposed the concepts of domestic violence, spouse abuse and

other gender-neutral terms on the movement, in preference to using the term "battered women." This is a change which not only masks the target population of women semantically, but politically obscures the social conditions which result in women being the primary victims of such violence.

In a recent article, Morgan (1981) outlines many of the ways in which state intervention has resulted in modifications within the battered women's movement. She calls for more awareness of the process by which radical movements are altered.

> First, we must develop a more critical understanding of grassroots movements for progressive social change, which means we must analyze the contradictions existing within these movements themselves. In the process of organizing there is consistent failure to become conscious of the organizational contradictions which provide the greatest openings for cooptation, or the means to overcome or circumvent them. Our understanding of this process has tended to be built on hindsight: more casual than systematic. Left organizers generally fail to recognize exactly how and why the state is able to defuse political issues and deflect the progressive goals of grassroots movements (Morgan, 1981: 18).

Morgan explains that because the demand for services for battered women and interest in the problem grew so quickly, the problem became visible far beyond the feminist community in which the movement began. At the same time, the need developed for state resources to address the issue. The state

was very responsive, and quickly provided large blocks of money for shelters and other services. But those funds were gained at the expense of the collective, feminist-oriented organizing which had originally focused on political transformations of battered women. Instead, to qualify for state funding, groups formed Boards of Directors, incorporated as non-profit organizations, developed specialized "professional" staff positions, and placed more emphasis on counseling and other specific, tangible services within the shelter.

> The personal-as-political structure inherent in the feminist refuges became submerged under the immediate needs of expanding services, obtaining government funds, and legitimating themselves as a shelter organization to the funding agencies (Morgan, 1981: 24).

In addition, many new shelters sprang up as a result of the availability of funding. They were organized from the beginning on the model advocated by the state regulations.

Thus, the movement constantly faces the dilemma of choosing between acquiescing to the preferences of its funding sources, which reflect the conservative political climate of the country at this time, or remaining consistently radical in outlook and demands and sacrificing valuable resources. The dilemma is one of weighing the relative importance of ways and means; i.e., of deciding whether what they are doing

is more important than how they do it. Not all members or local groups are even cognizant of this choice, but they are all affected by it. Others are aware that they are making compromises, but contend that it is necessary to survive in any way possible. As a speaker at the Region V conference said,

> There is no politically correct position in dealing with the issues of our movement; the strategy must be situational. Being political means acting out our vision in a way that works (Barbara Shaw, leader of "Political Action" workshop, Milwaukee, April 30, 1981).

She emphasized the necessity of retaining public funding: "Total self-sufficiency is unrealistic; we deserve public funds," but explained that the movement needs to understand the concessions it makes to acquire funding.

This is a problem which would not be encountered by all social movements. The civil rights movement, for example, was struggling for ideological transformations which would eventually result in greater political power for its members and access to the resources of the larger society. But it was not asking that society to sponsor its efforts with large-scale investments. In a sense, the problem for the battered women's movement is a result of greater privilege. Local groups have more to lose in antagonizing the power structure than does a movement

like civil rights (the civil rights movement had nothing to lose and everything to gain for its members, in the beginning. Later, as some gains were made which benefitted individual leaders, the civil rights movement was accused of having been coopted into toning down its demands to appease the mainstream social structure.) But the battered women's movement, because of its need for government and private financial support, was partially coopted from the beginning.

There is another reason for the battered women's movement to moderate its "presentation of self:" to appeal to its target population of battered women. If the movement sounds too "radical" many battered women will not avail themselves of its services. Leaving the battering situation represents a major repudiation of a woman's socialization, if she has been taught to be passive, dependent, and fatalistic. (Martin, 1976; Walker, 1979; and others describe the socialization patterns by which women are convinced that they "should" remain in a marital relationship regardless of how violent it becomes.) Coming to a shelter is itself a revolutionary decision. If the battered woman believes that she also has to accept a whole new ideology--i.e., feminism--she may decide that the move is too extreme for her. McGrath (1979: 26, 28) expresses this dilemma well:

> For a woman who is confused and frightened, the feeling that the . . . movement's "hidden agenda" is the destruction of the nuclear family in favor of a separatist "women's autonomy" only worsens a bad situation . . . the immediate question is: how can we establish shelters that save lives, provide support and help generate a sense of community and autonomy, and fight against the causes of domestic violence without mystifying the social nature of that violence, or alienating and frightening the very women we want to join with through excesses and errors in our own practice?

