

**Claims-Making in Context: Forty Years of Canadian Feminist
Activism on Violence Against Women**

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Abstract

Feminist activism has a rich history in Canada, but mobilization on the issue of violence against women specifically gained considerable momentum during what is often referred to as the “second wave” of the feminist movement. Since this time, the Canadian provinces of Ontario and Quebec have seen a proliferation of both grassroots and public policy responses to intimate partner violence and sexual violence. This study is an effort to construct a feminist history of the activism that occurred between 1970 and 2010, as well as to make sense of feminist claims-making strategies using a social constructionist approach to social problems and to make sense of feminist activism as a social movement using social movement impact theory. In constructing a feminist history, documents from the Canadian Women’s Movement Archives were consulted and interviews with current and former feminist activists were conducted. The historical component of this study focuses on how feminist activists first recognized and responded to the problem of violence against women.

This analysis suggests that throughout the last forty years, feminist activists have engaged in a multi-pronged project of providing feminist services for victims of intimate partner and sexual violence, advocating for social and legal change as the “official” response to violence against women, and conducting their own research on the extent and nature of violence against women. Various strategies were used in this process, including forming partnerships and coalitions, but activists also faced challenges from within and outside the movement, including internal debates, struggles to fit in, and backlash from counter movements. The final chapter discusses how the history of feminist activism on

violence against woman cannot easily fit into strict constructionist approach to understanding social problems and, as a social movement, is difficult to evaluate given the myriad goals, mechanisms for reaching those goals, and interpretations of success associated with the movement. Future research directions are also suggested, including looking at evidence of claims-making from other sources; bridging the gap, theoretically and pragmatically, between the “mainstream” feminist movement and other streams of women’s activism; and, more conceptual work on feminist movements and the separation between intimate partner and sexual violence.

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Abbreviations

AGM – Annual General Meeting

CACSW – Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women

CALACS – *Centres d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions a caractère sexuel*

CASAC – Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres

CEW – Committee for the Equality of Women

CRIAW – Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women

CRI-VIFF – *Centre de recherché interdisciplinaire sur la violence familiale et la violence faite aux femmes*

CRVAWC – Centre for Research and Education on Violence Against Women

CTS – Conflict Tactics Scale

CWMA – Canadian Women's Movement Archives

CWSA – Canadian Women's Studies Association

DAWN – DisAbled Women's Network

DVAP – Domestic Violence Action Plan

FFQ – *Fédération des femmes du Québec*

GSS – General Social Survey

INAC – Indian and Northern Affairs Canada

IPV – Intimate partner violence

LAC – Library and Archives Canada

LEAF – Legal Education and Action Fund

MAS – *Ministère des affaires sociaux*

MCSS – Ministry of Community and Social Services

METRAC – Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children

MP – Member of Parliament

MSSS – *Ministère de la santé et des services sociaux*

NAC – National Action Committee on the Status of Women

NAWL – National Association of Women and the Law

NDP – New Democratic Party
OAITH – Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses
OCRCC – Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres
OCTEVAW – Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women
PAR – Partner Assault Response
RCC – Rape crisis centre
RCSW – Royal Commission on the Status of Women
SAC – Sexual assault centre
SMO – Social movement organization
SV – Sexual violence
SVAP – Sexual Violence Action Plan
SWC – Status of Women Canada
VAW – Violence against women
WISE – Women in Safe Environments

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Feminist claims-making processes have contributed to the inclusion of many historically “private” women’s issues in Canadian public policy. Violence against women is a persistent manifestation of women’s inequality in society and is the issue with which I am most concerned as a feminist criminologist. Specifically, this study aims to make sense of the evolution of feminist activism on violence against women as a social problem. My overarching research question examines how feminists – as claims-makers and as social movement activists – have mobilized around the issue of violence against women in the Canadian provinces of Ontario and Quebec between 1970 and 2010. This geographic area and time period were chosen because of my location conducting research in bilingual Ottawa, Ontario and because 1970 marked the release of the report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women, considered by many to be the foundational document of liberal feminism’s second wave in Canada. In adopting a contextual social constructionist approach, I situate feminist activism as a process through which various strategies are engaged to make sense of violence against women as a social problem and advocate for various social changes. This study uses the voices of feminist activists themselves to construct a socio-politically contextualized account of their mobilization. Hundreds of documents from over 80 feminist organizations across Ontario and Quebec were consulted and interviews with 20 women currently or formally active in the movement were conducted. The outcomes of this study are contributions to three main areas of inquiry: an empirical contribution to feminist historical research, a theoretical

contribution to sociological social problems theory, and a theoretical contribution to social movement impact theory.

Many histories of the second wave of the feminist movement come in the form of memoirs written by individual activists (e.g., Anderson, 1996; Rebick, 2005; Landsberg, 2011). These types of reflections usually offer the author's analysis of the movement from her current perspective and focus on events and issues in which she was most directly involved. However, most allude to the highly contextual nature of history, the continuity of feminist movements, and the reality that no feminist project can ever really be finished as long as gender-based oppression persists in the world. A common theme among many feminist histories and memoirs of the movement is their atheoretical nature, usually a chronology of events with little attention to their significance outside the movement. This study aims to fill the gap left by these feminist histories of the movement by providing an evolutionary account of the movement, situating feminist mobilization in a socio-political, historical context and connecting it to social problems and social movement theory. As a contribution to feminist research, this exploration seeks to explain feminist claims-making using a contextual social constructionist approach to social problems theory (e.g., Best, 2008; Loseke, 2003; Spector & Kitsuse, 2009), in particular asking the substantive question: How did the feminist social constructions of "wife battering" and "rape" evolve into the legal concepts of "domestic violence" and "sexual assault"?

Situating feminist activism on violence against women as a social problems claims-making process embodies the social constructionist approach of studying activities, rather than outcomes. Early scholars who looked at the "natural history" of social problems claims-making (e.g., Spector & Kitsuse, 2009) presented linear models of how claims-

makers interact with government institutions, media, and the general public to “stake their claim”. A feminist constructionist account of feminist claims-making concerning violence against women cannot be divorced from a consideration of the context, and ultimately the outcomes, of that claims-making activity. As feminist claims-making activity is not concerned with a singular issue, but part of a broad, complex, and diverse social movement, a contextualized constructionist approach is employed.

Though feminist activists engage in a number of claims-making activities in their mobilization around violence against women, the multiple goals, different strategies for reaching those goals, and different interpretations of the success or failure of these activities suggest that feminist claims-making occurs in the context of a complex, diffuse social movement. Situating feminist activism within an understanding of feminist social movements as “everyday organizing” (Rupp & Taylor, 1999), I examine the extent to which the Canadian feminist movement has a directionality from which inferences of progress or regression can be made. Indeed, does the social movement literature offer indicators of social movement success or failure that would allow for an evaluation of feminist activism concerning violence against women? Again, the same characteristics that make it difficult to conceptualize mobilization on violence against women as a single issue claims-making process – multiple and diverse goals, strategies, and interpretations of social change – make it difficult to categorize the successes and failures.

Overall, this thesis argues that the Canadian feminist movement, conceptualized as “everyday organizing”, evolved as, but was not limited to, a dialectical process between claims-makers and the Canadian state. This conceptualization of social movements is best reserved for long-term, ongoing movements that maintain their activism outside moments

of broad public exposure (e.g., animal rights movements, environmental movements). Most women's organizations in Ontario and Quebec were working on issues related to a greater project of promoting women's equality, engaging in a range of activist mobilization strategies. Assigning a level of "effectiveness" to activism on violence against women is difficult given the lack of uniformity among these groups in terms of specific goals (e.g., service provision, advocacy, legal reform, and research), mechanisms for reaching these goals (e.g., funding, state action, and recognition of feminist expertise), and interpretations of the state's response to feminist claims-makers (e.g., a shift in the nature of services and service-providers, various setbacks and challenges). Thus, this thesis supports Leila Rupp and Verta Taylor's (1999) conceptualization of feminist movements as "everyday organizing". The concept of "everyday organizing" recognizes the ebbs and flows of activism visibility within shifting socio-political climates and provides a case for viewing social problems claims-making through a contextual social constructionist lens.

While I examine the potential for evaluating the feminist women's movements' activism on violence against women, I do not provide recommendations on what can be done "better" in the future. I am but one woman within a vast network of feminist movements in Canada and I do not intend to proscribe what would be "best" for the movement in the future. However, I do hope that this project, as a history, as an opportunity to pause and reflect and consider feminist activism in light of changing socio-political contexts, helps begin some conversations, among feminists and among those that do not consider themselves to be feminists. In addition, I hope it moves forward discussions on the conceptualization of "social problems", the dynamics of social movements, and the embeddedness of activist-researchers in claims-making activity

themselves. Violence against women remains a serious social problem for feminists and understanding their rich history of providing support to women and advocating for social and legal change, whatever that response might look like, can help guide us as we continue to mobilize for change.

To facilitate consistency and readers' understanding of this study, I will define several concepts used frequently throughout this text. "Feminism" refers to a social movement whose members recognize the historical and contemporary oppression experienced by diverse women in society and who are dedicated to promoting women's equality in society, formally and substantively. "Feminist activism" refers to the mobilization engaged in by individuals who identify as feminists with the intention of promoting women's equality (e.g., providing services, engaging with the state, promoting and lobbying for structural change, conducting research). "Mobilization" refers to various activities designed to promote social change, including the construction of the issue of concern as a social problem, but also providing or lobbying for first-hand remedies to that problem, calling on governments, state institutions, media, and the general public to recognize and respond to the problem, and then again critically reacting to how governments have responded. A "social movement" in particular is a socio-political phenomenon in which a group of concerned individuals mobilize around a specific issue, such as violence against women.

"Violence against women" is an intentionally broad term that encompasses any physical, sexual, psychological, emotional, financial, or social harm caused to a woman, by individuals (known or unknown to the woman), groups, or states, based primarily or in part on the fact that she is a woman. For the purposes of this study, mobilization around only

two forms of violence against women is examined: intimate partner violence and sexual violence. “Intimate partner violence” again is a broad term recognizing physical, sexual, psychological, emotional, financial, or social harm perpetrated by one romantic partner against another (i.e., dating, common-law, married, separated, divorced), typically by the male partner against a female partner in a heterosexual relationship, but also existing in same-sex partnerships and against men in heterosexual partnerships. This type of violence can involve coercive-controlling battering, situational violence, violence as conflict resolution, or separation-instigated violence (Kelly & Johnson, 2008). Historically, this type of violence was called “wife battering” or “woman abuse” to describe the “Power and Control” conceptualization of intimate partner violence as a phenomenon of an abusive man using violence to manipulate and control his female partner (Walker, 1979). The term is used contemporarily to distinguish battering relationships from relationships that are mutually combative or in which violence has been normalized as a means of conflict resolution, or to recognize the gendered power imbalances between heterosexual intimate partners. The term “domestic violence” is largely used to refer to the legal and policy status of intimate partner violence and related *Criminal Code* offences, including physical assault, threats, and criminal harassment.

“Sexual violence” is a broad term used to reflect a continuum of violations that objectify and/or attack an individual’s sexuality, typically directed at and/or experienced by women, from sexual harassment to sexual coercion to rape, that can be perpetrated by someone known to the woman, including an intimate partner, but also by family members, friends, acquaintances, colleagues, or people in positions of authority (i.e., doctors, police officers, teachers), or someone unknown to the woman (Kelly, 1988). “Rape” is the

historical legal term for the *Criminal Code* offence of a man's "carnal knowledge" of a woman who was not his wife and without her consent. It is used contemporarily to describe sexual violence involving penetration, typically of the vagina or anus, by a penis or other object. "Sexual assault" is the legal term for the *Criminal Code* offence that prohibits three levels of increasing severity of sexual assault (without explicitly defining it, but in practice referring to any unwanted sexual conduct).

This document is organized into seven chapters. In Chapter 2, several theoretical perspectives are explored to set the context for this study: the social constructionist approach to social problems theory, social movement theory and social movement impact theory, and the different streams of thought found within feminist movements. Chapter 3 provides the background context for this project by reviewing the literature on the emergence and evolution of the battered women's movement and the rape crisis movement in Canada. The methodology of the current study is described in Chapter 4, as well as various limitations of documentary and historical work. Chapters 5 and 6 describe my evidence on how feminists recognized and responded to the problem of violence against women and of their reflections on their historical and ongoing activism in connection with the concurrent socio-political context. In Chapter 7 I discuss some of the major conclusions that emerged from the data in light of "natural history" approaches to social problems and social movement "effectiveness" and provide suggestions for future research.

Chapter 2: Understanding social problems, social movements, and feminism

In this chapter, several theoretical paradigms will be reviewed, setting the context for the current study. First, the evolution of sociological thought on social problems will be addressed, from a focus on the “natural history” approach to understanding claims-making processes to the more contemporary approach of viewing these processes through contextual social constructionist lenses. Next, several models of the evolution of social movements will be discussed in an effort to situate the feminist women’s movement in Canada, examine their effect on social change, and question how well social movements theory allows for the evaluation of the activities with which they are concerned. Finally, this chapter will conclude with a section on the theoretical orientations of various feminist social movements within Canada to highlight the multiple and diverse goals and mobilization strategies engaged in by different branches of the movement.

Social problems theory

In their critique of early functionalist and value-conflict articulations of social problems that assume social problems are based on objective conditions, Kitsuse and Spector (1973a) offer a strictly constructionist approach to understanding social problems as a claims-making process. In their view, social problems are “the activities of groups making assertions of grievances and claims with respect to some putative conditions” (Kitsuse & Spector, 1973a, p.415). Arguing that the existence of so-called objective conditions is an empirical question, not a theoretical one, Kitsuse and Spector (1973a) urge social problems sociologists to concern themselves solely with how particular groups or

societies identify, define, and make claims to official, responding bodies about the existence, and the harm caused by, an alleged social condition. They further argue that sociologists of social problems should separate themselves ideologically from the claims-makers and situate their position in reference to the claims-making activity as an objective, scientific observer (Spector & Kitsuse 2009). In other words, the sociologist should not be concerned with the potential outcomes or resolutions to the social problems that claims-makers allege to exist.

Spector and Kitsuse (2009) offer a four stage “natural history” model to understand social problems that directs the sociologist to examine how claims-makers construct their stories of social problems over time. This approach sees claims-making activities progressing through four stages: 1) claims-makers define an issue as problematic and attempt to gain public recognition of this issue as a social problem; 2) there is “official” recognition of the issue as a social problem by the state or some other legitimate institution or organization; 3) initial claims-makers express dissatisfaction with the official response to the condition as a social problem; and, 4) claims-makers reject official responses and propose alternative or counter-institutions to respond to the issue. More recently, Best (2013) has produced a more complex natural history, starting from the initial claims-making activities, to securing media coverage, controlling and measuring public reaction, garnering a political response through policy-making and the implementation of those policies, and ending with an evaluation of the policy outcomes that may or may not reinvigorate another cycle of the process.

The social constructionist approach has inspired an impressive body of research on the process of claims-making and, more specifically, how claims-makers construct certain

putative conditions as social problems (e.g., Best 1995; Fleras 2005; Holstein & Miller 1993). However, as Best (2002) notes in a review of Kitsuse and Spector's work, few social constructionists are interested in divorcing themselves from the social contexts in which these alleged social problems, and the researcher, are embedded. As such, a tradition of contextual constructionism emerged that highlighted the importance of recognizing the cultural, historical, and social contexts in which claims-making activities are found (e.g., Best, 1993; Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 1994; Rafter, 1992). For example, Hepworth (1980) offered an early analysis of the emergence of wife battering as a problem to be remedied in the context of myriad other social developments for women in Britain, identifying this as a mark of social progress. But as Muehlenhard and Kimes (1999, p. 243) note, "Terms like progress or improvement are meaningless without a specific goal." Without connecting the "discovery" of wife battering to other changes in women's social status, as well as the broader feminist women's movement, there is little context to situate the identification of wife battering as social progress. It is by appreciating such things as the interconnected changes in women's labour force participation, the accessibility of divorce, and other social policy initiatives that position the emergence of wife battering as a social problem into an evolutionary trajectory of changes to women's status in society.

Darin Weinberg (2009) attempts to resolve the limitations of strict constructionism with "a more tempered approach", one that allows the researcher to attend not only to claims-making activities but also to situate these activities within a broader social and structural context. Weinberg (2009) problematizes Ibarra and Kitsuse's (1993) distinction between the sociologist's "analytical" or objective interpretation of the claims-making process and the "mundane" or value-laden interpretation of presumed objective conditions

by the claims-makers. Where Ibarra and Kitsuse (1993) advocate for a disengaged, value-neutral constructionist sociologist, Weinberg (2009), in a long tradition of critical scholars highlighting the chimera of value-free research, suggests that social research is, without exception, engaged in facilitating or obstructing social change.

Indeed, it is by acknowledging the relevance of social context that the assumption of designations of “progress” or “regression” can be problematized. Loseke (1991; 2001), using “wife abuse” as the putative social problem, argues that the particular frames claims-makers use to articulate their concerns serve to limit and shape the construction of the condition as a social problem and subsequently the official response to it. According to Loseke (1991; 2001), at least in the early years of their activism, the American battered women’s movement used a narrative of wife abuse that focused on wives who were the victims of extreme, repeated, and unstoppable acts of physical violence at the hands of controlling, villainous husbands. This particular construction of wife abuse contributed to the public seeing this as illegal activity and bolstered calls for police intervention in the home, a space historically considered sacrosanct. However, this construction effectively ignores the heterogeneity in women’s experiences of intimate violence – that wives are not only victims but exercise agency, that violence can be perpetrated in forms other than physical assault, and that abusers do not always present themselves as monstrous villains – and assumes that police intervention is warranted, welcome, or sufficient in all cases (Loseke 1991).

How does a contextualized social constructionist account of Canadian feminist claims-making on violence against women explain the emergence and evolution of violence against women as a social problem? This is the question I intend to address by

applying this theoretical approach to the specific case of violence against women and the specific claims-makers of feminist activists. As Best (1993) and Weinberg (2009) note of constructionist sociology in general, feminist research in particular is unable to remain strictly constructionist, or solely at the level of language, because of its intimate connection to the activist work and lived experiences of and as social problems claims-makers. Further, feminist researchers often are members of claims-making groups, and engage in scholarly or analytical activity because of their interest in advancing recognition and response to the conditions highlighted by claims-makers. Undoubtedly, we also have other goals connected to the academy and a commitment to advancing more abstract thought, but these cannot be divorced from, or hierarchized in relation to, those we may have as members of the claims-making group. Thus, I see this study as building upon the tradition of contextual constructionist approaches to social problems theory.

Social movements theory

As Joel Best (2002, p.705) notes, “Constructionist analyses have obvious parallels with studies of social movements.” In his constructionist work on social problems, Best (2013) connects social problems claims-making with social movement theory, recognizing how social movement actors and organizations harness claims of social conditions to fuel their mobilization. Indeed, social movement actors are influenced by access to resources, the persuasiveness of their rhetoric, and that of competing claims-makers, and the outcomes produced and responded to by the initial claims-makers at every stage of the natural history process (Best, 2013). Feminist activism on violence against women, while incorporating claims-making activities, is not the work of a uniform claims-maker, but the

amalgamation of multiple and diverse voices working toward goals and implementing strategies for social change that make up a larger social movement.

John McCarthy and Mayer Zald (1987, p. 153) define a social movement as “a set of opinions and beliefs in a population representing preferences for changing some elements of the social structure or reward distribution, or both, of a society” and the activity associated with that set of opinions and beliefs. Social movement theory attempts to explain how and why individuals enter into social movements; how, why, and in what form social movements take shape; and the potential social, cultural, and political consequences of that social movement activity (McCarthy & Zald, 1987). Social movement theory draws from a number of theoretical perspectives, including social constructionism, but is also rooted in ideas about socio-structural strain as described by Emile Durkheim and social class struggles as predicted by Karl Marx. Like other mainstream sociological, criminological, and public policy theories, social movement theory has often failed to take gender into consideration. Social movement theory in its classical and even its contemporary forms tends to characterize social movements as clearly definable and highly visible moments of large-scale mobilization that arise for a specific period of time in response to a specific concern, a conceptualization that is incongruent with many feminist interpretations of the women’s movement (e.g., Barry, Chandler, & Berg, 2007; Lehrner & Allen, 2009; Staggenborg & Taylor, 2005).

The classical model of social movement theory is heavily derived from Durkheim’s theorizing on structural strain in Industrial societies, as well as work within social psychology on individual strain, such as Robert Merton’s work on forms of cultural adaptation. The classical model posits that social movements emerge due to individuals

trying to deal with psychological tension that has been caused by some form of socio-structural strain (McAdam, 1982a). Assuming that mass social movements emerge and mobilize occasionally, this model takes for granted that society is generally free of strain. This presupposition cannot realistically be supported with even the most casual recognition that individuals vary in terms of economic status and ability to access education, social services, or criminal justice due to factors like gender, race, sexual orientation, and level of ability. More contemporary conceptualizations of social movements tend to fall under three general models: the political process model, the resource mobilization model, and a new social movement theory; but even these contemporary theories do not adequately account for gender in their explanations of social movement mobilization.

The political process model builds on Marxist conceptions of power and sees social movements as political, rather than psychological, phenomena that involve marginalized groups mobilizing for some collective interest (McAdam, 1982b). This model is premised on “political opportunities” or time-sensitive fissures in normal political relations that can be exploited when a social movement organization (SMO) has the resources to do so (e.g., during wars, economic crises) (Gelb, 1995; McAdam, 1982b). According to McCarthy and Zald (1987, p. 153) a SMO is “a complex, or formal, organization that identifies its goals with the preferences of a social movement or counter-movement and attempts to implement those goals.” The Canadian feminist movement has had a number of SMOs by that definition. From the very grassroots level there are women’s shelters and rape crisis centres that operate with a dual function of services for women and advocacy for social change, and then there have been provincial and national organizations with more explicit and organized social change agendas (e.g., the now defunct National Action Committee on the

Status of Women [NAC] and the currently operating Women's Legal Education and Action Fund [LEAF]). Seen through the political opportunities lens, both grassroots and more institutionalized organizations have successfully mobilized and lobbied governments for changes to promote women's issues and equality when the political mood was agreeable. This framework is particularly congruent with the conceptualization of the feminist women's movement existing in "waves". The second wave of feminism emerged in the 1960s and 1970s when other forms of political activism, like the civil rights movement, the anti-war movement, and the black liberation movement, were also highly visible (Schechter, 1982). Thus, in the 1960s and 1970s, the feminist women's movement was a robust social movement taking advantage of the political climate of the time and organizing public campaigns, demonstrations, grassroots consciousness-raising, and support groups on a number of issues that concerned women (Barry et al., 2007).

Since this time, visible feminist activism in North America has noticeably decreased, leading some feminist researchers to question whether or not a women's social movement currently exists (Barry et al., 2007; Lehrner & Allen, 2009; Nash, 2002; Staggenborg & Taylor, 2005; Taylor, 1997). Feminist social movement theorists, like Verta Taylor, see the women's movement as operating beyond the public gaze outside of distinctive waves. This can be seen in the fields of education and government where more women have moved into their ranks and where women's issues have made their way into curriculums and onto agendas. The "everyday organizing" of various social service organizations and grassroots groups, including annual "Take Back the Night" marches, vigils, and the more recent phenomenon of feminist blogging represent some of the shifting tactics of the contemporary women's movement (Staggenborg & Taylor, 2005).

The political opportunities framework speaks to discrete moments that SMOs harness for their mobilization purposes. While this may explain some of the more high profile activism around violence from the 1970s to the early 1990s in Canada, it does not take into account the more subtle forms of “everyday organizing” that are characteristic of the feminist women’s movement after the decline of the so-called “second wave”. Suzanne Staggenborg and Verta Taylor (2005) argue that conventional conceptualizations of social movements that focus on cycles of protest miss the more subtle activism in which some groups, including those in the women’s movement, covertly engage. Specifically,

In a long-term, widespread movement such as the women’s movement...public actions and interactions with targets may appear more sporadic than sustained, and ideological support for the feminist struggle against women’s political and social subordination is created and maintained through less visible actions in various venues (Staggenborg & Taylor, 2005, p. 41).

Again, because of this lack of attention to gender, the political opportunities theory of social movements fails to provide an adequate description or proscription for feminist women’s organizing which may become more visible because of political opportunities, but not necessarily more robust.

In the resource mobilization perspective, which derives from political sociology and economics, SMOs are concerned with mobilizing resources, including money, labour, and media coverage, and work almost as entrepreneurs to weigh the costs and benefits of achieving change (McCarthy & Zald, 1987). This is undoubtedly a major concern for any SMO, but when resource mobilization is put into a social context, the accessibility of various resources is ultimately conditioned by a number of factors, including gender but

also race, ethnicity, social class, age, sexual orientation, and level of ability. The issues of certain groups tend to be legitimated more so than others, allowing some groups easier access to financial, personnel, and publicity resources. While many feminist grassroots activists have honed valuable accounting, legal, and lobbying skills through years of activism, many simply do not have the public clout or populist support to garner sustained attention to their issues. Disparity in resource accessibility is even visible within the women's movement, as professional women can much more easily mobilize (e.g., Canadian Women's Studies Association [CWSA] or National Association of Women Lawyers [NAWL]), while other more marginal or grassroots groups may have a difficult time finding an arena where their voices will be heard. Further, women's organizations have been uneasily lobbying governments for funding to maintain explicitly feminist services for women, putting some organizations in an awkward relationship with a funder whose institutional structures and discourses they are also working to dismantle. Thus, resource mobilization becomes quite a bit more complicated when social differences are taken into account.

The new social movement theorists are interested in the membership of social movement organizations and with issues of identity (Barry et al., 2007) and are concerned with facilitating cultural change (Nash, 2002). Cultural change targets the underlying root causes of social inequality, rather than simply changing surface-level laws and policies. New social movement theorists see social movements as more fluid phenomena, with activist networks and social movement communities able to sustain commitment from their members between cycles of protest by shifting collective identities (Staggenborg & Taylor, 2005). According to Sidney Tarrow (1994, p. 441), a cycle of protest refers to

A phase of heightened conflict and contention across the social system that includes: a rapid diffusion of collective action from more mobilized to less mobilized sectors; a quickened pace of innovation in the forms of contention; new or transformed collective action frames; a combination of organized and unorganized participation; and sequences of intensified interaction between challengers and authorities which can end in reform, repression, and sometimes revolution.

Members stay committed to social movements when there is “frame alignment” (Snow, Rochford, Worden, & Benford, 1986), or congruence between an individual’s interests, values, and beliefs and a SMO’s activities, goals, and ideology. David Snow and colleagues (1986) borrow from Erving Goffman’s (1974) concept of a frame as a “schemata of interpretation”, a collection of labels, anecdotes, and stereotypes that allow individuals to make sense of their social world. In reference to social movements, frame alignment renders “events or occurrences meaningful [and] functions to organize experience and guide action, whether individual or collective” (Snow et al., 1986, p. 211). SMOs conduct their activities within “collective action frames”, which are sub-frames of a social movement’s broader “master frame” (Snow & Benford, 1992). However, social movements have to contend with “counter-movements” which arise in response to the mobilization of a particular social movement and that exist as a “conscious, collective, organized attempt to resist or to reverse social change” (Mottl, 1980, p. 408).

Feminist social movement scholar Verta Taylor (1997) argues that contemporary theories of social movements do not adequately account for the activism of the women’s movement, and that there is a need for a more fluid and continuous conceptualization to capture the complexity of social movements, one that identifies multiple “turning points” instead of distinct “waves”. The new social movement theory is one that best takes up this complexity of the feminist women’s movement specifically, though it still neglects to take

gender into account explicitly. The feminist women's movement is a two-pronged project concerned with providing support to women and advocating for socio-cultural change and/or legislative or policy reform. While there is delineation in forms and priorities of different streams of feminist activism, most conform in some way to the fundamental project of improving women's lives. The idea of "cycles of protests" aligns with Staggenborg and Taylor's (2005) conceptualization of feminist activism as the "everyday organizing" that occurs outside distinctive waves. "Everyday organizing" has also been referred to as periods of "abeyance", or "a holding process by which movements sustain themselves in nonreceptive political environments and provide continuity from one stage of mobilization to another" (Taylor, 1997, p. 409). Finally, many of the concepts that help make sense of new social movements are useful for this project, particularly the idea of "frames" and "counter-movements", especially in the context of a feminist history. Framing an issue in a particular way functions as an "articulation mechanism...so that one set of meanings rather than another is conveyed, or, in the language of narrativity, one story rather than another is told" (Snow, 2004, p. 384).

Framing can also mark the difference between social movements that may claim to be organizing in support of the same or a similar cause. Challenges to the feminist women's movement are presented by counter-movements, including the "other women's movement" and the father's rights and men's rights movements. Jennifer Somerville (1997) juxtaposes the feminist women's movement with the "other women's movement" that arose to combat what was perceived as a unified "anti-familial" ideology of the feminist movement. Both movements argue that they are working in interests of women and are grounded in women's experiences. Members identify with a particular women's movement

based on the perceived alignment between their notions of women's status in society and each movements' ideological discourses (Snow et al., 1986; Somerville, 1997). For example, REAL Women of Canada is offered as an "alternative women's movement" that supports "traditional family values"; they argue that prostitution should be explicitly criminalized, that both "soft and hard core" pornography should be criminalized, and they are anti-abortion (REAL Women of Canada, 2007). Fathers' and men's rights movements have also emerged as women have been granted more formal equality in the public sphere, particularly in relation to divorce and custody decisions in family law; the system is seen by these groups to be biased in favour of women. The rhetoric of these two counter-movements overlaps by appealing for "gender neutrality", calling for the reassertion of "traditional" (patriarchal) families, and by claiming their own victim status (Dragiewicz, 2008; Flood, 2010). In the context of child custody, fathers' and men's rights groups overlook caregiving divisions of labour, positive parenting, and the well-being of women and children to claim their "right to contact" (Flood, 2010). However, as Michael Flood (2010, p. 340) articulates, "although such father's rights groups purport to advocate on behalf of male victims of domestic violence, they seek to undermine the policies and services that would protect and gain justice for these same men."

While it should not be assumed that the feminist women's movement is a cohesive social movement, I take the position that it is indeed a social movement in the sense that Rupp and Taylor (1999) conceive of it: as operating outside the public gaze through "everyday organizing" and institutional infiltration, and occasionally, when there are resources and political opportunities, the movement can become more publically visible (also see Barry et al., 2007; Nash, 2002; Staggenborg & Taylor, 2005). Rupp and Taylor

(1999, p. 364) describe the women's social movement community as one that "encompasses those who see gender as a major category of analysis, who critique female disadvantage, and who work to improve women's situations". I have made the very conscious decision to specifically refer to the "feminist women's movement" to imply not only solidarity among women within the movement (as this can be found in the "other women's movement"), but to make clear that a particular ideology is attached to this movement. Feminism is not a cohesive project, but one made up of varying and sometimes competing priorities, strategies, and understandings of women's issues. Still, the concept of a "feminist women's movement" is useful as long as its complexities and the differences and inequalities found within the movement are acknowledged and attended to, and thus it will be used, not altogether unproblematically, but critically and carefully, as an object of study for the current project.

Social movement impact theory

Social movement literature is rich with theoretical work attempting to explain how and why social movements emerge and conceptual work explaining different types of social movements. The main gap in the social movement literature is attention to social movement evaluations; specifically, research evaluating specific social movements' effectiveness at sparking social change and research discussing methodologies for how social movement evaluations might be conducted. What is referred to as "social movement impact theory" is a relatively new sub-category of social movement theory based on William A. Gamson's *The Strategy of Social Protest* (1975). One of the main reasons for this scarcity owes to the complexity of social movement activities and the multiple and

interacting factors that can influence social movements and their effects on different aspects of society.

The bulk of research attempts to evaluate social movements have focused on the extent to which mobilization has led to policy changes and on isolating the characteristics of social movements that are responsible for those changes. For example, protests throughout the 1960s and 1970s in opposition to the United States' involvement in the Vietnam War were positively correlated with a shift in anti-war voting patterns in the Senate (Burstein & Freudenberg, 1978). Gamson's (1975) seminal study involved a comprehensive analysis of 53 American protest groups that operated between 1800 and 1945, using the indicator of goal attainment to measure success. Through this study he found that groups with single-issue demands were more effective at reaching their goals than those with general universalistic goals, as movements concerned with an array of issues tend to become fragmented and diffuse in their activities (also see Mann, 1993). Gamson (1975) also examined the channels of protest that were most likely to result in goal achievement, finding that the use of violent tactics by protest groups was associated with, but not necessarily a cause of, their desired social change. In looking at the organizational structure of social movements, Gamson (1975) found that social movements with a bureaucratic structure, for example in the form of SMOs, were more likely to be successful in reaching their goals than those with a decentralized structure.

Two years later, Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward (1977) published a dissenting view on the impact of organizational structure on social movements based on their study of working class mobilization in the United States. The authors argued that the formal organization of social movements was negatively correlated with social movement

success from their case study of working class Americans whose activism was interpreted as being heavily constrained by systemic structural inequality. While this particular finding was criticized by other social movement scholars (e.g., Jenkins, 1979; Ofsevit, 1980), their work also upheld Gamson's (1975) conclusion that violent or disruptive protest was associated with social changes; however, Pivin and Cloward's (1977) finding was based on their inference that these tactics are those with which the working class have most readily at their disposal. In addition to social movement goals, the two issues of organizational structure and channels of protest, sparked by Gamson's (1975) and Piven and Cloward's (1977) work, became the major areas of debate in social movement impact theory.

Paul Burstein, Rachel L. Einwohner, and Jocelyn A. Hollander (1995) also used the measure of goal attainment to assess the effects of political movements. In their study, the authors argued that the extent to which protest groups achieve their goals, particularly in reference to specific targets, is an indicator of discrete outcomes of social movement activity (Burstein et al., 1995). Building on this, Einwohner (1999) operationalizes goal attainment as a seven step process of social movement activity directed at a specific target: 1) contact with social change target; 2) target's acknowledgement of claims-makers; 3) target's consultation with claims-makers over the solution; 4) target's promise to address the social movement's concerns; 5) target's implementation of change; 6) target's implementation of claims-makers' desired change; and, 7) the achievement of the desired outcome of social movement activity. Einwohner (1999) used this model to measure the effect activists' gender and perceived social class had on the effectiveness of two animal rights campaigns. In this study, the researcher found that factors like gender and social class were relevant to social movement targets (hunters and attendees of a circus) when

those factors were connected with the behaviour activists were attempting to change (stopping hunting and stopping individuals supporting the exploitation of animals). How social movement targets perceive these markers of identity contributes to the amount of legitimacy and credibility they assign to social movement activists.

One of the major criticisms of Gamson's (1975) study, and others that have been conducted in the same vein, concerns the narrow definition of success employed by these researchers. Gamson (1975) assigned social movement success based on a three category model. Protest groups that achieved most of their desired goals were seen to have gained "new advantages", groups that achieved some of their desired goals were seen to have gained "partial advantages", and groups that failed to achieve their goals gained "no advantage" (Gamson, 1975). Among other methodological criticisms, Jack A. Goldstone (1980) problematized Gamson's (1975) definition of success for only considering groups that gained "new advantages" to be truly successful (and those with "partial advantages" as being unsuccessful), minimizing the impact of "small wins". As Karl E. Weick (1984, p. 43) argues,

A small win is a concrete, complete, implemented outcome of moderate importance. By itself, one small win may seem unimportant. A series of wins at small but significant tasks, however, reveals a pattern that may attract allies, deter opponents, and lower resistance to subsequent proposals. Small wins are controllable opportunities that produce visible results.

Other methodological critiques of Gamson's (1975) work at the time (e.g., Snyder & Kelly, 1976; Zelditch, 1978) also stressed the need for a systematic methodology for assessing social movement effectiveness.

The Collective Goods Criterion (Amenta & Young, 1999) allows for a measure of social movement success that moves beyond the indicator of goal achievement. Edwin Amenta and Michael P. Young (1999) suggest that the impact of social movements might be more accurately assessed by looking at the collective benefits that are produced as a result of social movement activity. For example, social movement evaluators might look at the benefits to a greater constituency than just the social movement actors or organizations, in terms of such things as social program funding, laws extending rights and freedoms, or increased opportunities for participation in public or social life. Amenta and Young (1999) provide a three-level model to measure the collective benefits of social movements, specifically in their engagement with state institutions: at the lower level, a specific state policy decision with no long term impact; at the middle level, institutionalized policies that have sustained impact; and, at the highest level, structural reforms that give a specific group some influence over the political process. The authors also suggest more widespread ideological or cultural change can be measured in much the same way: episodic changes in attitudes and behaviours to socially engrained changes in attitudes and behaviours (Amenta & Young, 1999).

Another reason to utilize a more inclusive definition of success is that social movement activities can have many unintended consequences that are not measured in evaluations of the achievement of intended goals. Marco G. Giugni (1998) stresses the importance of analyzing social movement impacts by looking at the broader political context in which activists and social movement organizations mobilize. Specifically, Giugni (1998) highlights the role public opinion, allies inside and outside the state, and the structure of state institutions have on the outcomes of social movement activity. It is within

this vein of social movement impact theory that I situate the current study. While the current study is not primarily concerned with evaluating the outcomes of the feminist women's movements' mobilization concerning violence against women, I do want to use this acknowledgement of socio-political context to comment on the potential to assign directionality to the movement: progress, regression, or maintenance of status quo. By situating feminist activism on violence against women in context, what are the various elements of the movement that would have to be considered in an evaluation of its success? The next section overviews some of the theoretical orientations of feminist movements in Canada that will give some context to a later discussion on the specific indicators of social movement effectiveness that might be included in an evaluation of mobilization on violence against women.

Feminist social movements in Canada

The feminist women's movement, as it has evolved in most Western liberal democracies, is often classified into distinct but continuous waves of action. The first wave of the Canadian women's movement occurred around the turn of the 20th century and peaked with the successes of the women's suffrage movement when some women were given the right to vote provincially in 1916, although this right was not extended to all Canadians until 1969¹. Violence against women was not a central feminist issue during this

¹ Non-Aboriginal women in Manitoba, Alberta, and Saskatchewan were given the right to vote in provincial elections in 1916; in Ontario and British Columbia in 1917; in 1918 non-Aboriginal women were given the right to vote in federal elections; in 1940 Quebec women were given the right to vote in provincial elections; in 1960 Aboriginal peoples were given the right to vote in federal elections, and in Quebec elections in 1969 (Ladner & McCrossan, 2007).

wave², despite the subordinate status and treatment of women, particularly within the family unit, likely because most feminists of this time were upper-class “maternal feminists” who “celebrated rather than challenged prevailing patriarchal family forms and representations of women” (Brodie, 1995, p. 36). The acceptance of women’s “natural” role as wives and mothers is a central criticism of first wave feminist activism. This view reinforced stereotypes about “good” and “bad” women and contributed to the extension of legal privileges to women who could fit into the narrow definition of “good wife and mother” (e.g., Chunn, 1988; 1992; 1999; Pleck, 1987; Sheehy, 2002; Smart, 1984).

The highly visible women’s movement of the 1970s, both in English and French-speaking Canada, is typical of second wave feminism. In the 1960s, when the civil rights movement, the anti-war movement, and the black liberation movement were all highly charged and visible, the political climate was primed for women to assert their right to equality (Schechter, 1982). Women’s increasing participation in the paid labour force outside the home also facilitated, and encouraged, women’s involvement in a liberation movement. In the United States, the publication of Betty Friedan’s (1963) *The Feminine Mystique* is largely credited with sparking a feminist consciousness among a generation of discontented, largely white, middle-class housewives. However, as Jean Wright, then managing editor of *Chatelaine* magazine, remarked about the book in the 1960s, “We’ve run most of this stuff in *Chatelaine*. In any case, it’s far too American, and it’s not very well written” (Anderson, 1996, p. 174). Indeed, in her autobiography, the late Doris Anderson, former editor of *Chatelaine*, chair of the Canadian Advisory Council on the

² Violence against women was marginally included in Christian women’s activism around temperance insofar as men’s alcoholism was seen to contribute to violence against their wives and children (Backhouse, 1991).

Status of Women (CACSW), and president of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC), remarked about the magazine: “What we had ‘done right’ – besides putting out a good solid magazine with lots of Canadian content – was, through *Chatelaine*, help launch in North America the second stage of the women’s movement” (Anderson, 1996, p. 174).

While *Chatelaine* may have helped lay the foundation, what is largely credited as the turning point establishing second wave feminism in Canada is the release of the report of the Royal Commission of the Status of Women (RCSW) in 1970. Though the idea for a royal commission came from English Canadian feminists, the Fédération des femmes du Québec (FFQ) joined forces with the Committee for the Equality of Women (CEW) and feminist journalists to put pressure on the federal government in the late 1960s to examine the status of women in Canada. The final report in 1970 included 167 recommendations on the issues central to women at the time: daycare, abortion, maternity leave, birth control, participation in the paid labour force, and increased opportunities for education (RCSW, 1970). The pressure for a royal commission represented liberal feminists’ optimism about the ability of the state to advance women’s position in Canadian society by legislating gender equality. Others have noted that feminists’ interaction with the government in producing the report facilitated a relationship based on feminists as a lobby group that legitimated some women’s involvement in the political process to the exclusion of others (Findlay, 1998). Little scholarly research has rigorously interrogated the effects of fitting women’s demands for equality into the public policy process via the RCSW’s report (e.g., Arcsott, 1998) and much of what is written on the report are reflections of those involved (e.g., Bégin, 1997; Bird, 1997). Broadly speaking, the report represents liberal feminists’

tendency to “resort to law” (Smart, 1989) and began the process of entrenching women’s formal legal equality in Canada. However, one clear omission from the RCSW’s report was any comment or recommendation about violence against women.

Liberal feminism has been called the “public face” of Canadian feminism (Findlay, 1987), initiated by the RCSW and active in the period from the late 1970s to the early 1990s when national level feminist organizations and government agencies dedicated to women’s equality were active and influential in their engagements with governments to inform and amend certain legislation. In 1972, the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) was created to monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the RCSW, though it evolved to encompass a much broader mandate. The following year, the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women (CACSW) was established as a research and advisory body on women’s issues that reported to the federal government. Though the NAC was never intended to have a representational structure, at its peak, the NAC boasted a membership of over 500 organizations with diverse ideological leanings, from different geographic regions of the country, and represented newly mobilized groups of women, including immigrant women, visible minority women, and women with disabilities. However, it was never able to maintain effective links with the Francophone women’s movement in Quebec or with Aboriginal women’s activists (Vickers, Rankin, & Appelle, 1993). As Jill Vickers, Pauline Rankin, and Christine Appelle (1993) suggest, the founding mothers of the NAC knew that in order to be seen as a legitimate voice on women’s issues in the political scene, they would have to organize a coalition that presented a common vision and worked on a common mission. In fact, the NAC’s expansion from lobbying for implementation of the RCSW’s

recommendations to developing policy positions on a variety of issues can in part be explained by the RCSW's silence on violence against women: the increasing salience of violence against women as a social problem for feminists demanded a policy position from the movement's national voice (Vickers et al., 1993).

The CACSW was established in response to one of the recommendations from the RCSW with members appointed by the then Liberal government as an independent advisory body to the federal government (Anderson, 1996). While much of the CACSW's early work was in line with the activities of the broader feminist movement in Canada and produced credible research on a number of issues, including violence against women, it was mistrusted by some members of the women's movement for being comprised mainly of loyal Liberal Party members (Rebick, 2005). This mistrust was validated during the constitutional debates in the early 1980s³ when a majority of the CACSW members supported then Minister Responsible for the Status of Women Lloyd Axworthy's cancellation of a national women's conference on the constitution⁴. Doris Anderson, who was at that time the CACSW's president, resigned from the Advisory Council in protest, sparking a flurry of grassroots feminist mobilization and the creation of an Ad Hoc

³ These debates were largely spurred by draft versions of the Charter proposed by the Liberal government that failed to improve the equality clause over the one found in the Bill of Rights (Anderson, 1996; Gotell, 1990).

⁴ The February 1981 national women's conference on the constitution had already been rescheduled from the previous September due to a federal translators' strike. Axworthy proposed cancelling the February national conference in favour of regional conferences as women congregating on Parliament Hill "would be potentially embarrassing for the government" (Anderson, 1996, pg. 239). Five of the six executive members of the CACSW voted in favour of cancelling the conference, and when the vote was taken to the full Council, it was voted 17 to 10 in favour of cancelling. Doris Anderson resigned in protest immediately and in the following days 14 more Council members and support staff quit (Anderson, 1996).

Committee of Canadian Women and the Constitution (or the “Ad Hockers”)⁵. This culminated in an Ad Hoc Conference on the constitution held on Parliament Hill on February 14, 1981. This conference, which drew over 1,300 women from across the country, is widely regarded as one of the major feminist triumphs in English Canadian feminist activism⁶ as it led to the entrenchment of women’s equality in the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*⁷ (see Rebeck, 2005).

However, not all activists interpreted the *Charter* provision as an unequivocal “win” for the feminist movement at the time. For example, Lise Gotell (1990) argued that the formal legal equality enshrined in the *Charter* effectively individualizes and degender feminist issues, provides symbolic rather than substantive change, and uses a liberal, legalistic analysis of women’s disadvantaged positions to decontextualize their struggles

⁵ The Ad Hockers reconvened in the late 1980s to protest the Mulroney government’s proposed amendments to the constitution in the form of the Meech Lake Accord. These amendments were an effort to persuade Quebec to endorse the constitution by designating the province a “distinct society”. English-speaking women’s groups were concerned that the Accord would undermine women’s equality rights in Quebec, while Quebec women felt Anglophone feminists were making this assumption without consulting Francophone feminists. This disagreement intensified an already existing rift between Anglophone and Québécoise feminists and led to the FFQ revoking its membership with the NAC in 1989. Debates over the Meech Lake Accord also illuminated rifts between Aboriginal women and other racialized women who felt that the Accord recognized Quebec’s rights over Aboriginal rights or the rights of other racialized women (Rebeck, 2005).

⁶ The Fédération des femmes du Québec did not support the conference as they did not support Trudeau’s proposal to repatriate the constitution. In part because of Quebec’s non-support, the NAC was also divided as to their position on the constitution (Rebeck, 2005; see de Sève, 1992).

⁷ While Canada had a *Bill of Rights* enacted in 1960 that guaranteed “equality before the law”, in practice this provision did not extend to equal rights for men and women. Many feminists have commented on how the Supreme Court failed to recognize gender equality rights under the *Bill of Rights* and interpreted the law with an ideology of sexual difference, rather than of sexual equality (Gotell, 1990).

from socio-structural problems⁸. Gotell (1990) argued in a paper produced through the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAOW) that the sexual equality provision in the *Charter* did not guarantee women substantive equality. Further, that the federal government's "stance could be characterized as reactive, rather than proactive, waiting for public and legal pressures to coalesce around instances of legislative inequalities before taking any action" (Gotell, 1990, pg. 24).

Like the NAC, the CACSW was deeply embedded in activism on women's issues, largely through research, from the 1970s until it was dismantled in 1995. In some ways, the CACSW could be seen as separate from the women's movement, but it was also separate from the Canadian state; it existed, at least in principle, at arm's length from the federal government, suggesting it occupied a precarious position. The CACSW was intended to be independent from the Canadian state, but in practice the appointment of Liberal Party members who at times may have been more or less likely to tow the party line certainly set it apart from the work of grassroots and more overtly institutionalized organizations (e.g., the NAC, which was politically independent, but relied heavily on federal funding and engaged in regular lobbying). Still, the CACSW produced a number of impressive reports over the years that were received favourably and used widely by the broader feminist movement.

⁸ Obviously, the reactions of individual activists or organizations should not be considered representative of all feminists mobilizing at the time. Further, feminist positions on the *Charter's* equality provision have undoubtedly evolved over time based on its application in the courts. For example, some judicial decisions in the Supreme Court have actually interpreted the provision using a substantive, rather than a formal, equality analysis (e.g., *Andrews v. Law Society of British Columbia* [1989]).

Lee Ann Banaszak (2010) critiques the assumption made by many scholars of the women's movement that most activism occurs "outside the state". Her characterization of the "fuzzy boundaries" between state actors and the women's movement highlights the space that the CACSW occupied for over two decades in Canada. Banaszak's (2010) examination of upper-level employees in the United States' federal government demonstrates how recognizing the intersection of the women's movement and the state, rather than the separation, can illuminate the extent of internal movement forces. Further, she argues that these intersections constitute movement institutionalization and co-optation. The debacle around the 1981 women's conference on the constitution illustrates the plurality of forces, from feminist allegiances to political party allegiances, and fuzzy boundaries that were influencing and characteristic of different movement actors' positions and maneuvers. While some Liberal Party members of the CACSW were loyal to Lloyd Axworthy and protested against the conference, Progressive Conservative Member of Parliament (MP) Flora MacDonald and New Democratic Party MP Pauline Jewett were aiding grassroots women in holding the conference anyway.

Consequently, the conceptualization of the CACSW as an advisory body, and thus an expert, on women's issues did not mean that it was always in line with the directions of other activists and organizations within the movement. However, it also does not mean that it was fully institutionalized and thus a pawn of the state, or at least of Liberal governments, as it was swiftly dismantled in 1995 by Jean Chretien's Liberal government despite commitments made to address women's equality at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women that same year. Clearly, the CACSW's role was a complicated one that cannot be easily categorized as "inside" or "outside" the state and

despite the contentions, feminist groups lamented its loss as a knowledge base for the Canadian feminist movement (Warwick, 1995).

Despite the liberal feminist hegemony in at least the English Canadian feminist movement, feminists of other political leanings were also mobilizing across the country. At the same time, radical feminists began to identify patriarchy as the root cause of women's oppression and advocate for a fundamental restructuring of social institutions and gender relations. Where liberal feminists saw women's equality as a legal problem, radical feminists defined women's oppression as a social problem (Comack, 2006). Radical feminist consciousness-raising groups were some of the first spaces where rape, wife battering, pornography, sexual harassment, and reproductive choice were identified as social problems that disproportionately affect women. Perhaps one of the most salient examples of radical feminist organizing in Canada is Vancouver Rape Relief, who have been highly visible within the feminist movement for their radical positions since the early 1970s. Radical feminists are criticized for using polarizing rhetoric and attacking masculinity (Gardiner, 2005), thus fuelling a backlash against the movement, but this may simply be a misinterpretation of radical feminist ideas and goals. For example, the phrase "all heterosexual sex is rape" is often attributed to radical feminist Andrea Dworkin (1987), but her discussion of the linkages between heterosexual sex and rape focus more on the influence of discourse and their existence on the same continuum, rather than being the same act. Moreover, radical feminists are seen to essentialize women by situating patriarchy as the predominant source of oppression in all women's lives, effectively ignoring the impact of racism, classism, homophobia, and ableism on women's lived

experiences, but all forms of feminism are increasingly recognizing the intersectionality of women's lived experiences.

Socialist feminism attempts to counter class-based critiques of radical feminism by emphasizing women's economic oppression. Socialist feminists argue that capitalism exploits the unpaid labour undertaken mostly by women in the domestic sphere and undermines the under-paid, largely unskilled labour that many women are cornered into in the labour market. In this view, all classes of women are oppressed by men, from the bourgeois housewife who is kept by her husband to the domestic servant who is kept by the housewife (MacKinnon, 1989). However, this line of reasoning neglects the severity and consequences of different women's experiences of oppression. Because socialist feminists see the totality of political, economic, and social existence to be infiltrated by capitalism, the solution cannot be reached with state engagement per se, but with the building up of a collective sex/class consciousness. The problem with this position is that socialist demands could potentially be satisfied without improving the status of women, as class concerns do not always consider the position of women, just as women's interests are not always obviously class conscious in that the lived experiences of working-class women, immigrant women, and other marginalized women are often excluded (MacKinnon, 1989).

Critical race feminists, including women of colour and post-colonial feminists, recognize that legal inequality, gender oppression, and class oppression are not the only sources of social disparity between men and women and between different groups of women. Critical race and post-colonial feminism are approaches that address intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1994). Intersectionality allows for an appreciation of how experiences and perceptions of culture, race, and ethnicity interact with gender to intensify

women's oppression (Collins, 2000; Razack, 1998). This approach further recognizes the inseparability of culture, race, and ethnicity from women's experience of gender; that is, no social category can be experienced in a vacuum. Criticizing other forms of feminism for their universalization of the female experience (as white, middle-class, formally educated), these feminists acknowledge how histories of colonization and slavery have imposed normative assumptions that discriminate against certain groups of women (e.g., that all black women are promiscuous or that all Aboriginal women abuse drugs and alcohol). Despite their involvement in women's advocacy, many women of colour do not identify with feminism because of its association with Western colonialism or because they see it as irrelevant to their work (Burn, 2011).

The plurality of feminist and women-centred thought emerging out of and influencing the evolution of the second wave of feminism in Canada occurred throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Beginning in the 1990s, some feminists began identifying a third wave of activism characterized by a poststructuralist orientation that recognized the dynamics and the performance element of social categories like gender and race (Butler, 1990). Another feature of this perspective is the possibility of multiple and competing truths, begetting the call for the deconstruction of social categories and an analysis of dominant social discourses. The label of third wave is a large umbrella, encompassing tenets of queer theory, anti-racism and post-colonial theory, postmodernism, transnationalism, transgender politics, and sex positivity, but also particular strategies of mobilization, specifically those that are found online. The epistemological flexibility and the perception of an "anything goes" approach attached to third wave feminism has sparked criticism that the movement now lacks a cohesive goal from which to direct its activism.

However, as Smart (1990) acknowledges and as the divergent arms of the movement described above indicate, the perception of the feminist movement as a unified sisterhood has always been an illusion.

When all the diverse streams of thought are acknowledged, it is clear that multiple perspectives have informed the emergence and the evolution of the feminist movement in Canada, though there has been a heavy emphasis on engaging the Canadian state, particularly the federal government and the Quebec government by feminists in that province. First wave feminists were largely concerned with women's roles as wives and mothers and women's legal right to vote. Second wave feminism extended this early liberal orientation to focus on women's equality under the law in other spheres of public life, but many women's alienation from this mainstream approach sparked niche streams of feminist activism. Such a plurality has continued today, resulting in a rich social movement characterized by multiple perspectives and approaches to improving the status of women in Canada.

Conclusion

A broad array of claims-making activities has been central to feminist activism on violence against women. Various feminist activists' and organizations' claims that violence against women is a social problem is situated as one activity within a broader social movement. The feminist women's movement in Canada has, at times, been highly visible, but it also maintains an ongoingness through "everyday organizing" activity that is discovered using a contextual constructionist lens. The various strategies that feminist activists and organizations have employed over the last 40 years are diverse and have

shifted over the years, as the next chapter will demonstrate. Looking at this contextualized evolution of feminist activism on violence against women through the lens of social movement impact theory can open up space to discuss how the movement might be evaluated.

This chapter has overviewed the key theoretical frameworks employed in the current study. The social construction of social problems through the natural history of claims-making processes is useful for understanding feminist recognition and early conceptualizations of violence against women. Other forms of mobilizing are best understood using social movement literature. Conventional approaches to social movement theory were discussed to show their ill fit with the feminist women's movement. An alternative conceptualization of the feminist movement as "everyday organizing" that speaks to the longevity and continuity of the movement is preferred for the current study. The sub-category of social movement impact theory was also discussed, providing a lens through which to consider the potential for evaluation. The last section of this chapter overviewed the theoretical orientations of various branches of the feminist movement in Canada. The next chapter will review the literature on feminist activism on violence against women in Canada, primarily looking at the time period of 1970 to 2010.

Chapter 3: Feminist activism on violence against women in Canada

This chapter will overview the literature on Canadian feminist activism, focusing on the issue of violence against women. First, consideration will be given to how the issues of wife battering and rape emerged as problems for feminist activists. Next, an examination of the responses feminist activists implemented to address the wife battering and rape, including providing grassroots services, conducting research to determine the extent of the problem, and calling on the Canadian state to take responsibility, at least in part, for addressing the problem. Criminal justice interventions for domestic violence will be considered, as well as the process for rape law reform and some of the particularities of feminist activism in the province of Quebec.

Recognizing and defining a problem

Violence against women has been variably conceptualized as a private matter, a social problem, a crime, a public health epidemic, or a question of human rights depending on the historical period, the socio-cultural context, and the perspective of the individual or agency responding to the issue. Before the second wave of the feminist movement, there was no unified conceptualization of violence against women. While wife battering and rape have been found throughout history as far back as records are kept, they were at best considered private problems for individual women to deal with and at worst tolerated and condoned under certain circumstances (Brownmiller, 1975; Dobash & Dobash, 1979). English common law influenced the development of Canadian law and it was laws concerning marriage that contributed to the social acceptability of physical violence by

husbands against their wives (Dobash & Dobash, 1979). In 1765, English jurist Sir William Blackstone decreed,

By marriage, the husband and wife are one person in law: that is, the very being or legal existence of the woman is suspended during the marriage, or at least is incorporated and consolidated into that of the husband; under whose wing, protection, and cover she performs everything (as cited in Dawson, 1994, p. 18).

With this understanding of marriage, women were essentially the property of their husbands, who were granted the authority to use moderate chastisement to control their wives:

The husband also, by the old law, might give his wife moderate correction. For, as he is to answer for her misbehaviour, the law thought it reasonable to intrust him with this power of restraining her, by domestic chastisement...But this power of correction was confined within reasonable bounds, and the husband was prohibited from using any violence to his wife except in so far as he may lawfully and reasonably do so in order to correct and chastise his wife (Blackstone as cited in Dobash & Dobash, 1979, p. 61).

Violence in the home only became a public issue when it surpassed certain tacit limits, and even then it was only interpreted as a disruption to the family unit (Brodie, 1995; Dobash & Dobash, 1979). The social acceptability of violence against wives was fostered by four main beliefs: women were the property of men, first their fathers and then their husbands; women were naturally subordinate and expected to obey and be dependent on their husbands; men had absolute authority over their wives; and, a woman's place was in the home (DeKeseredy & MacLeod, 1997). In 1829, England enacted the first formal law against a husband's legitimate right to chastise his wife. Additional laws in England throughout the 19th century established punitive consequences for husbands who

perpetrated harmful activity against their wives, and allowed wives to separate from or divorce abusive husbands, gain custody of their children, and obtain money from their husbands to take care of their families. Changing laws emerged as a function of a greater project to “civilize” Britain in the 19th century (Dobash & Dobash, 1979).

In Canada, divorce was still quite inaccessible throughout the 19th century, though Aboriginal communities tended to have a more flexible view of marital separation. Even in cases of wife battering, “fear and terror of life must be proved” in order to warrant marital separation (Backhouse, 1991, p. 174). In *Hawley v. Ham* [1826], Chief Justice William Campbell ruled that “a man has the right to chastise his wife moderately and to warrant her leaving her husband, the chastisement must be such as to put her life in jeopardy” (as cited in Backhouse, 1991, p. 174). This judgement set the tone for a century of subsequent cases that would deny women basic protection against abusive husbands. Judges would seek to justify the husbands’ actions even in cases demonstrating that women were severely brutalized (Backhouse, 1991). This impunity for husbands extended to sexual violence within marriage. As Sir Matthew Hale, a 19th century treatise writer, surmised, “By their mutual matrimonial consent and contract the wife hath given up herself in this kind unto her husband, which she cannot retract” (Backhouse, 1991, p. 178).

Unlike wife battering, rape was originally codified in the *Criminal Code of Canada* in 1892:

The act of a man having carnal knowledge of a woman who is not his wife without her consent, or with consent which has been extorted by threats or fear of bodily harm, or obtained by personating the woman’s husband, or by false and fraudulent representations as to the nature and quality of the act (as cited in Johnson, 1996, p. 143).

However despite legislation, in applications of this law, women were considered morally underdeveloped and their testimony was not trusted and could not be used to convict a rapist without other evidence. A woman's sexual history and reputation were routinely used to establish credibility and only complaints made immediately following an assault were taken seriously by the criminal justice system (Łoś, 1994; Tang, 1998). In her research on the history of women and rape legislation in Canada, Constance Backhouse (1991) found that women most likely to have rape charges brought against an assailant were young, unmarried women living with their fathers or young, married women living with their husbands. Women who were known to consume alcohol, frequent taverns, or have extramarital sex were seen as lacking credibility by the court; further, rape was considered an accusation too easily made. It is thus unsurprising that prosecutions of rape in the 19th Century rarely resulted in a conviction (Backhouse, 1991).

Backhouse (2008) later conducted in-depth case studies of nine sexual assault cases in Canada between 1900 and 1975. Her research reveals that seemingly "ordinary" cases of sexual assault are layered with complexity owing to evolving theories of sexuality and the influences of class, race, ethnicity, anti-Semitism, disability, age, and homophobia in the evolution of Canadian society. Backhouse's (2008) analysis of tactics of defence, factors influencing non-reporting, low conviction rates, and the dynamics of date rape, gang rape, and interracial rape in these historical cases bear a remarkable likeness to contemporary cases in North America. Backhouse's (1991; 2008) research highlights the significance of rape law in practice and suggests that factors like poverty, race, ethnicity, and disability have always been powerful influences in the adjudication of rape cases by the courts. While Backhouse's research and the historical records described above demonstrate the

widespread nature of violence against women throughout Canadian history, it was not until the 1970s that feminists began connecting what had once been women's private shame to a political agenda.

The battered women's movement and the rape crisis movement grew out of grassroots feminist consciousness-raising in North America. Women in feminist consciousness-raising groups began to discover that the violence they experienced at the hands of their male partners, family members, friends, and strangers was not unique and began connecting this experience to women's overall inequality compared to men in other spheres of social life (Jones & Cook, 2008). Radical feminists were identifying violence against women as the major source of women's oppression. Through this consciousness-raising, women discovered that the problems of "wife battering" and "rape" were largely minimized or medicalized by formal services, such as police and healthcare professionals, who often saw women as deserving of violence in some way (Matthews, 1994; Schechter, 1982). With no specialized public services being available, feminists began opening up their homes to women fleeing abusive husbands and operating telephone crisis lines for women who had been raped (Jones & Cook, 2008). Bolstered by the increasing visibility of the broader feminist movement and other social movements of the 1960s, the frontline knowledge gained from the grassroots work of early feminist service providers sparked two divergent and differentially politically influential sub-movements: the battered women's movement and the rape crisis movement (Jones & Cook, 2008). While the two movements in the United States are often differentiated by their respective liberal and radical feminist politics (MacKinnon, 1992; Schechter, 1982), delineation along these political lines is less clear in Canada.

Both the battered women's movement and the rape crisis movement in Canada have been active at the grassroots level and operate, in general, with a radical feminist conceptualization of violence against women. That is, frontline feminist services identify patriarchy or gender biases as the root cause of women's subordination and the violence perpetrated against them. Shelters and rape crisis centres operating on these principles historically survived on private donations, fundraising, and volunteer labour. Beginning in the late 1970s and into the 1980s, individual feminist organizations realized that they could no longer sustain their services independently and felt that the Canadian state should have a role in responding to violence against women. Thus, both the battered women's movement and the rape crisis movement have operated with a radical feminist, and increasingly intersectional, conceptualization of violence against women, but have at times turned to the Canadian state to legislate women's emancipation. This has had differing effects in Ontario and Quebec.

What follows is an overview of the research literature that has examined both the battered women's movement and the rape crisis movement in Canada, as well as what was going on concurrently among Aboriginal women whose activism is not always connected to the broader feminist movement. I have tried to organize events in somewhat chronological and thematic order for ease of reading, but as Gillian Walker (1990, p. 24) notes,

What happened was not a particularly linear or sequential process; rather it represents a number of parallel, contingent, sometimes connected or overlapping events in which the players were involved in various degrees and in different capacities.

As such, the reader will notice that what is produced is a complex account involving actors with competing and contradictory interpretations and analyses of how violence against women came to be recognized and responded to in Canada.

Responding to victims/survivors

With a recognition that “battered women faced a brutality from their husbands and an indifference from social institutions that compelled redress” (Schechter, 1982, p. 54), feminists began opening up shelters for women mainly in old houses that were converted to accommodate several women and their children for a few days to up to a few months at a time. The shelters provided women with “time and safety to think, free from coercion and violent interruption” (Schechter, 1982, p. 60). Household responsibilities were divided up among the staff, often volunteers, and the women seeking refuge. In a parallel movement, feminists in the rape crisis movement tried to promote healing among victims of sexual violence and provided them with counselling and other forms of support which were not available in the public sphere at the time. Women in the rape crisis movement operated telephone crisis lines out of their own homes and established rape crisis centres to provide women with crisis counselling, legal and medical advice and advocacy, and information about their options (Jones & Cook, 2008).

Early services were rooted in feminist philosophies of women’s empowerment and autonomy and operated as grassroots, non-hierarchical, volunteer-based collectives (Macy, Giattina, Parish, & Crosby, 2010). Concurrent with a desire to provide safe spaces for women experiencing violence, grassroots activists were also struggling to change the way wife battering and rape were treated by governments and the formal social service sector.

Activists also began to realize that their individual shelters and rape crisis centres, operating on private donations, fundraising, and volunteer labour, would not be sustainable or able to keep up with the need for services. Since the mid-1970s, many feminist activists have turned to the state, calling upon governments to recognize the severity of wife battering and rape and develop policies for funding feminist services. Others advocated for institutionalized services, such as hospitals, police, and mental health professionals, to better address women's needs. There was no unified position among activists as to how the Canadian state should respond, just that most saw a role for the state in responding to violence against women (Walker, 1990).

Shelters, rape crisis centres, and other services for abused women proliferated throughout the mid-1970s and 1980s, thanks in part to increases in government funding in response to feminist lobbying. However, a reliance on government funding has had some significant ramifications on the ability of feminist service providers to retain an activist focus in their work. While arguably never receiving enough funding from governments, feminist organizations, service providers, and researchers have gone from having a sense of possibility in the 1970s (Ridington, 1982) to frustration over federal funding cuts in the 1980s and 1990s (Bégin, 1997) to outright despair within the current political climate. The Secretary of State's Women's Program was established in 1973 to fund women's groups doing work to promote women's equality and improve the status of women in Canada. When REAL Women of Canada was formed in 1981, they demanded half the funding allocated to women's groups through the Women's Program, though this was denied at the time because they were not working toward women's equality (Anderson, 1996). The Women's Program, housed under Status of Women Canada (SWC), was an important

source of funding, and the main source of federal funding, for many organizations since the 1970s until major federal budget cuts and changes to its mandate in 2006. Until the early 2000s, the Women's Program funded many feminist advocacy projects, including essays by the CRIAW on the currents of thought in the Canadian women's movement and a feminist analysis on the Montreal Massacre. The governments' shifting approach to funding feminist activities has acted as an indicator to feminist groups of the level of commitment, or lack thereof, governments have to recognizing and responding to violence against women as a legitimate social problem (Girard-Brown, 2012). When governments decreased the funding available to feminist groups, or reframed the criteria for accessing funds away from feminist interpretations of the problem, feminist groups faced a challenge: provide their services without, or with substantially less, government funding or realign their activities to fit into government interpretations of and goals for addressing the problem.

While funding for feminist advocacy has historically been available at the federal level through SWC, the operation of most feminist services, including shelters and rape crisis centres, falls under provincial or territorial jurisdictions. Cheryl Collier (2008), in examining provincial violence against women policies in Ontario and British Columbia, demonstrates that even though provincial funding for anti-violence programs in Ontario did not significantly decrease between 1985 and 2005, funding criteria were reframed to allocate funding to gender neutral victim services for "family violence", rather than feminist services for women who had experienced abuse. In the first national survey on Canadian sexual assault and rape crisis centres, Melanie Beres, Barbara Crow, and Lise Gotell (2009) found that feminist services are negotiating against and resisting

“technologies of neoliberal governance” (e.g., funding restrictions, degendered and depoliticized frameworks) that undermine the activist role of rape crisis centres and individualize the problem of sexual violence. They found that many centres have adopted hierarchical operational structures, as opposed to their original collective structures, and are questioning the appropriateness of women-only spaces, particularly in a feminist context that is now negotiating how to include transgender men and women. An earlier study also found that, for rape crisis centres, it has been difficult to “remain radical”, with centres engaging in less direct political lobbying than they did in their earlier years (Campbell, Baker, & Mazurek, 1998). This can be explained by improvements to women’s formal legal equality that may give the guise of social change, but also because of the tension that is produced when an organization provides grassroots services requiring government funding while at the same time advocating for fundamental social change. The capacity to work for fundamental social change is also hindered by the emergence of neoconservative and religious right movements that call for a return to “traditional family values” and undermine women’s rights to specialized services (Macy et al., 2010). Further, in their study of women working in domestic violence service agencies in the United States, Amy Lehrner and Nicole Allen (2009) found that many advocates conceptualized their work solely as service provision at the individual level and did not connect it to the broader women’s movement for social change – a stark contrast to how early women’s advocates conceptualized their work.

Currently, at the federal level, SWC offers time-limited grants for new projects running up to 36 months. Ineligible activities include research projects, advocacy or lobbying activities, or direct services to women (Status of Women Canada, 2011). In

Ontario, most funding for victim services is allocated by the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS), who provide some funds for the delivery of shelter and rape crisis services through domestic violence and sexual violence action plans, run their own public education campaigns to raise awareness about violence (e.g., Neighbours, Friends and Families), and provide grants for individual projects. Ontario's Domestic Violence Action Plan (DVAP) is touted, by the government, as a necessary step "towards ensuring that women live without fear of violence at home, at work and in their communities" (Government of Ontario, 2012). However, there is little indication as to how the DVAP funds are allocated and distributed and, for the most part, efforts to protect women from violence have prioritized pilot projects and focused on strengthening the criminal justice response (Girard-Brown, 2012). The same critique could be made of Ontario's Sexual Violence Action Plan (SVAP), however its recent release in 2011 means its implementation has yet to be evaluated⁹. Despite these funding challenges, grassroots services for women experiencing violence still exist in many communities, relying on combinations of funding arrangements with municipal, provincial, and federal governments, the work of volunteers, and fundraising.

Measuring the extent of the problem

As the work of grassroots activists was beginning to reveal in the 1970s, the incidence of wife battering and rape seemed to be widespread throughout Canada. Some

⁹ As Ontario's actions plans are relatively recent initiatives, there were no materials on them in the archives and they were not mentioned in any interviews for this study. Further, this study is not directly concerned with the government responses to violence against women; it addresses these only insofar as they provide socio-political context to understand feminist activism. For me to comment on their influence at this point would be speculative. See Girard-Brown (2012) for a more in-depth look at violence against women policies.

organizations were keeping ad hoc records of the number of women served, but little was known about the rates of violence against women across Canada until Linda MacLeod's study on wife battering was published in 1980. MacLeod proposed the idea to the CACSW, which was under the leadership of Doris Anderson at the time, after her experience as an undergraduate student working with battered women at the Kingston Psychiatric Hospital in the 1960s. MacLeod (1980) collected the first statistics in Canada on wife battering by contacting individual shelters and transition homes, as well as police departments, court offices, and hospitals, though she discovered that these public services did not collect specific information on domestic violence at the time. Using this data, MacLeod surmised that, "Every year, 1 in 10 Canadian women who are married or in a relationship with a live-in lover are battered" (MacLeod, 1980, p. 21). In the report, MacLeod (1980) also addresses common myths about wife battering, reasons why women decide to stay in abusive relationships (e.g., isolation, economic dependence, and lack of options), the role and potential of criminal and civil law (before the introduction of criminal justice policies), and the various options that existed to respond specifically to wife battering in 1980 (e.g., the "Calgary Squabble Squad"). Her recommendations included better emergency and support services for battered women, better funding mechanisms, law reform, and long-term prevention. MacLeod's study had the effect of galvanizing and providing evidence to support the work of the battered women's movement, which was now actively calling upon the state to intervene. However, when it was used to inform the Report of the Standing Committee on Health, Welfare, and Social Affairs on wife battering presented to the House of Commons in 1982, the idea that wife battering was prevalent in Canada was considered preposterous and even humorous to many Members of Parliament (Dawson, 2004).

Since the early 1980s when victimization surveys first emerged (see Research and Statistics Group, 1984; Skogan, 1981), researchers have developed increasingly rigorous methods to measure the prevalence of violence against women. Though violence against women increasingly became a public issue throughout the 1980s, the Montreal Massacre in 1989 propelled governments to reinvigorate their commitment to addressing the problem. As one response to this tragedy, and in light of a need for more sophisticated data, the federal government provided funding to conduct two national surveys on violence against women: the Violence Against Women Survey (Johnson, 1996) and a survey on the rates of dating violence among Canadian university and college students (DeKeseredy & Kelly, 1993). These surveys provided comprehensive information on incidence and prevalence rates of physical, sexual, and psychological abuse among intimate partners and sexual assault among strangers. Other researchers have conducted their own population-based studies or analyzed official statistics (e.g., Randall & Haskell, 1995; Wilson & Daly, 1994), but since these two surveys in the early 1990s, the federal government has not commissioned another dedicated survey on violence against women.

Statistics Canada collects victimization data every five years in its General Social Survey (GSS) on Victimization. In 2009, the most recent year data was collected, 6% of women reported experiencing violence at the hands of a current or former partner in the five years preceding the survey and nearly 500,000 women reported being sexually assaulted in the year preceding the survey (Brennan, 2011a; Perreault & Brennan, 2010). Statistics Canada also collates and analyzes police-recorded crime rates every year. Unfortunately, police statistics on violence against women are inadequate for accurately measuring the problem because most incidents of violence against women are not reported

to the police, and even those that are reported are not necessarily recorded by police in official statistics because of the process of “unfounding¹⁰” (Johnson, 2012; see Johnson & Dawson, 2011 for an in-depth look at measuring violence against women). Still, police recorded 22,000 sexual assaults across Canada in 2010, representing roughly 3% of total sexual victimizations that year (Brennan & Dauvergne, 2011). The use of multiple data sources, including victimization survey data, police statistics, and quantitative and qualitative reports from victims and feminist service providers, demonstrates that violence against women is widespread in Canada.

Getting on the political agenda

Framing the issue of wife battering as a crime

The battered women’s movement has had to strategically frame intimate partner violence as a social problem in order for it to be palatable to the general public and governments who were asked to respond (Dobash & Dobash, 1992; Schneider, 2000). In other words, feminist activists were representing the problem of intimate partner violence in a way they thought would be most effective for their claims-making campaign (Best, 2013). The earliest advocates in the 1970s used what Loseke (2001) terms “formula

¹⁰ “Unfounding” refers to a designation police officers make regarding complaints that come to their attention. When police officers are confronted with a complaint, for example of sexual assault, they make a decision, based on the available evidence and their assessment of the credibility of witnesses, whether or not that complaint is “founded” or “unfounded”. If they believe that there is enough evidence to suggest that a crime took place, they will designate the complaint as “founded” and continue on with an in-depth investigation. If they believe there is not enough evidence to suggest a crime took place, a decision that has been shown to be influenced by individual and systemic biases (Alderden & Ullman, 2012; Ask, 2010), they will designate the complaint as “unfounded” and there will be no further action on the case. Research in a number of jurisdictions has found that complaints of sexual assault have a much higher rate of unfounding than other crimes, a difference that cannot be accounted for by false rape claims (Belknap, 2010; Crew, 2012; Johnson, 2012).

stories” to raise public consciousness of the problem and to convince the public of its severity. These formula stories were based on the recognizable figure of the helpless, battered woman and the abusive man who seeks to control his wife. These archetypes reinforced what it meant to be a victim and perpetrator of intimate violence, but provided only one social construction of intimate partner violence, one that emphasized extreme physical violence and a helpless woman victim who had developed psychological pathologies as a result of her victimization. This characterization of wife battering can be seen as useful, in that it may have garnered sympathy for the problem in the early years of the battered women’s movement. However, it can also be argued that this stereotype of wife battering may have mobilized activists who resisted this characterization. As emerging studies and feminists’ experiences providing support to women began to uncover the widespread prevalence and the complex dynamics of intimate partner violence, it became clear that this description did not account for all women’s experiences of abuse.

Other feminists have criticized the battered women’s movement’s early and continued reliance on the battered woman-as-victim archetype (e.g., Comack, 1993; Randall, 2004; Walker, 1989). Feminist legal scholar Melanie Randall (2004) shows how early conceptualizations of wife battering have influenced the social and legal responses to domestic violence by stereotyping women’s experiences and responses to abuse. Specifically, she highlights how the “battered woman syndrome” and the conceptualization of the “uncooperative witness” fail to acknowledge that women “may be making decisions which are both reasonable and rational when grasped within the particular circumstances of their lives and the social conditions which shape those circumstances” (Randall, 2004, p.

108)¹¹. For example, a woman may actively choose to stay with an abusive partner because he is the “devil she knows” or because she and her children are financially dependent on him, thus ensuring a certain measure of safety based on her lived experiences (Johnson & Fraser, 2011). Similarly, a woman may choose to recant a previous statement alleging abuse when she is in court because she has actively decided that she wants the prosecution process to stop, either because she does not want to see her partner punished or they have resolved the situation outside of court. As Randall (2004, p. 109) notes,

Dominant images and legal representations of women who are victims of violence typically fail to apprehend the co-existence of women’s victimization with women’s agency that is often expressed through the context specific strategies of resistance which most women employ when they experience violence perpetrated against them.

Further, wife battering, and other iterations such as “wife assault” or “wife beating”, called attention to the historical position of women as wives within the private, family sphere (Parent & Coderre, 2004). While this naming ensured wives as victims were the primary focus of attention (Loseke, 2001) – and not girlfriends, ex-partners, or women in same-sex relationships – the phrase called attention to the specifically gendered problem of men abusing their female partners. However, throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s, as different social institutions were beginning to respond to the problem, feminists were beginning to lose exclusive ownership over defining the issue. In their analysis of the

¹¹ The Battered Woman Syndrome, based on Walker’s (1979) theory of learned helplessness, was an early feminist explanation for why women stay in abusive relationships and is available as a possible defence in cases where women have killed their abusive partners. The concept of the “uncooperative witness” is a non-feminist archetype that has emerged since the proliferation of aggressive criminal justice policies and the influx of domestic violence cases seen in court. It refers to women who may, for a variety of reasons, not want to participate in the criminal prosecution of their abuser.

movement, Walter DeKeseredy and Linda MacLeod (1997) argued that feminists lost the battle over language when it came to officially naming the problem of wife battering. Professionals in social work, psychology, and health began using the term “family violence” in the 1970s, a term that has stuck and is now used by many governments in Canada. DeKeseredy and MacLeod (1997) argued that wife battering was easily absorbed into this family violence discourse because professionals had already been studying and treating child abuse; collapsing the abuse of women and children together seemed to make logical sense (Walker, 1990). However, from some feminists’ perspectives, the effect was to remove the important link to gender, as well as gender neutral explanations and responses to this form of violence (Schneider, 2000).

As feminists continued to advocate for a recognition of the gendered nature of this type of violence, some compromised by using the phrase “domestic violence”, while others continued to use phrases like “wife assault” or “woman abuse” (DeKeseredy & MacLeod, 1997). In effect, feminists were emphasizing the criminal element of this type of violence and some explicitly began calling on the criminal justice system to respond to wife battering as it would “any other crime”. Reframed into gender neutral domestic or family violence, wife battering was easily adopted into a crime discourse concerned with gender neutral, individualized offences and responses. Now institutionalized in Canadian governments and social institutions as “domestic violence” or “family violence”, the problem became one of protecting families rather than challenging the patriarchal familial relations that contribute to abuse (DeKeseredy & MacLeod, 1997). A side effect of the shift to gender neutrality has been an increased focus on women’s violence against men, fuelled in part by research arguing that women and men are equally violent in intimate partnerships

(Barata & Senn, 2003; DeKeseredy, 1999; see Gelles, 1997; Straus, 2005) and rhetoric provided by men's and fathers' rights discourses. Nancy Berns (2001) argues that mainstream society is putting up "patriarchal resistance" by degendering the problem of woman abuse but gendering the blame through the following strategies: highlighting woman abusers, but curiously showing no interest in the plight of the male victim; holding female victims responsible for their role in their own victimization; and, critiquing the social tolerance for women's violence but not for men's violence.

Many other feminists have noted the backlash against feminist movements (Chesney-Lind, 2006; Chunn, Boyd, & Lessard, 2007; DeKeseredy, 1999; Dragiewicz, 2008; Faludi, 1991). Feminist movements face counter-movements that call for formal equality, the reassertion of the traditional (patriarchal) family, and objections to women's rights (Dragiewicz, 2008). Much of this is based on so-called "family conflict" research that turns a blind eye to gender differences in violence perpetration and victimization. Murray Straus (2005) relies on the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) to support his claims that women are as violent as men, that women's minor assaults against their male partners are a major social problem, and that women's violence actually helps perpetuate men's violence against women. However, as Donileen Loseke and Demie Kurz (2005) note, while the CTS consistently produces data that finds gender symmetry in intimate violence perpetration, it is the only scale that does. As a large-scale statistical counting tool administered over the telephone, the CTS is bound to produce biased refusal rates (i.e., women who are severely abused would not be likely to disclose to a stranger over the phone). There is also a tendency for both men and women to underestimate men's use of violence while overestimating women's use of violence, thus also producing biased results in this way

(Dobash & Dobash, 2004; Johnson, M.P. 2006; Loseke & Kurz, 2005). The CTS also does not inquire about the meaning, motive, or outcome of a violent act, but only asks respondents about a series of violent tactics that could be used in a conflict situation (DeKeseredy, 1999). Statistics gleaned from the use of the CTS have been used to “gender the blame” (Berns, 2001) of domestic violence and also in arguments to reduce resources for women-centred services. The most notable indicator of this backlash comes from men’s rights activists, who believe there is gender symmetry in domestic violence perpetration. In many cases these activists do not want to focus attention and increase services for male victims, but propose taking away public attention and resources from female victims (Berns, 2001; Loseke & Kurz, 2005).

The naming and understanding of intimate partner violence, in the context of other forms of violence against women and in the context of interactions and collaborations with other institutions holding competing discourses, is not a settled struggle. Official statistics in Canada demonstrate that both women and men experience violence in relationships¹², but that women report experiencing much more severe violence than men. Women report fearing for their lives and the safety of their children as a result of abuse to a much greater extent than men; women are much more likely to be physically hurt, require medical attention, and experience repeated assaults; and, women are more likely to be stalked, harassed, and killed by their partners (Johnson, 2006). Emerging theory in the field is attempting to make further sense of domestic violence by classifying different types of violence, in effect merging feminist and family conflict conceptualizations within one

¹² The 2009 GSS found that 6% of both women and men had experienced spousal violence with a current or former partner in the five years preceding the survey (Brennan, 2011a).

typology. Joan Kelly and Michael Johnson's (2008) typology recognizes four types of intimate partner violence: coercive controlling violence (i.e., wife battering), violent resistance (i.e., self-defence), situational couple violence (i.e., family conflict violence), and separation-instigated violence (i.e., motivated by a need for control or a psychological break). As yet, there is no consensus among feminists as to the utility of such an approach for their own work. Suffice to say, the transitions from a private matter to a public, largely crime problem and from a gendered problem to a family problem have informed not only feminist definitions and responses to wife battering, but also the way that other social actors have conceptualized the problem.

The criminal justice response to domestic violence in Ontario

In addition to the active framing negotiation process that was going on between the battered women's movement and the Canadian state, other concurrent factors contributed to a state response emphasizing criminal justice interventions in the early 1980s. Social science research at the time, like the Minneapolis Domestic Violence Experiment and a similar study in London, Ontario, found arrest, and not mediation or "cooling off" periods, to be the strongest predictor of lower repeat arrests in a six month follow-up with violent male partners (Jaffe, Wolfe, Telford, & Austin, 1982; Sherman & Berk, 1984). In the United States, high-profile lawsuits saw women suing police departments for failing to protect them from domestic violence (Buzawa & Buzawa, 2003; Mills, 1999). Despite subsequent research that has produced conflicting results on the effectiveness of arrest on reducing future assaults or keeping women safe (Maxwell, Garner, & Fagan, 2001;

Sherman, 1992; Sheptycki, 1991), the early perceived effectiveness of this approach has led to a proliferation of interventions by the criminal justice system.

Between 1983 and 1986 the Federal Solicitor General and provincial Attorneys General called on police within their jurisdictions to adopt mandatory arrest policies in cases of wife battering. Pro-prosecution policies and specialized domestic violence courts soon followed to deal with the influx of cases into the system. Advocates for aggressive criminalization of domestic violence argue that these policies demonstrate a clear societal commitment to treat domestic violence as a serious crime; provide a credible threat of prosecution for the offender; result in speedier court processing; result in greater consistency in sentencing; and, protect women from retaliation, if the abuser perceives the decision is out of her hands (Corsilles, 1994; Eley, 2005; Hanna, 1996). However, many feminists have been skeptical about the potential for the criminal justice system to adequately address women's concerns (Smart, 1989; Snider, 1991; 1994). Laureen Snider (1991, p. 239) has noted that "a strategy relying upon the criminal justice system is practically, theoretically and morally wrong" because it extends control over the lives and bodies of women and exacerbates class and race biases. Evaluations of criminal justice interventions for domestic violence have focused on procedural indicators of effectiveness, for example the number of cases processed, the number of offenders attending and completing Partner Assault Response (PAR) programs, or the number of rearrests (e.g., Dinovitzer & Dawson, 2007; PRA, 2006; Ursel, Tutty, & leMaistre, 2008). These evaluations have shown some promising results in terms of domestic violence case processing in the criminal justice system, including a rise in the number of cases reported to the police; more offenders pleading guilty; fewer cases being dropped by the police or

prosecution; and, more supports available for victims within the system (Dugan, Nagin, Rosenfeld, 1999; Hornick, Boyes, Tutty & White, 2008; Tutty, McNichol & Christensen, 2008; Ursel & Hagyard, 2008). However, there is little evidence to suggest that criminalization is effective at keeping women safe from violence, promoting women's sense of justice, or addressing the complexity of women's experiences of violence.

Most domestic violence-related offences prosecuted in court involve charges of physical assault; other types of violence can be difficult to prosecute when little physical evidence is present or when they are seen as less serious because there is no physical injury (see Forrester, 2011). Since the *Criminal Code of Canada* does not have a specific prohibition against domestic violence, related offences are subsumed under existing offences that can result in incongruence between police officers' understandings of criminal offences and women's experiences of partner violence (see Hoyle, 1998)¹³. In addition, the number of cases processed through the system or the number of individuals completing PAR programs cannot speak to any future violence committed by offenders if follow-ups are not conducted with both the convicted offender and their current or former partners. Arrest and rearrest rates are an inadequate measure because many women who experience domestic violence do not report their victimizations to the police. Statistics Canada's 2009 GSS on Victimization found that only 23% of women who experienced domestic violence contacted the police (Brennan, 2011a). If, as research suggests, women tend to contact the police only after a particularly severe incident of violence or after their partner "crosses the line" (Grauwiler, 2008; Holder, 2008), relatively less serious incidents

¹³ The most common domestic violence-related charges include common assault; assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm; breaches of peace bonds, restraining orders, or probation/parole; uttering threats; and, mischief (Forrester, 2011).

of violence committed after the abuser has already been processed through the criminal justice system might not reach the attention of police. Any instances of unreported violence would then not be reflected in rearrest rates, giving a potentially false sense of criminal justice effectiveness if an offender has not been rearrested for domestic violence.

Research on “what matters” to women who have experienced intimate partner violence has found that women who call the police are usually looking for protection and an immediate stop to a particular incident of violence; many are not committed to long-term involvement with the criminal justice system (Holder, 2008; Holder & Mayo, 2003; Landau, 2000). When women call the police they want the violent man removed, advice and information about their short- and long-term options, and someone to talk to who will be supportive and non-judgmental and who will not insist on prosecution (Hoyle, 1998). Women identify the need to be believed and have their experiences validated, to have immediate protection from violence, and to secure their children’s well-being (Minaker, 2001). Many survivors of domestic violence speak of wanting “justice”, but they do not always see that as something the criminal justice system can deliver and in fact engaging the justice system can often result in negative consequences, such as dual charging and loss of children (Barata, 2007; Minaker, 2001). Studies find that the most important resolution victims of violence want is validation of their experiences, and for family and friends to take an unequivocal stance in support of them and in condemnation of the perpetrator’s violence (Herman, 2005). Victims express a desire for healing and rebuilding and to feel safe throughout and as result of this process. Women may be afraid of their partner, but feel frustrated and confused about the criminal justice process and conflicted over whether or not they want him criminalized (Bennett, Goodman & Dutton, 1999). Many women

express a desire for their partners to be rehabilitated rather than punished (Cretney & Davis, 1997; Robinson, 2008).

Further, the ability of some women to access the Canadian criminal justice system is limited by a number of social factors, including being a visible minority, immigrant, or refugee, having a mental or physical disability, speaking neither English nor French, experiencing violence in a same-sex relationship, or having a low income (Barrett & St. Pierre, 2011). While it is widely documented that violence against Aboriginal women in Canada is disproportionately higher than violence against non-Aboriginal women (Brennan, 2011b), this violence is often not considered through the lens of Aboriginal peoples' experiences of historical and ongoing colonization and racism (Farley, Lynne, & Cotton, 2005; Native Women's Association of Canada [NWAC], 2010; Weaver, 2009). In an Australian study, Indigenous women were more likely than non-Indigenous women to see the criminal justice system as a tool of oppression and a facilitator of violence against them and their communities than as a mechanism for advancing the status of women. As a result of this view, Indigenous women tended to prefer alternative interventions, like restorative justice, that prioritize relationships and community well-being over state-defined solutions to violence (Nancarrow, 2007). However, alternative solutions are rarely available, particularly in the rural or isolated communities in which many Aboriginal women live, and many women may not have the resources to seek formal services in urban centres (Warrington, 2001).

Despite the lack of evidence of the effectiveness of criminal justice interventions at keeping women safe, addressing women's concerns for justice, and responding to the needs of diverse women, they are deeply embedded in the federal government's and the Ontario

provincial government's response to domestic violence. The root of the disconnect between the criminal justice system and feminist interpretations of violence against women is that "criminal law is an individualized response while violence against women is a systemic problem" (Majury, 2002, p. 134). Diana Majury (2002, p. 129) argues that the feminist movement of today is at an impasse: "We did in fact start with a vision...[but] the original vision no longer holds and we have not articulated a new vision on which to found the work we are doing." With research evidence now available giving suggestions as to what women might actually need and want as a response to intimate partner violence, feminists have an opportunity to craft a new vision to guide their activist work. A similar impasse can be observed in the evolution of the rape crisis movement in Canada. The battered women's movement's negotiations on the framing of wife battering involved the use of a sympathetic, archetypical victim in a socio-political context that was primed for a criminal justice response to physical assault. For the rape crisis movement, no such sympathetic figure existed, and the framing process was centred primarily on debates about whether or not rape should be considered a violent assault or a sexual act.

Rape law reform¹⁴

Canadian rape law prior to reforms in 1983 reflected a number of traditional normative messages that served to maintain male social dominance: the patriarchal marriage must be protected; women were morally underdeveloped; women's credibility

¹⁴ As a note regarding this section, I would like to remind readers that my area of expertise is not the law, I do not have a legal background, and I am not intending to write a legal thesis or an examination of legal discourse. My coverage of rape law reform and other legal responses to violence against women is as a feminist criminologist, viewing law as one "official" response to the social problem of violence against women.

depended on their reputation, while a man's did not; some women did not deserve legal protection, and men were entitled to exploit this advantage; and, female sexuality was defined by male sexuality (Łoś, 1994). Early feminists like Susan Brownmiller (1975, p. 15) conceptualized rape as a "process of intimidation by which all men keep all women in a state of fear"; Robin Morgan (1978, p. 163) saw rape as an act of "political terrorism", while Andrea Dworkin (1976, p. 32) interpreted it as a "colonizing act" by men seeking control over women's bodies. The anti-rape or rape crisis movement wanted rape, long considered a woman's private shame and the behaviour of a few sick men or else due to a woman's provocation, to be redefined in the public sphere according to feminist interpretations of the problem and reinforced as a crime subject to the full power of the law.

During the 1970s a major debate among feminists was whether rape should be considered an act of violence or an act of sex. In Canada, this played out in discussions to reform the historically narrow and gender biased legal definition of rape at that time. Specifically, feminists criticized the pre-1983 rape law for sending symbolic messages that reinforced patriarchy, for encouraging discrimination against female victims in the court process, and for its inability to be efficiently enforced (Łoś, 1994). Lorraine Clark and Debra Lewis (1977, p. 166) argued that the legal definition of rape should coincide with how victims – women – experience it: "They experience rape as an assault, as an unprovoked attack on their physical person, and as a transgression of their assumed right to the exclusive ownership and control of their bodies." On the other end of the debate, Constance Backhouse and Leah Cohen (1980, p. 101) argued that desexualizing rape was undesirable because "rape victims perceive rape as an act which is qualitatively different

from other forms of physical assault...the trauma of rape comes not so much from the physical unpleasantness of the experience as from the fear or terror that often accompanies rape.” Feminists on both sides of the debate were deeply involved in lobbying and consulting with the federal government to amend the rape law, which undoubtedly felt the pressure to align the *Criminal Code* with the newly entrenched *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (Łoś, 1994). After several iterations, Bill C-127 was tabled to the House of Commons in 1982.

Bill C-127 introduced a compromise with three levels of increasing severity of “sexual assault” that, on paper, addressed many feminists’ concerns with the original legislation (Łoś, 1994). While no explicit definition of sexual assault was outlined in the *Criminal Code*, the crimes of sexual assault; sexual assault with a weapon, threats to a third party, or causing bodily harm; and, aggravated sexual assault were added. In addition, the corroboration requirement and the recent complaint doctrine were lifted and spousal immunity was removed. The new legislation centred consent as the determining indicator in sexual assault cases; however, consent, like sexual assault, was not defined. It was not until after the decision in *R. v. Seaboyer* and *R. v. Gayme* [1991] that the definition of consent was attended to the *Criminal Code*. In this case, the Supreme Court found that sections 276 and 277 of the *Criminal Code*, which limit the questioning of victims about their sexual history if they take the stand as a witness in a sexual assault trial, violated the

accused person's *Charter* rights¹⁵ and go "beyond what is required or justified" to abolish outdated sexist stereotypes concerning sexual assault victims.

In response to the public outrage the Seaboyer and Gayme decisions caused, the Minister of Justice at the time, Kim Campbell, pledged to introduce legislation based on consultations with stakeholders that would mitigate its implications (McIntyre, 1994). These "Justice Consultations" were highly contentious (see McIntyre, 1994), but still resulted in a proposed bill that largely reflected the recommendations put forth by the coalition of women's groups who were present. Referred to as the "No means No" law, Bill C-49 set out guidelines for judges to use when assessing the admissibility of a victim's sexual history at trial. The legislation held that sexual history evidence can be admitted when it is of specific instances of sexual activity that are relevant to an issue at trial and are considered to be important evidence. The legislation also specified that "consent" required voluntary and active agreement to engage in the sexual activity in question and restricted the use of the mistaken belief in consent defence by prohibiting its use based on self-intoxication or when the accused had not taken "reasonable steps" to ascertain consent. In her detailed account of the consultations, McIntyre (1994, p. 310) notes,

I am of the view that what is good about the bill is women's doing and that because the word is out within women's communities and the public sphere, the individual women, the organizations they represented, the coalitions they built, and the principled feminism they made real will be heard from again. There is already evidence that for sectors of the women's community who have never before so influenced power politics, there will be no going back.

¹⁵ Specifically section 7 that guarantees, "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of the person and the right not to be deprived thereof except in accordance with the principles of fundamental justice" and section 11 d) which guarantees accused persons the right "to be presumed innocent until proven guilty according to law in a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal."

However, the existence of a definition of consent did not prevent courts from employing liberal interpretations of the concept.

In 1994, the Supreme Court overthrew the conviction of a man who had sexually assaulted an elderly, physically disabled woman based on the defence of extreme intoxication in *R. v. Daviault* [1994]. Intoxication, both on the part of the accused and victims, has remained a contentious issue in the courts at all levels (see Benedet, 2010). For example, in 2008 a Calgary judge acquitted a 19-year-old man of sexual assault against a 14-year-old girl based on his rejection of her claim that she did not consent to having sex, even though both were heavily intoxicated and evidence suggested that the accused had plied her with alcohol. Despite the fact case law holds that sex with a sleeping or unconscious person amounts to rape¹⁶, acquittals in these types of cases are not uncommon, especially when the complainant was drinking and even when she was exposed to date rape drugs¹⁷. The issue of consent also becomes particularly problematic in cases of sexual assault committed against spouses, despite the removal of spousal immunity in the 1983 reforms. In her examination of case law, Randall (2008) found that sexual assaults against intimate partners are the least likely of all domestic violence and sexual assault cases to come to the attention of and be processed by the criminal justice system. Of those cases involving intimate partners that do reach the court of law, Randall (2008) found that sexual history evidence seems to “slip in” to the extent that some judges read-in a relationship of ongoing consent between the accused and the victim. Further, some judicial decisions

¹⁶ *R. v. Ladue* [1965].

¹⁷ *R. v. Osvath* [1996]; *R. v. Cornejo* [2003].

reflect an assumption of men's sexual access to their wives based on language that reflects normative assumptions about heterosexual marriage (Randall, 2008). Randall's (2008) findings highlight the embedded myths and stereotypes that continue to erode what might otherwise be interpreted as feminist-inspired legal advances.

As Gotell (2008a, 2008b) has noted through an examination of sexual assault case law post-Bill C-49, judicial decisions are increasingly recognizing a standard of "affirmative consent"¹⁸ and reframing sexual interaction in terms of a market transaction whereby normative sexuality is imbued with the entrepreneurial logic of rationality and responsibility. In its application, this means that law privileges sexual assault complainants whose behaviour mirrors normative femininity and heterosexuality. In other words, the "ideal victim" of sexual assault is no longer tied to vulnerability (see Christie, 1986; Estrich, 1987), but to responsibility (e.g., by avoiding "risky" situations, responding to threats assertively, and seeking immediate protection; Gotell, 2008a; see also Comack & Peter, 2005; Randall, 2010). As a result, this conceptualization of normative sexual interaction delegitimizes some women's experiences of violence when their behaviour cannot be understood as sufficiently "responsible", an effect that is intimately connected to race and class relations. For example, women who engage in street sex work often need to put themselves in "risky" situations to survive. Similarly, Aboriginal women are often constructed as violable, throwaway objects in judicial decisions, serving as a reminder of Canada's more overtly racist and colonial past (Razack, 2005). This extension of market

¹⁸ Affirmative consent refers to consent that is active and ongoing, freely given, and not derived from physical responses (e.g., perceived arousal), intoxication, or allusions to prior consent.

values to the interpretation of sexual interaction provides one example of the neoliberal shift in the governing rationality of Canada's liberal democratic state (see Brown, 2005).

In addition to broadening the definition of rape to sexual assault, other less easily measured goals were also attached to the rape law reform: increasing public awareness about sexual assault (Roberts, Grossman, & Gebotys, 1996); increasing the number of victims reporting sexual assault to the police (Roberts & Grossman, 1994); and, making the judicial process more sensitive to female victims (Bowland, 1994; Clark & Hepworth, 1994; Comack & Balfour, 2004). In terms of increasing public awareness about sexual violence, legislative and public discourse changes in language can serve to complicate the issue for the general public. In a 1996 analysis of the Department of Justice's public opinion database, researchers Julian Roberts, Michelle Grossman, and Robert Gebotys found that 10 years after the rape law reform, only 16% of Canadians knew that the crime of "rape" had been changed to "sexual assault". However, most Canadians were aware of the substantive changes: 77% were aware that both men and women could be charged with an offence; 83% knew that a man could be charged with assaulting his wife; and, 76% knew that sexual assault could occur in the absence of sexual intercourse. The researchers also found that the changed language from "rape" to "sexual assault" did not lead to an increased attribution of aggression to the crime – or, in other words, that the inclusion of the word "assault" did not make Canadians take the crime more seriously. In fact, they found that Canadians attributed less punitive consequences to sexual assault than rape, suggesting that Canadians believe "sexual assault" is less serious than "rape". These results suggest that Canadians are somewhat confused about what constitutes "sexual assault". Though they are aware of the specific behaviours for which a person can be charged,

Canadians seem to believe that “sexual assault” is less serious than “rape”. This is problematic in that Canada no longer has a criminal offence of “rape” and that for legal and criminal justice purposes, “sexual assault” is “rape”. If Canadians believe that “sexual assault” is less serious than “rape”, it is logical to reason that they believe a person can still commit the crime of “rape”. However, when the word “rape” is never used in public discourse, the impression may be that “rape” is a fairly uncommon occurrence in Canada. This perception would also be supported by official police-reported crime statistics: 97% of sexual assaults in Canada in 2010 were classified as level 1, the least serious form of sexual assault (Brennan & Dauvergne, 2011).