Thorne (1971: 300) describes a similar problem in the draft resistance movement. Draft counselors had to bridge gaps of culture, language, values, and education in appealing to working-class clients.

> They [middle-class draft counselors] only vaguely understood the assumptions which shaped the way a working-class registrant approached his draft situation (for example, a strong respect for the military, and a reluctance to push for physical deferment).

While members of the battered women's movement seem to be more aware of class differences, they have perhaps also been more willing to make compromises on an ideological basis than were members of the draft resistance movement. Thus, they may be more successful in "recruiting" clients who do not share their ideology. The battered women's movement is a client-focused movement and, for the most part, one that is still controlled by "outsiders"--women who have never been battered themselves. Thus, members

must continue to push for acceptance among their target population, and attempt to eradicate the differences of class and experience that might separate them from their clients.

As Morgan (1981) points out, battered women have often preferred more bureaucratically organized shelters, operated by professional, social-worker types of people, to the feminist-oriented, collectively organized shelters. This is because the former shelters are less demanding, since they concentrate on providing efficient services; whereas the latter tend to focus on trying to provide "political understanding" as well as services. The latter type try to involve the battered women in the decision-making processes of the group, at a time when they are confused and preoccupied with the upheavals in their lives caused by leaving the battering situation. Even the feminist-oriented shelters have tended to ignore the perspective of their clients, and what are often class-based differences between their clients--who are usually working-class and third world women--and themselves, generally white and middle class.

> Feminist organizational and political strategies tended to be developed separately from the battered women themselves. It was primarily a movement for rather than of battered women (Morgan, 1981: 25).

The nature of the movement's structure also produces, and makes allowances for, ideological differences among members. Gerlach and Hine (1970: 42) observe that in reticulated movements, where local groups--or "cells"--develop independently of any central decision-making structure, "each unit has different ideas about how to achieve the more general objectives of the movement, and each interprets the movement ideology in its own way." They relate this characteristic to the "split-level nature" of movement ideologies. Any movement possesses a few basic concepts which are embraced by all of its participants, and tie the cells together loosely. Simultaneously, "infinite variations on the ideological themes" (Gerlach and Hine, 1970: 165) create diversity among groups and individuals, and make the movement attractive to a broader range of people.

In Chapter One, I conjectured that, as a result of contacts within the movement, groups would share a definition of reality which included a common perception of goals and appropriate strategies for achieving them, if not a fully developed "symbolic universe" (Nall, 1976). The findings, however, are somewhat ambiguous. Groups tend to share some ideas, such as those concerning the causes of and solutions to battering, and the importance of developing a

public image (what Nall refers to as a "public ideology") that is not threatening to prevailing community values. However, groups do not agree on terminology, the involvement of men, the importance of racial, ethnic, class, age, or religious balances, or the influence of feminism on their development. These variations are probably a result of the rudimentary stage of the movement's ideology, rather than indicating a total absence of an ideology. In spite of compromises and differences among groups and individuals, the battered women's movement does appear to have a "general philosophical orientation" (Tierney, 1979); a retinue of basic concepts which is developing into an ideology that challenges the hegemony of capitalist patriarchy.

The emerging ideology is most coherent, and most consistent across groups, in its explanation of the causes of woman battering, and in its long-range goals. It is least coherent and consistent in an analysis of the role of the state in relation to the movement, and in the designation of an appropriate group structure.

The explanations of causes that are put forth by local groups were presented in Chapter Four. These include four main components: society's attitudes toward violence and toward women, socialization into gender (definitions of "appropriate" male and female

behavior) and (for men) into violent ways of expressing anger and frustration, a family history of abuse (adults who were abused or witnessed abuse as children), and economic frustration. National spokespeople cite the same causes, although expressing themselves somewhat differently. They tend to put more emphasis on structural arrangements of class and gender which perpetuate violence and domination. I gave an example in Chapter Four of one widely disseminated explanation of the causes of battering--that of Susan Schecter.