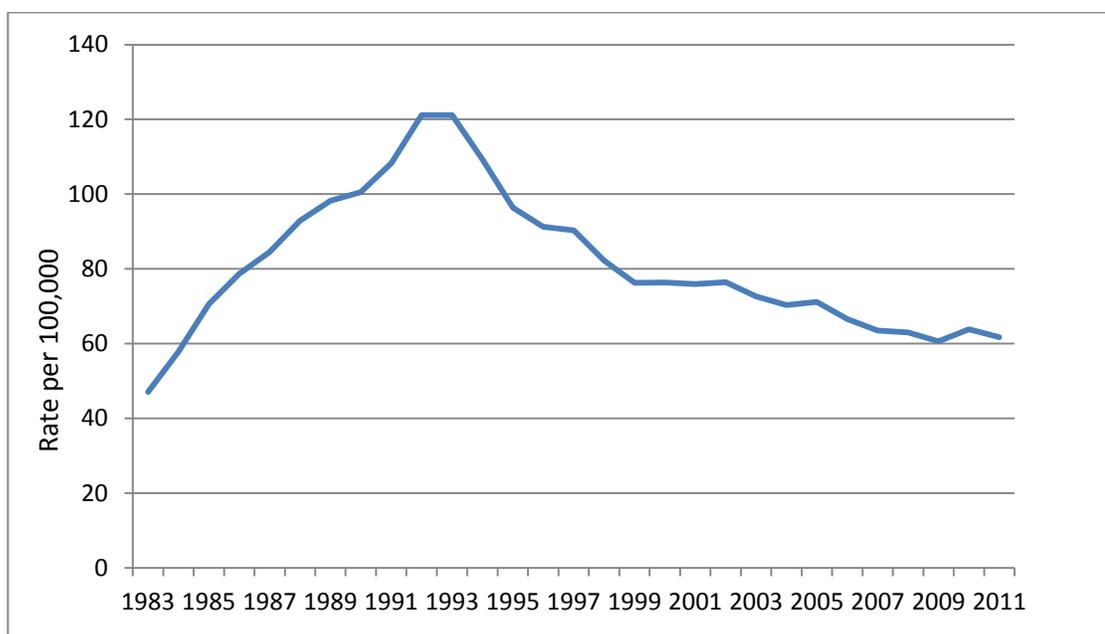
There has not been another nationally representative public opinion survey on violence against women in Canada since the 1996 analysis, so it is unclear if Canadians’ attitudes and knowledge of sexual assault have changed over time. However, an Australian study on community attitudes toward violence against women found that 15% of respondents agreed that women often say “no” when they mean “yes”; 38% agreed that rape results from men not being able to control their need for sex; and, 66% agreed that women rarely make false claims of being raped (Taylor & Mouzos, 2006). A 2008 province-wide public opinion survey in Ontario commissioned to collect baseline data for the Neighbours, Friends, and Families public education campaign on woman abuse, found that 82% of Ontarians were aware of at least some of the warning signs of intimate partner violence (e.g., slapping, pushing, or throwing objects to cause fear) but that 46% thought most women could get out of an abusive situation if they really wanted to and only 57% agreed that it was never acceptable to use physical force against a female partner (i.e., 43% agreed that there may be some instances where physical force is warranted – e.g., to protect

oneself or children or to restrain the woman if she is a threat to herself; Johnson & Fraser, 2008). Recent community-based research in Ottawa has shown that, at least among young people, there still is confusion about what constitutes “sexual assault”, as well as perceptions that “sexual assault” is less serious than “rape” (Johnson & MacKay, 2011). If there is confusion in the general public around what constitutes sexual violence then there will inevitably be confusion over who has ownership of the issue in terms of the ability to define the problem and the responsibility to address the problem. Unlike intimate partner violence, sexual violence has not been taken up as enthusiastically in the criminal justice system; there have been no similarly widespread and aggressive policies or processes for sexual violence as those that developed in the 1980s and 1990s for intimate partner violence.

It is difficult to measure if reporting rates for sexual assault have increased as a result of the 1983 legislation because it created a new offence for which there was no baseline for comparison. When police-reported rates for sexual assault are examined post-1983, an increase is noted throughout the 1980s, with a peak in reporting rates between 1992 and 1993, and since then a steady decline (see Figure 1), which parallels a general pattern of reductions across all crime categories in Canada. However, trends in police reporting rates say little about actual rates of sexual violence because most victims do not report to police. According to the 2009 GSS on Victimization, 88% of sexual assault victims do not report to the police, a rate that has remained consistent since it was first measured in 1993 by the VAWS (Johnson, 2006; Perreault & Brennan, 2010). Victimization surveys are a good way of uncovering the bigger picture of sexual violence, but they are completed too infrequently in Canada to establish a trend in sexual

victimization and reporting. The VAWS found that 39% of Canadian women had at least one experience of sexual assault since the age of 16. The 1999, 2004, and 2009 GSS found that about 3% of women experienced a sexual assault in the 12 months prior to the survey. These rates reflect about 500,000 victimized women in Canada annually. Thus, it seems unlikely that police reporting rates have been affected in any significant or sustained way by the legislation, neither increasing nor decreasing, but it is very difficult to measure with certainty given the paucity of trend data for sexual victimizations that are not reported to police and the absence of any victimization data prior to 1993.

Figure 1: Total sexual assaults recorded by the police in Canada



Source: Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Statistics Canada

If making the judicial processing more sensitive to female victims was another goal of the rape law reform, one way to do this might be to increase the likelihood that reported offences would be processed through to prosecution and, optimally, result in a conviction.

Clark and Hepworth's (1994) review of the Department of Justice's Sexual Assault Law Monitoring Program¹⁹ found that the sexual assault legislation did not result in any significant change in the number of cases that were designated by police as founded, in the number of cases that were cleared by charge, or in conviction rates. Further, the authors maintained that the criminal justice process was still traumatic for victims. Since the Department of Justice evaluation, other researchers have also looked at the criminal justice processing of sexual assault complaints. In an overview of research on the police "unfounding" of sexual assault reports, Theresa DuBois (2009) found that sexual assault complaints disproportionately result in an unfounded designation compared to other crimes, ranging from 7% to 43% depending on the jurisdiction. High rates of unfounding cannot be explained by the perceived problem of "false allegations" of sexual assault; indeed, as Joanne Belknap (2010) suggests, rape is "too hard to report and too easy to discredit victims". The process of discrediting victims in the courtroom, for those few cases that do reach that point, further deters victims from reporting (Comack & Balfour, 2004; Hattem, 2000), an experience that can be particularly traumatic for women who are marginalized by social factors like race, ethnicity, level of ability, and socio-economic status (e.g., see Dylan, Regehr, & Alaggia, 2008).

Removing gender bias in the legislation was also meant to sensitize the legal processing of rape cases for women. However, the way sexual assault cases play out in the courts has led to a reinterpretation of gender bias, with judges and defence lawyers finding

¹⁹ The Department of Justice's Sexual Assault Law Monitoring Program ran from 1985 until 1991 and included field research, a survey of frontline agencies, reviews of case law, analysis of police statistics, and an analysis of sentencing patterns (Clark & Hepworth, 1994). More recent evaluations of sexual assault legislation from the Department of Justice include Hattem (2000), McDonald (2004), and McDonald, Wobick, and Graham (2006).

new ways to “whack the complainant”, despite the gender neutral definition (Schmitz, 1988). For example, while Supreme Court decisions in *R. v. Ewanchuk* [1999]²⁰ and *R. v. Darrach* [2000] would uphold Bill C-49’s provisions on implied consent and the limits on the admission of sexual history evidence at trial respectively (see Benedet, 2001), other judicial interpretations have sought to circumvent the limits on sexual history evidence by introducing other forms of evidence that can be similarly damaging to victims of sexual violence. In *R. v. O’Connor* [1995], the Supreme Court upheld the common law rule that personal records could be admitted when they are relevant to the case based on a two-step process: 1) the accused must demonstrate that the records are relevant to the case and 2) the judge must decide to disclose the records based on balancing the right to full answer and defence and the right to privacy. In this case, Bishop O’Connor was charged with a variety of sexual offences against four Aboriginal women at a church-run residential school in the 1960s. The women were forced to disclose their medical, counselling, and school records for the trial. Though he was originally convicted, the British Columbia Court of Appeal later acquitted Bishop O’Connor of sexual assault. The Supreme Court dismissed an appeal, upholding the defendant’s right to access therapeutic records of complainants that were relevant to the case or to the complainants’ ability to testify. This decision was

²⁰ It is important to recognize the contribution of feminist judges in the interpretation of sexual assault legislation. Justice Claire L’ L’Heureux-Dubé wrote for the majority in *R. v. Ewanchuk* [1999] stating that the trial judge’s acceptance of implied consent derived from “mythical assumptions [that deny] women’s sexual autonomy and [imply] that women are in a state of constant consent to sexual activity” and that “complainants should be able to rely on a system free from such myths and stereotypes, and on a judiciary whose impartiality is not compromised by these biased assumptions” (*R. v. Ewanchuk* [1999]). Justice Bertha Wilson is also remembered widely for her decision in *R. v. Lavallee* [1990] recognizing Battered Woman Syndrome as a self-defence for women charged with killing their abusive partners, in some cases.

considered a “disaster for women” (Dawson, 2004) and lead to aggressive lobbying²¹ for an amendment to the *Criminal Code*, which came in the form of Bill C-46 in 1997. Bill C-46 provided some privacy protection for victims in terms of the defendant’s access to her personal records²². This legislation was challenged in *R. v. Mills* [1997] at the trial level on the basis that Bill C-46 included items not addressed in *R. v. O’Connor* [1995] and those items offended the accused’s constitutional right to a fair trial. However, the legislation was upheld by the Supreme Court, who overturned the trial judge, in *R. v. Mills* [1999] stating that the provision “prevents speculative myths, stereotypes, and generalized assumptions about sexual assault victims” (p. 7) from being used by the accused to “whack the complainant” (p. 62).

Gotell (2002; 2008b) has explored the case law implications of the *Mills* decision on the conduct of defence lawyers during sexual assault trials. She found that defence lawyers continue to request and access victims’ personal records, with judges refusing to grant access based on narrow, individualistic notions of “privacy rights” rather than recognizing the social, political, and feminist implications of undermining the credibility of women who have experienced sexual violence (Gotell, 2002). She also found that women who have been extensively documented – women who were under the state’s care as a child, women with disabilities or mental health issues, Aboriginal women, and women of colour – are most vulnerable to records requests and most hurt by them. In a recent

²¹ According to Gotell (2002), the bill emerged out of consultations with women’s groups, anti-rape activists, and defence lawyers; however, there was no evidence of these consultations in my CWMA explorations nor were they referred to by any interview participants.

²² This bill added Section 278 to the *Criminal Code*, referring to any “record that contains personal information for which there is a reasonable expectation of privacy and includes...medical, psychiatric, therapeutic, counselling, education, employment, child welfare, adoption and social services records, [and] personal journals and diaries.”

analysis, Gotell (2008b) suggests that the liberal legalistic framing of sexual assault as a discrete incident on the part of an individual perpetrator renders invisible the complex power relations that increase marginalized women's vulnerability to violence and to the invasive defence tactics of requesting access to personal records. Further, access to records continue to be granted without equality considerations (for example, with judges granting access based on the acquiescence of the complainant despite not meeting the relevancy or necessity for justice thresholds set out in the *Criminal Code*) and when there is an assumption about a false allegation (Gotell, 2008b). Ultimately, Gotell (2008b) found that women sexual assault complainants who fail to meet the standards of the new neoliberal "ideal victim" are more likely to be denied access to the neoliberal individual's right to privacy and that myths about women's tendency to falsely allege rape are still active in the courtroom.

Kristen Bumiller (2008) and Gotell (2007; 2008a; 2010) both argue that the rise of neoliberalism in Western liberal democracies has led to government co-optation of the feminist issue of sexual violence. In their view, this co-optation has involved the reframing of the issue from one of women's equality and right to sexual autonomy to an individualized legal (and to a lesser extent medical) issue subject to the regulatory and crime control agendas of the state. Gotell (2007; 2008a; 2010) further posits that in this process of co-optation, sexual violence as feminists know it has "disappeared" from the public agenda altogether through the individualizing gaze of the legal system. This view posits quite a different effect than what is observed with the evolution of the battered women's movement: feminists were able to actively negotiate the reframing of intimate partner violence and used the tactic of sympathy to garner attention for the battered woman

and then harnessed gender neutral discursive maneuvers to make it accessible and relevant for government intervention. Sexual violence, on the other hand, has not had access to a similarly legitimate victim figure as that of the helpless, battered woman in the battered women's movement. In fact, historical evidence on the treatment of sexual assault victims in Canada since the enactment of the *Criminal Code* has shown that women who have alleged sexual victimization have consistently had their credibility questioned or been assumed to be lying about being victimized because they were delusional, seeking to protect their own reputation, or out of a desire to incriminate the accused (Backhouse, 1991; 2008). Rape victims, due to widely spread and deeply ingrained beliefs about their own implication in their sexual victimization, have never garnered the sympathy, or at least pity, that a stereotypically helpless, battered woman is often granted. But, unlike "family violence" or "domestic violence", sexual violence is not an issue that can easily be made gender neutral. When sexual violence is interpreted as "rape", it evokes visceral emotions because of its intimate connection with women's embodiment and feminine sexuality, making "women" and "rape" nearly inseparable concepts (Cahill, 2000; MacKinnon, 2003). But when sexual violence is interpreted as "sexual assault", a term which certainly serves to obscure the gendered component of the violation, confusion over what "sexual assault" actually means has led to Canadians taking it less seriously than rape, not more. The outcome of this struggle over language has probably been what neither camp in the feminist "rape"/"sexual assault" debate would have desired or expected: "sexual assault" is less clearly gendered than "rape", but also taken less seriously than "rape" by the general public.

To sum up, after decades of inadequate legal responses to rape and in response to a highly visible feminist movement in the 1970s, the federal government amended the *Criminal Code* in 1983. After feminist backlash to discriminatory judicial decisions, the federal government clarified its position on the meaning of consent and the use of sexual history evidence and personal records in court proceedings. The classification of sexual violence as “disappeared” by some feminists may be overstated, though there are certainly variations in the fidelity of government intervention into sexual violence compared to intimate partner violence. While intimate partner violence has received essentially consistent political attention since the 1980s, political attention for sexual violence, at least at the federal level, has ebbed and flowed in response to key debates or events, attributable in part to the confusion over sexual violence instigated by the “rape”/“sexual assault” debates.

Regroupements and the Government of Quebec

The feminist movement in Quebec defies the Anglophone distinction between first and second wave feminism. Quebec women were not granted the right to vote in provincial elections until 1940, 20 years after most other provinces and the federal government amended their election statutes to include women²³. Relatively delayed suffrage contributed to the ongoing feminist activism of Quebec women during times of less visible feminist activism in other areas of the country (Dumont, 1992; see Barry et al., 2007; Taylor, 1997). After 1940 and through to the 1960s, Quebec women mobilized in response

²³ Aboriginal peoples did not receive the right to vote in Ontario until 1954, in federal elections until 1960, and in Quebec until 1969 (Ladner & McCrossan, 2007).

to religious, social, labour, and cultural institutions, setting the stage for an explosion of feminist activism in the 1970s (Dumont, 1992). In light of Quebec's recognition of women as legitimate political players, feminist activism on violence against women has been distinctly different in this province compared to what has occurred throughout the rest of the country, particularly relating to Quebec feminists' ability to inject feminist analysis into government policy strategies around funding and action plans on violence.

Since the 1980s, Quebec's *Ministère des affaires sociales* (MAS, now *Ministère de la santé et des services sociaux* [MSSS]) has provided a significant level of financial support to women's centres, women's shelters, and *centres d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions à caractère sexuel* (CALACS or rape crisis centres), without requiring these centres to conform to bureaucratic and professional mandates (Beaudry, 1985; Masson, 1999/2000). Additionally, the Ministry has released updated action plans on intimate partner violence and sexual violence every few years since the mid-1980s that guarantee *Regroupements* (coalitions of organizations) and individual organizations a certain amount of stable funding. Dominique Masson (1998) argues that feminist claims of government co-optation of the women's movement are exaggerated, or at least not representative of the Quebec experience, and that Quebec women's advocacy groups have not faced attacks on their legitimacy or faced the political marginalization experienced by Anglophone feminists. While Quebec women experienced a similar process of consciousness-raising that unveiled the prevalence of violence against women in their communities and developed similar grassroots responses as other locations in Canada, the response from and interaction with the Quebec government has been markedly different. To understand this

difference, the history of the welfare state in Quebec and the contribution of popular and community movements needs to be considered.

Masson (1998) makes the argument that funding for community services constituted the major debate in which social movement groups, of which feminist groups were a part, struggled for inclusion in Quebec politics during the expansion and dissolution of the welfare state. Indeed, she notes that community-based service provision exploded in Quebec in the 1970s and 1980s – “the turn to services” – and quite clearly situated this service provision as the dominant form of collective community action. Of course this is not so different from what was occurring in the rest of Canada, whereby women-centred services for victims of violence were emerging as a new form of services, addressing a gap in state-provided services. However, amidst the financial crisis of the 1980s, the Quebec government had to balance the need for cost-cutting with a sustained call from the community sector for state-funded services. Unlike in the rest of Canada where social programs were being subjected to massive budget cuts, Masson (1998) argues that “a movement away from previous welfare commitments...did not translate into a crude retreat from welfare service provision”. Instead, the Quebec government established institutionalized, state-funded partnerships with community agencies, including women’s centres, shelters, and CALACS that were ultimately further entrenched following the report of the Rochon Commission in 1988 which recommended renewable, three-year funding plans for community organizations²⁴. Whereas feminist services were being reconceptualized into gender neutral services at the federal level and in Ontario, in Quebec

²⁴ The *Commission d’enquête sur les services de santé et les services sociaux*, or Rochon Commission, was created in 1985 and operated until 1987 to investigate and achieve a broad social consensus on a comprehensive reform of Quebec’s health and social service sector (see Masson, 1998).

community services' "demand for democratization" allowed these groups to retain a level of autonomy over the definition and delivery of their services.

Of course, the struggle for political legitimacy and funding had some very specific ramifications for women's groups. Masson (1998) argues that funding for feminist service provision was not "there for the asking", but that feminist groups had to represent themselves in a particular way in order to obtain that legitimacy and inclusion played out through state funding partnerships. At the end of the 1970s, feminist services were in "survival mode" and decided to form the *Regroupement provincial des maisons d'hébergement*²⁵ with 19 shelters and the *Regroupement québécois des CALACS* with six rape crisis centres in 1979 as a basis from which to lobby the Quebec government, and the MAS in particular, for funding²⁶. In the context of a provincial government committed to addressing women's status in Quebec and the problem of violence against women²⁷, the *Regroupements'* struggle for funding came to a head in response to a 1980 Ministry decision that defunded CALACS under the assumption that shelters could also "do rape". The *Regroupements* lobbied the government for recognition of the distinctiveness of CALACS and were ultimately successful in retaining separate funding for shelters and CALACS as of 1982-83, albeit on an ad hoc basis. It was not until 1985, with the *Politique d'aide aux femmes violentées*, produced through consultations with the *Regroupements* and individual shelters and CALACS, that funding for these services was formally

²⁵ In 1987, the *Fédération de ressources d'hébergement pour femmes violentées et en difficulté du Québec* was formed taking a less feminist and less political stance on providing services to "women in difficulty".

²⁶ The *Regroupement des centres de femmes du Québec* was established in 1985.

²⁷ In 1973, Quebec established the *Conseil du statut de la femme* which released a *Politique d'ensemble de la condition féminine* recognizing the problem of violence against women in 1978.

institutionalized in Quebec. This funding was guaranteed in three year terms for shelters in a 1987 update to the policy and by 1990-91 for CALACS. While the 1985 policy was not perfect²⁸, Masson (1998, p. 107) argues that,

The decision of women's groups to seek permanent funding from the Ministry was not naïve. Rather, it was a calculated gamble that lobbying and political pressure would establish a balance of forces strong enough to withstand attempts to override their commitment to self-determination.

Indeed, this was the position of the majority of feminist organizations across Canada who turned to, and relied on, state funding to sustain their advocacy and service provision. Quebec *Regroupements* were based on a radical feminist analysis of violence against women, identifying patriarchy as the problem, but did not operate with a radical feminist analysis of the state. While there were, and still are, variations in feminist organizations' conceptualizations of violence against women and on the utility of feminist engagement with the state, most Anglophone feminist organizations were also "gambling on" the potential for the state to address women's concerns, but many Anglophone feminist groups were not so lucky after major cuts to federal funding beginning in the 1990s.

In addition to a political context reinforcing the community sector, an important factor that bolstered the recognition of feminist legitimacy by the Quebec government concerns the history of the nationalist movement in Quebec. Micheline de Sève (1992) notes that Quebec feminists were not concentrated on either side of the nationalist/federalist debate in Quebec and because it was such a contentious issue in the province, official organizations like the FFQ held a neutral position. As Masson (1998)

²⁸ See Masson (1998) for a comprehensive and contextualized recounting of the feminist struggle for state funding in the 1980s.

notes, both the *Parti Québécois* and the *Parti Libéral* were in power during the “turn to the community” and the establishment of state-community funding partnerships, thus it behooved each party to respond to the particular concerns of women’s groups to garner women’s political support. Clearly, feminist activists in Quebec struggle with similar issues as activists working in Ontario, but their activism is influenced by the view that the provincial government is responsible for ensuring that violence against women is adequately addressed and the cautious knowledge that the government will provide for feminist responses to the problem. This is a fundamentally different situation than that faced by feminists in Ontario who advocate and provide services with no guarantees of a base level of government funding, despite a view that the state should be involved in responding to violence against women and the state’s formal recognition of the problem.

Conclusion

This chapter has overviewed some of the developments in feminist activism on and institutional responses to violence against women in the Canadian provinces of Ontario and Quebec over the last 40 years. From the literature, we see how various feminist activists and organizations engaged in claims-making campaigns to promote their conceptualizations of violence against women during shifting socio-political contexts. From the recognition that men’s perpetration of physical, sexual, and other forms of violence against women constituted a social problem, to responding to survivors of violence with specialized feminist services, feminist groups have struggled for legitimacy within a political and social context that has undermined the extent and severity of the problem. As feminist research began to reveal in the 1980s, violence against women is

widespread across the country, which suggested to feminists the need for governments to intervene. In the early 1980s, some feminist groups began framing the issue of wife battering as a crime to be taken as seriously by police as other forms of assault, leading to a proliferation in aggressive criminal justice interventions for domestic violence in Ontario and other provinces. These reforms have had unintended consequences and research suggests that women are still not getting what they need as victims of intimate partner violence. Rape legislation was reformed in an effort to remove gender bias from the legislation and encourage more victims to report, however data is limited in measuring the extent to which these goals were achieved. Quebec feminists have had comparably more success in retaining a feminist analysis in their provincial government's response to domestic and sexual violence, but relying on governments for funding inevitably still puts feminist groups in a precarious position. How did the feminists working within these conditions make sense of their activism during this time? The next chapter will outline the methodology used in the current study to answer that question.

Chapter 4: Methodology

In this chapter, the qualitative methodological approach used in this study will be described. First, I situate this project as one of feminist history-making within the discipline of criminology. Following that, I lay out the data collection method involving archival materials and key informant interviews, and discuss how data was thematically analyzed. I also provide my thoughts on my position as a researcher in relation to my research data and the participants in my study. Finally, the chapter concludes with a consideration of the limitations of the chosen methodology.

Feminist History-Making

Feminist criminological scholarship first emerged in the late 1960s (see Adler, 1975; Bertrand, 1969; Simon, 1975; Smart, 1976). Being a relatively new stream of thought in the discipline, not much attention has been paid to the limited role that thinking about women, and women's criminality and victimology, have played in shaping modes of social and crime control (e.g., Daly & Chesney-Lind, 1988; Maidment, 2006; Naffine, 1987; Walklate, 2007). Particularly what is lacking is an acknowledgement of how the dynamics and iterations of these modes of social and crime control are gendered (as well as raced and classed) within historical socio-political contexts. This project represents a contribution to the discipline of criminology by centring women's perspectives on their activism on violence against women, often rooted in firsthand experiences with victimization, and their engagement with the Canadian state in an examination of the evolution of feminist activism on violence against women in Ontario and Quebec between 1970 and 2010.

The methodology of “doing history” combines the extensive documentation of sources and the art of telling an interesting story that resonates with present day readers. Gerda Lerner (2009, p. 158) defines history-making as “form-giving and meaning-giving. It is a creative enterprise by which we fashion out of scraps of memory and selected data from the past a coherent story that makes sense to the present”. Feminist history-making attempts to acknowledge women and women’s experiences and place them in social, political, and cultural contexts where they have been traditionally absent or considered inconsequential (e.g., Davis-Kimball, 2002; French, 2002; Lerner, 1979; 1986a; 1986b). This approach, sometimes referred to by feminists as “herstory” (Morgan, 1970), is rooted in women’s own experiences of being “suppressed, rendered unfree, [and] made men’s property” (French, 2002, p. 2) throughout history, geographic location, and social milieu. As Casey Miller and Kate Swift (1976, p. 135) describe, feminists use the term “herstory” “to emphasize that women's lives, deeds, and participation in human affairs have been neglected or undervalued in standard histories.” But feminist history-making is not simply uncovering the forgotten lives of women; it reconceptualizes what it means to look at a historical topic by placing women at the centre of inquiry (Laslett, Joeres, Maynes, Brooks Higginbotham, & Barker-Nunn, 1997). For example, Constance Backhouse, a Canadian legal scholar, conducts historical research on women’s interactions with the Canadian legal system through case studies or “micro-histories” from the woman’s point of view (e.g., Backhouse, 1991; 2008). Her approach recognizes the futility in trying to produce any sort of consistent or complete history on a given topic due to the selective retention of historical materials. Her view is that micro-histories provide illustrative examples that can be just as elucidating as broad historical generalizations (Backhouse, 2008).

Distinctions also need to be made between feminist history-making or herstory, which is indeed a research methodology that can be applied to any issue, even those traditionally considered non-feminist²⁹, and the history of feminism or feminist issues, an endeavor that could be conducted from any number of different approaches to history-making³⁰. For example, two seminal works on the history of violence against women, Susan Brownmiller's (1975) *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape*³¹ and R. Emerson Dobash and Russell Dobash's (1979) *Violence Against Wives: A Case Against the Patriarchy*, attempt to reinterpret prevailing understandings of women's victimization up until the 1970s from a feminist perspective. Both of these tomes interrogate a vast array of historical documents and other source material (e.g., case studies, in-depth interviews, literature, news reports, propaganda, scholarly research, and statistics) to produce feminist historical interpretations of rape and wife battering when none before existed³². These texts are often considered to be part of the foundational work in early feminist research on violence against women, serving to galvanize and provide support for the work of the rape crisis and battered women's movements.

²⁹ While many feminists, myself included, would argue that nearly any socio-political issue would benefit from a feminist analysis, some issues that have not traditionally been interpreted as feminist issues have been subject to feminist historical inquiry, including education (Hayes, 1998), public policy (Pillow, 2003), and language writing (Vickery, 2000).

³⁰ Examples of historical approaches to feminist topics conducted from non-feminist perspectives include biological explanations for rape or biblical justifications for family violence.

³¹ Brownmiller (1975) has been criticized for her alarmist generalization that rape is "a conscious process of intimidation by which *all* men keep *all* women in a state of fear" (p. 15). As well, she tends to minimize the disparities in social status between white women and racial minority men, and resort to a "law and order" approach of "civilized retribution...as a deterrent against the commission of future crimes" (p. 379).

³² Also see Clark and Lewis (1977), Griffin (1979), and Walker (1979).

The current study represents a feminist approach to history-making, recognizing that women have often been left out of writing even their own histories and that feminist histories of the “second wave” of the feminist movement in Canada are only beginning to emerge³³. Feminist activists who have been involved in the movement to end violence against women are recognized as “historians” in the present analysis, their experiences and stories are positioned as integral to the production of feminist history. The stories and experiences of these feminist activist/historians, as gleaned through archival research and key informant interviews, are made sense of in the context of the natural history approach to social problems (Best, 2013; Spector & Kitsuse, 2009), as well as the interview participants own reflections on their activism. Situated at the intersection of criminology, feminism, and history, the current project produces a feminist history of feminist activism on violence against women in Ontario and Quebec between 1970 and 2010, as well as an analysis of feminist activism as claims-making and social movement activity.

Research Method

The research method for the current project was a multi-method qualitative approach involving archival documentary analysis and thematic analysis of key informant interviews. In the social sciences, qualitative research is often concerned with the study of social issues – in this case, feminist activism on violence against women – and the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to those issues – in this case, the feminist activists involved in the movement (Creswell, 2007). Two sources of data were chosen: archival documents,

³³ See the Feminist History Society for a unique project seeking to document the second wave of the feminist movement in Canada: <http://feministhistories.ca/>

important because of the “pervasive significance of documentary records...in contemporary social settings” (Atkinson & Coffey, 1997, p. 46), and key informant interviews, to bring out the personal stories hidden from view or to fill in the gaps that remained after examining the documents (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011).

Strategies used to ensure validity and reliability include keeping a field notes journal, stating my researcher bias, allowing interview participants the opportunity to review their transcripts for accuracy, and explicitly laying out all steps taken during my data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2007). Interview participants were also given the opportunity to review the analysis chapters of this dissertation to see if my interpretations of the data made sense to them and to see if quotations and summarizations reflected the intended meaning of their dialogue during the interview (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). As Margarete Sandelowski (1986, p. 30) notes, “a qualitative study is credible when it presents such faithful descriptions or interpretations of a human experience that the people having that experience would immediately recognize it from those descriptions or interpretations as their own.” The women’s stories and interpretations are situated within the context of the archival documents (and vice versa), as well as within the scholarly literature and the socio-political context as both an exercise in historiography and “fittingness” to ensure that “findings can ‘fit’ into contexts outside the study situation” (Sandelowski, 1986, p. 32). Further, this methodology chapter (and my field notes journal) serve as my “decision trail” documenting and justifying what was done and why throughout the research process (Sandelowski, 1986).

The two research methods were chosen to highlight the relative marginalization of women’s history and to use women activists not only as sources of data, but to elevate

them to the status of “historian”. Originally, I had planned to conduct archival research at both the Canadian Women’s Movement Archives (CWMA) located in the Morisset Library at the University of Ottawa and at Library and Archives Canada (LAC), also located in Ottawa. However, after wading through the complex *fonds*³⁴ at LAC, I realized that only five files would potentially be of relevance to the topic of violence against women; of those five files, one was closed by the donor³⁵, one held the personal records of a politician, one held the files of a government agency, and the other two were national associations not directly related to violence against women or explicitly feminist in orientation. Given my focus on feminist activism on violence against women for the current project, I chose to exclude the files from LAC in this analysis because they were not directly related to the topic of the current study. In the future, when I hope to focus on the government and public policy discourse on violence against women, the LAC documents will be of more relevance. This decision to exclude an entire potential site for data collection is an example of an adaptive research process, one characterized by an ability to change course should one possible avenue prove to be unfruitful and also to adapt understandings originally based on pre-conceived expectations (Layder, 1998).

An adaptive approach was also useful in the key informant interviews I conducted with 20 women who had a range of different experiences with feminist activism on violence against women. Originally, I had intended to conduct 10-15 key informant interviews to flesh out the data I had collected from the archives, but women’s interest in

³⁴ “*Fonds*” is an archival term that refers to an accumulation of documents from the same source and represents the highest level of archival organization.

³⁵ This designation means that the files are inaccessible to the public until the donor lifts the restriction.

participating encouraged me to expand that number to 20. After the first few cases, when I conducted interviews strictly according to my carefully-crafted, based-on-the-literature interview guide, I began to notice that women were relaying stories to me about social events and processes that did not fit with my expectations based on what I had read about them in books and articles. This juxtaposition alerted me to the need to adjust my pre-conceived notions about how certain events occurred or how certain paths were chosen and to allow the women to describe and reflect on their experiences as they made sense of them. An example of this is my initial interpretation of feminists' "enthusiastic" adoption of the crime control discourse in the early 1980s, particularly for intimate partner violence. This was quite decisively reframed by several activists as a more cautious acquiescence to the only public sphere that was willing to actively respond. Similar contradictions, theoretical grapplings, adaptive decision-making, and early inklings of emerging themes and potential bases for analyses are chronicled in my field notes journal kept throughout the process of data collection and analysis, an activity that is seen as an important measure of validity in qualitative research (Buch & Staller, 2007).

Data Collection & Sample

For the current project, data was collected to explore feminist activism in response to violence against women in Ontario and Quebec between the years 1970 and 2010. "Feminist activism" was at first defined very broadly to include all organizations and individuals that had done some sort of work around violence against women during this time period. It soon became clear that not all organizations or individuals included under this definition were indeed "feminist", as evidenced by my exclusion of the *fonds* from

LAC for the current study and my interviews with at least three women who did not currently identify as feminist. For the purposes of the analysis, only documents produced by non-governmental organizations that self-identified as “feminist” were included. However, government and other non-feminist initiatives, discourse, and rhetoric on violence against women were still examined for how they contributed to the socio-political context, with key events referred to in the literature review (see Appendix A). Individuals who did not identify as feminist were still included in the interview sample and analysis to make sense of the evolution of feminist activism and the different kinds of activism around violence against women (particularly in relation to violence against Aboriginal women).

Archival Research

Archival research was conducted at the Canadian Women’s Movement Archives (CWMA) in the Morisset Library at the University of Ottawa in Ottawa, Ontario between January and July 2011. The CWMA was established in 1977 in a small second floor office at the corner of Spadina and College in Toronto, Ontario with the intention to house documents produced by second wave (post-1960), grassroots feminist organizations (Curnoe, 1989). In the early years, there was an insistence on remaining independent from larger, more traditional archives, but lack of stable funding and an overwhelmed volunteer-based staff led to the archives moving to the University of Ottawa in 1992³⁶. The archives hold records from approximately 2000 women’s groups across Canada and include a range of documents, such as minutes of meetings, correspondence, reports, briefs, newsletters, posters, logbooks, grant applications, project files, client records, petitions, flyers, leaflets,

³⁶ Personal communications with Lucie Desjardins, archivist at the CWMA.

event programs, and other operational files (Fulford, 1991). It should be noted that the archives represent only a selective deposit of information and cannot be considered representative of all grassroots feminist activism that occurred in Ontario and Quebec during the time period in question³⁷. The majority of the documents are from Ontario, as the archives were established and remain in Ontario, and they underrepresent some groups who may have folded after only a short period of operation, rural groups, and groups representing diverse populations of women. Additionally, some organizations may not have recognized the importance of preserving their records, so much of what the movement produced may be lost forever.

Because of its location as a fragmentary, unfixed, and changing space for knowledge, Marlene Kadar (2001) describes the archive as a “complex text” – one where women’s lives, experiences, and stories often remain unpublished and uncelebrated. The physical location of the CWMA is a good example; it is an archive in the basement of a library and draws up images of dusty old relics with little relevance to the present. Indeed, in my experience, I was often the only person working in the archives for days at a time. But this is precisely one of the reasons feminist historical work is so important: to rescue women’s stories from “the anonymity of history” (Davies, 2001) and make them understandable within the socio-political contexts of the time.

³⁷ Some activists with whom I spoke were unaware of the CWMA’s existence. Others reported that they had boxes of documents in their basements or attics that could eventually be donated – if they could ever find the time to organize them. These comments lend credence to the recognition that the CWMA does not hold the complete history of feminist activism materials, and that much of what has been produced is absent from this analysis.

Documents in the CWMA are organized by finding aid³⁸ and by theme. All of the original documents from the independent CWMA (pre-1992) are housed in the finding aid “Canadian Women’s Movement Archives Fonds”. Documents that have been donated to the archive post-1992 have not yet been integrated into the larger finding aid and are either organized according to organization or donor or not yet available for public viewing. All documents that are available for public consultation are also organized by theme. I used the following thematic guides to identify which documents might be relevant for the current study: Law, Politics, Sexual Assault, and Violence. These four thematic guides were scanned for organizations operating in Ontario and Quebec between 1970 and 2010. In most cases this information was quite clear, but if I was ever unsure of where or when an organization operated, I was able to find this information through an internet search. Originally, I pulled documents from approximately 210 organizations, but upon inspection not all groups had donated documents that pertained to violence against women and specifically intimate partner violence and sexual violence. In total, documents from 87 organizations, groups, committees, coalitions, and centres across Ontario and Quebec were consulted and analyzed for the current study. Of these 87 groups, two were crisis lines; four were legal organizations; 35 were local committees, coalitions, groups, or centres; 15 were provincial or national organizations; 14 were rape crisis or sexual assault centres; and, 17 were women’s shelters. Tables 1 and 2 outline the location of and main terms used to describe violence by the organizations included in the analysis. See Appendix B for a full list of all groups included in this analysis.

³⁸ An archival finding aid is a list of all documents available for consultation at the archives.

Key Informant Interviews

Conducting key informant interviews was part of the methodology of the current study to highlight the status of “expert” given to the interview participants, a central tenet of feminist interviewing (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011; Reinharz, 1992). Participants were considered “key” if they were involved in some way in feminist activism: from high profile events and roles to “everyday organizing”. Participants were interviewed to uncover information about their experiences with feminist activism on violence against women and their reflections on how they made sense of different activist strategies at the time and in hindsight. The intent of the interviews was to highlight and give voice to the stories uncovered through the archival research, to flesh out the details, to fill in any gaps, as well as to retrieve potentially alternative interpretations of key events and processes from my own or those based in the scholarly literature. Feminist interviewing, like other approaches to in-depth interviews, allows for and encourages contradictions in participants’ narratives as it highlights the complexity of human experience and individuals’ changing interpretations as they reflect on their experiences (Anderson & Jack, 1991). Such an approach allows interview participants to comment on the meanings behind their stories before the researcher puts their own interpretive lens on them (Borland, 1991).

Table 1: Location of organizations

Location	# of Organizations	%
Etobicoke, ON	2	2
Guelph, ON	1	1
Hamilton, ON	1	1
Kenora, ON	1	1
Kingston, ON	1	1
Lanark County, ON	1	1
London, ON	4	5
Mississauga, ON	1	1
Montreal, QC	10	11
National	9	10
North Bay, ON	1	1
North York, ON	1	1
Oshawa, ON	1	1
Ottawa, ON	3	3
Outaouais, QC	1	1
Provincial (ON or QC)	6	7
Quebec, QC	1	1
Sault Ste. Marie, ON	3	3
Scarborough, ON	2	2
Sept-Iles, QC	1	1
Sudbury, ON	1	1
Thunder Bay, ON	3	3
Toronto, ON	26	30
Trois-Rivieres, QC	2	2
Ville-Marie, QC	1	1
Waterloo, ON	1	1
Windsor, ON	2	2
Total	87	100

Table 2: Main terms used to describe type of violence addressed by organization

Main Issue	# of Organizations	%
Intimate partner violence	26	30
Public violence	3	3
Sexual harassment	1	1
State violence	2	2
Sexual violence	24	28
Violence against women	16	18
Women in crisis	2	2
Women's equality	4	5
Women's issues	9	10
Total	87	100

The interview guide was developed based on an initial reading of themes that emerged during an early stage of analysis of the archival material, as well as on the intellectual debates that characterize the literature in this field (see Appendix C). The interviews were semi-structured to allow the gathering of specific information, but also provided ample space to allow the interview participant to construct a reflective narrative of her involvement in the women’s movement and for any spontaneous discussion topics to arise (Hesse-Biber, 2007). All interviews began with a degree of “small talk” about our various feminist involvements in an effort to build rapport. As an engaged feminist researcher, or “active participant” (Devault, 1990), I openly answered participants’ questions about my own feminism, what activist issues I have been and am currently involved in, and details about my dissertation. As Shulamit Reinharz (1992) argues, interviewer self-disclosure can help to develop trust and encourage participants to share their own stories. After the first few interviews it became clear that the opening question –

“Tell me about your involvement in the women’s movement/feminist activism on violence against women?” – was often enough to encourage participants to speak at length about a variety of topics, including and beyond the other items in the interview guide. Interviews tended to focus on specific areas of violence against women or campaigns that the participants had been or were currently involved in, allowing me to uncover a wide range of experiences in the movement. All interviews concluded with the following question: *“Is there anything you’d like to add or anything you think I should definitely know about feminist activism in Canada on violence against women that I might be missing?”* Several interview participants noted that, as the interview was so comprehensive, they had nothing to add and some expressed that they felt reinvigorated in the feminist movement after reflecting on their past experiences.

A total of 20 interviews were conducted between July and December 2011. Sixteen interviews were conducted face-to-face in a location of the participants’ choosing, including participants’ workplaces, participants’ homes, and my office or in classrooms on the University of Ottawa campus. Fifteen of the face-to-face interviews were conducted in Ottawa; the other was conducted at a participant’s home in Toronto. The remaining four interviews were conducted via telephone or Skype for logistical reasons (i.e., cancellations, conflicting schedules, or distance). Face-to-face interviewing is the preferable method for feminist interviewing (Currie & MacLean, 1997); however, since these interviews did not involve the disclosure of any particularly sensitive information, it is expected that any lost rapport-building in the telephone or Skype interviews did not negatively affect the information collected. All participants signed a form giving informed consent to participate in the study and were reminded that they could withdraw from participating at any time,

even after the completion of the interview. Additionally, all participants gave their consent to have the interview audio-recorded. The length of interviews ranged from 45 minutes to 2.2 hours, with an average length of 1.25 hours. All of the interviews were transcribed verbatim by me. Participants were offered the opportunity to have their transcript emailed to them for their records and to check for accuracy. For those who took up this offer, transcripts were sent, but no participants made any substantive changes to their transcript. In one case, a participant replied with further information to add to the information she had supplied during the interview. Some participants also asked to see the written portions of this dissertation where their stories or quotations had been used; this request was honoured and no participants had any substantive changes to make concerning my interpretation or analysis of their interview.

The criteria for interview participation were broad as I sought to include women who had been involved in feminist activism on some of the key issues between 1970 and 2010 (e.g., first study on wife battering, rape law reform, Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women), but also those involved in the more day-to-day work of supporting and providing services to women who had experienced violence. Interview participants were recruited by personal invitation and comprised current members of the Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women (OCTEVAW), women involved in feminist activism with whom I have personal or professional connections, and the personal and professional contacts of my supervisor, Dr. Holly Johnson. This method of purposive sampling (see Hesse-Biber, 2007; Sandelowski, 2000) was used to ensure a wide spectrum of interview participants who had been involved in different kinds of feminist activism (i.e., grassroots activism and service provision, legal reform, political advocacy, research), at different

levels (i.e., community, provincial, national), and over different periods of time (i.e., 1960s to 2000s). The sample should in no way be considered representative of feminist activists working on violence against women issues in Ontario or Quebec during the time period in question; rather, it involves a cross-section of women who were able to shed light on some of the key issues, events, and debates that mobilized the movement during this time. Indeed, I would have liked to have spoken to more Aboriginal women and more Francophone women from Quebec. All interview participants identified as women, and while men's involvement in the feminist movement was discussed in several interviews, the purpose of the current study was not to examine feminist activism from the perspective of feminist or pro-feminist men³⁹. See Table 3 for a breakdown of the demographic statistics of the interview participants.

Table 3: Demographic statistics of interview participants

Dates of Involvement in Activism	# of Participants	%
1960s-Present	2	10
1970s-Present	7	35
1980s-Present	3	15
1990s-Present	1	5
2000s-Present	4	20
1980s or 1990s only	3	15
Total	20	100

³⁹ There is significant controversy in the feminist movement as to the appropriateness of men's involvement, particularly in violence against women issues. While it is becoming more acceptable, common, and even encouraged in many areas, men have not traditionally been integrated into feminist activism. Since this is an historical project of feminist activism, I have chosen to exclude men as interview participants, though I do examine the few male-initiated organizations that have donated documents to the CWMA. I will leave it to other researchers to explore the role of male supporters in the history of feminist activism on violence against women.

Table 3 continued

Race/Ethnicity	# of Participants	%
Aboriginal	2	10
Multi-racial	2	10
White	16	80
Total	20	100

Education	# of Participants	%
Post-graduate degree	15	75
University undergraduate degree	5	25
Total	20	100

Age (at time of interview)	# of Participants	%
20-29	2	10
30-39	2	10
40-49	1	5
50-59	6	30
60-69	6	30
70-79	2	10
80-89	1	5
Total	20	100

First Language	# of Participants	%
English	14	70
French	4	20
Ojibwe	1	5
Other	1	5
Total	20	100

Data Analysis

Documents from the Canadian Women's Movement Archives (CWMA) were consulted on location at the Morisset Library on the main campus of the University of Ottawa. The qualitative approach taken in the study was to consider the archival texts as a "proxy for experience" whereby documents were analyzed based on codes given to "chunks of text" (Ryan & Bernard, 2000). Documents were initially read to gain a broad sense of the meaning of the text, and then to parse out particular indicators of meaning-making, including intertextuality (what other texts, events, or individuals were mentioned in a given text), ideology, and assumptions that can be inferred from the use of particular vocabulary or the deference to certain types of authority, expertise, or other events (Atkinson & Coffey, 1997). Detailed notes about these indicators were kept for each organization's documents. As well, I considered the feminist tone (e.g., liberal, grassroots, or critical race), the intended audience, and the socio-political context in which it was written based on an indicator guide (see Appendix D). Some passages were transcribed verbatim if they were considered potentially useful as quotations. Emerging or potential themes and decisions made throughout this process were recorded in a field notes journal⁴⁰.

As documents were consulted, all the notes on a particular organization were uploaded into the qualitative analysis computer software program QDA Miner. QDA Miner

⁴⁰ For example, at one point in the data collection process I decided to exclude "operational materials" from my sample of documents. In my field notes journal I noted, "As a point of expediting this daunting task of looking through archival data, I have decided to not examine what I'll call 'operational materials' of women's organizations – i.e., manuals, publications, etc. that speak to how they operate their services (e.g., the RCCs funding manual or volunteer training manual). I will look at these documents to the extent of making note where they exist and a brief overview of their contents, but for my purposes will not be considered 'activism' per se."

facilitates the coding of texts by allowing users to build codebooks of themes, mark texts, find relationships among codes, and test these relationships against theoretical and empirical data. An initial codebook of potentially relevant themes was created based on the literature on conceptualizations of violence against women, feminist activism on violence against women, feminists' relationship with the state, and social movements. The codebook was amended and expanded in an iterative process according to grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), as more archival data was collected and as I engaged in memo-ing (exploring potential themes through journaling), identifying codes, linking codes to emerging themes, and relating the themes back to the literature and socio-political context in which the texts were produced (Creswell, 2007; Hesse-Biber, 2007). As Matthew Miles and A.M. Huberman (1994, p. 56) note of this process, "Coding is analysis". The initial codebook was also expanded based on the interview data. As interviews were transcribed, they were also uploaded into QDA Miner, read for a sense of the whole, and then coded for specific themes. The final codebooks for the archival research and the interview data can be found in Appendix E and include both "in vivo" codes (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), or categories and terms used by the authors of the documents and the interview participants, as well as more abstract codes based on themes that I constructed through comparisons between the archival documents, interview transcripts, and scholarly literature. Texts that were coded early on in the analysis process, and both archival document notes and interview transcripts that were coded based on early versions of the codebook, were revisited to determine if changes needed to be made to their coding.

The archival documents were first divided into type of organization – crisis lines, legal organizations, local groups, provincial or national organizations, rape crisis or sexual

assault centres, and shelters or transition homes – and then coded within separate project files in QDA Miner. To get a sense of the magnitude of coding done throughout the process of data analysis, Table 4 outlines the number of coded segments that were produced in each project file, including the interview data project file.

Table 4: Frequency of coded segments

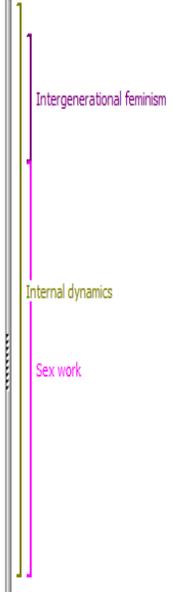
Project file	# of coded segments
Crisis lines	33
Legal organizations	61
Local groups	225
Provincial/national organizations	278
Rape crisis/sexual assault centres	125
Shelters or transition homes	111
Interviews	409
TOTAL	1242

Since some organizations had only one, short document stored in the archives, as few as one code was applied to the text while other organizations that had multiple documents on a variety of issues were assigned over 100 codes per text. The interview transcripts ranged from a low of 12 codes per text to a high of 39 codes per text. This range in codes in the interview transcripts can be attributed to the topics the participants chose to talk about: some participants spoke at length about a particular issue or campaign in which they were involved, while others went over a variety of themes. Some codes were also nested within other codes, as documents and transcripts revealed concurrent or embedded themes that could be read at different levels of interpretation (e.g., literal, theoretical/abstract). Figure 2 gives an example of coded text from an interview transcript where the passage is broadly referring to internal dynamics within the women’s movement, but also touches on the

issues of intersectionality, intergenerational feminism, and the debates around pornography and sex work.

Figure 2: Example of coded text

16: Well, I think the, there have been a number of them and most of them are pushing the boundaries of our understanding. When the race issue first came up I guess in the early '80s, first began to be a debating point in the feminist movement, and most of us older white feminist denied that there was any problem at the beginning - we're not prejudiced - we completely failed to make the systemic analysis that we had made on our own behalf. So it took a while before lots of us could open our eyes and understand the systemic bias that had kept black women out of our movement to a shocking degree. I think there were lots of black women involved, especially in the States, but it was never as embracing as it should have been, however that has changed, and we all benefitted from that change. And the same, well not quite the same, around pornography it was a huge debate and very, very vociferous and I think pushed us all to think through our positions more rigorously. I don't think it benefitted us as much as the race debate did, it was, you know, any issue around sex goes so deep and touches us so deeply personally, that when you're involved in that kind of debate and receive what feels like a personal wound around these sexual issues, you tend to close your door and retreat, and not be engaged in the issue anymore. I've noticed a resurgence of this in the whole debate around sex workers. I don't think I personally will ever feel that that's a free choice that women make. I will never think it's a dignified or worthy way to make your living; I never would blame any woman involved in it, that's the last thing I would do, but I certainly don't think that that's the best way for her to live her life. It may be the only way that she was, but those who are involved in the sex trade, are so vociferous and I would say even vicious toward those who frown on it, even if a mention is made on the internet, there are all sorts of women saying, well I'm a sex trade worker and I'm proud of it and so was my mother and this is wonderful, blah, blah, blah. First of all, I don't believe them, and second of all, I think that the ferocity of their attack is a disguise for their own feelings about what they're doing. So I may be really wrong about this, we're all being pushed to try to think more openly about it and hear what's being said, and maybe in the long run this will benefit us, but in the short run I think it's unnecessarily divisive, or maybe necessarily divisive, that's a better way of saying it. This debate has to happen and...you know, it's unique to women, men don't have to have this discussion.



The diagram consists of three vertical bars on the right side of the text. The top bar is purple and labeled 'Intergenerational feminism'. The middle bar is green and labeled 'Internal dynamics'. The bottom bar is pink and labeled 'Sex work'. The bars are positioned to the right of the text, indicating the coding of different parts of the text.

In terms of inter-coder reliability, I hope to have grasped the intended meanings of archival documents, and the use of an indicator guide based on the literature is my measure of reliability, but I cannot be sure as the texts exist as “social facts” (Atkinson & Coffey, 1997) representing one interpretation of a social phenomenon that I am reading from my own situated perspective. Of course, it would have been a check on reliability had I engaged another coder for a sample of the archival or interview data, but due to time constraints this was not done. However, I was certainly lucky in cases where I read a document in the archive and was then able to discuss it with an interview participant who was involved in the creation and dissemination of the material (e.g., Constance Backhouse and the booklets distributed out of London, Ontario by the Battered Women’s Advocacy

Clinic). Additionally, as the interview participants were “professionals” in the sense that they all had at least an undergraduate university education, many having worked in the field for a number of years, they were generally quite reflexive in their story-telling and were able to draw the links between their experiences and the broader issues facing the movement. As such, I do not have significant concerns that my interpretations of their words differ greatly from their own, as most participants explored interpretations of their stories within the interview. As I am using participants’ stories to situate feminist activism on violence against women over a period of time, I am not looking to make sense of their stories “factually” or to uncover some objective “truth” about the evolution of feminist activism on violence against women. What I am interested in is seeing how these various individual stories may fit within a larger narrative that contextualizes the process by which “violence against women” evolved as a social problem. While giving context to qualitative research is sometimes an afterthought, the macro-level orientation of the current study is how this work contributes to a feminist historicity within the discipline of criminology by examining social processes through the lens of individual experiences.

Situating the Researcher

As a feminist researcher, and like other critical researchers, I do not believe that “objective” or “value-free” research exists and am skeptical of any scientific inquiry that purports to uncover a “universal truth” (Brooks & Hesse-Biber, 2007). As Vickie Rutledge Shields and Brenda Dervin (1993) claim, feminist research should promote the emancipation of women and the accomplishment of a more egalitarian society by putting women’s lived experiences at the centre of inquiry, recognize the socially constructed

nature of social concepts and relations, engage in researcher reflexivity, and actively conduct research that has the potential to promote the social, economic, political, or cultural emancipation of women. Bringing the feminist perspective to my work means acknowledging the “biases” I carry with me on a daily basis, recognizing the impact they have on the topics I choose to study and how I choose to study them, and harnessing them to conduct research that I believe has value at multiple levels beyond the completion of the doctoral dissertation.

My role as a feminist researcher conducting a study on the specific topic of feminist activism on violence against women has had other impacts on the research process and undoubtedly, in different ways, on the choice and response of interview participants. Since moving to Ottawa in 2005, I have been involved in many types of community work, including providing services to women who have experienced violence and working as an advocate for the eradication of violence against women. Most notably, I have been a community member of OCTEVAW since 2007 and sat on their Board of Directors in 2011-2012. In these capacities, I have been involved in a number of community-based research projects, including a Domestic Violence Court Watch project, a statistical analysis of rates of violence against women in Ottawa, and a “herstory” project on the evolution of the coalition. Indeed, my involvement in the latter project evolved due to the complementary nature of it to the current study. My relationship with the OCTEVAW members involved in the herstory project has been, from my perspective, mutually beneficial by my sharing of research and knowledge about archival research with the committee and their participation as interview participants, as well as recommending their own colleagues and friends to

participate in my study⁴¹. In this context, I am simultaneously a researcher, a feminist activist (who is concerned not only with the history of the movement and the history of OCTEVAW, but in mobilizing around other issues as well), and a friend. While this sort of entanglement of roles with several of my interview participants may be of some concern in more traditional or non-critical forms of research, my feminism cannot easily be separated from my research, my community work, and my personal relationships; and, truthfully, I would not desire such a separation as each sector informs and inspires the others.

In her formative book on feminist research methods, Reinharz (1992, p. 26) argues that “every aspect of a researcher’s identity can impede or enhance empathy” and mutual understanding. I can only speculate about the potential effects of my position as researcher/feminist/friend or some combination of those roles on the interview participants. Several of the participants with whom I collaborate on a number of community projects and with whom I attend a number of community meetings on a regular basis, are well aware of the number of roles I assume, as they do as well. Other participants who I had not previously known personally would be less familiar with my activist role, and thus I assume more likely to see me solely in the role of researcher. However, most interviews did begin with a degree of small talk about our various feminist activities, with several participants inquiring as to how I became involved in the movement. So, whether it was explicitly mentioned or not, it was clear to the interview participants that I was both a researcher and a feminist.

⁴¹ As a note of clarification, the current study and the OCTEVAW herstory project should in no way be considered a collaborative research project, but two separate, yet complementary, research projects both in which I am involved.

I suggest that there were two cases in which my identity as a feminist may have created a barrier between myself and the interview participant, potentially affecting the data collected, and both were with Aboriginal women participants. Two interview participants identified as Aboriginal⁴², and though they had both done work on violence against women issues, neither considered themselves to be feminist. Suffice to say that, in at least one case, I had the impression that the participant felt like a “token” Aboriginal representative⁴³, I found that rapport was very difficult to establish, and, through the course of our interview, I realized how much my “mainstream” feminist perspective on violence against women differed from her indigenous perspective and experiences. My hope is that my willingness to learn from her experiences and understand her perspective came across over the course of the interview, but I cannot be sure that she interpreted my inquiry in this way. In the second case, while the interview participant and I did not share a feminist identity, one identity that we did share was that of PhD student, so that common experience facilitated a rapport and was a basis on which to situate my interest in her lived experiences.

Since my interview sample was not a homogenous group of women, even though all had been involved in work on violence against women issues in some capacity, I could be considered to be more or less an “insider” depending on the interview (see Hesse-Biber, 2007). This status has both advantages and disadvantages. With those women who would

⁴² A third participant identifying as “multi-racial” also identified as “part Aboriginal”.

⁴³ It was expressly my intention not to demonstrate “tokenism” in my interview participant sample. However, due to logistical constraints, including the relatively small sample of interview participants and the few connections I have personally within the Aboriginal women’s community (or within the Quebec Francophone women’s community), it was difficult to ensure equal representation of Aboriginal women and Francophone women from Quebec.

consider me an “insider”, and I would suspect this would be mostly the case with women I have worked with in the community or whom I know on a personal basis, there may have been an assumption of shared knowledge (e.g., around key feminist events) that did not get fully explored in the interviews as a result. However, during these “insider” interviews, rapport was easily established and conversations often veered into other areas of common feminist interest toward the end of the interview. With those women who would consider me an “outsider”, or at least a partial outsider, and I am thinking in the cases of Quebec Francophone feminists and Aboriginal women’s activists, rapport based on common experience was less likely, but interview participants were also quite keen to fully explain their thoughts and perspectives on issues to facilitate my understanding. Sonya Corbin Dwyer and Jennifer Buckle (2009) argue that since qualitative researchers often occupy both an insider and outsider position in different ways with respect to their interview participants, researchers should instead focus on projecting openness, authenticity, a deep interest in the lived experiences of their participants, and commit to accurately and adequately representing their stories. Such an approach was always my intention with interview research, one that I hope was communicated to my very forthcoming interview participants.

Feminist researchers are keenly aware of the potential for researchers to appropriate participants’ stories while providing little benefit for participation in return (Patai, 1991), to re-traumatize participants who are asked to disclose and reflect on sensitive topics (Btoush & Campbell, 2010), or simply being what Carolyn Hoyle (2000) calls “a nosy bloody cow”. While interview participants did not receive any tangible compensation for their contribution to my project, most expressed gratitude for the opportunity to reflect on their

past or current involvement in the movement and thought the writing of a feminist history was of value. Indeed, at least one participant was happy to be interviewed because it meant she would not have to write the history of the movement herself! As this research did not involve the participation of any particularly vulnerable populations, the risk to participants of experiencing trauma or distress was minimal. Many of the interview participants, already being widely well-known in the feminist movement and beyond, explicitly requested to have their full names attached to their interviews. Many participants expressed sentiments that since this was an historical project, naming key actors was imperative to “get things right”. Of course, anonymity has been honoured for those participants who chose to remain unnamed for various reasons; as well, all archival documents are attributed to a group or organization, rather than individuals, to preserve the identities of individuals who may be unaware that their name is attached to documents in the public domain⁴⁴.

There were only two instances in which identifiable ethical issues arose. The first was in relation to the small, tight knit community of feminist activists in the Ottawa area who know each other well. Participants would often want to know what another activist spoke about in her interview, or if I had contacted a specific person to talk about a certain event; in this way, the “insider” status complicated confidentiality, particularly in the case of two collegial participants who were both aware that the other was giving an interview, but where one did not want her name to be attached to the data. In this case, I just reminded each participant that interviews were confidential and that I could not share information from one interview with another participant without consent. This issue is connected to the

⁴⁴ This approach is also in line with that of the CWMA, which retains and organizes documents by organization and not by individuals (Curnoe, 1989).

second ethical dilemma that arose, and that was in relation to the herstory project with OCTEVAW. Women involved with the history project gave interviews for my study, but also requested that their transcripts be available for use by the herstory project committee. While my approach has always been to share information and knowledge from the academic world with the community members I collaborate with at OCTEVAW, a quick call to the University of Ottawa's Office of Research Ethics and Integrity clarified that this was officially ethical assuming that any participants gave informed consent if they wished to have their interview transcripts used in this additional project.

Limitations

As with any methodological approach, qualitative research has limitations regarding the validity and reliability of the study findings, but by combining two research methods, archival research and key informant interviews, engaging in self-reflexivity, and checking back with participants regarding my transcriptions and analyses, I have tried to account for some of these shortcomings. Still, the ways in which this research was conducted have shaped what data has been collected and how that data has been interpreted. Methodological limitations in relation to sampling and historical research will be discussed in this section.

In terms of the archival research, studying documents is attractive because they are an accessible form of history, but they represent only a partial reality because every event, nuance, triumph, or setback is not necessarily physically documented and stored for public use. What exists is only a selective deposit of information (i.e., what has been recorded) and a selective retention of documents (i.e., what has been kept and archived). Practically,

this has meant that the bulk of documents analyzed for this study were produced in the 1970s and 1980s and in Ontario, as there is a lesser accumulation of documents produced in the 1990s and 2000s and in Quebec, likely due to the ongoing activism of many organizations who would otherwise surrender their materials and the location of the archives in Ontario. This is unfortunate as there is not much physical documentation after a peak in feminist activism in the 1990s, so in many ways the documents cannot speak to how feminist activism evolved after this period. Additionally, I feel that the documents donated by the Quebec organizations used in this study only scratch the surface of the mobilization that was going in that province at the time, as most of the documents are pamphlets for services than do not speak to the depth of activism that was occurring. To attend to this in the future, organizations that are still in operation could be contacted for information about their activities in the late 1990s and 2000s, websites could be used as data sources and analyzed, and hard copies of publications could be requested.

Sampling was also an issue for the key information interviews. Since participants for the interviews were individually chosen by me to participate, the sample is not representative of all feminist activists who have been involved in the issue of violence against women. Through purposive sampling, I attempted to recruit women with a range of experiences, who were involved with Anglophone, Francophone, and Aboriginal movements, and who were active at different times in the last 40 years, but I have, of course, missed many women's stories. It was particularly difficult to recruit the most marginalized women, as more marginalized groups may not have had the resources to maintain extensive records, as well as individual feminist activists who may not have been associated with any formal organizations, making the archives a difficult place to identify

marginalized feminists to interview. I also have few contacts in the Quebec Francophone women's movement or in Aboriginal communities, so it was difficult to reach women in these populations. Further, while the sample may not be representative, the narratives that the women provided are also limited by what they remembered or what they chose to share, which was in part influenced by how they perceived me as researcher (Reinharz, 1992). As mentioned above, my interviews with two Aboriginal women may have been constrained by the different perspectives we bring to violence against women work (i.e., feminist vs. Indigenous). It is my hope that by comparing the documentary materials with the interviews and situating these texts within the literature and the socio-political context to which they refer has allowed me to show the "fittingness" (Sandelowski, 1986) of my interpretation of feminists' perspectives on their activism on violence against women.

Conducting historical research also brings with it some unique challenges. As I am confined to examining documents and interview participants' narratives from my own historically-situated position, I have undoubtedly influenced the way in which the social processes examined have been interpreted. As Karen Dubinsky (1989, p. 118) noted at the outset of her archival research, "I realize that my sense at the beginning of my involvement with the women's movement was right; I *had* missed a lot". I have not been privy to much of the evolution of the feminist movement in Canada, and as evidenced by my incorrect interpretation of feminists' opinions on the criminal justice response to intimate partner violence, my knowledge, experience, and my historical position in the "today" may have influenced other interpretations that I have not recognized as skewed. To reconcile this, I have attempted to ensure "descriptive validity" (Sandelowski, 2000) by cross-referencing interpretations of texts with a chronological ordering of key events in the history of

violence against women in Canada (see Appendix A). I have also applied an “historical-mindedness” to my research data, or a sensitivity to how other times and places differ from our own; an awareness of basic continuities in human affairs over time; an attempt to note and explain significant changes; a sensitivity to multiple causation; and, an awareness that all written history is a reconstruction that inadequately reflects the past as it really happened (Furay & Salevouris, 1988). My intention is not to construct “the” history of feminist activism on violence against women in Ontario and Quebec between 1970 and 2010, but to provide one interpretation that can be used along with others constructed from alternative perspectives or using different data sources. As Gerda Lerner (1998, p. 211) notes, “We experience; we give voice to that experience; others reflect on it and give it new form. That new form, in its turn, influences and shapes the way next generations experience their lives. That is why history matters.”

Additional limitations regarding researcher “biases” and coder-reliability have been alluded to previously in this chapter. Throughout this chapter, I have attempted to highlight the importance of feminist historical work to the discipline of criminology, as well as the strengths and limitations of the chosen research methods of archival research and key information interviews. However, the value of this study will only truly be uncovered when the research participants (and hopefully others) read my account of the evolution of feminist activism on violence against women and find that it makes sense given their own experiences and interpretations of ongoing social responses to violence against women.

Conclusion

This chapter provided an outline and explanation of the methodological approach used in the study. As an empirical project in feminist history, as well as an analytic project in social problems and social movement theory, this project employs a multi-method, qualitative approach to get at data that speaks to feminist activism on violence against women in Canada. Specifically, analysis of archival materials and key informant interviews with activists provide the data to uncover how feminists were and are making sense of their activism within shifting socio-political climates. The next two chapters will report on the research findings from this analysis. Chapter 5 will examine themes from the data that explore feminist activism as a claims-making process; how feminist activists and organizations conceptualized the problem of violence against women and how they responded to it. Chapter 6 will examine the reflections of feminist activists on their mobilization to address the issue of social movement effectiveness.

Chapter 5: Feminist activists' voices – The claims-making process

This chapter and the next chapter report on the findings of the current research project. Using examples and excerpts from archival documents and interview transcripts, this chapter focuses on how the social activism of individual women and organizations emerged and evolved as part of the mobilization against gender-based violence. Feminist mobilization will be situated in its socio-political context using a contextualized social constructionist perspective to social problems claims-making. The first two sections will trace the emergence of wife battering and rape, exploring the multiple social constructions of the issue produced by the battered women's movement and the rape crisis movement, respectively. Following this is a discussion of the three major, concurrent prongs of feminist activism on violence against women: feminist service provision, feminist advocacy, including engagement with the state, and feminist research.

Recognizing wife battering as a social problem

By the mid-to-late-1970s, data suggests that intimate partner violence was an issue that needed to move from the private sphere and into the public realm. As Education Wife Assault wrote in the early 1980s:

The way wife assault is conceptualized largely determines the social response to this problem. At present in Canada, the issue is typically defined as a woman's personal dilemma instead of a social problem, as interaction gone wrong instead of patriarchal violence.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Most documents from the CWMA did not have a specific date, an author, or page numbers attached to them. As such, direct quotations are attributed to the source using as much detail as was available.

As one of the first stages in “natural history” models of the social construction of social problems, feminist activists and organizations were engaging in the project of; problem-definition arguing that the issue of violence against women needed to be taken seriously as a social problem (Best, 2013; Spector & Kitsuse, 2009). At first, women’s groups were calling on other women to “Break the Silence” around wife assault by recognizing and naming their own abuse. For example, the Assaulted Women’s Helpline in Toronto released a pamphlet in the 1980s that asked women “Are you afraid at home? Being hit? You have a right not to be beaten.” Another pamphlet released by Support Services for Assaulted Women in Toronto reads,

If your husband or boyfriend hits you, you should know that: you are not the only one, you do not cause the beatings, wife beating is not a sickness, it's a crime; you do not have to put up with it; leaving is not desertion; [and,] ignoring a beating is dangerous.

This type of consciousness-raising through pamphlets and brochures was common in the documents from the 1970s and 1980s housed in the archives. These excerpts suggest that one of feminist groups’ first concerns was to have women acknowledge their own experiences of abuse and recognize that this was not something with which they had to live.

An interesting feature of much thinking around violence against women as evidenced in the archival material is the complexity with which the problem is defined. Even in early articulations of the problem, feminist groups integrated discourses of human rights, socio-structural issues, community dynamics, individual maladaptive behaviour, and crime into their social constructions of violence against women. Before wife assault was formally recognized by the Canadian criminal justice system and even after due in part to

the reluctance of women to report, feminist groups referred to it as a “silent crime” in their advocacy. According to the Faye Peterson Transition House in Thunder Bay, the silent nature of domestic violence...

...Makes [it] a frightening social problem. Domestic violence, a problem in every community, creates concern for the victims, usually women and their children (n.d.).

In a 1984 information sheet, Ernestine’s Women’s Shelter in Etobicoke wrote,

Wife beating is assault, and that freedom from assault is everyone person's right; that wife assault is violence against women, and is widespread in Canada; that wife assault is not a sickness but a crime, a crime that both society and the law have not yet adequately dealt with; [and,] that wife assault should no longer be the secret of the battered woman.

Interval House in Ottawa also provides a definition from the late 1970s:

Wife beating. It means slapping, kicking, punching, burning, throwing, pulling, pushing. It could be happening to your mother, your sister, your daughter, your aunt, your best friend, or to you. The wife beater could be drunk or sober; a factory worker, a carpenter, an executive, a doctor, a city councillor, or a lawyer. He beats his wife because he is allowed to. Because the reality of our male-dominated society forces women to be the bearers of men's abuse and hatred. You can give all sorts of reasons for the beatings: he is an alcoholic, he is mentally ill, he is a powerless worker oppressed by his boss, he is frustrated by the responsibility of providing for a wife and children at the expense of his freedom. There are a million excuses. The point is, however, that women are the ones who suffer physical and mental violence every day at the hands of men.

These kinds of complex articulations suggest that feminist groups recognized the multi-dimensionality of intimate partner violence early on, particularly in their documents directed at women. The above constructions of wife battering acknowledge that it is

perpetrated and perpetuated by individual men, who may or may not have mental health issues, anger management and stress-related problems, or addictions. However, they also suggest that this violence occurs within a social context that implicitly and explicitly reinforces violent behaviour through male-dominated or patriarchal social structures and socialization processes that undermine women's equality and autonomy. From the data, it is clear that this connection to the social included a desire for intimate partner violence to be recognized as a crime, but that this recognition would be one component of a broad, multi-faceted conceptualization of the social problem.

Starting in the 1980s, archival materials begin to focus more exclusively on the "crime" dimension of wife battering and begin focusing their advocacy efforts on the Canadian state, rather than women as victims of violence. In the 1980s, Support Services for Assaulted Women stated,

The law must be used to affirm that wife assault is a crime. The law must provide protection for victims of wife assault.

Other groups including the London Battered Women's Advocacy Clinic, the Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic, the Assaulted Women's Helpline, and various women's shelters have all produced materials supporting the recognition and treatment of intimate partner violence as a crime. However, at around the same time, the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC), the major national institution of the feminist movement in Canada at the time, proposed that,

Solutions to violence against women and children must include legislative change, provision of needed services, and education aimed at changing attitudes. NAC continues to lobby for more funding for rape crisis centres,

[and] services for battered women and incest survivors in all regions of Canada.

Other groups were also proposing similarly comprehensive solutions. By 1989, Education Wife Assault suggested that,

Society must become more serious about ending violence against women and children. Men must take responsibility for their own lives and actions, individually and collectively. Our institutions must work for and achieve gender equality including equal power between women and men.

This type of advocacy directed at the Canadian state, and the Canadian public, is another activity characteristic of the first stage of natural history models of social problems claims-making (Best, 2013; Spector & Kitsuse, 2009). After claims-makers have recognized the existence of a social problem, they begin calling on official bodies – who may make different claims – who are seen as capable of responding to that social problem. At the time, even though the influence of the welfare state was on the decline, Canadian governments were still largely seen as responsible for the well-being of their citizens (Brodie, 2002). Being the dominant social location where decisions over laws, policies, and civil rights were determined, it is not surprising that feminist groups directed their advocacy primarily toward the Canadian state.

Despite the variety of social solutions proposed by feminist groups in the 1970s and 1980s, governments first responded to intimate partner violence primarily through a conceptualization of the problem as a crime. Using this construction means that intimate partner violence is viewed through an individualizing lens that focuses on isolated acts, rather than from a perspective that recognizes the systemic nature and women's dynamic

experiences of violence. While this may be true of all crimes that come to the attention of the criminal justice system, this individualizing gaze can have unique unintended consequences for the crime of domestic violence. For example, aggressive criminal justice interventions for domestic violence call on police to arrest and courts to prosecute for single incidents of violence and not an historical pattern of abuse. The interviews with feminist activists who worked on the frontlines during these changes shed some light on how the “crime” construction of intimate partner violence seemed to be the one that resonated with the Canadian state.

Deborah Sinclair, a social worker who has been active in feminist issues around intimate partner violence for over 30 years in Ontario, explained the apparent resort to the criminal justice system in this way:

People say, and I challenge this all the time in my work publically, saying that we chose to focus on the criminal justice system, well we didn't. It's just, remember the context, it was the one place where we could get some consensus and there was a particular political climate at that point in time where we were able to engage in policy and that's when we agreed with the “Wife Assault is a Crime” campaign, and we were fighting at that point, not that we thought that was the solution, but we were in a situation where police were treating this very differently than they would be treating a stranger assault and so we were pushing for women to have the same rights. That if their partner was abusing them, then they should be able to turn to the courts, they should be able to turn to the police for protection. So that was the beginning of that, but it was never seen as the solution, ever, and that gets mixed up now a lot.

Constance Backhouse, a feminist legal scholar and historian who has been involved in feminist issues for over 30 years in Ontario, had this to say about the way feminists thought of violence against women as a crime:

I have learned more about the criminal justice system in the last 30 years, about its weaknesses, its tilting towards prosecuting and convicting and sentencing poor people, racialized people, its double standards, not just with respect to men and women, but with respect to wealth and power and race privilege. When we made the decision we wanted to opt in to the criminal justice system, we inherited that and that was not a good thing to be part of and so some people have said the whole thing is so infected; it was a major error to go that route. I don't know the answer to that, at some level you think maybe we could help them, maybe our insights about why those injustices need changing as much as patriarchy, maybe we can help drive the whole system into a better spot; I don't know the answer to that. We were very proud at the time; we saw it as public recognition, that women deserve not to be battered and that anybody that perpetrated acts like that were criminal and that our criminal law should respond, so we felt proud that we made headway on that... [However,] there were serious, serious fissures in the landscape of the criminal justice system.

Perhaps feminists' complex views on engaging with the crime discourse is best summed up by Nancy Miller-Chenier, a long-time activist and consultant on women's issues for the federal government, who stated in her interview,

The law on its own, tackling crime and putting more people in prisons, doesn't get to the root of it, doesn't do anything about those substantive and multiple causes of the crime.

Thus, what happened to the social problem of wife battering in the "official recognition" stage of Spector and Kitsuse's (2009) natural history model is a "considerable transformation" (p. 148) in the construction of the problem. While conceptualizing intimate partner violence as a crime was not an entirely new construction, it was decidedly not the only, and perhaps not even the most important, way of interpreting the problem for feminist claims-makers.

While feminists were advocating for increased public recognition of the widespread prevalence of wife battering during the 1970s, it was not until 1980 that data was widely available to support their assertions. Here, feminist activists begin using “grounds” (Best, 2013), or research evidence, to substantiate their claims that violence against women needed to be recognized as a social problem. Canada’s first study on wife battering was conducted by Linda Markowsky (formerly Linda MacLeod), who also participated in an interview for this study. She describes her experiences leading up to the study as follows:

When I kept seeing these women coming in time and time again, with you know, way too many accidents, way too many repeat issues, way too many issues around how they felt worthless, and you know, they didn’t use words like powerless because, again, it was a different time, but now putting our lens on it, that’s really what they were saying, they would say, I was so confused all the time, I think I’m losing my mind, I really don’t know what’s happening to me.

Linda Markowsky characterizes this first study as one informed by a “power and control” analysis, an analysis that is associated with the ideas of battered women’s learned helplessness and the cycle of violence (Walker, 1979). Seemingly presciently, in her book she points out that,

Legislation which is strictly punitive, which does not take into account the economic and political realities of the situation and which is not accompanied by an attempt to provide support for the victim, is probably doomed to be ineffective... This reform can be best achieved by increasing the rights of wives and support given to women under the system through a coordinated approach to legislative change and policy change (MacLeod, 1980, p. 63).

MacLeod’s (1980) study had an undeniable influence on galvanizing and supporting the work of the battered women’s movement in Canada in the 1980s. However, in her 2011 interview for this study, Linda Markowsky argued that the feminist movement

today needs to move away from what she described as the “victim narrative” of earlier conceptualizations of intimate partner violence that perhaps reinforced an individualized view of this type of violence. Here she is referring to that archetypal image of the battered woman as a helpless victim; again, perhaps useful in the early years of the movement, but perhaps also obscuring from view women’s experiences that do not fit this image. In a similar vein, a young feminist activist interviewed for this study described her experiences negotiating feminist conceptualizations of violence against women in a socio-political environment dominated by an individualizing victim/perpetrator lens:

I think violence against women is such a distinct kind of crime that it doesn't necessarily even belong in the victim discourse because it's so different... We're not necessarily connecting [women's victimization] to a larger issue of equality... It's also coming from a standpoint that all victims, all victims were, previous to the victimization, on some kind of same plane, like everyone is the same, and then you have victimization happen, and now all of sudden you have been taken out of the same plane as everyone else and put in this special category as “victim”. Whereas I would say women...are living in this potential state of victimization all the time, and men don't have that. Women, we construct our lives around not getting victimized...which is a different frame of mind... Men don't have that fear of victimization so ingrained.

Other feminists have also criticized the movement’s early and continued reliance on the battered woman-as-victim archetype (e.g., Comack, 1993; Randall, 2004; Walker, 1989). What may have served as a “typifying example” (Best, 2013) to garner attention early on, has been reduced to a stereotype that fails to represent many women’s experiences of violence and in fact can be used to reinforce counter-claims.

While the victim narrative of the “battered woman” may have been the image the battered women’s movement was projecting to the general public and the government in the early years, it was certainly not their assumption about women experiencing violence as

reflected in their materials directed at this audience. Analysis of materials advertising feminist services for victims and survivors of intimate partner violence demonstrate a clear recognition of women's agency. In the 1980s, law students at the University of Western Ontario produced a series of handbooks aimed at women who had experienced different types of violence outlining their options:

There are a lot of people in London who will help you if you want to help yourself.

Constance Backhouse, then a new faculty member at the university who spearheaded the group of law students, was inspired by how well-received the handbooks were by women across the country:

People all over Canada wrote to us asking for copies, we sold out, it was really extraordinary.

Shelters were also keen to encourage women to take action to deal with the violence in their own lives. Interim Place in Mississauga wrote in 1980 that,

The beatings will continue and increase in severity until you do something to change the situation.

In a pamphlet produced by Crisis Homes Inc. in Thunder Bay in 1978, the shelter offered women tips about how to cope in a domestic relationship that involves physical abuse, but also gave women information about what they could expect if they called the police to intervene. Feminist activists "in-group" conceptualizations of intimate partner violence suggest that they acknowledged women's agency, but their recommendations were made

within a context of criminal justice interventions that emerged out of and continue to operate with an atypical conceptualization of intimate partner violence.

The juxtaposition between the public image of wife battering (i.e., helpless victims, monstrous perpetrators) and the way in which many feminist groups were actually working with women who had experienced violence (i.e., women as active agents in their own lives), is further highlighted in an interview with a former feminist activist speaking about immigrant women's experiences with intimate partner violence:

It doesn't mean that a woman is stupid if she's choosing to stay in a violent a relationship because she values family unity more than her safety. That may not be a decision that you understand or accept, but if that is the decision that she's making as an intelligent adult who is in control of her life, stop telling her that's wrong, stop judging her like that's the wrong decision, and saying, oh, you know, these poor victims, sometimes it takes them a lot of times to leave a violent marriage, well, yeah, but what if she's choosing to stay and why can't that be [her decision]?... If she's going to make that decision then it is our job to respect that decision and help that family reduce the violence... If you set up a relationship so that you have a victim who's just this poor, pathetic victim and you have an abuser who is just the monster and you have the worker who's the saviour... It's a negative dynamic because relationships are complicated and nobody's 100% a victim and nobody's 100% a perpetrator and it's not a good thing for service providers to be heroes, and that's the dynamic I see too often.

This passage highlights an unintended consequence of bringing a problem, one originally uncovered and defined by a particular group of influential, largely white, middle-class feminists in the 1970s and 1980s, into a broader social context of diverse women's experiences of abuse. While the early battered women's movement did help create the archetypical image of the "battered woman", this concept was one attempt to explain women's reactions and responses to intimate violence in a social context that normalized

men's violence against women and pathologized and medicalized women who were victimized. But at the same time, feminist groups also recognized women's autonomy, women's potential to recognize what they were experiencing as wrong, and women's ability to make their own decisions about how to cope or remedy their situation. This sort of nuance is not easily captured when the issue gets taken up in another social arena with an alternate lens through which social problems are articulated and negotiated.

Spector and Kitsuse (2009) note that the second stage of the claims-making process may "represent the beginning of the end" (p. 149) for claims-makers as official institutions take ownership over the social problem. Feminist researchers have noted that with increased governmental recognition and response to violence against women, feminist conceptualizations have been severely eroded, if not entirely co-opted by an increasing neoliberal Canadian state (Bumiller, 2008; Gotell 2007; 2008; 2010). While assessing governments' responses to violence against women is not the purpose of this project, it can safely be observed that working with institutions that are largely coming from a non-feminist perspective inevitably leads to a degree of reinterpretation, or a "watering down" of nuanced, feminist discourse. Intimate partner violence went from being articulated as the complex social problem of "wife battering" by early feminists to being responded to by governments through an individualizing, criminal justice lens based on an atypical conceptualization "domestic violence". Rape, as another dimension of the social problem of violence against women, underwent a different claims-making process.

Recognizing rape as a social problem

Early feminist conceptualizations of rape reflected the tension between activists' desire to promote healing among victims by providing them with counselling and other forms of support, which were not available in the public sphere at the time, and with their advocacy for greater public awareness and response to sexual violence. Archival material from the 1970s and 1980s includes pamphlets and brochures directed at women who might need services, such as crisis lines, crisis counselling, long-term counselling, information, referrals, and hospital, police station, and court accompaniment. The documents also reveal how feminist groups were thinking about rape during this time period. Women's Place in Kenora recognized that "that any woman can be raped" and encouraged women to,

Be prepared – take a self-defence course; learn about rape and talk to other women about rape; express to government officials your concern about the issue; [and,] support your local rape crisis centre (n.d.).

A pamphlet produced by the Montreal Rape Crisis Centre in 1982 stated that,

En tant que féministes, nous croyons que l'agression sexuelle est un acte de domination, de violence et d'agression perpétré contre la volonté d'une femme et sans son consentement. Elle révèle l'état profond d'inégalité qui existe entre les hommes et les femmes dans nos sociétés.

One of the most telling aspects of feminist social constructions of rape before the rape law reform in 1983 concerns the information feminist groups gave to women about their options following an assault. The Women's Place of Toronto informed women of the following:

Note that a husband is legally permitted to rape his wife if she does not wish to have sexual relations with him on any particular occasion... [And that] not only are many rape charges reduced to a charge of indecent assault, but when it comes to sentencing, judges are usually very lenient... A woman who is raped and decides to report it to the police should prepare herself for an even more traumatic experience than the rape itself...What woman after being raped wants to subject herself to the further ordeal of having to convince others of her sound moral character?

The Thunder Bay Rape and Sexual Assault Centre asserted that,

Rape is a crime against women. However, the myths which surround rape say that women often victimize men by yelling "rape" and that women frequently ask for and want to be raped. Because of these myths, the female rape victim must defend herself rather than be treated as a victim of a criminal act. Rape victims may have to prove that they are of chaste character, that they were not being seductive, that they tried to fight off the attacker, and that they did not enjoy being raped. It is no wonder that up to 90% of rapes that actually occur are never reported to the police. This means that women are not being given protection under the law against this form of assault (n.d.).

Kenora's Women's Place produced a pamphlet in the early 1970s about what women should do if they are raped:

Preserve the evidence; call police immediately – Some of the questions may seem irrelevant or make you feel uneasy, don't hesitate to ask for an explanation; call a friend, relative, or the rape crisis centre; get medical attention; write down the details of the rape – It may take some time before the rapist is apprehended and brought to trial. Your immediate recollection of particulars surrounding the assault will help you at that time and will be instrumental in any later investigation or report; [and,] get a VD test and a pregnancy test.

The Hamilton Rape Crisis Centre in the late 1970s stated that,

According to the law, the only difference between rape and normal sexual intercourse is the lack of consent of the victim. Rape is seen as a sexual offense. However, victims do not experience rape as a sexual event. To them, it is a life-threatening assault. Research shows that rapists themselves are motivated by the need to express power and anger, not sexuality. If the law is to reflect what really occurs in rape, there need to be some changes made.

Clearly feminist groups recognized the inadequacy of the criminal justice response to rape prior to the rape law reform based on their personal experiences as victims and working with victims. Despite rape being a *Criminal Code* offence, female complainants have historically not been taken seriously and have had their credibility undermined in courts of law (Backhouse, 1991, 2008). Still, these groups encouraged women, albeit cautiously, to report their sexual victimizations to the police, likely because it was the only formal mechanism for address available at the time.

After the 1983 rape law reform, many rape crisis and sexual assault centres focused on the conceptualization of sexual assault as a crime, likely because of the public focus on this conceptualization of the problem at the time. In 1984, the London Sexual Assault Centre believed that,

Sexual assault is a social issue; sexual assault is a crime of violence; [and,] rape is traumatic, a violation of body and mind.

From the Montreal Sexual Assault Centre in the 1980s:

We believe that sexual assault is a violent crime – not a sexual act. Sexual assault is a violation of the victim's total self.

However, like the solutions proposed by the battered women's movement, feminists have long advocated for a multi-pronged approach to addressing sexual violence. In the mid-1980s, the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Ottawa stated,

Women and men can begin to prevent rape by: ending victim-blaming; protecting most vulnerable women; demanding vigorous prosecution of offenders; educating defense attorneys; ending street harassment; donating time and money; establishing school prevention programs; confronting sexist men. Don't harass women; don't rape; support women.

The Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children (METRAC), a community-based organization in Toronto created to address mainly public violence against women, encouraged individual women to resist men's violence against them:

Fighting back significantly increases chances of avoiding rape and slightly increases chances of rough treatment; women who have fought back reported less depression afterwards, even when they have been raped; sensational media coverage of brutal rape murders frightens women and limits their choices for defending themselves; [and,] women who were angry about having their space or rights violated were more successful in avoiding rape.

One of the earliest established rape crisis centres, the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre, released a set of guidelines in the 1980s for women to follow in an effort to prevent rape:

On the street: be prepared; walk on well-lit streets; be observant; yell "Fire!"

In your car: keep doors locked; honk the horn.

In your home: check doors and windows; request ID from visitors; never let a stranger into your home; keep lights on at night; get a dog.

Hitchhiking: try not to do it alone or at night.

In any case, a woman must always evaluate a potentially dangerous situation, and decide, on the basis of her own judgement, how she will respond to it. There are a few means of identifying high risk situations: be observant of your environment, obey your intuition, and consider your own feelings first.

Today, guidelines similar to those listed above are often publicized by police departments and campus security forces that focus on public sexual violence against women, reflecting a shift away from the welfare era promise of state protection to the neoliberal tactic of responsabilizing citizens for their own well-being (Brodie, 1995). Guidelines such as these are often criticized by feminists for failing to acknowledge that women are most likely to be victimized by men they know and trust and in places they feel safe, such as their own home, and for keeping women in a state of hyper-vigilance and fear (Haskell & Randall, 1998; Stanko, 1996). Still, a distinctive feature of the feminist guidelines above is their focus on what women can do to prevent sexual violence, rather than the behaviours from which they should refrain from engaging. Again, a focus on how women can resist sexual violence and what they can do in an effort to protect themselves suggests that early feminist groups were not confident about the ability of the legal system to prevent or respond to sexual violence against women.

In the rape crisis movement, language has been a contentious topic of debate with important ramifications for how sexual violence has been conceptualized. As with intimate partner violence, the claims-making process in the late 1970s and early 1980s involved a push to have rape treated “like any other crime”, but in this case it was perhaps more intuitive because rape was already technically a crime. Feminists were deeply involved in discussions to reform the narrow legal definition of rape and improve the system for women, but there was significant disagreement over changing the language from “rape” to

“sexual assault” (Backhouse & Cohen, 1980; Łoś, 1994; MacKinnon, 1992). As the passages above suggest, some feminist groups in the 1970s were advocating for a conceptualization of rape as a physical violation, rather than a sexual one, for the purposes of its criminalization and in an effort for it to be taken more seriously by the general Canadian public. Feminist legal scholar Diana Majury describes her interpretations of this debate in her interview:

I did some work before the law changed from rape to sexual assault, I was actually in the minority; I didn't think it was a good change. So the slogan of the time was, “rape is a crime like any other crime”; it should be taken seriously like other crimes. In that we lost the gendered dimension of rape and the fact that, while it is a crime, it isn't actually like other crimes; it's a very specific crime. I do think it is a crime against women even when it is enacted on men. It's a gendered crime against gendered women. So we lost that in that whole lobbying effort to have it taken more seriously as a criminal offence. So I understand that desire of it to be taken more seriously. And then it led to all sorts of problems in the law... I actually regret that we lost the word rape, which I think is an incredibly powerful, gendered word, whereas sexual assault sounds less powerful.

Diana Majury underscores the concerns of some feminists at the time who believed that the word “rape” connotes very specific imagery and emotional reactions about the severity of and what constitutes the crime, something that is just not captured with the phrase “sexual assault” (e.g., Backhouse & Cohen, 1980). Deborah Sinclair agreed:

I think rape is a better word than sexual assault, stronger, certainly.

Since only three out of the 20 interview participants worked or continue to work primarily on sexual violence issues, few participants talked at length about their conceptualizations of this issue or about their perspectives on the change from “rape” to “sexual assault” under the law. Most interview participants and activists in general use the phrases “rape”, “sexual

assault”, and “sexual violence” interchangeably in their discourse on the topic, though generally speaking “rape” is most often used when referring to non-consensual oral, vaginal, or anal penetration, “sexual assault” is used when referring to the legal context, and “sexual violence” is used when referring to a broad spectrum of sexually intrusive behaviours (e.g., from harassment to rape).

In her reflections on the feminist “rape”/“sexual assault” debate in her interview, Diana Majury shared her view of how the issue of language has perhaps facilitated government co-optation of the sexual violence agenda:

Because it was seen as a crime against women it wasn't taken seriously, so in order to have it taken seriously we had to say, no, no, no, it's not about sex, it's not a crime against women, it is a crime... We weren't sophisticated enough to say no, maybe there are some differences and we like our stuff better or maybe you guys should pay attention to how we do things, so it was what in the legal context is described as a formal equality model that we were stuck in at that time. And I think analytically we haven't got the understanding of the way sex is used as a way to demean women and as a tool against women, so this whole notion, “it's not about sex”, was trying to separate happy, consensual sex from this criminal sex and I think probably most feminist analysis now wouldn't say that it wasn't about sex. We all get that it's very much about sex.

Conceptual feminist research on sexual violence, and more layered understandings of sexual violence espoused by some interview participants, expand the notion of sexual violence and attempt to disrupt the “rape”/“sexual assault” debate that characterized a significant portion of feminist engagement with the Canadian state on sexual violence in the 1970s and 1980s. For example, Liz Kelly's (1988) continuum of sexual violence recognizes the array of threats women perceive to their personal safety on a daily basis and illustrates the range of sexual victimizations women can experience, from sexual harassment to brutal rape, as well as the commonalities of their impact and intent. Kelly's

continuum was frequently recognized and subscribed to by feminist activists in their interviews:

I believe in violence as a continuum, absolutely. Based on my own experience in being in an abusive situation, I feel like what was stereotypically understood as violent affected me less than things that would not have been conceived as such, so I think people's understanding of violence needs to be expanded (Julie Lalonde, community activist).

There's a continuum of forms of violence against women that go from systematic, sort of huge system-wide power relationships to very specific; people using brute force on one person. You need a huge number of separate, but coalescing people working on different aspects of it (Caroline Andrew, Professor Emeritus in political science at the University of Ottawa).

There's a whole range of ways that it manifests, some of them are more subtle, so I think it starts with non-physical forms of violence, like harassment, discrimination... (Barb MacQuarrie, community activist).

The idea of a continuum of sexual violence is not clearly projected by feminist documents in the CWMA, likely because most of the documents housed in the archives were produced in the 1970s and 1980s, before Kelly published her theory on the continuum of sexual violence and before it was common in the sexual violence lexicon. A supplemental internet search of some of the main sexual violence service providers and advocacy organizations in existence in Ontario and Quebec today, shows that most groups now hold a more complex view of sexual violence:

The Toronto Rape Crisis Centre/Multicultural Women Against Rape developed and expanded its mandate in the 70's and 80's, offering a wide range of services to all kinds of sexual abuse survivors, including rape, sexual assault, incest, sexual harassment and physical and emotional violence (TRCC/MWAR, <http://www.trccmwar.ca>).

Agresser sexuellement, c'est imposer des attitudes, des paroles, des gestes à connotation sexuelle contre la volonté de la personne et ce, en utilisant des méthodes de manipulation : l'humiliation, l'intimidation, la menace, le chantage, la violence verbale, physique ou psychologique (CALACS francophone d'Ottawa, <http://calacs.ca>).

Sexual violence is a broad term that describes a continuum of aggression, abuse and violence. It includes but is not limited to sexual abuse, sexual assault, rape, (date, marital, partner, stranger, gang), ritual abuse, sexual harassment, incest, childhood sexual abuse, molestation, stalking, indecent/sexualized exposure, degrading sexual imagery, voyeurism, exhibitionism, dissemination of sexual photographs electronically (cyber harassment), rape during armed conflict, trafficking and sexual exploitation (Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres, <http://www.sexualassaultsupport.ca>).

Much like with intimate partner violence, feminist activists and organizations have evolved in their conceptualizations of sexual violence from their original focus on rape and whether or not it should be considered a violent assault or a sexual act. Today, much more complex constructions of sexual violence are espoused, conceptualizing the problem as one comprised of many different behaviours that exist on a continuum, rather than the more singular focus on rape early on in the movement. The rape crisis movement's singular focus on rape, and specifically rape law, was likely at least part of the reason why the federal government responded so concretely to their claims with rape law reform. Unlike the battered women's movement, whose claims included asking the state to take wife battering "more seriously" or "treat it like any other assault", there was already legislation and precedent for dealing with rape in the legal system. Of course, this did not mean that feminists were satisfied with the legal response.

The preceding sections have dealt with the early stages of the claims-making processes for wife battering and rape. Since the focus of this study is on the activists, or claims-makers, less attention is paid to those middle stages of the natural history model of social problems claims-making where the official bodies are engaged in policy-making and policy-implementation, although feminist organizations continued to be very active during the stages (e.g., NAC, NAWL). However, subsequent sections in this chapter will relate to the final stages of the model where the activists, or claims-makers, have a more central role. First, I would like to comment on what has long remained an unspoken feature of feminist activism on violence against women: the perceived construction of, and response to, intimate partner violence and sexual violence as two distinct problems.

(Not) Making the links: Wife battering and rape

Research evidence makes clear that there is a significant overlap between the perpetration and victimization of both intimate partner violence and sexual violence (WHO & London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, 2010). Specifically, women who are sexually assaulted are usually victimized by someone that they know, and a significant number are victimized by a current or former intimate partner (Johnson, 1996; 2006; Krug, Dahlberg, Mercy, Zwi, & Lozano, 2002; Randall & Haskell, 1995). Similarly, though intimate partner violence is often only conceptualized and criminalized as physical violence, different forms of abuse are often co-occurring and women who are physically assaulted by their partners are also more likely to be sexually assaulted by their partners (Ellsberg & Heise, 2005; Johnson, 1996; 2006; Johnson, Ollus, & Nevala, 2008). Further, women who have experienced previous victimizations, including childhood abuse and

intimate partner violence by ex-partners, have an increased vulnerability for repeat and future victimizations (Browne, Miller, & Maguin, 1999; Rinfret-Raynor, Riou, Cantin, Drouin, & Dubé, 2004; Tyler, Hoyt, & Whitbeck, 2000; Young & Furman, 2008). Thus, the reality for many women is that there is not a clear boundary between experiences of childhood, adolescent, and adulthood intimate partner violence and sexual violence, and that different acts of violence can be perpetrated against women by different men throughout their lifetime.

An operational separation between intimate partner violence and sexual violence is reflected in many of the documents, as most organizations produced documents on specific forms of violence against women and not on the broad spectrum of violence against women. There is one exception; in a pamphlet for their services produced in the early 1990s, the Assaulted Women's Helpline in Toronto used the slogan, "Assaulting Women is a Crime", to talk about the multiple forms of violence including physical, sexual, and mental which are all interconnected, regardless of the relationship between victim and perpetrator. But does this operational separation reflect a conceptual separation for feminist activists? The perception of mutual exclusivity between intimate partner violence and sexual violence as issues under the rubric of "violence against women" was put to the interview participants in this study.

The visibility of physical intimate partner violence is one possible reason for an ostensibly obvious distinction from sexual violence. One women's health advocate hypothesized:

I think for anyone in the world it's easier to deal with a bruise than a torn hymen, you know, it's just much easier, so that's sort of this underlying thing

and it's easier to use language about bruises than sexual parts, and this incredible privacy violation that happens with sexual violence, so there's that.

Here, the participant is stressing the physicality of intimate partner violence. Of course intimate partner violence is perpetrated in ways other than just physical violence, but when women presented themselves to service providers with physical markers of abuse there was a clear problem that could be tangibly addressed. Related to this, are the different service needs that survivors of stranger sexual violence and intimate partner violence might have:

I think typically the needs of women who have been sexually assaulted have been different in that the recovery from a sexual assault looks different from the recovery from partner violence. It's a different kind of, you know, if a person is a victim of ongoing emotional and physical violence from their partner, they're kind of being brainwashed and getting out of that looks different from someone who's been, let's say, sexually assaulted once (Women's health advocate).

In her interview, Linda Markowsky remembered conceptualizing violence against women holistically, but attributes the early operational separation of intimate partner violence and sexual violence to pragmatism. She argues that in an effort to find practical solutions to violence against women, the problem needed to be broken down into smaller components in order to not be too overwhelming, both for the activists doing the initial work and presumably for the governments eventually called upon to respond.

Thus, during the early years of mobilization on violence against women, feminists had not necessarily conceptualized intimate partner violence and sexual violence as separate social problems. Toby Brooks, a long-time women's advocate and former shelter worker, recalled how she knew of the rape crisis movement's work in the early years of

feminist activism on violence against women, but that it was not integrated into her work at a women's shelter:

I got to realize late in my career at Interval House how many of the women had also been victims of sexual violence, because I think I didn't know how to ask the questions, I was just so overwhelmed by them coming in with all their bruises and broken bones... At the time that Interval House opened, I certainly knew that there were advocates on the issue of sexual violence, and I just sort of thought, OK, they're doing their job and I'm doing my job, and I didn't see the obvious connection. I remember one politician did, I don't think he was a local politician, and he said, you know, you've got this service on sexual assault and you've got this, I think it was just the women's centre, how about if we give you more resources and you combine facilities, and I scratched my head, oh yeah.

The separate implementation of feminist service and advocacy for intimate partner violence and sexual violence can be understood within the socio-political context of the time. Working on wife battering or rape would have been a conscious decision on the part of some activists who would have chosen to work for the cause about which they were most passionate. It is also just as likely the result of an evolutionary process involving pragmatic decision-making to ensure women received services in a social environment that failed to recognize their needs and activists constructing claims that they thought would best resonant with Canadian governments. Kitsuse and Spector (2009) and Best (2013) argue that claims-makers are more likely to be effective in garnering public and political support for their issue when claims focus on a single, clearly identifiable problem with a logical solution, so it certainly makes sense if feminist activists were trying to break “violence against women” down into more manageable parts.

To activists inside and outside the movement, the continued separation between intimate partner violence and sexual violence services today seems confusing at best and

inefficient at worst. In her interview, Constance Backhouse stated that intimate partner violence and sexual violence should not be separated in the feminist movement because,

Most battered women have lots of sexual violence they don't report, the concept of sexuality within permanent relations, you know how romantic or economic partnerships as marriages or living together arrangements work... The battered side needs to know about sexual violence and the sexual violence side, I think, needs to know that not all violence is directed at the genitals and that it can be just as excruciating... Well it's gendered, it's gendered, and so the root causes of one problem are the same as the root causes of the other and so we'd do well to connect.

A former feminist activist who is connected with multiple types of social services expressed surprise around the continued separation in violence against women services:

I see people complaining about isolation between rape crisis centres and women's shelters and it took me quite a while to realize that when they were talking about separate sectors, they meant that they were separate sectors, those two, I just couldn't, I found that very hard to get my head around... I think they should be connected... If you're living with your husband and he's raped you, do you go to the rape crisis centre or do you go to the shelter? And do they cooperate and work together on your file? Well no, they don't, and I think that's weird.

A Francophone social work researcher noted that the pragmatic separation of intimate partner violence and sexual violence has also led to competition between groups for government funding:

If we had a violence against women policy in Quebec, all the money would be put together and divided depending on the problems that we have, but money is always an issue, so sexual violence groups think that the domestic violence groups have too much money and so on, so there are problems, yeah, there are problems.