My intent was not to analyze or critique Schecter's explanation but to show that, although much more complex than most of the causes cited by my interviewees, her perspective does not contradict them. Many members of local groups would probably reject her terminology and her critique of capitalist social relations. But their understanding of what causes woman battering is compatible with such an analysis. I focused on Schecter's presentation of the movement's ideology because she is a highly visible and vocal representative; although there has never been a formal acceptance of her analysis as the movement's official "line," and there are undoubtedly many individuals and local groups who would disagree with her. Schecter is an activist in the movement; but in elaborating a statement of ideology, she also

becomes a movement intellectual and, as Killian (1973: 33-4) explains:

> It is the task of the intellectual to elaborate the myth or ideology of the movement, providing answers as to why the movement is right and what heights it may achieve . . . Although many members of the movement may not understand the writings of the intellectual, . . . the ideology is a fruitful source of slogans, epithets, and stereotyped arguments which become part of the culture of the movement.

Thus, to some extent the discrepancies between the answers given by local respondents and the analysis given by Schecter and other spokespeople at national and regional forums represents a "sifting down" process, from the ideal to the real--putting abstract concepts into practical language that will be understood and (hopefully) accepted by local audiences.

The movement is less cohesive in its understanding of structure and the role of state agencies in dealing with the needs of battered women. This is demonstrated in the contradiction between an ideology of grassroots organizing and collective structure, and the actual structure of most groups, which is hierarchical and dependent on government funding. The explanation for this discrepancy probably lies in the dependency of local groups on state resources, which makes them vulnerable to state mandates. As McGrath (1979: 27) explains:

> Women fighting against domestic violence should appropriate whatever resources they can manage, but often government funding sources have reactionary implications . . . The priorities of the state work to channel attention toward less "political" solutions to domestic violence, like arrest and divorce, rather than either toward the creation of real economic alternatives for women, or toward providing an emotional and material context in which a restructuring of family relations could take place.

In spite of inconsistencies and contradictions in its own ideology--probably inevitable results of its reticulate nature and its rudimentary stage--the battered women's movement does seem to have had some success in challenging old perceptions of woman battering, in bringing the issue of woman battering to public awareness as a social problem. The movement has succeeded in politicizing woman battering, so that it is no longer seen by the whole society as a private trouble. Some portion of society now sees it as the result of social arrangements and the responsibility of public policies. This represents a new definition of reality, and is indicative of the increasing power of women to challenge the cultural hegemony that has subordinated them for so long. To a large extent, the battered women's movement was made possible by the achievements of the more general women's movement, and the structural conditions that have resulted in a weakening of male power within the family. As Easton (1979: 556) observes:

> It is always the first task of a movement to attack oppressive institutions that are in decline. To the extent that they are anachronistic they can be shown to be illegitimate; it is possible to turn public sentiment against them with relative ease.

The battered women's movement developed for the specific purpose of attacking the institution of patriarchy, physical forms of male control within the family that had reinforced that institution, and the "justifying myths" (Freeman, 1975) that had led women to accept such control as legitimate.

> If aspirations for change are to be legitimate ones, the justification of the status quo must be destroyed. This is often the role of a new ideology . . . (Freeman, 1975: 16).

The swiftness of the movement's growth, and the resulting changes in public sentiment--from apathy to concern--may be indicative of patriarchy's anachronism and fundamental illegitimacy, as well as the rationality and acceptability of the new ideology.

Future Issues

In this study, I have examined the intentions of the battered women's movement. There is now a need to look at its accomplishments, in terms of ideological and structural transformations of the issue of woman battering. Specifically, how has the movement been shaped by experience; i.e., how have the views and

needs which battered women bring to the shelters affected the women who work there? Have these experiences of service providers had any impact on the movement? If, as I have contended in this study, the battered women's movement is composed mainly of outsiders to the issue, how has their contact with insiders--the battered women who are the movement's clients and target population--changed their perspective on the problem?

For example, was reality disillusioning? I think that many of the women who are members of local groups joined with an idealistic and altruistic intention to help, to "work with these women" who are battered and oppressed. But the battered women who come to shelters or call crisis lines are not always grateful for the help received. Often they challenge the group members, ask for their credentials of experience; e.g., "Have you ever been a battered woman? If not, you can't possibly know what I'm feeling." These kinds of comments were what I heard mentioned by movement participants, who were often surprised by their clients' hostility. But they usually recognized the validity of the skepticism and strove to make themselves accountable, "relevant" to the real needs of battered women. However, since at the time this issue seemed peripheral to my main focus, I did not pursue it in my research. Now I would like to delve

more deeply into how a movement instigated and supported by outsiders is altered by the needs and desires of insiders.