A young Francophone woman who is new to the feminist movement described her realization that intimate partner violence and sexual violence were considered distinct issues in feminist counselling:

I had never noticed the big separation; I never personally separated it, because to me sexual violence is violence, so I never personally separated it, but lately, I've been noticing that there was a big separation and that they're trying to make it all together nowadays.

Other services are also beginning to take measures to address the historical separation between intimate partner violence and sexual violence. Julie Lalonde, a community activist, described how the Coalition for a Carleton Sexual Assault Centre at Carleton University in Ottawa has widened its mandate:

We're still about getting a sexual assault centre, but we really broadened our scope just to gender-based violence in general because stalking is a real problem. So, you have people who come in, and they may or may not have been sexually assaulted, but they want to talk about the criminal harassment that they're getting, particularly if that person also goes to Carleton... We support women and men and trans people, so we get a lot of people who are not able to access services elsewhere who maybe were assaulted or queer assaulted or they were assaulted within the confines of their queer relationship, or they're transitioning, so even though our mandate is sexual assault, we've really had to broaden our scope because we've just noticed that there's all of these needs that are not being met.

Integrating two issues in a movement that has traditionally mobilized around them separately is not an easy task, even if most of the activists in the movement conceptualize intimate partner violence and sexual violence as being a part of a larger whole. Constance Backhouse noted,

It's hard to connect because the issues are so big that the research, the activism, the delivery of assistance is just so demanding and so pressing, it's so huge, that just getting up in the morning is sometimes a struggle, so it's hard to beat ourselves up too much and say we should be doing more.

Some participants highlighted a troubling dynamic they have noticed in some jurisdictions where women's groups are attempting to integrate multiple forms of violence under one rubric: the marginalization of sexual violence and a predominant focus on intimate partner violence. One participant spoke about how the restructuring of OCTEVAW led to the marginalization of individuals doing work specifically on sexual violence. Originally, OCTEVAW involved subcommittees whose mandates related to specific topics (e.g., victims of sexual violence, Aboriginal women, lesbian women, justice, and accessibility). In the 2007 restructuring of the coalition, subcommittees were reoriented to have mandates related to specific functions (e.g., engaging the justice system, accessibility and outreach, public engagement, and frontline services). Still, in the words of a women's health advocate:

I think until we integrate sexual violence really and truly into the whole spectrum of the kinds of violence that women live with, it's not going to get addressed.

Constance Backhouse described a past attempt to integrate intimate partner violence and sexual violence:

We saw [sexual harassment] as sitting at the fulcrum between violence against women because it was sexual coercion, in some cases it was outright rape on the job, and employment discrimination. So we saw it as a very good bridging issue to bring together women who were looking for formal equality in the workplace and women who were fighting violence against women, the socialist feminists, the radical feminists; we thought it was a great bridging issue...

[Sexual harassment is] coercive, male sexual overtures which take place, primarily, although now we know much broader than that, but at the time we said primarily in the workplace and it has economic consequences. And so we said it brings both groups together, you should both be interested in each other's issues; you both need to know what is being said on the other side.

The idea of using a common issue to bridge two disparate sectors of feminist activism on violence against women invokes Kelly's (1988) continuum of sexual violence. As the excerpts from the women's narratives show, these feminist activists, either having worked in the movement for a number of years or joining it in progress today, have a holistic conceptualization of violence against women that recognizes that intimate partner violence and sexual violence are not mutually exclusive. Still, advocacy and services for intimate partner violence and sexual violence have remained separated. Early separation made sense pragmatically, but today in an increasingly neoliberal political climate, characterized by cuts to social services and financial aid, different feminist groups are finding themselves competing with each other for scarce resources in a socio-political context that increasingly delegitimizes advocacy and research.

Responding to the problem: Feminist service provision

Concurrent with their claims-making activities, feminist activists responded to the increasing numbers of women coming forward with stories of the violence they had experienced. The first feminist services for victims of wife battering and rape emerged in the 1970s out of an historical context that either hid or medicalized women's victimization (Schechter, 1982). With no specialized public services being available, some feminists began opening up their homes to women fleeing abusive husbands and operating telephone

crisis lines for women who had been raped (Jones & Cook, 2008). These services were rooted in feminist philosophies of women's empowerment and autonomy and usually operated as non-hierarchical, volunteer-based collectives (Macy et al., 2010). In 1983, Interval House of Toronto released a position paper on their philosophy:

It is important at this time that our collective is composed of individuals who have a feminist perspective i.e. a recognition that, for example, woman battering, along with other forms of violence against women, is a manifestation of the patriarchal and economic structure of our society... By operating as a collective, we each have the opportunity to receive a range of perspectives on any given issue... While group decision-making can make it difficult to deal with individuals in the group who may not be pulling their weight, not coping or trying to dominate the group, we feel that this form of decision-making is on the whole the most effective way to operate.

Pamphlets and brochures advertising feminist organizations' services and providing women with information about violence are common among the documents in the CWMA. These materials describe the services of women's shelters, rape crisis centres, general support services, legal support and advocacy, and self-defence courses. Early materials produced in the 1970s and early 1980s by groups offering services to women who had experienced violence tend to follow a strict formula of invoking discourse that sets violence against women into a context whereby women's experiences and reactions to violence are identified and normalized; highlighting the high prevalence of violence against women through the use of statistics; providing information to women about their options and advertising available services and to which type of violence they were designed to respond; and, requesting financial and volunteer support. The intended audience of these materials is usually women who have experienced violence – as a pamphlet produced by Kenora's Women's Place stated they are “women helping women”.

The strategy of attempting to identify and then de-stigmatize women's victimization, as well as normalize women's various reactions to victimization, demonstrates a claims-making campaign targeted directly at women who had experienced violence, in an effort to make women feel as if what they were experiencing was not unique, but in fact part of a broader social problem. The Toronto Rape Crisis Centre released a pamphlet in the late 1970s that provided answers to a series of questions that "every woman should know":

Who are the rapists? "Normal" men, known to the victim;

Who are the victims? Every woman;

How does it happen? Physical strength and threat;

Where does it happen? Everywhere;

When does it happen? Anytime; and,

Why does it happen? Present studies indicate that rape is not simply deviant behaviour on the part of one man but indicates a social malaise involving the way men and women relate to each other. Rape has two components – aggression and sex.

In a pamphlet on rape and sexual assault, Women's Place in Kenora also encouraged women to "realize that any woman can be raped." Education Wife Assault produced a resource kit in 1984 that asked of women a series of questions:

Did you ever back down from an argument with a man because you felt intimidated? Did you feel that if you said anything more the situation might get out of hand? Have you ever felt threatened by a man's superior physical strength? Were you afraid that if he became angrier he might strike you? Have you ever stayed in a relationship longer than you should have? Did you stay because you felt responsible for the other person?

These types of questions encourage women to consider what might be considered “normal” interactions between men and women, but when situated within the context of violence against women shed light on the continuum of violence. In a more pointed brochure asking women, “Are you living in fear of him?”, Education Wife Assault informed women that if their husband or boyfriend is physically violent,

You are not the only one; you are not to blame; wife assault affects the children; wife assault is wrong; [and.] wife assault is a crime (n.d.).

A 1985 fact sheet also produced by Education Wife Assault identifies abuse as “more than just physical assault”, but includes sexual abuse, psychological abuse, and emotional abuse as well. In the view of this resource centre, wife assault is “too widespread to be the work of a few mentally ill men.”

Feminist groups were clear about what type of violence their services were designed to respond, reinforcing the operational divide between services for battered women and services for victims of rape as discussed above. A 1986 press release announcing the creation of the Assaulted Women’s Helpline in Toronto stated,

The focus of the service is reaching women who are assaulted in their homes.

Women’s Place in Kenora, in their advocacy for a transition house, wanted

To meet the needs of women who have been physically or mentally abused or sexually assaulted.

Education Wife Assault in Toronto described their group as

A feminist non-profit organization that provides training and resources on the issue of wife assault to the public (n.d.).

The Sexual Assault Centre of Guelph (later Guelph-Wellington Women in Crisis) released a flyer in 1987 advertising their purpose:

To support women who have been sexually assaulted or are incest survivors; to co-operate with community agencies to improve care for women who have been sexually assaulted; to work toward the prevention of all forms of sexual violence and inequality.

The next two sections will look at the two major locations of feminist service provision for women victims of violence: rape crisis and sexual assault centres, as well as shelters and transition homes.

Rape crisis and sexual assault centres

The type of information provided in a particular document would depend on the type of violence to which it was intended to respond. In a pamphlet on rape and sexual assault before the 1983 rape law reform, Women's Place in Kenora provided women with information on what to do if they had been sexually assaulted:

Preserve the evidence; call police immediately – Some of the questions may seem irrelevant or make you feel uneasy, don't hesitate to ask for an explanation; call a friend, relative, or the rape crisis centre; get medical attention; write down the details of the rape – It may take some time before the rapist is apprehended and brought to trial. Your immediate recollection of particulars surrounding the assault will help you at that time and will be instrumental in any later investigation or report; get a VD test and a pregnancy test.

Instructions to “tell someone”, “call the police”, and “preserve the evidence” are provided by many rape crisis and sexual assault centres prior to the rape law reform in 1983 (e.g., Sexual Assault Centre in London, Montreal Rape Crisis Centre, Regional Rape Crisis Centre in Sudbury, and Sexual Assault Crisis Centre in Windsor). In “A Legal Rights Handbook for Women: All men are equal before the law” published in 1973, Toronto’s Women’s Place gave women information about the legal definition of rape what it means to report rape, and the process of charging and sentencing:

Note that a husband is legally permitted to rape his wife if she does not wish to have sexual relations with him on any particular occasion. A woman who is raped and decides to report it to the police should prepare herself for an even more traumatic experience than the rape itself. Not only are many rape charges reduce to a charge of indecent assault, but when it comes to sentencing, judges are usually very lenient.

The Thunder Bay Rape and Sexual Assault Centre provided similar precautions to women reporting rape:

The myths which surround rape say that women often victimize men by yelling “rape” and that women frequently ask for and want to be raped. Because of these myths, the female rape victim must defend herself rather than be treated as a victim of a criminal act. Rape victims may have to prove that they are of chaste character, that they were not being seductive, that they tried to fight off the attacker, and that they did not enjoy being raped. It is no wonder that up to 90% of rapes that actually occur are never reported to the police. This means that women are not being given protection under the law against this form of assault (n.d.).

In an information sheet produced prior to the rape law reform, the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre informed women that,

Only certain kinds of rape cases proceed to and through the courts. Those that do usually involve some or all of the following criteria: no use of alcohol by the victim, forced entry by accused into victim's home, being raped by a total stranger, being physically injured during the attack...Those which are less likely to proceed to court or result in a conviction usually involve: apparent inebriation of the victim, prior voluntary conduct of the victim, well known attacker, being poor, unemployed, or on welfare, having a criminal record (n.d.).

After the 1983 rape law reform, rape crisis and sexual assault centres usually included information about the updated legislation on sexual assault, identified myths and realities about sexual violence (e.g., only certain types of women are assaulted; the attacker is a scary, weird stranger; sexual assaults take place in dark alleys; women who have been sexually assaulted will be hysterical and show signs of physical violence; and, sexual assault is a result of uncontrollable sexual passion), and provided information about what to do after a sexual assault:

Whether or not you report a sexual assault to the police is your personal decision, but in any case it is advisable to see a doctor (Sexual Assault Centre of Guelph, 1987).

Previous to the rape law reform in 1983, women's groups were quite keen to encourage women to report their victimization to the police immediately – likely due to the recent complaint doctrine that required a woman to inform the first reliable person she encountered following the assault – despite their acknowledgement of the legal system's inability to bring most offenders to justice. With the removal of the recent complaint doctrine in the 1983 rape law reform, women were no longer required to report their victimization immediately following the assault if they wanted the option of prosecution and could now take more time to process what had happened, attend to their immediate

needs (e.g., safety or medical attention), and make an informed decision about whether or not they wanted to involve the criminal justice system. However, delayed reporting in cases of sexual assault often works against the survivor who later decides prosecution may be desirable: physical evidence can no longer be collected and the woman may be seen as less credible or more likely to be making a false report (Kelly, Lovett, & Regan, 2005; Lisak, Gardinier, Nicksa, Cote, 2010). With women no longer forced to make a complaint immediately in case they might want the offender to face prosecution at some point, women's groups were afforded the opportunity to give women more tempered advice about contacting the criminal justice system.

Shelters and transition homes

Documents advertising the services of women's shelters and transition homes also made clear the population of women for which their services were intended. For example, Marianne's Place in Guelph provided "help to women who are physically, emotionally and sexually abused" (n.d.) and Sault Ste. Marie's Women in Crisis provided "counselling for women who are experiencing abuse in their relationships with men" (n.d.). In 1988, Lanark County Interval House described their philosophy as follows:

We believe a woman and her children have the right to live their lives with dignity and without the threat of abuse. When this basic right is denied or interfered with, we offer protection and support.

Most shelters, in addition to offering emergency and temporary housing and a safe space where women can "explore their options and develop their lives on a path free from violence" (Women in Transition, Toronto, n.d.), provided services such as children's

programs, counselling, information, public education, and referrals to other community services. As *Maison de connivance in Trois-Rivières*, Quebec describes of their role in the 1980s,

Raisons de notre existence: Permettre aux femmes de réfléchir à leur vécu, dans un milieu propice, afin de prendre les décisions qu'elles jugent adéquates; que chacune puisse connaître ses droits et soit en mesure de les exercer; donner à chacune la possibilité de développer son autonomie; permettre aux femmes de sortir de leur isolement et de créer une solidarité féminine.

Most materials for shelters offered a broad definition of abuse, likely to appeal to as many women as possible who might need their services. In a pamphlet for Marianne's Place produced in 1987, Guelph-Wellington Women in Crisis recognized abuse as a broad spectrum of behaviours:

When someone constantly puts you down; harasses you; makes it hard for you to leave the house; does not allow you to have your own friends; makes you feel stupid, crazy, worthless; threatens violence; beats you; makes you feel afraid for yourself and your children; emotionally tears you apart; makes you think you are never right no matter what you do; makes you feel guilty or ashamed of what is happening.

Similar to the materials produced by rape crisis and sexual assault centres, shelters provided women experiencing abuse with information about their options. In a pamphlet on the "battered woman", Kenora's Women's Place gave women information about what they can do before a beating – "Make a safety plan"; during a beating – "Do what you can to protect yourself from serious injury; don't strike back unless you have no choice"; and, after a beating – "Leave your house; call the police; call the crisis line; get a medical exam." Similar instructions to "call the police" were encouraged by women's shelters prior

to the introduction of aggressive criminal justice responses to intimate partner violence in the 1980s:

There may be little the police can do to help you in a case where violence is not evident upon their arrival, but if you are in physical danger – CALL THEM!... Calling the police may end the fight...but they cannot interfere in domestic matters unless you lay an assault charge (Crisis Homes Inc. in Thunder Bay, 1978).

In a 1978 information booklet for women experiencing battering at the hands of their husbands, Thunder Bay's Crisis Homes Inc. touched on the difficult legal position in which women could find themselves. On women deciding whether or not to leave an abusive home, the organization suggested,

Unless you are in immediate physical danger, seek advice first. A bad move now could complicate your position later. IF, WITHOUT ENDANGERING YOURSELF OR YOUR CHILDREN YOU CAN TAKE THEM WITH YOU, YOU SHOULD DO SO... Needless to say, consideration should be given to the future needs (housing, income, etc.) of you and your children.

A brochure produced by Education Wife Assault in the 1980s provided advice specific to the potential concerns of immigrant women experiencing abuse (as well as a list of available resources based on language):

If your husband threatens you with deportation: find out your immigration status, know that your husband cannot have you deported; find out your options. If you have no money: find out about financial aid; find out if you're eligible for welfare. If you do not understand English well: find a sympathetic friend or relative, call one of the interpreters/translators, [or] call a women's shelter.

Similar to the materials produced by rape crisis centres, service providers of the battered women's movement recognized women's autonomy and ability to make decisions about their own lives and strived to provide women with the tools and information to make informed decisions about how they might choose to respond. Again, this represents a claims-making campaign directed at the women survivors of violence, rather than official institutions or the general public. Rather than asking others to respond to a putative social problem, feminist activists were asking women to look at their own lives and recognize their "private troubles" as reflections of violence elsewhere.

In all its various forms, feminist service provision has been a cornerstone of feminist activism on violence against women since the 1970s. Responding to a gap in services, feminists began offering up their homes and expertise to provide women with options, whether it was a safe space to stay, someone to listen to their stories, or someone to provide them with information. In the early years of feminist mobilization on violence against women, service provision was intimately connected to feminist advocacy for social change, and particularly in advocating for a widespread recognition of violence against women as a social problem and the need for specialized services to be publically supported. The next section will now turn to a discussion of the ongoing feminist advocacy that emerged out of initial claims-making campaigns.

Responding to a problem: Feminist advocacy

Feminist advocacy to end violence against women has taken on many forms over the last 40 years. After initial claims-making campaigns that asked women, the Canadian state, and the general public to recognize violence against women as a social problem and

respond to it in different ways, feminist activists sustained their advocacy in response to various policy initiatives, legal reforms, and ad hoc events or incidents. In Spector and Kitsuse's (2009) natural history model, this is the third stage of the claims-making process wherein the initial claims-makers respond to the perceived inadequacies of official responses, or what Best (2013) refers to as "feedback". This section will look at some of the various forms of advocacy in light of this stage of the claims-making process.

Some of the more institutionalized feminist initiatives that are tied to the broader women's movement include celebrating International Women's Day on March 8th, "Stop Rape Week" campaigns in the 1980s, "Take Back the Night" marches, documentary film showings⁴⁶, discussion panels and forums⁴⁷, protests and rallies, and letter writing campaigns. Feminist groups who have taken a position that support working with governments have engaged in a number of lobbying efforts over the years on a broad range of issues. Perhaps the most long-standing example of Canadian feminist lobbying efforts was the annual lobby organized by the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) during their Annual General Meeting. Feminist groups have adapted their advocacy in response to incidents of discrimination that garner public attention, for example mobilizing around films, rock bands, and gallery exhibits that they have found to be

⁴⁶ An example of a film screening mentioned in the archives is "Fires of Transformation", a 1991 documentary on Violence Overcome in Creative Ensemble (VOICE).

⁴⁷ Discussion panels and forums advertised include "Rape Law Reform: 10 Years of Waiting – Are we getting what we need in Bill C-53?" with Constance Backhouse and Debra Lewis; "Violence Against Disabled Women" with Joanne Doucette at the 1986 DAWN Ontario Networking Conference; and, "Breaking the Silence: Wife Assault, Sexual Assault, Incest, Pornography, Prostitution, Sexual Harassment – Making the Links" with Susan G. Cole, Diana Majury, Marlaina Sniderman, and Makeda Silvera in 1986.

offensive to women⁴⁸. When the Women's Coalition at the University of Toronto experienced significant backlash during their "Take Back the Night" march in 1982, with male students throwing buckets of water and other objects at the protesters and yelling such violent chants as, "Rape is normal!", "Ugly dykes, who'd rape you anyway?", and "Wishful thinking, cunts!", they organized another march and a forum to discuss the incident, stating:

We believe that their actions are completely unjustifiable and we demand that our right to safety be taken seriously. The assault on the Take Back the Night of November 4 is not a "harmless prank". It is clearly an expression of a sexist, misogynistic and homophobic mentality against which we must take action. Woman and men, demonstrate in solidarity against misogyny on campus.

Feminist groups across the country raised vocal opposition to Frederic Storaska's 1975 book and film, *How to Say No to a Rapist and Survive*, which encouraged women to "be humble" towards a rapist and "play along" (Waterloo Regional Rape Distress Centre, n.d.). The Toronto Rape Crisis Centre responded,

The methods of rape prevention outlined in this film are unrealistic and based on false assumptions. Women who are led to believe in these methods may be putting themselves in very vulnerable and dangerous situations unnecessarily... There are many fallacies in Storaska's theories. Regarding the nature of rape – it is not a crime of sexual passion; it is a crime of violence, humiliation and control... Storaska's assurance that women can still resist later if his method doesn't work is contrary to evidence. The longer a woman waits, the more difficult it is to get out of the situation... [Rape is] impossible to prosecute if she "leads him on" (n.d.).

⁴⁸ Women Against Violence Against Women (WAVAW) in Toronto organized protests and boycotts of the films "The Story of O" in 1975, "Snuff" in 1976, and "Dressed to Kill" in 1980, the rock band "Battered Wives", as well as SoHo Gallery's "Exotic Ladies: An Intimate View" and the Canadian National Exhibition's "The Headless Woman: See her beautiful body without a head".

Feminist groups' responses to this book and film shed light on the construction of sexual violence with which they were operating at the time. As the Waterloo Regional Rape Distress Centre wrote in their 1976 article, *Rape Prevention: How to say NO to Storaska*,

Storaska claims that his methods work "unless you are in immediate defense of your life'" – yet every woman threatened with rape is in this position. She is not thinking, "This is a sexual encounter", she is thinking, "I might be killed!"

These examples can be divided into two types of advocacy: institutional and reactive. Part of effective advocacy work is timely response to "opportunity structures" that illustrate or undermine claims regarding social problems (Best, 2013). Of course, there is not always a clear distinction between the more institutionalized forms of advocacy and opportunistic advocacy. As the following examples demonstrate, feminist groups' reactions to perceived discriminatory treatment by governments and state institutions are fuelled, informed, and shaped by their ongoing activism.

In a report from the Northwestern Ontario Women's Decade Council included in the Women's Lobby Coalition archival material, the Council criticized the "First Report on Family Violence: Wife Battering" produced by Ontario's Standing Committee on Health, Welfare, and Social Affairs in 1982 for not addressing the need for stable funding for transition houses or the special needs of Northern women. Another example is a letter written to then Prime Minister John Turner by the Durham Region Battered Women's Support Group in 1984. In response to Prime Minister Turner being caught "patting the bum" of then Liberal Party President Iona Campagnolo and Liberal Party organizer Lise St. Martin-Tremblay during the 1984 federal election campaign and his subsequent attempts to

rationalize his behaviour as “part of his political style” which involves “slapping people all over the place” (Globe and Mail, 1984), the Durham group wrote,

As head of this country, you are showing men its O.K. to treat women as objects. Such behaviour leads to women being battered... Men would be outraged if you patted their bums. Are you really indicating that if women were to go around touching your private parts that would just constitute “exchanging greetings”? It's interesting that in your “tactile” politicking your hands find their way to the buttocks of only beautiful women, not to ninety year old grandmothers or others less well-endowed by nature. We cannot help noting that you are more “liberal” with your wandering hands than with your actions on behalf of battered women. We await your apology.

While Prime Minister Turner’s “bum patting” was only one among many other political gaffes⁴⁹ that contributed to the Liberal Party’s loss in the 1984 election, he never officially apologized for his “tactile” approach, though he did cease it as a greeting for the rest of the election campaign and in 1986 referred to himself as a “reformed bum patter” (Vienneau & Sears, 1986).

Community coalitions have also sprung up to respond to what is perceived as “state violence against women”. The Community Coalition in Support of Cynthia Johnson, an Etobicoke high school teacher who nearly cut off her partner’s penis in an act she described as occurring during a struggle after he had raped her, produced a flyer in 1990 expressing their concern about “women who have been charged for protecting themselves against sexual attacks and where charges were not laid against the attacker.” In a stereotypical he said/she said case, Cynthia Johnson was charged and eventually convicted of attempted

⁴⁹ Including insider opposition to his leadership, his “rusty” and “old fashioned” leadership style, and missteps during televised debates, most famously the “You had an option, sir” blow delivered by Brian Mulroney in reference to upholding the patronage appointments Pierre Trudeau made in the final days of his tenure as Prime Minister (Hepburn, 1986).

murder in 1991 in what her partner described as a premeditated murder/suicide plot. After her conviction, Cynthia Johnson fled Toronto and lived underground until 1995, when she returned to the city and an appeal in her case was finally dismissed (DiManno, 1995). The coalition argued that,

This is an intolerable precedent for Ontario women. We will not be punished by the police and the courts for defending our own lives.

However, despite their efforts, neither the coalition of women's groups nor Cynthia Johnson was able to convince the police, the Ontario Crown Prosecutor, or the jurors to believe their interpretation of the event.

Another form of perceived state violence against women is police brutality directed against racialized women. In Toronto, the Friends of WINSOM organized to support a black Canadian artist who was injured by police following a peaceful demonstration protesting the acquittal of two police officers who had been charged with the shooting death of black teenager, Michael Wade Lawson. In a 1992 letter the group stated,

The severity with which we believe Black women and men in our communities are treated by the police leaves us all feeling vulnerable and unprotected.

Yet another response to discriminatory police actions was launched by Women Against Violence Against Women (WAVAW) in Toronto, who released a public awareness campaign after an Ontario Provincial Police report in 1979 stated that over 50% of rapes were provoked by women hitchhiking, going out alone at night, attending parties, or being promiscuous. In response, WAVAW released a number of recommendations based on "police logic":

Since most rapes of juveniles are perpetrated by relatives, we recommend the abolition of the family; as indicated in the report, women hitch-hikers are endangered when offered rides by men. We recommend that for a one-year trial period, the driver's licenses of all men be revoked; in the hope of preventing any attacks on women when possible danger signals arise, we urge that all men who show signs of promiscuity or are less than circumspect in their behaviour be immediately arrested and charged with public mischief. In order to decrease the danger by potential rapists to women after daylight hours, we recommend a 9pm curfew on all men to apply in all areas where women have been attacked, such as streets, homes, doctors' offices, judges' chambers, places of business, police stations. We recommend automatic conviction for all accused rapists unless they can prove their virginity.

Most recently, feminist activists in Canada, and subsequently globally, have mobilized in response to one Toronto police officer's advice to women at York University to "not dress like sluts" if they want to avoid being raped (Kraus, 2011). Constable Michael Sanguinetti's remarks spurred an uproar from feminists who argued that his advice effectively discouraged women from reporting sexual victimization to the police for fear of being judged for their actions and that his advice was not evidence-based, as women do not have to be "dressed like sluts" to be raped. In response, Heather Jarvis and Sonya Barnett organized the first SlutWalk that was held on April 3, 2011 in Toronto and attracted up to 4,000 supporters for the march. Since the Toronto march, SlutWalks have been organized in cities across Canada, as well as in places as diverse as Australia, Germany, India, Mexico, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Jessica Valenti (2011), an American feminist blogger, describes the SlutWalk as the type of grassroots feminist activism that could "herald a new day in feminist organizing" because "in just a few months, SlutWalks have become the most successful feminist action of the past 20 years." As a young feminist activist described in her interview for this study:

I've also seen really positive [things]... Women trying different things and trying really novel ways, like SlutWalk, regardless of its controversy, it still got people talking, it gets people talking, it's going to go down as one of the cornerstones of third wave feminism, and we're going to be fourth wave and look at third wave and we're going to look at SlutWalk... These are some things that are just going to go down in history... I just see SlutWalk as being something that was just so interesting... How women in different countries have picked it up, even there was the debates about who can actually claim the word, or reclaim the word "slut" but women from everywhere are reclaiming it, or some women are finding value in reclaiming it in all sorts of circumstances... But you don't have to reclaim it either, and that's the whole thing, you don't have to, so I think that's going to go down as something in the history.

In the case of SlutWalk, some feminists jumped on an opportunity created by the ill-conceived comments of one police officer and, using an already established feminist analysis of rape myths and the “tried and true” medium of the feminist march, created a unique feminist claims-making campaign (see Kraus, 2011). Of course, the reappropriation of the word “slut” to connote empowerment does not sit well with all feminists (e.g., Dines & Murphy, 2011), illustrating one of the internal tensions within the movement that will be discussed in the next chapter. Still, SlutWalk, while only the most recent example, exemplifies a continuation of a pattern in feminist advocacy.

Advocacy for funding

In the 1970s, feminists began arguing that they could not sustain their activities through volunteers and fundraising alone and that the state had a role in responding to violence against women. In Quebec, feminists have had some success in securing government funding for feminist services (Masson, 1999/2000). In her interview, Dominique Masson speculated as to the reason for this:

[Provincial Regroupements have] a pragmatic approach to the state: it's that the state makes laws, the state has resources, we need these resources to be accessible for struggling against violence against women or sexual assault and we need to change institutions as well as change society. The state is a powerful instrument for changing the institutional response and changing society... The groups also know that they have allies within the state, that the state is not this monolithic, always and forever, patriarchal thing, that society is changeable and they have allies... This idea that the state is a place, both a target and an instrument of social change, is a dominant view in the Quebec women's movement. I guess the voices that have been heard against that view belong to a few radical feminist intellectuals and have not left a mark in the way the Quebec women's movement deals with the provincial government.

Still, despite sustainable provincial government funding, there exists a sense of uncertainty amongst some women's groups in Quebec because of the recent cuts at the federal level:

The climate of uncertainty...being tired, demoralized, and not having enough, never having enough money, because we're focusing on operational funding, but it's not enough. So many, if not all of the groups, try to get money elsewhere: project funding, charitable foundations, fundraising, and some service agreements. So they're still playing the funding game in a sense, even though part of their existence is stabilized through the operational grants that they get, so fatigue, burnout, frustration (Dominique Masson).

As with engaging with the state in general, feminists have debated what it means to request funding from the government to conduct activities that may be critical of or in opposition to certain political ideologies. Barb MacQuarrie, a long-time community activist and researcher, outlined her perspective on this debate in her interview:

For many years there used to be conversations about whether or not we completely compromise ourselves by accepting government funding and are just buying into the government's agenda. That's not really my view. My view of government is that it exists to redistribute resources in a way that's more fair and equitable and I really think that, as a society, we really need to direct resources to addressing the problem of violence against women and girls. So I

think it's the state's responsibility, I think that organizations that are able to demonstrate that they're reliable and that they're doing work that's supportive of women and that's effective and preventive, they deserve funding. Some deserve a lot more funding than what's available. I say that knowing that when you work with government, they are pretty powerful, and they do tend to want to set agendas, and they will try to impose their framework on you, their set of objectives, and that becomes a condition for receiving your money.

Bonnie Diamond described what happens, in her view, when governments set the agenda for program funding:

I think that a lot of the organizations who are providing services to women who are victims of violence, I don't think that they have sold out by any means. What I'm talking about is the fact that the government, when they no longer want to pay or they don't believe philosophically in the feminist base of the organizations, what they have a tendency to do is to try to take them in-house and to create government organizations... Then I think that you're delivering a service that is less useful rather than more useful, and that's what the government tends to do. Any place where they would be able to institutionalize it within government services, they try to do that because they think it's cheaper, and they may even think that it's taking a little bit from the politicization of the issue, of violence against women; I think that that's a move that's bad.

As one young feminist described of her advocacy role in her interview,

I think there are also lots of contradictions; the government is almost like the hand that feeds you in a sense, if you're in a non-profit environment. So I think there's a huge difference between an activist environment and a non-profit environment... As a feminist, in this position, you're always kind of riding the line. When are you a non-profit kind of person that has to answer to government, rules and regulations and reports and funding things and all this stuff? And when you're an activist, when you challenge, you say no, this is not what I feel like doing or no, I'm not going to apply for that funding because I don't agree with the basis of it or I don't think that the government's mandate is in the right place, I'm not even going to go there, I don't want to sell-out. So you're constantly riding that line I think, when you're engaging, and I know

that in my own little way... I find myself at times being really angry with certain things and challenging them. So I have been able to do that in my role, [make] very small, very minimal challenges.

One of the major challenges around funding for many non-governmental organizations is the lack of sustainable funding for the ongoing operations of organizations, in favour of one-time grants for “innovative” projects. Limited term or project-based funding creates a culture of instability and insecurity for feminist organizations that have to use their scarce financial and personnel resources to come up with new project ideas and write funding applications rather than engage in their core advocacy or service provision activities. Anita Olsen-Harper, an Aboriginal women’s activist and researcher, described the difficult situation of “year-to-year core funding” for the National Aboriginal Circle Against Family Violence:

I feel it's government's business how Aboriginal women are doing, after all they are the cause of it. I feel that there's a select few in government who tell Aboriginal women how to spend money that's allotted to them, such as INAC (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada); INAC makes funding extremely difficult for organizations. The Circle, for example, they get year-to-year core funding which is kind of a contradiction right there, but that's the way it is, and they're very highly graded for sustainability, but they're still on year-to-year, so fiscal year end is March 31, on April 1 they're supposed to get next year's funding, well the Circle hasn't even had all their money yet, they're still getting it; it's December. There have been years that they've had to close down in July and August and September until that money came in, but they still have to pay rent, the employees agreed to get a big pay cheque three months down the road, [but] that's not right. As well as that, suddenly in five months, December, January, February, March, four or five months, they have to spend 100% of their funds, now does that make any sense?

Despite the challenges that state engagement creates for feminists, it is seen by many to be necessary for organizational survival. Most interview participants expressed a

pragmatic, if reluctant, view of the utility of feminist groups engaging with the Canadian state. As one activist from the community health sector noted,

I think we have to... When the government cut the funding for Status of Women and cut its ability to fund organizations that do more political action, it's a huge problem because...the government is saying that men and women are equal and that they should be able to get things done the way they need to get it done, but they're not recognizing that from a historical point of view, we aren't equal. We're equal in principle, but we're not equal in reality and in order for us to become equal, we have to be given the resources to do the work that we need to do... to me that means lobbying the government and in some ways reflecting back to the government what it is that's happening on the ground.

This activist is referring the most recent budget cuts that have been undertaken by Stephen Harper's Conservative government since 2006. Specifically, the government eliminated the Court Challenges Program and the Law Commission of Canada⁵⁰ and cancelled the national childcare program the previous Liberal governments of Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin had negotiated with the provinces. Perhaps most manifestly damaging to feminists has been the continuous budgets cuts to Status of Women Canada (SWC), previously a large funder of feminist service, advocacy, and research activities. The Conservatives closed 12 out of 16 regional offices, removed the word "equality" from SWC's mandate, and made research and activist activities ineligible for funding. This represents a significant restriction on feminist organizations' ability to engage in claims-making activities that involve advocacy for social or legal change. Most recently they have denied any new funding for research activities on the missing and murdered Aboriginal women in Canada

⁵⁰ The Court Challenges Program had only been re-established in 1994 and the Law Commission in 1997 by Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, after both were cut by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney in the early 1990s. See Rantansi (2008) for a discussion of how the elimination of the Court Challenges Program affects women.

and closed the Sisters in Spirit Campaign, despite a commitment to this issue in the March 2010 Speech from the Throne (Beres et al., 2009; Ditchburn, 2010).

Advocacy for recognition of feminist expertise

In the early years of feminist activism, feminists working with women who had experienced violence asserted themselves as experts on the issue and were, at times, consulted by various governments who had, by this time, recognized the problem of violence against women as a social problem. This was perhaps most clearly reflected in the institutionalization of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) as a “Parliament of Women” representing a broad array of women’s interests (Vickers et al., 1993), as well as in the government establishment of the Canadian Advisory Committee on the Status of Women (CACSW) in 1973 as a research and advisory body on women’s issues, who was responsible for publishing the first study on wife battering in Canada (MacLeod, 1980). The Montreal Massacre of December 6, 1989⁵¹ served to galvanize the feminist women’s movement and also moved governments to “do something” after such a visibly violent event. At their 1990 Annual General Meeting (AGM), the NAC called for a full and open inquiry into the Montreal Massacre. The Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses (OAITH) released a background report, “Balance the Power: First mourn, then work for change”, for the 1990 lobby. In this report, OAITH connected the Montreal Massacre with all women who experience violence:

⁵¹ On December 6, 1989, 14 women, most of who were enrolled as undergraduate engineering students, were killed at l’École Polytechnique during a mass shooting. The women who were killed are: Geneviève Bergeron, H  l  ne Colgan, Nathalie Crotaeau, Barbara Daigneault, Ann-Marie Edward, Maude Haviernick, Barbara Maria Kueznick, Maryse Leclair, Maryse Lagani  re, Ann-Marie Lemay, Sonia Pelletier, Mich  le Richard, Annie St.-Arneault, and Annie Turcotte.

Currently, the individual, institutional and cultural response to these events, whether they are public or private, denies the root causes of male violence at best, or colludes with the abuser and blames the victims at worst.

In 1991, then New Democratic Party (NDP) Member of Parliament (MP) Dawn Black introduced a private member's bill to mark December 6 as a National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women that was supported by all parties. Other federal government responses to this tragedy included five-year funding to establish five regional research centres on violence against women. These now exist as the Alliance of Five Research Centres on Violence with funding from universities, fundraising, and limited term grants (Hague, Kelly, & Mullender, 2001). Further, survivors of the Montreal Massacre were leaders in the creation of the Coalition for Gun Control, a group that was influential in the passage of Bill C-68 in 1995 by Jean Chrétien's Liberal government that included, among other items, a provision to set up a gun registry. Notably, the gun registry has recently been dismantled by Stephen Harper's Conservative government, without the input of women's organizations⁵² (Coalition for Gun Control, 2012). In reacting to the government response to the Montreal Massacre, the NAC, in their 1992 annual report, reflected on the previous year's work "to strengthen the national voice of women fighting against violence against women" and pressure the federal government to adopt December 6 as a national Women's Remembrance Day. However, in December 1994, five years after

⁵² The campaign for first the creation, and then to keep, a registry of all owners of licensed firearms was and continues to be an important struggle for feminist victim advocates. The risk of femicide for a woman whose abusive partner owns a gun is five times that for non-gun owners (Campbell, Webster, Koziol-McLain, Block, Campbell, Curry, Gary, et al., 2003) and when an abusive incident involves a gun, the woman is 12 times more likely to be killed (Saltzman, Mercy, O'Carroll, Rosenberg, & Rhodes, 1992). An in-depth study of intimate femicides in Ontario between 1974 and 1994 found guns to be the most common weapon used (Gartner, Dawson, & Crawford, 1998).

the Montreal Massacre, the NAC criticized the federal government for failing to take concrete action on eliminating violence against women:

A national day of mourning is not the same as ending the war against women. This government has paid lip service to ending violence against women, but has failed to develop an action plan towards achieving this goal.

In this passage, the NAC is referring to the lack of response by the federal government to endorse the recommendations of an all-women Parliamentary Sub-Committee on the Status of Women. This Sub-Committee was established in June 1989, prior to the Montreal Massacre, but only released its “War Against Women” report in 1991. The report outlined a number of progressive recommendations for the federal government that focused on prevention, education, and long-term funding for feminist services, but the report went unendorsed by the Standing Committee on Health and Welfare (Gotell, 1998). Women’s groups across the country were particularly vocal in supporting the report’s recommendation for a royal commission on violence against women after the tragedy at *École Polytechnique*. In a 1992 Executive Report to the Membership, the NAC responded by stating that,

The hearings of the Parliamentary Sub-Committee on Violence Against Women provided an important opportunity for the women's movement to present an analysis and strong recommendations for necessary reform. The excellent report, War on Women, of the sub-committee provides an important blueprint for immediate government action.

However, instead of establishing a royal commission that would look at the problem in-depth, the federal government decided to establish the Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women.

In the 1991 Speech from the Throne, the federal government announced that a “blue ribbon panel” would be formed to inquire into the problem of violence against women in Canadian society. In response, Anne McGrath, then the NAC Vice-President, worried that,

Blue ribbon sounds to us like the opposite of grass roots... The women's movement has twenty years [of] experience in combating violence against women. Government money would be better spent empowering women's organizations to come up with solutions than paying a well-heeled panel to re-invent the wheel (1991).

Despite these concerns, the Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, a decidedly less rigorous form of inquiry than a royal commission, was formed in August of 1991. From the outset, the Panel was comprised of two government-appointed co-chairs and seven part-time members, supported by a four member Aboriginal circle and a 23 member Advisory Committee⁵³ (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993). Initially, the NAC supported the creation of the Panel:

The formation of the Canadian Panel on Violence in response to demands from some women's groups for a royal commission is another indication of the way in which the violence issue has moved to the top of the political agenda. Because NAC had been part of the call for the royal commission and because the composition of the Panel had most of the elements that we had requested, NAC strongly supported the formation of the Panel.

However, participants at the NAC’s 1992 roundtable on violence disagreed:

⁵³ The Advisory Committee was created to respond to feminist concerns about representation and inclusion of diversity. However, recruiting one immigrant woman, two women of colour, and one woman with disabilities to sit on the committee was not seen as an adequate response to these concerns (Gotell, 1998). In addition, the Advisory Committee was limited to discussing issues brought up by the Panel, reinforcing the marginalization women’s groups had been struggling against for the previous two decades (Levan, 1996).

The majority of women at the NAC Roundtable on Violence Against Women expressed strong criticism of the process of the Panel, particularly in terms of exclusion of women of colour and immigrant women, and questioned NAC's support of the panel given that the money could be better used to implement the recommendations of the War on Women report and facilitate inclusive discussions among the experts in the community working on a day to day level to end violence against women.

In their 1992 report to the membership, the NAC retracted their prior statements supporting the Panel:

In retrospect this was an error. The establishment of the Panel could have been a tactic by the government to avoid taking immediate action on the War on Women report. Moreover, the Panel has been fraught with problems that were predicted by members of the NAC executive and others at a grass roots level. There was insufficient consultation before we decided on our support. We should have insisted that the War on Women report recommendations be immediately implemented as a priority.

At their 1992 AGM, the NAC submitted a resolution to,

Oppose the Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women in terms of structure, terms of reference and process, and ask that the panel process be stopped and instead the government implement the recommendations already proposed in the War Against Women report and work with other organizations to empower women to support recommendations already proposed in War on Women.

The NAC further suggested that,

Any money remaining in the Panel budget be used to sponsor roundtable discussions on strategies to end violence against women that are inclusive of front-line agencies (rape crisis centres, transition houses, women's centres), national women's organizations, Aboriginal women, women of colour, immigrant women, and women with disabilities.

The NAC's opposition to the Panel was representative of the broader feminist movement in Canada. As the first phase of its research process, the Panel conducted 139 consultations with nearly 4,000 individuals over the course of seven tours: British Columbia and Alberta, Quebec, Atlantic Canada, Ontario, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, the Northwest Territories and the Yukon, and Northern Quebec and Labrador. The second phase involved consulting with women's groups, including organizations of Aboriginal women, immigrant women, and women with disabilities, church groups, and organizations working with youth (Canadian Panel, 1993). However, some feminist groups felt left out of these invitation-only consultations and by 1993, the NAC had formally withdrawn from the Panel's Advisory Committee because of its failure to be representative of all women. It was supported in its opposition to the Panel by the Congress of Black Women, the DisAbled Women's Network, and the National Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women. However, feminists' boycott of the Panel to challenge its legitimacy to speak for all women's experiences of violence was exploited as a source of backlash that characterized feminist organizations as "self-interested, special interest groups", which served to reinforce feminists' marginalization in the political arena (Gotell, 1998).

When the Canadian Panel's final report, "Changing the Landscape: Ending Violence-Achieving Equality" was released in 1993, it reflected a feminist analysis of violence against women despite the exclusion of voices from the organized feminist movement. It recognized a range of violence against women behaviours and the increased vulnerability for certain groups of women, including Aboriginal women, older women, poor women, women with disabilities, rural women, women of colour, immigrant and refugee women, and migrant workers. It also proposed a national action plan incorporating provisions for

gender equality and zero tolerance for violence. However, feminist organizations opposing the Panel saw many of their initial criticisms realized in the overwhelming, unprioritized 474 recommendations made by the Panel. In their view, the report failed to offer any new information for feminists on the dynamics of violence against women. The report also restated claims feminist groups had already been making on how to address violence against women, but now instead of coming from the feminist groups themselves, were repackaged as a product of government (Gotell, 1998).

The NAC criticized the report for having no implementation timeline or framework; for conceptualizing violence against women as a public health problem, rather than a problem of women's equality; and, for not addressing federal government policies that undermine women's safety and equality. The NAC's Violence Committee immediately responded critically to the release of the Panel's report in their 1994 Executive Report to the Membership:

[NAC had been calling] on the government to take immediate action on the demands made by the women's movement long before the appointment of this Panel. The Panel members had consistently refused to support the demand by national women's groups for more inclusion of women of colour and women with disabilities in its process, and while the government seems able to find money to put into reports and studies, women's groups continue to see a reduction in their funding. The Panel's recommendations were not backed by any concrete resources to eliminate violence against women and the NAC Violence Committee further criticizes this.

Indeed, the \$10 million budget for the Panel was seen by many groups to be a gross waste of money that could have been better spent supporting frontline services for women experiencing violence. Further, the report's release in advance of the 1993 federal election

suggested a symbolic gesture on the part of the declining Progressive Conservatives to win the favour of women.

Bonnie Diamond, who was Director of Research on the Panel and an interview participant for this study, reflected on her involvement with the controversial initiative:

[The Panel's report] wasn't that well-received by women's organizations, for some legitimate reasons, but a report that nonetheless was built on the philosophy of the women's movement at that time, the anti-violence women's movement. [It] wasn't perfect, but was a very good attempt by a number of women to create something that government would recognize... That was really a tough time for myself and a few other women who were involved with it because I've always worked very closely with NAC and with other organizations. Well first of all, it was a Conservative government and there was a lot of suspicion as to what exactly they were doing, ... The make-up of the Panel itself was considered dubious, and I think with some substance to that suspicion, a lot of the women from the practical end of the movement, people who were worried about keeping shelters open and that sort of thing, didn't want to see \$11 million spent, which effectively was the budget of the Canadian Panel on VAW. I didn't actually support that notion, because I thought, and I always think, that the substantive services that have to do with violence against women come from a very different envelope of money than any sort of policy initiatives the government takes, so I didn't buy that. But what I did buy was the make-up of the Panel and particularly the lack of authentic representation of the many communities of women that we were going to be looking at. Nonetheless, given what we had to live with when we got into it, I think that we did a very good job in trying to make up some of those deficits, but never to the satisfaction of some of the key players in the anti-violence movement, and so there was never the real acceptance of that report that might or might not have made a difference.

As an “insider” to the production of the report, Bonnie Diamond was keenly aware of the criticism made by her colleagues “outside” in the women’s movement. Still, she noted that the Panel’s report was received positively by some in the movement:

I can't tell you the number of people I've met with who have actually used the report and continue to use the report as a substantiation of what it was like then and the fact that it hasn't changed very much now.

While some feminists feel the qualitative experience of violence against women that the Panel describes has not changed much since the 1990s, perhaps neither has the state's relationship with the feminist movement that the process of the Panel exemplified.

Also in the early 1990s, women's groups were consulted by the Department of Justice (see McIntyre, 1994). To participate in these consultations, the federal government provided funding to bring representatives of women's groups from across the country together for a two day meeting. On the first day, representatives from the women's groups would meet and decide on an agenda for the consultation with then Minister of Justice Kim Campbell and other justice officials on the second day. Lee Lakeman referred to these consultations in "99 Federal Steps... Towards an END to violence Against Women", remembering how delegates from the Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres (CASAC) approached Minister Campbell at the National Symposium on Women, the Law, and the Administration of Justice in 1991 about Bill C-49, the proposed "Rape Shield Law". The consultations on the bill were described as "movement-wide" and included groups of battered women, domestic workers, lawyers, sex workers, lesbian women, and women with disabilities (Vancouver Rape Relief, 1993). In a 1992 Executive Report to the Membership, the NAC reflected on these consultations:

The focus on lobbying for mandatory judicial education was shifted when the Supreme Court struck down the Rape Shield Law. NAC worked in coalition with other national women's organizations to develop alternative legislation. In an extraordinary series of consultations with the Justice Minister, the informal coalition of women's groups managed to convince the Minister to introduce a

No Means No bill that had many of the elements of the legislation we had proposed. Probably the most important development was a meeting of 60 women's groups, sponsored by the Justice Department that was both inclusive and united. There was unanimous agreement that we will fight to ensure that the special situation of doubly oppressed women be recognized in the preamble to the bill.

When Justice Minister Pierre Blais announced plans to table anti-stalking legislation in 1992, feminist groups expected to be part of the consultative process. Instead, a select few groups were invited for an “information exchange” rather than the meaningful consultation that had occurred around Bill C-49. Despite their exclusion from substantive consultations, the NAC continued their annual general lobby until 2001⁵⁴. However, their status as experts on women’s issues continued to be questioned. For example, during the 1994 lobby, then Reform Party leader Preston Manning refused to meet with the NAC lobbyists, stating that “he doesn’t meet with interest groups”. Consultations with feminist groups were formally discontinued in the mid-1990s era of then Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and Finance Minister Paul Martin, who campaigned on their ability to eliminate the deficit on which previous governments had been operating. In Bonnie Diamond’s view, without the ability of women’s groups to get together and consult with government representations, the government is creating a situation in which...

...Nobody can prove anything; nobody can get together and make the case. And that's what they're robbing of us: the ability to make the case.

⁵⁴ It is difficult to find information about the NAC’s demise ostensibly because in its final years the organization did not have the resources to produce materials or arrange for their archival. Through a search of the Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies database, I have gleaned that the last annual lobby on Parliament Hill was in 2001 and that the organization was considered defunct as of 2004. However, a Wikipedia entry identifies Dolly Williams as the current president of the NAC since 2006, though the NAC itself does not currently have a website. A Canada 411 search produces a phone number and address in Toronto for the NAC, though when called, the phone number redirects to the Centre for Social Innovation.

The elimination of the “Justice Consultations” illustrates what Nancy Miller-Chenier described in her interview as the link that is now missing between feminist activists and the federal government. If feminist groups as claims-makers do not have the means necessary to coordinate, communicate, and reach consensus on the issues they see as social problems, and on how they will conceptualize those social problems, it becomes difficult to project the image of a cohesive social movement. Added to this is the dearth of mechanisms through which the movement, in whatever form it takes, can communicate with Canadian governments. These challenges at this stage of the “natural history” of feminist claims-making concerning violence against women provide some explanation as to why there was a decline in visible feminist activism starting in the 1990s.

In light of the temporary “Justice Consultations”, the closure of the CACSW, and the demise of the NAC, there is a perception among many feminists that governments, and specifically more right-leaning governments, have moved away from recognizing feminist expertise on women’s issues, while systematically removing mechanisms that were once in place to facilitate feminist engagement with the Canadian state. As one young feminist interviewed urged:

I feel it is important for the feminist movement to get involved, in fact I feel they should have the biggest part in restructuring the system. I feel they should have the biggest part in it, and they should be the first ones consulted, women, survivors of violence should be the first ones consulted in the matter and not go from the top, patriarchal society, let's build a system, and let's make it work how we think it should work. No, it should start from the bottom-up, instead of starting from the top-down... Involve the women, involve the feminist movement, involve women that are survivors or victims of violence, get them to tell you what's needed and not, don't try to imagine what they want.

The delegitimation of feminist expertise is not unique; it is indeed in line with an overall move away from evidence-based policy making and scientific research characterized by the current political climate. In this new context, feminists are now very visibly faced with what is characterized as “backlash” (Chesney-Lind 2006; Dragiewicz 2008). In a departure from simply arguing the case that violence against women is a social problem, in this social context of backlash feminists’ claims-makers need to negotiate the influence of counter-claims, from men’s and fathers’ rights groups, conservative women’s groups, and the gender neutral victims’ service industry. This “new normal” would suggest, according to Spector and Kitsuse’s (2009) model, the need for a new way of organizing, and as feminist activism evolved so too did its sophistication.

Advocacy for state action

In addition to calling on governments to fund feminist services and acknowledge feminist expertise, much of early feminist activism on violence against women included calls for governments to take action on specific, major issues, like rape law reform or the criminal justice response to domestic violence. One example of a feminist group using the claims-making approach to social problem recognition for a smaller issue is found in an information letter disseminated by the Committee for Everywoman’s Garden in the early 1990s. The Toronto-based group’s main goal was to lobby the Ontario provincial government to designate a space at Queen’s Park in Toronto for a public garden to acknowledge the daily violence many women experience, to help keep violence against women visible, and to give people a place to honour women and mourn loss. In their view,

the garden would symbolize nurturing, birth, and renewal, as well as society's potential for growth and change. The committee used this claims-making appeal:

We believe that male violence against women is fundamentally invisible, even after the killing of 14 women in Montreal.

Like other feminist groups, the committee appealed to the authority of research statistics to underscore the severity of violence against women, but argued that,

Few see these figures as indicative of systemic violence against women; as part of a long history of persecution... Our language helps hide men's brutalization and killing of women from us. Killings are called "homicides", hiding that 40% are men killing women. Violence in the family is called "domestic violence", hiding that it is men who are usually violent and women who are most often hurt... We, as a society, do not want to "see" the prevalence of male violence or its roots in sexist attitudes towards women. Men say "I'm not violent". Women say "I know lots of men who are not violent". These statements are beside the point. The violence continues because all of us let it. The reality of male violence against women needs to be more visible. We all have to acknowledge it and work to end it.

Ultimately, the garden was never created, suggesting that outside influences, whether from competing claims for limited resources, ideological disagreement, or social inertia, have made it difficult for feminist claims to succeed (Best, 2013).

This concrete example of the difficulties encountered by one feminist group's proposal for a memorial garden illustrates the challenges that all feminist groups faced as they lobbied governments for change; these setbacks challenged groups to become more sophisticated in their lobbying tactics. No doubt to facilitate this, the NAC released guidelines on how to plan a demonstration and a template for a press release, documents that were submitted by other organizations to the CWMA (including Toronto's Women's

Place). Indeed, the NAC institutionalized an annual lobby around women's issues on Parliament Hill that was widely viewed as a legitimate voice for the English Canadian women's movement (Vickers et al., 1993). The functions of the NAC's AGM lobby were:

1. For NAC delegates to see firsthand how the parties behave and how the top decision-makers respond to the issues of the day;
2. To provide education and new skills for the individual delegates in questioning their elected representatives – skills that could carry over to provincial and local levels;
3. For NAC to exercise and experience its own strength as a lobby organization that wields political clout and to persuade new or wavering member groups of that clout;
4. For NAC to gain media coverage (ideally, a clip on the national news to highlight the key issues and the stature of NAC) (Vickers et al., 1993).

While the NAC was involved in a range of issues related to women's equality that came out of the report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women (RCSW), their earliest activism around violence against women was to push for the removal of the phrase “of previously chaste character” from all sections of the *Criminal Code*. In 1978, the NAC held workshops at their AGM on the topic of “women and violence” that resulted in the organization's first major resolutions on violence, but it was not until their AGM in 1984 that “wife battering emerged as a principal issue” where their mid-year meeting recognized that “society's response has been to ignore, blame the woman, or turn the other way”. In 1985, the NAC questioned the potential for government co-optation of feminist agendas and priorities concerning violence in a workshop that explored,

The influence of government initiatives on existing feminist services: is feminist analysis in danger when governments start recognizing the issue? Professionalization, use of volunteers, safe homes (are they safe?), does government funding necessarily mean losing control?

Also in the 1980s, the NAC struck a Women and Male Violence Committee to deal specifically with issues of violence against women. At their 1986 AGM, this committee submitted a resolution that was passed as follows:

*WHEREAS reports of wife battering are increasing in Canada and
WHEREAS the response of the justice system has been inconsistent and sexist,
BE IT RESOLVED THAT NAC urge the Government of Canada to implement
directives and monitor the response of:
Police forces in laying criminal charges and of crown attorneys in vigorously
prosecuting male batterers in incidents of wife assault,
Judges to compulsory education programs on the issues surround violence
against women.*

Some of the activities of this committee during the previous year included monitoring policy and judicial decisions around wife battering, incest, child sexual abuse, and sexual assault; conducting a national survey of services for battered women; and, lobbying and requesting an apology from then Progressive Conservative MP David Nickerson from the Northwest Territories who was convicted of wife assault in 1985⁵⁵. At their mid-year meeting in 1987, the NAC focused on,

*Violence in all its forms... To widen our understanding of the term; to realize
that the violence we experience in the home and on the streets is the most direct
version of the violence done to women in the culture and in the economy.
Violence against women is not just one issue on our feminist agenda; it is the
central theme invading all of our issues.*

⁵⁵ The NAC wrote letters to then Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and MP David Nickerson demanding a formal apology, the public support of a report produced by the Northwest Territories' Task Force on Wife Abuse, and for Nickerson to enroll in a batterer's intervention program.

At this meeting, workshops were offered on such topics as Aboriginal women and battering, disabled women and violence, sexual assault law, and racism against visible minority and immigrant women. A resolution that same year focused on lobbying...

...The Government of Canada to provide sufficient funding to women's houses and shelters to allow them to make reasonable long-term alternative plans to escape the violence they face in their homes.

By the 1990s, the NAC was expanding their focus on violence against women to other issues related to violence, including violence against lesbian women, refugee women, immigrant women, women of colour, and women with disabilities; and, what governments were doing about these issues. In 1990, they criticized the government's depoliticization of wife battering:

There is a critical need for feminist analysis of violence to be articulated and promoted. The growing acceptance of a de-politicized version of "family violence" is part of the government and media's efforts to ignore feminist analysis and find other, more conservative descriptions that deal only superficially with the problem and not at all with the causes or solutions.

After the Montreal Massacre, the NAC launched a "United Against Male Violence" campaign that included a roundtable in 1992 that brought together representatives from 60 women's organizations to discuss the relationship between various forms of oppression and violence against women. In their 1992 annual report, the NAC attributed the increased political attention to violence against women to the success of their campaign. However, they worried that,

All efforts will be devoted to Band-Aid solutions, not solutions that deal with the causes of male violence. We are further concerned that the front line workers who have waged the battle against male violence for twenty years will

be marginalized in the process and that solutions proposed will not address the needs of doubly oppressed women.

Through this campaign, they lobbied for further legal reform in regards to sexual assault; mandatory judicial education, affirmative action for judicial positions, and an overhaul of the process for selecting judges; funding for national roundtable discussions on violence; and, recommendations from the Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women to align with the values of the feminist women's movement. Also in 1992, the NAC released a "Declaration of Principles" and a "Call to Action" that included a section on the "control of our bodies and the elimination of violence against women". In this declaration, the NAC outlined specifically what governments could do:

Until we have eliminated violence against women, we want governmental funding for racially- and culturally-sensitive services sufficient to meet the needs of victim-survivors of violence, including services such as women's centres, women's shelters, transition houses, rape crisis centres, crisis counselling, legal, financial and emotional support services that protect women and their children and allow them the choice to remain in their home... We need a major public education initiative dedicated to ending violence against women, as well as increased training for doctors and medical personnel, police, lawyers, and judges, the criminal and penal systems, and educators at all levels.

In 1993, they sponsored the report "99 Federal Steps... Towards an END to violence Against Women" produced by Vancouver Rape Relief that outlined 99 recommendations to the federal government about how to effectively respond to violence against women while recognizing the impacts of racism, heterosexism, able-ism, and age-ism on women's experiences of violence. The NAC also called on governments to allocate \$50 million to national women's centres, rape crisis centres, transition homes, and shelters, a request for

funds that they would make again in 1996, after national prevalence rates of violence against women were revealed in Statistics Canada's 1993 Violence Against Women Survey. In 1999, the last year for which there are documents from the NAC in the CWMA, the NAC resolved to,

Call on the Minister of Justice to institute a mechanism that can educate, monitor, and take action for unacceptable, irresponsible behaviour, statements, and actions that members of the judiciary make that exhibit a bias against women.

Though the NAC was committed to engaging with the Canadian state for action on a range of women's issues, including violence against women, they demonstrated an awareness of some of the problems inherent to a criminal justice response:

Gaining redress through the courts is difficult, particularly for the most powerless among us. The criminal justice system is often an arena for additional victimization where obstacles to filing charges, pressures to reveal prior sexual history, inhumane evidentiary rules and sexist attitudes prevail. Strong laws and significant penalties must be instituted to stop all forms of violence. Vigilant monitoring of police activity and judicial decision-making is necessary to point out how sexism can distort the application of justice and undermine the rights of the victim. Solutions to violence against women and children must include legislative change, provision of needed services and education aimed at changing attitudes.

Other national and provincial women's organizations institutionalized government lobbying, most notably during election campaigns. The CACSW released a series of "Shocking Pink Papers" that provided readers with questions they could ask political candidates to learn more about their positions on a variety of issues, including violence against women. For example, in 1988, questions included the following:

What steps will your party take to develop a coordinated campaign to prevent the crime of family violence? What measures will you take to help women and children who are victims of abuse?

In 1993 the CACSW asked,

What policies would you advocate to eliminate violence against women and children? What support systems will you fund to help all women and children who are victims of violence?

While provincial and local level groups also engaged in state lobbying, this was mostly done on an ad hoc basis in response to specific issues. The national bodies that have since dissolved or been dismantled, specifically the NAC and the CACSW, were the main connection between the federal government and the feminist movement in Canada.

Interview participants were asked about their position and thoughts on feminist state engagement. Most participants tended to speak abstractly about the appropriateness and relevancy of feminists engaging with the Canadian state. Most interview participants saw utility in state engagement, but expressed a degree of caution about this approach.

Community activist Toby Brooks stated,

I think it is worthwhile for feminists to engage with the state. I think anytime you're on the outside asking for reform, you have to be very careful when the state appears to be doing some very generous things that you don't become their errand boy, but I think you can use the state's facilities with discretion and keep your own ideas clear. Just don't let the state set your agenda.

Julie Lalonde espoused a similar view on feminists engaging with the state:

I think it's imperative. I've met a lot of resistance from second, third wavers who think that it's a sell-out to engage with the government, that you're watering down your politics, that you're depoliticizing the process, but you've

got to speak truth to power, you just, you've got to... I think that the state is always going to be there and that's not necessarily a bad thing if you can engage them in the right way. The media and the state are people, people in lefty groups view them as enemies, but they can be your ally if you make it worth their while.

Several interview participants noted successes they had in working with local governments and criminal justice agencies and highlighted the necessity of identifying allies “inside” the state. Joan Gullen commented on the effectiveness of developing partnerships between state and non-state actors:

[We] always found the people inside who cannot do the advocacy work on their own, but we can do it, but they can be allies within and give us information and also help our proposals along. So we've done that with the police and we did that with the social services and we did that with the provincial government and even the federal government because you develop contacts and as long as you behave properly, you develop a good relationship and you can get some things done, because then you're considered to be a legitimate, credible person. So I used that over the years very much as a modus operandi.

Joan Gullen had quite positive experiences to share about her partnerships with local police officers in the Ottawa region, particularly in their participation in community groups dedicated to ending violence against women and in the way police officers wrote domestic violence reports. Caroline Andrew also supports the strategy of using partnerships when working with various levels of government. In her interview, she commented on her experience working on women's safety at a municipal level:

[Funding for international] organizations always depends on internationally what's the excitement of the month, or the flavour and trying to build, trying to establish that there is this whole background of work done by the organization, that it actually has learned how to promote partnerships. Partnerships with municipal governments take time to develop. So the idea has been, the idea of

safety audits, is that you take women's experiential knowledge and you try and translate it into a way that municipal governments can understand... It's just connecting to what the city wants to do itself and then [they] realize that this is actually a useful way of understanding physical planning... Other than that, it's sort of a combination of trying to get political champions, administrative people who see the benefit, and groups in the city trying to push on this issue and get the city to understand that if people are afraid of going out at night, it creates a more unsafe environment for everybody.

Barb MacQuarrie espoused this view of allies working within the state:

While bureaucrats work in systems, they're also people. Ultimately, decisions are made by people and again it's a responsibility to engage in dialogue with these people, understanding that their whole accountability is not the same as my accountability, understanding that what they need to get done is not what I need to get done, but at the end of the day, you can look for some common ground. I believe they can learn, I believe that I can learn, and I believe that over time it's possible to make some headway in terms of helping representatives of government to understand problems that the community sees and then to help to shape those responses.

Diana Majury discussed the importance of feminists situating themselves inside and outside the state:

My position is that we need feminists inside government and we have often given those poor women a very rough time. But if they're not there we don't have a receptor to what we're doing. We need feminists willing to engage with government and do law reform and we need the others out there saying no, you sold out, at least publicly criticizing both other groups; I think often it will be the same women, but we need feminists in all places. I don't think we can be just outside the system and critiquing, you need those strong critics in order make any change and it's a slow, painful process making any new change.

This view was also supported by Deborah Sinclair:

I've always felt that people begin their activism work wherever they're at and I've always developed relationships with people on the inside, I call them on the inside, as well as people on the outside. Wherever you find yourself, you do your work. We need people on the inside, I'm thinking policy people; we've had some great allies over the years. I do believe that if you get too close, it's very easy to get co-opted... So that's why it's critical that people stay connected to a more radical base.

These comments highlight what Banaszak (2010) identifies as the blurry boundaries between feminist activism inside and outside the state. Interview participants in this study, and particularly those that had been deeply involved in feminist activism in the 1980s and 1990s did not necessarily define feminist engagement with the state as a discrete strategy. Instead, they recognized that it “just happens” as feminists and feminist allies can be found in all areas of social life, including in governments and bureaucracies. This is perhaps a more specific articulation of the recognition that American feminist activism has been considered “radical”, while Canadian feminism is often seen to be more “liberal” (see MacKinnon, 1992). As Nancy Miller-Chenier described of her work “inside” the state, these activists can inject a gender perspective into their daily work:

In some of the studies that I worked on, making sure that there was some gender perspective in the way the report was written and in the witnesses that we called, because we were helping in identifying witnesses from across the country. Making sure there was representation in front of the Members of Parliament so that they were hearing from groups, so in the early days when NAC was still speaking to a broad range of issues, making sure they were invited, making sure LEAF (Women's Legal Education and Action Fund) was invited, making sure NAWL was invited, making sure that the Women's Health Collective came, making sure that the Parliamentarians were hearing those different views.

In her interview, Julie Lalonde described some examples of creative strategies for lobbying and working with governments. For example, the Miss G Project⁵⁶ in Ontario organized a Valentine's Day campaign that flooded the offices of Members of Provincial Parliament (MPP) and MPs with love letters and postcards. Gender studies curriculum has been developed by the Ontario Ministry of Education, though backlash has prevented its implementation as of writing. However, in Julie Lalonde's view,

I don't feel like Miss G has failed in any way, shape, or form. I think a huge part of their success is that they engaged the state in such creative ways that just, you couldn't ignore us anymore, and I think that's what we need to be doing, is making it so you just can't ignore us. Whether that's dropping a Greenpeace banner on Parliament Hill or playing croquet at Queen's Park, I think there's ways to do it that it's not sort of schmoozing and you're not depoliticizing; it's equally as political, but you're not so, I guess antagonistic.

Creative strategies like those discussed above illustrate the constant reinvention that feminist activists have undergone to remain relevant and keep the lines of communication open between their organizations and the Canadian state.

The need for rape law reform

Calls for and struggles around rape law reform in Canada that began in the late 1970s were one of the first major interactions between feminists and the Canadian state around issues of violence against women. Beginning in 1975, the CACSW began calling on the federal government to amend the *Criminal Code of Canada* with respect to sexual offences. In that year, the CACSW released "Web of Law: A Study of Sexual Offences in

⁵⁶ The Miss G Project is a feminist, anti-oppression organization lobbying for gender equity in education. See: www.themissgproject.org for other campaigns.

the Canadian Criminal Code” and began arguing that the crime of rape should be replaced with four degrees of sexual assault in the *Criminal Code*: sexual assault; sexual assault while armed with a weapon; sexual assault causing bodily harm; and, sexual assault with intent to maim or endanger life. Feminist groups have often used the strategy of turning perceived discriminatory practices, statutes, and guidelines on their head by reframing them in feminist terms. In the late 1970s, this approach was frequently harnessed by women’s groups working to redefine the legal definition of rape. A coalition of Canadian rape crisis centres (to be formally named the National Association of Sexual Assault Centres in the 1980s and later the Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres [CASAC]) drafted a Model Sex Offence Statute in the late 1970s that differentiated between degrees of sexual assault:

- 1) *Criminal sexual assault in the first degree: sexual penetration by use of force or threat (e.g., armed with a deadly weapon, victim is in official custody, or actor is in position of authority), when the actor knew or should have known that the victim was physically helpless, mentally incapacitated or mentally defective, and with the intent to commit sexual assault;*
- 2) *Criminal sexual assault in the second degree: sexual contact by use of force or threat, when the actor knew or should have known that the victim was physically helpless, mentally incapacitated or mentally defective;*
- 3) *Criminal sexual assault in the third degree: sexual contact when the actor knows or has reason to know that the contact is offensive to the victim or when the actor knows that the victims is unaware that the contact is being committed.*

In this model statute the Coalition also indicated that victim resistance was not required, corroboration was not required, prompt complaint was not required, sexual history evidence was inadmissible, and that “the term 'unchaste character' shall not be used in any court in any case in which an offense under this chapter is charged.”

The CACSW also debated the issue of rape law reform throughout the late 1970s. In their 1975 report “Regarding Rape”, the CACSW describes rape as an “elusive crime” dealt with within a criminal justice system where the laws were not designed to punish rape. The CACSW argued,

In revising rape laws, all myth and misconception must be stripped away. New laws must be based on the concept of women as sexual and economic equals with men in our society.

The NAC was similarly deeply involved in lobbying for legislative change of Canada’s rape law. Their 1978 AGM resulted in the organization’s first major resolutions concerning violence against women and were focused on how to amend the *Criminal Code*:

Be it resolved that:

- *Rape be removed from the sexual offences section of the CC;*
- *New assault offences to be created to prohibit all acts of forcible sexual contact (present sexual offences section is not entirely abolished);*
- *A definition be added to the assault section to read that: consent shall not be inferred from lack of resistance;*
- *No differentiation on the basis of gender of the parties to the offence;*
- *Concept that should be central and differentiate specific offences is the nature of the risk created, use of weapon, extent and nature of injuries threatened or inflicted;*
- *Removal of the husband's exemption from a charge of rape of his wife;*
- *Offences should not be differentiated on the basis of whether or not there is vaginal penetration by a penis since this reinforces the view that women's value is determined primarily by their sexuality and reproductivity; [and,]*
- *That the rules of evidence should provide that all evidence as to past sexual history of the complainant should be inadmissible, unless put in issue by the complainant.*

These resolutions were in line with what had been proposed by the Law Reform Commission of Canada in their 1978 report, "Sexual Offences". Bill C-52, tabled in May of 1978, was the first bill to be introduced to the House of Commons that proposed a redefinition of rape to sexual assault. This bill was strongly criticized by the NAC, the CACSW, and the CASAC and ultimately did not pass. The NAC presented their proposed revisions to Bill C-52 to then Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau and Ministers of Cabinet in February of 1979:

The provisions regarding rape are a step in the right direction. However, the problem of the interpretation of consent remains. Submission has been the practical indication of consent. The presence of injuries, or other material evidence of resistance, has been required to prove lack of consent, in spite of the presence or threat of physical harm. The sexual assault offences should be restructured to reflect the same principles as characterize other forms of assault.

Section 142 should be deleted and the Evidence Act amended to remove the provisions regarding the admissibility of evidence as to the past sexual history and character of the complainant. The credibility of women does not depend on their sexual chastity any more that it does for a male.

We support the Law Reform Commission recommendation that the inter-spousal exception be abolished. We do not believe that marriage gives a husband a right to sexual access to his wife at any time under any conditions.

A 1979 meeting of the CACSW resulted in the recommendation that the offences of rape, attempted rape, indecent assault on a female and indecent assault on a male, buggery and bestiality, and acts of gross indecency be removed from the *Criminal Code* and be replaced with the four levels of sexual assault described above that would be included with other assault offences, rather than sexual offences. The one reservation the CACSW

identified in this proposal was the potential for the former crime of rape to be treated as a minor offence; something the CACSW suggested could be safeguarded against by guidelines from the Department of Justice. Here it is clear that the CACSW acknowledged the potential for legal reforms to fail to substantively address the problem of sexual violence, but they still advocated for the shift away from “rape” and to “sexual assault”.

However, other women’s groups disagreed on what direction rape legislation should take. The Waterloo Regional Distress Centre released a position paper in the late 1970s that stated,

We propose that rape be re-defined to conform to the commonly accepted meaning of the term rather than moving rape to assault or coining a new word...We do not want the seriousness of rape to be diminished by use of a euphemism or by banishing the word “rape” from the lawbooks... Although rape is assaultive in nature and primarily an act of aggression it is a crime unlike any other and deserves a category of its own in that rape is the only crime which uses sexuality as a weapon.

The definition of rape proposed by the Waterloo Regional Distress Centre was as follows:

Rape occurs when any person (male or female) uses an inanimate or animate object (including the sexual organs as well as other parts normally understood to be part of a person) to have contact or penetration of any sexual organs (including the tongue, the mouth, the anus, the breasts and vagina of a female as well as the penis and testicles of a male) against their will, whether acquisition is obtained through threat of damage derived from physical, psychological, emotional or economic premises. Any relationship, whether through bloodlines or marriage, should not alter the above law.

Other feminist organizations were invested in the legislative change and ad hoc groups sprung up to assert alternative perspectives on the proposed legislation. The Rape

Legislation Reform Group at the University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario released a position paper in 1981 that took a critical look at Bill C-53. Their position was,

Sexual offences should be placed in the same category as assaults, [we remain] of the view that rape is qualitatively a different and more serious offence.

They criticized the legislation for its vague terminology, the loss of the powerful word “rape”, the rendering of previous statistics unusable, and the fact that terminology changes do little to improve the criminal justice process for victims. In an undated essay on recommendations for rape law reform, the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre cited underreporting, high police unfounding rates, and low conviction rapes as evidence of the need to reframe rape as a crime of assault, rather than a sexual offence. However, the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre did not advocate for the creation of an offence of “sexual assault”, but for “criminal assault” (without inflicting bodily harm) and “aggravated assault” (causing bodily harm) that would apply to male and female victims and involved the assault of “the sexual organs of a person with either his or her sexual organs or any other object”. In addition, the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre proposed removing the corroboration requirement, removing spousal immunity, and making sexual history evidence inadmissible. Similarly, in a pamphlet from the late 1970s, the Hamilton Rape Crisis Centre argued,

Victims do not experience rape as a sexual event. To them, it is a life-threatening assault... If the law is to reflect what really occurs in rape, there needs to be some changes made: 1) Rape should be removed from the Sexual Offenses section of the Criminal Code and replaced with new assault offenses. 2) The same concept of consent used in other assaults should be used in sexual assault. The use of threat or a weapon should eliminate any presumption of consent on the part of the victim. 3) Seeing rape as an assault means that the past sexual history of the victim should be irrelevant. 4) Both men and women

should be protected from sexual assault. 5) The marital relationship between the victim and the offender should not be relevant.

Feminists groups also worried about the effect of including the element of consent on the criminal processing of sexual assault and the experience for victims in the process. In a 1981 position paper, the Rape Legislation Reform Group in London argued that the element of consent “constructs victims as co-accused” and suggested that,

By eliminating consent as an element to the crime of rape and relegating it to its proper role as an affirmative defence, the rape victim would no longer be treated as an accused, the sole accused in a rape case would be the assailant.

Thus, they argued, the focus of legislation should be on the force or coercion used in the commission of the offence, rather than on the lack of consent. In order for this to be clear, the Reform Group suggested that the legislation...

...State categorically that there is no duty of self-defence imposed by the law upon the victim. A victim need not resist an application of force.

This example suggests feminist groups had concerns about the future treatment of sexual assault complainants in the Canadian criminal justice system.

Another component of the rape law reform was the removal of the recent complaint doctrine. The Rape Legislation Reform Group in London argued that,

By far the most damaging and unfair aspect of the present recent complaint doctrine is the mandatory direction of the judge to the jury of the inference to be drawn from the complainant's failure to make a complaint...there should be a section stating that a judge shall not give any direction to the jury regarding the inference to be drawn from the lack of a complaint.

Other groups also proposed changes to jury instructions. In their model sex offence statute, the CASAC stated,

The jury shall not be instructed to examine the testimony of the victim with caution because of the nature of the charge. Nor...that such a charge is easy to make but difficult to defend against... The term “unchaste character” shall not be used in any court in any case in which an offense under this chapter is charged... Nor shall the jury be instructed that it may be inferred that a victim who has previously consented to sexual activity with the defendant would likely consent to sexual activity with the defendant again.

Clearly the activism of feminist groups in Canada around rape law reform was echoing the debates in the literature demonstrating the plurality of feminist positions on rape law reform.

Even after the rape law reform, feminists groups were still challenged with judicial interpretations, decisions, and legislative amendments that further complicated the definition of sexual assault and how that affected the treatment by the criminal justice system of women who experienced violence. Toronto Rape Crisis Centre released a critique of Bill C-127 and called it “a step backwards for women.” Specifically, they highlighted how the spousal immunity provision could be undermined by the admissibility of sexual history evidence and the allowance of the “honest belief” defence⁵⁷. In 1986, the NAC released an Action Bulletin that stated, “The struggle continues”:

⁵⁷ The “honest belief” defence had been previously invoked in *R v. Pappajohn* [1980]. In this case, the complainant, a real estate agent, alleged that she was raped by a client after they had both consumed a large quantity of alcohol at lunch together. The accused claimed the complainant had consented. Pappajohn’s conviction was ultimately upheld by the Supreme Court of Canada, but based on arguments that there was not enough evidence to suggest the accused could have mistaken her consent, rather than questioning whether or not it matters if an accused believed, honestly or not, that consent was given if the complainant holds that she was raped.

The [1983] amendments did not reflect the needs of rape victims nor adequately reflect the reality of rape. Many women's groups across the country decided to support the proposals in Bill C-127, believing that they represented a first step towards having legislation that did adequately protect women and which properly defined rape as a form of violence, [but the bill did not] provide sufficient protection to rape victims. Allowing questioning on a victim's past sexual history leaves many rape victims feeling victimized a second time on the witness stand... [It did not] exclude the defence of "honest belief", which allows a rapist to claim that even though his victim did not consent to the assault, he "honestly believed" that she was consenting... [It did not] define "sexual assault" – leaving the term wide open for judges to define and limit... [And it did not] adequately protect young women and children from sexual assault.

At their 1987 AGM, the NAC highlighted “the inadequacy of the government's evaluation procedures for monitoring the impact of the 1983 changes in the sexual assault legislation” as a major area of concern. They stated,

We firmly believe that the current evaluation tool is inadequate and that, consequently, the exercise of evaluating the legislation is futile and will prove nothing.

Government evaluation of the 1983 amendments was centralized in the Department of Justice in the form of the Sexual Assault Law Monitoring Program introduced in 1985, despite the NAC’s calls for an “independent, comprehensive, victim-based monitoring program” at their 1987 AGM. Since its implementation, feminist researchers have attempted to discern the impact of the 1983 sexual assault legislation, but measuring legislative impact is a difficult task.

In 1990, the NAC passed the following resolution,

Condemn any line of questioning in the cross examination of women in sexual assault/assault cases that calls into question a woman's credibility or that

introduces irrelevant evidence to discredit her status as an innocent victim of crime.

This resolution was tabled in the context of a looming Supreme Court interpretation of the rape shield provisions of the *Criminal Code*⁵⁸. The decision in *R. v. Seaboyer* and *R. v. Gayme* [1991] found that sections 276 and 277 of the *Criminal Code*, which limit the questioning of victims about their sexual history if they take the stand as a witness in a sexual assault trial, violated the accused person's *Charter* rights⁵⁹ and go "beyond what is required or justified" to abolish outdated sexist stereotypes concerning sexual assault victims. In 1991, the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF) disseminated a fundraising letter in response to the Seaboyer and Gayme Decisions:

In August, the Supreme Court dealt women's rights a devastating blow...the judges said the rape shield law infringed on an accused person's right to life, liberty and security of the person and right to a fair trial...that's why I'm asking you to contribute to LEAF's continued efforts to ensure that women and children who have been raped are offered some protection under the law – and that all women have a fair chance at justice... We are trying to make sure that some legislation or policy will be put in place that will encourage women to report sexual assault and not frighten them away from the justice system. We want sexual assault and rape to be looked at as an issue of equality – not simply as a matter that relates to evidence in a court room.

⁵⁸ The amendment in 1976 to restrict questioning of a victim's sexual history at trial was challenged in *R v. Forsythe* [1980]. The issue of restricting past sexual history evidence was incorporated again into the 1983 amendments under section 276 which stated that sexual history evidence could only be introduced by the defense to rebut a claim made by the Crown, to establish the identity of the accused, or to lay the foundation for the defense of an honest but mistaken belief in consent. Section 277, which was also at issue in the Seaboyer and Gayme cases, restricted the use of sexual reputation evidence (see Majury, 1994).

⁵⁹ Specifically section 7 that guarantees, "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of the person and the right not to be deprived thereof except in accordance with the principles of fundamental justice" and section 11 d) which guarantees accused persons the right "to be presumed innocent until proven guilty according to law in a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal."

Evidence from the analysis of the archives and the interviews illustrates the important role discussions over rape law reform had on the overall rape crisis movement. The natural history of this specific social problem demonstrates that even though some sector of claims-makers may agree on the existence of a social problem (i.e., the original rape legislation), there was little consensus on how to resolve the issue. The plurality of voices on this topic is seen throughout debates around legal interpretations of sexual assault law, judicial decisions, and amendments to the *Criminal Code*.

Getting wife battering taken seriously

Nearly parallel to the struggle for rape law reform, feminists of the grassroots battered women's movement were calling on governments to address the tradition of police inaction on cases of wife battering. While the struggle over rape was happening on the federal stage around law reform, activism on wife battering was occurring largely at the provincial level, specifically around the policies and procedures of police and the processing of the criminal justice system. Given the lack of *Criminal Code* provisions explicitly prohibiting wife assault, assaults occurring in the domestic sphere were to be subsumed under existing legislation, largely provisions against assault, uttering threats, mischief, criminal harassment, and, to a much lesser extent, sexual assault⁶⁰. Looking back on this struggle, in 1987 the London Battered Women's Advocacy Clinic stated,

Before 1980...provisions for legal redress through the criminal justice system were acknowledged on all sides to be inadequate. There has been a marked improvement in the response to battered women in the last six years.

⁶⁰ See Forrester (2011) for a breakdown of domestic violence charges in Ottawa.

Prior to 1980, police officers could arrest and charge violent partners with assault, but were very unlikely to do so, often due to traditional beliefs of the privacy of the home and that “a man’s home is his castle” (Dobash & Dobash, 1979). In 1980, the CACSW provided recommendations to government regarding wife battering based on the following principles: that assault is a crime whether it occurs within or outside the home; that victims of assault have a right to protection; that women who want to leave a violent situation have a right to be given every assistance to do so; that the community has an obligation to do everything possible to protect all of its members from violence regardless of age, sex, marital status, or where the violence takes place; and, that any proposed changes in policy and legislation be developed in conjunction with women’s groups. Their recommendations included supporting transition houses and follow-up services, investing in public education to prevent wife battering, improving the legal response for women, and defining wife battering as a separate problem from family violence.

In Ontario, the first public calls for criminal justice intervention came from the London Coordinating Committee on Family Violence in their 1981 report recommending police lay charges in all cases of wife battering (Ad Hoc Federal-Provincial-Territorial Working Group, 2003). These calls were echoed in 1982 during hearings on wife battering with then Premier Bill Davis’ Progressive Conservative government that focused on the gaps in services for battered women and the revictimization women experienced when accessing mainstream services (OAITH, 1998). These hearings resulted in a “First Report on Family Violence: Wife Battering” submitted by the Standing Committee on Social Development. Though outlining 47 recommendations, the Progressive Conservatives did little to change the status quo in social service provision (OAITH, 1998). Documents in the

CWMA from the Women's Lobby Coalition illustrate their specific concern around the Ontario government's apparent lack of concern for Northern women:

Northwestern Ontario women will not accept inadequate services for battered women as an alternative to violence. Battered women everywhere in this province have a right to quality services and a right to access to those services. Northern transportation and communication costs must not remain an obstacle that allows Northern women to be held captive in situations of physical and emotional suffering. The province of Ontario must recognize the uniqueness of the North and provide funding to address these special problems in order to eliminate the present regional disparity (1985).

Their specific recommendations to the Ontario government included adequate consultations with women's groups, legislation to ensure adequate funding for transition houses and support services, and the recognition of the special needs of rural and Northern women. In 1982, Scarborough's Justice for Assaulted Women gathered a 1,500 signature petition submitted to then Ontario Attorney General Roy McMurtry with recommendations largely for reforms in family law, but also with the following intentions:

To address the entire criminal justice process as it relates to women seeking relief from wife assault...it is imperative, therefore, that our criminal justice system be as responsive as possible in protecting the victims of this widespread crime.

Activists in the battered women's movement seemed to be engaged less in internal arguments about the nature of intimate partner violence (as activists in the rape crisis movement were over the nature of rape), and more in advocating for an adequate response to the problem. This could perhaps be an effect of rape/sexual assault's codification in federal law, and intimate partner violence being subject to policies that had the potential to vary by jurisdiction.

Responding to a problem: Feminist research

Feminist service provision and advocacy have been bolstered by an exponentially increasing body of empirical and theoretical feminist research on violence against women that would provide the “grounds” for feminist claims (Best, 2013). Throughout the late 1970s, the 1980s, and early 1990s, the CACSW produced multiple studies to inform both the federal government and the general population about intimate partner violence and sexual violence: *Web of Law: A Study of Sexual Offences in the Canadian Criminal Code* in 1975; *Wife Battering in Canada: The Vicious Cycle* in 1980; *Preventing Wife Battering: Towards a New Understanding* in 1989; and, *The Intoxication Defence in Canada: Why Women Should Care* in 1995. The Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAOW), as well as the Centre for Research and Education on Violence Against Women (CRVAWC) in Ontario and the *Centre de recherche interdisciplinaire sur la violence familiale et la violence faite aux femmes* (CRI-VIFF) in Quebec⁶¹, have been integral to the production of feminist materials documenting violence against women.

Individual feminist service organizations have also launched their own research projects for a variety of purposes, including conducting needs assessments, identifying gaps in service provision, and determining the prevalence of violence against women in their specific communities. For example, the Sault Ste. Marie Women’s Centre conducted a survey of women’s needs in their city in 1979, that found:

⁶¹ CRVAWC and CRI-VIFF are affiliated with other provincial research centres under the Alliance of Canadian Research Centres on Violence established in 1992, also including the FREDA Centre for Research on Violence Against Women and Children in British Columbia, RESOLVE: Research and Education for Solutions to Violence and Abuse in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba, and the Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research in New Brunswick. See the centres’ individual websites for lists of publications produced by affiliated researchers.

- 88% of respondents disagreed that “violence in the home is nobody's business but the family's business”;
- 94% agreed that “violence in the home is the sign of a troubled family and help should be given”; and,
- 77% felt there were not adequate services or information dealing with violence in the home.

Another common form of grassroots feminist research are women’s safety audits, including those conducted by Women in Safe Environments (WISE), which have looked at how the design of cities and public spaces are perceived from women’s points of view. In a 1987 questionnaire, WISE at York University in Toronto, in collaboration with the Faculty of Environmental Studies and METRAC, was concerned with “when and where women feel anxious or nervous about their personal safety... [And] what it is about these places that make women feel this way.” Toronto’s METRAC produced a “Women’s Safety Audit Kit Guidebook” in 1989 based on their experience of conducting public safety audits as “one piece of a complex puzzle” required to improve women’s safety. This toolkit has been used extensively by Women in Cities International and UN Women to help inform their work around women’s safety in public spaces⁶².

Women’s Place in Kenora conducted an environmental scan of services available for victims of domestic and sexual assault in 1985 with funding received through the Secretary of State Women’s Program. This research led to the following conclusions: the need to help victim-serving agencies in collecting and documenting service data; the need for agencies serving victims of domestic and sexual assault to become more visible in the community; and, the need for improved support for victims within the criminal justice

⁶² See <http://www.femmesetvilles.org/index.htm> and <http://www.unwomen.org/>

system, as well as better training for judges and Justices of the Peace. Identifying the needs of women in the community is facilitated when victim-serving agencies collect data about the services that they offer. In 1975, the Montreal Rape Crisis Centre received a disappointing response to their efforts to conduct a study on hospitals' cooperation with the rape crisis centre and their assistance to rape victims. Out of 23 hospitals, only 6 expressed an interest in working with the rape crisis centre:

[We are] shocked and disappointed in both Montreal hospitals' lack of interest in dealing with rape...as well as their lack of simple courtesy in acknowledging the reception of the questionnaire and explaining the rationale behind the consideration of the questionnaire as not relevant to the operation of their institutions.

From the completed surveys that they did receive, the Montreal Rape Crisis Centre found that hospitals provided “unsatisfactory” and degrading medical procedures to rape victims and that staff were unfamiliar with hospital protocols for dealing with rape victims. Other service-related data includes the data that feminist organizations collect about the services they provide.

In 1978, the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre reported on the women served by their organization in the preceding year:

- 490 calls for service, 49% initiated by victims;
- In 50% of calls the caller was looking for psychological interventions, 47% were looking for information, 2% called about police intervention, and 1% called about medical intervention;
- In 57% of the calls the woman knew her attacker, in 34% of calls the attacks occurred in the victims' home;
- 49% of attacks occurred during a “normal” course of events with friends or family; and,

- 17% of victims were attacked in the presence of others.

In 1980-1981, Interim Place in Mississauga received 1,500 crisis calls for service, and served 600 women at their centre. In 1983, Interval House in Toronto served 79 women and 137 children for an average stay of 34 days. In 1981, the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres (OCRCC) released a position paper on rape research calling for its member organizations to standardize their data collection procedures to account for historical inaccuracies in rape statistics:

In part, this is a reaction against misleading information about sexual assault. As well, it is an attempt to counter-balance the biased sexual assault research undertaken by outside agencies and individuals.

Women's groups concerned with evidence-based practice continue to struggle today with the limitations inherent to data around prevalence of violence against women and the use of services by women who have experienced violence.

Women's groups also produced comprehensive documents on different topics of violence against women. For example, Montreal Health Press, Inc. released French and English versions of a sexual assault handbook in 1980 that overviewed the problem of sexual assault, prevention, and the legal, medical, and psychological aspects of rape and popular beliefs about victims and rapists, the social origins of those beliefs, and the structures that allow rape to continue. DAWN has produced a number of documents providing detailed information about violence against disabled women and girls. A 1986 grant from Ontario's MCSS allowed DAWN to conduct the first study in North America on the incidence of violent assault against disabled women which found:

- 67% of disabled women reported experiencing physical abuse as children (vs. 34% of non-disabled women);
- 47% of disabled women reported sexual abuse as children (vs. 34% non-disabled women);
- 33% of disabled women reported physical abuse as adults (vs. 22% of non-disabled);
- 23% of disabled women report sexual assault as an adult (vs. 31% of non-disabled women); and,
- 63% of disabled women reported being medically assaulted (vs. 56% of non-disabled women), which could include assault by doctors or being asked to undress unnecessarily.

A 1989 study, published as “Beating the Odds: Violence and Women with Disabilities” written by Jillian Ridington, analyzed 245 questionnaires finding that only 29% of disabled women who had been abused reported their abuse to the police. This study recommended sex education, assertiveness training, and self-defence courses for women with disabilities, money to ensure that all transition houses and rape crisis centres were accessible, and for support services and criminal justice agencies to collect and make available all statistics that acknowledge if their client has a disability.

A number of the interview participants had been or continue to be involved in feminist research at community, academic, and government levels. Deborah Sinclair, a longtime feminist activist and social worker, co-founded the Domestic Violence Project with Susan Harris in the late 1970s which resulted in the publication of *Domestic Violence Project: A Comprehensive Model for Intervention into the Issue of Domestic Violence*. This research conceptualized wife assault as “the use of violence involving physical force with the intent to intimidate by a husband or live-in lover towards his wife to which the wife does not consent”, including that perpetrated by a common-law partner or in premarital,

separated, or divorced couples. Their study found traditional counselling services to be inadequate in dealing with domestic violence:

Often these services are not aware that violence exists. When they are aware, they are confused and unclear as how to help and either neglect or do not know how to focus on the safety of the victim.

In their publication, Susan Harris and Deborah Sinclair argued,

Services that focus solely on specific family situations without comprehension of the wider social context tend to treat wife beating as deviant behaviour rather than what it is: a historically acceptable phenomenon... The pervasiveness of the social tolerance for men's use of physical force against their wives must be acknowledged in order to develop effective interventions for violent husbands.

The understanding of the prevalence, consequences, and dynamics of violence against women has been improved by the expansion of community-based, academic, and government-commissioned feminist research.

Conclusion

This chapter has reported on the findings of the analysis of archival materials and interviews with feminist activists regarding the social construction of violence against women as a social problem. As more and more women recognized their experiences as violence and more grassroots organizations began documenting the cases of women served, the issue of violence against women became absorbed into the larger feminist project that had been gaining momentum since the 1960s. Large organizations, like the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC), began to turn their attention to public officials and institutions that could “do something” about the problem. However, perhaps because of

claims-makers near complete reliance on lived experiences, rather than research evidence in the early years of the movement, there was little consensus in the movement as to how to conceptualize or respond to the problem. This is reflected in distinctions between the “victim narrative” identified by some interview participants as dominating the early conversation on wife battering, despite many documents suggesting feminist groups were recognizing women’s autonomy and agency. As well, the debates around changing the crime of “rape” to “sexual assault” reflect internal disagreements around how to construct these issues as social problems.

Early feminist claims-making involved broad calls for women, the Canadian state, and the general public to recognize that wife battering and rape were social problems requiring a dedicated social response. Evidence from the archives suggests that feminist groups have long promoted a multi-pronged response to violence against women, including calls for the law to protect women and for legislative change, for funding to sustain services for victims, and for recognition of feminist expertise. However, given a shifting socio-political climate from a welfare state to a neoliberal state, feminists have had to renegotiate and reinvent their claims to speak in language that would be receptive within a new governing rationality and to respond to ongoing injustices and oppressions against women. This suggests that feminist claims-making concerning violence against women has evolved in an ongoing dialectical relationship with the Canadian state. There is not a clear moment that can be identified wherein the Canadian government “officially” responded to violence against women. However, the tone and direction of feminist claims-making certainly changed when judicial decisions employed an androcentric interpretation of sexual assault legislation or when national level feminists groups were no longer

recognized as legitimate claims-makers, for example. The next chapter will continue the exploration of the voices of feminist activists, but by situating various claims-making strategies discussed in this chapter through the lens of social movement theory.

Chapter 6: Feminist activists' voices – Making sense of the social movement

This chapter will situate feminist activists' claims-making strategies within the context of assessing the broader social movement's mobilization on violence against women. Specifically, it will look at interview participants' reflections on their involvement in specific mobilization activities, as well as some of the strategies they interpreted as successful and some of the challenges they faced. Issues like the integration of the three prongs of feminist activism – service provision, advocacy, and research – will be discussed, along with the impact of internal movement debates and the distinctiveness of Aboriginal women's activism.

Feminist activism: Then and now

Interview participants were asked to reflect on the decision making processes that led to their use of claims-making strategies to advance the recognition of violence against women as a social problem. One activist from the healthcare field described feminist activism in this way:

Sometimes it feels like we're going and we're getting nowhere and then other times it feels more hopeful... Things happen in bits and pieces and in some ways I view it as a spiral, so that you keep moving up and the spiral itself, as you're moving along, it is moving up and at a certain point you come back to what you think was the starting point, but you've ascended one rung of the spiral. So you look down and you think we've been here before and you say, "Yes, you have been, but not exactly at the same place, we actually have moved, but it took us all this time and there's a certain familiarity each time we pass that point, but you've moved along". I think if we view things as changing in that way we won't be as discouraged.

Interview participants highlighted the contextual nature of feminist activism on violence against women. In looking back on her personal involvement in the movement, Joan Gullen stated,

I can't think of anything I would do differently because I think it was very important to understand the concepts we were working with [at the time].

Bonnie Diamond described the evolution of the movement as follows:

It's really complex and the more I worked in it the more I realized, none of this is easy and nobody has a roadmap, nobody has a template for you to pour into, you're just learning as you go along. I think that we did the best we could with what we had, and we came a long distance, there's no doubt about it, but it's fragile. Who knows what will remain and what will not, who knows how much will be rolled back?

A former feminist activist noted the shifting nature of feminist activism on violence against women:

Just naming that it [violence against women] existed was radical because it didn't exist, but now those services exist, the laws have changed; OK what's next?

In terms of what strategies were perceived as most effective for mobilizing around violence against women, interview participants had a number of ideas. A young feminist activist suggested,

I think it's a middle ground, having more women involved in politics, reducing their resistance to feminism, reducing the negative stigma associated to it, having more women wanting to, starting from young feminists, the roots, having women identify as feminists, getting involved within the political system, getting involved in all these different institutions and systems where you can start from the ground up, where you can stir things from the inside, not just from going marching on Parliament Hill... It is not the only way to get heard,

other strategies have to be used by other women, or by the same women if they want to also... Every strategy has to be put together and work as a solid group.

In Joan Gullen's view, feminist activists,

Have to have passion, you have to be strategic, you have to seize your opportunities when you see them, you have to do your homework, you have to develop a reputation, you have to develop relationships, and your organization has to be sound and it must come from the people.

Jolene Saulis, an Aboriginal women's activist encouraged,

Talking, educating, listening, seeking answers, being very forthcoming; they have to move.

Nancy Miller-Chenier reflected on the effectiveness of feminist activism strategies:

To me, you have to somehow, people have the ideas and the people working on the issue have to find a way to build coalitions and they have to find a way to find the people that will move their ideas along and they have to be persistent, the old "Rome was not built in a day" thing. And certainly, and I don't know how Linda, the context she puts around her study in '79, but whether it just popped up, or when you look back whether you saw the currents building in the communities and just looking for that person to give it voice.

Most participants reflected on the complexity of mobilizing around violence against women and how different strategies were embarked on – both inside and outside of the state – depending on individual women's life experiences and opportunities.

Many activists described feminist "wins" in the struggle over violence against women as occurring due to a "perfect storm" of factors. Joan Gullen stated,

I'm very aware that you have to keep up the noise and then there comes a confluence of forces at some point where there's an opportunity to advance your cause further... You have to be somewhat brave and stick your head out, that's part of being an activist too, sticking your head out when it's not popular, and then it becomes popular, and that's how you develop your reputation.

Bonnie Diamond expressed a similar sentiment:

A lot of people like myself had been disillusioned in the '60s about the role of women and the leadership capacity for women, but we still had that kind of activism in us; it had felt good to be an activist in the '60s. I think that that and the civil rights movement in the States led us all to believe that all things were possible and so as we started to have that conversation amongst ourselves, the truth of women's lives and the truth of our hidden aspirations started to come forward and I think that allowed us to collectively have hope and through that collective hope we took on things, that once we started to have the small victories, they felt very good and it gave energy to the organization.

This is what Weick (1984) refers to as accepting the “small wins” that recast large social problems (i.e., violence against women) into smaller, more manageable issues for social movement activity.

As illustrated through interview participants’ words above, feminist activism concerning violence against women has never been isolated to one specific activity or one specific group. It is engaged in by different women involved in the movement as individuals or as members of organizations, doing work in the areas of public life where they have connections, experience, and interest. The next sections will look at some of the specific mobilization strategies that were seen to be effective by interview participants, as well as the challenges that these activists faced throughout the years of their mobilization.

Social movement strategies and challenges

Integrating service provision, advocacy, & research

From the archival materials and the involvement of the interview participants in the feminist movement, it is difficult to see a clear distinction between feminists' service provision to women who have experienced violence and their advocacy for a society in which violence against women has been eliminated. As the following passage from an Assaulted Women's Helpline pamphlet produced in the 1980s highlights, many feminists' desire for social change informs their provision of feminist service:

Service based on the following principles: it is a human right to live without the fear of violence; wife assault is a criminal offence and it is everyone's right to receive protection under the law; crime transcends all class, cultural, and ethnic boundaries; some women face "double oppression"; assault is a reflection of women's status in society; it is a crime and a societal problem – not a private matter.

Organizations offering feminist services and advocacy groups have often used feminist historical, theoretical, and empirical research to back up their claims of the seriousness of violence against women and to debunk widespread myths about violence against women. For example, the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre, in their 1976 booklet "Rape: The Crime Against Women", referenced Brownmiller's (1975) *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape* to explain the history of rape. In the early 1980s, Education Wife Assault used Lenore Walker's (1979) concept of "learned helplessness" to argue that "wife assault is a crime and therefore a public issue" not "interaction gone wrong". Pamphlets and brochures produced in the 1980s and 1990s tended to refer to the same statistics in their education materials. Documents on sexual violence tended to refer to the "1 in 4" statistic of women

experiencing rape. While a number of organizations did not cite the source of this statistic, I have inferred that it is a reference to Julie Brickman and John Briere's 1984 study on the incidence of rape in Winnipeg in which they extrapolate their findings to suggest that "approximately one quarter of urban Canadian women will experience some form of sexual violence from men during their lifetime" (p. 204). For intimate partner violence, MacLeod's (1980) "1 in 10" statistic is referred to consistently, including by Metro Men Against Violence and Lanark County Interval House, but again not necessarily directly sourced.

A young feminist activist who has been involved in the movement in a number of ways attempted to make sense of different women's involvement in the movement as follows:

I think that there are different places of expertise, like a lot of women have said to me, "I like doing the frontline work, working with women, I am not confident enough, or I don't have interest enough or I do not want to engage with police, I do not want to go to a meeting with a local politician, I don't want to do that, I don't want to be involved in strategic planning, I don't want to be involved in governance, I don't want to be involved in fundraising, I want to work with women", and then the same can be said for every other one of those things, right?