As a further area of study, I am curious about the ongoing relationship between insiders and outsiders. Why have battered women not taken over this movement on their behalf? What about the situation of being a battered woman makes it less likely that the victims will organize themselves? Or is it incorrect to assume that they will not? Have battered women or formerly battered women in fact become the majority of members in some groups? If so, how has their involvement affected the group, and how will it eventually affect the movement? Marx and Useem contend that insiders are more likely to achieve dominance in the later stages of a social movement, as they gain a sense of their rights and the means to achieve them. If this proves true of the battered women's movement, what are the implications? For instance, would insiders be less inclined to follow the social services model of providing shelter and other concrete services?

As I stated in Chapter One, this has been a study of a movement that is still in the process of developing, rather than a restrospective analysis of a movement that has already peaked and declined. Hence, the movement's final act is yet to be played; and its

ultimate success or failure cannot be judged. The battered women's movement has not reached stage four of Spector and Kitsuse's (1977) model (described in Chapter One of this dissertation) of the history of social problems. At stage four, groups reject institutional solutions and begin to develop alternative solutions to the problem they have organized to make visible and solve. At this point, members of the battered women's movement are still working within "the system," attempting to alter the definition of woman battering and gain support for mainstream solutions--providing social services for the victim. In the future, however, the movement may alter its strategy, or even its goals.

NOTES

Chapter One.

1. This discussion implies an ahistorical perspective. Although male dominance may have existed in most periods of human history, the forms of dominance have varied enormously.

> The acceptance of wife-beating in biblical and medieval times and in 19th century Europe highlights the continuity of female oppression . . . but this truth must be specified historically in ways that permit us to chart its changing meaning under different conditions and the appropriateness of different strategies of resistance . . . Complex social factors may determine whether and in what combination physical, ideological, political, or economic force will be used to control women and to what particular end (Stark, et al. ,1979:481).

This study will focus on some of the factors which led to a change in acceptance of physical force in the 1970's.

2. Marx was specifically describing the small-holding peasants of nineteenth-century France who were prevented from organizing themselves into a class by several material conditions:

> a. Their mode of production isolated each family on its own land, and inhibited the development of a division of labor in cultivation or diversification of social relations;
>
> b. The underdeveloped system of communication in France at that time kept the rural population further isolated; and
>
> c. Poverty and the necessity of a day-to-day struggle for survival on self-sufficient land holdings obviated social intercourse.

Interestingly, almost the same conditions may be found among battered women in modern society, who are often isolated in their own homes much as the peasant family was isolated on its farm.

3. Spector and Kitsuse (1977: 79) point out the same flaw in conventional sociological definitions of social problems, which ignore "how the participants in an activity define that activity."

Chapter Two.

1. Freeman (1975) objects to these terms, insisting that the two branches cannot be consistently differentiated along "ideological" lines. She prefers to refer to the "older" and "younger" branches of the movement, and to divide them on the basis of differing organizational structures and styles (p. 50). But since this paper deals with the subject of the two branches or strands so briefly, I see no reason to reject the easily distinguishable and recognizable terms of Women's Rights and Women's Liberation.

2. Obviously, this history of the two branches is very sketchy. But it does not seem necessary to go into further detail for the purposes of this study.

3. Like the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's, the Anti-Slavery Movement of the nineteenth century set a precedent for feminism. Abolitionism provided women with a political education: it supplied a theory of social change which they could apply to their own situation, an egalitarian ideology which made woman's subordination to man lss acceptable, and a way to escape the clerical authority which had formerly made objection to inequality impossible for most women (DuBois, 1978: 32).

4. Geiss (1977: 4-5) states that prostitution was the first focus of women's groups concerned with crime issues, but not everyone agreed that prostitutes were victims, and prostitutes themselves usually did not want feminists to intrude or curtail their business. Thus, the women's movement continued to search for an appropriate "cause" until they targeted rape, in 1971.

5. Other definitions of woman battering may be either more general or more restrictive. Davidson (1980) includes any situation in which the "wife" fears the "husband's" superior strength and cannot

effectively defend herself or prevent him from acting as he wishes. Straus, et al. (1980), in an effort to arrive at a systematic definition, constructed a scale of eight "violent acts," ranked in order of intensity, ranging from "throwing something at spouse" to "using a knife or gun on spouse". But as the authors concede, battering is a subjective term: for some people it refers only to situations in which severe damage is inflicted. For others it refers to any act of aggression by a man against his wife or cohabitee. Still others would include psychological coercion as a form of woman battering. As in the case of child abuse (Gelles, 1979), the definition of woman battering is socially constructed. But for me, the crucial factor in defining battering is that it occurs between intimates, and this seems consistent with most definitions.