Of activism and service provision, she went on to say,

The thing is that they need to be together in a sense because you can't do activist work if you don't have the lived experience of women. How do you know about the lived experience of women? Either you know from yourself, you know from your friends, or you know from doing work with women or hearing women's stories.

Bonnie Diamond described her thoughts on the relationship between feminists doing policy work and those providing services to women:

To me, if you're really serious about either achieving equality or doing something about violence against women, it's really complex and you really need everybody working every place... Because really to me, whether you're working at the policy level or you're working at the practical level, the most important aspect is not the laws that you get, but the knowledge that you glean through going through the exercise, where you can be naïve in the beginning and then all of a sudden you come up against all the legal forces and you're constantly having to strategize with other women to try to understand that, to try to overcome.

Having knowledge of women's experiences, from a research or an experiential perspective, means feminists can insert their activism in whatever milieu in which they find themselves. While feminist service provision at women's centres, shelters, and rape crisis centres is usually imbued with a certain amount of activism, feminists in other sectors have also done integral work for the movement. For example, one interview participant spoke about her role as a nurse and how she was able to advocate for women coming into the hospital who had special concerns about privacy during a medical procedure connected to previous experiences of violence.

The combination of service provision and advocacy in a social movement is what Debra C. Minkoff (2002) calls a "hybrid organizational form" and occurs in what Cheryl Hyde (1992) calls "social movement agencies". This form of social movement organizing is not unique to the women's movement, but it has been found typically within social movements directed at socially marginalized groups, including racialized groups, that emerged out of the 1960s "cycle of protest" (Tarrow, 1994). In her study of women's organizations and racial and ethnic minority organizations, Minkoff (2002) found that

organizational hybridization emerges out of uncertain environmental contexts (e.g., a shift from social welfare to neoliberalism) and can play a critical role in anchoring the collective identity of a social movement. I would argue that the feminist movement in Canada is actually made up of three prongs of mobilization: service provision, advocacy, and research. The research component, like the service component, was necessary in a social context in which data was not collected from a feminist perspective or on violence against women at all. Early research provided the grounds with which feminist activists argued their claims, and continued research serves to connect activist-researchers through a common identity and theoretical perspective. Thus, the organizational structure of social movements continues, from the time of Gamson (1975) until now, to be an important element in determining social movement success.

Partnerships, coalitions, and *Regroupements*

Documents in the archives indicate the existence of supportive partnerships between different organizations that were mobilizing around the elimination of violence against women and providing services to victims of violence. For example, in 1974 the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre wrote a letter of support for Toronto's Women's Place based on the referrals they were making to the crisis centre and the communication and coordination of their efforts. A number of interview participants also talked about how they were able to "get things done" because of the positive and productive partnerships they had made with members of the media and within various branches of government. As Joan Gullen suggested,

It's your contacts, your reputation, how you do it, and relationships, that's the only way you get to get some changes.

In the Francophone feminist movement in Quebec, women's groups have derived some clear benefits from their memberships in provincial *Regroupements*. As Dominique Masson described,

They have a place where they meet others, they have a place where they can exchange on various types of strategies, it can be funding strategies, training your own workers, what do we do when...we're seeing an increase in demand from women from immigrant backgrounds, we're not sure we can answer properly to what they need, what do we do? And then those demands get, the groups are together in the general assembly, in workshops for two days, it gets to the Regroupement, the provincial association, which then will try to put the workers of the Regroupement on these issues or develop special funding projects to address these particular issues.

Only one activist who has been primarily involved in the feminist movement in Ontario spoke about provincial associations. Barb MacQuarrie spoke about her involvement in the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres (OCRCC):

My years working with the OCRCC were really important. That was a strong advocacy group, it's still active, the government of Ontario has just released a sexual violence action plan and we were very involved in taking that forward... I think that, not just for me, but for many women working in sexual assault centres, rape crisis centres, that was a source of inspiration and support through hard times, a place to come together, where we do work that's hard to talk about at social gatherings, it can be a bit isolating right, so that really created a community, which I think was really important for many of us... So allowing women to get together in the coalition, I guess we're all coming from the same place, share frustrations, there's always a kind of inside humour that really is about coping and resistance, there's just knowing what each other are dealing with every day, the excitement of planning initiatives, finding ways to have a bigger voice, all of that was, I think, really important for being able to maintain a sense of hopefulness about the work.

Working in partnership also has its challenges, particularly in cases where women's groups were trying to work with organizations that held different core values. As one former activist noted in her interview, it would make pragmatic sense for feminist service providers to collaborate with mental health and addiction services, services for immigrant and Aboriginal women, and services for youth, but in her experience, they often do not.

Certain locations in Ontario and Quebec have been hotbeds for feminist service provision, advocacy, and research on violence against women, providing models for the interrelationship between these forms of activism for other jurisdictions. For example, of the progress made within the province of Quebec, in her interview, Dominique Masson attributes it to the collective strength of the provincial *Regroupements*, allies within the broader community activism sector as well as within government, and the Quebec government's commitment to women's inequality.

Since the early 1980s, London, Ontario has been at the centre of a number of progressive initiatives in feminist and feminist-inspired responses to violence against women. In 1980, the London Coordinating Committee to End Woman Abuse was established to promote an integrated community response to wife assault and led to London, Ontario being the first police jurisdiction in the province to introduce mandatory charging in cases of domestic violence. Other products in the area include the London Battered Women's Advocacy Clinic, Inc., created in 1982 and now called the London Abused Women's Centre, the legal handbooks developed by University of Western Ontario law students and Constance Backhouse in the early 1980s, and the Centre for Research and Education on Violence against Women and Children (CRVAWC) at the University of

Western Ontario established in 1992. Constance Backhouse talked fondly of the feminist community in London, Ontario of which she was a part:

It was a small community inside what is typically described as a very conservative, right-wing, traditional-bound city, very white, very patriarchal. I think we just bonded because we felt like such an insurgent camp, but we were so tiny, we were so brave and so loyal. Even though we didn't always agree on the analysis or the strategy, it was too dangerous to make public disagreements, so people were very supportive... It just clicked.

The words of the interview participants echo the findings of Gretchen Arnold's (2011) evaluation of coalition effectiveness for the battered women's movement in St. Louis, Missouri. In her study, Arnold (2011) found that strong personal relationships among members of a coalition can facilitate the effectiveness of the group. Relationships can be nurtured by encouraging positive interactions at coalition meetings and the development of conflict resolution mechanisms for dealing with internal ideological disagreements. However, if these personal relationships are not fostered within the coalition, it can undermine the extent to which it is effective at reaching its goals.

Internal debates

The feminist movement has never been a cohesive movement and many internal struggles, both conceptual and operational, have influenced mobilization on violence against women. Certain "hot button" issues have divided feminists over the years, including debates over pornography, men's participation in the movement, sex work/prostitution, and the inclusion of transgender people in the movement. Many of the interview participants noted the dysfunctionality of this "in-fighting" on the overall effectiveness of the feminist movement:

There's so much in-fighting on these issues, but it's like, some things are important to some people, and you know, it's different, and how do we work together and not implode, I don't know... We still [as feminists] are coming from a root of women's respect and equality (Young feminist activist).

From where I sit, it doesn't look like we've gotten very far getting rid of violence against women and, in fact, I feel that we are going backwards (Diana Majury).

Michele Landsberg (2011), a feminist journalist best known for her feature writing in *Chatelaine* and as author of a regular feminist column in the *Toronto Star* for over two decades, classifies these debates as “binary wars” that trap feminists into an “either/or” position on hot button topics. She reflected on these conceptual debates in her interview for this study:

There have been a number of them and most of them are pushing the boundaries of our understanding. When the race issue first came up, I guess in the early '80s, first began to be a debating point in the feminist movement, most of us older white feminist denied that there was any problem at the beginning – “we're not prejudiced” – we completely failed to make the systemic analysis that we had made on our own behalf. So it took a while before lots of us could open our eyes and understand the systemic bias that had kept black women out of our movement to a shocking degree. I think there were lots of black women involved, especially in the States, but it was never as embracing as it should have been, however that has changed, and we all benefitted from that change. Around pornography it was a huge debate and very, very vociferous and I think pushed us all to think through our positions more rigorously. I don't think it benefitted us as much as the race debate did, it was, you know, any issue around sex goes so deep and touches us so deeply personally, that when you're involved in that kind of debate and receive what feels like a personal wound around these sexual issues, you tend to close your door and retreat, and not be engaged in the issue anymore. I've noticed a resurgence of this in the whole debate around sex workers... We're all being pushed to try to think more openly about it and hear what's being said, and maybe in the long run this will benefit us, but in the short run I think it's unnecessarily divisive, or maybe

necessarily divisive, that's a better way of saying it, this debate has to happen and...you know, it's unique to women, men don't have to have this discussion.

In Julie Lalonde's view,

My hope for the next little bit of feminism, is that we reconcile this trans inclusion and prostitution issue, because it's the worst divide-and-conquer politics and we are in such a scary political environment and to be wasting energy attacking each other just makes me mad.

As Michele Landsberg stated,

I really think people should strive to be more flexible and accepting and tolerant; we need all the kinds of feminists we can get.

Feminist activists, as claims-makers, are engaged in an ongoing process of socially constructed meaning-making, but these meanings are constantly being debated, contested and renegotiated in light of new information and shifting environments. Feminist activists have competing positions and priorities; agreement becomes more difficult as issues under broader rubrics get parsed into narrower and more specific components.

In addition to these conceptual issues, feminists have disagreed on a number of operational issues within their organizations, including whether or not and how to transition from collectives to more hierarchized organizations (often for funding purposes or internal conflicts that undermine consensus-building), the relationship between individual organizations and regional or provincial coalitions, and the appropriateness of partnering with agencies that may not hold feminist values (e.g., criminal justice agencies). Many of the interview participants recalled experiences in their activist history when the operation of feminist organizations was undergoing these shifts:

I think collectives work, but they can only work when it truly is a level playing field and people really are equal in skill level and in shared bases of unity and philosophy...so that they're not acting out their stuff and doing power plays and things like that...and that they can self-select, they can select who they choose to work with; then I think you've got a good chance of making it work (Deborah Sinclair).

One of the principles of a collective is that everybody has to be informed about everything but they [shelter workers] were, not only were they on shift work, but they were pressed with crises and having to deal with crises and that kind of emotional work, very demanding. So it just didn't work; it only works, to my mind, in a small, close-knit organization... So the challenge was how to move to a non-collective model without destroying our feminist approach... [but] there has to be structure, there has to be bylaws... How do you build it in so that it's durable, so that it's sustainable, and a lot of it has to do with funding (Joan Gullen).

We want to include people and we want to partner with people and then we come up against the fact that these people's values are different, or they come from institutions whose values are ostensibly different, and then we don't know what to do and then people kind of scramble and they want to change the rules and it becomes complicated (Feminist activist in the healthcare field).

I think that as long as groups are fragmented... then you're always going to have these little fragmented groups and to me there's more strength in numbers. I know the difficulties of people saying, "Well I can't compromise on that and I can't compromise on this and I have my principles". It's tough because what are you asking people to give up in order to move forward, and again maybe one of the things is that maybe we don't all have the same ideas in our head about what we want our feminism to look like and what we think our feminism should achieve (Nancy Miller-Chenier).

The characterization of the Canadian feminist movement as a fragmented collective illustrates the broad identity with which most activists identify, but also the conflicting conceptualizations and ways of mobilizing in which these activists engage. In Susan D.

Phillips (1991) analysis of the consequences of meaning and structure in national level women's organizations in Canada during the so-called "second wave", she found that organizations were interconnected through a "liberalized" interpretation of feminism, but that their ties to one another were of relatively low density. Reasons for this include the importance of informal, personal ties to feminist activism, the lack of funding available to maintain connections between different groups, and the relative strength of ties between Aboriginal women's organizations and other Aboriginal groups and between racialized women and ethnocultural groups (Phillips, 1991). Indeed, incorporating difference has historically been a challenge for the more mainstream feminist movement in Canada.

Incorporating difference

The mainstream feminist movement, not only in Canada but across most Western countries, has been criticized for conceptualizing and responding to the problem of violence against women as if all women experienced violence similarly. This notion is based on the early recognition of the "battered woman" and women's experiences with sexual violence rooted in feminist consciousness-raising among mostly white, middle-class, married women. However, as ongoing research and service providers' experiences of working with victims have shown, women have vastly different experiences of violence, attach different meanings to their experiences of violence, and have different service and justice needs depending on an array of social factors, including their age, race or ethnicity, cultural heritage, socio-economic status or line of work, immigration or refugee status, history of colonization, sexual orientation or gender identity, and level of physical or

mental ability. Several of the interview participants noted that strides had been made in the “cultural diversity” of the feminist movement. As Bonnie Diamond lamented,

I really wish that we would have been able, right from the beginning, to have had some concept of multiple oppressions and we didn't; it took a long time. We were working with what we knew, what we had, there weren't very many highly educated women then, when I'm talking about highly educated, I mean I was very well educated, I had a BA; there were some women who had more education, but not a lot. I mean we were starting out not understanding some of the large concepts like freedom of expression and what libertarianism was and all these kinds of things, so we made a lot of mistakes in the beginning... So the limitations of the movement were of their time, but that doesn't mean that it wouldn't have gone better and we wouldn't be at a better place now if it would have been different, and I really wish that we would have had that look at multiple oppressions and a more inclusive organizing right from the beginning.

Accusations of racism between feminists were not uncommon in the 1980s and 1990s when the feminist movement was beginning to more openly recognize the past exclusion of women of colour. Toby Brooks recalled a story “as she heard it” that occurred during her tenure at Interval House in Ottawa in the 1990s. In this case, a woman “determined to make her mark against racism” charged a co-worker with assault in what Toby termed a “personal problem”:

I had been involved in civil rights work in the United States, pretty passionately devoted to anti-racism; I had also had the benefit by my work in the civil rights movement of seeing that there would be people in a minority situation who had a personal grievance, who might turn it into a political grievance, and I think I was able to look at that in a different way. My colleagues, who had grown up in Canada and hadn't had that advantage of seeing it that way, were really quite struck with the accusations of racism and I would say, in some cases, disabled by them.

This situation sparked restructuring at Interval House, including a move away from its original form as a collective into a more hierarchized organization with bylaws and policies designed to facilitate decision-making in difficult situations. While Toby went on to say that the shelter workers tried to not let these kinds of internal struggles affect their work, she admits that it likely did anyway. These types of incidents, while distinctive when considered in isolation, are contextualized by Diana Majury in her interview when she speaks about her work with the Shirley Samaroo House for Abused Immigrant Women in Toronto in the 1980s. The “cumulative experience” of racism explains why an individual woman might “overreact” to ostensibly minor mistreatment, or reframe a personal grievance into a political one. The Shirley Samaroo House is an example of a specialized service that did not last (it closed in 1994 amongst so-called “racial squabbles⁶³” [Laframboise, 1998]), but its demise at that time is particularly interesting given many feminists’ current calls for more specialized services for immigrant and visible minority women.

Most feminists now have a conceptual appreciation for the multiple oppressions with which women are faced. However, in services for immigrant and Aboriginal women who have experienced violence, the “clash of values around roles in families and in couples” (feminist activist in the healthcare field) sometimes means that services designed for the “battered woman” do not resonate with women who do not feel their experiences fit with that label. For example, one interview participant with experience providing feminist therapy talked about her plan to conduct doctoral research on a model for feminist

⁶³ Laframboise’s (1998) article does not elaborate on what these so-called “racial squabbles” were about, except to say that “intolerance” and “extremism” were elements that “tore the shelter apart”.

intervention that would account for the experiences of immigrant women. In her interview, Dominique Masson talked about how the Quebec *Regroupements* are producing tools that will help local CALACS offer integrative services to women who experience multiple discriminations, including being a victim of sexual violence (See Regroupement Quebecois des CALACS, 2006).

Several of the interview participants indicated noticing, through their experiences working within Aboriginal communities, Arab communities, and Jewish communities specifically, that many women within these communities tend to prioritize family unity over their own safety. While specialized services that problematize violence against women do exist within many of these communities, for example Jewish services across North America that reframe the phrase “Shalom bayit” to suggest that there is no peace in the home when abuse is present, mainstream services often cannot account for the variety of experiences and needs of different women. For example, as one young feminist noted in her interview, Western interpretations, and even some feminist interpretations, of some women’s behaviour (e.g., the wearing of a hijab for some Muslim women) fail to account for how these women understand their choices or how these choices are contextually situated. As she explained,

They obviously have a different view of feminism; feminism is not non-existent within Arab countries... It's different types of issues that they live there, they have a different type of feminism, but I feel that Westernized feminists often will [think that] the veil is such an oppression for women there, but for them...they wear the veil when they want to wear it, if they want to wear it. Of course, there are situations where they feel oppressed because of it and because they are forced to do so, but for them poverty, war, those are the issues that are more important, right? And we fail to see that here, and we fail to offer them a feminist intervention adapted to their needs. A lot of those women are here because they lived in war, because they're fugitives, they're refugees, and we

fail to give them the type of intervention that meets their needs. So by knowing their perspective of feminism, their perspective of violence, how they live things, I feel it's easier to adapt.

Thus, there seems to be some commitment to the potential efficacy of “add-on” specialized services for different groups of women, in light of the recognition that existing mainstream services are not generalizable to the heterogeneity of women’s experiences with violence and their needs for support. While feminists historically criticized the “add women and stir” approach to integrating women into various “male-stream” aspects of social life, mainstream feminist interventions could be seen as using the “add Aboriginal women”, or “add immigrant women”, or “add racialized women” and stir approach to perhaps limited effectiveness. This is not to criticize feminists who undoubtedly have good intentions with their work, but simply to recognize that independent services for any marginalized group are difficult to sustain without stable funding, which often means government support, and a committed group of people working toward a common goal.

In her interview, one young feminist commented on the particular challenges facing women in many of the countries undergoing uprisings since the “Arab Spring” in 2010 and the implications for some women of living in a country in crisis, as well as being a victim of violence and having no services to access. In many African countries, where conflicts have been embedded in some communities for years or decades, there is at least a casual awareness in the Western world of the violence to which women are subjected. However, in many of Northern African and West Asian countries that are currently in an immediate crisis mode, there is little media or political attention given to women’s safety, even though women are undoubtedly experiencing violence as a result of social insecurity. As several of

the women remarked in their interviews, these types of connections need to be made – and acknowledged by governments with the power to do something – in order to improve women’s lives across the globe⁶⁴.

Men’s involvement

Another ongoing struggle in the Canadian feminist movement is the appropriate place for male allies in the struggle to end violence against women. Some of the more radical feminist groups have adamantly opposed men’s involvement in feminist activism as a whole and on violence against women issues specifically. Toronto’s WAVAW issued a statement in relation to their absence from the March 8th Coalition in the 1980s:

WAVAW find it painfully ironic that we have a feeling of déjà vu on International Women's Day. But it is no wonder that we feel like we've been here before. The all too familiar contingents, slogans and banners go hand in hand with the male presence both here on the demonstration and, all too often, in the consciousness of women... Women want a new direction. The strength of the autonomous women's movement has made this possible. In choosing to organize initially through closed committee meetings, for a leftist-styled demonstration that includes men, the organizing committee has sacrificed the feminist process that could have created an action that belongs to women.

⁶⁴ For example, Lara Logan, a South African journalist working as a CBS war correspondent, was sexually assaulted in Egypt during the uprising against Hosni Mubarak’s dictatorship in early 2011. Her assault attracted significant Western media attention and fuelled a “blame the victim” discourse that suggested an attractive, white reporter “knew what she was getting into” by working in conflict zones (see Wordsworth, 2011). Despite this problematic response, the fact that her victimization reached such a wide audience and did not spark a broader conversation about the violence perpetrated against all women in times of political crisis is troubling. In fact, even when her victimization was situated within a broader context of violence against women, that violence was effectively normalized and dismissed, as evidenced in a Tweet by journalist Nir Rosen: “Look, she was probably groped like thousands of other women” (February 15, 2011). Such “everyday violence” is often minimized when it is perpetrated against any woman, but it is minimized in most cases involving racialized women and women already living in vulnerable situations. If governments are serious about providing humanitarian aid, for example, this aid needs to recognize the reality of women’s lives as they experience it.

A similar sentiment was expressed by the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Ottawa in reference to men's participation in a "Take Back the Night" march in the 1980s:

We march to assert our right to walk the streets without a male escort. We demand to be able to move freely without being suffocated by our need for precautions against sexual assault... [Which is] not a statement ignoring the part men play in the maintenance of violence against women.

Other groups have produced materials directed at a male audience, including Education Wife Assault with their brochure, "You may be driving her away. Stop before it's too late." In this pamphlet, the resource centre called on men to identify their own abusive behaviour:

If you hurt your wife or girlfriend when you are angry, you should know that you are not the only one; you are accountable for your actions; you are not sick; ignoring an outburst is dangerous; feeling sorry and apologizing is not enough; you are driving your wife and children away; you are committing a crime; you do not have to behave this way; blaming your violence on alcohol or drugs is no solution; do not resist intervention; counseling can help; [and,] you can change the way you act.

This brochure also asked readers to pass along the information to a friend, neighbour, or relative they suspect might be abusive. This community engagement approach has been revisited in recent years with the launch of the Neighbours, Friends, and Families campaign in Ontario⁶⁵. A few pro-feminist men's organizations have also mobilized over the years in solidarity with feminists working to end violence against women. Men Walking Against Male Violence launched their group because...

⁶⁵ Neighbours, Friends, and Families is a provincial public awareness campaign launched by the Ontario Women's Directorate and funded by the Ontario government that encourages community members to intervene in situations where they suspect intimate partner violence is occurring. See <http://www.neighboursfriendsandfamilies.ca>.

...The need for men to speak out against violence against women and children becomes daily more acute, what with the repeal of the rape shield law and the most recent series of high-profile abductions and killings of women (1991).

The group was responsible for organizing a number of male-led marches against violence against women in the 1990s because, in their view,

The time has long since passed when men can allow such crimes to continue without our protest and resistance. This project, we sincerely believe, is an important and visible means by which such complicity can be ended.

Also, Metro Men Against Violence in Toronto created their group in response to the Montreal Massacre “because we believe that men's violence will not end until men become part of the solution.”

The interview participants also had many things to say about the role of men in the feminist anti-violence movement. Julie Lalonde stated,

I think we've reached the point where we will never move forward until we reconcile our relationship with men, like we're just not going to, we are not engaging half the population.

Some participants talked about promising initiatives within their own communities in terms of engaging men, including the “Ally Project”, “Don’t be that guy”, “Man Talk”, and “Men for Equality and Non-Violence” in Ottawa. As one young feminist activist noted,

What I've noticed lately is that the younger feminists are more open to having men as allies, having men work with women in order to promote equality, in order to reduce the patriarchal society, having men as supportive partners, obviously not taking over the movement, but having them there as allies. I mean they are half the population; we are trying to change their mind, so by involving them, I feel, it's a good way to do it. Obviously there's cons, like, for example, them taking control, and stuff like that, but I do feel that older

feminists are very, very against the participation of men; it's women by women and they are more outspoken about it.

In talking about her father, Julie Lalonde spoke about the value she sees in engaging men in the work to end violence against women:

He's a good dude that we don't include in our conversations, but when he speaks to another man they listen, and as much as that grinds my gears, because I've been saying it forever and you just came up with it five minutes ago, who cares? If they're going to listen to you, let's make sure you're telling them the right things, and I think that is the thing that I think a lot of second wave feminists are not ready to acknowledge, which is that yes they have more power than we do, and yes when they speak people listen, and yeah that really sucks, but let's equip them to at least say the right things, and let's not waste that opportunity because we're stubborn.

Still, the involvement of men is a new approach in the feminist movement against violence.

Diana Majury highlighted the position of some second wavers:

I am, again, a classic violence against women, second waver, I would say, in saying men have a role of supporters; they don't have a role as leaders. And some men have been fabulous supporters and have played really important roles, but the men who want to come in and be leaders in this area I think are doing it on the backs of women and are taking away from women. I am a believer that whatever your life experience is of a man, you can't really understand these issues in the same way that, not all women do, but women can.

Thus, an ongoing challenge within feminist activism is the appropriateness of including men as allies in a context where men have historically dominated public and political life. It was seen by the young feminists interviewed for this study as an important step forward to recognize men's role in responding to violence against women, but the resistance of

other activists can, in some cases, illustrate a substantive topic for intergenerational struggles.

Intergenerational struggles; or, “second wave” vs. “third wave”

Intergenerational struggles have been fuelled in part by Susan Faludi’s incendiary article, “American Electra: Feminism’s Ritual Matricide” in the October 2010 issue of *Harper’s Magazine*. In this article, Faludi (2010) argues that feminism is plagued not only by the battle of the sexes, but by the “battle of the ages”, suffering from a stereotypical “mother/daughter” divide between the generations. Specifically, she asks, “Why does so much of ‘new’ feminist activism and scholarship spurn the work and ideas of the generation that came before?” While the archival documents, having been produced primarily during the “second wave” of feminist activism in Canada, do not speak to the issue of intergenerational politics within the movement, it is a tension that is palpably felt – though perhaps overstated by Faludi – and variably interpreted based on my own observations throughout the research process and the responses from interview participants when asked about this issue.

Both as a function of the research as well as my personal interest in feminist politics and activism, I attended a number of feminist community events and conferences throughout the research process to heighten my contextual knowledge of key events in the feminist movement. The first event where intergenerational conflict was noted was at a symposium organized by the Faculty of Law at the University of Ottawa in May 2010 called “Feminist Legal Activism at 50: Critical Reflections”. This symposium was intended to reflect on the legal achievements of the “second wavers”, largely attributed to the work

of a group of now older, white, well-educated women, and involved a number of comments from the participants about younger feminists' apparent general disregard for the work of their fore-mothers. This sentiment was echoed by some of the older women who were interviewed for this study:

We have to keep educating our young people about the work that's left to be done because I think every so often they take for granted what huge amount of work has been done to arrive at where we're at (Feminist activist in the healthcare field).

Michele Landsberg, while recognizing the “mother/daughter” divide between the second wave and today's younger feminists, offered this analysis:

One thing I've always expected was that young women will force their own way, I mean who wants to be identical to their mothers? Nobody does, everybody wants to define herself and embark on a new path on life. So it was entirely to be predicted that our wave of feminism, as we brought up daughters, that our daughters would have a different view of things; that didn't astonish me at all. In fact, I would have been really creeped out if our daughters agreed with everything we said because that is not the norm in human life, but on the other hand, what I think happened was that young women who were very pro-feminist in lots of ways, but would make provocative statements about rejecting second wave feminism and second wave feminists over-reacted, just like mothers of teenagers do. “How dare you speak to me that way?” Because I was quite a rebellious teenager and I remember it, I remember how I didn't mean half the stuff I said, and I remembered always with my own kids not to take it personally when they acted out like that in adolescence; it wasn't really about me, it was about their needing to find their own way. So I feel the same way about younger feminists, that if they say snarky things about feminism, that's OK, as long as they're not anti-feminist, which they're not really; it's a smokescreen.

Indeed, from the audience at this event and others, younger feminists were not significantly represented. I also attended a film screening of “Constitute!” in February 2011 that was

also organized by the Faculty of Law at the University of Ottawa. “Constitute!” is a documentary of the 1981 ad hoc conference on Parliament Hill that drew over 1,300 women to discuss the inclusion of sex discrimination in the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. From a February 15, 2011 entry in my field notes journal regarding this event:

The screening was in honour of the 30th anniversary of the conference and brought together a lot of the original “Ad Hockers” and, as one of the speakers remarked, many women had probably not seen each other in those 30 years. The room was a sea of white-haired, older women, and I felt slightly out of place, as I sometimes do, in these crowds of second wavers. I was not even born yet when the conference took place. Unlike the “Feminist Legal Activism at 50” symposium, I don’t think any mention was made of younger feminists (nor of their apparent general disregard for the work of second wavers), but being here this evening felt almost like intruding on a private reunion. Where do the younger feminists congregate?

The absence of younger feminists at second wavers’ events might perpetuate the idea that younger feminists do not acknowledge the ground-breaking work that has been done in earlier upswells of mobilization in the feminist movement. This may be because younger feminists are locating their activism in different spaces that may be less familiar to second wavers. As one feminist activist noted in her interview, “feminism looks different” today than it did in the 1970s. A young feminist activist elaborated on her identification with feminism:

I don't say I'm third wave feminist, I just say I'm a feminist. I think that by being born in the year I was born in and being exposed to the things I've been exposed to, I probably am a third wave feminist, but I probably would have been a second wave feminist had I been born earlier, it's just what I've been exposed to, but I do see some differences with the different waves, I mean there were a lot of women who were left out of discussions from previous times, but there was a lot of good work that was done. I think it's acknowledging that nothing in the feminist movement is wrong, I think it's just, at that point in time,

they were interested in doing X, Y, and Z, and the people that had the resources to be able to do that were doing it, and now let's look at what we need to do now, so now we need to focus on A,B,C, and how do we get that done and there are different ways of doing it and that's OK, it's a different time, it's a different place.

While this same younger feminist adamantly stated, “I’m not going to apologize for my strategies and if second wave feminism doesn't like it, then tough”, another younger feminist activist spoke about her positive experiences collaborating with older feminists:

I've been quite lucky... It's a very clear definition of 1970s, '80s feminists and younger feminists nowadays, and you do see the difference in thought, but older feminists are still very open-minded and they welcome our ideas and welcome our ways, but you can see the difference in opinion when it comes to certain things.

Intergenerational struggles can emerge out of other topical debates that have affected the feminist movement – not only the appropriate role of men in the movement, but also the sex workers’ rights/prostitution abolitionism debate and the inclusion of transgender people – but not necessarily so. As Julie Lalonde, a younger feminist activist, noted,

I think there is a second, third wave divide, but I think it's a political one and not necessarily an age one. There's a lot of really amazing second wave-aged women who are down with the cause, who are, “bring on trans people, let's do it, let's be inclusive of everyone, let's engage men in talking about these discussions, let's respect anyone's position on sex work”... What I respect about hard core second wavers is that they refuse to waver and I think in a lot of ways that's how you survive... I think we throw second wavers under the bus way too easily, we assume so many things about them, we assume that everything that's wrong about the feminist movement is some kind of hangover from the second wave, which I don't agree with.

There is considerable debate as to whether contemporary feminist activism on violence against women constitutes a component of a broader social movement. While first wave and second wave feminism have become firmly entrenched in feminism's "herstory", contextualizing feminist activism today vis-à-vis what has come before becomes more difficult. Several of the older women interviewed for this study, who had been active in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, self-identified as "second wave feminists". Diana Majury saw second wave feminism as coming out of women's consciousness-raising:

That's where the second wave came from, is having those conversations, so I'm an old school. The second wave, and I think consciousness raising, I think women talking and getting together, but now I think there is a disincentive for women to get together. Because things were so obviously bad out there in the labour force, it was easier for us to say, "Maybe we need to talk"... So now I think when people think things are pretty equal, why would you just want to talk to women? Why do we have women's centres now? We don't need them anymore; maybe in the 60's or the 70's we needed them, but things are OK now, we don't need them.

As Diana Majury alluded to in this passage, while second wave feminism dealt with a broad range of substantive issues, the movement was essentially based in the normative project to end sex discrimination against women entrenched in the law. In discussing how second wave feminism was effective at garnering this political attention, Constance Backhouse described the optimism and energy of groups of women working together:

We wanted to change the world in our lifetime and we were at the front end of a wave that felt that powerful. We didn't have the power we do now, we didn't have the resources, we didn't have the stature, we didn't have the knowledge, but we had the energy to say, "Goddammit, the world is going to shift, we're going to insist upon it, and it will happen." It's not a question of maybe it will happen in the next three centuries, it will happen. There was a real sense of optimism and that was so much fun, because it really feeds on itself... It was a

great era, it still is, we wouldn't want to be in anything other, and I am convinced that we can just jumpstart this again.

The energy that Constance Backhouse described was echoed by other second wave feminists who saw their activism as coalescing within a “perfect storm” of external factors including responsive government officials and a receptive public. As Bonnie Diamond stated,

Well, it was a perfect storm... As we started to have that conversation, talked amongst ourselves, the truth of women's lives, and the truth of our hidden aspirations, started to come forward. I think that allowed us to collectively have hope and through that collective hope we took on things, that once we started to have the small victories, they felt very good and it gave energy to the organization.

On the flipside of the hope she described as characteristic of second wave activism, Bonnie Diamond noted that setbacks during the last two decades have chipped away at feminist optimism:

I've seen the opposite happen in the last 10, 15 years; that as the defeats began, people start to fall away and lose hope, lose energy.” This is the context in which so-called “third wave” feminist activism has arisen.

Third wave’s differentiation from the first and second waves of feminism has been its critique of previous waves’ essentialism and its embracing of multiple perspectives and diverse women’s experiences. The label of “third wave” is a large umbrella, encompassing tenets of queer theory, anti-racism and post-colonial theory, postmodernism, transnationalism, transgender politics, and sex positivity. Indeed, the epistemological flexibility inherent to third wave feminism has sparked criticism that the movement now

lacks a cohesive goal from which to base its activism. Only one interview participant in this study self-identified with third wave feminism, though the two other younger feminists reflected on the idea. Julie Lalonde discussed her “third wave” feminism in the context of her online activities:

I was sort of the first generation of people to have access to the web when I was young so I really learnt about the world through old school, 1990s websites and little e-zines... I was able to meet like-minded people online, to read really interesting websites, to feel like my views were validated by someone other than myself... A huge part of what I do is online, all of Hollaback! is online, I've never met these people in my life, but we Skype and we have a Facebook group... So for that reason, I would say a huge part of my politics is third wave because I believe in activism online; I think it's not frivolous.

The theoretical and strategic dispersion of third wave feminist activism (i.e., “anything goes”) makes sense given the loss of an umbrella organization meant to unify the feminist movement, but it is precisely because of the dire situation Bonnie Diamond described that feminist activists should maintain their solidarity, whether it is among third wavers or between second and third wavers.

However, the association of feminist activism to “waves” of mobilization, according to one young feminist interviewed, serves to divide movement actors and undermine the solidarity of feminist activists:

“Wave” is a very political term that has been given to the feminist movement by media. Mostly to explain that feminism comes in waves, it was needed for that specific time, then it wasn't needed, then it came in another wave, and it wasn't needed, and then it came in another wave. And then you have to pick: which wave do you want to be associated with? If you're a radical feminist, for example, you'd be associated with the second wave. If you're a post-modern feminist, you'd be associated with the third wave. If you're more of a liberal feminist, first wave. [It's] even more of a categorization than just already

having to pick which current of feminism you want to be in and it becomes very political. In between those waves, what's happening? Are there no women's issues there? Are there no problems in society with women's equality, with violence against women?

The socially constructed division between older feminists and younger feminists, between second wave and third wave, serves to further divide a movement that in essence is unified at its most fundamental goal: to improve women's lives. Internal feminist debates can certainly be productive in allowing activists to form nuanced conceptualizations of their issues; however, "in-fighting" is often seen as serving no purpose but to dilute feminist messages – so why does it continue to occur? This is not to suggest that there are not different priorities and strategies for action within the feminist movement, but that some base solidarity needs to be garnered in order to build a sense of collective hope. As post-colonial and transnational feminist scholars have argued, a common orientation needs to start from the lived experiences of the most marginalized women who exist at the intersection of multiple oppressions (see Grewal & Kaplan, 1994; Razack, 1998; Sokoloff & Pratt, 2005).

Recognizing Aboriginal women's activism

One of the tensions within the mainstream Canadian feminist movement is the extent to which the experiences of marginalized women have been incorporated into feminist analyses and responses to violence against women. In her interview, Anita Harper-Olsen suggested that most Aboriginal women would not identify with the label of "feminist" and that activism around violence against Aboriginal women operated within a "parallel world":

Most Aboriginal women, I don't believe, see themselves as feminists, but when Aboriginal women who work in violence against women, I think what I remember as being really contentious was the fact that the mainstream movements were always targeted at white, middle-class women. So there was sort of this core that all the policies and advocacy work was being directed towards. We're not white, middle-class; we're extremely marginalized, we're extremely poor, and our realities are just not that of the core group or even of the mainstream group.

Jolene Saulis, an Aboriginal woman who has been involved in a range of work on missing and murdered Aboriginal women in Canada, rejected the idea that Aboriginal women's activism is part of, or constitutes, a social movement:

I think with Aboriginal women, it's not a movement. It can't be a movement because it's always been there. It's about finding it again, it's about rediscovering, because many, before contact with Europeans, Aboriginal women were the core and the drive for most Aboriginal communities; it was based on a maternal way of doing things and still to this day, in some Aboriginal cultures, the women of the community make the decisions... I don't see it as a movement, it's not a movement, it's always been there because a lot of these women [have] been through a lot of trauma, and if you put the word movement out there again, it's not going to fly. How can it be a movement when you've lost everything by being sexually abused in residential school or being victimized by your parents? ... I feel that's a huge contributing factor to violence against Aboriginal women and I think that a movement is just the wrong word.

Jolene Saulis characterized Aboriginal women's activism as a circular, more holistic way of re-establishing balance lost during colonization, while she saw the women's movement as more linear and forward-moving:

A movement is when you want things, a movement is that we're going forward and we're trying to get things we never had. Women in this country never had equality, never; it's always been like this [uneven], there's never been a balance and we're always searching for that... In Indigenous cultures there

was always a balance, it was always like this [even], it was never like this [uneven]. We had equality, we knew what our roles were, everyone was equal, the man's going to do the hunting, and I'm going to do the harvesting; we're going to raise our children together. There's equal society, there was an equal justice system, [and] there was an equal ideology. We never had to do what you other people are doing, what we have to do is get everything back so that we can get there; [it's] not a movement.

Despite different traditional conceptualizations of the relations between men and women in Aboriginal societies and the European societies that have influenced “mainstream” Canadian culture, the circularity that Jolene Saulis describes resonates with what one non-Aboriginal interview participant described as the “spiral” of the feminist movement. While the “mainstream” movement is still characterized as more forward-moving than restorative, the notion that “we’ve been here before” could act as a potential bridge to greater understanding between Aboriginal women activists and more mainstream feminists.

Indeed, mainstream feminists in Canada have increasingly attempted to include the voices of Aboriginal women in their activism, to varying effects. Typically, texts on violence against women will include one or two chapters on Aboriginal women or racialized women, discussion panels will include an Aboriginal representative, and mainstream feminist groups will attempt to recruit Aboriginal members. Anita Olsen-Harper addressed the problem of tokenism in mainstream feminisms’ approach to including marginalized women’s voices:

I would say that generally the organizations I've been involved with [are not] attached very firmly with the mainstream organizations. I think sometimes the mainstream organizations will call us partners, but really that's in name only, it will appear on a brochure or somebody's picture will show up somewhere to imply that, yes, we are working with Aboriginal women and groups, but that's

as far as it goes. It's done for perception, public perception rather than what is really happening out there.

Jolene Saulis saw the separation of the work of Aboriginal women from the mainstream anti-violence movement as intentional and appropriate:

We got our own thing going on; we're doing pretty good. You guys got your own thing going on; you're doing pretty good. Why do you want it [a partnership]?

I went on to ask her how non-Aboriginal women can support the work of Aboriginal women:

Pray for them. It's the only way you can do it, because each one of these women is on their own healing journeys. I know, I was there; they have services to utilize in here, in the city, they have Elders at their disposal, they have support and love around them; that's all they need right now. You can't put too much on them, because they won't take it. And why would they? You're supporting them by giving them a chance for their issue to be in your paper, you're giving them a chance when eventually your group and their group come together; you're supporting them. Only when they're ready to tell their story will they come out, and that stems from always being told what to do all their lives, it's just the way Western thinking has been on them. I know it's not a great answer; it's probably not what you want to hear.

Jolene Saulis' passage suggests the need for an appreciation of the struggles of Aboriginal women, and by extension the struggles of all marginalized women, in favour of the provision of practical support. She noted that donations and invitations to participate in events are welcome, but that non-Aboriginal women need to make a concerted, ongoing effort to talk with Aboriginal women about their experiences, to get out into the community and learn by participating in women's circles. Anita Olsen-Harper characterized this as

feminists needing to “do their homework”. Jolene Saulis’ suggestions underscore the reality that meaningful activism requires personal sacrifice on the part of the activist.

Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed interview participants’ reflections on their involvement in feminist activism on violence against women in Canada. The experience of interview participants providing services and engaging in a variety of mobilization strategies was considered in the context of social movement impact theory. For example, participants highlighted the complex nature of feminist claims-making, the hybrid organizational structure of feminist organizations, and the positive experiences they had working in partnerships and coalitions.

Despite the recognition of “small wins”, the feminist movement has been faced with a number of challenges. Interview participants discussed how internal debates around the inclusion of men and transgender people in the movement contributed to stagnation, but when considered in the context of the increasing intersectionality of the feminist movement, it is usually perceived as an improvement over earlier mobilization. Discussions around incorporating difference, whether conceptually or operationally, can be interpreted as part of the necessary process of the feminist movements’ evolution. Further, participants reflected on what it meant to be a part of a social movement, specifically in terms of the “wave” designations that are usually attributed to feminist activism occurring during different time periods and the different conceptualizations some Aboriginal women attach to their activism.

The next and final chapter will bring together the themes addressed in this chapter concerning the assessment of feminist activism on violence against women as a social movement and the themes from the previous chapter on the natural history of feminist claims-making processes. Specifically, I will make the argument that feminist claims-making is characterized by a dialectical relationship between feminist activists and the Canadian state and is not easily explained using linear models of claims-making. Additionally, I will look at some of the indicators of, and impediments to, success brought up by interview participants to highlight the difficulty in evaluating complex social movements.

Chapter 7: Making sense of feminists' activism on violence against women in Canada

Chapters 5 and 6 reported on the findings from an analysis of archival material from the Canadian Women's Movement Archives and from in-depth interviews with current and former feminist activists. Chapter 5 described the findings of how violence against women was first recognized as a problem by feminists, the claims-making strategies of feminist activists, and how violence against women was initially responded to as a social problem by the Canadian state. Chapter 6 reviewed the reflections of feminist activists on their perceptions of the strategies used by feminist claims-makers in their mobilization around violence against women. The first section of this chapter will assess the claims-making process concerning violence against women as a case to support the use of contextualized constructionism when seeking to understand social problems. The next section will bring together some of the potential indicators of success that could be used in an evaluation of feminist activism on violence against women, as well as identify some of the challenges in conducting such an evaluation. Following from this, I will comment on the situation of feminist state engagement today and how to bridge the gaps between different feminist social movements. Finally, I will suggest some areas for future research.

Claims-making in context

The social constructionist approach to social problems claims-making is concerned with how certain issues come to be identified as social problems. What are the processes through which an issue progresses that result in the label of "social problem" and a subsequent "official" response? What are the processes that result in a failure of claims?

Best (2013) and Spector and Kitsuse (2009) suggest that sociologists can trace the evolution of a social problem through the “natural history” of claims-making. Claims-making is common reconstruction of social problems that are seen as plaguing society, from drugs to terrorism to violence against women. Certain individuals or groups (i.e., “claims-makers”) make the argument that a condition they find troubling ought to receive widespread attention and a dedicated response. For the purposes of this study, one sector of claims-makers is feminist activists and one social problem is violence against women.

Using a natural history approach to understand social problem claims-making necessitates parsing claims-making activities into discrete stages. While models vary as to the number of stages (e.g., Best’s [2013] model has six stages, Spector and Kitsuse’s [2009] model has four stages), the general progression of activities is similar. Claims-makers start by asserting the existence of a troubling condition and attempt to raise awareness of the issue in the public arena. If the claims-makers are successful, the targets of their claims-making campaign, typically institutions of the state, will develop responses to address the social problem. These responses may align with claims-makers’ expectations or they might be based on a redefinition of the social problem to fit the institution’s discourse or agenda. If claims-makers are unsatisfied with the official response, or they are unsuccessful in garnering an official response at all, they may embark on a new claims-making campaign or decide to develop their own institutions to address the problem.

The problem with tracing the evolution of complex claims-making activity is that it does not neatly fit into a stage-based model; thus, the necessity of contextualized social constructionism. In the early years of feminist activism on violence against women, many of the feminist organizations were calling for the recognition of wife battering and rape as

“social problems”, demonstrating their acknowledgement that “social problems”, rather than women’s private problems, project greater legitimacy for non-members – Spector and Kitsuse’s (2009, p. 143) “private troubles to public issues”. Much of feminist groups’ early consciousness and awareness raising was directed at other women, to help women recognize their experiences as violence and to do something to help themselves or prevent being a victim. Eventually, this claims-making was directed at official institutions, like Canadian governments and the criminal justice system, which were expected to respond.

As more and more women recognized their experiences as violence and more organizations began documenting the number of women served, the issue of violence against women became absorbed into the larger feminist project that had been gaining momentum since the 1960s. However, perhaps because of claims-makers near complete reliance on lived experiences rather than research evidence in the early years of the movement, there was no consensus in the movement as to how to conceptualize or respond to the problem. This is reflected in distinctions between the “victim narrative” identified by some interview participants as dominating the early conversation on wife battering, despite many documents suggesting feminist groups were recognizing women’s autonomy and urging them to help themselves. As well, the debates around changing the crime of “rape” to “sexual assault” reflect internal disagreements around how to construct these claims. Emerging issues, such as the overlap between intimate partner and sexual violence highlighted by mounting research evidence illustrate the fluidity of conceptualizations of violence against women amid increasing experience, awareness, and knowledge.

Spector and Kitsuse (2009) hypothesize that “vague” claims will result in more diffuse and general attributions of social problem responsibility. Feminist claims of

violence against women involved broad and encompassing calls for fundamental change in the social and legal response to violence against women. There was and is certainly little consensus as to the definition of the problem or the necessary interventions for its resolution. Thus, early calls for the law to protect women and for legislative change, for funding to sustain services for victims, and for education on gender equality could demonstrate that feminists were making a case for a variety of responses to the social problem of violence against women or could suggest that feminists themselves were unsure about what the best response would be. These alternative explanations for how feminist groups were calling on the state to intervene demonstrate the complexity of the issue.

It is by examining the social context of the late 1970s and early 1980s that the process of how violence against women started to receive recognition as a social problem by the Canadian state is understandable. As several interview participants indicated, in many ways this response was centred on strengthening the legal and criminal justice response to wife battering as wife assault and rape as sexual assault – because that is what was palatable to governments – despite the fact that feminist groups presented this as only one element in a multi-pronged approach. In response to this early activism, mandatory arrest policies were introduced in police departments across the country, followed by pro-prosecution policies and specialized domestic violence courts. Legislative amendments to the *Criminal Code of Canada* changed the crime of “rape” to the three-tiered crime of “sexual assault”. Other responses were demanded in connection with specific incidents and emerging trends. The Montreal Massacre on December 6, 1989 provided a clear example for the feminist movement that more needed to be done to stop violence against women. Official responses to this event included marking the date as a national day of

remembrance, funding research centres on violence against women, and the tabling of legislation to establish a gun registry. Additionally, a parliamentary sub-committee released a report on the status of women in Canada, leading to the creation of the Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women. Emerging trends that provided evidence for new solutions include the application of the newly created sexual assault law, particularly around precedent-setting judicial decisions that continued to undermine women's credibility in the courtroom.

Spector and Kitsuse (2009, p. 149) note that this stage may “represent the beginning of the end” for claims-makers as official institutions may now take ownership over the social problem. Feminist researchers have noted that with increased governmental recognition and ownership over the problem of violence against women, feminist conceptualizations have been severely eroded. In her account of the feminist anti-rape movement in the United States, Matthews (1994) suggests that the reactive focus of government responses to violence against women in the form of prohibitive laws, services for victims, and more aggressive criminal justice interventions, rather than a preventive focus, has led to a social service culture of managing the problem rather than stopping the violence. This interpretation of service provision is reflected in one young feminist's words:

You can get bogged down in the governance aspects and in the non-profit management aspects, which do take away from the activism and do take away from actual social change work.

As a result, feminist services have, to a certain extent, become institutionalized or “reconstructed and couched in terms of the existing institutions and ideologies” (Adamson,

Briskin, & McPhail, 1988, p. 181), such as gender neutral “victim services”. The reframing of the conceptualization of violence against women is one example of this process whereby feminist groups have had to conform, to varying degrees, to governmental discourses that can account for violence against women when governments are called upon to intervene. In a study of Canadian rape crisis and sexual assault centres, Beres, Crow, and Gotell (2009) identified five main factors facing feminist service provision today: the erosion of gender analysis and women-only spaces, funding restrictions, the “law and order” agenda, the victim’s discourse, and women’s poverty. The researchers note,

As national feminist organizing declines, antirape activism is being sustained at a local level in SAC/RCCs, though in a context that is increasingly difficult. Centres have been forced to rely heavily on volunteer labour; paid workers face enormous pressures and inadequate compensation; centres have reorganized to continue their crucial work; and they have devoted significant resources to grant-seeking and fundraising (p. 158).

Other researchers have identified similar challenges facing contemporary feminist activists (e.g., Campbell et al., 1998; Collins & Whalen, 1989; Macy et al., 2010; O’Sullivan & Carleton, 2001). Some research has even found that the individuals providing community-based services to victims of domestic violence know little about the origins of the battered women’s movement or the political and social change underpinnings of domestic violence service provision (Lehrner & Allen, 2008; 2009).

Bumiller (2008) and Gotell (2007; 2008a; 2010) argue that the neoliberal state has at least eroded, if not entirely erased, feminist conceptualizations of sexual violence on the political agenda. Both researchers argue that the problem has been redefined as a legal and, to a lesser extent, medical problem, rather than a feminist social problem. Bumiller (2008)

in particular problematizes the notion of “criminal justice” responses for sexual violence and instead posits alternatives such as social justice responses for women and even the abolition of criminal sanctions that serve to criminalize some men and reproduce violence for many women. Such concerns are supported by research on women’s experiences with the criminal justice system (e.g., Johnson & Fraser, 2011; Minaker, 2001; Pontel & Demczuk, 2007). However, few research participants for this study expressed dystopian visions for feminist state engagement and instead most offered pragmatic suggestions for continued feminist-state interaction. This could perhaps be explained by the relatively “mainstream” feminist movement from which most research participants were connected; indeed, neither of the Aboriginal women participants felt represented by mainstream feminist engagement with the state.