6. The politics of naming is discussed in Chapter Five. Terms such as domestic violence, spouse abuse, and conjugal crime are all used to refer to the same phenomenon, but these terms obscure the victim; I am specifically concerned with the battered woman. Those who agree in retaining the emphasis on women, but prefer the term "battered wives" usually explain that they are using the term wives to emphasize the intimate relationship, not to exclude cohabiting, unmarried couples. They often add, correctly, that the possession of a marriage license tends to increase the chances of battering (see, for example, Dobash and Dobash, 1979; Straus, et al., 1980; Walker, 1979).

7. Rubin (1975) defines a sex/gender system as "the set of arrangements by which a society transforms biological sexuality into products of human activity, and in which these transformed sexual needs are satisfied" (p. 159). It is a "neutral term which refers to the domain of gender relations and indicates that oppression is not inevitable in that domain, but is the product of the specific social relations which organize it" (p. 168).

8. The concept of patriarchy is somewhat problematic, since it is not used in the same sense by every writer. Bridges and Hartmann (1977: 5) define it as "a descriptive term used to refer to any male-dominated society . . . or to a social system which continually reproduces male dominance." But Gayle Rubin prefers to reserve the term patriarchy to refer to "a specific form of male dominance . . . of the Old Testament-type pastoral nomads . . . or groups like them" (1975: 168). And Barbara Ehrenreich agrees that "a huge discontinuity lies between us and true

patriarchy . . . a system in which production is centered in the household and is presided over by the oldest male" (1976: 6).

In a later article, Hartmann challenges Rubin's narrow use of the term as too restrictive and, at the same time, gives a more precise explanation of her own conception.

> I define patriarchy as a set of social relations which has a material base and in which there are hierarchical relations between men, and solidarity among them, which enables them to control women. Patriarchy is thus the system of male oppression of women . . . and is a good label for most male-dominated societies (1979: 232).

Hartmann's argument is a strong one for adopting the term patriarchy to refer to varying situations of male dominance, and in the second article, with Amy Bridges, she demonstrates the material basis for patriarchy which helped to shape capitalism and which interacts with capitalism in a partnership of mutual beneficence (Bridges and Hartmann, 1977: 15-22). It may, in fact, be the best signifier for the concept, since it captures some of the Freudian notion of the unconscious roots of social relationships. Perhaps the term will eventually be uniformly defined in the broader sense, as a system of male dominance. Until that understanding is reached, however, I think that if the word patriarchy is employed, it should be accompanied by a statement of how the author is conceptualizing it. In this paper I am using patriarchy as Hartmann does, and I think that she and other writers who employ the word this way are at least on the right track in seeking some symbol for society-wide male dominance.

9. The television shows were "Do You Still Beat Your Wife?", an episode of the weekly "Police Woman" series (ABC TV, October 24, 1977); "Intimate Strangers," a made-for-TV movie (ABC TV, November 4, 1977); and "Battered," a made-for-TV movie (NBC TV, September 26, 1978).

10. Examples of each type of verdict include Francine Hughes, found not guilty by reason of temporary insanity in 1977 (Michigan); Sharon McNearney, acquitted on grounds of self defense in 1977 (Michigan); Evelyn Ware, acquitted on grounds of self defense in 1977 (California); and Janice Hornbuckle, acquitted of first-degree murder on the

grounds of self defense in 1977 (Washington). (All cited in Schneider and Jordan, 1978).

Chapter Three.

1. Steinmetz (1976) and other researchers have attempted to establish the prevalence of "husband battering" as equal or nearly equal to woman battering; but Pleck, et al. (1978), McGrath (1979), and others have refuted both the validity of Steinmetz's data and the rationale of her perspective. Steinmetz herself seems to have later modified this position, and she and her colleagues (Straus, et al., 1980) point out that the social position of women in our society makes them much more vulnerable than men to severe and continued abuse.

2. Klein (1979: 26) contends that Women's House was the first feminist-oriented shelter for battered women in the U.S. Martin (1976) describes three shelters which were in operation previously: Haven House in Pasadena, California, Ingraham Volunteers in Maine, and Rainbow Retreat in Phoenix, Arizona. But each of these shelters were originally begun as homes for the families of alcoholics and, Martin implies, were neither feminist-oriented nor, by extension, products of the battered women's movement.