Continued feminist engagement with the state reflects activists’ ongoing responses to official interventions to violence against women as they emerge. While Spector and Kitsuse (2009) suggest a clear transition from official responses to new claims-making activity focused on claims-makers complaints about the inadequacy of those official responses, the case of feminist activism on violence against women suggests more of an ongoing dialectical process. There is not a clear moment that can be identified wherein the Canadian government “officially” responded to violence against women. As Appendix A illustrates, there have been many landmark moments in the past 50 years that contributed to some of the more visible interventions, such as rape law reform and the introduction of mandatory arrest. “Second wave” feminist activists and the Canadian state have been engaged in ongoing dialogue centred on the contradictions and perceived shortcomings of the other’s approach at least since the Royal Commission on the Status of Women

(RCSW), and the report from that Commission did not even mention violence. Probably the best example concerning violence against women is the debate surrounding the Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, created in response to calls for another royal commission on women, after the Montreal Massacre and the “War Against Women” report. Some feminists were initially optimistic about the Panel; others saw it as antithetical to the grassroots origins of the movement. Eventually the Panel was seen by many feminists as unrepresentative of Canadian women. Despite its feminist analysis of violence against women, the final report was interpreted by many activists as untenable due to its overwhelming number of recommendations, a prescient concern given that the report resulted in little substantive change.

The nature of feminist claims-making took on a different tone following official intervention into the social problem. This new tone, characterized by an ongoing dialectical relationship between feminist activists and the Canadian state was halted in the mid-1990s when national level feminists groups were no longer recognized as legitimate claims-makers on the issue of violence against women, as evidenced by the dismantling of the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women (CACSW) and the demise of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC). In this new context, feminists were now very visibly faced with backlash (Chesney-Lind, 2006; Dragiewicz, 2008). In a departure from the historical ignorance of the problem of violence against women, in a social context of backlash, feminists’ claims-making strategies needed to negotiate the influence of counter-claims, such as that gendered violence against men is just as prolific as violence against women (Straus, 2005), or counter-movements, such as the socially conservative REAL Women of Canada or the gender neutral victims’ services industry.

This “new normal” would suggest, according to Spector and Kitsuse’s (2009) model, the need for a new way of organizing.

Another issue with stage-based natural history models is how they account for activist service provision as a claims-making activity. Best (2013) does not refer to it at all; Spector and Kitsuse (2009) suggest that once the claims-making groups have asserted their dissatisfaction with official responses to the social problem, they may then decide to “work outside the system” by establishing alternative solutions or counter-institutions. In their very earliest mobilization around violence against women, feminist activists strived to provide grassroots services to victims of wife battering and rape in a social environment where these services were not available. Feminist claims-making activity has been ongoing since the recognition of the problem within a broader feminist movement to the contemporary reflections of activists who are constantly negotiating their relationship with the Canadian state. This suggests that activists mobilize intuitively in response to the external socio-political conditions that effect the movement. Clearly, this speaks to the limitations of “staying at the level of language” when talking about social problems in the “real world”; social context, and thus a contextualized social constructionist approach, is what makes social problems activity meaningful.

Feminist social constructionist research on social problems argues that a strict constructionist approach – one that stays at the level of language and minimizes the socio-political context in which claims-making activities occur – fails to paint the full picture of social problems claims-making activities. Indeed, this study into the claims-making activities of feminist activists on violence against women demonstrates how embedded social context is in the strategies used by feminist claims-makers, thus providing support

for the contextualized social constructionist approach. From providing grassroots services because mainstream services did not exist to advocating for criminal justice and legal change because responses were perceived as inadequate, these claims-making directions only make sense when we consider the social context in which these claims are made.

Ibarra and Kitsuse (1993) argue that the social constructionist sociologist is unconcerned with the social problem they study through the activities of its claims-makers and, further, have no interest in associated social change movements. As a feminist activist/researcher, this tenet of social problems theory is not only unrealistic, but is also an untenable expectation of all social research. Howard Becker (1967) asked sociologists to consider, “Whose side are we on?” in his argument that value-free social science is impossible. Why do we do the research we do? As a feminist researcher, I do research on topics that are important to me as a person committed to social equality and on which I hope to make some substantive social contribution. I do this primarily in the location of the academy because this is where my strengths lie⁶⁶ and because I am also committed to the pursuit of knowledge(s), though I would not, nor do I think I could, divorce these facets of myself from my feminism. Indeed, understanding the history of feminist activism on violence against women within changing socio-political contexts has helped shape both my identity as a researcher and as a feminist.

⁶⁶ I also do community activist work, but providing frontline services, though I have in the past, is not something at which I see myself as being particularly adept.

Assessing the impact of feminist activism

Social movement impact theory provides a framework through which the outcomes of social movements, and not just their contextualized activities, can begin to be evaluated, something that had been missing from social movement literature. Still, there exists a lack of rigorous evaluations of social movements because of their complexity, the different possible indicators of success, and the myriad of external socio-political factors that can influence social movement outcomes unintentionally. In this section, I will comment on some of the ways feminist activism on violence against women could potentially be evaluated and whether it is possible to determine if the movement has resulted in social progress.

Evaluations of social movements tend to use social movement goal attainment or overall collective social benefits of social movement activity as indicators of success. As is the case with other large-scale social movements, rigorous evaluations of large scale feminist women's movements are not common. Analyses of the success or failure of a specific campaign or of the work of a particular organization are done more frequently, for example of the NAC (Vickers et al., 1993) or the 1982 report of the Standing Committee on Social Policy Development concerning wife battering in Ontario (Walker, 1990). However, social movement impact theory would suggest that the effectiveness of particular social movement activities could be predicted by the organizational structure of the social movement organization or the strategies of mobilization in which they engage.

Early feminist organizing was based on a collective model, eschewing the hierarchical traditions of more "malestream" institutions. As Phillips (1991) found in her

study of national level women's organizations in Canada, these groups were deeply interconnected through formal networks, but she suspected that informal networks sustained through personal relationships connected individuals even more. Thus, while early feminist organizing did not follow a typical bureaucratic style, their mobilization was still highly organized: groups knew about one another, formed coalitions and *Regroupements*, and wrote letters of support and signed petitions for each other. Gamson's (1975) research suggests that highly organized groups will be more successful and indeed, feminist activism in the 1970s and 1980s received significant public attention. As the movement grew and relied more heavily on government support, collective organizing, for many groups, gave way to bureaucracy. Since the 1990s, the larger bureaucratic organizations have been dismantled (e.g., the NAC and the CACSW) and feminist activism is comparatively less visible in the public sphere. The problems with feminist collectives have been documented (e.g., Morton, 1997), but there is a clear association between collective organizing and feminist visibility. Future evaluations of feminist activism might look more closely at the correlation between feminist organizational style and movement recognition by target audiences.

One consensus within the social movement impact literature is that social movements that employ "active" tactics, from disruptive strikes to violent protests, are more likely to gain new advantages for their cause than movements that use passive strategies (Gamson, 1975; Mann, 1993; Piven & Cloward, 1977). In the early years of the feminist movement, active strategies were a core element of activism on violence against women, from public protests to lobbies on Parliament Hill. These types of mobilization still exist; annual "Take Back the Night" walks and October 4th vigils for Canada's missing and

murdered Aboriginal women and girls are highly visible public events. A systematic quantitative and qualitative analysis of the evolution of mobilization strategies might identify the most effective modes of feminist action. However, it is worth mentioning that the potential for feminist movements to employ violent tactics to assert their goals is unlikely, particularly among activists striving for safety. Perhaps there is somewhat of a paradox to be overcome in that the very characteristic that may help social movements succeed is the characteristic against which most feminist movements are protesting.

The current research project has identified the range of activist mobilization strategies that feminist organizations engage in, from service provision to advocacy to research, or some combination of those goals in hybrid organizations. Different mechanisms for reaching these goals are employed and vary by organization, including securing funding, calling on the Canadian state to create and implement laws and policies, or asserting the legitimacy of feminist expertise. Finally, activists have unique interpretations about the fidelity of responses to their desired goals. For example, most interview participants for this study saw a conceptual shift in the nature of services to be an unfortunate, but inevitable outcome of engaging the state (e.g., the shift, in some cases, from feminist services to gender neutral victim services). However, there are certainly more radical branches of the movement that would refuse funding if it meant a reinterpretation of their services, or that would simply not engage the state altogether. These conceptual and operational divides make it difficult to attach a label of “success” or “failure” to the feminist movement’s mobilization in response to violence against women. It depends on individual activists’ perspectives, what compromises are deemed acceptable, and what are “deal breakers”. This is not to resort to a relativistic understanding of the

Canadian women's movement, only to suggest that we need to consider its influence in context, one of the major goals of this project.

What are the potential goals that could be measured in an evaluation of feminist activism on violence against women? Feminist activism has contributed to a number of social changes concerning violence against women in Canada, an issue that was quite simply not on political agendas before feminist claims-making in the 1970s (see Appendix A). However, laws, judicial decisions, and criminal justice and social policies have all been interpreted and implemented in ways that have had unintended negative consequences for women who have experienced violence. Thus, policy outcomes alone cannot be a measure of effectiveness. Indeed, laws, judicial decisions, and criminal justice and social policies have been the “small wins” feminists have alternately and simultaneously campaigned for, compromised on, or begrudgingly accepted. Despite the specific goals that individual activists, organizations, or coalitions might be working toward, the underlying collective identity of feminist social movement actors encompasses a desire to improve women's lives. The goal that is perhaps so obvious that it often remains unspoken, is that feminist activism on violence against women is meant to ensure women's safety. Safety can be operationalized differently depending on the activist or the organization, from helping women manage the violence in their lives to advocating for a non-violent, egalitarian society. But women's safety is certainly the starting point from which much social activism could be assessed.

Future directions, bridging gaps

This research project has been an invaluable opportunity for me, as a feminist and academic researcher, to learn more about the history of the contemporary feminist movement in Canada and how activists make sense of their mobilization. Of course, this project was always going to be a gargantuan feat, and I could not hope to cover the breadth of material that exists on Canadian feminist activism on violence against women in one dissertation, nor even include all of the rich data I collected from both the archives and my very forthcoming interview participants. As such, there are several areas I hope to explore in future publications and others that I will suggest would benefit from further inquiry by other researchers.

The mutual exclusivity of intimate partner violence and sexual violence as issues under the rubric of “violence against women” was interpreted by some activists in this study as a pragmatic strategy to break down a complex problem into manageable parts, largely for the purposes of government funding. However, the backlash in Quebec to an early 1980s proposal that shelters could “do rape” suggests that, perhaps depending on the jurisdiction, ideological differences do exist between activists in the battered women’s movement and the rape crisis movement. Empirical research evidence makes clear that women who are sexually assaulted are usually victimized by someone they know and that most intimate partner violence includes multiple forms of abuse, including sexual violence (e.g., Ellsberg & Heise, 2005; Johnson, 2006; Krug et al., 2002). However, conceptual work has largely focused on intimate partner violence and sexual violence as discrete forms of violence against women. While activists can debate the pragmatism of continuing to

mobilize and provide services separately to survivors of domestic violence and rape, feminist researchers might want to explore overlaps in the prevalence of intimate partner violence and sexual violence within a continuum of perpetrator intentionality and victim experiences of violence. Specifically, building upon Kelly's (1988) sexual violence continuum and Kelly and Johnson's (2008) typology of intimate partner violence may help to bridge the gap between these two types of violence and to help inform more nuanced prevention and intervention practices.

My focus on Ontario and Quebec was quite simply pragmatic; however, influential feminist activism has occurred throughout Canada during the time period in question. Though I interviewed a few Francophone women, I came to realize that Francophone feminist activism in Quebec is also different, and indeed disconnected, from Francophone feminist activism outside of Quebec. Two interview participants for this study were Francophone women from outside of Quebec (Northern Ontario and New Brunswick, specifically) and noted how they did not know where they "fit in" to the feminist movement or felt that they were not "French enough" for the Francophone feminist movement, being Francophone but not from Quebec. These women also highlighted the increased inaccessibility of services for Francophone women outside of Quebec, especially since many minority Francophone communities are also located in rural areas, and the difficulties in organizing as a collective given these logistical realities. Further research is needed on the different forms of Francophone feminist activism and impact of violence for these women, and indeed how activism within different provinces and territories fits into what was going on at the national level.

Very little material from the archives spoke to activism around violence perpetrated against Aboriginal women. While I was able to include the voices of two Aboriginal women in my interview sample, what they had to share only demonstrated to me how little I knew about the way Aboriginal women make sense of their experiences of violence and how they conceptualize their activism. More research is needed from Aboriginal women's perspectives about how their activism on violence against women fits into their lived experiences of colonization, discrimination, and violence.

To further understand the evolution of feminist activism on violence against women in Canada, it will also be important to acknowledge in more depth the socio-political context in which this mobilization occurred and continues to occur. Public policy documents, transcripts from parliamentary debates, proposed bills, entrenched legislation, and political rhetoric found in Throne Speeches, interviews, and press releases are all potentially rich sources of data to understand another side to the social processes of responding to violence against women. Overall, I cannot overstate the importance of contextualization to understandings of particular social processes, such as feminist activism on violence against women, as a way to situate our current response to an ongoing social problem.

Finally, I will suggest that further conceptual work is needed to account for the increasing empirical evidence demonstrating that violence against women is experienced very differently by women depending on a variety of social factors. While the mainstream feminist movement is faced with backlash centred on the argument that feminism is no longer relevant in Canada, that the biggest battles for women have been won, and that women have achieved equality – these arguments may be persuasive if we look only at the

gains white, middle-class women have made in terms of education, employment, and formal equality under the law. Social justice and substantive equality rights are precarious for all women and continue to be threatened in our current socio-political environment. Still, we cannot speak of a “Canadian feminist movement” without including the voices of Francophone women both inside and outside Quebec; Aboriginal women from diverse First Nations throughout Canada; other racialized and ethnic minorities, including Muslim women and the space they inhabit as “victims” of their culture, at least from many Westerner’s perspectives; older women and women with physical and intellectual disabilities whose vulnerability to victimization is heightened precisely because of how silenced their voices are in a society that idolizes the young and able-bodied; lesbians and bisexual women whose victimization in same-sex intimate partnerships is often ignored; sex workers whose bodies have become the battleground on which feminists wage their own debates on what constitutes violence; and, transgender women whose womanhood is often erased altogether.

Conclusion

In this research project I have attempted to pull together various sources to paint a picture of how feminist activists have made sense of their mobilization on violence against women as connected to the contemporary Canadian feminist movement using contextual social constructionist social problems theory and social movement impact theory. I have focused on activism within Ontario and Quebec for pragmatic reasons and chose the time period of 1970 to 2010 to acknowledge an era that saw the emergence of “second wave” feminism in Canada, a robust movement that developed to advocate for and provide

services to women experiencing violence, that eventually declined in terms of its political and social visibility. Using archival material from the Canadian Women's Movement Archives in Ottawa and interviews with current and former feminist activists, this analysis has produced an historical document that I hope will be useful and interesting to people who were involved in the movement and to those interested in learning more about the history of feminist activism in Canada.

Findings from this research suggest that feminist activists have long operated with complex conceptualizations of violence against women in their provision of services to women who had experienced intimate partner or sexual violence. However, depending on the socio-political climate, feminists have had to negotiate their activism to obtain government funding for their services, government recognition of their expertise on violence against women issues, and government action. In reflecting back on their activism, feminists make sense of their strategies as historically contextualized, working with the concepts and resources they had at the time. Certainly successes were won from this lens and, according to some interview participants, happened because of a “perfect storm” of factors, including sympathetic allies inside and outside the state. Some mobilization strategies were highlighted as particularly useful, including forming partnerships and coalitions and integrating feminist advocacy, service provision, and research. But internal debates, both conceptual and operational, have also plagued the movement, many issues of which still remained unsolved, including the conceptual separation of domestic and sexual violence, how to situate feminist state engagement today, and how to bridge the gap between different feminist “movements” in Canada.

Theoretically, this project upholds critiques of strict constructionist approaches to social problems claims-making and provides a case study of a contextualized social constructionist account of social problem claims-making. The feminist orientation of this project highlighted how feminist research cannot stay at the level of language. Feminist claims-making activities only make sense, from a feminist perspective, when they are located within their socio-political contexts. Additionally, this project made a contribution to social movement impact literature by suggesting some of the particular indicators of effectiveness that might have to be considered in an evaluation of feminist activism on violence against women.

This research project was about learning what has come before in a feminist movement that is increasingly delegitimized in the public sphere. Making sense of where we are today is only possible through a comprehensive exploration of the multiple processes that have been involved in the evolution of social responses to violence against women in Canada. This project represents one component of such a comprehensive investigation by looking at the words and hearing about the memories of feminist activists who have been mobilizing during the last 40 years. In addition to forming an important historical document, I hope this research will fan the flame of discussion around solving the problem of violence against women.

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APPENDIX A: Timeline of key events regarding violence against women in Canada

1960s	
1960	Peace activists create Voice of Women in response to the threat of nuclear war
1966	Committee for the Equality of Women in Canada (CEW) is formed
	<i>Fédération des femmes du Québec</i> is formed
	<i>L'Association féminine d'éducation et d'action sociale</i> is formed in Quebec
1967	Royal Commission on the Status of Women (RCSW) is set up and chaired by Senator Florence Bird
	Toronto Women's Liberation Movement is formed, followed by other feminist groups across the country
	United Nations adopts the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

1970s	
1970	Royal Commission on the Status of Women (RCSW) Report is tabled to the House of Commons
1971	Freda Paltiel is appointed as the first coordinator of the Office of the Coordinator Status of Women
	Robert Andras is appointed as the first Minister Responsible for the Status of Women by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau
	The first women's centres open in Canada
	Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau establishes the Law Reform Commission
	Ontario Committee on the Status of Women is formed to lobby the Ontario Government to implement Royal Commission recommendations
	CEW reconstitutes as the National Ad Hoc Committee on the Status of Women
1972	National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) is founded at the "Strategy for Change: Convention of Women in Canada" conference to monitor the implementation of recommendations from the Royal Commission

1973	Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women (CACSW) is established out of recommendations from the Royal Commission
	Secretary of State establishes the Women's Program to fund women's groups doing work to improve the status of women in Canada
	Interval House of Toronto is the first transition house to open in Canada
	Ontario Government releases report " Equal Opportunity for Women in Ontario: A Plan for Action " leading to the creation of the Ontario Status of Women Council
	Vancouver Rape Relief is the first rape crisis centre to open in Canada
	Quebec creates the <i>Conseil du statut de la femme</i>
1974	NAC holds its first Annual General Meeting
	Toronto Rape Crisis Centre opens with \$8000 from the City of Toronto
	Native Women's Association of Canada is formed
1975	Bill C-71 introduced to amend s. 142 of the <i>Criminal Code</i> ("no questions shall be asked as to the sexual conduct of the complainant with a person other than the accused" unless reasonable notice in writing has been given to the prosecutor)
	United Nations' International Women's Year
	National Association of Women and the Law (NAWL) is formed
	CACSW releases " Web of Law: A Study of Sexual Offences in the Canadian Criminal Code " and begins arguing that rape should be replaced with four degrees of sexual assault in the <i>Criminal Code</i>
	Secretary of State releases " A Directory of Canadian Women's Groups "
1976	Bill C-71 is passed
	Status of Women becomes official federal ministry
	Interval House of Ottawa opens
	Delegates from 20 rape crisis centres across the country meet in Ottawa for first national conference of Canadian Rape Crisis Centres
	Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAOW) is established
1977	United Nations sets March 8 as International Women's Day
	Marc LaLonde, the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, awards

	<p>\$68,700 in one-year grants to 10 women’s organizations (including the NAC, the FFQ, the National Congress of Black Women, and the CRIAW)</p>
	<p>Government of Canada passes the Canadian Human Rights Act</p>
	<p>NAC conducts first public lobby of federal Members of Parliament</p>
	<p>Government of Quebec starts providing funding to women’s shelters</p>
	<p>Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres (OCRCC) is formed</p>
1978	<p>Bill C-52 is introduced to amend the <i>Criminal Code</i> on rape, but is never passed</p>
	<p>Constitutional Amendment Bill containing <i>Charter of Rights and Freedoms</i> is introduced to the House of Commons</p>
	<p>Law Reform Commission of Canada releases “Report on Sexual Offences” which calls for the removal of “archaic language”, a change from “rape” to crimes of “sexual interference” and “sexual aggression”, and the abolishment of spousal immunity, among other recommendations</p>
	<p>International Women’s Day Committee is established in Toronto</p>
	<p>The Conseil du statut de la femme releases <i>Politique d’ensemble de la condition féminine</i></p>
	<p>Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses (OAITH) is formed</p>
1979	<p>Government of Canada releases “Towards equality for women”, its first policy statement and national Plan of Action on the Status of Women as part of the UN World Plan of Action</p>
	<p>United Nations adopts the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women</p>
	<p>CACSW releases “10 Years Later: An assessment of the federal government’s implementation of the recommendations made by the Royal Commission on the Status of Women” – of 122 recommendations in the Royal Commission’s Report, 43 had been implemented, 53 were partially implemented, 24 were not implemented, 2 were no longer applicable</p>
	<p>Government of Canada begins consultations on the Constitution</p>
	<p><i>Regroupement provincial des maisons d’hébergement</i> and the <i>Regroupement québécois des CALACS</i> are formed in Quebec</p>
	<p>Feminist Party of Canada is formed</p>

1980s	
1980	Canadian Congress of Black Women is formed at the 7 th annual Conference for Black Women
	<i>Ministère de la santé et des services sociaux</i> (MSSS) decides shelters should respond to both wife battering and rape, sparking backlash from Quebec women's groups
	CACSW publishes " Wife Battering in Canada: The Vicious Cycle " based on consultations with service providers and shelters and is the first national study on wife battering
	The National Association of Sexual Assault Centres changes its name to the Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres (CASAC)
	Speech from the Throne recognizes the "serious problem of violence against women"
	Canadian Association of Social Workers establishes first national Task Force on Inter-Spousal Violence
	<i>R v. Pappajohn</i> , allowing a defence of a mistaken belief in consent, is upheld by the Supreme Court of Canada
	London Coordinating Committee to End Woman Abuse is formed
1981	CACSW releases " Report on Sexual Assault in Canada "
	Bill C-53 is introduced to amend the <i>Criminal Code</i> on rape, child sexual offences, and pornography, but is never passed
	Doris Anderson resigns as president of CACSW in protest to the cancellation of a national conference on women and the Constitution
	1,300 women meet on Parliament Hill for a protest conference on women and the constitution, leading to the development of the Ad Hoc Committee of Canadian Women on the Constitution
	Parliamentary Task Force on Family Violence convenes
	CASAC, at the initiative of the <i>Regroupement québécois des CALACS</i> , sets the third Friday of September as the annual date for Take Back the Night
	London Police Force first to institute policy encouraging charges in cases of wife assault
	Federal-Provincial Task Force on Victims of Crime created at the Federal-

	Provincial Conference of Minister Responsible for Criminal Justice
	Hearings of the Standing Committee on Health, Welfare, and Social Affairs (wife battering) begin
	REAL (Realistic, Equal, Active for Life) Women of Canada is formed
1982	Report of the Standing Committee on Health, Welfare, and Social Affairs (wife battering) , introduced to House of Commons, greeted with laughter from some MPs
	National Clearinghouse on Family Violence under the Ministry of Health and Welfare is established
	Report of the Standing Committee on Social Development tables “ First Report on Family Violence: Wife Battering ” to the Ontario legislature
	Constitution of Canada is repatriated and the <i>Charter of Rights and Freedoms</i> entrenched
	Federal Solicitor General begins calling on police to implement mandatory charging policies for wife battering
	Quebec recognizes the distinctiveness of shelters and CALACS and reestablishes funding to CALACS
1983	Bill C-127 is passed creating three levels of increasing severity of sexual assault, restricting the use of sexual history evidence, removal spousal immunity, removal of recent complaint doctrine, and removal of corroboration requirement
	MSSS acknowledges CALACS distinctiveness for funding purposes
	Federal-Provincial study of progress and proposals for reform on wife battering is undertaken
	Ontario Solicitor-General orders police forces to lay charges in cases of wife assault in accordance with how other assault charges are laid
	Ontario Women’s Directorate is established
	Family Violence Unit established within the Ontario Women’s Directorate
	City of Toronto releases final report from Task Force on Violence against Women and Children
1984	Meeting of the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women focuses on wife battering
	Formal recognition of REAL Women of Canada by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney

	NAC organizes federal election campaign debate on women’s issues that is aired on primetime TV
	City of Ottawa convenes Task Force on Wife Assault
	Ontario Women’s Lobby Coalition meets with provincial party caucuses
1985	Women’s Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF) is formed
	MSSS’ <i>Politique d’aide aux femmes violentées</i> incorporates a feminist analysis
	<i>Regroupement des centres de femmes du Québec</i> is formed
	Federal-Provincial encouragement of police enforcement of wife assault
	Prime Minister Brian Mulroney formally establishes Court Challenges Program
1986	National Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women is formed
	Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women produce implementation report on wife battering
	Family Violence Prevention Division under the Ministry of Health and Welfare is established
	First Ontario provincial conference of disabled women , hosted by DAWN
	Ontario Government introduces the Ontario Joint Family Violence Initiatives (for a five year term – services for victims, public education & prevention, and law enforcement, specifically mandatory charging & vigorous prosecution adopted as policy frameworks)
	Bill C-15 is introduced regarding child sexual abuse
	Regional Coordinating Committee to End Violence Against Women (RCCEVAW) is formed to monitor recommendations from Ottawa’s Task Force on Wife Assault
	Quebec’s <i>Ministère de la Justice</i> releases <i>Politique d’intervention en matière de violence conjugale</i>
1987	Harmony House , a second-stage shelter, opens in Ottawa
	CACSW releases “ Battered but not Beaten: Preventing Wife Battering in Canada ”
	Ontario Government adds \$7 million in funding for family violence , including first funding for second-stage housing
	Bill C-15 is passed

	MSSS updates <i>Politique d'aide aux femmes violentées</i>
1988	Family Violence Initiative is launched by Government of Canada with \$40 million for new shelters, more policing, crime prevention programs, and research
	Ontario Government launches Inter-Ministerial Committee on Sexual Assault
	Progressive Conservative Government refuses to participate in the NAC's annual lobby
	<i>Action ontarienne contre la violence faite aux femmes (AOcVF)</i> is formed
1989	Supreme Court of Canada decisions in <i>R. v. Seaboyer</i> and <i>R v. Gayme</i> strike down rape shield law
	DAWN releases " Beating the 'Odds': Violence and Women with Disabilities "
	Government of Canada decides to fund REAL Women of Canada
	National Clearinghouse on Family Violence releases " Wife Battering and the Web of Hope: Progress, Dilemmas and Visions of Prevention "
	CACSW releases report " Preventing Wife Battering: Towards a New Understanding "
	Parliamentary Standing Committee on Health and Welfare, Social Affairs, Seniors, and the Status of Women establishes a Sub-Committee on the Status of Women
	Montreal Massacre on December 6 at École Polytechnique leads to the death of 14 women

1990s	
1990	Government of Canada cuts \$1.6 million in core funding from women's organizations
	Committee for a Royal Commission on Violence Against Women , a coalition of 30 women's groups across the country, convenes
	Ontario Government commits \$30 million over 5 years to address sexual assault (with the intention to develop a violence against women strategy by 1994 to focus on services for victims, improved judicial proceedings for victims, and prevention programs)
	National Clearinghouse on Family Violence releases " Isolated, Afraid and Forgotten: The Service Delivery Needs and Realities of Immigrant and Refugee Women who are Battered "

	CRIAW releases “ The Canadian Women’s Movement, Equality Rights and the Charter ”
1991	Equality Eve organizes 10th anniversary celebration of the conference on women and the constitution
	House of Commons Subcommittee on the Status of Women issues report, “ The War Against Women ”, recommending the government establish a Royal Commission on Violence against Women
	Mary Collins, Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, establishes the Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women
	Government of Canada responds to “The War Against Women” report with “ Living Without Fear ”, a prevention-oriented public education initiative
	Kim Campbell, Minister of Justice, tables Bill C-49, the “No means No” law , that clarifies when sexual history evidence is admissible, defines consent, and makes changes to the defence of an “honest but mistaken” belief in consent based on “ Justice Consultations ” with women’s groups
	NDP MP Dawn Black introduces Bill C-202 to declare December 6 a National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women, it is supported by all parties and passed
	Family Violence Initiative is renewed for another 4 years at a cost of \$136 million
	Ontario Government commits an additional \$8.26 million to the Sexual Assault Initiatives, \$12 million to Wife Assault Prevention Initiatives, and \$4.6 million to make shelters more accessible
	CACSW presents brief to the House of Commons Subcommittee on the Status of Women, “ Male Violence Against women: The Brutal Face of Inequality ”
	Ontario Government provides funding for 10 new sexual assault centres and 21 existing centres under Ontario Sexual Assault Prevention Initiative
	Ontario Attorney General directs Crown Attorneys to fight attempts to make victims’ sexual history admissible at trial
	CRIAW releases “ The Women’s Movement and it’s Currents of Thought: A Typological Essay ”, funded by the Secretary of State’s Women’s Program
	The Supreme Court finds the rape shield provisions of the <i>Criminal Code</i> (sections 276 and 277) to violate an accused person’s <i>Charter</i> rights in R. v. Seaboyer and R. v. Gayme

1992	Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women releases “Collecting the Voices: A Scrapbook”
	Ministry of Health releases position paper, “Taking Action against Sexual Abuse of Patients”
	CACSW presents a brief to the Legislative Committee on Bill C-49, “Sexual Assault and Criminal Justice: Addressing Women’s Reality”
	Prime Minister Brian Mulroney withdraws funding from Court Challenges Program
	Alliance of Canadian Research Centres on Violence is established
	Ontario Government adds \$11.5 million to prevent sexual assault
	Bill C-49 is passed
	MSSS publishes guidelines for intervention with violent spouses , building on <i>Politique d’aide aux femmes violentées</i>
1993	Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women releases final report, “Changing the Landscape: Ending Violence-Achieving Equality”
	Prime Minister Brian Mulroney eliminates the Law Reform Commission
	National Clearinghouse on Family Violence releases “Like a Wingless Bird: A Tribute to the Survival and Courage of Women who are Abused and who Speak neither English nor French”
	CACSW releases “Evidence of Recent Complaint and Reform of Canadian Sexual Assault Law: Still Searching for Epistemic Equality”
	CRIAW releases “Feminist Engagement with the Law: The Legal Recognition of the Battered Woman Syndrome”
	Vancouver Rape Relief, with support from NAC, releases “99 Federal Steps...Towards an End to Violence Against Women”
	UN adopts the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women
	Quebec establishes the <i>Comité interministériel de coordination en matière de violence conjugale et familiale</i>
1994	Prime Minister Jean Chrétien reinstates the Court Challenges Program
	NAC participates in consultations with the Minister of Justice , with “99 Federal Steps...Towards an End to Violence Against Women” report forms basis of discussion
	CRIAW releases “The Events of Polytechnique: Analyses and Proposals for

	Action”
1995	Government of Quebec releases <i>Politique d’intervention en matière de violence conjugale: Prevenir, dépister, contrer la violence conjugale</i> which incorporates a feminist analysis
	CACSW releases “ The Intoxication Defence in Canada: Why Women Should Care ”
	Prime Minister Jean Chrétien dismantles CACSW
	CRIAW releases “ No Rhyme or Reason: The Sentencing of Sexual Assaults ”
	All Ontario Government funding from MCSS eliminated for counselling, education, prevention, advertising, and culturally-specific services for domestic violence; 2.5% of the budget is cut from interval houses and women’s shelters
	Supreme Court decision in <i>R. v. O’Connor</i> allows accused to access victims’ medical, counselling, and residential school records at sexual assault trial
	Bill C-68 is passed, establishing a long-gun registry
1996	National Clearinghouse on Family Violence releases “ Taking the Next Step to Stop Woman Abuse: From Violence Prevention to Individual, Family, Community and Societal Health ”
	CRIAW releases “ Feminist Voices: The Exclusion of Survivors’ Voices in Feminist Discourse on Violence Against Women ”
	Ontario Chief Coroner’s inquest into the deaths of Arlene May and Randy Iles
	Ontario Government cuts another 5% from funding to interval houses and women’s shelters
	Ontario releases the Framework for Action on the Prevention of Violence Against Women in Ontario (“The McGuire Report”)
1997	(to 2001) Robert Pickton murders up to 49 women from Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside
	Prime Minister Jean Chrétien re-establishes Law Commission of Canada
	Ontario releases Prevention of Violence Against Women: An Agenda for Action with \$27 million for new prevention initiatives
	Bill C-46 is passed restricting access to victims’ personal records at trial
1998	Federal government cuts funding to advocacy groups, the NAC loses its core operational funding
1999	Supreme Court upholds restrictions on personal records used to “whack the

	complainant” (Bill C-46) in <i>R. v. Mills</i>
	Supreme Court upholds “No means No” law (Bill C-49) concerning consent in <i>R. v. Ewanchuck</i>
2000s	
2000	Ontario Chief Coroner’s inquest into the death of Gillian Hadley
	Ontario Government introduces Bill 117 , the Domestic Violence Protection Act
	Ontario Government cuts funding to women’s centres in Oakville, Ottawa, North York, and Windsor
	Supreme Court upholds “No means No” law (Bill C-49) concerning admission of sexual history evidence in <i>R. v. Darrach</i>
	Ad Hoc Federal-Provincial-Territorial Working Group Reviewing Spousal Abuse Policies and Legislation is struck
2001	MSSS releases <i>Orientations gouvernementales en matière d’agression sexuelle</i> and <i>Plan d’action</i>
	Oshki Kizis Lodge , a shelter for homeless and Aboriginal women, opens in Ottawa
	Ontario Government dedicates \$4.5 million over 5 years for a province-wide crisis line
2002	Domestic Violence Death Review Committee is established in Ontario
2004	Ontario Domestic Violence Action Plan launched with \$60 million
	MSSS releases <i>Plan d’action gouvernemental 2004-2009 en matière de violence conjugale</i>
2006	RCCEVAW restructured to the Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women (OCTEVAW)
	Prime Minister Stephen Harper cuts funding from Status of Women and changes its mandate, eliminates Court Challenges Program, and Law Commission of Canada
2007	Update to the Ontario Domestic Violence Action Plan
	Ontario Chief Coroner’s inquest into the death of Lori Dupont
2009	Ontario Chief Coroner’s inquest into the deaths of Andrew and Jared Osidacz
2010	Bill 53 is introduced , Escaping Domestic Violence Act
	Robert Pickton’s conviction on 6 counts of second degree murder upheld by the

	Supreme Court of Canada
2011	Ontario releases sexual violence action plan , “Changing Attitudes, Changing Lives”
2012	Bill C-19 is passed , dismantling the long-gun registry

APPENDIX B: Feminist groups included in documentary analysis

	Name of Organization	Location	Years in CWM A	Years Active	Main issue	Type of Feminism
<i>Crisis Lines</i>						
Case 1	Sexual Assault Crisis Line	London, ON	1981	1975-Present	SV	Grassroots
Case 2	Assaulted Women's Helpline	Toronto, ON	1985-89, 1992-94	1985-Present	IPV	Grassroots
<i>Legal Organizations</i>						
Case 1	Rape Legislation Reform Group, University of Western Ontario	London, ON	1981	1981	SV	Liberal
Case 2	Charter of Rights Coalition	Toronto, ON	1981-85, 1995	?	Women's equality	Liberal
Case 3	Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic	Toronto, ON	1984-92	1984-Present	VAW	Liberal
Case 4	London Battered Women's Advocacy Clinic, Inc. (now London Abused Women's Centre)	London, ON	1980-88	1982-Present	IPV	Liberal

<i>Local Committees, Coalitions, Groups, & Centres</i>						
Case 1	Ad hoc Women's Coalition against Racist and Police Violence	Toronto, ON	1989, 1990s	1990s	Public violence	Critical race
Case 2	Sault Ste. Marie Women's Centre	Sault Ste. Marie, ON	1979	?	VAW	Grassroots
Case 3	Stop Rape Week Committee	Montreal, QC	1985	?	SV	Radical
Case 4	Support Services for Assaulted Women	Toronto, ON	1979-80	?	IPV	Grassroots
Case 5	Take Back the Night	Montreal, QC	ND	?	SV	Radical
Case 6	Women's Coalition, University of Toronto	Toronto, ON	1982	?	VAW	Radical
Case 7	Women's Newsmagazine, University of Toronto	Toronto, ON	ND	?	SV	Radical
Case 8	Violence Overcome in Creative Ensemble (VOICE)	Toronto, ON	1991	1987-?	VAW	Radical
Case 9	Wen-Do, Women's Self Defence	Toronto, ON	ND	?- Present	VAW	Grassroots

Case 10	Women Against Violence Against Women (WAVAW)	Toronto, ON	1977-83		VAW	Radical
Case 11	Women's Initiatives for Safer Environments (WISE), York University	Toronto, ON	1987	?	Public violence	Grassroots
Case 12	Montreal Women's Network	Montreal, QC	1975		IPV	Grassroots
Case 13	Women's Habitat	Etobicoke, ON	1975	1978-Present	IPV	Grassroots
Case 14	Women's Lobby Coalition	Toronto, ON	1984-85	?	Women's issues	Liberal
Case 15	Women's Place	Kenora, ON	1985	1977-Present	IPV	Grassroots
Case 16	Women's Place	Toronto, ON	1973-74	?	VAW	Grassroots
Case 17	Women's Self-Defense Centre	Toronto, ON	ND	1974-?	Public violence	Grassroots
Case 18	Committee for Everywoman's Garden	Toronto, ON	1989-92	?	VAW	Grassroots
Case 19	Community Action on VAW	Toronto, ON	1994	?	IPV	Grassroots
Case 20	Community Coalition in Support of Cynthia Johnson	Toronto, ON	1990	?	State violence	Radical

Case 21	Durham Region Battered Women's Support Group	Oshawa, ON	1984	?	Sexual harassment	Grassroots
Case 22	Education Wife Assault (now Springtide Resources)	Toronto, ON	1980-90	1978-Present	IPV	Grassroots
Case 23	Feminist Network Against Violence	Toronto, ON	1986	?	VAW	Radical
Case 24	Feminist Services Training Program	Toronto, ON	1978	?	IPV	Grassroots
Case 25	Friends of WINSOM	Toronto, ON	1992	?	State violence	Critical race
Case 26	Justice for Assaulted Women	Scarborough, ON	1982	?	IPV	Radical
Case 27	Men Walking Against Male Violence	Toronto, ON	1991	?	VAW	Men's involvement
Case 28	Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children (METRAC)	Toronto, ON	1984-95	1982-Present	VAW	Grassroots
Case 29	Metro Men Against Violence	Toronto, ON	1990	?	VAW	Men's involvement
Case 30	Montreal Assault Prevention Centre	Montreal, QC	1980s	1980s-Present	VAW	Grassroots
Case	Montreal Health	Montreal,	1980,	1968-	Women's	Grassroots

31	Press Inc.	QC	1984	Present	issues	
Case 32	Mouvement contre le viol	Montreal, QC	1984	?- Present	SV	Grassroots
Case 33	Café commun	Montreal, QC	1980s	?	VAW	Radical
Case 34	North Bay Women's Centre	North Bay, ON	1986-88	?	SV	Grassroots
Case 35	North York Women's Centre	North York, ON	1989	1989- Present	Women's issues	Grassroots
<i>Provincial & National Organizations</i>						
Case 1	Ad Hoc Committee of Canadian Women and the Constitution	National	1979-81, 1984-90	1980s-90s	Women's equality	Liberal
Case 2	Canadian Rape Crisis Centres	National	1975-78	?	SV	Grassroots
Case 3	Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF)	National	1991	1985- Present	Women's equality	Liberal
Case 4	Task Force on Sexual Abuse of Patients, College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario	Ontario	1991	?	SV	Radical
Case 5	DisAbled Women's Network (DAWN)	National	1986-97	1985- Present	VAW	Grassroots
Case 6	International	Ontario &	1981-	1977-	Women's	Grassroots

	Women's Day Committees	Quebec	89	Present	issues	
Case 7	Korean Canadian Women's Association	National	1991-95	1985-Present	Women's issues	Grassroots
Case 8	National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC)	National	1972-92	1971-2000s	Women's issues	Liberal
Case 9	National Association of Sexual Assault Centres	National	1980s	?-Present	SV	Radical
Case 10	National Association of Women and the Law (NAWL)	National	1975-97	1975-Present	Women's equality	Liberal
Case 11	Ontario Advisory Council on Women's Issues	Ontario	1980, 1987	?	Women's issues	Liberal
Case 12	Ontario Association of Interval and Transitional Houses (OAITH)	Ontario	1985-94	1977-Present	IPV	Liberal
Case 13	Ontario Coalition of RCCs	Ontario	1981	1977-Present	SV	Radical
Case 14	Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women (CACSW)	National	1973-95	1973-1995	Women's issues	Liberal
Case	Young Women's Christian	Ontario &	1974-	1800s-	Women's	Grassroots

15	Association (YWCA)	Quebec	91	Present	issues	
<i>Rape Crisis & Sexual Assault Centres</i>						
Case 1	Sexual Assault Centre of Guelph (now Guelph- Wellington Women in Crisis)	Guelph, ON	1987	1977- Present	VAW	Grassroots
Case 2	Sexual Assault Centre	London, ON	1984- 91	1973- Present	SV	Grassroots
Case 3	Sexual Assault Centre	Montreal, QC	1980s	?	SV	Grassroots
Case 4	Sexual Assault Crisis Centre	Windsor, ON	1981- 84	1978- Present	SV	Grassroots
Case 5	Sexual Assault Support Centre	Ottawa, ON	1986- 89	1983- Present	SV	Radical
Case 6	Sudbury Regional Rape Crisis Centre	Sudbury, ON	ND	1977- Present	SV	Grassroots
Case 7	Thunder Bay Rape & Sexual Assault Centre	Thunder Bay, ON	ND	?- Present	SV	Grassroots
Case 8	Toronto Rape Crisis Centre	Toronto, ON	1974- 90	1974- Present	SV	Grassroots
Case 9	Waterloo Regional Rape Distress Centre (now Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region)	Waterloo, ON	ND	?- Present	SV	Grassroots
Case	Centre d'aide et	Trois-	1980-	?-	SV	Grassroots

10	de little contre les agressions a caractere sexuel (CALACS)	Rivieres, QC	90	Present		
Case 11	CALACS	Outaouais, QC	1980- 90	1977- Present	SV	Grassroots
Case 12	Algoma District Sexual Assault Centre	Sault Ste. Marie, ON	1985	?	SV	Grassroots
Case 13	Montreal Rape Crisis Centre (now 5 CALACS)	Montreal, QC	1975- 76, 1982- 83	1974- Present	SV	Grassroots
Case 14	Rape Crisis Centre	Hamilton, ON	1976- 79	1975- Present	SV	Grassroots
<i>Shelters & Transition & Crisis Homes</i>						
Case 1	Women in Crisis	Sault Ste. Marie, ON	ND	?	IPV	Grassroots
Case 2	Women in Transition	Toronto, ON	1978, 1994	1974-?	IPV	Grassroots
Case 3	Emily Stowe Shelter for Women (now Dr. Roz's Healing Place)	Scarborough , ON	1982- 83	1981- Present	IPV	Grassroots
Case 4	Ernestine's Women's Shelter	Etobicoke, ON	1984	1983- Present	IPV	Grassroots
Case 5	Faye Peterson Transition House	Thunder Bay, ON	1984	1983- Present	IPV	Grassroots
Case 6	Hiatus House	Windsor, ON	1983- 89	1976- Present	IPV	Grassroots

Case 7	Interim Place	Mississauga, ON	1980-81	1981-Present	IPV	Grassroots
Case 8	Interval House	Ottawa, ON	1973-95	1976-Present	IPV	Grassroots
Case 9	Kingston Interval House	Kingston, ON	1980s	1975-Present	IPV	Grassroots
Case 10	Lanark County Interval House	Lanark County, ON	1988-91	1979-Present	IPV	Grassroots
Case 11	Maison d'amitie	Ottawa, ON	1988	1975-Present	IPV	Grassroots
Case 12	Maison de connivence	Trois-Rivieres, QC	1980s	1985-Present	IPV	Grassroots
Case 13	Maison des femmes	Ville-Marie, QC	1980s	?	IPV	Grassroots
Case 14	Maison des femmes de Québec Inc.	Quebec, QC	1980s	?-Present	IPV	Grassroots
Case 15	Maison le coin des femmes	Sept-Iles, QC	1987	?-Present	Women in crisis	Grassroots
Case 16	Maison Marguerite House	Montreal, QC	1985	1977-Present	Women in crisis	Grassroots
Case 17	Crisis Homes Inc.	Thunder Bay, ON	1978	?	IPV	Grassroots

APPENDIX C: Interview guide

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in an interview with me. As you know, I am doing research on the Canadian feminist women's movement during the time period of 1970-2010 for my PhD in Criminology at the University of Ottawa. I've asked to talk to you today because I want to hear about your experiences with the women's movement, particularly in relation to activism around violence against women. I have some questions I want to ask you, but feel free to tell your story as you'd like to, and if you think I've missed something important, please let me know. I will be audio-recording this interview just to make sure I get everything right. Remember that you don't have to answer any questions you don't want to, for whatever reason, and can withdraw from being a participant in this study if you choose at any time, with no negative repercussions.

Participant # _____

Q1: Title (e.g., "feminist activist"): _____

Q2: Dates of involvement (e.g., 1975-1982): _____

Q3: Gender:

- a) Woman
- b) Man
- c) _____

Q4: First language:

- a) French
- b) English
- c) ASL/LSQ
- d) _____

Q5: With what racial or ethnic group do you identify?

- a) Aboriginal

- b) Black
- c) East Asian
- d) Latin American
- e) Middle Eastern
- f) Multi-racial
- g) South East Asian
- h) White
- i) _____

Q6: Age: _____

Q7: What is your highest level of education obtained?

- a) Less than high school
- b) High school
- c) Some college or university
- d) College diploma or certificate
- e) University undergraduate degree
- f) Post-graduate degree

Q8: Tell me about your involvement in the women's movement in Canada.

(Were you a member in any organizations? What issues were you most passionate about? Were you involved in any major events? How did you get involved?)

Q9: How do you, and how have you in the past, conceptualized violence against women? (i.e., are sexual violence and intimate partner violence separate issues? Is it an individual problem, a crime problem, a social problem, etc.?)

Q10: What do you think would be the most effective approach to dealing with violence against women? Either as a response to violence against women or how it might be

eradicated. (e.g., harsher criminal justice policies, more social safety nets, social equality, etc.)

- Q11: What was, or is, your position on feminist activists engaging with the state to improve women's safety? By the state I mean working with governments, engaging in consultations for law reforms, relying on the criminal justice system, etc.
- Q12: What stands out as "wins" during your time of feminist activism? What setbacks, challenges, or losses did you experience?
- Q13: When you look back on the activism that you were involved with on violence against women from your stance today, what do you think could or should have been done differently and why?
- Q14: Are you still involved in feminist activism (on violence against women)? What keeps you going?
- Q15: Is there anything you'd like to add or anything you think I should definitely know about feminist activism in Canada on violence against women that I might be missing?

Thank you again for helping me with my research by agreeing to do this interview with me. I'm going to type up a transcript of this interview and if you'd like to see it to make sure I've got everything down right, I'd be more than happy to send it to you. I'd also just like to remind you that even though you've already signed the consent form, if you decide at any time and for whatever reason that you no longer want to participate in this study, you can just let me know and I will destroy the recording of this interview and any analysis I might have already done on it, no problem. If you want, you can also contact me in the future to follow-up on the research results.

APPENDIX D: Archival research indicator guide

Buzz words:

- “Rape”, “sexual assault”, “sexual violence”, “wife battering”, “woman battering”, “woman abuse”, “intimate partner violence”, “domestic violence”, “family violence”, “violence against women”, “gendered violence”, “victim”, “survivor”, “crime”, “violence”, “rights”, “equality”, “social change”

Overt messaging:

- Advertising services, an event, etc.
- Public education
- Stating a position
- Correspondence

Rhetorical or intentional messaging:

- Is this text presenting an argument for something?
- What questions does this text ask of the reader?
- How does this text conceptualize violence against women (i.e., as a social problem, as a crime, as an individual problem)?
- Are sexual violence and intimate partner violence considered together?

Implicit ideological assumptions:

Radical feminism:

- Grassroots/community action
- “Patriarchy”, “revolution”
- Social change

Marxist/Socialist feminism:

- Grassroots/community action
- “Capitalism”, “social class”
- Social change

Liberal feminism:

- Commitment to/engagement with the state (e.g., legal process, government, etc.)
- “Reform”, “equality”, “rights”

Critical race feminism:

- Attention to specific races, cultural groups, etc.

Intertextuality:

- Other texts, events, organizations, individuals, etc. mentioned in this text

APPENDIX E: Archival research codebook

Activism on violence against women

- Backlash
- Campaigns
- Conferences
- Criticisms/barriers
- Discourse
- Flyers/pamphlets/brochures
- Info/fact sheets
- Letters/press releases
- Lobbying
- Model statutes
- Myths/facts
- Options for women
- Publications/reports
- Recommendations/demands
- Research
- Resolutions
- Services

Conceptualizations of violence against women

- Community problem
- Complex problem
- Crime problem
- Individual/family problem
- Private/public problem
- Public health problem
- Role of men
- Social/structural problem

Intertextuality

- Campaigns
- Events
- Films/plays
- Laws/bills

- Organizations/individuals
- Statistics
- Texts

Main issue

- All forms of violence against women
- Intimate partner violence
- Other issue
- Physical violence
- Public safety
- Sexual violence

Other

- Miscellaneous
- Poetry/song

Socio-political context

- Key events
- Meetings/conferences
- Public policy

Type of feminism

- Critical feminism
- Grassroots feminism
- Internal struggles
- Liberal feminism
- Marxist/Socialist feminism
- Radical feminism

Interview Data Codebook

Experience in the movement

- Activism
- Coalitions
- Counsellor

- Education
- Family history
- Feminist identity
- Government/policy
- Media
- Public education/engagement
- RCC/SAC worker
- Research
- Shelter worker
- Victimization
- Women's or resource center

Intertextuality

- Campaigns
- Events
- Films/plays
- Laws/bills
- Organizations/individuals
- Statistics
- Texts

Issues

- Aboriginal women
- Activism strategies
- Backlash
- Criminal justice system response
- Conceptualizations of violence against women
- Engagement with the state
- Francophone movement
- Funding
- Intergenerational feminism
- Internal dynamics
- International feminism
- Intersectionality
- Media response
- Men's involvement
- Partnerships

- Responses to violence against women
- Service provision vs. activism
- Sex work
- Social issues
- Social movement
- Sexual violence vs. intimate partner violence

Socio-political context

- Key events
- Meetings/conferences
- Public policy