3. Note that since the focus of my research was not on the residents or on any aspect of the internal, day-to-day functioning of groups' services, I cannot offer a detailed analysis of life within this type of environment.

4. It is not clear whether she is referring to national, feminist news networks, or perhaps YWCA publications, or the establishment press. In any case, it is interesting to note that this is a way in which the media participated in spreading the movement.

5. On August 26, 1976.

6. This form of public "speaking out" may have been an important source of recognition and support in many communities. In Michigan in 1976, the state Women's Commission sponsored a series of public hearings around the state in which battered women testified to experiences of abuse, and social service agencies discussed the lack of services for battered women. This was before most communities in the state had established shelter groups, and received

widespread publicity in state newspapers (Michigan Women's Commission Report, 1977).

7. Some writers and activists refer to the "shelter movement" (e.g., McGrath, 1979; Klein, 1979), or use the terms "battered women's movement" and "shelter movement" interchangeably. I have adhered to the term "battered women's movement" because I think it has broader implications: it encompasses groups who do not provide shelter, and may not intend to do so in the future. Many activists now see a need to go "beyond shelters" in dealing with the issue of woman battering:

> Activists have come to see sheltering as one aspect of a broader anti-battering campaign. Attacking the legal situation and criminal justice response has been a strong focus (Klein, 1979: 27).

8. Specifically, dues are determined as follows:

> For programs with a budget of $250,001 and over, annual dues are $100.00.
>
> For programs with a budget of $150,001 to $250,000, annual dues are $75.00.
>
> For programs with a budget of $50,001 to $150,000, annual dues are $50.00.
>
> For programs with a budget of $50,000 and less, annual dues are $25.00.

Chapter Four

1. An interesting question, which I did not explore, would concern whether such organic solidarity actually resulted in stronger cohesion within the group, as Durkheim suggested is the result of differentiation and specialization.

Chapter Five.

1. Barry (1979: 38) presents a strong argument for careful use of the concept of victim, although she is not referring specifically to battered women.

> Creating the role and status of the victim is the practice I call victimism.

> . . The status of "victim" creates a mind set eliciting pity and sorrow. Victimism denies the woman the integrity of her humanity through the whole experience, and it creates a framework for others to know her not as a person but as a victim, someone to whom violence was done.

2. Harding (1981: 73) makes this same observation, and then broadens the definition of feminism to include anyone who supports "feminist" causes:

> In this essay, "feminists" refers to women who actively support major feminist reforms and ideas, such as the right to legal abortion, equal access to education and employment, and equal rights and obligations in marriage, even though not all women who support such reforms would call themselves "feminists."

For my population, however, it does not seem appropriate to impose the label of feminist on people who explicitly reject it. Thus, I have allowed them to define themselves as either feminist or not.

Chapter Six.

1. "Women's Aid" is the name used in Great Britain to refer to the movement to end woman battering. It seems to be the counterpart of the battered women's movement in the U.S., snce its goals and orientation, as described by Dobash and Dobash (1981: 563) are to try

> . . . in an egalitarian way to return the problem [of "wife beating"] to women and the community and also to get social agencies to respond positively. It rejects male violence unequivocally and challenges the patriarchal domination underlying the acceptance and continuation of wife beating.

2. Gusfield (1975) explains that although ownership of and responsibility for a problem are sometimes retained by the same party, they are often separate. The owners of the problem may perceive their mission as being that of obliging others to take

responsibility for the problem. An example would be the Temperance movement, which claimed to own the problem of alchohol abuse, but placed responsibility for it on saloon keepers and/or weak-willed "drunkards."

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. What is the name of your organization? Does the name have a special meaning/significance? Was there any debate among your members about choosing this name? Were other names proposed? Did some members favor a different name?

2. What is your role in the organization? Has your role changed over the course of time you have been involved? In what ways? When did you become personally involved in the organization? Why? How did you learn about battering? When?

3. How did your organization get started? Who were the first people to see a need for the organization? How did they learn about battering? What books, if any, did they read? Why do you think these people started realizing there was such a need at that particular time?

How did those first people find each other and find others to help them? Did they know each other through other organizations or experiences?

What is the approximate population of the community you serve? Do you have any idea how many battered women are in that population?

4. What services does your organization provide? Why did you decide to provide these services and not others?

(If there is a shelter) How long has the shelter been open, and what services did you provide before? How long after starting to organize did the shelter open? (If quite a while) Why did it take that long?

(If there is no shelter) Do you plan to open a shelter? Why? When?

Who is eligible for your services (women, men, women with children, battered women only or rape victims, drug or alcohol abusers . . . ?) Is there any controversy within your group about this issue of who is the target group? Are most women who request your services married? Does it matter?

How many women have used your services since the beginning? This year?

5. Describe your shelter. What kind of housing does it provide (either that exists or is planned)? Do you rent or own it? How many people can stay at one time? For how long? Do you have a back-up system for more people?

6. Do you provide counseling? By your own staff/volunteers or by referral? Do counselors go through any training?

7. Is your (office/shelter) location secret? Why or why not? What security precautions do you provide?

8. What do you think is your group's philosophy? What do members of your group think causes battering? Do you believe a woman should permanently leave a battering situation? What is the solution to battering?

What do you think will happen to your group in the future? Will the issue of battering become obsolete? Will your services only be needed for a short time?

9. How is your group organized? Describe the formal structure. Is there a different, informal structure that is closer to reality? Do you have a board of directors? Paid staff? Volunteers? What are the criteria for becoming any of these? How are they (board, staff) chosen? Is any formal training required? Are there any splits or factions among these groups?

10. Are any men involved? Any restrictions on men participating?

Is any attempt made to balance personnel racially, ethnically, by class, age, or religion? Are there any conflicts between factions?

Are there any formerly battered women involved in your group? Were there in the beginning? What is the relationship between battered and nonbattered women?

Is membership predominantly composed of people who regard themselves as "professionals" or experts in the field of battering?

Is the membership feminist? How do you define feminist?

11. Are there any other types of services for battered women (men) in your community? Do the different groups work together? Do they share philosophies/ideologies?

Are you affiliated with groups providing services to battered women in other communities? With state or regional coalitions? With the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence?

12. How do you tell people about your services? About battering in general? How are you going about gaining public support and recognition? What sorts of opposition have you encountered? How do you handle it? What about the issue of religion?

Do members of your group do much public speaking about battering? How do you explain battering--why men batter women? Do you use any films? Which ones? Do you recommend any books or articles? Which ones?

Do you use the term "patriarchy"? Do you talk more about "domestic violence", "spouse abuse", "battered women", or some other term? Why do you prefer the term you use?

Have the news media been supportive of your efforts? How have you contacted them?

13. What are your sources of funding? What is your relationship to your funding sources? Do they impose any regulations on your operations? What were some of the fundraising tactics you have used?

14. What other kinds of regulations do you operate under (zoning, city council, state laws . . .)? What is your relationship to the police?

15. What are the future goals of your group? What do you think is the most important function your group serves?

16. Is there anything else you want to talk about or you think I should have asked you?

APPENDIX B

LETTER SENT TO LOCAL GROUPS

PLEASE RETURN TODAY IF POSSIBLE

October 15, 1980

Department of Sociology
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan 48824

Dear (name of group):

I am a graduate student in the Department of Sociology at Michigan State University. I have also participated since January, 1980, as a volunteer counselor/advocate at a battered women's shelter. For my doctoral dissertation, I am doing a study of groups who are providing services for battered women. I am especially interested in the way such groups got started. I would appreciate your answering the following questions and returning this form to me. I am enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope for your convenience.

1. What year did your group form?

2. Could you very briefly indicate why people in your community decided to organize services for battered women?

3. Do you have a shelter?
   a. If so, briefly describe the type of housing if offers:

   b. If not, do you plan to have a shelter eventually? When?

4. Do you have a paid staff?
   If so, how many?

5. Do you have volunteers?
   If so, how many?

If you have any brochures or other printed material about your organization, I would appreciate receiving a copy.

After getting basic information, I shall make further contact with specific groups. My study will be primarily focused on interviews with women who have been active in organizing groups.

Thank you for your cooperation. When completed, I think this research will be helpful to you and other groups in learning more about each other and the ways each has found to help women in battering situations. All information will be confidential, and the name or location of organizations will not be used. I shall share my findings by making results available in printed form to participants.

Sincerely,

Carol S. Wharton

I can be contacted through the Sociology Department, Michigan State University. 517/355-6640 or at home 517/349-4716.

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